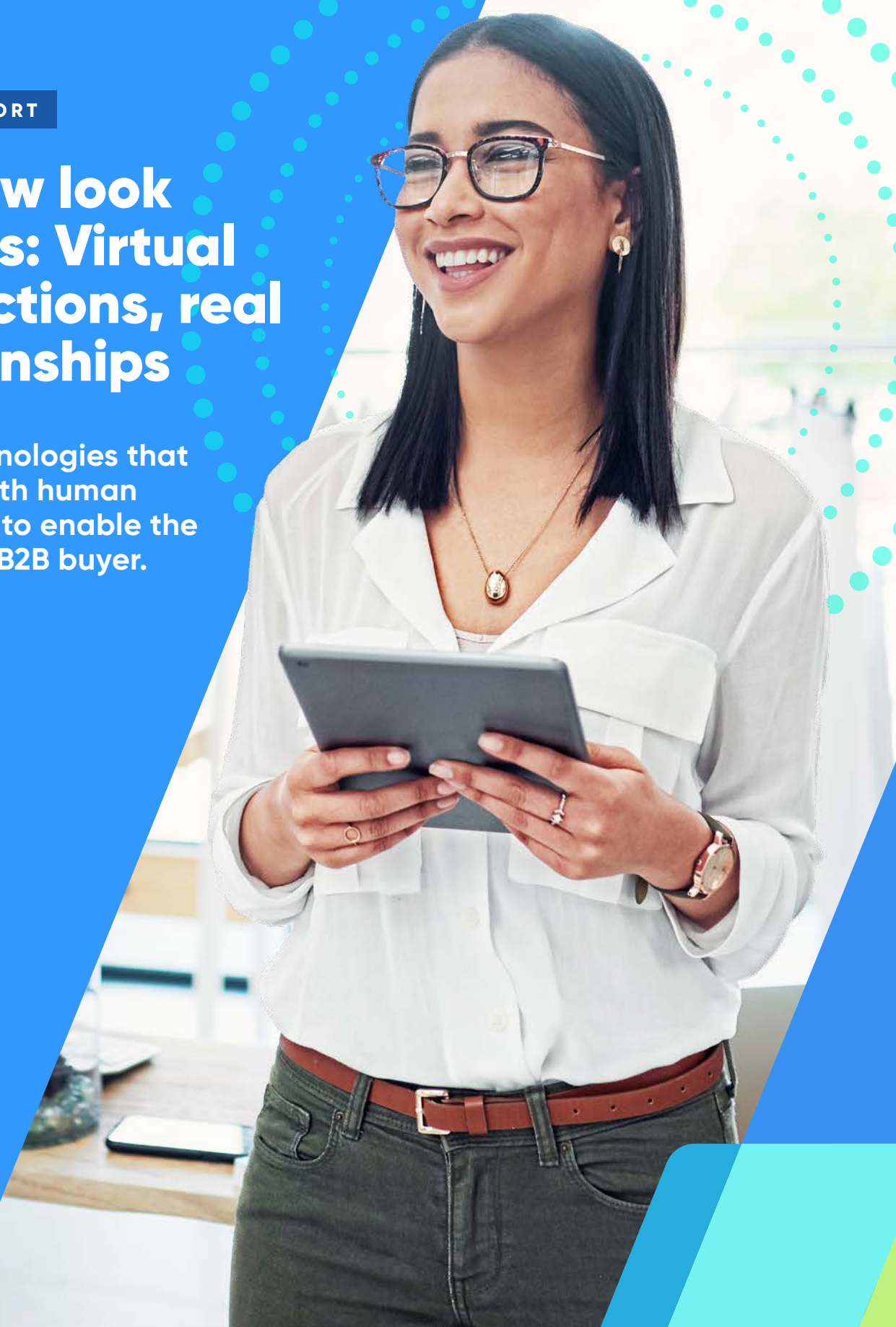




TRENDS REPORT

The new look of sales: Virtual connections, real relationships

6 sales technologies that integrate with human intelligence to enable the digital-first B2B buyer.



Overview

A truly good sale is about relationships, not products. While that adage still holds true, how you cultivate and develop that relationship has moved to a digital-first world. What does the new sales process look like, and what tools can sellers use to gain an edge without compromising valuable customer relationships?

TTEC has compiled insights about the future of sales, highlighting trends, tools, and technologies that are the foundation of the new age of selling. In the B2B space, companies are figuring out how to mimic consumer outreach over longer sales cycles that require deep expertise and personalization around unique client pain points.

This trends report features 6 growing sales technologies that support the transition to digital-first relationships, along with how to leverage human expertise and empathy to realize technology's potential.

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B2B sales will never be the same

The business world is now forever altered, thanks to pandemic-fueled digital transformation across entire enterprises. In the B2B world, where relationships reign supreme, sales organizations found effective and efficient ways to conduct business with a digital-first approach that's efficient, effective, and won't go away any time soon.

In-person meetings have nearly disappeared, replaced by Zoom meetings, webinars, virtual trade shows, online wine tastings, and cooking demonstrations. Many sellers found success in these digital introduction, education, and nurture activities, thanks to the relaxed nature of connecting with people in their homes in an informal, authentic environment.

Further research from Forrester found that digital "front doors" are now the primary way that sales prospects connect with brands—80% of B2B sales will take place in remote and digital settings, elevating the roles of data insight, digital content, and inside sales in the sales process.¹

The lines between inside sales and the rest of the sales organization have blurred—BDRs and inside sales reps continue relationships

further down the sales funnel in multiple digital channels, while field sales and AEs engage with prospects earlier in the process as well. Along the way, critical data and insight are shared and leveraged to better understand individual customer needs and develop strong relationships and value propositions.

With these digital trends comes increased buyer "self-service" in the B2B world, as well. According to Forrester:

70%

of B2B buyers say that buying from a website is the most convenient way to buy business products or services.²

67%

of B2B buyers prefer not to interact with a sales rep as the primary source of information.²

62%

of B2B buyers say they can now develop selection criteria or finalize a vendor list based solely on digital content.³

¹Forrester/B2BecNews Q2 2018 Global B2B Buy-Side Online Survey

²Forrester/Internet Retailer Q1 2017 Global B2B Buy-Side Online Survey

³Forrester/Internet Retailer Q1 2017 Global B2B Buy-Side Online Survey



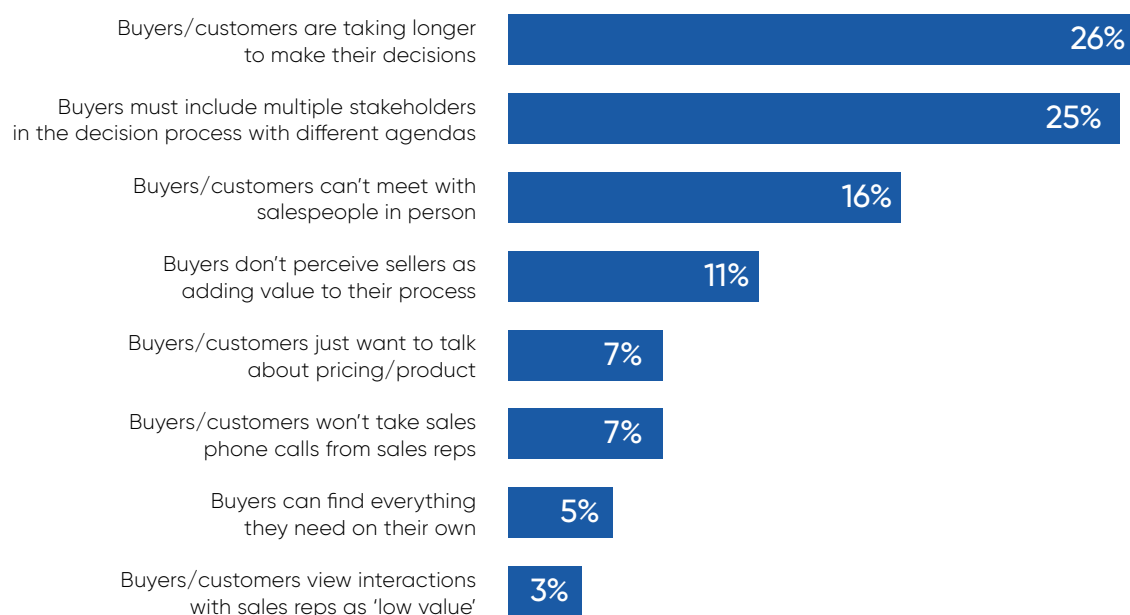
Digital experiences bring B2B seller challenges

The convergence of digital channels, buyer control, and deeper relationships means the old way of making sales won't cut it anymore. Sales teams still relying on "old school" strategies and tactics will only go so far.

B2B sellers understand they need to change, yet face challenges to creating successful digital-first sales experiences. As we emerge into a post-COVID sales environment, the buyer's table adds more seats, decision-making takes longer, and sellers find it hard to stand out in a virtual environment. Here are some top challenges facing sellers, according to Forrester.

B2B seller post-COVID challenges

What are the top three challenges your sellers face regarding buyer/customer engagement in 2020 post COVID-19?



Base: 228 responses from sales professionals
Source: Forrester's Q2 2020 B2B Channel and Sales Survey

Sellers need deeper, faster, more personalized data and insight, as well as the right tools to foster engagement and relationship building. They need to show their value to the buyer more quickly and digitally in order to build strong human connections. It's a tough balance.

6 sales technologies to support digital-first sales

To succeed in today's sales world, new technologies are needed. In its research, "The Forrester Tech Tide™: Sales Technologies, Q1 2021," Forrester recommends six technologies where sales organizations should invest to keep up with the changing sales landscape.

1. Conversational intelligence

According to Forrester, conversational intelligence tools, like speech & text analytics and other voice-of-customer technology, "use natural language processing to capture unstructured data from remote spoken conversations between sellers and buyers. Embedded AI analyzes the data and surfaces insights to support executive level decision making, inform management coaching, and inspire reps to adopt best practices."

There is tremendous insight to be gleaned from unstructured data. Keywords and trends, customer sentiment, and process analysis can help improve sales engagements and improve future interactions on the phone or through digital channels.

SUCCESS STORY

Speech analytics deliver a holiday boost for social media ad sales

A global social media platform wanted to measure the success of its holiday ad pricing promotion by its contact center staff. The company needed a way to determine if customer service agents promoted the relevant products and if the promotion led to increased sales. Manually listening to calls in full wasn't a cost-effective strategy, as only a small sample, perhaps 1 or 2% of the volume, could be monitored in this way. The client turned to TTEC to provide a data-driven solution instead.

We deployed our proven speech analytics solution, which combines call recording technology with artificial intelligence (AI) and analysis to gather unique insights. The solution converted recordings to phonetic text files, which were then queried to obtain insights into conversations to help the company improve agent efficiency and improve sales conversions.

Approximately 200 calls of 20+ minutes each were selected for analysis. Specific terms relating to holiday pricing and offers were used to identify calls in which these products were mentioned. Armed with this information, the client re-energized its campaign to associates with clear instructions on how to discuss holiday pricing and emphasizing the need for compliance.

The results

214%

increase in agents mentioning specific holiday pricing topics

233%

lift in customers taking action based on agent recommendations

118%

increase in total spend on the accounts managed by TTEC

2. Customer success

Customer success (CS) solutions are used by brands to monitor the health of their customer relationships by keeping track of customer satisfaction and churn across their products and services. Forrester calls this a “high-potential category that is evolving quickly.” If used correctly, CS solutions enable proactive engagement with customers to ensure they realize the full value of their purchases and derive value from the brand.

As the space evolves, automation, AI, and advanced analytics tools are helping companies drive better engagement, higher revenues, and lower defection from their customer success activities.

3. Revenue intelligence

Revenue intelligence is a dynamic and an attractive developing category, using technology to “capture engagement activity between buyers and sellers and automatically upload that data to CRM systems,” Forrester writes. As automatic data capture and CRM upload of buyer and seller activity data become commonplace, AI-generated insights from a range of revenue cycle activities offer significant potential to influence decision making. The AI engine analyzes data to deliver insights; provides dynamic guidance; and supplies inputs on deal management, forecasting, and other revenue generating activities, Forrester notes.

**Forrester calls this a
“high-potential category that
is evolving quickly.”**



4. Sales engagement

According to Forrester, sales engagement platforms “help sales, marketing, and post-sales personnel manage their omnichannel touchpoints at all stages of the buy cycle.” Leaning on automation and orchestration of simple, repetitive tasks, SE platforms deliver efficiency and effectiveness gains. Embedded AI can help users understand preferred engagement channels and surface missing contacts. The tools save employees time and effort when trying to understand sales prospects and customers.

Forrester found that 91% of survey respondents plan to or currently invest in a sales engagement platform, but automation and AI tools embedded in these tools are in early stages of maturity.

SUCCESS STORY

Associate Assist drives the customer experience into the future

Sales agents for a leading carmaker spent too much time manually entering information from callers while also navigating multiple screens to locate answers during a call. We implemented our Associate Assist solution, which uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to monitor live calls with customers and scan relevant data to serve up critical information to the associate in real time. An intelligent virtual assistant dynamically populated a screen with a summary of the customer’s intent or issue, a next-best-action recommendation, and/or a deep link to the exact location of the relevant information in the knowledge base.

The results

10.4%

reduction in average handle time

4.3%

increase in first contact resolution

4.45%

increase in NPS

5. Sales training and services

To win, you must train; that’s where sales training and services (STS) come in. Providers in this space help businesses increase sellers’ effectiveness and align sales execution to strategic business goals. With them, sales enablement leaders improve sellers’ skills, increase cross-functional collaboration, and embrace modern selling methods.

Tools to support sales training specifically for remote and digital engagement skills is critical, since Forrester predicts remote work will be 300% of pre-COVID-19 levels even after the pandemic has diminished. “There is increased urgency and high business value in investments to help B2B organizations reskill and upskill sellers,” Forrester writes.

6. User-generated video

User-generated video allows sellers and other users to create, edit, and share dynamic and personalized video content over email or within social channels. They are prevalent in the B2C world, but with so much B2B buying and selling happening remotely now, Forrester predicts asynchronous video messages “will be an essential arrow in the seller’s quiver in 2021 and beyond.” There is also great potential for UGV among sales teams and other internal groups.

Wouldn't it be cool if clients created “unboxing” videos of their B2B products and services? Or did a “gender reveal”-type video event to launch new products to employees? User-submitted how-to and “work hack” videos also have potential to drive engagement with B2B prospects and clients.

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SUCCESS STORY

TTEC sales incubator boosts revenue and wins back customers

A leading bulk oil, fuel, and lubricants distributor wanted to enhance, expand, and evolve its inside sales approach while improving efficiencies and leveraging more insight.

TTEC’s sales incubator program included growth services expertise, robust digital products, and experienced at-home inside sales experts. We deployed the salesforce CRM platform for more visibility into the entire sales funnel. Now, it was clearer at which stage each account was, how many “touches” each account had received, and other reporting insights. This empowered the sales team to make more informed decisions from an account level as well as optimize their go-to-market strategy in a virtual setting.

Utilizing our Inside Sales Playbook (a database of more than 400 different inside sales best practices) our sales experts conducted lead generation activities to prospect, cold-call, and qualify leads. We shared numerous industry best practices and sales exercises such as Win Back Wednesday to motivate and engage the sales teams. On one Wednesday of every month, we focused on winning back customers that no longer had an active status.

The results

Achieved

12%

increase in revenue
in 3 months

Reactivated

33%

accounts in
5 weeks

Generated

>\$20k

in win-back
account revenue

Move the ROI needle with human experts

While technology has its merits, it will not solve sales challenges on its own. Behind every great technology are people to realize the potential that's specific to the needs of the business. Human experts can leverage the power of these technologies to achieve maximum ROI and deliver amazing experiences along the way. Some ways that humans can help make the most of sales technology include:

Focus on a consistent customer experience and measure longevity

Connections between buyers and sellers rely on consistent and long-term touchpoints that convey empathy, aptitude and authenticity. Technology alone is no substitute for developing and nurturing an attunement to a customer's needs and concerns. A human touch is, at least for now, a non-replaceable component of customer relationships. Customer trust is a necessary and hard-won condition to render longevity and loyalty to your brand. Under less-than-ideal experiences, trust can be quick to evaporate.



Evaluate current tools and optimize usage

A critical assessment of current sales, CRM, and conversation management tools can provide insights that reveal strengths and weaknesses in the current sales environment. Self-directed digital buyers, for example, may encounter multiple points of friction and frustration in a process that requires repetitive information entry or protracted wait times that lead to lost opportunities and a tarnished brand impression. Other current sales tools may be outdated and in need of retooling, recalibration and/or replacement. Usage KPIs may not tell the whole story—it will take a critical human eye and contextual understanding to truly understand how best to use the tools and technology.

Test and measure digital tools

Sales teams need to sense and respond quickly to the needs of their prospects and customers. The ability to test and measure technology's effectiveness allows organizations to adapt and track tangible and intangible goals. Measuring, testing, and more measuring and testing pave the way to the most rewarding and customer-centric experiences available via digital tools. When mindfully and strategically applied, digital tools serve as a human touch force multiplier.

Don't be afraid to ask for help

Let a partner work with you to improve sales results so you can focus on your core business. Growth experts tap into these technologies and more to find new customers, grow share of wallet with current customers, or reduce churn. Sales outsourcing teams utilize the most advanced marketing, sales, and automation technologies to help clients stay ahead of the technology and innovation curve to compete and win.

Learn more

Sell as a team and win as a team. TTEC has decades of experience providing partnership and expertise through technology and people to support revenue growth for the entire customer lifecycle, in companies big and small.

Let us help you make virtual connections and build real relationships that begins with sales.

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[visit ttec.com](https://www.ttec.com)

About TTEC

TTEC Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ: TTEC) is one of the largest global CX (customer experience) technology and services innovators for end-to-end, digital CX solutions. The Company delivers CX technology and operational CX orchestration at scale through its proprietary cloud-based CXaaS (Customer Experience as a Service) platform. Serving iconic and disruptive brands, TTEC's solutions span the entire enterprise, touch every virtual interaction channel, and improve each step of the customer journey. Leveraging next-gen digital and cognitive technology, the Company's Digital business designs, builds, and operates omnichannel contact center technology, conversational messaging, CRM, automation (AI / ML and RPA), and analytics solutions. The Company's Engage business delivers digital customer engagement, customer acquisition & growth, content moderation, fraud prevention, and data annotation solutions. Founded in 1982, the Company's commitment to CX excellence has earned its leading client NPS scores worldwide. TTEC's nearly 59,000 employees operate on six continents and bring technology and human ingenuity together to deliver happy customers and differentiated business results. To learn more, visit us at [ttec.com](https://www.ttec.com).