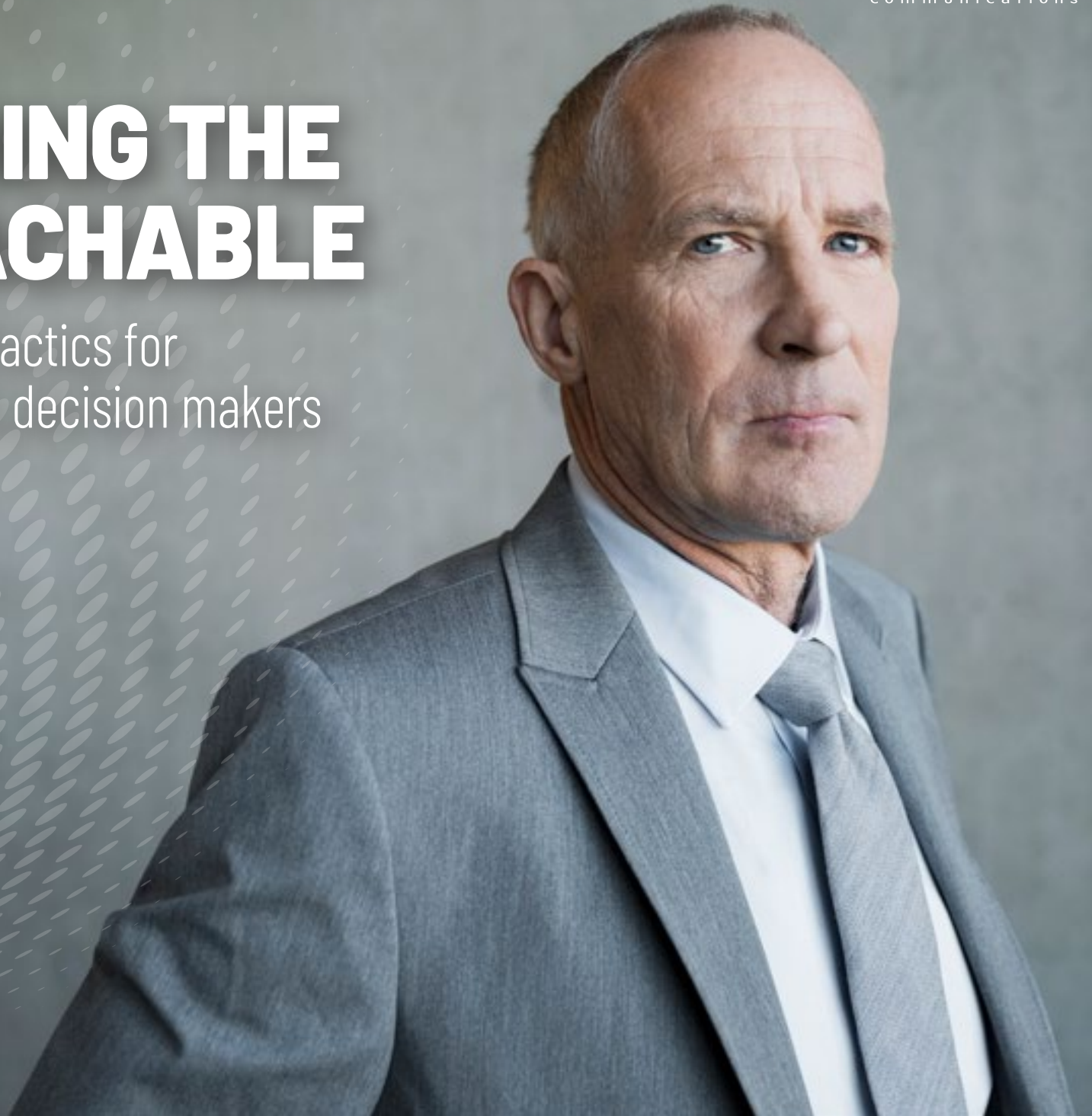



REACHING THE UNREACHABLE

Strategies and tactics for
connecting with decision makers

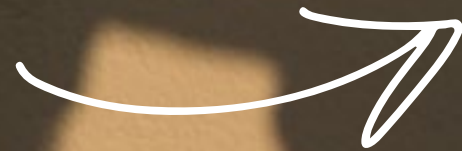




**Whatever
happened to sales
prospects who are willing
to respond to you?**

They don't answer emails, return phone messages or acknowledge you any more. It's almost like they've turned into ghosts. You can feel their presence, but can't communicate with them in any way.

**What's driving this
frustrating scenario?**



It's because customers have changed the way they buy.

In the past, they were comfortable connecting with a salesperson early in their purchasing process. It's the way business was done for the better part of a century. But it's no longer the case.

According to a recent Gartner study, customers today don't want to talk to a salesperson until they are nearly 70% of the way through their purchasing process. They prefer to do their own research, education and vendor selection.

What does this mean to marketers? You need to enable this self-guided process with high-quality, educational content and resources that are focused on their needs. The suppliers that do this the best will end up connecting with prospects and customers.

It's that simple.

Today's winning strategy: **Teach, don't sell.**

Clearly, customers haven't suddenly stopped buying. They've simply found a more efficient way to manage their buying process, fueled by a growing amount of valuable, informative content online.

DOOR OPENERS

TACTICS FOR USING SALES PROPS

Content will help you reach unreachable decision makers by attracting prospects in the early stages of the buying process. But know that it works over time and is not a quick hit solution. It's a consistent solution.

Often, when you're trying to "get in the door" with a prospect on a selective basis, using a sales prop may be effective. In the next few pages we'll highlight some examples of physical props that will help you open doors.

Remember, it is best to put your efforts into a long-term strategy using content, but sprinkle it with a few door-opening tactics whenever appropriate.

How can you enable this new way of buying with your customers and prospects?

Here are some tips to help you refocus your marketing so it assists you in connecting with prospects:

- **Provide a consistent supply of high-quality, educational content** focused on your prospects' needs. Inform and teach them over time. This builds trust, which, in turn, makes it more likely that they'll meet with you and eventually buy from you.
- **Focus your content on your customers' pain points and aspirations.** How can you discern them? Ask key customers what they struggle with and are challenged by. Ask your sales and customer support people what questions they get asked most frequently. Then answer them with your content, one at a time.
- **Your perfect buyers' needs change** as they move through their buying process. Initially, they will be focused on education and learning about the products and solutions they're considering. As they get closer to buying, their needs will become more specific and product-focused. Your content should "meet" them at every key point of their buyer's journey.





What's the big idea?

This isn't just a marketing issue. It's a cultural one.

As a business, you need to consider transforming all aspects of the ways you approach and support customers. Here are three cultural shifts you can master to survive and thrive in today's technology-fueled selling environment:

1. Develop a culture of curiosity.

Learn about the needs and aspirations of your customers and prospects. **How?** Use ongoing research and business intelligence. Learn your customers' businesses and the industry vocabulary they use. *(Remember, if you want to do business with a French man, you need to learn to speak French).* Use this information to drive messaging that resonates with your customers and prospects. Learn from them and move toward stronger messaging that better connects with the people you need to reach.

2. Develop a culture of sharing.

It's not enough to just research and gather mounds of intelligence about your customers and prospects. You must transform it into content that addresses their needs, solves their problems and makes their lives easier.

Become a "magnet" for prospects who are starving for the right information and knowledge: Consistently publish

TACTICAL SALES PROPS

Get Your Foot in the Door

A tennis shoe with a clever note tied to its laces is a great way to get attention. The note should have a headline of *“Just Trying to Get My Foot in the Door”* and the shoe prop should be dropped off at the offices of your prospects with the targeted prospect’s name on the note. Include your phone number or email address. Sometimes when you go beyond the typical sales effort, prospects will agree to a meeting.

We’re Hot and We Deliver

Print up your key sales message/benefit along with the headline *“We’re Hot and We Deliver”* on a piece of card stock that can be glued to the inside of a pizza box. Make sure the message asks people to “tell Mr. Big to take a meeting with me.” Drop a couple of pizzas off at the prospect’s place of business and tell the receptionist they are for staff members and Mr. Big. Typically, the pizzas will end up on the business lunch break room. As the aroma of pizza floats through the business, people will come in to grab a slice and learn who provided the pizza. Your message will get in front of Mr. Big when the employees thank him for the pizza.

Remote Control Car

Mail the prospect a \$20 remote-control car, but hold back the radio control device. Your note should say you’ll bring the control by when the prospect invites you in. Your prospect can’t use the car unless he or she has the controller.

high-quality, educational content that’s focused upon their needs. Your focus should be on nurturing, not selling. Don’t worry – your prospects will tell you when they’re ready to buy!

3. Embrace a culture of change.

As a sales manager, it’s time to give up the illusion of control. You’re no longer in charge of the buying process – **the customer is**. Forget about pushing products, features, benefits and advantages at people who aren’t even sure they want to buy yet.

Even more fundamentally, recognize that your customers and prospects want to read information that is uniquely focused on their needs, questions, challenges and aspirations. If they can’t get it from you, they’ll find what they need elsewhere – most likely, from one or more of your competitors. Remember, great content makes your company look smart and people like to do business with smart people.

Be open to the fact that they’re getting information about potential solutions from a number of different channels. Figure out where they’re gathering online and “meet” them there. Answer their questions in forums and online communities. Be helpful.

In short, smart is the new brand.

Become a thought leader to your customers, a trusted resource. Deliver value to them consistently, and you’ll form relationships that will result in you winning more sales.

The strategy for marketing and sales success.

Successful businesses today have learned to stop selling and start sharing information of value. Why not strive to become **THE “go-to” resource** for your industry or product type? Build trusted relationships that will help you get on the short lists of your favorite prospects and customers.

The bottom line is that a content-based approach, properly planned and executed, can help your salespeople reach unreachable prospects and convert them into buyers – faster!

**Contact us today to learn
HOW to communicate with and
persuade today’s customers –
and grow your business faster!**

414-861-2331



OTHER FUN AND TACTICAL IDEAS

Here are some lower-cost alternatives that still deliver plenty of bang for the buck and could be used to send to a larger group of prospects:

- **A note in a bottle**, like the kind that would wash up on shore.
- **A Leatherman multi-tool**: This Swiss Army knife tool features a clever, integrated all-in-one design that you could tie into your firm’s integrated approach to solving customer problems. Mail prospects a photo of the Leatherman and offer to present a real one to them *when they grant you 15 minutes to hear your story*. The Leatherman may cost you \$20, but it will get you an appointment.
- **Viewmaster**: This old-fashioned slide viewer is quite unique looking and would command attention when the box is opened. You would custom-create a Viewmaster reel with your sales message that could be inserted into the box. This company will make a reel for you plus they sell viewers. <https://www.image3d.com>

For best results, your prop must tie in with the story you aim to communicate to your prospects.

