

# INFLEXION POINT

SYSTEMATICALLY ENABLING B2B COMPANIES TO BUILD SCALABLE SALES & MARKETING MACHINES

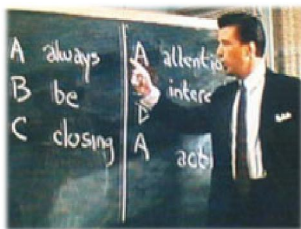
## Re-Architecting the B2B Sales & Marketing Process for a New Decade

According to [CSO Insights](#)' recently published annual sales performance optimisation study, the number of sales people making quota and the percentage of sales organisations achieving their revenue targets both declined faster in 2009 than at any time during the past 16 years.

Sales organisations are reporting extended sales cycles, declining win rates, and that a growing number of apparently promising opportunities are ending in "no decision". At the same time, they observe that their prospect's budgets appear to be shrinking, that more players are involved in the decision making process, and that their buyers are exhibiting increasingly risk-averse behaviour.

## Product hype and sales pressure are losing strategies...

Faced with an increasingly pragmatic mainstream market, claiming better/faster/cheaper product capabilities isn't going to have much of an impact - it's become all too easy for competitors to claim "me too" functionality, and anyway, most buyers are looking for solutions they can have confidence in rather than features they might neither need nor understand.



It's becoming equally clear that "selling and marketing harder" isn't going to improve matters unless a dramatically different approach is taken. Buyers have become immune to hyped-up marketing claims and manipulative sales techniques. Prospects are still keen to learn, but have come to hate being pitched to. We're all going to have to learn to sell and market smarter.

## Re-architecting the sales and marketing process...

Faced with the realities of today's markets, we would go so far as to suggest that for many organisations nothing short of a radical re-architecting of their sales and marketing process is going to suffice - based around a profound understanding of today's prospect priorities and buying processes.

So we would like to suggest three simple ideas that seem to be delivering dramatic results for the growing number of companies that have embraced them. They all depend upon an important change in mindset, since they revolve around facilitating the buying process - rather than driving the sales process...

## 1: Evangelise a better future...



The first step is to envision a better future for your customers and prospects, and to articulate the role that your organisation is going to play in helping them to achieve it. For maximum impact, this vision needs to be crafted outside-in (around what your solutions can help your customers to accomplish) rather than inside-out (around what you do - much less compelling!).

It's often said that there is a narrow line between vision and hallucination, but companies who prove to be powerful evangelists with a clear and compelling vision invariably emerge as thought leaders in their markets - and are able to generate a magnetic inbound attraction for potential prospects (and other key members of the BuyerSphere) who want to learn more.

### Some things to think about:

*What is your vision of a better future for your customers and what is your role going to be in helping them achieve it? And how are you evangelising this vision to them?*

## 2: Elevate the need for your solution...

You may have identified a prospect need - but unless the need is urgent, you are unlikely to translate this into a decision to buy. This is one of the major reasons why apparently promising opportunities end in a decision to “do nothing”. Interesting needs are often enough to get your solution considered, important needs can drive formal evaluations, but in today's business environment only urgent needs drive a decision to buy.

Sales people who fail to distinguish between interesting, important and urgent needs invariably end up wasting their time on too many low-quality opportunities - but sales people who are unable to elevate interesting and important needs to urgent ones will end up with too many “no decisions”.

Sales coaches talk of the need to identify a compelling event, but in order to create a compelling reason to buy sales people need to get the prospect to associate a significant cost penalty with maintaining the status quo.

### Some things to think about:

*How would you categorise your prospect's typical needs as interesting, important or urgent? And what are you doing to elevate the consequences of inaction?*



### 3: Eliminate barriers to buying...

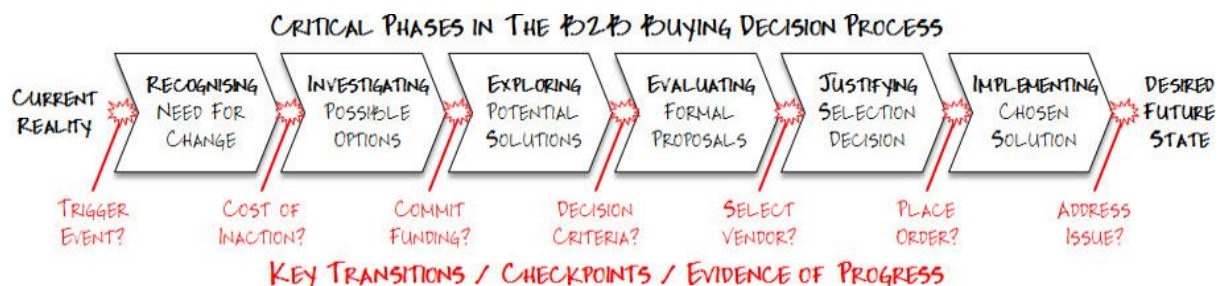
B2B buying decisions typically evolve through a number of key phases, separated by *checkpoints* that determine the progress that the prospect is making in their decision making process.

Most follow a sequence that looks something like this:

- **Status quo**
  - *Trigger event*
- **Recognising the need for change**
  - *Identify economic consequences*
- **Investigating possible options**
  - *Commit funding*
- **Exploring potential solutions**
  - *Define decision criteria*
- **Evaluating formal proposals**
  - *Select preferred vendor*
- **Justifying selection decision**
  - *Place order*
- **Implementing solution**



The buying process can get stuck in any of the phases - and the checkpoints usually prove to be the bottlenecks. Rather than - as conventional thinking might suggest - trying to drive the sales forward, if the vendor has articulated a compelling vision and the sales person has identified an urgent need, they would be better advised to think in terms of identifying and eliminating the barriers to buying.



When this buyer-centric perspective is applied, it's usually possible to identify a handful of the most common sticking points, and to create revenue roadblock removing programmes to systematically address them.

**Some things to think about...**

*What are the most common barriers to buying in your prospect's decision making process? And what are you doing in order to systematically eliminate them?*

## The Inflexion-Point Approach...

Inflexion-Point Strategy Partners help promising B2B organisations to realise their full potential by equipping them to build scalable sales and marketing machines that reflect the way their most valuable prospects prefer to buy.

We like to think of ourselves as practitioners, rather than consultants. We can point to several decades' worth of experience in achieving demanding revenue and profit targets, quarter after quarter - and of helping organisations stand out from the crowd and be acknowledged as market leaders.

## Market Leadership Methodology...

Our systematic, evidence-based market leadership methodology helps clients to bridge the gap between strategy and execution by helping them understand who their most valuable prospects are, what their most urgent problems are, and how and why they make buying decisions.

We apply this learning to help our clients to craft compelling visions that resonate strongly with their prospect's concerns and practical programmes which serve to facilitate their prospect's buying processes.

## Rapid Revenue Traction...

We know that the best proof of our contribution lies in helping to drive rapid revenue traction. We don't expect clients to commit to long consulting engagements with uncertain outcomes.

Our attitude is to start with a limited initial engagement to prove our abilities, and to earn the right to a continued client relationship through the value we can demonstrate we have delivered.

## Find Out More...

To find out more please visit our website at [www.inflexion-point.com](http://www.inflexion-point.com), or contact Bob Apollo, Managing Partner, by email at [bob.apollo@inflexion-point.com](mailto:bob.apollo@inflexion-point.com) or by phone on +44 7802 313300.

We look forward to talking with you!



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