

2024

The Year of the Customer



Going to Customer Drives Expansive New Growth

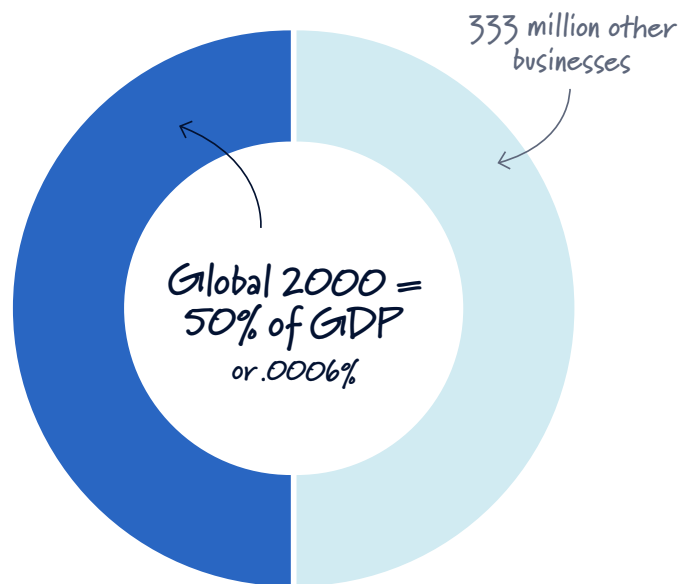
In every business sector, revenue and spending are dominated by a handful of companies. The [Global 2000 drives over 50% of the world's GDP](#). Out of 333 million businesses, that's .0006%. For example, Samsung alone would rank as the 51st largest country based on economic output.

As a result, enterprise accounts offer a whole new growth opportunity. Growth within these enterprises requires different data, knowledge, strategies,

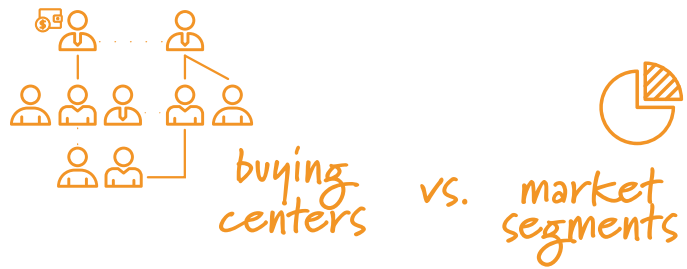
tactics, and resources compared to traditional acquisition-focused go-to-market approaches. To tap into the massive growth potential of enterprise accounts, companies need to equip their account teams with the right know-how and tools.

5 ways Go-to-Customer Offers a New, Different Approach to Revenue Growth

Let's review [five ways](#) Go-to-Customer (GTC) operates differently, what's required and what results can be achieved.



No.1



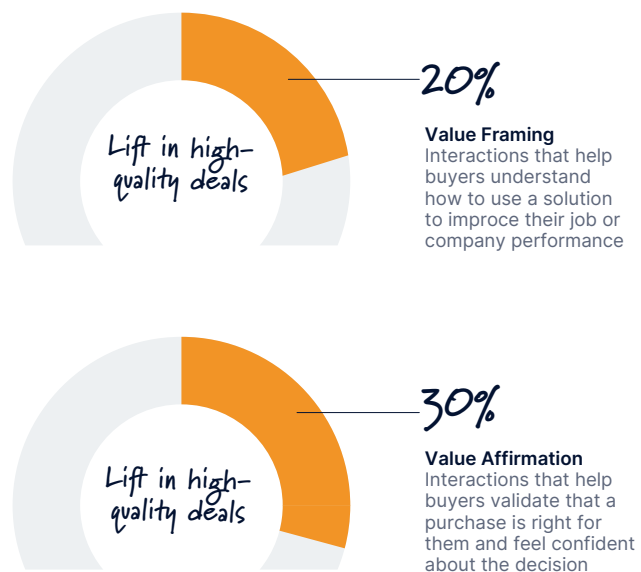
GTC Focuses on Buying Centers vs. Market Segments

According to Gartner, the B2B buying journey is highly complex.

“The average enterprise B2B buying group consists of five to 11 stakeholders who represent an average of five distinct business functions. Meeting needs and driving consensus can be a challenge. Value framing and value affirmation drive high quality deals.”

Gartner 2022 B2B Buyer Survey

Buyers are stakeholders in funded initiatives they define and make decisions based on emotion and logic where they have something to gain. Buyers are part of an agreement network that must align in order to act.

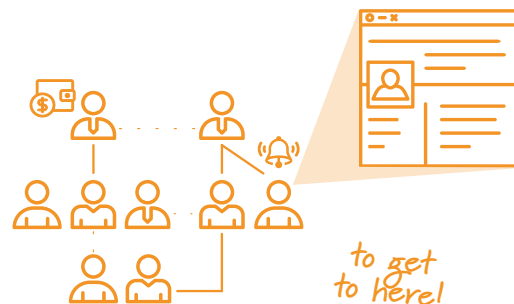


Gartner 2022 B2B Buyer Survey

Requirements to Model Buying Centers

start here

- 1 Create a list of all potential stakeholders involved in an agreement network
- 2 Map all the stakeholders involved based on roles, relationships, and desired outcomes
- 3 Drill down into the background of each stakeholder to understand their unique perspectives
- 4 Monitor changes to the network, constantly including new stakeholders who surface



to get to here!

- 5 Annotate how the network behaves over time in making decisions



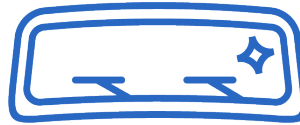
Agreement networks span regions, departments, levels, and even owned companies. Don't restrict your view to only CRM contacts, but instead look for hidden people involved and match your team to the network to align with each stakeholder's interest with the best internal team member.

Buying Center Precision Yields Results

- ✓ Increase close rates and prevent deals from stalling
- ✓ Decrease sales cycle time by addressing each stakeholder's unique interest
- ✓ Increase repeat purchases by knowing the network and how it makes decisions
- ✓ Increase account expansion by mapping more buying networks effectively

Case in Point

A leading media firm was able to navigate a large renewal spanning over a dozen stakeholders. This "must win" deal required an in-depth understanding of new stakeholders involved at multiple levels and their individual perspectives. The company successfully navigated the renewal by orchestrating internal resources value communication to each stakeholder based on role alignment. The company is now well positioned for repeat, add on cross-sells and up-sells, and using network insights to model other accounts.



windshield

vs.



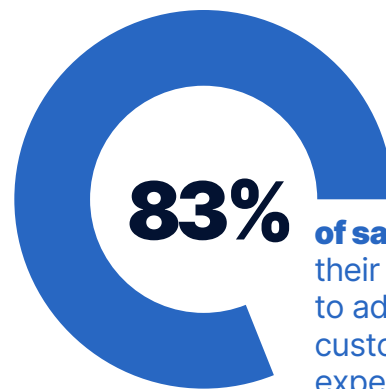
rearview mirror

GTC Analyzes Customer Needs vs. Market Demand

GTC is a growth strategy based on continuously analyzing evolving and changing customer needs. It looks forward to what's occurring and being prioritized within an account's environment vs. looking backwards to what known demand has already been expressed. Customers fund initiatives that address their needs and priorities, creating a "customer" (vs. salesperson) driven pipeline that is a well spring of new opportunities, if you are aware of them. Given the fact that traditional demand has been upended with accelerated change affecting everything from supply chains to consumer spending and everything in-between, product demand forecasts are no longer as predictable as they once were.

Alternatively, growing enterprise accounts by staying close to B2B stakeholders, addressing their changing needs, and helping them succeed is a way to tap into entirely new growth areas. Companies that create an adaptive approach to meeting the needs of customers

and who are resourceful, innovative, and flexible will uncover a large volume of new growth opportunities quickly. Unfortunately, according to Gartner, 83% of sellers struggle to adapt to changing customer needs and expectations. (Gartner, Driving Seller Behavior Change, November 2023).



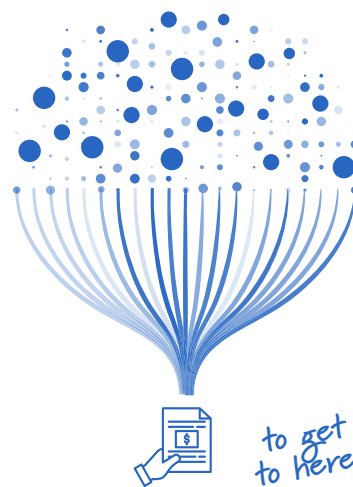
83% of sales leaders report their sellers struggle to adapt to changing customer needs and expectations.

Gartner.

Requirements for Mining Customer Needs

start here

- 1 Collect sources of information relative to customer needs across the enterprise
- 2 Organize the information by category, source, and type for analysis
- 3 Assess the size, frequency, urgency, and level these needs are originating from
- 4 Prioritize the needs your company can address and match to relevant growth playbooks
- 5 Activate priority opportunities quickly to be relevant, timely, and in context of the need



In the race for customers, proactive problem-solving is key. “Speed to need” empowers you to outpace competitors by suggesting solutions first. When you earn trust through authenticity and viable approaches, you secure a significant competitive edge that results in a much higher win rate. Customers want what’s easiest for them while achieving the outcomes they want. Unlock the power of collective problem-solving by showing them a path they can believe in.

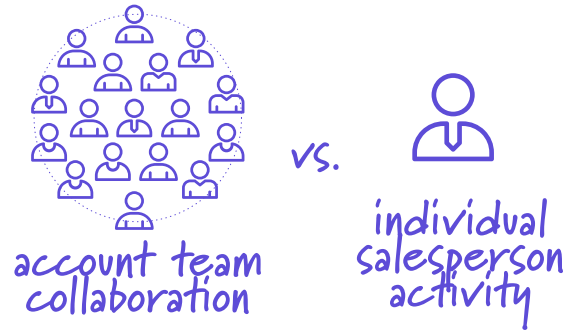
Continuous Need Activation Yields Results

- ✓ Increase pipeline volume given expansive breadth of enterprise needs
- ✓ Increase average deal size given the variety of needs that can be addressed
- ✓ Increase deal velocity by moving quickly in terms of speed to need
- ✓ Increase deal frequency given how many new opportunities surface across the enterprise

Case in Point

A **technology provider** was able to close hundreds of growth opportunities for a Global 100 firm over a 5-year timeframe. The customer became accustomed to solving problems with the technology provider weekly far more easily than dealing with other supplier alternatives. This cemented on continuous growth rate over 100% year over year and kept competitors out of the equation for most of the opportunities developed.

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GTC Enables Teams to Collaborate and Adapt vs. Measuring Salespeople Activity

GTC enables coordinated actions across account teams driving predictable customer engagement steps that lead to wins. The process is transparent and can be measured, monitored, reviewed, analyzed and corroborated at any moment given it's always up to date. The team is constantly adapting to a broad range of changing stakeholder needs every day, with transparency across roles, and reflects adaptive measures through the actions it takes, and recommendations it makes. This is different than monitoring what a salesperson does via CRM data. Stalled deals and elongated sales cycles result from monitoring sales activity at the expense of monitoring customers' changing situations. For example, according to LinkedIn's 2022 Talent Insights Report, "86% of reps say they've either lost a client or had a deal delayed because a champion changed roles." Being able to quickly adapt to customer org and people changes, M&A, evolving threats

"86% of reps say they've either lost a client or had a deal delayed because a champion changed roles."

LinkedIn 2022 Talent Insights Report

and opportunities, and other events is extremely important to deal sustainability. Companies routinely invest hundreds of thousands in new deal pursuits in people time without a systematic ability to adapt to changes, gain the depth of knowledge needed about those changes or centrally capture deal history and tribal knowledge along the way.

Team Collaboration & Adaptability Requirements

start here

- 1 Maintain an online account plan where the team executes together in a central collaborative digital environment
- 2 Update progress on key customer initiatives and stakeholder feedback continuously
- 3 Collaborate across functions to innovate and adapt to a customers' changing situation
- 4 Coordinate account stakeholder comms across roles and levels



to get to here!

- 5 Demonstrate you have the customers' best interests in mind by making their problem the focus



The entire account team needs centralized access to online account plans, not just the sales resources. Many account teams are fragmented by role already and limiting a real-time view of account knowledge and progress to only a few. This approach restricts insights and innovation. Annual or quarterly account plans are too slow and limited. Being adaptive requires daily awareness of critical events, transparency, and collaboration across the entire team.

Adapting to Customer Needs Yields Results

- ✓ Increase close rates by adapting to the customer's changing situation
- ✓ Increase contract value and duration as a flexible and adaptive
- ✓ Increase share of wallet by being more strategic and partner oriented

Case in Point

An information technology firm was able to adapt to an account's need to solve an internal reporting problem resulting from fragmented views and manual unification of data across multiple sources that caused errors and delays. By pivoting to the issue, the technology firm was able to win the client's trust to move forward on the original deal scope and increase the size of the contract opportunity including expansion into new buying centers.

No.4



solves problems vs. sell products

GTC Solves Problems vs. Sells Products

GTC looks at the inventory of capabilities you possess vs. products. It has been proven time and again that customers don't want products. They want a set of integrated capabilities that fit with their own capabilities and resources to address a problem and drive expected outcomes. Simple inventories of capabilities spanning your organization across products, services, know-how, IP, resources, problem solving experience, approaches, methodologies, reporting, and analysis assets, etc. are all relevant to a buyer. It's more rare that a customer is looking for your product than looking to solve a problem or fill an existing need.

57% of executive buyers want to see a conceptual model or framework to see how all the pieces of a solution fit together when funding initiatives

Forrester Research, Inc.

Customer Problem Solving Requirements

start here

- 1 Establish a format for examining a clients need or problem across the team
- 2 Create a simple inventory of capabilities across the company by type
- 3 Pre-bundle different combinations of capabilities tied to a type of problem's scope
- 4 Offer alternatives to customers to help solve the problem
- 5 Provide know-how and guidance around how to ensure success and measure impacts



to get to here!



Customers value know-how and support as much as any other type of capability. It's the ability to implement and achieve the expected outcomes that stakeholders must have confidence in. It's often more about the risk involved and reducing that risk to a level that is acceptable vs. just the proposed benefits vs. cost. In the book "Good to Great," the message remains... if you focus on the customer and their needs, sales will happen.

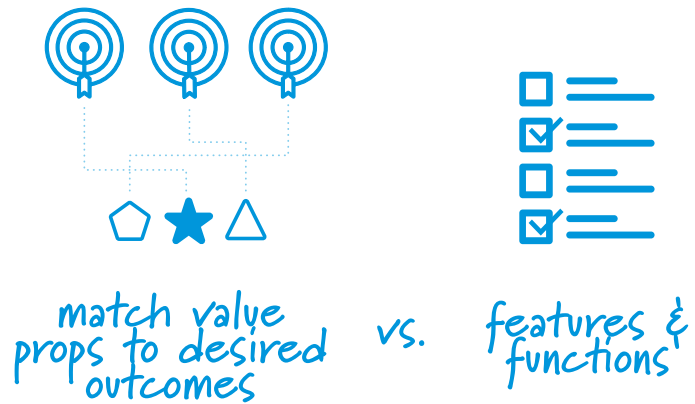
Innovative Solution Packaging Yield Results

- ✓ Increase average deal size by offering more capabilities that fill gaps and increase value
- ✓ Increase the ratio of larger deals to smaller deals through expanded solution bundles
- ✓ Increase deal close rates by providing more options
- ✓ Increase the strategic level of relationship building by elevating solution alternatives
- ✓ Increase cross-selling pipelines by establish a long-term vision with account executives

Case in Point

A **technology firm** elevated a recommended solution to the CTO level vs the traditional entry point (much lower) in the technology organization. The solution included deploying broader support, guidance, and measurement than initially requested. This approach resulted in a deal size 40x larger than average. The solution required a team of people working together vs. a single salesperson.

No.5



GTC Matches Value to Desired Outcomes vs. Product Features and Functions

GTC aligns value to what customers value vs. products. One certainly feeds the other, but what is important is to work backwards from the customer's desired outcomes vs. working forward from what a product does. These are two completely different starting points that are often worlds apart. The ability to actively listen to customers, synthesize their diverse perspectives, and articulate the value proposition in terms that resonate with their individual priorities is crucial for garnering support.

Only 11% of executive buyers think sales conversations are valuable

Forrester Research, Inc.

Outcome Based Messaging Requirements

start here

- 1 Create messaging that originates from what customers say by role
- 2 Establish a conversational style to messaging that sounds like your customers language
- 3 Provide accessible messaging soundbites and headlines based on situations
- 4 Generate automatically recommend messaging cues to commercial teams
- 5 Ensure outcomes are expressed for each stakeholder consistent with their interests

Personalize your message

Business need ▾ Playbook ▾
Style ▾ Tone ▾

GENERATE EMAIL

to get to here!



It's very easy to believe you understand a client's desired business outcomes without really having the background. It's also inevitable that the client's situation will change and require adjustment in recommended solutions and associated value. Leverage a value equation that considers the three pillars of impact, cost, and risk. For each stakeholder, the impacts (minus costs) must align to their expectations while keeping the risk low. This can differ across stakeholders and should be constantly re-affirmed by each.

Better Messaging Yields Results

- ✓ Close more deals faster with more relevant messaging to all stakeholders
- ✓ Accelerate sales velocity cycles through greater relevancy given the customers situation
- ✓ Gain greater market share by leveraging customer insights faster than your competitors
- ✓ Increase cross sell and upsell volume by becoming a trusted advisor

Case in Point

A consulting firm was able to use deep knowledge of stakeholders involved in a large decision to align relevant messaging that tied to their specific interests and goals. This was in stark contrast to other firms who weren't as knowledgeable, resulting in a significant competitive win.



Easy Ways AI Automates GTC Execution

AI is a gamechanger in supporting a variety of GTC functions, assuming the data is there to support it. Here are 5 ways AI automates GTC strategies to create a competitive advantage:



Summarize account research and documents quickly to glean insights and findings faster



Search broad sources of account information in seconds to find answers to questions



Write outbound emails including value messaging tied to customer problems



Generate proposal alternatives and drafts automatically tied to specific customer situations



Find similarities and differences between documents, notes, proposals and articles

Conclusion

Productivity Gains Pay for GTC Investments

For most companies, account research, planning and execution is a very manual approach in an environment with a high degree of role fragmentation. Endless meetings, reports, email are common. Modernizing account management systems can squeeze major inefficiencies out of the process, empowering fewer people to do much more, with speed and precision. It's easy to double account team productivity by making these investments at a time when GTC is critical to growth and retention objectives. GTC simply pays for itself quickly in many ways and will be a huge asset and competitive advantage for those that modernize in 2024.

Connect with us

Learn how to gather intelligence, improve collaboration in deal processes, and streamline customer communications to boost pipelines and revenue.

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