

For: CMOs

Make B2B Marketing Thrive In The Age Of The Customer

by Laura Ramos, May 21, 2013

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Firms That Obsess Over Their Best Customers Will Win In The Age Of The Customer

Digital innovation erodes traditional competitive advantages in manufacturing strength, distribution power, and information mastery. Firms that lead in the next decade will be those that use customer knowledge to engage and delight buyers and win their business and loyalty away from competitors.

Data-Backed Insight Is Key To Real Customer Knowledge

B2B firms require a new level of customer intelligence maturity to empower marketing. The goal is to serve up actionable information that helps customer-facing employees deliver the cross-channel, cross-platform experiences that buyers demand in a seamless, error-free, and consistent manner.

Digital Channels, Experiences, And Content Fortify B2B Strategic Success

Customer-obsessed firms will place a premium on intimate customer experiences and service, sales interactions focused on buyer-specific business issues, and thought-leading points of view. Investment here will move from tactical lead generation activities to highly focused interactions based on data that determines when and how to deliver messages.



Make B2B Marketing Thrive In The Age Of The Customer

by [Laura Ramos](#)
with [David M. Cooperstein](#) and Alexandra Hayes

WHY READ THIS REPORT

Empowered buyers, disruptive digital innovations, and removal of global and traditional boundaries erase traditional types of competitive advantage. We are now in an era in which competition comes from new sources that are unexpected, fast-moving, and easily funded. Forrester believes that the next wave of competitive advantage will come from deep customer knowledge, engagement tied to the buyer's timing, and actions based on an obsessive desire to deliver what your customers want before your nearest competitor does. Forrester defines this as the age of the customer. This report will examine how to win in this new world. Business-to-business (B2B) CMOs will need to drive customer intelligence into sales, service, support, and product development to create meaningful business-focused customer interactions that lead to greater levels of visible value tied to a consistent, distinct brand experience.

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Forrester interviewed 13 vendor, agency, and user companies, including Caterpillar, CDW, Intel, LexisNexis, MRM, and Teradata.

Related Research Documents

[Rethink Marketing In The Buyer's Context](#)
February 21, 2013

[Competitive Strategy In The Age Of The Customer](#)

June 6, 2011



THE AGE OF THE CUSTOMER IS HERE: ARE B2B MARKETERS READY?

Technology enables pervasive, deeply rooted change in consumer buying habits. This trend holds true with business buyers. B2B marketers are not immune to this disruption since every business professional also makes purchases for personal use and knows that configuration, pricing, and comparison information is just a click away. Digital makes solving business problems or buying industrial grade products just as accessible and convenient as buying automobiles or making personal investment decisions online. But most B2B marketers are ill-prepared to give buyers the respect this new power deserves because:

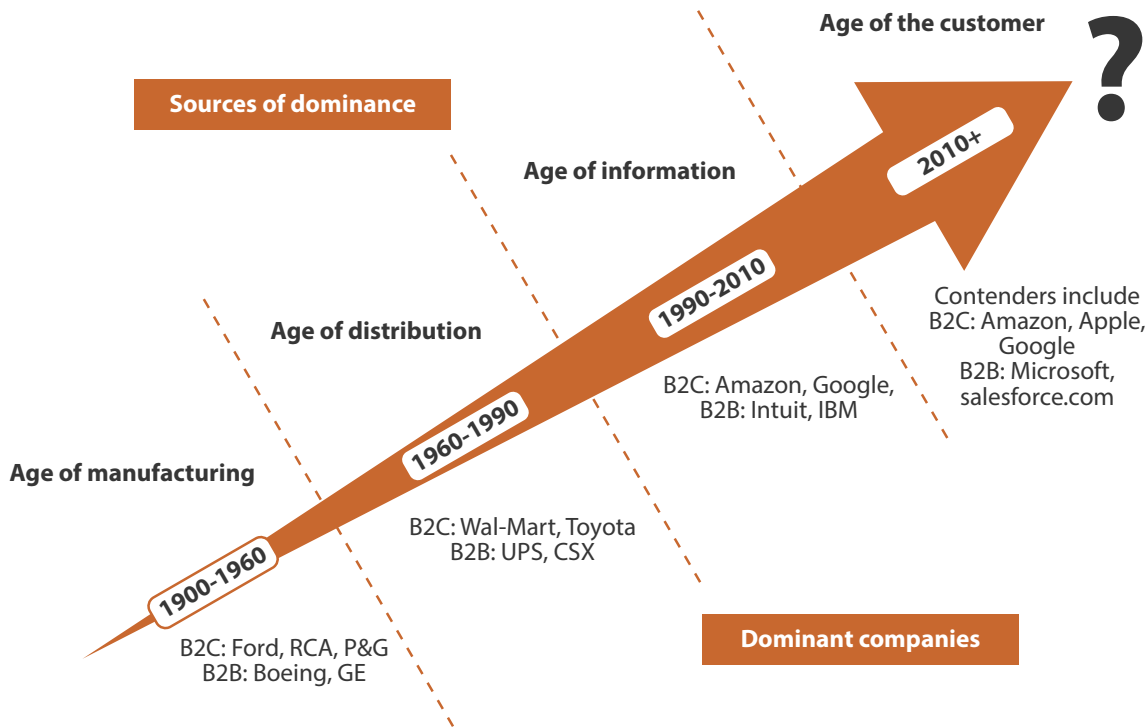
- **Business transactions silo customer relationships.** B2B firms divide customer interactions across the selling funnel, with marketing leading the promotion effort, sales doing the deals, and customer service handling complaints after a sale happens. Hard handoff points create jarring customer experiences as staff tosses buyers from one department to another. The situation worsens as firms grow and begin to specialize in cold calling, appointment setting, demonstrations, presales, and relationship management across sales. In this scenario, no single function is accountable for understanding the buyer's journey or for creating a consistent experience from awareness to loyalty.¹
- **Marketing messages focus on products and features, not customer concerns.** Look at the Oracle and SAP websites, and you see a parade of features and functions. Like many B2B firms, the messages and offerings rarely talk about business issues and needs. Content and language that describe how they really approach solving customer problems get buried in lengthy, poorly written case studies or squirreled away in sales presentations that relatively few get to see.
- **Executives pay lip service to improving customer intimacy.** When asked where improving current customer understanding lies among business priorities, about half of those interviewed said it falls toward the lower end of the list. The slow economy, quarterly revenue targets, or getting undercut by a competitor relegate programs that sharpen customer analysis to the bottom of the investment pile. Even when faced with an abundance of user data gleaned from online sources, the vice president and managing director at digital marketing agency Resource told us, "Most CMOs don't know what to do with it. They know how to track awareness, reach, and frequency but can't build a data-driven customer engagement model."
- **Channel partners muddy relationship waters.** Many consumer transactions occur through intermediaries like agents, dealers, and brokers. Sellers of health plans, insurance and financial management, automobiles, and industrial equipment turn over the relationship reins to these partners despite the fact that consumers welcome and expect information and content from manufacturers or service providers.² One step removed, B2B marketers fail to develop rich consumer data and insights that reveal the true path to purchase and ongoing support for car buyers, farmers, machinists, or insurance policyholders.

B2B Marketers Fail The Customer Obsession Test

In this age of the customer, businesses that succeed will focus strategy, energy, and budget on processes that enhance knowledge of and engagement with customers — and prioritize investment in customer relationships over maintaining traditional competitive barriers (see Figure 1). Firms obsessed with customers will win because focusing on customer needs, wants, and motivations matters more than any other strategic business imperative.³ But today, many B2B marketing executives fail the customer obsession test because their teams:

- **Suffer with messy, incomplete customer data.** Acquisitions, piecemeal technology investment, and parochial fights between business units and the field leave B2B customer data riddled with holes. The ideal of a single view that incorporates the most important customer data points remains a distant goal at many firms. Marketing, sales, strategy, delivery, and product management have no choice but to operate off incorrect or incomplete information that often leads to the wrong approach.
- **Lose touch without direct customer interaction.** B2B marketing requires an ever-increasing set of skills and experiences ranging from market intelligence to communications and product definition. To manage a diversity of demands, many marketing teams spend more time focused on internal communications and operational issues than they do working with customers. Should a problem come up, marketers often act like a relay team as they bounce issues from social media expert to brand manager and from service center to product manager. With sales and support holding court over customer interactions, it's no wonder that marketing can barely recognize a buyer across lines of business, let alone physical and digital channels.
- **Lack skills needed to put customer data to work.** As keepers of the brand, visual execution, voice, and the pithy tagline, business marketers often focus on creative to the detriment of solid analysis. Unfamiliarity, insecurity, or lack of analytical skills results in superficial segmentation that fails to uncover any meaningful differences in need or behavior that can lead to action. Few invest in customer personas and mapping the buyer's journey to cure this problem.

Figure 1 Sources Of B2B Competitive Advantage Change Over Time



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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

B2B MARKETERS MUST INVEST DIFFERENTLY IN THE AGE OF THE CUSTOMER

To thrive in this customer-controlled era, businesses must get to know buyers as completely as buyers are able to know suppliers. Brand power will come from building a reputation buyers can trust. To fund this journey, marketing executives will have to change how they approach their budget. Funds need to shift away from traditional activity like mass emailing, hospitality, mass-market trade events, and paid media to more customer-focused marketing efforts (see Figure 2). To put customer-obsessed analysis, answers, and action into practice, marketers should invest in four key areas:

1. Data-backed insight that familiarizes employees with customers before each encounter.
2. Digital customer experiences and service that enhance the human touch.
3. Sales channels enabled to deliver account-specific experiences and return rich intelligence.
4. Relevant inspired content delivered through interactive, information-rich experiences.

Figure 2 Key Budget Adjustments Are Needed In The Age Of The Customer

Budget priorities	Strategic imperatives		Budget changes	
	Focus more: ↑	Focus less: ↓	Spend more: ↑	Spend less: ↓
Actionable customer insights	Data analytics backed by real-time predictive modeling and micro-level segmentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey-based research • Untargeted email blasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase social intelligence investment • Hire database service providers • Build personas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional research • In-person focus groups
Digital experiences	Fund customer experience upgrades across channels	Customer service goals based on volume of calls handled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train employees on social and customer experience • Create B2B communities • Multitouch campaigns • Streamline transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standalone channels • “Walk away” onboarding
Accountable sales channels	Focus on end customers and building repeat business	Shift inventory to channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account-based marketing • Foster direct/social customer interaction • Channel partner leads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold calls • Single-channel programs • Third-party marketing funds
Content-driven marketing	Create content that drives inbound traffic and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR-led social activity • Campaign-driven ad blitzes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build goal-driven social and mobile apps • Publish content for nurturing • Develop thought leadership marketing • Earned media strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid-only, one-way media strategy • Brand sponsorships and hospitality • Mass-market trade events

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Build Actionable Customer Insight Accessible To Frontline Teams

To move beyond rudimentary segmentation, B2B analytics must evolve from operational systems focused on competitive intelligence and managing sales coverage to one that distills meaningful insight — gained by tracking how buyers interact with your messages, content, and each other — and must present it in a readily consumable format. Forrester has shown that developing a customer intelligence command center lets marketing serve up actionable information that drives multichannel customer communications, product development, strategic planning, and loyalty.⁴ To improve their customer intelligence maturity, customer-obsessed B2B firms will need to:

- **Clean up the data mess.** B2B customer data management suffers the challenges presented by long sales cycles that involve multiple decision-makers who hide behind complex corporate hierarchies, all of which makes data hygiene a challenging problem.⁵ To combat this, CMOs partner with IT to develop marketing-specific databases or views built in lock-step with the

buyer's journey. They bring in marketing service providers like Extraprise and Infogroup that specialize in B2B marketing, to help merge, de-duplicate, and augment data while they standardize data structures. CMOs who aren't comfortable with statistics and technology find a close lieutenant to handle marketing scientist responsibilities to streamline data management and build out analytics.

- **Listen in on social conversations and then join in.** While many B2B firms treat social like an extension of public relations by listening for brand mentions and changes in sentiment, smart marketing execs boost their social intelligence when they use monitoring tools to understand vertical industry concerns and target market worries.⁶ Companies like CDW and Esri put senior marketers in charge of social teams that use tools like Attensity, Google Analytics, Radian6, and Visible Technologies to not only listen but also respond to concerns and criticism quickly, thoughtfully, and honestly. Because they speak like regular people and foster personal connections, these teams build relationships with customers who voluntarily come to their aid online when problems or complaints crop up.
- **Capture usage information and share it with current customers — and prospects.** B2B marketing execs move from gut-level brand creation to data-driven business impact when they collect detailed information about how end customers use products and feed this back to channel partners and potential buyers. Because heavy-duty farm equipment can experience 20-year life spans and heavy seasonal use, Caterpillar collects data on factors like fuel consumption, component wear and tear, and geographic location to help farmers make harvest and planting operations more efficient. It shares this data with dealers to encourage information exchange that rounds out customer profiles and understanding.
- **Personalize each and every relationship.** Identifying white space in untapped markets and developing clear understanding of how buyers buy in those new domains requires new tools and analytic techniques, some enabled by contextually-aware information from smartphones and transmitting devices. Like Caterpillar marketers, who learned how the needs of construction graders differ from landscapers and copper miners, and Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, which uses aircraft engine sensors to provide individualized maintenance schedules proactively to airline customers, CMOs must use these new forms of customer intelligence to develop micro-level segmentation by need and industry, build corresponding personas, and raise the entire firm's IQ around specific use cases.

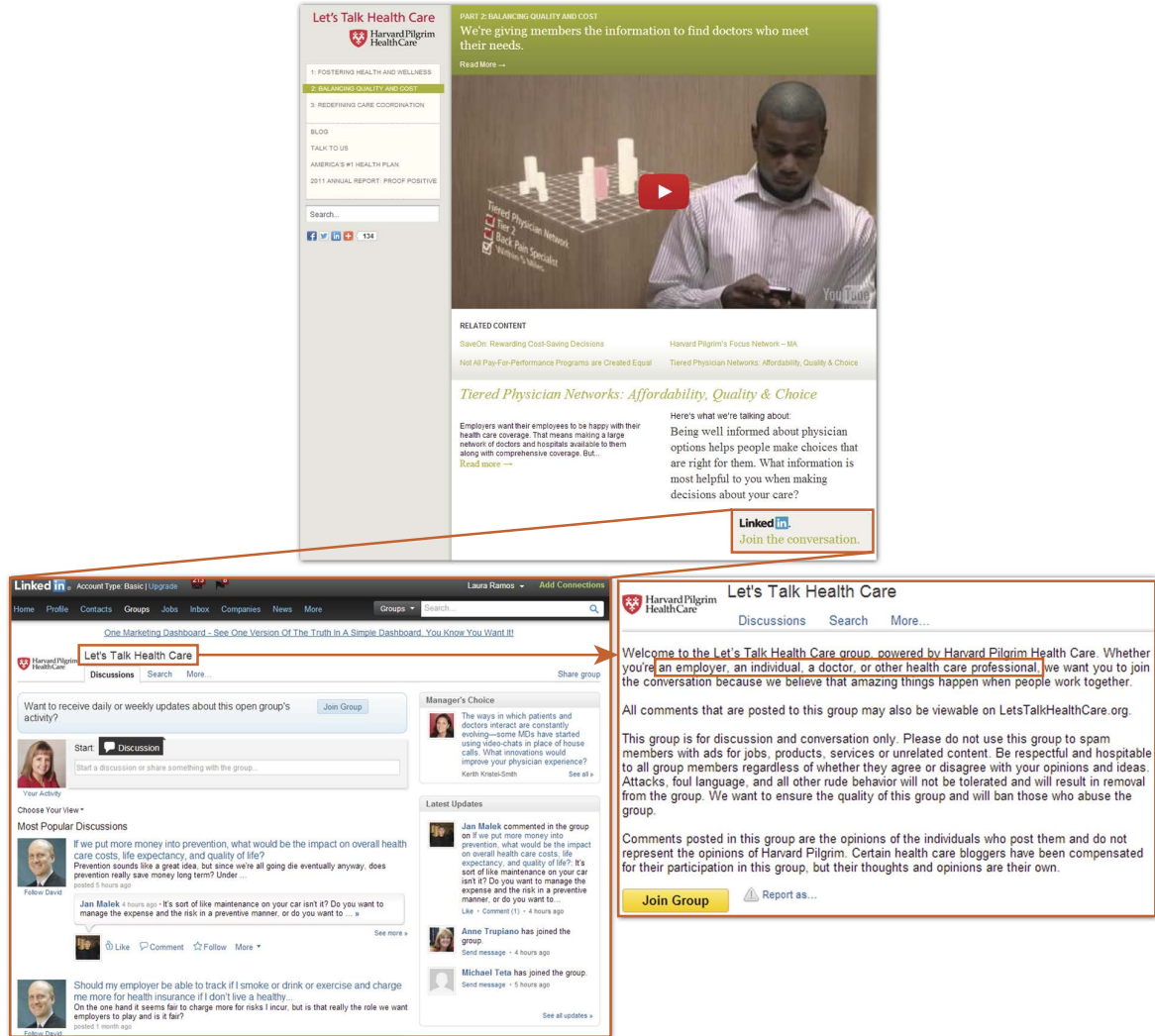
Create Intimacy Across Both Digital And Physical Worlds

Face-to-face interactions are more common in B2B since the negotiation and selling process figures prominently in building the customer relationship. Digital makes it possible for B2B marketers to create a unique relationship at scale with every customer they touch. However, buyers expect these cross-channel, cross-departmental interactions to be seamless, error-free, and consistent — delivered with as much human touch as a handshake. The CMO's job here is to create presales experiences that

make customers come to you and then turn around post-sale and advocate for your brand. Companies we talked with said that successful CMOs create this type of highly personalized interaction across physical and digital channels when they:

- **Turn employees into digital brand ambassadors.** From executives and thought leaders to customer support staff, engineers, and operations teams, employees in all functional areas must represent your brand and mission equally well online as in-person. In particular, this means making sure that technical support and customer service people learn how social channels like Twitter, chat, LinkedIn, and Facebook work so that they can address customer needs in a consistent manner regardless of the channel the customer may have experienced. To keep the process simple, Teradata created a customer intent statement to guide online interactions conducted by its support teams. It has 28 volunteers who evangelize social tool use and the principles of the intent statement to help others work better with customers.
- **Get to know buyers in rich detail.** Before digital tools became universally accessible, gathering insight into customer needs required in-person focus groups and paper or phone surveys. Today, marketers use digital means to learn about customers faster, across more endpoints, and less expensively. To understand how customers really talk about topics like cloud and big data, MRM used keyword and semantic analysis of website content, search engine data, and social media channels including off-domain blogs and forums to help Computer Sciences Corp (CSC) understand individual user's content preferences and build personas with rich detail. LexisNexis tapped Communispace to work with more than 300 customers in an online community that helped develop new visualization tools and natural language search that made its way into the recent Lexis Advance 3.5 release.
- **Connect cohorts of influencers, prospects, and current customers.** Besides creating rich online experiences to engage prospects, top CMOs use digital to build bridges across the entire spectrum of buyer influence. Digital Influence Group helped Harvard Pilgrim Health Care develop the "Let's Talk Health Care" group on LinkedIn to augment its online presence by the same name and to connect human resources (HR) benefits managers with plans, providers, and other members of the healthcare community (see Figure 3). CDW is active in the Spiceworks community and participates in programs designed to foster one-on-one interaction between IT professionals or to provide expert technical advice from CDW solution architects.
- **Use digital to make business transactions easier.** Marketing's task to deliver great customer experiences doesn't stop when buyers sign the sales contract. B2B execs thrive by making it easier for customers to do business with them. Not only does the Amazon Web Services platform make setting up an online presence trouble-free for small merchants but also the convenience of one-click shopping simplifies their customers' experiences as well. Digital onboarding tools like KickoffLabs, Pitney Bowes Portrait, and WalkMe make it easier to get customers up and running. Teradata hires nonsales-compensated advisors to focus on key accounts, manage touchpoints across silos, and increase satisfaction. It uses a metric called "first year annual revenue" to track and motivate these account managers to get customers up to speed quickly.

Figure 3 Harvard Pilgrim Connects HR Managers With Broader Healthcare Community Via LinkedIn



Source: Harvard Pilgrim Health Care website; LinkedIn website

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Help Channels To Engage More Personally

Marketing automation has helped improve alignment between sales and marketing across the lead-to-revenue management process. But to increase the focus on end users and ensure repeat business, customer-obsessed firms will strengthen the sales and marketing association further as CMOs:

- **Teach sales to become socially savvy and to add a personal touch.** Traditional B2B selling aims to differentiate a solution against competitors to small audiences. Sales become adept at spotting solutions but not understanding end user behavior and motivation. Online, buyer needs and wants become more apparent, especially when expressed across social channels. Rockfish Interactive teaches its sales team members how to use LinkedIn to examine connections they may have with individuals at prospective clients and to find someone in their network who can offer a warm introduction. Social investigation helps sales team members learn what customers care about when they see to which groups customers belong or conversations they join.
- **Invest in account-based marketing.** In many B2B firms, the majority of revenue comes from a minority of accounts. To boost account-based marketing, KPMG International is embedding marketing staff in premier account teams to help drive communication and connections. These marketers use online technology to learn what target executives say in the press or talk about in articles, blogs, tweets, and videos. Top firms will then arm sales with account-specific talking points delivered through tablet-based applications featuring links to the original source. NetApp uses the Adobe Marketing Suite and Demandbase to identify buyers by company of origin and identify group buying behavior in its lead scoring efforts.⁷
- **Elevate channel partners to customer status.** When buyers are ready to buy, they want to talk to an educated salesperson. This is difficult to deliver when selling through third parties. When Caterpillar brought dealers into advisory boards and customer experience workshops, it showed its partners that it knew as much about their customers as they did when it revealed data about after-hours online shopping behavior. While many B2B channel partner relationships remain somewhat competitive because resellers want to maintain account control, Caterpillar sees its dealers starting to offer customer data in exchange for leads. Exxon Mobil built a website for its aviation, marine, and industrial lubricants distributors to help become a better digital marketer by promoting brand and product awareness as well as utility to end users directly (see Figure 4).

Figure 4 Exxon Mobil Helps Connect End Customers With Its Channel Partners



Source: Exxon Mobil website

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Invest In Relevant Content; Repurpose It For Physical Or Digital

When Linda Stone coined the term “continuous partial attention” to describe the ability to pay superficial attention to many information sources at once, she described how B2B decision-makers shop solutions. Buyers snack on your offering’s content a little at a time. They may look at your content on desktops or smartphones and bring in other members of the team before taking it to management for further consideration. Customers come back again and again to decide the next feature or add-on.

While sales teams have learned to deal with this behavior, in the digital world, most marketers are ill-prepared to engage customers with the depth and frequency of these presales interactions. Enter the need to publish and syndicate richer, more tailored marketing content. To get content to attract a crowd, however, B2B CMOs should:

- **Develop content strategies geared to online use.** Converting print marketing collateral to HTML went out in the 1990s. Instead, Intel designs all sales content for digital interaction. Gone are the days of publishing magazines or printing out 5,000 copies of a datasheet to store in the warehouse until the next trade show pull. Digital Influence Group developed a “construct of 8s” model to map content strategy from an eight-week macro story down to an 8-minute crisis communication. MRM plots out content blueprints for clients that include owned, paid, and earned media distributed across life-cycle stages set to attract, engage, and activate prospects, while turning buyers into advocates.
- **Use interactive content to spark some conversations.** When it comes to advertising spend, we continue to stand by our original advice: Prioritize word of mouth over mouthing off. B2B marketers are better off spending money on content development efforts that have a multiplier effect. KPMG did this when it filtered and analyzed almost 5 million comments shared during The World Economic Forum in Davos. The weflive.com site made it easy for participants and followers to spot key insights, without wading through the cacophony of voices (see Figure 5).⁸
- **Focus on thought leadership marketing.** Thought leadership sits at the pinnacle of good customer-centric content production. It engages buyers in a value-based exchange of ideas and information, while positioning the company as a trusted resource. MRM extended Verizon’s unique points of view to businesses when it built an online destination that curates content around macro business trends like risk management and sustainability. The site also digs behind the scenes to help track usage information like dwell time, source links, key topic trends, and the ways in which visitors share content they find there with others in their network. It also used collaborative filtering to recommend related content to users based on what other visitors viewed most (see Figure 6).

Figure 5 KPMG's World Economic Forum Live Site Helps Capture Key Conference Trends

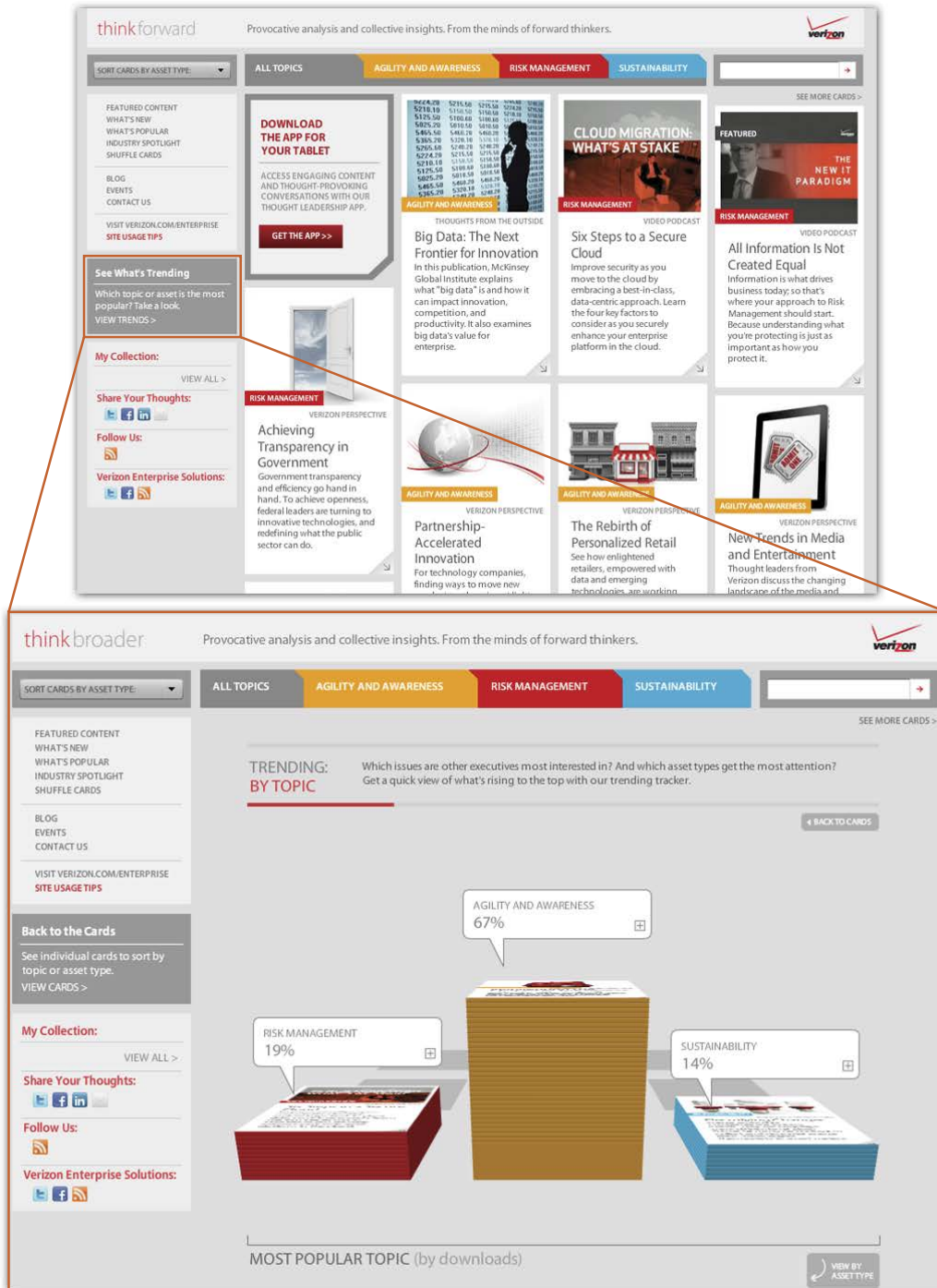


Source: KPMG International website

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 6 Verizon Uses Interactive Content To Tap Into Business Buyer Concerns



Source: Verizon website

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FIVE WAYS TO BECOME MORE CUSTOMER-OBSESSED

Strategy, budget, and process changes necessary in a customer-obsessed company should start with marketing. But they must ripple throughout the organization to achieve the desired results. To get the ball rolling, CMOs should lead the effort to:

- **Organize operations around customer segments.** Want to get customer-obsessed? Break down functional silos and make people work together to serve and delight different customer groups. HubSpot did this when it organized sales, marketing, and services around customer personas and made them sit together. Teams found that they could use different methods to nurture deals, close sales, onboard customers, and manage accounts based on persona attributes they uncovered by working in physical proximity.
- **Become a generous brand.** Willingly give customers something of value, even before they buy, and they will come and spend more time with you. Intel launched Digital Canvas Retail to attract a global community of retailers and help Intel make connections, at a far lower cost than TV ads.⁹ Not wanting to be seen simply as a medical imaging provider, Philips Electronics built the NetForum community to help clinicians and hospital administrators understand how to select and operate its equipment toward the common goal of improving care. At the top of each section, Philips invites community members to continue the generosity by contributing their content to the site.
- **Connect the dots between brand and business metrics.** Instead of clicks, fans, tweets, and brand lift, shift your marketing metrics to focus on customers and their reactions. Track and analyze why one campaign results in three times more registrations or why certain clients are more likely to recommend you. Esri uses a “field engagement score” based on a broad set of behavioral, demographic, and service history factors ranging from time on-site to training courses completed and participation in events to test how it is faring in customers’ eyes.
- **Use digital smarts to prove customer success.** Stop talking about customers as things to be harvested like low-hanging fruit. Instead look for ways to instill a customer-first mindset throughout your company. HubSpot instrumented its software so that it tells implementation managers who the client logged in as and which apps they used successfully. Usage metrics are part of a broader Customer Happiness Index that combines customer success, loyalty, and satisfaction measures with implementation milestones. It also hires people with the teaching gene — those who get a positive release of endorphins when the client finally says, “Oh, I get it.”
- **Base compensation on customer engagement.** To turn customer interest into obsession, top companies tie performance reviews and annual incentive programs to customer reviews and loyalty. HubSpot adjusts sales compensation payouts based on customer retention and

tenure. From executives to administrative staff, Intel ties a portion of employee annual bonuses to satisfaction scores. This changed everyone's tune from "that's sales' job" to "just say yes" when it came to customer interactions. Sit with HR counterparts and look for ways to link bonuses and commissions to customer success, renewal, and upsell rather than internal milestones like signing contracts or closing trouble tickets.

WHAT IT MEANS

CUSTOMER-OBSESSED B2B FIRMS WILL SHARE DIFFERENT ATTRIBUTES

Building competitive barriers and locking in customers will no longer be successful long-term strategies. As B2B firms learn to flex new technology and process muscles that create deeper customer understanding and engagement, we see customer-obsessed companies diverge from mainstream counterparts in some interesting ways.

- **Growth B2B business models favor private ownership.** Obsessing over customers takes time and resources. To better trade off margin against the cost of more thorough customer engagement, more midsized B2B firms experiencing higher-than-average growth may elect to stay private to strengthen the focus on buyers. If investment in customer obsession leads to sustainable competitive advantage, don't be surprised to see the US Securities and Exchange Commission or the Pew Research Center release reports before 2020 showing higher financial returns among privately held, growth-oriented firms where executives place a premium on building long-term customer relationships over delivering short-term stockholder value.
- **"Customer ambassador" becomes a highly sought-after qualification.** Out of 6,800 coworkers at CDW, more than 4,000 face customers. This customer-facing staff ratio will become the norm as employees spend more time engaging with customers, both online and offline, than on internal meetings and matters. This means that skills and attributes like social media competence, responsiveness index (as measured by how long it takes to return phone calls, emails, or chat requests), and depth and influence of workers' social network will become as important as their negotiation, analytic, or writing talents because they demonstrate an affinity for working naturally with clients.
- **Hired sales experts will jump-start new go-to-market efforts.** Discontinuous business events like new product launches, mergers, and opening of international offices create temporary demand for specialized sales skill sets — people who can quickly size up new customers and target audiences and determine if the new business venture will fly. Like Intel, customer-obsessed B2B firms will turn to specialized sales agents — senior salespeople adept at digital and video communications who no longer want to travel and who come stocked with a large Rolodex — to develop and script the sales calls that rank-and-file reps can follow post-launch, post-integration, or from five of Intel's geographic locations.

- **Predictive analytics single out executives to woo.** In the age of the customer, a salesperson who serendipitously meets a new executive during a routine sales call can consult a wearable wrist unit with a heads-up display to check out the exec's bio, review his most recent interactions with the rep's company, and highlight the four people they connect most closely with on social networks. Customer-obsessed data management, social-network-driven algorithms, and digital sales enablement will give rise to predictive analytics that give sales folks great insight into which names to drop or business issues to bring up in conversation. Increased immediacy in social connections leads to faster time-to-business-discussions that help sales close deals sooner.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Companies Interviewed For This Report

AdHocnium	KPMG International
Caterpillar	LexisNexis
CDW	MRM
Digital Influence Group	Resource
Esri	Rockfish Interactive
HubSpot	SapientNitro
Intel	Teradata

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Forrester defines the B2B buyer's journey as the decision experience from problem identification and comparative analysis through purchase decision and ongoing engagement with suppliers. Because buyers no longer follow a linear path to purchase, marketers must know them well enough to spot business disruptions that initiate problem-solving and to intercept the buyers' journey with relevant information that creates the need and willingness to engage. See the February 21, 2013, "[Rethink Marketing In The Buyer's Context](#)" report.
- ² In Forrester's Q1 2012 study of US online adult consumers, we found that consumers like to get close to the source when learning about new brands/products they're considering. Sixty percent of online consumers head to the brand's or manufacturer's websites, making them the second most-used research tool. See the March 20, 2013, "[Fragmented Path-To-Purchase Demands Everywhere Marketing](#)" report.
- ³ In 2011, Forrester identified the age of the customer as the next era in commercial dominance. In this stage, the power of customers, enabled by new digital access and behavior, requires successful firms to focus on

customer intimacy and interactions more than any other prior strategic imperative. See the June 6, 2011, “[Competitive Strategy In The Age Of The Customer](#)” report.

- ⁴ Marketers who measure the impact of their customer intelligence (CI) say that it not only boosts campaign-specific metrics but also improves customer acquisition, retention, and satisfaction, as well as revenue, profitability, and customer value. Forrester developed its CI maturity model to help chart the way forward to these benefits. See the October 16, 2009, “[The Intelligent Approach To Customer Intelligence](#)” report, and see the July 31, 2012, “[Assessing Your Customer Intelligence Quotient](#)” report.
- ⁵ The fundamental underpinning of customer obsession is customer data management. B2B marketers face different challenges than their B2C counterparts that persist today and make data management a particular challenge. Forrester has long advised B2B marketers to seek help from marketing database marketing services providers, especially those like Allant, Extraprise, Harte-Hanks, and Infogroup that maintain a separate focus on B2B. See the June 27, 2008, “[Database Marketing Fundamentals For B2B Marketers](#)” report, and see the January 12, 2011, “[The Forrester Wave™: US Database Marketing Service Providers, Q1 2011](#)” report.
- ⁶ Social intelligence requires technology assistance, and businesses turn to listening platforms to help capture social data, manage and analyze its content through text analytics, and deliver insights in dashboards and reporting services. See the April 24, 2012, “[The Forrester Wave™: Enterprise Listening Platforms, Q2 2012](#)” report.
- ⁷ When it comes to understanding online behavior, the B2B marketer needs to frame this understanding in the context of the visitors and the business they represent. To learn more about how NetApp does this, check out this article from Adobe Systems: “Case Study: Account-Based Web Analytics Power B2B Marketing To New Heights.” Source: Doug Rekenhaller Jr., “Case Study: Account-Based Web Analytics Power B2B Marketing To New Heights,” Adobe Systems, May 9, 2012 (<http://www.cmo.com/articles/2012/5/9/case-study-account-based-web-analytics-power-b2b-marketing-to-new-heights.html>).
- ⁸ Social tracking and analysis on the weflive.com site helped KPMG show trends in female online conversations about conference topics and counter charges that women’s views were underrepresented. Source: “Women at Davos forum increase their influence through social media, according to KPMG,” KPMG International Cooperative press release, January 24, 2013 (<http://www.kpmg.com/Global/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Press-releases/Pages/women-world-economic-forum.aspx>).
- ⁹ Digital Canvas Retail is a gated online community sponsored by Intel in partnership with InformationWeek and UBM DeusM that offers news, case studies, and other premium content that help retail CMOs, advertisers, CIOs, and others drive success in their organizations. It also invites members to network with peers and to participate in forums to share advice, experiences, and opinions. Source: UBM Tech (<http://www.digitalcanvasretail.com/>).

About Forrester

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« CATHERINE MELISSA OLIVER, client persona representing CMOs

