

Turn time into traction

5 strategies to drive long-term sales contest success

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It's a well-known fact that the most effective sales contests are built for speed: short, energetic bursts that last 90 days or less, most focused on a single quarter's success. But what happens when the challenge demands more time? Whether you're navigating lengthy sales cycles, delivering more complex or strategic sales, or pursuing ambitious full-fiscal-year objectives, there are times when you need a strategy designed for the marathon, not the sprint.

Here are **five actionable strategies** to ensure your long-term sales contest, one that goes six months or more, doesn't just launch with a strong start, but **delivers measurable results right through the finish line.**

1 **Bold messaging and theming**

A strong theme can make or break your contest. Think beyond the generic "sales drive" language. Your theme should be memorable, inspiring, and bold enough to rally your team around a shared mission. Whether it's a call to "Conquer the Impossible" or a journey to "Reach the Summit," the right message creates an emotional connection that drives commitment.

Pro tip: weave the theme into all contest aspects, from a launch animation to the awards offered – every touchpoint furthers your message.

2 **Engage the right stakeholders**

Sales success isn't achieved in isolation nor is it always a single-person mission. Often, it's the behind-the-scenes heroes, such as marketing, operations, or customer success, who help close deals. Consider including these team members in your contest framework, rewarding for their efforts in the sales process. By giving them a stake in the game, you're fostering collaboration and aligning everyone towards the same goals.

3 **Variable metrics**

Monotony is the enemy of motivation. For a contest spanning six months or more, it's crucial to mix things up. Introduce variable metrics that align with your broader goals, but shift focus each quarter. For example, one quarter might reward lead generation while the next emphasizes closing deals. This approach keeps the competition dynamic and ensures everyone has an opportunity to shine, regardless of their sales strengths.

4 **Frequent rewards**

Let's face it: even the most dedicated teams need encouragement. Long-term contests thrive on momentum,



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and frequent rewards are the fuel that keeps the engine running. Celebrate small wins with on-the-spot bonuses, team shoutouts, or smaller, themed rewards (call back to the bold theme!). Think of these moments as checkpoints: mini-celebrations that re-energize your team and keep them focused on the ultimate prize.

5 Actionable progress tracking

Clarity drives confidence. If your team can't see where they stand or how their efforts are contributing to the bigger picture, engagement will dwindle. Invest in user-friendly progress reporting that provides actionable and personalized information to their goals. Transparency isn't just about numbers; it's about fostering trust and giving your team the tools they need to succeed. Want to amp up the energy? Incorporate gamification elements such as heat maps or badges to add a layer of fun.

The long game

Long-term sales contests require careful planning, a clear vision, and a commitment to continuous engagement. By combining bold themes, inclusive audience identification, dynamic metrics, frequent rewards, and transparent tracking, you're not just running a contest, you're building a sustained and unified movement that delivers results.

**As we know, time – when focused – creates traction.
And with the right strategies, your long-term sales contest
will deliver remarkable returns.**

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