

Microsoft buys firm that boosts sales through games

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Microsoft announced on Monday that it has bought a startup with a winning way of using game play to boost the performance of sales teams.

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acquired Texas-based Incent Games, developer of the online platform FantasySalesTeam.

The platform allows managers to try to ramp up sales numbers through fantasy sports-style competitions among their representatives.

"They've disrupted the old sales incentive model with an original twist that combines gamification with fantasy sports and expertly applies it to a sales setting," Microsoft corporate vice president Bob Stutz said in a blog post announcing the acquisition.

"Their platform is highly effective at increasing team collaboration, productivity and consequently driving greater results and business growth," he said.

Employees "draft" peers onto teams whose combined results they believe will shine the brightest, in a spin on fantasy sports games in which people pick a pretend roster of players whose combined statistics they believe will be tops at the end of a season.

The strategy gets employees invested in each others' success, leading to better sales team results, according to Stutz.

FantasySalesTeam will be woven into Microsoft's Dynamics CRM (customer relationship management) offering aimed at businesses.

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