



Dear Valued Partner:

For nearly a decade Mainstay Partners has been focused on measuring and communicating the value of technology investments. Over the years, we've conducted more than 300 business impact assessments and assembled a database of more than 2,000 business performance metrics. We have also refined our ROI methodology to the point where we can forecast returns on IT investments with a high degree of accuracy.

The research and analytical work we do -- including business impact reports, case studies, benchmarking projects, ROI modeling and more -- serve as "customer evidence" because they provide proof that a vendor's technology solutions are delivering the promised benefits. It's not just telling, but showing. And it's probably the most effective way to influence a prospective buyer.

As Gartner analyst Massimo Pezzini has observed: "There's no better way to communicate that your product is delivering its intended business benefits than telling a story of a successful implementation. I like to remind vendors just how powerful this technique can be."

Influencing Buying Behavior

Indeed, a Gartner study backed up Pezzini's claim, concluding that "third-party quantification of IT value leads to a 64% increase in buying behavior." And an IDC study came to a similar conclusion, finding that "technology providers can reduce their sales cycle by 30-40% by providing credible ROI evidence."

Of course, every company has its success stories touting the virtues of its "world-class" products and services. Stories like these can be informative and helpful to decision makers, but rarely are they convincing. What's lacking is the power of quantified business metrics and the credibility of independent research.

Adding hard numbers makes a huge difference in the marketing equation. Instead of vague assertions of "improved business processes" you get specifics like a "24% increase in on-time deliveries" or a "10% reduction in inventory carrying costs." For serious-minded buyers, quantified benefits always carry more

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*Massimo Pezzini
Gartner Inc.*

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 - Includes a detailed ROI analysis
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 - Includes a detailed ROI analysis
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 - Shows how your product has helped the customer achieve their goals
 - Includes a detailed ROI analysis

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weight. And when the hard numbers come from an independent researcher, the evidence becomes even more credible and convincing.

The Art and Science of Case Studies

There is both an art and science to writing an effective case study. The science has to do with adhering to industry-standard methods of measuring business value and ROI. It also means following a methodology that identifies the appropriate set of performance metrics to assess. "Fishing for evidence" is hardly scientific and often a waste of time.

A sound business-assessment methodology recognizes that most companies realize benefits over a period of time -- with significant gains often coming in the second, third and fourth year after implementation. And a complete ROI will evaluate not just cost savings, but productivity increases and enhancements to top-line revenue.

The art comes from making wise assumptions about the likelihood and magnitude of future benefits. Here, the general rule is: when in doubt, be conservative. Overly optimistic projections are easy to spot and can damage the study's objectivity and effectiveness.

Leveraging the Customer

With the customer's time often in short supply, it's essential to optimize every minute spent developing the case study. For Mainstay, that means a lot of upfront research and prep-calls with the client to create an interview guide that zeros in on the benefits and metrics that matter most. Yet we're careful not to straitjacket an interview with rote questioning because some of the most valuable facts and insights are uncovered by following up on unexpected responses.

Case study engagements are a great opportunity to create more than just a case study. Customer interviews, for example, can be recorded, edited and turned into podcasts. In-person interviews can be captured on video. And both audio and video can be combined in Webcasts and posted on the Web or emailed along with the case study.

Spectrum of Marketing Assets

Exploiting these opportunities, Mainstay now offers a spectrum of marketing assets that clients can add to our core case study deliverable. For example, our Customer Showcase Study features an in-depth ROI study, a video testimonial, a podcast, an executive summary sales sheet, an internal report for the customer, and a spreadsheet-based ROI model. All of these assets are generated from a single in-person customer engagement.

We also offer an economical Customer Snapshot package, based on phone interviews, that requires less customer involvement, and a high-volume Customer Sales Sheet option that is ideal for building a critical mass of references across industries or products. You choose the service -- or combination of services -- that fits your strategic needs and budget. To learn more, read our [case studies brochure](#).

Mainstay Partners is the leader in quantifying and communicating the value of enterprise solutions. We are an independent advisor to some of the most admired companies in the world and help both buyers and providers of technology solutions measure the impact of business investments. [Find out more](#)

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