

SIMPRO EMPOWERS HYBRID SALES AND A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN A GLOBAL WORKFORCE



The challenge

With the impact of COVID-19, simPRO needed a way to strengthen and develop their new remote sales process.



The outcome

With Gong's deal dashboard and call library, simPRO gained valuable insight into the customer journey, increased collaboration across employees around the world, and streamlined onboarding while respecting the constraints needed to stay safe during the pandemic.



Technology is transforming how people monitor and improve their performance. Sports superstars like LeBron James analyse game footage to adapt their playing style and learn from their mistakes. Legendary sports teams like New Zealand's All Blacks rugby squad bring tape into the locker room to prepare for championship games. The old adage is true: seeing is believing.

This approach has trickled down to the business world, and I now review video conference footage with members of my sales teams, who switched from in-person to remote sales meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I'm the Chief Revenue Officer at simPRO Group. Our cloud-based platform is a single-stop service, project, and maintenance management solution used by more than 6,000+ trade and construction companies in field and office environments. Our customers include electrical, plumbing, HVAC, security, and fire protection service providers in the US, the UK & Ireland, Australia, and here in New Zealand.

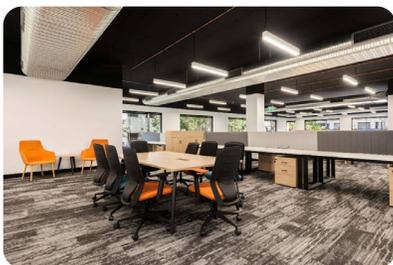


RESTRUCTURING ALONG FUNCTIONAL LINES

In the past, our company structured along geographic lines, with offices operating as independent units. Last year, we decided to restructure our business units along functional lines. Instead of having separate teams in each territory, we moved to centrally-managed departments that brought together colleagues from around the world—regardless of location.

We were ready to switch to this new way of working, but COVID-19 forced us to put these plans on hold. At first, we thought the lockdown would last a few weeks, and the construction industry would stall. But neither of these realities proved to be true. Although New Zealand and Australia have opened up a lot since spring of 2020, the US and UK have yet to return to normal. After an initial disruption, the construction industry returned to pre-pandemic levels, and our sales reps are keeping busy despite the challenges to their workflows.

In Q2 of last year, we transitioned to the new business structure, and I was put in charge of a global sales team. This team consists of multiple internal functions and roles: our partner managers bring in highly-qualified leads; our inside sales team handles the early prospecting phase; our business development managers connect with the trades, construction, and facilities management community; and our account managers people handle the post-implementation customer journey.



INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE AND VISIBILITY

When our senior management team realised that the pandemic was here to stay, they decided to move forward with the reorganisation and invest in our future. They asked me to augment our technology stack to bolster collaboration and transparency. They wanted insight into the remote sales process, including intel about our customers' needs and our reps' performance. I found that solution in Gong, and our executive team approved my choice.

Gong captures customer interactions across calls and remote meetings, providing unfiltered visibility into the activities of my sales team. Gong's proprietary AI identifies what's driving effective sales discussions and

what's holding our people back. Gong helps us track customer journeys across the entire sales process, establish pain points, determine winning strategies, and identify ways to improve our reps' performance through coaching and mentoring.

ROLLING OUT GONG AND POWERING PAST RESISTANCE

I initially rolled out Gong to our US sales team. I was its interim manager during the transition from geographic to functional business units. I wanted to see if practises that worked well in Australia & New Zealand would translate into successful American sales.

The pandemic made it impossible to travel to the US to make these changes and coach our teams in person. So, I used Gong to see whether these new sales strategies impacted our bottom line. Instead of guessing whether our sales reps were more or less effective based on numbers alone, I could now analyse their conversations to see what was working and track the point where prospects were converting on the customer journey.

The screenshot shows the 'Deal Drivers' dashboard in Gong. It features a table with columns for various performance metrics and rows for individual sales representatives. The metrics include 'Open deals', 'No next call', 'No activity', 'Ghosted', 'Not enough contacts', 'No power', and 'Pricing not mentioned'. The data is color-coded, with yellow highlighting areas of concern or low performance.

Rep	Open deals	No next call	No activity	Ghosted	Not enough contacts	No power	Pricing not mentioned
Ben Hadenberg (US Sales Director)	69	97.1%	60.0%	10.1%	72%	14.5%	14.5%
Andrew Bessette	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Christopher Karris	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Danielle Patterson	4	100%	0%	25%	0%	25%	0%
John Shaw	1	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Lance Williams	9	100%	11.1%	0%	33.3%	33.3%	22.2%
Luke Nowakowski	1	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Max Clark	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nick Carter	35	100%	91.4%	0%	5.7%	14.3%	8.6%

There was some hesitation at first. Employees don't want "Big Brother" watching them, and we had to push past their negative perceptions. Once our reps realised it was humanly impossible for me to eavesdrop on every minute of every conversation, they loosened up. Instead of thinking of Gong as a way of spying on them, they saw it as a solution that could help them fine-tune their sales process and increase conversions.

Sales tools can help fine-tune your sales process and increase conversions.

They say that success breeds success. When our other teams saw US sales increase thanks to Gong, they wanted a piece of the action. We rolled it out in other countries, and our sales leaders started to use the Gong deal dashboard to see a clear picture of their pipeline and improve sales forecasts. The numbers speak for themselves. Our US team doubled its sales figures this quarter, and all of our sales leaders are now within 5% of their monthly forecasts.

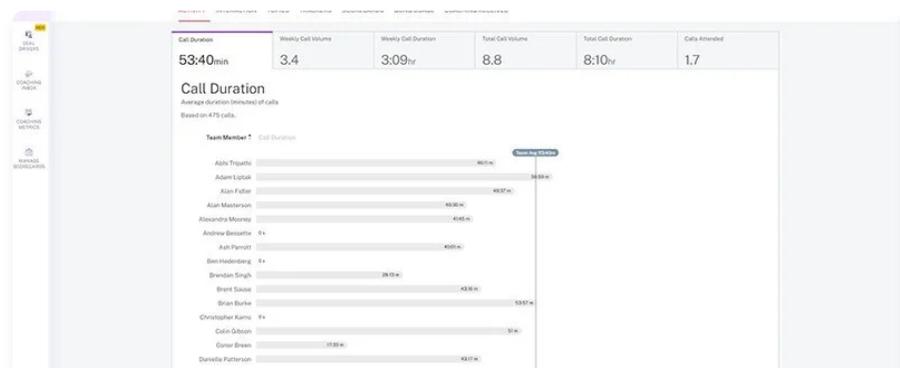
EMPOWERING ALIGNMENT FROM AFAR

When we moved from a geographic to a functional corporate structure, we had to realign how we shared our vision and goals with employees around the world. I believe in empowering our people to be accountable and in creating a culture of openness and transparency. But it's hard to do that when you can't sit down with team members for a heart-to-heart talk. Gong helped me build collaboration into our sales activities and streamline onboarding while respecting the constraints needed to stay safe during the pandemic. It showed me that just because you can't physically be close doesn't mean you can't stay aligned.

Even across the globe, sales teams can stay aligned through openness and transparency.

With Gong, more of our new hires meet their sales targets within their first quarter at simPRO. After four weeks of onboarding, new reps move to self-directed learning activities and one-on-one coaching through Gong. They can shadow established reps, listen to recordings of their own calls, and work with managers to find ways to perfect their sales technique.

Gong has also helped senior reps find their footing during the pandemic. When our BDMs transitioned from field sales to video calls, many of our established employees were thrown off. They assumed they couldn't be themselves because they had to get straight to the point. There was no way to gauge the room, so to speak; they couldn't get real-world context for a conversation by driving to a customer's site and noticing the number of vans/trucks in the parking lot, seeing how the offices were laid out, or observing the dynamic in the office. The only way they could get a feel for a new prospect was by online research, which often presents an incomplete picture.



After listening to themselves and their peers in Gong, established reps found ways to adapt their natural charisma to virtual sales. They were not alone in learning from the new platform. All our reps can benefit from Gong's analytic tools to see interaction rates and analyse how they're building rapport with their customers.

We also use Gong's trackers to scrutinise customer journeys and break down the sales process. Among other things, we can teach them repeatable steps to follow during the typical two-week sales cycle and how to time discovery questions.

LEARNING FROM THE CUSTOMER VOICE

The pandemic has robbed us of face-to-face interactions at customer sites and industry events like trade shows. Gong has given our executive team the ability to be as close to the customer as possible. We may not always have the capacity to sit down with our clients for a one-on-one pulse check, but we can listen to their interactions with our reps and apply Gong analytics to everything they're saying.

We receive so much valuable data from Gong that we've created a Revenue Operations role dedicated to analyzing the information and presenting it to the C-suite. This addition will help us better translate the insights we can glean from Gong's AI-driven dashboards into actionable strategies to increase sales.



LEARNING FROM THE CUSTOMER VOICE

The pandemic forced simPRO to move to a hybrid sales model. We went from face-to-face meetings and handshakes to video calls and e-signatures. This transition could have spelt disaster, but Gong helped our people thrive in this time of crisis.

After a brief pause at the onset of the pandemic, we saw trade, construction, and facilities management resume in full force. Meanwhile, our teams in Australia and New Zealand have regained some mobility, but our UK & Ireland and US offices remain in lockdown. We've been able to keep pace with our customers, despite the various locations of our employees.

Like world-class athletes armed with game footage, simPRO can now learn from the past. From our successes to our slip-ups, we can adapt and get better. There's no telling when we'll all hit the road again, but Gong has given us the tools to create a consistent, repeatable remote sales process that will continue to serve us long after the pandemic is a thing of the past.

Want to create a memorable sizzle reel?

Gong customers access all the data and conversational snippets they need! Not a customer yet? Don't miss out next year. Get full visibility into every deal in 2022. Take a tour at Gong.io/demo