

master

# digital selling

make yourself and your  
message more memorable  
for digital buyers

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# from the *field* to the *screen*

Just a few short years ago, face-to-face sales meetings were the norm. At the beginning of the pandemic, 70 percent of sellers didn't believe that virtual conversations could be as effective as in-person meetings.

Today, two-thirds of buyers prefer not to meet face to face. In fact, When asked what they want most from their sales rep, one executive told McKinsey, **"Please stop asking to meet with me in person. I'm busy enough as it is!"**

Buyers are doing research, forming opinions, and narrowing their options at their own pace. They're using digital channels almost as frequently as they contact your sellers. And when they do reach out, they prefer virtual interactions.

Even though buyers want and prefer digital buying experiences, some companies remain skeptical of how effective those interactions can be. Others don't know how to adapt their approach, even if they see the need to change.

Our own neuroscience research has shown that, contrary to popular belief, virtual presentations can put people in a positive state of mind, and their brains synchronize well during a fully virtual conversation.

We've also found that an effective digital engagement strategy can lead to significantly more sales opportunities with less effort. You don't need to embark on a whistle-stop tour of every account—you can meet with prospects and customers virtually, and those interactions will be just as effective.

But what does "effective" actually look like? How can you make your digital presence more enticing and memorable? How can you keep your audience engaged and make your message more persuasive?

This e-book answers those questions and more. When you put these techniques into practice, you'll lead higher-impact digital conversations and drive more buying decisions in your favor.



**Tim Riesterer**  
Chief Strategy Officer  
Corporate Visions



# buying behaviors have *changed*

Today, **two out of three buyers prefer a digital self-service buying experience over traditional sales communications.** And Gartner predicts that 80 percent of all B2B sales interactions will occur in digital channels by 2025.

Additionally, 63 percent of Fortune 500 executives say they expect their field sales revenue to decrease, while 80 percent expect their inside/digital sales revenue to increase, according to Boston Consulting Group.

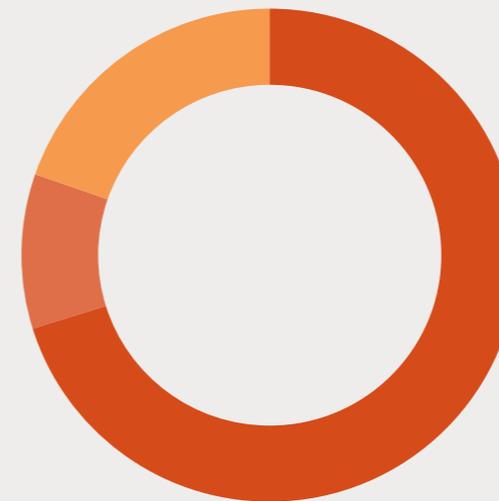
All these stats assume that the digital motion is being properly executed. But our research says otherwise, which means sellers and sales leaders are leaving opportunities on the table.

It's not enough to send the same messages on digital channels. Buyers are digitally savvy and well informed. They're also inundated with texts, robocalls, sales emails, and ads. So they're harder to reach than ever before.

You can no longer expect your buyers to pick up the phone and call you with questions. You need to reach them where they are—on digital channels—but you need to do it well.

## How would you prefer to interact with sales reps from your company's suppliers?

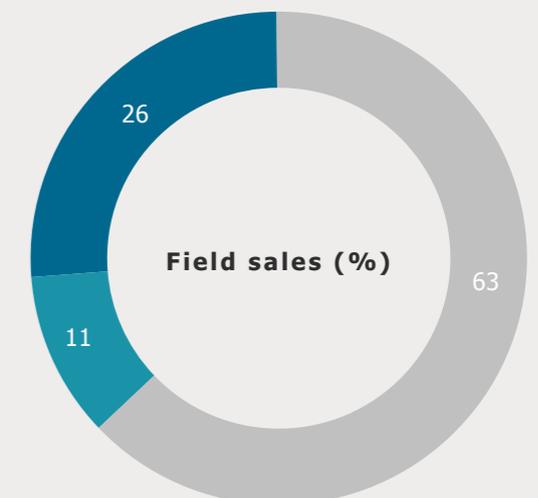
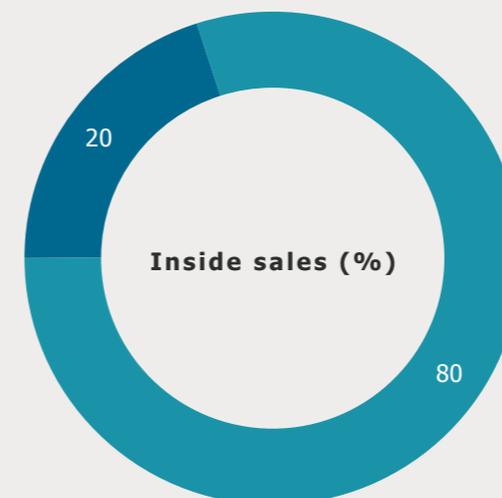
Traditional channels Remote/digital channels



**~70-80 percent** of B2B decision makers prefer virtual conversations or digital self-service interactions, according to McKinsey.

## Share of revenue: inside sales vs. field sales

Increase No change Decrease



**63 percent** of Fortune 500 executives say they expect their field sales revenue to decrease, while **80 percent** expect their inside/digital sales revenue to increase, according to Boston Consulting Group.

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Your buyers want and prefer digital sales interactions. But that doesn't mean you can start spamming them with the same old sales pitch. You need to think digital first, build value-based connections, and deliver highly memorable and persuasive virtual presentations.

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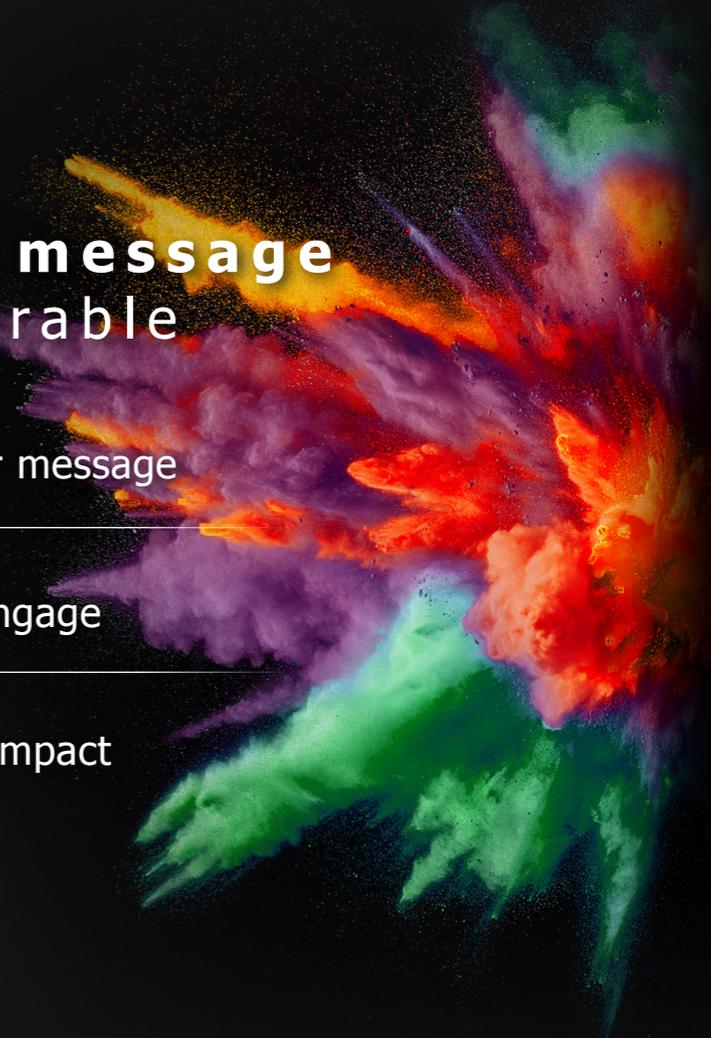
## make **yourself** more memorable

- 01.** think digital first
- 02.** build credibility and reach
- 03.** personalize your interactions



## make **your message** more memorable

- 04.** sharpen your message
- 05.** prepare to engage
- 06.** deliver with impact





make yourself more

*memorable*

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# think *digital first*

The average person sends and receives 121 business emails per day, and Fortune 500 executives receive an average of 500 emails a day, not including spam.

Buyer reachability is at an all-time low. Buyers are inundated with emails, robocalls, and LinkedIn messages—most of which get ignored.

How can you cut through the noise?

You need to do more than just switch to digital messages and virtual meetings. You need to think digital first. That means sharing helpful information online, making value-based connections before you try to sell, and nurturing those relationships to move them through the pipeline.

All of these tasks require the right digital tools.

In addition to your CRM, here are a few tech stack staples to consider:

- **A prospecting tool** to collect and manage lead and contact data.
- **Sales engagement software** to build and manage automated cadences.
- **Sales enablement software** to organize and support your enablement content.
- **Conversation intelligence software** to provide detailed coaching feedback.
- **A personal video tool** to enable asynchronous video engagement.
- **Automated win-loss analysis** to provide tailored coaching based on buyer feedback.

With the right tech stack, implemented well, you can execute faster and with greater precision on digital channels.





# build *credibility* and *reach*

**Digital sales requires sellers to build a credible reputation online.** And that reputation takes time to build. Buyers are using digital channels to find new insights, learn about solutions, and narrow their options. They're fully in control of their buying journey, and they're skeptical of anything that looks or smells like a sales pitch.

When buyers see your messages in their inbox or social feed, they're less likely to respond.

But if you're building credibility first by sharing relevant and useful insights, you can establish trust with your potential buyers before they see your sales pitch. You'll prime the relationship and they'll be more open to reading your messages and taking your calls.

You need to invest time into building trust and demonstrating your value, so your buyers believe you have their interests at heart and it's worth their time to learn more.

- Share useful data and insights, and relevant tools and resources
- Answer their questions
- Send interesting industry information and links
- Connect them with other helpful people in their industry

When you offer value in these ways, you build credibility and reach *before* you speak with them. **Create a connection that demonstrates your insight and relevance as a trusted advisor before you move into "sales mode."**

## "sales math" doesn't add up



**Frank Pinder**  
EVP Digital Transformation

For years, the sales process was linear, predictable, and controlled. As a result, sales organizations often used "sales math," or a sales equation, to train their sellers.

Traditional sales math meant that if you made 100 phone calls, 10 people would answer. If those 10 people answered, three of them would become opportunities. Of those three opportunities, one would become a sale.

Sellers are still told to make a certain number of calls and send a certain number of messages to fill the funnel and hit their quota.

But that old sales math doesn't add up today. The sales equation is changing—you can't rely on 100 calls to equal one sale or three opportunities.

As buyers become increasingly harder to reach, sellers need to contact more prospects than ever before, just to get the same number of meetings booked.



# personalize your interactions

You're trying to connect with prospects, but so are hundreds of other companies and thousands of other sellers.

Buyers still need your solutions, but they've become numb to traditional outreach methods and they're resisting seller contact as long as possible.

What can you do? Consider these stats:

- **71 percent** of buyers are more likely to engage with a salesperson if they can provide specific information relevant to the prospect's current job.
- **89 percent** of buyers don't engage with a seller when they feel the solution isn't relevant to their company.
- **77 percent** of buyers are more likely to choose a vendor if they feel the seller is informed about their business needs.

No matter how you connect with your prospects, your interactions must be personalized to their business needs. You need to show them that you've done your research and you know how and why you can add value to their business situation.

Buyers don't want to hear about product facts and features, they just want to know how your solution will benefit their business in a tangible way, from their day-to-day operations to their high-level strategic goals.



## putting personalization to the (field) test



**Tim Riesterer**  
Chief Strategy Officer

Should you personalize your messages by industry, company, or individual?

In one field trial, we targeted 7,000 cold prospects with sales emails to test different levels of personalization. The CTAs in these emails were identical, but they had different subject lines and openings based on various personalization methods.

While individual + company personalization had the highest open rate, **industry personalization significantly outperformed other approaches** in terms of click-throughs and meetings scheduled.

The lesson?

You can get people to open an email if it looks personal to them, but they'll most likely be turned off if the message inside isn't relevant to their business concerns.

To create real interest, offer an insight about their industry. Show that you know more about their competition than they do. You'll activate their sense of intrigue, and they'll be more likely to click a link in your message.



make **your message** more  
*memorable*

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# sharpen your *message*

Our research shows that **your audience will forget about 90 percent of what you communicate after 48 hours.** Worse yet—the little they do remember is completely random.

If your message isn't explicitly clear, each person will walk away with a different understanding of what they just heard. But if your goal is to drive consensus around a specific buying decision, you need to make sure your audience doesn't just remember *something*—they need to remember the *right thing*.

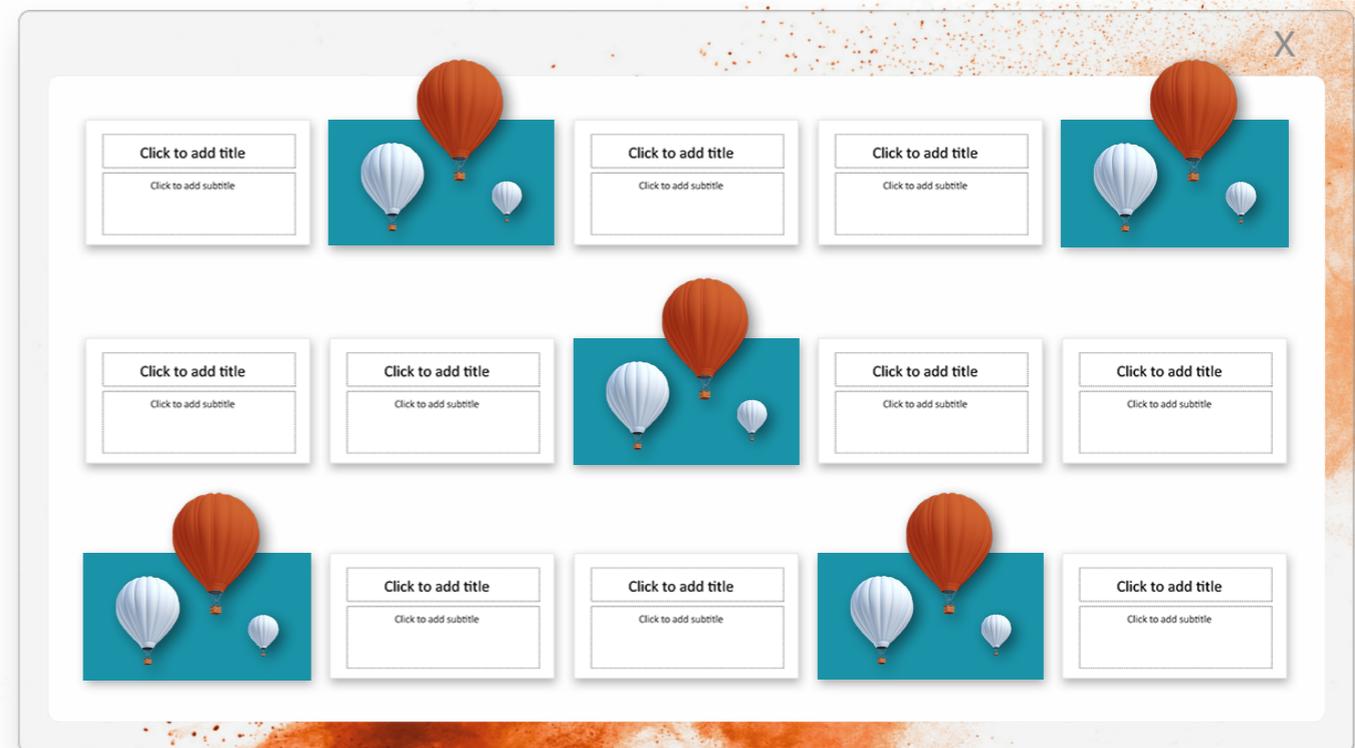
As a general measure, we refer to the small amount of information people remember as a metaphorical "10%." So when you're talking to your prospects and customers, you need to intentionally clarify your 10% message and repeat that message throughout your presentation.

**The 10% message is a crisp and concise statement that emphasizes key takeaways from your content that you want your audience to remember and act upon.**

By identifying and repeating your 10% message, you can better control what your audience remembers and influence their buying decisions in your favor.

## An effective 10% message is:

- **Focused** – Identify the main takeaway from your content and include no more than 3–4 supporting points.
- **Rewarding** – Link your message to something your audience finds rewarding, like a better business outcome or learning how to do something new.
- **Differentiated** – Make sure your message is unique to you, and that another competitor in your field can't claim the same statement.
- **Repeatable** – Create a message that's easily remembered and simple for your buyer to repeat to other people.
- **Actionable** – Phrase your message as an action you want your buyer to take to achieve a beneficial goal.



# prepare to *engage*

There's a popular myth that people have shorter attention spans than 25 years ago. But our research disproves that idea.

People have a great capacity for prolonged attention—just ask anyone who's ever binge-watched a television show. The problem is, they now have a higher threshold for stimulation. And they're surrounded by highly stimulating distractions that pull their attention away.

Your audience is watching your presentation with a lot of enticing distractions right at their fingertips. You're competing for attention with their phone, email, social media, and even their fridge.

To grab and hold your audience's attention, you need to overcome that stimulation threshold with impactful, dynamic visuals and interactive elements—all while continually directing their attention to what you want them to remember throughout your presentation.

## To focus your audience's attention, use:

- **Color** – Guide your audience's eyes to the most important information on your slides by adding a splash of color and graying out other parts.
- **Size** – Adjust the size of specific information or visuals on a slide to increase or decrease their importance relative to the other information.
- **Animation** – Add motion to a slide to sustain your buyer's attention while you gradually reveal a complex idea.
- **Less information** – Simplifying complex content is not the answer to memorable presentations but reducing the amount of unnecessary information on your slides will keep your audience focused on the essentials.

## roa: return on attention



**Dr. Carmen Simon**  
Chief Science Officer

A word of caution when choosing how much information to reduce in your slides.

On one hand, too much information can negatively impact your audience's focus.

On the other hand, too little information will lead to boredom and multitasking. The brain is drawn to complexity because complexity synchronizes better with how the brain itself works.

So offering your audience manageable complexity by controlling elements such as color, size, and animation will help direct people's attention and focus. Using animation, for instance, helps your buyers' brains focus and understand information more easily.

You don't need to include every kind of visual stimulus on every slide. But if you invest in some visual elements to gain more attention and make it easier for your buyers to remember you, you're getting an outstanding return on attention.

# deliver with *impact*

Many sellers find virtual presentations challenging because it's difficult to build relationships and presentations are too passive. As a result, there's little to no audience engagement.

How can you tell your story in a way that creates a more interactive and engaging experience?

- **Turn on your camera** – Getting people to show up on video is a simple and effective way to prevent multitasking, build connection, and engage with your audience.
- **Use annotation** – Using the pen feature in PowerPoint, you can write or draw directly on your slides while you're talking with your buyers, to direct their attention to key points and bring your audience into the experience.
- **Add whiteboarding** – Live whiteboarding makes your presentation more dynamic and memorable. Plus, it differentiates you from nearly every other presentation your buyers will see.
- **Use chat and polls** – Use the chat and polls to facilitate interaction with everyone on the call, discover audience sentiments, and drive consensus around key issues and opportunities.

When all your attendees show up as small squares on a screen, it's difficult to create the same level of participation as an in-person meeting. By using these simple techniques, you can instantly boost your impact by making your presentation more engaging and interactive.

## why isn't everyone whiteboarding?



**Tim Riesterer**

Chief Strategy Officer

Whiteboarding has been shown, time and time again, to be a highly effective selling tool.

In one behavioral study, we found that watching a whiteboard presentation led to **a 16 percent improvement in memory** over watching a PowerPoint presentation or having someone just talk through the information using a single slide.

In another neuroscience study, when comparing attention among groups of business professionals, there was **a 91 percent difference in visual attention** to important elements in favor of the whiteboard vs. slides.

Even if you don't have a physical whiteboard, annotation—that is, drawing directly on a PowerPoint slide—can reap some of the benefits of whiteboarding.

Our research has shown that drawing directly on a slide while presenting helps direct focus, build trust in the presenter, and increase your buyer's motivation to act.

If you want to stand out in a digital setting, practice and improve your annotation and whiteboarding skills.

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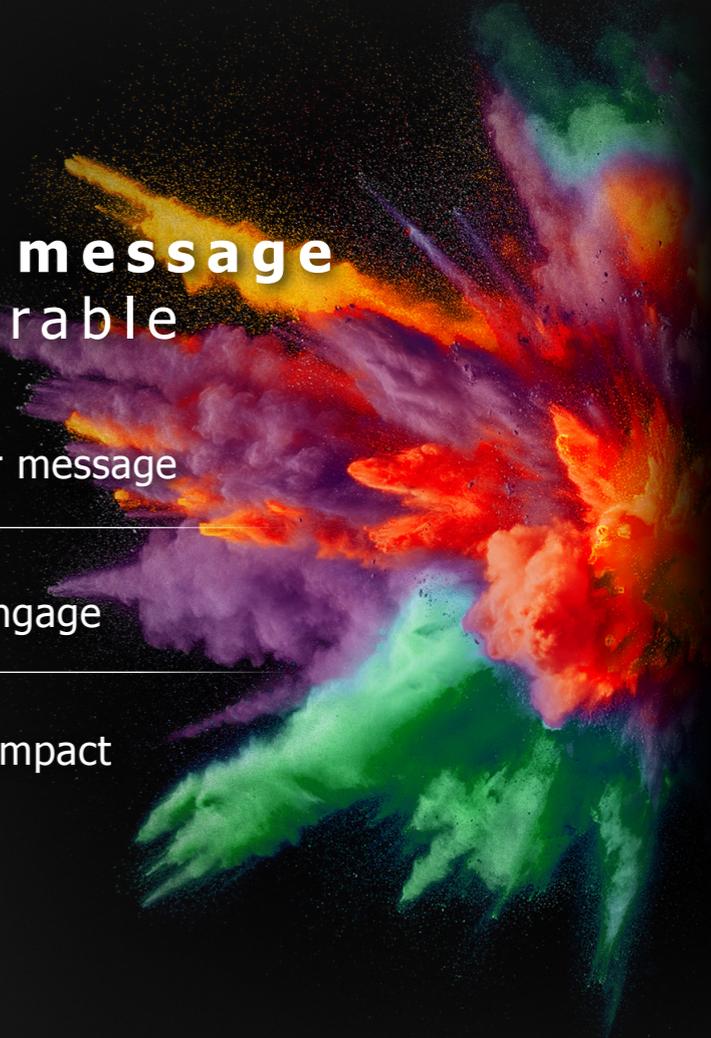
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## about Corporate Visions

Corporate Visions is the leading provider of science-backed revenue growth services for sales, marketing, and customer success. Global B2B companies work with Corporate Visions to articulate value and promote growth in three ways:

- **Make Value Situational** by distinguishing your commercial programs between customer acquisition, retention, and expansion.
- **Make Value Specific** by creating and delivering customer conversations that communicate concrete value, change behavior, and motivate buying decisions.
- **Make Value Systematic** by equipping your commercial engine to deliver consistent and persistent touches across the entire Customer Deciding Journey.

Only with Corporate Visions will your revenue teams get science-backed training to articulate value in every critical conversation with prospects and customers.

[CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE](#)

## author



**Tim Riesterer**  
Chief Strategy Officer  
Corporate Visions



Tim Riesterer, Chief Strategy Officer at Corporate Visions, is dedicated to helping companies improve their conversations with prospects and customers to win more business. A visionary researcher, thought leader, keynote speaker, and practitioner with more than 20 years of experience in marketing and sales management, Riesterer is co-author of four books, including *Customer Message Management*, *Conversations that Win the Complex Sale*, *The Three Value Conversations*, and *The Expansion Sale*.

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