

How to \_\_\_\_\_

# *influence* customer decision-making

Highlights from  
*B2B Marketing Expo, ExCel, London*



Presented by  
**Ciarán Reardon,**  
*Director, Embrace Marketing*

## **INSIDE:**

- The biggest challenges faced in B2B marketing today
- How to influence decision-making across the five-stage buying process
- Our top tips for success



# WHAT *challenges* are B2B marketers facing today?

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*In today's marketing world, businesses of all sizes are constantly facing a variety of challenges that can impede their success if they aren't considered.*

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From the absence of a clear marketing strategy to the lack of a customer-centric focus, addressing these issues is crucial for achieving sustainable growth. Let's discuss some of the key challenges faced by marketers and explore strategies to overcome them.

## **Lack of a clear and focused marketing strategy**

A common problem faced by marketers is the absence of a clear and focused marketing strategy. Without a well-defined plan, businesses could run into efficiency and alignment issues, leading to missed opportunities, as well as wasted time and budget. A successful strategy should bring clarity on your approach to fulfil your business objectives, encompassing specific market segmentation and evidence-based decision-making.

## **Insufficient analysis for evidence-based decisions**

Another critical challenge is the lack of analysis – you need to know what's working and what isn't! To make more informed decisions, look into data analysis based on your marketing efforts, customer insights and market trends. This evidence-based approach ensures that strategies are based on actual performance and customer preferences instead of just a hunch.





## Broad target audience without segmentation

Targeting a broad audience without segmentation can lead to diluted marketing efforts and ineffective communications and use of your budget. A targeted, account-based approach is essential for reaching specific audience segments, allowing businesses to tailor messages and strategies to meet the unique needs of different customer groups. Additionally, an account-based marketing approach can help achieve higher value sales.

## Siloed sales and marketing

Silos between sales and marketing departments can hinder the efforts of both departments. To address this challenge, businesses should focus on aligning their teams, creating a more integrated approach that facilitates the fluid sharing of customer insights and strategies. When sales and marketing work together the sufficient touchpoints you need to build viable leads soon become achievable.

## Inadequate focus on the customer's world

Understanding the customer's world is essential for effective marketing and sales. This involves gaining insights through departments that talk to customers day in day out, through research such as customer interviews, surveys, and empathy mapping. By placing themselves in the customer's shoes, businesses can identify pain points and gains, and adjust their strategies accordingly.

## Insufficient touchpoints

Creating meaningful touchpoints throughout the customer journey is crucial. It takes six to eight touchpoints to generate a viable sales lead, and businesses need to ensure they are using the right channels and activities to engage with their audience consistently. If you don't have sufficient touchpoints then prospects won't have the opportunity to recall and take action on your marketing and sales efforts.



# The FIVE-STAGE *buying* process

With customers increasingly expecting personalised experiences, understanding the customer's B2B decision-making journey is more important than ever. At **Embrace**, we envisage the customer's path unfolding through five distinctive stages, each presenting unique challenges and opportunities.

**Let's explore how to effectively guide and influence decision-making across the entire buying process.**

## TWO Information search



Once the problem is recognised, it's the opportune moment to provide valuable content that educates and informs. Develop comprehensive guides, blog posts, and videos that answer common questions, highlight product features, and establish your brand as an authoritative source. Make sure you resonate with and stand out to customers - regular brand awareness and being recognisable is key!

## ONE Problem recognition



The journey begins with problem recognition. At this stage, customers may not even be aware of a need or issue. As a marketer, your goal is to illuminate this problem and position your product or service as the solution. Make sure your messaging is addressing pain points and showcasing how your offering can make a difference.

## THREE Evaluation of alternatives



As customers weigh up their options, your goal is to stand out among the alternatives. Showcase what makes your product or service unique and superior. Building a strong emotional connection with your brand can also play a pivotal role in influencing decisions - even if this is only on a subconscious level. Case studies, so you can evidence how to achieve success for a similar service, product, or industry, are key at this point.

## FOUR

### Purchase decision



The moment of truth arrives as customers make the purchase decision. Simplify the buying process, remove obstacles, and reinforce the benefits of your product or service through targeted messaging to instil confidence in the decision-making process. If customers know, like and trust your product and brand, they are well on their way to making a purchase.

## FIVE

### Post-purchase behaviour



The journey doesn't have to end with a purchase! Instead, it can evolve into post-purchase behaviour. Engage with your customers post-purchase through personalised emails, and exclusive services that build on your current relationship. Encourage them to share their experiences on social media, creating a positive feedback loop that contributes to brand advocacy. Remember, it's a lot easier to retain existing customers than to gain new ones!

# Our top • TIPS

**Want a quick overview of some of the most important points to remember when it comes to customer journey marketing success?**

**Take a look at our top tips below!**



## THE POWER OF TOUCHPOINTS

The journey from initial awareness to a finalised sale typically involves between six and eight touchpoints. Join up your marketing and sales touchpoints to ensure a cohesive customer experience and build trust and memorability at every stage of the buyer's journey. The more touchpoints, with the right messages - the more likely they are to buy from you.



## EMOTIONAL RESONANCE

Human decisions are strongly influenced by emotions. While rational messaging has its place, tapping into the emotional side of your audience can significantly impact decision-making. Craft messages that evoke positive emotions, align with your brand values, and create a memorable connection.







## SUBCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE

Repetition is a powerful tool in marketing. By consistently exposing your audience to the same messages, you can influence their subconscious minds. Repetition builds familiarity, trust, and brand recognition. Craft a set of key messages that encapsulate your brand identity and strategically reinforce them across various channels.



## TARGETED ACCOUNT-BASED APPROACH

Rather than casting a wide net, an account-based approach narrows your focus to specific high-value accounts. This strategy allows for personalised and tailored interactions, increasing the likelihood of securing higher-value sales. By understanding the unique needs of key accounts, you can create customised campaigns that resonate with decision-makers.

# Thanks for *reading!*

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Looking for advice on your  
B2B customer journey?

*Get in touch:*

**Visit:** [embracemarketing.co.uk](https://embracemarketing.co.uk)

**Email:** [ciaran.reardon@weareembrace.com](mailto:ciaran.reardon@weareembrace.com)



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