

Accelerate Revenue Goals With Buyers Experience



Scale Your Sales

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Exceed Your Revenue Goals Accelerating the Buyers Experience

Why the Need for Change

Have you seen the length of the sales stack that has sprung up to fill the gaps of an out-date sales methods, funnels and processes? We have an abundance of tools it is just the methods that are outdated.

The fact is, Salespeople do not control the buying journey and the sales funnel is not representative of what happens today. Buyers control the process of buying. So why not start with the buyer and their outcomes!

Back in 2016 Harvard Business Review agreed with the quote from Forrester, stating that sales professionals tend to prioritize the sales agenda over solving a customer's problem. Warning that if these organizations do not change their outdated thinking and create effective sales models for today's digital era, then one million B2B salespeople will lose their jobs to self-service e-commerce by 2020.

2016, was literally a different world. But here we are still using out-dated methods to crack the nuts of our buyers. If it was not for the pandemic many companies would still be in the digital dark ages. Sadly, some still are.



You may be done with the challenges of the pandemic, but it is not done with you. The fallout and associated economic upheaval have radically changed the way we choose to live and work, termed the “Great Resignation,” and the way we purchase and conceive experiences.

Continued supply chain disruption, with the increasing customer expectations has caused companies to re-evaluate their approach to Customer Experience in 2022.

Delivering great experiences to buyers has the biggest impact on whether buyers buy. In fact, excellent buying experiences will return 2x growth faster than your competitors that deliver average experiences.



The Scale Your Sales Framework



Due to the lack of alignment between customer experience and sales and between buyers and sellers, I founded the Scale Your Sales Framework that Reimagines Revenue Growth Through Customer Excellence and Sales.

I developed the Scale Your Sales Framework to help companies modernise the sales methodology, build great experiences to retain and grow their most valued customers, and build strategic relationships into profitable partnerships.

The Scale Your Sales Framework is based on three premises:

- Retention is the outcome-focused and efficient relationship building growth strategy.
- Productivity is the customer-focused way to sustain your growth trajectory.
- Attraction is the personalised approach to digitally secure, maintain and grow relationships into partnerships.

In this eBook, I will clarify the difference between the buyer experience and customer experience. Show how improvements to the buyer experience increase sales revenues—giving you a step process to move forward **now!** But first let talk about changing buyer behaviour and the need for change.

It Starts with a Shift in Mindset

According to Gartner, 77% of B2B buyers state that their latest purchase experience was complex and did not match their expectations. If we are not meeting the expectations of buyers then how can we hope satisfy their requirements and increase sales revenue?

According to Forrester, there are four forces have set the course for a B2B evolution, which has motivated the reassessment of how marketing, sales, and services approach buyers and customers, these are:

1. Expectations of business buyers are rising towards a consumer-like experience.
2. Fast-paced technology advances have unleashed unimagined engagement opportunities (think digital).
3. New values are changing employees' motivations, behaviours, and choices (great resignation).
4. Corporations are aiming for higher meaning and social responsibility.



Traditional B2B sales and marketing teams organise themselves in a sequential linear funnel where marketing creates demand before handing over the qualified leads to sales that close the deal. But the B2B buying journey is non-linear. As discussed by Gartner, buyers are irrational, humans do not conform, and they hate it when to try to make them do what you want; B2B buyers jump across different tasks and stages within their journey.

The problem is handing over when half the team is still in the penalty box; you cannot take your shot at the goal until everyone is ready behind the ball and out of the penalty box.

What is needed is a transparent process managed by marketing and sales in parallel, constantly nurturing and fulfilling the relevant needs of the prospects and customers rather than handing them over to one another; I have rarely met a customer who liked being handed-off.

A new mindset and shift on how organisations apply customer experience is required to increase the impact and customer-centricity.

The Changing Buyer Expectations

The Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

In addition to the ongoing supply chain delays and labour shortages in specific sectors, 68% of B2B buyers reported that the length of their purchase cycles had increased since 2020.

According to the 2020 B2B Buyer Behaviour Study from Demand Gen Report, 84% of B2B buyers changed their purchasing plans and behaviour, including engagement with potential service providers.

Today, everything is fluid, and it is all in the hands of your buyers, there you must be adaptive and innovative if you are to succeed and thrive.



Think of Modern B2B as B2C With More Bells On!

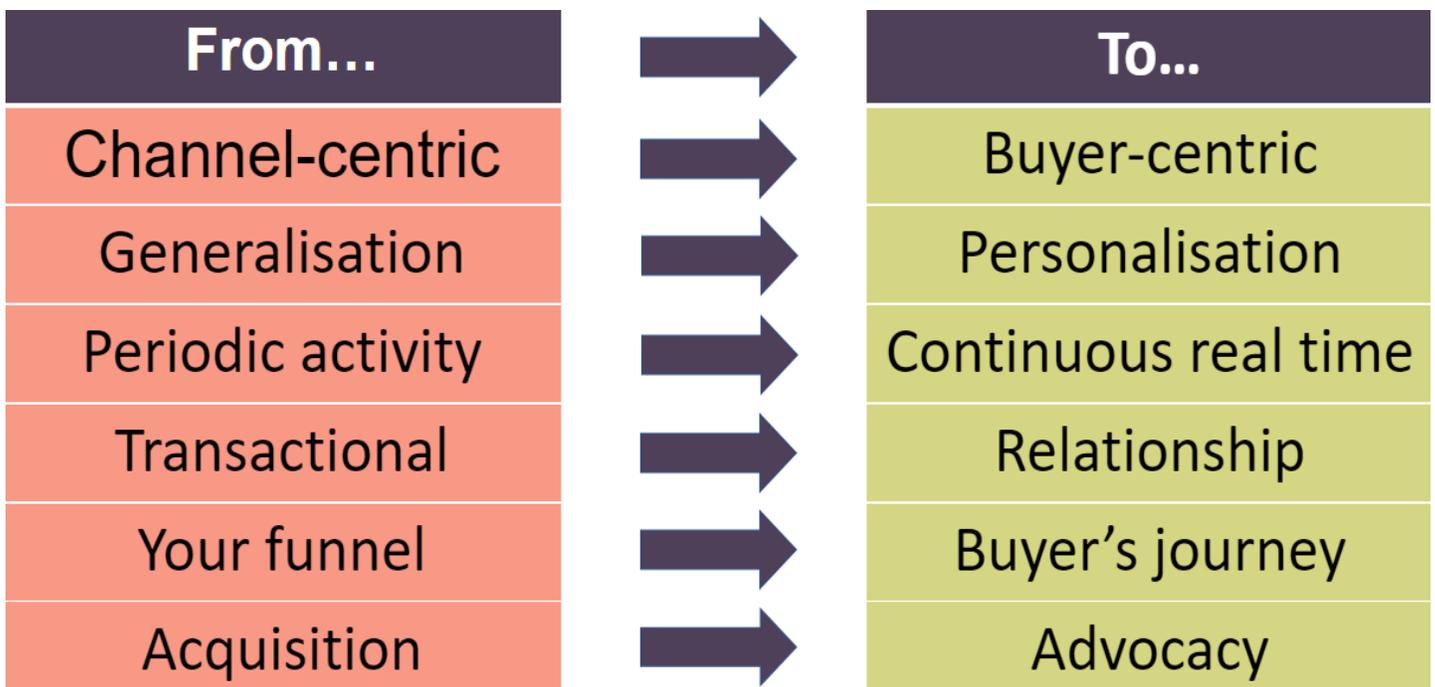
You never sell to a company; you sell to individuals within a company. These individuals have the same emotional triggers as spending their own money but with added pressure and less time.

Ninety-five percent of purchasing decisions are made subconsciously, according to Harvard Business School professor Gerald Zalcman; reason and logic may form the foundation for the decision to buy, but feelings, intuitions, and trust seal the deal. The assumption is long outdated that B2B buyers make purely rational decision. The belief that the complex and longer buying decisions push emotional factors out; it is more that the nature of emotions is changing.

We need to stop looking for the differences between B2B and B2C and start seeing the similarities in buyer preferences and work from what outcomes we want to help our buyers and customers achieve. Because B2B buyers increasingly expect the same levels of service they experience in their personal lives.

Forrester describes the modern marketing's purpose as "leading the B2B organisation's quest to identify opportunities, architect strategies, orchestrate execution, and ensure profitability revenue growth, through a relentless focus on delivering value to existing and future customers and stakeholders".

All this has led to a change in buyer expectations of suppliers, and we have moved from channel-centric to buyer-centric



What Buyers Really Want?

According to Scott Albro, the buyers wants:

1. Simplicity: Buyers are 86% more likely to buy during a simple experience.
2. Relevance: 64% of buyers cite that "understanding the customer" is the most crucial factor.
3. Information: 95% of buyers prefer brands that provide content throughout the buying process.
4. Low Risk: "Reduced financial risk" cited as a crucial factor by 54% of buyers.
5. Control: 70% of the buyer experience is completed before interacting with the supplier.
6. Speed: McKinsey No 1 B2B pain point is lack of speed. 2/3 want faster turnaround of quotes, orders, and billing.

Buyers and customers want a frictionless, delightful experience that feels tailored to their specific needs and pain points.

According to Gartner research, B2B buyers spend only 17% of the total purchase journey with sales reps. Because the average deal involves multiple suppliers, a sales professional gets roughly 5% of a customer's entire purchase time.

The buyer just does not have the time – you must make the buying process EASY!



How You Deliver What Buyers Want?

In today world, this means for most suppliers, digital and social connectedness. Customers demand digital-first engagement and rich virtual buying experiences. Your B2B sales channels must match their expectations like the seamless, easy, and informative standard of B2C digital platforms. Now, B2B deals are secured by creating exceptional buyer experiences, and much of this is online.

Gartner Says 80% of B2B sales interactions between suppliers and buyers will occur in digital channels by 2025. Across the channels that buyers engage, the supplier must deliver the buyer experience. This is the Scale Your Sales Attraction element of the Framework is to personalise, digitally secure, maintain, and grow key relationships into partnerships.

Gartner research shows that delivering a wonderful experience to prospective buyers has the most significant impact on whether or not buyers will buy. The overall buying experience outranks product and price.

The Buyers Experience

According to Gartner companies that deliver a great buying experience grow twice as fast as those that provide average experiences. Buyer experience is defined as how your ideal buyers experience making a purchasing decision. Sellers must understand why their customers buy and craft a journey that reflects the buyers' needs, expectations, and motivations.

The Difference Between the Buyer and Customer Experience

The focus of the buyer experience is to measure the relevancy and ease of the buying process. And to make the process of buying seamless and easy with a mutually beneficial revenue-oriented objective. Customer experience continues when the buyer experience ends with a purchase.

Customer experience focuses on the levels of customer satisfaction. Customer experience has established leading indicators of how satisfied customers are with the product and service, like the Net Promoter Scores (NPS) and Customer Satisfaction (CSat) metrics to measure and benchmark and improve the experience.

Why is the Buyer Journey Map Essential?

You may be used to the term, customer journey map in the B2C world and less so in the B2B environment.

The buying journey map visually maps out the buyers' interactions with the supply company. It is a tool to investigate, analyse and ultimately lay the foundations to improve the buyers' experiences. B2B buyer journey mapping requires you to step into the buyer's shoes and understand how your processes impact the experience they have with the company and its processes.

Because the buyer expectations and behaviours differ across industries, verticals, and companies, it is helpful for teams to create a buyer journey map to understand these nuances better.

A journey map outlines all customer touchpoints and how your ideal customer profile (ICP) and the various buyer personas interact within each touchpoint. It helps you understand which have the most significant relevance to whom and why. This will help identify the moments of truth, which are the key areas where there is the opportunity to "make" or "break" the relationship.

A buyer journey map may include actions, such as buyers searching for specific information and answer to questions or demo requests, and plots how those actions correspond to distinct stages in the buying process across various personas. Just like in e-commerce, you must analyse every buyer touchpoint and identify factors like clunky user interfaces and slow-loading web pages, and all that create barriers to engagement or even which will torpedo sales.

Undertaking the entire buyer and customer journey mapping process has a critical advantage of breaking down the silos that exist within most supply companies, and not least in creating a customer-focused culture. Simply considering what the customer thinks and feels and considering their lifetime experience with your company, this highlights the strategic positioning the customer has within the company and elevates the consideration given in service design and delivery.



Create Emotional Bonds in B2B

Understanding the buyer psychology and emotions is essential. This governs what the buyer will experience when making a purchase and how they feel about what they experience. And covers the buyer's desires, needs, wants, and fears.

Understanding the buyer's journey, the pains, and problems they experience along that journey, and the influencing factors shaping their thinking. Sales professionals can better empathise with the buyer and better position their product or service, if relevant, along their path understand the personal buyer psychology.

The 8 Benefits of Creating Great Buying Experiences on the Sales Process

1. Buyer Experience trumps product and price for impact on the decision.
2. Increases traffic to the website.
3. Increases lead generation.
4. Higher conversion rates.
5. Larger average deal size.
6. Shorter sales cycle.
7. Lower customer churn.
8. More referrals from customers.

Just in case you are not yet convinced:

- Revenue grows 2X faster than your competitors that deliver average experiences.
- A study by Sirius Decisions shows that 80% of B2B buying decisions are based on a purchaser's direct or indirect buyer experience.
- Forrester states that 71% of high growth B2B brands have a clearly defined buyer experience vision and roadmap.

Delivering an excellent experience to prospective buyers has the most significant impact on whether or not they will buy and become your customer.

The Scale Your Sales 9 Step Process to Delivering Buying Experience that Excels Revenue Growth

1. Understand your core strength and competencies, and competitive advantage to supply and innovate.
2. Deeply understand and map your customer segments, ideal customer profile, key and most valued customers and buyer personas. This is the Scale Your Sales Productivity element of the Framework.
3. Create a buyer journey map for your target customer.
4. You need to understand the experience your target buyers and customer are currently having versus the experience they want to have. What is the gap between what you think and the buyer's perception of their experience?
5. Understand what experience the buyer wants to have and why?
6. Analyse the touchpoint for impact and prioritise the area, giving the buyer the greatest return on impact (ROI).
7. Adopt an agile and omnichannel approach to delivering experiences that help the buyer make the purchasing decision **better and easier**.
8. Design and deliver the buying experience grounded in what the buyer wants and needs or moves the buyer to the next step in their purchasing journey.
9. Unlock your data potential to support your internal decision-making.

Some areas that require improvements may be developing trusted relationships, building emotional bonds, personalised and relevant content, alignment of sales, marketing, operations, service, response time, demonstrating relevant ROI or demonstrating impactful qualitative and quantitative value.

Follow this 9-step process to discover where you need to focus your efforts to gain the greatest impact on your buyer experience and supercharge your revenue generating process.



Conclusion

Your buyer is part of a decision-making team; you must build a breath of relationships to empower and evangelise them to advocate on your behalf. This means that they must convince the other members that your solution is the right choice.

The buyers' experience makes the difference between a lost or won deal. As selling becomes increasingly digital and buyers have more knowledge at their fingertips. You must circumvent this with an optimised digital engagement process that aligns the buyer journey and create high-quality buyer experiences that set your product and relationship apart from the competition.

You must understand what your buyers are thinking and feeling and what they want and need to enhance the entire end-to-end buying experience and not just the buying process. Follow the **Scale Your Sales 9 step process to delivering buying experiences that escalates revenue growth**. Because selling today requires a relentless focus on the buyers' experience.



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grow two times faster

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About the Author



Janice B Gordon, The Customer Growth Expert, uses her 20+ years business, sales, CX and leadership experience to unleash hidden potential and accelerate growth by investing in customer relationships. Founder of Scale Your Sales Podcast and Framework – Reimagining Revenue Growth Through Customer Excellence and Sales.

Janice B Gordon, The Customer Growth Expert listed in the Top 50 Global Thought Leaders and Influencers on Customer Experience, 2020 and 150 Women B2B Thought Leaders You Should Follow, 2021 and LinkedIn Sales 15 Innovating Sales Influencers to Follow, 2021. Janice is a Consultant, International Speaker, Educator and Facilitator; and author of Business Evolution: Creating Growth in a Rapidly Changing World.

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