



SALES NOISE: ARE YOU PART OF THE PROBLEM?

You have to feel a little sorry for today's B2B buyer. They are relentlessly bombarded with unprecedented levels of 'sales noise' from every angle. Every day they face a plethora of social media platforms and carefully targeted online engagements ready to leap from their browser. Equally, they have ready access to more information than ever before – peer reviews, analyst reports and vast websites packed to the rafters with information all intended to get them to engage.

Seeing the wood for the trees is now a required skill for any B2B buyer.

Add to this an evolution in some sectors of sales where sellers are becoming more proactive, persistent and, let's face it, opinionated as they struggle to differentiate themselves in a crowded market. Life is not particularly rosy for the B2B buyer today.

As sales professionals, empathy for our target audience is instinctive. We naturally place ourselves in their shoes, endeavour to understand their challenges and then find a solution. The paradox is that rather than find an empathetic solution to this challenge, we pile further pressure on B2B buyers by producing ever more content and cunning ways of distributing it.

We are responsible for a form of 'sales tinnitus' that forces buyers to either bury their head in the sand and not make a decision OR lose patience and buy on price

rather than value – neither option is good news for sales people. It's time to face facts; buyers are punch-drunk and we're part of the problem.

The final paradox is that sales organisations expend so much energy creating 'noise' at the start of the sales process that they've forgotten the value of quality communication once the deal is done. A recent survey by Gartner highlighted that nearly two-thirds of tech buyers said they would purchase more from existing providers if the value from their initial investment was clearly demonstrated. In short, they are calling out for MORE information and salespeople are falling short - what a criminal waste of opportunity.

So, the time is well overdue to rethink prospect and client engagement. I put it to you that the key to sales success is more about the **when** and **what**, rather than the **how much** information you share. While this is not a particularly controversial statement (frankly, it's bordering on the obvious), very few sales organisations behave in this way.

We need to start creating and then sharing valuable information more strategically throughout the **entire** process, pre-and post-sale. It's about using content wisely, sharing it with caution and **thinking more and sending less**. As sales professionals, we've never had it so good in terms of the tools available to use but with choice comes a further challenge.



Many opt for that old stalwart, the emailed PowerPoint presentation. Now, while I am of the firm belief that in the right hands and with a skilled presenter, PowerPoint can be a powerful meeting engagement tool; it loses all impact when sent as an attachment. It simply doesn't provide the connection required as a sales tool.

With this in mind, many turn to video. After all, respected analysts like Aberdeen Group tell us that companies that use video are growing revenue 49% faster than those who don't. However, don't get over-excited - video is not a panacea and those fancy videos created by your marketing team that now adorn your YouTube channel may actually be hindering your sales conversation. Why? They are simply not focused enough and by sharing them too liberally you're inadvertently adding to the sales 'noise'. Generic videos are perfect for buyer research, but they won't help you close.

Assuming that you've created a short, pithy and valuable video asset that will support the next stage of your sales conversation, how do you ensure it gets watched by the right people? Buyers have become immune to emailed links to video

while increased IT security mean that a loaded branded USB is never going to see the light of day. As a result, people are starting to rethink the different stages of the sales process and move to new hybrid solutions like [Eyeful Lens](#)

In short, **the ball is in our court**. Buyers are increasingly deafened by sales 'noise' and it is incumbent on us to rethink and refocus our engagements with them. New technology CAN help but nothing will improve if we don't ween ourselves off a 'spray and pray' approach to sales engagement.

So.... what can you do differently to reduce the noise?

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