

Atea Nordics – Case Study

From Diminishing Margins to Millions of Euros in New Opportunities

Modernizing an IT-based business to target the business groups hungry for solutions

When Alinea Partners started to assess Atea, the market leader in IT infrastructure for businesses and public-sector organizations in Europe's Nordic and Baltic regions, they were quick to discover something that would be worth millions of euros in new business opportunities. Despite having the largest share of the VMware market in the Nordics, Atea wasn't capitalizing from such a strong position. As a market leader, the company was doing many things exceptionally well. The advanced technology and creative approach to their products were second to none. Yet, they were experiencing the diminishing margins in hardware and software that many companies in the high technology world experience today. It was time for a makeover, and Alinea Partners knew how to go about it.

The main message for Atea was that there was a need to modernize their IT business. Such an approach would bring new offers that could deliver more profitability, but then how was more important than the what. Atea needed to introduce a new way of selling. They needed to pivot from a technology-driven mindset that targets IT teams, IT managers, and CIOs into a business-driven approach that could serve the business groups that generate today's demand for modern IT solutions. Having helped countless customers worldwide, Alinea Partners knew that the IT solutions that business decision-makers seek need to be packaged correctly to be attractive to them. To accomplish that, they developed a playbook with a simplified flow that outlined critical steps for Atea to define its offers and create higher-value and more profitable services.

"The first thing we wanted to do was to understand which customers we should target, Leahanne Hobson, CEO of Alinea Partners, says. "The initial phase of the journey was our due diligence methodology where we analyze and determine where companies have key opportunities," she continues. "The deliverable that defines the offer is something that we call an Offer Canvas, and part of the methodology we use to build the Offer Canvas is our Portfolio Assessment. It's one of the analytical tools in our bucket."

By providing them with effective methodologies, Alinea Partners empowered Atea to dig deep into the data silos containing customer profiling data and customer purchase information, including which services and products they were using.

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Due diligence and careful analyses revealed opportunities in three main areas: managed IT Services, managed VMware Solutions, and managed Virtual Desktop Solutions. Atea had the most significant VMware footprint in the Nordics, about 60% of the market. That was the low-hanging fruit. Alinea Partners ran the VMware solution on Azure through the rest of the cycle, helping them define the offer and everything relating to it.

The umbrella message was that Atea would now sell IT Modernization. They would build their product into unified management and operations that focus on two main tracks: managing growth and optimizing IT costs. Alinea Partners provided clear use cases and sales triggers to support the new approach. They then consolidated it all into a customer-facing deck and a sales briefing document. Alinea Partners also conducted various training sessions in different countries, including Atea's solution specialists and account teams, to adequately position the new solutions.

"The new approach does not start with the product. It starts on the other side, with the customers, business outcomes, and the business needs those customers to have," Christian Hess, Senior Advisor for Alinea Partners, says. "The objective was to help them map out and understand the correlation and to get started with those non-technical conversations that build an opportunity pipeline. Sales triggers and sales motions are of particular importance to take it all to the market because they are the excuses for salespeople to have those conversations."

As Atea built the pipeline, Alinea Partners also briefed them on how to run an account-based marketing program. "They already had some core competencies," Leahanne says. "We simply helped answer questions and do brainstorming."

The first run of the campaign generated 250 opportunities for Atea with a pipeline worth almost 50 million Euros.

"It was the best cloud seminar I've attended in a long time. I believe the VMware-Azure combo, positioned as IT Modernization and including Atea's Value proposition in the message, will help me make the cloud transformation tangible for many customers."

Seminar participant, Atea