



## SalesGorilla Strategic Account Management Newsletter

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### Announcing the SAMS-ASP solution for strategic account management!

SalesGorilla, Inc., is pleased to announce the launch of an ASP version of its best-of-breed strategic account management system (SAMS). Our SAMS-ASP solution is perfect for companies who are just starting their strategic account management programs, or want to test the waters before investing in an enterprise solution. For more information, send an e-mail message to [sales@salesgorilla.com](mailto:sales@salesgorilla.com), or contact us at 408-868-9700 x18.

### SAMA's Summer 2002 Velocity Magazine to feature SalesGorilla Analysis of SAMA Research Study

Between November 2001 and January 2002, the Strategic Account Management Association (SAMA) conducted a research study to evaluate the use of technology in strategic account management. The research consisted of two phases. In phase one, approximately fifty SAMA constituents completed an electronic questionnaire to provide a high-level perspective on the major technology issues. In phase two, thirty-five one-on-one telephone interviews were conducted with SAMA constituents to explore the issues in greater detail. During the interviews, participants were asked:

- how well existing technologies addressed their business needs,
- the key requirements that such technologies must fulfill, and
- what their experiences were with technology implementation.

Our independent analysis provides general observations about technology and implementation processes, and identifies four key areas that technologies must address to meet the needs of strategic account management teams. Subscribe to *Velocity* magazine at the SAMA Web site (<http://www.strategicaccounts.org/>), or [download the report from the SalesGorilla Web site.](#)

### SAMS Search Tool Features Cross-Account Reporting

Did you know that SAMS has a built-in search tool for helping user locate important search terms? Available from the SAMS dashboard, the tool enables users to search for key terms across all account plans of which they are members. The search tool returns results with excerpts from the associated discussion message, action item, or attachment.

### The High-Reliability Organization

Ever hear of the term "high-reliability organization?"

High-reliability organizations are groups that perform flawlessly in complex, stressful, and ever-changing work environments. Such organizations are engaged in activities in which a single mistake can have disastrous consequences.

Sound familiar?

Research done by Rochlin, La Porte, and Roberts ([“The Self-Designing High-Reliability Organization.”](#)) and others has focused on high-reliability organizations such as air traffic controllers and aircraft carrier crews that work under strenuous and formidable conditions. While strategic account management is far removed from these environments, there are certain parallels in terms of system complexity, rapid change, and uncontrollable variables that provide important lessons.

The complexity of managing strategic accounts is well known. Strategic account managers can have dozens of sales and cross-functional professionals on their account teams. Some of those professionals are direct reports, some are dotted line, and others are partners or internal resources. And all of these people have different goals, objectives, and agendas.

In a world of fierce competition, the rules change constantly.

Unpredictable competitors look for ways to change the game to their advantage. Multiple decision makers – with different goals, objectives and agendas – change their opinions as new data becomes available. Information is difficult to obtain and is often unreliable. The wild swings of the economy and the customer’s shifting business outlook alter the structure of opportunities from one day to the next. And in the midst of all this, the account team must make its numbers quarter-by-quarter – despite changing conditions.

What can high-reliability organizations like air traffic controllers and aircraft carrier crews teach us as strategic account managers? How can we foster high reliability in our teams?

The latest research provides the following insights:

- Your team must be made up of people who fit well into a flexible, learning-oriented culture. Headstrong team members, intent on their own agendas, have no place here. Because cross-functional departments depend on each other for success, they must communicate at both the highest and lowest reaches of the organization.
- Team members must be open to new ideas and perspectives.
- There must be an overall organizational structure and framework, but there must also be a second structure that allows people to reorganize themselves into different functional configurations so they can address changing conditions. This characteristic enables the team to adapt quickly to unforeseen problems. By tapping into the expertise and experience of those who are best suited to solve the problem, the team responds efficiently and effectively.
- Team members must communicate constantly and watch out for one another. They look for signs of trouble, trade advice, and offer suggestions.
- You must emphasize active learning in order to continually improve performance.

SalesGorilla’s Strategic Account Management System (SAMS) design provides tools that make it possible to build a high-reliability sales team. SAMS is organized around a high-level framework with rich collaborative capabilities. It enables strategic account managers to manage complexity within a powerful planning framework. SAMS enables active learning and clear communications possible because it consolidates account discussions, action items, and documents within a well-understood and practical framework.

Contact us today and let us help your team become a high-reliability organization! E-mail us at [sales@salesgorilla.com](mailto:sales@salesgorilla.com), or call now at 408-868-9700, extension 18.

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