

# Commercial App Go-to-Market Playbook



# Promoting Commercial Apps

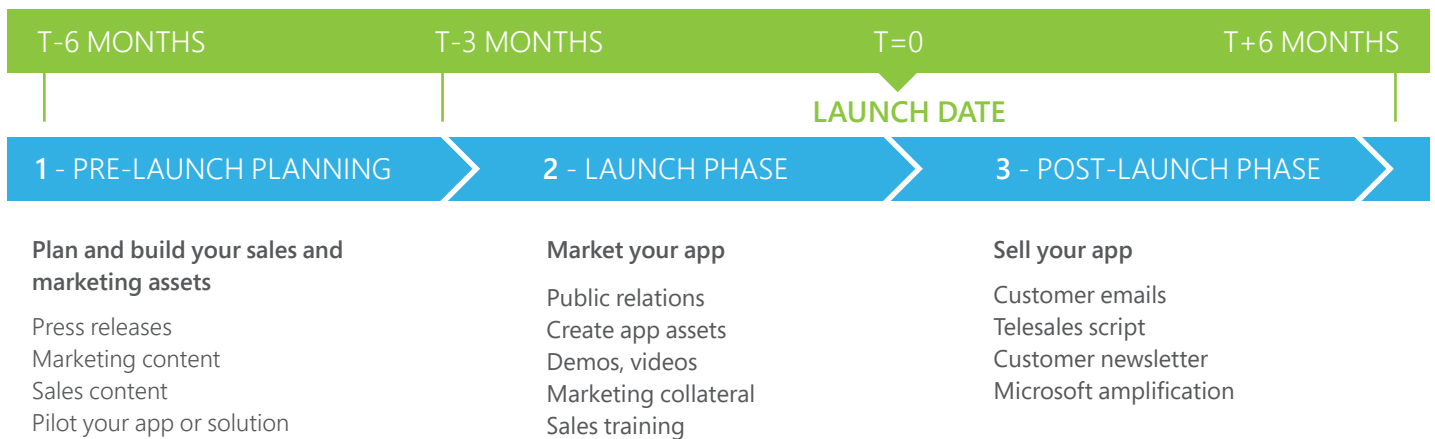
## Welcome

This playbook includes resources to help you effectively promote and sell your commercial apps built on Windows, Windows Phone, Azure, Office and more. In the following pages, we will cover:

- 1 Pre-launch decisions, activities, and sales and marketing assets that can create buzz and ensure a successful app launch
- 2 Launch-time promotions to generate customer trials and sales leads, plus public relations, marketing and pitch techniques
- 3 Post-launch tips to keep your customers coming back for more

Below is a general launch timeline with the key actions you'll want to consider for each phase of the launch process.

## Launch Timeline







App  
Marketing  
Checklist

Leverage this useful checklist to ensure that your team is on track with all necessary materials and processes to support the pre-launch planning, launch and post-launch phases.

## Pre-launch

### Plan your assets:

#### Press release content

- Press releases by ISV partner with Microsoft messaging or quotes
- Press kit with company information

#### Marketing content

- Visual identity assets, logos and branding guidelines
- Digital web presence (web landing page and social media sites such as YouTube, Twitter and Facebook)
- Brief app overview (1-2 sentences)
- Infographic that shows product benefits and features
- Leave-behind product brochure (one-pager or multi-page)
- App demo video
- Customer direct marketing emails
- Customer newsletters

#### Sales content

- Pitch decks for Microsoft and ISV sellers to present to customers
- Telesales scripts for Microsoft and ISV sellers (not customer-facing)
- App demo scripts and demo bits with test accounts

### Pilot your app or solution:

- Identify noteworthy customers to create early evidence
- Complete the pilot phase of your app with early evidence customers
- Create written and/or video case studies and/or use cases
- Collect testimonials, quotes, and feedback

- Arrange partner participation in launch and industry events
- Connect with your Microsoft account manager to see how Microsoft can help to amplify your sales and marketing efforts

## Launch

### Market your app:

- Drive public relations campaigns with your PR agencies
- Share and distribute your app assets (app demos, videos, marketing collateral and telesales scripts) internally and externally
- Create marketing campaigns (digital/social) to drive web traffic to the product landing page
- Include limited-time-only promotional offer to grow customer interest and drive sales velocity
- Train your sales force on the features and benefits of your apps and Microsoft's technologies to help customers tackle their business challenges

## Post-launch

### Sell your app or solution:

- Articulate the customer value proposition of your apps and Microsoft's technologies to your customers
- Leverage Microsoft engines to amplify your sales and marketing efforts if applicable
- Continue to drive sales opportunities and build awareness of your solution through online and offline channels, and through your direct-to-customer channels



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a grey blazer over a blue patterned top, is smiling warmly at a laptop. The laptop screen displays the Microsoft Excel interface, showing a dashboard with various charts and data tables. The office environment is bright, with large windows in the background showing a cityscape. A blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'Pre-launch'.

Pre-launch

# Pre-launch



## Plan and build your sales and marketing assets

### Articulate compelling customer value proposition through storytelling

A successful app launch requires thoughtful planning. As you prepare to launch your app or solution, you will need to create a series of polished, professional assets to share with your customers and channel partners. These will serve as critical sales and marketing resources throughout your launch process.

### Considerations as you plan and create your materials:

**Allow plenty of time.** Creating useful, engaging assets will always take more time than you expect, so don't begin any later than three months before your launch.

**Focus on benefits.** We know your app is packed with amazing features and cutting-edge technology, but your customers want to know how it will help them tackle business challenges and grow their businesses.

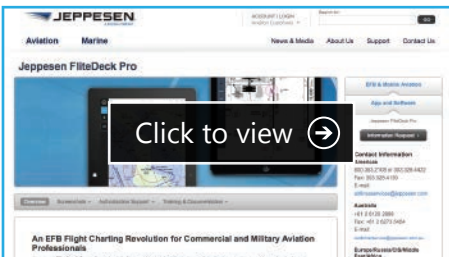
**Prove your value.** Customer testimonials and feedback are essential to showing decision-makers that your solution is workable, valuable, and ultimately, essential for them to purchase. Be sure to align your product value proposition pillars to the customer case study structure. (See page 12 "Pilot your app")

# Sales and marketing asset examples

## Marketing in action

Your sales and marketing assets should be formatted for a variety of different platforms and channels, including landing pages, social media accounts, printed brochures, and more. Here are some examples of strong, multi-platform marketing assets that our partners have created to sell and promote their apps.

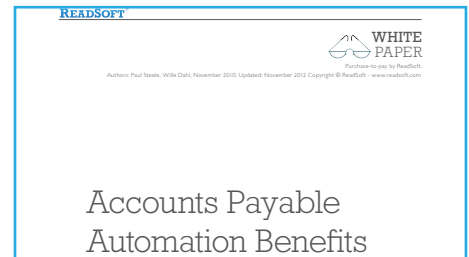
### Web landing page



### Social Media



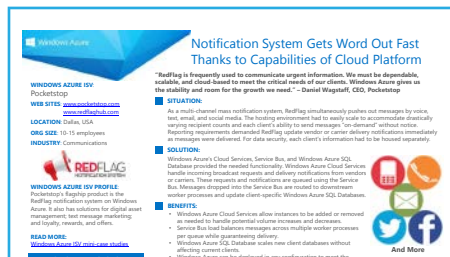
### Whitepapers



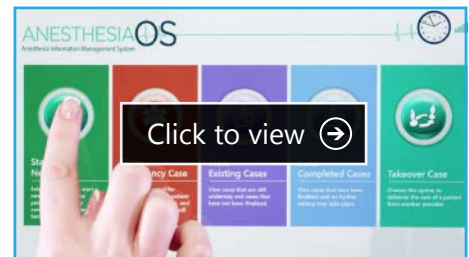
### Product Brochures



### Case Studies



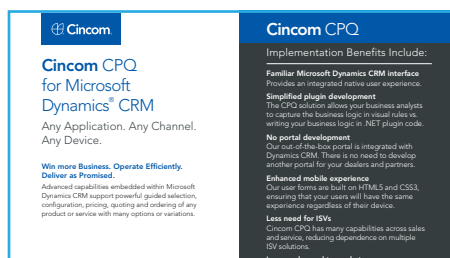
### App Demo Video



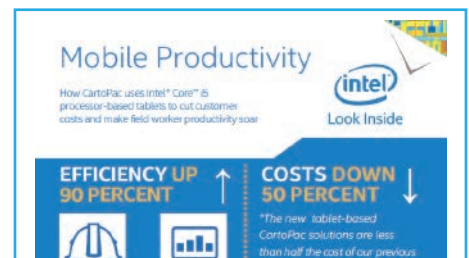
### Demo Scripts



### Telesales Scripts



### Infographic



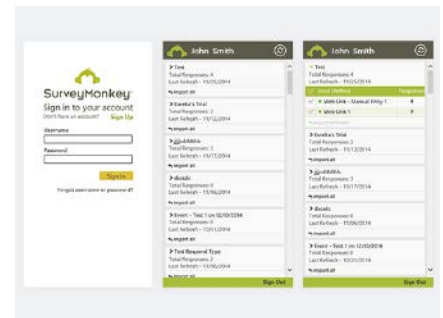
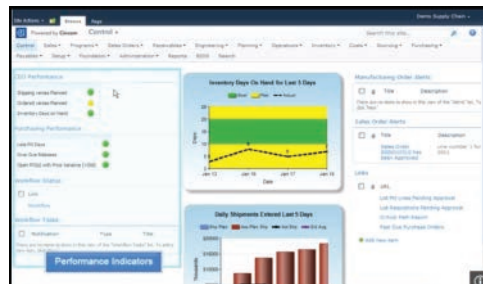


# App assets

## Visual association is key

When it comes to app recognition, visuals are essential. Your marketing and sales collateral should always include visual assets that customers will associate with your solution over the long term.

Third parties who are partnering with you to drive awareness and solution sales can also use these photos, illustrations, branding assets and/or logos. When it comes to distributing your visuals, think broadly. Make sure they're ready for your organization (and all its platforms, networks and channels) to leverage as required, in addition to sharing these visuals with your customer and sales channels. Remember that Microsoft can also work with you to distribute visual app collateral through our extensive customer and partner channels.



# App marketing collateral

## Tying it all together

Whether you engage with your customers online or in one-to-one meetings, it's important to create a digital web presence in the form of a landing page that can articulate your product value proposition to customers and offer a one-stop shop for sales and marketing collateral. Your collateral should include app demo videos, customer video case studies, leave-behind product brochures, industry and digital event details, and additional information that highlights the top benefits your app delivers.

In addition, you may consider creating a monthly or quarterly marketing campaign to drive continued customer interest and demand through newsletters, outreach emails, and social media/communities, as well as through third-party sales partners, news outlets, and trade media.

Here are some of the collateral materials you should have ready for all sales and marketing opportunities:

- **Infographic.** This is a great way to quickly and visually convey the benefits of your solution. Show how the app supports business goals, how much time it can save, how it could enhance profits, or how it addresses a business challenge, for example.
- **Leave-behind (one pager).** Clearly and succinctly outline the benefits of your solution, which problems or challenges it solves, and (briefly) how it works. Be sure to add purchase and contact information.
- **Leave-behind (multi-page brochure).** Think of the multi-page brochure as a more comprehensive tool to help close sales after the customer interaction. Cover all the basics from the one-pager (as described above), plus relevant details about the technology, the app's functionality, or anything else your customer needs to make a decision. We will share more information about sales collateral on page 19.



Jeppesen FliteDeck Pro Fact Sheet

# App demos

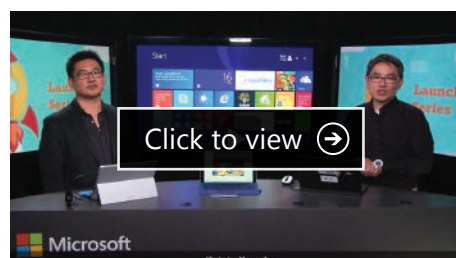
## Would you see a movie without watching the trailer?

We suspect the answer is “no.” So why would you expect someone to purchase your app without seeing it in action first? App demos can occur online, at live events, in customer meetings, and by partners, and should always highlight your solution’s tangible benefits and functionality. These demos do not need to be long, but they are essential to helping your customers see what the app provides – and why they should purchase the solution.

You can use this demo in one-on-one meetings with customers, at live events and trade shows, and in industry presentations. Brief demo videos should also be featured on your own platforms (such as your website, social media accounts and internal networks), distributed to members of the press through PR outreach campaigns, used in paid media placement, and highlighted in sales communications, such as customer newsletters emails and customer-facing blog posts.

Here are the basics of a strong app demo:

- Clarify how your demo video will be used, and by whom
- Begin with a “level 100” app demo script for high-level decision makers (remember that you can always create a more detailed level 200 version later on)
- Tailor your script to help Microsoft and ISV sellers demonstrate the business value of your app
- Include one or two usage scenarios that show the app in action
- Keep the demo video brief – short version (3-5 minutes max), detailed version (15 minutes max)



AssistX TestPolicy and ClassPolicy App Demo Video (detailed version)

# Pilot your app

## Gather customer-ready evidence

Customer references are one of the most important tools in your sales and marketing arsenal. Even before most of your prospects have the opportunity to test and buy your solution, you need to complete a full customer pilot phase and ensure you have a few early adopters (customers) on board.

Note – customer references need to be completed early, during the pre-launch phase, so they are ready to use as sales and marketing assets and leave-behind materials when you formally launch your app. Here are the seven steps in the pilot process:

- 1 Identify noteworthy customers who would benefit from using your app or solution
- 2 Leverage Microsoft resources if your customer is interested in using a Windows solution or Windows devices
- 3 Complete the pilot with selected customers and collect detailed feedback
- 4 Create written and/or two-minute video case studies that show how your customer has implemented and benefited from the solution
- 5 Include partners whenever possible, including Microsoft, hardware OEMs, and channel partners
- 6 Ask the customer(s) to provide testimonials, quotes and make their key team members available for press interviews
- 7 Arrange for your customer(s) to participate in major launch or industry events

**Notification System Gets Word Out Fast Thanks to Capabilities of Cloud Platform**

“RedFlag is frequently used to communicate urgent information. We must be dependable, scalable, and cloud-based to meet the critical needs of our clients. Windows Azure gives us the stability and room for the growth we need.” – Daniel Wegstaf, CEO, PocketStop

**WINDOWS AZURE ISV:** PocketStop  
**WEB SITE:** [www.pocketstop.com](http://www.pocketstop.com)  
**LOCATION:** Dallas, USA  
**ONE SIZE:** 10-15 employees  
**INDUSTRY:** Communications

**WINDOWS AZURE BY PROFILE:** PocketStop's RedFlag product is the RedFlag notification system on Windows Azure. It also has solutions for digital asset management, text message marketing, and loyalty, rewards, and offers.

**READ MORE:** [Windows Azure ISV mpr case study](http://Windows Azure ISV mpr case study)

**WINDOWS AZURE CASE STUDY**

**SITUATION:** As a multi-channel mass notification system, RedFlag simultaneously pushes out messages by voice, text, email, and social media. The hosting environment had to easily scale to accommodate drastically varying recipient counts and each client's ability to send messages "on-demand" without notice. Reporting requirements demanded RedFlag update vendor or carrier delivery notifications immediately as messages were delivered. For data security, each client's information had to be housed separately.

**SOLUTION:** Windows Azure's Cloud Services, Service Bus, and Windows Azure SQL Database provided the needed functionality. Windows Azure Cloud Services handle incoming broadcast requests and delivery notifications from vendors or carriers. These requests and notifications are queued using the Service Bus. Messages dropped into the Service Bus are routed to distributed worker processes and update client-specific Windows Azure SQL Databases.

**BENEFITS:**

- Windows Azure Cloud Services allow instances to be added or removed as needed to handle potential volume increases and decreases.
- Service Bus load balances messages across multiple worker processes per queue while guaranteeing delivery.
- Windows Azure SQL Database scales new client databases without affecting current clients.
- Windows Azure can be deployed in any configuration to meet the business continuity requirements of enterprise customers.

And More

Case study - PocketStop





Launch

# Launch



## Market your solution

### Generate market demand through PR and marketing

You may have just built a groundbreaking new app or made remarkable improvements to an existing solution. However, your customers (both current and potential) don't necessarily know about your new app or understand all its business benefits. This is where marketing comes in. To ensure you promote broad awareness and understanding of your solution, you need to:

- **Drive Public Relations (PR).** Use press releases and customer evidence (case studies and videos) to create buzz and general awareness across trade press, paid media and social media.
- **Share and use app assets and marketing collateral.** Be sure to gather up all the screen shots, high-resolution visuals, logos, branding elements and other assets you will need for sales, marketing and PR purposes.
- **Distribute app demo.** All videos (app demos and pitches) should be focused on benefits and less than 15 minutes in length. Customer video case studies should be no more than 3 minutes. **See page 11** for more details on how to create a valuable demo.
- **Distribute marketing collateral.** Remember that today's market (and your customer decision-makers) often requires multi-media content, including print, video, static visuals, and even audio.
- **Drive traffic to a single landing page.** Drive all customer traffic to a single landing spot as a one-stop shop for sales and marketing assets to propel sales actions.
- **Sales training.** Be sure your sales team has a thorough understanding of the app's benefits, features and unique functionality. Most importantly, your team should be ready to share a clear value proposition with customers and answer their questions about the solution. We'll cover sales training in greater depth on page 16.



TestPolicy for Windows  
App Demo Video

# Market your app: PR

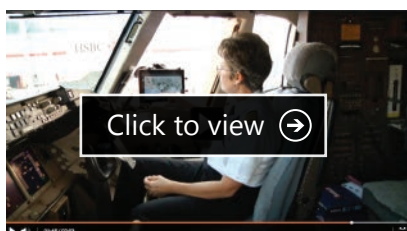
## The importance of public relations

Clear, crisp and engaging PR materials and campaigns are a smart way to create broader awareness for your app or solution. Not only can they help you create excitement and buzz among your customers, but they also generate interest in your partner ecosystem.

Keep in mind that PR is a way to influence the messages that appear in “earned media,” such as newspapers, industry publications, blogs, websites and magazines.



Jeppesen FliteDeck Pro for  
Windows Press Release



Customer video with  
Delta Airlines

## Your PR kit should include:

**Press release.** Put yourself in your customers’ shoes and focus on benefits and simplicity. Why should they use your app? Answer that question at the beginning and add more detail later in the release. Send your release to the appropriate media outlets, bloggers, writers, and review sites for your industry. You can also use online services, such as PRWeb and Marketwired, for distribution.

**High-resolution visuals.** Prepare screenshots, promotional photos, videos, logos and anything else that will enhance the coverage. Be sure these are easy to download.

**Company information.** Make sure that anyone who covers or reports on your app or solution can easily find basic company statistics, such as history, number of employees, products, service, management team bios, and other applicable details.



# Market your app: Sales training



## Know your pitch

Sales training starts with a concise and powerful pitch that equips your team for success, and works to support both print and verbal sales opportunities. Craft your pitch carefully and get ready to answer common questions and concerns. Make the most of every interaction and remember that an effective pitch typically includes:

- **An overview.** Be sure your team can summarize your app in 1-2 brief sentences – whether they are pitching in print or in person.
- **The value.** Quickly prove the app's benefits, opportunities, and hook your audience in so they are eager to learn more.

## Know your platform

Your app or solution runs on Microsoft technology, but does your sales force know that? Your sellers not only need to be familiar with your new solution, but also the benefits of its running platform and devices. Microsoft can help by providing live or online sales training focused on the benefits and features of Windows, Windows Phone, Azure, Office, Windows-based devices and more.





Post-launch

# Sell your app



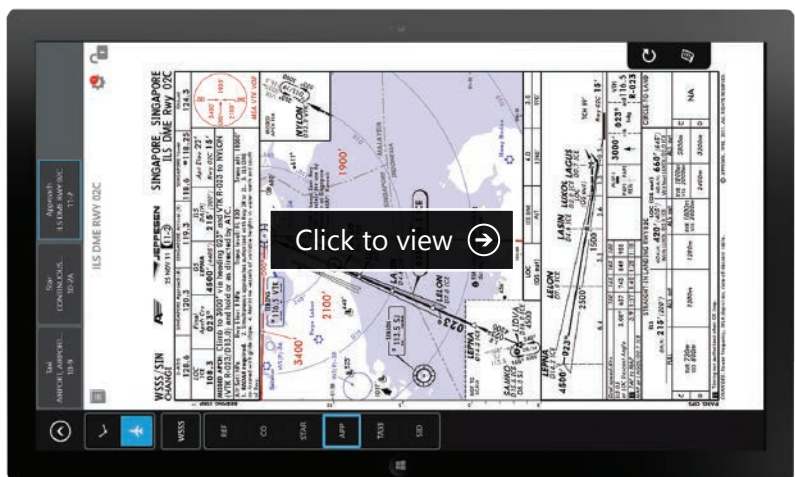
## Access key resources and land your pitch

As you begin to sell your solution, it can be helpful to remember that Microsoft has a vast partner ecosystem and a huge install base. Many of these resources are available for you to access throughout your sales and marketing process.

To effectively leverage Microsoft's broad customer reach, be sure to share your pitch – early and often.

Microsoft partner Jeppesen (a Boeing company) created a Windows app called Jeppesen FliteDeck Pro. Keep in mind that this is a print version, but you should ensure that your sales team has strong verbal pitches. Here's how Jeppesen phrased its pitch:

“Jeppesen FliteDeck Pro is the industry's first and best data-driven, interactive chart rendering experience for Jeppesen enroute chart data. No matter where you are, you will have up-to-date and immediate access to global Airway Manual Terminal procedures and airport diagrams at your fingertips.”



Flight Deck Pro 8.0 - Windows

# Sales collateral

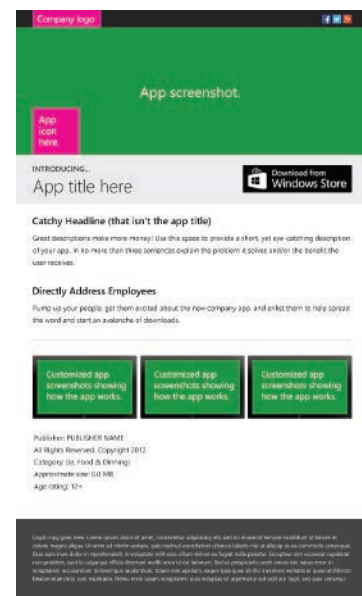
## Land the pitch and make the sale

Sales don't stop once the seller finishes the pitch, ends the meeting, or wraps up the campaign work. Good sales collateral can also help to spark customer interest and close deals. This collateral can be used online, in person for one-to-one executive meetings, and at live events. Key collateral pieces include:

- **Customer emails.** Your emails can include both standardized and/or personalized communication that address specific customer, industry, or market concerns and relevant opportunities.
- **Telesales script.** As we mentioned earlier, a solid sales or call script will keep your team on track and ensure they focus on the benefits of your solution.
- **Customer leave-behind.** We've discussed the need to create a leave-behind one-pager, product brochure, or spec sheet. These materials keep your solution top-of-mind and can often answer questions that arise during meetings, customer interactions and live events.
- **Customer newsletter.** Don't forget to mention your new app or solution in both internal and external (customer-facing) newsletter blurbs. Use every opportunity to spread the word.



Jeppesen FliteDeck Pro Fact Sheet



Email announcement template – for example only



# Microsoft amplification

## Keep selling – and let Microsoft help you turn up the volume

A successful launch is exciting, but it's just the beginning of what needs to be an ongoing sales and marketing process. It's important to keep your team's momentum up and continue driving sales through all your online, offline, and direct-to-customer channels.

Remember to:

- Promote ongoing awareness of your app or solution through your current sales force, while leveraging all your external and third-party sales channels.
- Continue sharing new angles and highlighting different features of your app to keep your customer base engaged – while also attracting new customers who could benefit from your solution.
- Share your marketing assets through as many different, multi-media platforms as possible.
- Stay in communication with your sales team to ensure your assets are effectively addressing common questions, business challenges and customer concerns.
- Seek out new PR opportunities through media contacts, press release distribution, and press outreach campaigns.
- Work with your Microsoft account manager to explore opportunities to boost awareness of your apps through partner newsletters, customer calls, in-person and online events, partner-facing sites, and much more.
- Join the Microsoft Partner Network (<https://msdn.microsoft.com/applicationbuilder>) to receive additional benefits that help save you time and money while you strengthen your capabilities, better serve customers and build connections to reach your full business potential.

Talk to your Microsoft account manager about how we can turn up the volume and boost awareness of your apps – and increase your sales.