



## Dow Transforms Customer Relationship Management to Unlock New Growth

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Company's paint and coatings business focuses on enhancing strategic partnerships to open new opportunities.

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### Challenge

Dow, one of the world's largest chemical companies with annual revenue of \$43 billion, plays a critical role in the paint and coatings industry, supplying the resins, solvents, and additives that are essential for a wide range of everyday products. With a strong track record of product innovation and longstanding customer relationships, Dow has consistently helped industry leaders improve performance and features in their offerings.

As markets evolved and customer priorities shifted, Dow saw an opportunity to build on its innovation leadership by taking a broader lens to what its customers were trying to achieve – including operational efficiency, sustainability goals, and regional growth. To stay ahead, the company looked for new ways to engage with partners even more deeply, expanding the conversation to uncover broader opportunities for value creation and growth.

### Discovery

Innosight partnered with Dow's Coating Materials business, using a future-back approach to better understand how the industry and its customer needs are evolving and what strategic opportunities might result. This included employing a jobs-to-be-done perspective to examine challenges its customers face and how Dow could help them innovate and identify opportunities across the value chain.

To act on the customer insights, we partnered with leaders in the business to implement **Strategic Relationship Management (SRM)**, a method for deepening ties with customers. SRM equips teams to align business capabilities with customer priorities while strengthening the cultural foundation of the relationship. The result: shared solutions that create mutual value through stronger partnership.

The coatings business piloted SRM with a key customer. A central part of the effort was creating a market map that plotted Dow's distinctive capabilities against the customer's strategic priorities, organized by jobs-to-be-done. This has become a shared reference point, helping commercial and marketing teams identify and prioritize high-value, unmet opportunities at the intersections.

These insights also revealed the potential for reshaping customer relationships, expanding conversations to broader strategic goals and long-term priorities, and increasing engagement. In addition to helping Dow develop these insights, Innosight provided support through coaching, workshops, and other hands-on efforts to embed the lessons and practices into the company's daily routines.

"We're always looking for the next way that we can create value, where we can help customers grow, and where we can grow," said Deirdre Crowley, Dow's Marketing Fellow. "So, for us, strategic relationship management is an accelerant to help us to think much more broadly about what our customers need and what are the jobs we could uniquely and positively impact to create value for both companies."

## **Impact**

The pilot project delivered measurable commercial impact through improved sales and became a catalyst for internal momentum, providing a clear signal of what's possible through deeper customer engagement.

As part of the pilot, the Coatings Materials business uncovered new ways to reduce complexity and cost, such as designing materials that more easily integrated into customer production processes. Dow also introduced tools and approaches that surfaced insights to streamline operations and cut costs for both parties.

As collaboration grew, so did engagement, building on procurement's role while deepening senior-level relationships between Dow and key customers. Armed with new insights, Dow has broadened its conversations with other customers to explore shared priorities and long-term opportunities using the SRM approach.

"Strategic relationship management is not just about maintaining good relations; it is about leveraging those relationships to tackle shared strategic challenges to ultimately drive sustained growth and innovation," said Joanne Sekella, Vice President, Dow Coatings & Performance Monomers. "We firmly believe that utilizing SRM methodology will ensure a more resilient and prosperous future for both our business and our customers."

## Contact Our Experts



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## About Innosight

Innosight helps enterprise leaders turn uncertainty into opportunity and thrive in a changing world. With unmatched expertise in navigating disruption, we partner closely with clients to address their most complex strategic challenges, building resilience in today's business while shaping the organization of tomorrow. Together with our colleagues across **Huron**, we align strategy, operating models, and people to drive transformation and deliver sustainable growth.

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