

VST Alliance Sales Methodology

An Alliance Optimisation Best Practice Process

What is it?

VST stands for Vision Skills and Trust and describes the three critical Phases of initiating growing and maximising the commercial value of a strategic alliance relationship. ABP calls this process Alliance Optimisation.

The VST process is based on known best practices and each Phase is broken down into Stages. There are six stages in all as follows:

1. Benchmarking
2. Visioning
3. Executing
4. Resourcing
5. Tracking
6. Growing

Each stage has a defined set of Tasks which need to be accomplished to successfully complete each stage. Once complete each Stage has a defined Output which represents a key input to the next stage.

The methodology was originally designed and developed by ABP with the active support of a number of leading partnering companies (e.g. IBM, Microsoft, Capgemini, EMC, Accenture, BT, SAP and Oracle).

Currently it has been used in over 75 companies worldwide to optimise alliance relationships.

Why is it Useful?

VST is useful because it gives alliance practitioners a systematic and scalable process which they can follow to optimise the commercial value of their alliance relationships.

Previous practice has shown that organisations following a VST approach increase alliance sales with partners more quickly than using a proprietary partnering approach.

At the time of writing VST is the ONLY non proprietary alliance sales methodology available*.

VST is also supported by a large range of High Tech companies (See the section *Who Uses It?*). Which means that members of the VST User Group can easily suggest VST Alliance Optimisation exercises to other group members.

The VST methodology is supported by Alliance Best Practice Ltd (ABP) and a group of ABP associates who are VST Certified.

Full training and supporting tools are available for the process online at www.alliancebestpractice.co.uk

The VST Alliance Sales Optimisation User Group can be found at: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4077857/>

*Correct as at September 2021

How Does it Work?

VST comprises six stages in three phases. The Phases are:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where could we be?
3. How do we get there?

Phase 1 comprises a series of interviews with key stakeholders to ascertain the current strengths and weaknesses of the relationship as it currently stands.

The result is a report which gives an indicative score somewhere between 0-100 indicating the current collaborative strength of the relationship. Based on the score both sides make a 'go / no go' decision to move to Phase 2.

Phase 2 is a workshop (or series of workshops) to identify which of the weaker areas identified in the Stage 1 report are capable of improvement. In addition both sides are encouraged to speculate on further levels of success possible in the relationship. The result is an alliance vision report which identifies 'Where could we be?'. Assuming senior stakeholder acceptance of the vision both sides proceed to Stage 3.

Phase 3 answers the question 'How do we get there?' by creating a joint improvement action plan comprised of short and long term actions to address areas of underperformance in the alliance. The joint action plan is supported by the identification of key stakeholder roles and responsibilities in the plan.

About ABP

ABP is the world's leading alliance research and benchmarking organisation. We maintain a database of over 200,000 observations of alliance best practices in action.

We have over 75 companies represented in our Alliance Best Practice Community and meet quarterly to exchange ideas and develop new best practice standards in ever more complex collaborative relationships.

Ever tougher stakeholder demands, changing business conditions and increased competition means you need better operational controls, performance and risk management.

To help you, we continue to enhance our services. We don't just verify our findings in the classroom we go even further and reach out to active alliance practitioners to apply our research in meaningful and commercially lucrative ways for our clients.

Our expertise

Selecting ABP means you'll be working with a company that strives for alliance excellence through rigorous and demonstrable best practices.

VST Endorsements

Samsung UK – Used VST to initiate a strategic alliance with IBM based on mobility. Saved 18 months of wasted effort.

IBM GTS EMEA – Used the approach to achieve 'interlock' with key partners in EMEA including: Cisco, Anixter, Citrix, Adva, Juniper, NetApp, Schneider-Electric, IPEG, Lenovo and Motorola

Qlik Software – Used the approach to develop a public sector service to NHS Hospitals with PwC.

Cisco EMEAR – Used the approach to develop strategic alliances with SI / SO partners: Capgemini, IBM, Accenture, CGI, Infosys, TCS, BT, Wipro, Deloitte, PwC, Atos, Canopy and Tech Mahindra.

Capgemini – Used VST to develop increased business with its Tier 1 partners: IBM, HP, SAP, Oracle and Microsoft.

Tieto – Used VST to increase alliance sales with key partners: EMC, SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, IBM and Cisco.

Accenture EMEA – Used VST to assess 15 alliance relationships in EMEA.

EMC – Used VST as part of its 'Velocity' program with: Sungard, Rackspace, AT&T, Accenture, TCS, HCL, Deloitte, CSC, Xerox, Unisys, vCHS, Booz-Allen and Lockheed Martin

Who Else Has Used it?

The following companies have previously used VST to improve their alliance relationships:

Accenture, Adobe, ADVA, Alcatel, Alphabet, AMD, AppDynamics, Apttus, Apple, Arkadin, AT&T, Atos, Avaya, Bearing Point, BCX, BMC, Borland, Brocade, BT, Computer Associates, Canopy, Canon, Capgemini, CGI, Cisco, Citrix, Cognizant, Commvault, Computacenter, CSC, Dassault Systemes, Dell, Delaware, Deloitte, Dimension Data, Dun and Bradstreet, EMC, Equifax, Equinix, Experian, EY, Ericsson, F5 Networks, Fujitsu, Genesys, Getronics, Google, HCL, Hitachi, HPE, i2, IBM, Indra, Infor, Informatica, Infosys, Juniper, KANA, Kaspersky, Konica Minolta, KPMG, Lawson, Lenovo, McAfee, Microsoft, Micro Focus, Mitel, Motorola, Mphasis, NEC, NetApp, NextiraOne, Nokia, Northgate, Nortel, NTT, O2, Oracle, Ordina, OpenText, Orange, Qlik, Pegasystems, Pitney Bowes, Polycom, PTC, PwC, Rackspace, Red Hat, Ricoh, RSA, Sage, Salesforce, Samsung, SAP, SAS, Satyam, ServiceNow, Siebel, Siemens, Software AG, Sungard, Symantec, Tata Communications, T-Systems, TCS, Tech Mahindra, Telefonica, Telus, Teradata, Tieto, Unisys, Verint, Verizon, VMware, Vodafone, Wipro and Zebra.

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