LeanData OPS STARS™ AWARDS

OPS STORIES COLLECTION
PRESENTED BY LEANDATA

✦ OPSSTARS AWARDS • 2026 WINNERS

AWARD-WINNING OPS STORIES

2026

SHINING A LIGHT ON GTM LEADERS

Shining a light on the bold thinkers, strategic builders, AI pioneers, and cross-functional connectors redefining GTM Operations to fuel real, measurable growth. These are the people behind the projects — the ones transforming how go-to-market (GTM) teams align, operate, and win.

In their eighth year, the OpsStars Awards honor the unsung heroes powering modern go-to-market success: the pros pushing boundaries, breaking down silos, and rewriting the GTM playbook.

This year's awards theme, Power Your AI GTM, reflects a new era of go-to-market operations. Leading teams are orchestrating AI and automation across the revenue engine, connecting the systems, signals, and handoffs that turn buyer intent into pipeline and pipeline into revenue.

Our award categories reflect how elite GTM teams operate in an AI-powered world, from intelligent orchestration and buying group strategy to velocity, transformation, and full-lifecycle alignment. Winners bring these ideas to life through intelligent routing, AI-powered buyer journeys, transformed infrastructure, and stronger cross-functional alignment.

We hope their stories inspire you to rethink what's possible and find new ways to power your AI-ready GTM engine.

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AGENTIC GTM AWARD

For the team that has embedded AI agents as active participants in its go-to-market motion, using them to engage prospects, qualify intent, schedule meetings, and execute handoffs. The award recognizes agentic GTM programs that connect AI engagement with automated execution and deliver measurable improvements in conversion, pipeline velocity, and operational efficiency.

✦ THE WINNER

KORN FERRY

42%

BOOST IN CONVERSION FOR LEADS RECEIVING AI-FIRST ENGAGEMENT

38.6%

INCREASE IN AVERAGE DEAL SIZE

1 DAY LESS

TO REACH SALES ACCEPTED STATUS — ON AVERAGE

THE CHALLENGE

For Korn Ferry, managing inbound leads was unusually complex. As a global organizational consulting firm serving both B2B and B2C markets, it received everything from high-value commercial opportunities to personal, non-commercial requests. Every lead needed to be evaluated and routed appropriately before reaching a seller. For years, a dedicated Lead Management team manually reviewed leads after initial checks in LeanData to confirm their commercial value.

When Korn Ferry reallocated that team to other priorities, it needed to eliminate the manual review step without sacrificing lead quality or response speed. The challenge was compounded by a consulting-based sales organization whose sellers also deliver client work, making timely lead follow-up difficult. Korn Ferry also needed to accommodate detailed routing rules by country, market, and solution while keeping license usage within its contract.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Korn Ferry partnered with LeanData to automate lead routing and combine its routing logic with 6sense's AI SDR. Today, qualifying inbound leads move through automated checks in LeanData and, when they meet defined criteria, trigger an AI-driven first-touch email. The AI SDR engages prospects, gathers additional context, and qualifies them before LeanData routes qualified leads to the appropriate human rep.

A second AI reasoning layer adds another level of qualification. Using a LeanData AI Inference Node, the team independently evaluates leads the AI SDR marked as unqualified or needing human review. The node analyzes the email conversation and related lead information against Korn Ferry's qualification criteria, then returns a qualification decision, confidence score, and specific disqualification reason. This creates a more detailed and auditable decision process and helps recover leads that the first AI layer misclassified. LeanData also gives Korn Ferry a way to visualize and manage complex, business-specific routing requirements, helping the team communicate routing logic clearly and manage license utilization.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

An automated approach to lead engagement, qualification, and routing gave Korn Ferry a scalable inbound motion with stronger conversion, higher deal value, and greater sales velocity.

- Boosted conversion to 42% for leads receiving AI-first engagement, compared with 26% for leads routed directly to sellers
- Increased average deal size by 38.6%
- Reduced average time to Sales Accepted by one day

Adding a second AI reasoning layer, Korn Ferry closed a gap in AI-led qualification and reporting.

- Independently evaluated AI SDR decisions and recovered leads that may have been miscategorized
- Generated more granular qualification data, including confidence scores and specific disqualification reasons, to improve reporting and routing

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AI-POWERED PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

This award honors a team that has embedded AI into its go-to-market motion to improve how its revenue engine operates. It recognizes programs that have moved beyond experimentation to use AI in areas such as lead scoring, outreach, qualification, or predictive analytics, with measurable impact on pipeline, conversion, or efficiency.

✦ THE WINNER

coalesce®

93%

INBOUND SLA ADHERENCE, UP FROM 28%

<5 MIN.

TO PROSPECT 10 ACCOUNTS WITH AI — DOWN FROM 30–45 MINUTES PER ACCOUNT

UNIFIED

INBOUND & OUTBOUND WORKFLOWS IN A CENTRALIZED GTM WORKSPACE

THE CHALLENGE

Coalesce's inbound motion struggled with speed, routing accuracy, and inconsistent follow-up. Enrichment delays led the team to build wait steps and other workarounds that slowed speed to lead, and roughly 72% of inbound leads were not being followed up on within SLA. At the same time, BDRs were working across Salesforce, Gong, ZoomInfo, Nooks, LinkedIn Sales Navigator, and other tools, with separate lead and contact queues and no centralized workflow for prioritizing demand.

As the GTM Operations team dug deeper, it found that the problem went beyond rep productivity. Event scans, webinar attendees, and other low-intent interactions added noise to the MQL queue. This made it harder to distinguish genuine buying interest from activity that did not warrant immediate sales attention. The team needed to improve both the quality of inbound demand and the way reps acted on it.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Coalesce started by observing how BDRs actually worked, using rep rides and workflow reviews to identify friction across the GTM process. The team then rebuilt its qualification model using Snowflake data, combining historical customer and opportunity data with current ICP definitions, buyer intent, engagement signals, and market priorities. AI-driven scoring evaluates those signals in near real time to identify high-intent activity, assess ICP alignment, surface emerging buyer profiles, and reduce low-intent noise.

That new qualification model became the foundation for an internal GTM Hub called CoalesceIQ, which brings inbound and outbound workflows into a single operational workspace. AI and automation now help prioritize leads, monitor SLAs, enrich records, identify contacts, and generate outbound messaging. At the same time, the platform orchestrates routing, dispositioning, and engagement across Salesforce, Gong, Clay, and other GTM systems. Reps retain control over final outreach and engagement and spend less time switching between systems and managing administrative tasks.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

By redesigning both its qualification model and operational workflows, Coalesce created a more consistent way for reps to prioritize, prospect, disposition, and engage with demand.

- Increased inbound SLA adherence from 28% to 93%
- Reduced AI-assisted prospecting time from 30–45 minutes per account to less than 5 minutes for 10 accounts
- Lowered low-intent noise in the inbound queue through AI-driven scoring and prioritization
- Unified inbound and outbound workflows in a centralized GTM workspace
- Gave reps more time for customer conversations, personalization, high-intent accounts, and prospecting

LeanData OPS STARS AWARDS

BUYING GROUPS TRAILBLAZER AWARD

This award celebrates a team or organization leading the way in operationalizing a Buying Groups transformation. From strategy to systems execution, these trailblazers are influencing multi-threaded deals, and reshaping how go-to-market teams engage with complex buying committees.

✦ THE WINNER

SUSE

56.9%

COLD INQUIRIES AUTOMATICALLY CLASSIFIED INTO CORE BUYER PERSONAS

47.7%

WARM AQLs AUTOMATICALLY CLASSIFIED INTO CORE BUYER PERSONAS

100%

OF CONFIRMED BUYING GROUPS MEMBERS MAPPED AUTOMATICALLY TO OPPORTUNITY CONTACT ROLES

THE CHALLENGE

SUSE was trying to win complex enterprise deals with a lead-scoring model built around individual prospects. When a lead reached a 50-point threshold, it was automatically routed to sales, even if the activity reflected only a limited or isolated interaction. Reps had little visibility into other people engaging with the same account or into buying activity before or after that point. They could miss early evaluation signals, ongoing engagement, and activity from technical, procurement, or executive stakeholders.

The GTM organization also lacked a structured way to build buying committees and capture early qualification before an Opportunity was created. As a result, reps often had to start qualification from scratch when a deal entered the pipeline. This slowed sales cycles and made it harder to build momentum across the account.

To scale predictably, SUSE needed to recognize when an account showed meaningful buying activity, rather than trigger sales engagement based on an individual prospect's score.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

SUSE addressed that challenge by shifting from individual lead scoring to an account-centric approach built around buying groups and signals of active engagement. The team used AI to analyze more than 148,000 historical lead records and consolidate thousands of job titles into 10 core persona groups aligned with its enterprise sales motions. LeanData's Journey's product then automatically classified new prospects, connected them to the right accounts, and brought activity from multiple people into a single account-level view.

When two or more relevant personas showed engagement, the account could be flagged for sales attention, giving reps visibility into an active buying group rather than a single lead. The team also automated the transition from early account engagement to an Opportunity, carrying the buying group and its members into the deal. This allows AEs to continue multi-threading without losing context or attribution.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

With an account-level buying group motion, SUSE gave sales a more complete view of buyer engagement and a more coordinated approach to complex deals.

- Automatically classified 56.9% of cold inquiries and 47.7% of warm AQLs into core buyer personas
- Automatically mapped 100% of confirmed buying group members to Opportunity Contact Roles
- Eliminated manual errors in linking buying group journeys to Opportunities
- Gave reps an aggregated view of active buying committees instead of requiring them to piece together activity across multiple CRM records
- Enabled marketing to identify gaps in buying committees and launch targeted campaigns to engage missing personas

LeanData OPS STARS AWARDS

GTM SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION OF THE YEAR

Celebrates a team that has fundamentally rebuilt its revenue infrastructure, connecting GTM systems, data, and processes at scale. Winners tackle complex architectural challenges, from CRM migrations and tech stack consolidation to global rollouts and redesigned data flows.

✦ THE WINNER

AUTODESK

~85%

REDUCTION ROUTING-CHANGE CYCLE TIME

SCALED

AN ESTABLISHED FOUNDATION FOR AI SDR & AGENTIC ROUTING CAPABILITIES

CREATED

AN AUDIT TRAIL FOR EVERY ROUTING DECISION

THE CHALLENGE

Autodesk's global lead and account routing ran entirely on custom Apex inside Salesforce. Hand-coded logic governed territory assignment, round-robin distribution, and one-lead-per-customer matching across a large direct sales organization and a partner network spanning tens of thousands of individuals worldwide. Every routing change, from a new territory to a market segmentation shift or organizational realignment, required an engineering build. Requests competed with other Salesforce priorities, so changes that should have taken days took roughly six weeks from request to production.

That delay exposed a deeper operational dependency. Only a small engineering team could read and modify routing, leaving RevOps and marketing operations without a self-service path to manage routine changes. The system also lacked a unified audit trail, standardized SLA enforcement, and validation for partner lead assignment. These gaps increased operational risk as Autodesk's business and partner network grew.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Autodesk chose to rebuild its GTM routing model rather than continue adding workarounds to the existing system. The enterprise team used a proven LeanData deployment at Autodesk Construction Solutions to build the case for replacing custom Apex with LeanData's native orchestration platform. As part of the migration, it rebuilt routing rules as configurable no-code flows and data tables, including matching, territory, round-robin, postal-code, and account-team assignment.

The new model gives RevOps and marketing operations direct control over routing. It also automates matching, assignment, SLA enforcement, notifications, auditing, and reprocessing.

Autodesk began the rollout with BDRs and SDRs working new-logo accounts. The team will expand the model to global sellers and the partner network, creating a scalable foundation for broader GTM automation and AI-driven routing.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

Replacing custom-code dependencies with configurable orchestration dramatically accelerated routing changes, gave operational teams greater control, and created a foundation for AI-driven lead management.

- Reduced routing-change cycle time from roughly six weeks to about six days, an ~85% reduction
- Shifted routine routing configuration from engineering to RevOps and marketing operations
- Created an audit trail for every routing decision
- Automated matching, assignment, SLA enforcement, notifications, and reprocessing
- Established a scalable foundation for AI SDR and agentic routing capabilities

LeanData OPS STARS AWARDS

GTM VELOCITY AWARD

Recognizes a marketing or revenue team that has built a sophisticated, automated GTM motion where data, people, and systems work together to connect the right prospects with the right reps at the right time. Winners unite account intelligence, routing, and sales engagement to create faster, smarter, and more measurable pipeline generation.

THE WINNER

Vestwell

4,000+

CALLS IN 18 MONTHS

>50%

OF CALLS ORIGINATED THROUGH SELF-SERVICE

REAL-TIME

ROUTING THAT MADE QUALIFYING LEADS BOOKABLE

THE CHALLENGE

Vestwell needed prospects to move from initial interest to a booked meeting as quickly as possible. That included self-serve leads coming through its product-led-growth website. Scheduling depended on reps being available and responsive in real time, and even a short delay could cause an interested prospect to drop off before a human ever saw the lead.

The self-serve demo flow also needed to connect each prospect with the right rep and meeting time immediately after form submission. That meant eliminating the manual steps between a prospect raising their hand, identifying the appropriate seller, and finding time to meet.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Vestwell paired real-time LeanData routing with BookIt for Forms and BookIt Links to automate the path from interest to meeting. As soon as a qualifying lead arrives, including through Vestwell's self-serve site, LeanData evaluates the prospect and routes them to the right rep based on territory. BookIt then immediately presents available meeting times on that rep's calendar, eliminating the need for manual follow-up or a separate scheduling step.

The team extended the automation into the customer-facing experience, making BookIt part of the live demo-booking flow on Vestwell's website. Routing and scheduling now work together as a single motion: LeanData determines ownership, and BookIt makes the rep available for a meeting in real time. This keeps prospects moving from initial interest to seller engagement without sitting in a queue or waiting for a rep to notice the lead.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

A connected routing and scheduling motion helped Vestwell reduce friction between buyer interest and sales engagement.

- Scheduled 4,000+ calls in 18 months
- More than 50% of calls originated through self-service
- Routed and made qualifying leads bookable in real time
- Connected routing directly to rep calendars without manual follow-up
- Extended automated scheduling into Vestwell's customer-facing PLG experience

LeanData OPS STARS AWARDS

INTELLIGENT GTM ORCHESTRATION AWARD

For the marketing or revenue team that has built a sophisticated, automated GTM motion connecting data, people, and systems to get the right prospect to the right rep at the right time. Winners unite account intelligence, routing, and sales engagement to create faster, smarter, and more measurable pipeline generation.

✦ THE WINNER

PagerDuty

80x

INCREASE IN DAILY SLA EVENTS

1,477

SLA EVENTS IN 35 DAYS — COMPARED TO 28 IN THE PREVIOUS 53 DAYS

27.8%

REDUCTION IN PROSPECTS ENTERING THE MONITORED REVENUE LEAK AFTER UPSTREAM FIXES BEGAN

THE CHALLENGE

PagerDuty's go-to-market engine had evolved over 16 years, with new systems and processes added as the business grew. While the engine continued to operate, the team lacked a clear view of how well its connected systems were working together or where prospects were falling through the cracks.

That lack of visibility directly impacted revenue. Prospects who explicitly asked to be contacted by sales were accumulating in Salesforce without an owner, alert, or SLA. Other leads reached MQL status and then saw no sales activity for 90 days or more. Leadership struggled to trace the data behind its reports, raising data integrity concerns across sales, marketing, and finance.

With a small Marketing Operations and Analytics team supporting 120 marketers, PagerDuty needed to make its revenue engine more visible, measurable, and manageable without adding tools or significant overhead.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

PagerDuty built an observability and governance layer around its existing GTM technology stack. The team began by turning potential revenue leaks into measurable, continuously monitored conditions. AI agents now scan Salesforce on a set schedule to find high-intent prospects without an owner, track changes since the last scan, separate real buyer interest from low-value submissions, and flag records that need action.

The team also audited its routing and reporting infrastructure to understand how the system actually behaved, rather than relying on assumptions about how it was configured. This work exposed gaps in SLA measurement and helped establish more reliable ways to track routing changes and performance. PagerDuty applied the same evidence-based approach to automation decisions. By testing data signals before using them, it could drive routing and choose better data capture when existing signals could not support reliable automation.

Finally, PagerDuty rebuilt reporting as a self-service, traceable layer and added governance to the operations intake process. AI agents validate requests against live system data, consolidate requirements, identify gaps, and route automation requests through an appropriate governance review. Together, these changes gave a small team greater visibility and control over a complex revenue environment without adding new technology.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

A measurable, continuously monitored GTM infrastructure helped uncover revenue leakage, restore SLA visibility, and create a more accountable operating model.

- Increased daily SLA events from 0.53 to 42.2, an approximately 80x increase
- Captured 1,477 SLA events in 35 days, compared with 28 in the previous 53 days
- Reduced the rate of prospects entering the monitored revenue leak by 27.8% after upstream fixes began
- Identified that 3 of 6 newly stuck leads on a representative day were legitimate high-intent buyers
- Delivered the initiative with zero net-new technology costs

LeanData OPS STARS AWARDS

REVENUE LIFECYCLE AWARD

Recognizes a team that has created seamless alignment across the revenue lifecycle, connecting handoffs, signals, and coordinated motions to retain customers and drive growth. From pre-to-post-sales handoffs to renewal orchestration and product-led expansion, this award celebrates teams that make the customer journey one connected motion.

✦ THE WINNER

verizon connect

33%

REDUCTION IN ACTIVE CUSTOMER CHURN AND AT-RISK ACCOUNTS

44%

REDUCTION IN SHIPPING ERRORS

7 DAYS

FASTER MEDIAN FULL INSTALLATION TIME

THE CHALLENGE

Verizon Connect lacked a true end-to-end onboarding journey. Its legacy process focused heavily on installation, making it difficult to collect vehicle information, track progress, and communicate consistently with customers. As a result, the time it took to get the first product installed was delaying customer value and revenue recognition.

The process also relied heavily on manual work. The company lacked a standardized way to capture vehicle information in the client services project, automate progress tracking, and ensure consistent customer communications. Verizon Connect wanted to give customers a clear point of contact, improve operational visibility, and move accounts efficiently from opportunity close through installation and into customer growth.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

To address these challenges, Verizon Connect introduced a dedicated VOSS Agent as the single point of contact throughout onboarding. The team connected LeanData, Gainsight, Salesforce Marketing Cloud, Salesloft, and Gong to standardize the journey. LeanData automatically assigned qualified sales opportunities to VOSS Agents, including specialized routing for opportunities involving Extended View Camera installations. Gainsight tracked onboarding progress and assigned agent tasks, while Marketing Cloud automated customer communications based on Salesforce data.

Automation also streamlined the handoff after onboarding. A twice-daily LeanData routing job automatically transferred completed accounts to Customer Growth agents and balanced assignments by revenue size. AI-generated summaries gave Strategic Account Managers key context from the onboarding journey, and Gong consolidated customer communications to support QA and coaching.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

Connecting onboarding, installation, invoicing, and customer handoffs created a more automated lifecycle that improved speed, accuracy, and downstream revenue operations.

- 33% reduction in active customer churn and at-risk accounts
- 44% reduction in shipping errors
- Lowered median time to first installation by 4 days
- Reduced median full installation time by 7 days

LeanData OPS STARS AWARDS

OPSSTAR OF THE YEAR

For the GTM professional who leads by example, combining sharp strategy, innovative solutions, and a focus on measurable business impact. The OpsStar of the Year elevates their team, earns trust across the organization, and delivers results that speak for themselves.

✦ THE WINNER

NICOLE PEINADO

Revenue Technology Manager

Uber for Business

56,972

ENGAGED ORGANIZATIONS — MORE THAN TWICE THE HUMAN OPERATION'S OUTREACH IN THE SAME 12 MONTH PERIOD

43%

INCREASED CONVERSION ACROSS THE SELF-SERVICE AI MOTION

EXPANDED

PROACTIVE COVERAGE BEYOND THE HUMAN TEAM'S 20–25% FUNNEL REACH

THE CHALLENGE

When Nicole Peinado looked at the company's self-service funnel, the opportunity was significant but so was the leakage. The channel generated $540 million in FY2024 self-serve bookings, yet roughly 93% of sign-ups dropped out before becoming active, revenue-generating customers. A 30+ person Proactive Onboarding team could manually reach only about 20–25% of the funnel, leaving most sign-ups without proactive outreach.

The challenge extended beyond coverage. Disconnected systems for web sign-up, CRM, and scheduling created manual qualification and slow handoffs just when buyer intent was highest. Nicole needed to expand engagement without disrupting the existing human operation, which remained responsible for more than $12 million in annualized incremental Gross Bookings in 2026. That required a way to introduce AI while maintaining human oversight, measurable benchmarks, and close coordination across RevOps, Self-Serve Ops, BizTech, and Salesforce Engineering.

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Nicole built an AI-powered onboarding motion that extended the team's reach and preserved the strengths of the existing human operation. The team created "Garrett," an Agentforce SDR agent that engages self-service sign-ups and answers common onboarding questions. It also reads each customer's live onboarding stage to determine whether a buyer is ready to move forward or needs human assistance.

Nicole's team then connected Agentforce directly to LeanData so AI engagement and revenue orchestration could work as one motion. When a lead needs human assistance, LeanData identifies the appropriate owner or territory. BookIt then schedules a meeting directly on the specialist's calendar, eliminating manual scheduling. Human agents can take over any AI conversation at any time.

Rather than treating AI adoption as a one-time technology rollout, Nicole established a phased, evidence-based transition. Her team is testing the AI motion against the existing human baseline, using A/B testing and parity dashboards to guide expansion by market and language. Cross-functional governance keeps the AI motion, CRM data, routing logic, and scheduling infrastructure aligned as the program evolves.

OPERATIONAL RESULTS

Nicole Peinado's approach expanded proactive onboarding and created a measured path for integrating AI into the revenue lifecycle.

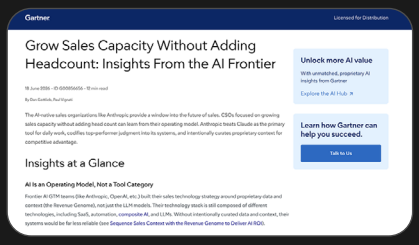
- More than doubled outreach volume, engaging 56,972 organizations versus 28,362 for the human operation over the same 12-month period
- Increased conversion across the Self-Service AI motion by 43% through targeted outreach optimization
- Expanded proactive coverage beyond the 20–25% of the funnel the human team could reach manually
- Eliminated manual email scheduling for AI-to-human handoffs through automated routing and BookIt
- Established a measurable framework for evaluating AI performance against the existing human operation before making further changes

LeanData

OPS STARS™ AWARDS

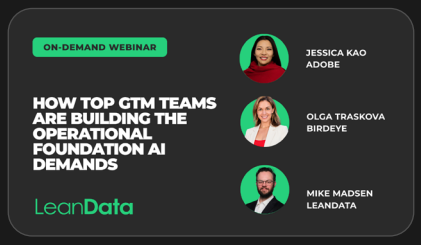
THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN OUR 2026 OPSSTARS AWARDS WINNERS!

Learn more about operating an GTM engine in an AI-powered world:



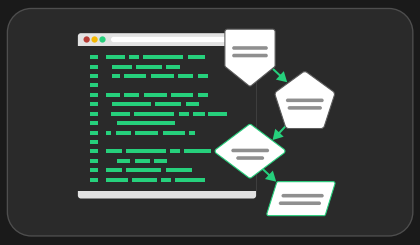
The 2026 State of AI Go-to-Market Readiness Report

LEARN MORE →



How Top GTM Teams Are Building the Operational Foundation AI Demands

LEARN MORE →



How to Build an AI-Ready Sales Tech Stack

LEARN MORE →

ABOUT LEANDATA

LeanData provides the backbone for AI-ready go-to-market infrastructure. More than 1,000 leading B2B companies and a community of 5,000-plus OpsStars rely on LeanData to fuel efficient growth by aligning marketing, sales and customer service execution with the entire AI-enabled customer journey. LeanData's Intelligent GTM Orchestration platform acts as the connective tissue across the revenue lifecycle, integrating and normalizing buyer data, automating signal-driven workflows and delivering AI-powered insights. LeanData is a #1 G2 Crowd Provider and a 2027 Salesforce Partner of the Year for Customer Value.

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