

DNOW Gains Competitive Advantages in its Complex Industrial Sales Cycle

How DNOW Sales Managers Use Substrata to Uncover Hidden Buyer Dynamics and Gain in order to gain the Upper Hand



+21% Increase in Win Rates

26% Reduction in Sales Cycle Length

42% Increase in Booked Demos



COMPANY SIZE

~2,575 Employees

INDUSTRY

Energy, Industrial Distribution, Oil & Gas

HEADQUARTERS

Houston, TX

CHALLENGES

Traditional tools in their tech stack failed to capture hidden frictions and overall clarity for a long sales cycle with layered buying groups and tight margins. Furthermore, forecasting was an education guessing game. Sales Managers needed deeper insights to identify which deals were progressing, who held real influence, and where to deploy limited resources effectively.

SOLUTIONS

DNOW implemented Substrata to bring sharper precision to its deal management by going beyond surface-level activity metrics. Sales leaders gained visibility into early frictions, hidden resistance, and informal power dynamics allowing managers to intervene before deals stalled across their rep’s pipelines.

RESULTS

With clearer insight into deal dynamics with Substrata, managers were also able to deploy technical and commercial resources more effectively, which improved execution on high-value opportunities and accelerating revenue.

PRODUCTS USED:

- SoundWave**

Analyze conversational cues to discover the tension, power dynamics, and sentiment shifts during interactions
- Q For Email**

Build perceived authority in B2B deals by analyzing and optimizing communications for trust, credibility, and impact in your emails.
- Temper**

Evaluates behavioral tendencies such as decision making speed, risk tolerance, and interaction style to provide practical insights for business interactions.



Activity Isn’t the Problem: DNOW’s Challenge in Navigating Complex, High-Stakes Sales Cycles

DNOW Inc., a global leader in industrial distribution for energy and infrastructure markets, operates in one of the most complex and competitive sales environments on the planet. But while DNOW’s operational footprint and supply chain capabilities are state-of-the-art, many of its sales leaders faced a persistent challenge: how to truly understand what was happening inside strategic deals not just at the surface level, but beneath it. CRM systems and deal reviews provided data. What they lacked was context: Which stakeholders were resisting? Where was influence strongest? Was the deal moving forward or silently stalling?

“Substrata helps me cut through the noise, identifying the points of misalignment early in our sales process. With that kind of visibility, I can address issues before they stall the sales, providing me a lot more confidence a deal will close.”

Furthermore, DNOW supports a global customer base across the different stages of the value chain (i.e. upstream, midstream, and downstream) to go along with the energy transition sectors. With thousands of vendor relationships, DNOW’s sales teams must navigate long buying cycles, large buying committees, and technically demanding RFP processes all while maintaining high service levels and tight margins. Technical buying processes are layered, and margins depend on flawless coordination.

For Sales Managers, the real challenge wasn’t activity but rather clarity. With hundreds of deals moving through various lifecycle stages, regional sales leaders were constantly questioning:

- Which opportunities were moving forward versus quietly stalling?
- Who, among multiple stakeholders, truly held influence?
- When and where should limited sales engineering and commercial resources be deployed?

Standard tools in their tech stack couldn’t capture the nuance of buyer behavior. Decisions were delayed. Resource allocation was reactive, and forecasting became guesswork wrapped in confidence.



Turning Signals Into Strategy: How Substrata Equipped DNOW Sales Managers to Win with Precision

DNOW adopted Substrata to bring greater precision to its deal management process. Instead of relying solely on status updates or activity metrics, sales leaders now had access to behavioral data. All of the social cues, sentiment signals, and communication patterns across the entire buyer group were being captured for the sales team to analyze and adjust internal processes.

Substrata helped DNOW Sales Managers:

- 1 Uncover Friction Before It Slows the Deal**

By analyzing tone, timing, and buyer responsiveness, Substrata flagged early signs of disengagement, tension, or internal resistance—giving leaders a chance to act before deals drifted or derailed.
- 2 Pinpoint True Influence Inside Accounts**

Substrata surfaced informal power structures often missed in traditional discovery, helping managers and reps understand who to align with, who to win over, and who was quietly slowing momentum.
- 3 Make Coaching and Resourcing Data-Driven**

Sales leaders used live buyer intelligence to tailor coaching, recommend specific plays, and better prioritize where to send engineers, field techs, or pricing support.

“We needed more than CRM updates and rep hunches. There’s too much at stake in our capital-heavy deals. If we can’t read between the lines early, we lose valuable time or worse, we’ll overcommit to deals that are quietly going sideways.”

Sharper Forecasts, Faster Deals, Smarter Plays: The Measurable Impact of Substrata at DNOW

With Substrata, DNOW Sales Managers were no longer left interpreting surface-level signals or second-hand summaries. Instead, they could separate signal from noise using behavioral insights that revealed the underlying sentiments. This clarity drove a 21% lift in win rates by allowing leaders to more accurately identify which deals were genuinely progressing and which ones were stuck behind silent objections, passive resistance, or misaligned decision makers.

By identifying friction points earlier in the sales cycle such as delayed responses, shifting sentiment, or disengaged stakeholders, sales teams were able to address issues proactively instead of reacting to them weeks later. As a result, DNOW saw a 26% reduction in total deal length, and improved speed-to-decision in several of their most strategically important pursuits.

Substrata also helped optimize DNOW’s deployment of limited, high-value resources. Sales Managers could now prioritize technical engineers, commercial specialists, or pricing support based on deal potential and buyer readiness that wasn’t only based on volume or rep urgency. This led to more targeted resource allocation, better execution on complex deals, and higher ROI on every hour of internal support deployed.

Together, these shifts transformed DNOW’s deal management process from reactive to strategic fueling a higher team efficiency and faster time-to-revenue.