

E-BOOK

Rewriting the Rules of Engagement for the Modern Buyer



The way businesses buy has changed

There was a time when the seller was in control. When a business wanted to buy something, they looked it up and called. The seller elaborated on their product or service. The seller explained how they compared to their competition. The seller determined a reasonable price.

Not anymore.

Now, the buyer has more control than ever. With so many online resources at their fingertips, buyers are more than halfway through the sales funnel before they contact anyone. They've done their own market research, their own competitive analysis, and their own price comparisons. What they know has changed and what they want to know has changed.

To sell to today's buyer—and regain more control of the buying process—sellers need to give buyers the content they want when they want it.





Giving buyers what they want

Buyers want to find most of the answers they're looking for online. Not only is that more convenient for them, it's also a necessity with fewer in-person events, like conferences and tradeshows, happening these days. And since there's no shortage of content for them to find online, the challenge is getting them to engage with yours.

So, how do you do that?

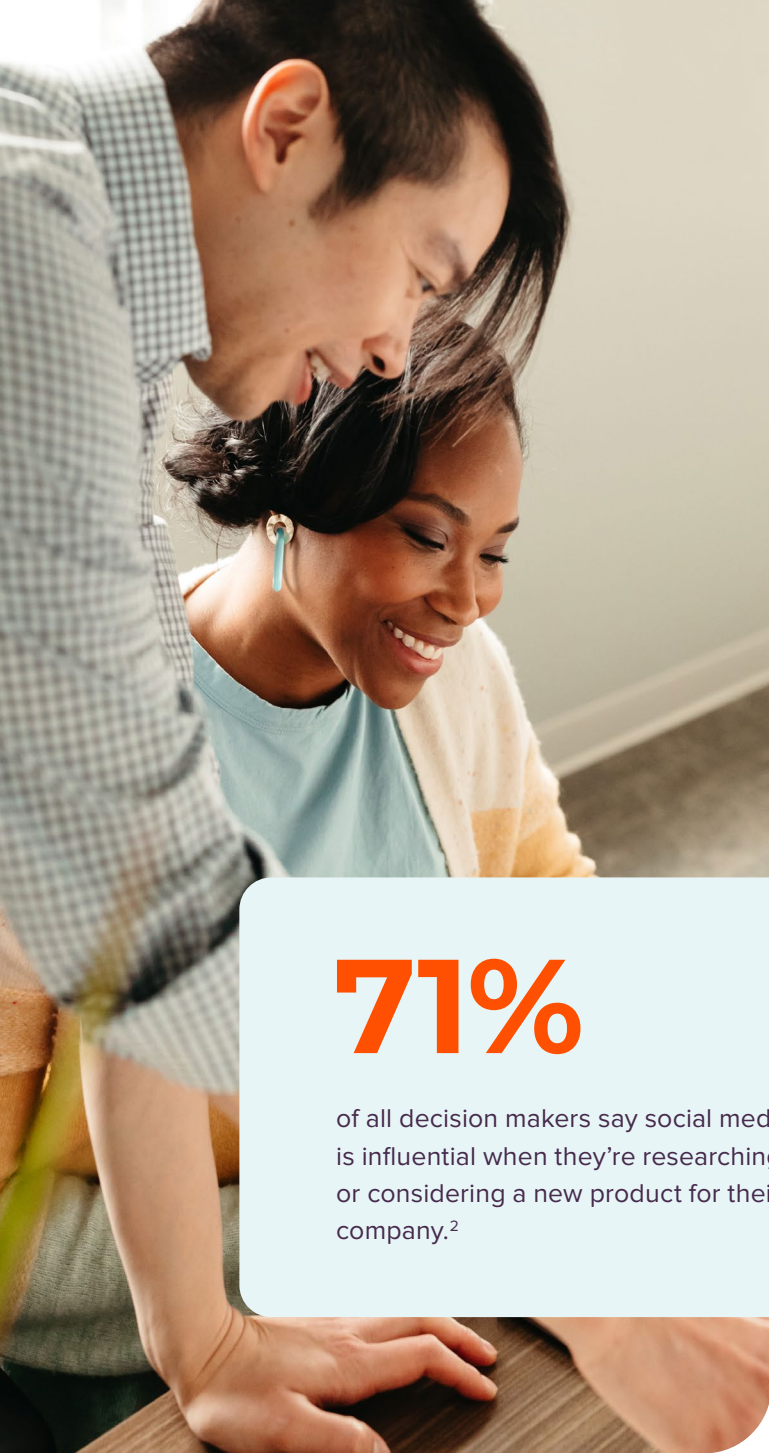
¹ <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/these-eight-charts-showhow-covid-19-has-changed-b2b-sales-forever>



3/4 of buyers say they now prefer digital self-serve and remote human engagement over face-to-face interactions.¹

Connect with them





Meet them where they are

Meeting buyers where they are doesn't just refer to serving up content on the platforms they're frequenting. It also means providing them with subsequent pieces appropriate for each stage in their journey.

Social media sites, particularly LinkedIn, are bustling with buyers ready to have conversations. That's a seller's chance to reach out, find out where a buyer is in the sales funnel, and present them with information that will move them through it. By doing this, sellers sow the seeds of long-term relationships built on the buyer's trust of their expertise.

71%

of all decision makers say social media is influential when they're researching or considering a new product for their company.²

² <https://blog.gwi.com/chart-of-the-week/social-and-the-b2b-purchase-journey/>



Capture their attention

Knowing where buyers can be found and having the right content for them still isn't enough. Buyers are inundated with content, so getting them to engage with yours means standing out in the crowd.

Content should tell a story in which the buyer is the hero. That means personalizing content whenever possible and directly addressing the challenges buyers have in their roles, organizations, and industries.

It's also vital to make sure some content is interactive. Such content is highly visual and dynamic, presenting the buyer with options on what to consume according to their own needs. It's about giving them something to explore, not just read or watch.



86%

of B2B buyers prefer interactive content they can access on demand, as opposed to static content formats.³



65%

of business buyers are likely to switch brands if a vendor doesn't personalize communications to their company.⁴

³ http://e61c88871f1fbaa6388d-c1e3bb10b0333d7ff7aa972d61f8c669.r29.cf1.rackcdn.com/DGR_DG107_SR_VideoInteractive_Sept_2019_Final.pdf?mkt_

⁴ <https://a.sfdcstatic.com/content/dam/www/ocms/assets/pdf/service-cloud/state-of-connected-customer.pdf>

Guide them





Educate, don't sell

Capturing a buyer's attention is one thing; keeping it is another. Not only does content need to be informative and insightful, but it also needs to have the right tone.

Always take a consultative approach. Sellers need to come across as experts ready to help buyers overcome challenges, not as peddlers looking to make a quick buck. A seller may have the solution a buyer is looking for, but it's the seller's role to help the buyer come to that conclusion on their own.

Build trust

The more a seller can provide a buyer with the information they need when they need it, the more that buyer will see the seller as a guide to their success.

Credibility is key, and that means more than simply supporting claims with data. By connecting with buyers where they are, winning their attention, and helping them navigate their way to a solution, sellers are more likely to be approached for future discussions about a buyer's emerging challenges.

**Be
confident**





Stay on-brand

An organization's brand is foundational to its reputation, and content is where buyers familiarize themselves with a brand. Unfortunately, sellers all too often take their companies' brands into their own hands, leading to inconsistent and/or out-of-date messaging.

Value propositions and tone of voice are just as important as a memorable logo. To confidently share content with buyers and solidify a good reputation in their minds, sellers need to keep these elements consistent across every piece.

Ensure compliance

Perhaps nothing can damage a brand more than legal troubles. In addition to keeping visuals, tone of voice, and value propositions consistent across content pieces, mitigating regulatory risk is a given.

To avoid fines and other more detrimental judgments, the information presented across content must always be correct and adhere to regulatory guidelines.

The lines between go-to-market teams have blurred

Getting buyers to engage with content requires sellers to act more like marketers.

Traditionally, marketers focused on higher-funnel tactics, such as web content, social media, and paid media, to generate leads while sellers owned lower-funnel face-to-face interactions. But with the rise of knowledgeable buyers, and the rise of rich content as a response to them, this distinction isn't as clear as it used to be.

Enablement is a function that has developed to bridge this gap by taking the content that marketing creates and providing it, along with training and tools, to sellers so they can have valuable conversations throughout the buyer's journey, from opportunity, to close, to upsell.

Together, marketing, enablement, and sales comprise a go-to-market engine. But for many organizations, this engine has stalled and needs serious repair.





The new world of buying requires new tools

Every team that makes up the go-to-market engine faces its own challenges, compounding the struggle to find, entice, and engage buyers.

Marketers lack a single system with which they can create, manage, and distribute their content. They also have difficulty demonstrating how their content has performed, particularly in yielding revenue.

Enablement has a similar dilemma. They not only grapple with how to deliver the collateral, training, and coaching sellers need to talk to buyers, but they also struggle to measure the effectiveness of their efforts with both audiences.

Sellers spend hours looking for the content they need to engage with buyers, often coming up short with outdated or barely relevant material. They also have no way of knowing whether the content they presented has resonated, making it difficult to follow up appropriately.

It's time a solution directly addressed the needs of these teams.

⁷ <https://learn.seismic.com/guide-demand-metric-report-sales-content-roi-lp>

It's time to rewrite the rules of engagement for the modern buyer

Meeting the demands of today's buyer means empowering go-to-market teams in the following ways:

Marketing



Manage content planning with full visibility of milestones and deadlines, and copy existing campaigns and workflows to go to market faster.



Craft and manage integrated campaigns, from planning to execution, all in one place with calendarized tasks and assets, and with proofing to ensure compliance.



Gain insights into how tasks, content, and campaigns impacted the business—especially revenue—and audit underperforming pieces to quickly improve future results.

Enablement



Make content interactive, creating immersive experiences that allow buyers to drive the conversation, and make that content easy for sellers to find using an accurate search engine.



Onboard and upskill new sellers faster so they're more productive sooner, and align their content and their learning with buyer interactions for better conversation guidance.



Control permissions so sellers only see the content they need based on what they sell, and stay on-brand with automated workflows and approvals before distribution.



Learn what's resonating with buyers, prioritize follow-ups, identify deal risks, and derive best practices as a result.

Advisor



Reach buyers through social media, text messages, email, and more with an intuitive mobile-first platform that makes it easy to find, personalize, and schedule content in minutes.



Identify prospects, including key points of contact, for relevant content, and gather analytics throughout the engagement to understand ROI.



Mitigate security, policy, and compliance risks quickly and easily with automatic checks prior to content sharing.



About Seismic

Seismic is the global leader in enablement, helping organizations engage customers, enable teams, and ignite revenue growth. The Seismic Enablement Cloud™ is the most powerful, unified enablement platform that equips customer-facing teams with the right skills, content, tools, and insights to grow and win. From the world's largest enterprises to startups and small businesses, more than 2,000 organizations around the globe trust Seismic for their enablement needs. Seismic is headquartered in San Diego with offices across North America, Europe, and Australia.

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