Solution Provider Profile

Brainshark

January 2017

Company Background

Company At-a-Glance	
Name of Product/Modules Offered	Brainshark
Headquarters	Waltham, MA
Year Founded	1999
Number of Employees	200+
Revenue	$50M+
Market Focus	Brainshark targets medium to large organizations
Key Industry Verticals	Technology, medical devices, manufacturing, insurance, financial services, business services, consulting, retail, transportation
Top Customers	GE Digital, Tegna, Caterpillar, Penske, Yelp, CareerBuilder
Website	www.brainshark.com

Product Overview

Brainshark sales enablement software equips businesses with training, coaching and content authoring capabilities to improve sales readiness and productivity.

Organizations use Brainshark for:

- **Sales onboarding** – Ramping up new reps faster with online formal training
- **Continuous learning** – Ensuring reps understand new products and services, competitive advantages, value propositions and more with anytime access to learning content and resources

- **Sales coaching** – Improving team performance and validating rep mastery of trained skills and messaging
- **Content authoring** – Quickly creating rich, interactive video content for sales training, prospecting and more

In addition, Brainshark analytics enable organizations to understand exactly which sales readiness activities drive sales productivity.

Product Analysis by Brandon Hall Group

Business Overview

While many learning solutions can be applied to sales professionals, Brainshark is a platform aimed squarely at the unique challenges of B2B sales organizations. The self-contained sales training, coaching and content authoring solution is aimed at not just helping reps sell more, but sell more effectively.

Product Details

Brainshark primarily focuses on the "sales readiness" side of the sales enablement function, providing technology that arms reps with the knowledge and resources to stay prepared for every buyer interaction.

Content

There is a content creation engine that is designed to make it easy for people without programming experience to create media-rich content for sales training, prospecting and other use cases. Static assets such as PowerPoints, PDFs and Word documents can be repurposed as part of interactive video-based content. The output of the engine is content that is accessible from anywhere on any device.

Both existing content and content that has been created in Brainshark can be organized and accessed on-demand through the Brainshark portal. Companies can create their own categories within which to organize the content, and set rules as to who can access the content. This content can also be accessed directly through Salesforce, complete with context based on the opportunities and accounts within which the rep is working.

Training

The platform includes many of the core features found in an LMS, which allows companies to deliver courses and curricula, as well as manage enrollment, completion, certification, etc. In addition to the more formal types of learning experiences, the platform can also deploy learning in more of a just-in-time environment for sales people who have already been onboarded and are in the field or on the job.

Coaching

Beyond onboarding and training, coaching is a huge part of sales enablement. Brainshark gives sales managers a tool to coach their teams, sharpen skills, and validate that training has been mastered. Managers can deliver video-based challenges to their teams to ensure mastery of a subject, reinforce their training, and prepare them for sales conversations.

Analytics

Brainshark analytics also integrate with Salesforce reports, helping organizations identify when reps are truly ready to have the types of conversations that power sales. Organizations can also track learning progress, rate and score practice sessions and ensure completion of critical training. The combination of this powerful data with the CRM helps organizations understand exactly what readiness activities drive sales productivity. A similar integration for Microsoft Dynamics is coming in the first quarter of 2017.

Brainshark also offers a variety of services and support, including implementation support for all of the solutions. For organizations that want more in terms of content creation, there are on-staff graphic designers and content creators to help with content creation. And for organizations that have integrations or other unique needs, there are customization services.

Roadmap

Product: Brainshark has an aggressive approach to product enhancement and planning in support of its Sales Readiness strategy and will focus on the following improvements in 2017:

- Q1
  - Updated user interface for a better content authoring, training and coaching experience

- Expanding integrations—including a new integration for Microsoft Dynamics
- Brainshark will release a mobile app for an enhanced mobile experience
- Deeper Salesforce integrations to help unify communications across Microsoft Outlook, Salesforce and Brainshark

- Q2

  - Machine scoring and cognitive services will monitor tone and language to coach reps and help them master the message.
  - Predictive training and coaching to help reps better prepare for buyer interactions

Brainshark plans to expand its partnership with CloudCoaching International to incorporate more services, including having CCI coaches help kick-start coaching programs and workshops, as well as reviewing existing programs. Brainshark also recently announced a strategic partnership with Highspot to provide customers with an even more complete sales enablement offering. Solution integrations with Highspot will also be announced in early 2017.

Pricing Models

Brainshark has a tiered subscription model based on the number of users, functionality required and CRM integration. Companies may elect to license access to content creation and training functionality with add-on options available to include Brainshark's coaching platform capabilities, access to Brainshark content within Salesforce, licensed content from CloudCoaching International, and more.

The Analyst's Perspective

Sales training is an area where learning can have a huge impact, both positively due to improved results, and negatively due to time away from selling. As such, organizations are looking for solutions that can get salespeople up to competency quickly and keep them at peak performance unobtrusively.

Brainshark has found ways to solve this dilemma by providing quick, contextual content that fits right into the daily lives of sales professionals. Recognizing the power of video for

learning, this company has a strong focus on video in its content development tools that allow companies to transform static content into video interactions.

Most sales organizations spend a great deal of time in Salesforce. As such, Brainshark has developed a powerful Salesforce integration that replicates most of Brainshark's main features, written in the native Salesforce environment. Content will play on a player within Salesforce, rather than sending learners to a separate platform. This allows salespeople to engage in learning interactions without leaving the environment in which they are most comfortable, as well as where they get their jobs done.

Analytics are key in sales training, where results have a direct impact on the bottom line. Brainshark gives organizations a robust tool to measure their learning activities, with a dashboard that gives managers quick, visual access to information they can use to make decisions.

-David Wentworth, Principal Learning Analyst, Brandon Hall Group

About Brandon Hall Group

Brandon Hall Group is a HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management. With more than 10,000 clients globally and more than 20 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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