



Gartner®

Chief Sales Officer Leadership Vision 2022

3 Strategic Actions for Success

From Chris Howard, Chief of Research, Gartner

As we head into 2022, we continue to feel the human toll of the global pandemic, but we already know it has been a watershed period in which attitudes and norms have permanently shifted — in our everyday lives and at work.

Living through COVID-19 has increased social awareness — as have growing demands for equity for those who are underrepresented.

Businesses have also changed. For many organizations, the pandemic has catalyzed digital business initiatives as we adapt to the demands of employees, customers and other stakeholders, who were forced into new digital options that they have now come to favor.

B2B purchasers are happy to buy digitally, without a sales representative; B2C consumers are buying off social media platforms; employees are physically distributed and communicating asynchronously — and IT infrastructures must secure the organization despite this “anytime, anyway, anywhere” way in which we’re operating.

You and your team may be burning out, and it’s never been more important to prioritize your time and energy.

In your role as a leader, you’ve now spent months adapting to change and delivering new solutions at speed. You and your team may be burning out, and it’s never been more important to prioritize your time and energy. To help with that, Gartner Leadership Vision provides top-level guidance to leaders and their teams on where to focus — based on our data-driven research.

We’re providing detailed insights to our clients across dozens of roles, and we’re now excited to share excerpts with the business community beyond our clients. We hope this will help you to focus discussions with your teams, peers and other leaders, so you can more quickly and effectively diagnose priorities and actions, especially as you solidify your strategic plans for 2022.



Chris Howard
Chief of Research, Gartner

Three Opportunities for the Chief Sales Officer (CSO) to Drive Digital Era Hypergrowth



Digital buying becoming more common

Overall, 43% of B2B buyers would prefer a rep-free experience, a rise to 54% among millennials, who are aging into key decision-making roles and influencers of organizational purchases.



CSO challenges

Digital buying undermines confidence in complex purchases, and customers who prefer rep-free buying experience 23% higher purchase regret.



CSO actions

Create confidence-boosting and immersive digital experiences.



Virtual selling changing how selling happens

70% of B2B sellers cite “gaining access to stakeholders virtually” as their top challenge, and 74% of CSOs have recently or are currently updating their seller competencies for virtual selling.



Most sellers feel unprepared for the new selling environment and only 20% of B2B sellers believe they are as effective selling virtually as in person.



Hire and develop flexible sellers able to deliver rep-mediated digital experiences.



Sales budgets shifting to emerging technology

The percentage of sales budgets allocated to sales technology is rising, and 88% of CSOs are considering or already executing investments in new technology to support analytics, machine learning and/or artificial intelligence (AI).

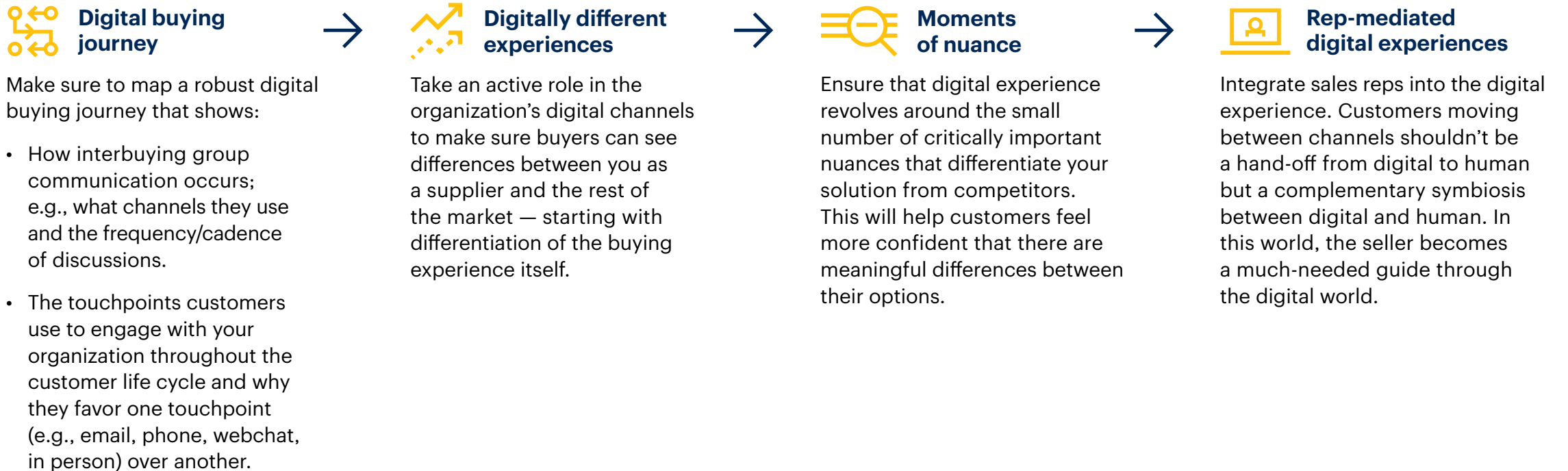


Emerging technology investments often underperform due to underlying data issues. Organizations estimate the average cost of poor data quality at \$12.9 million every year.

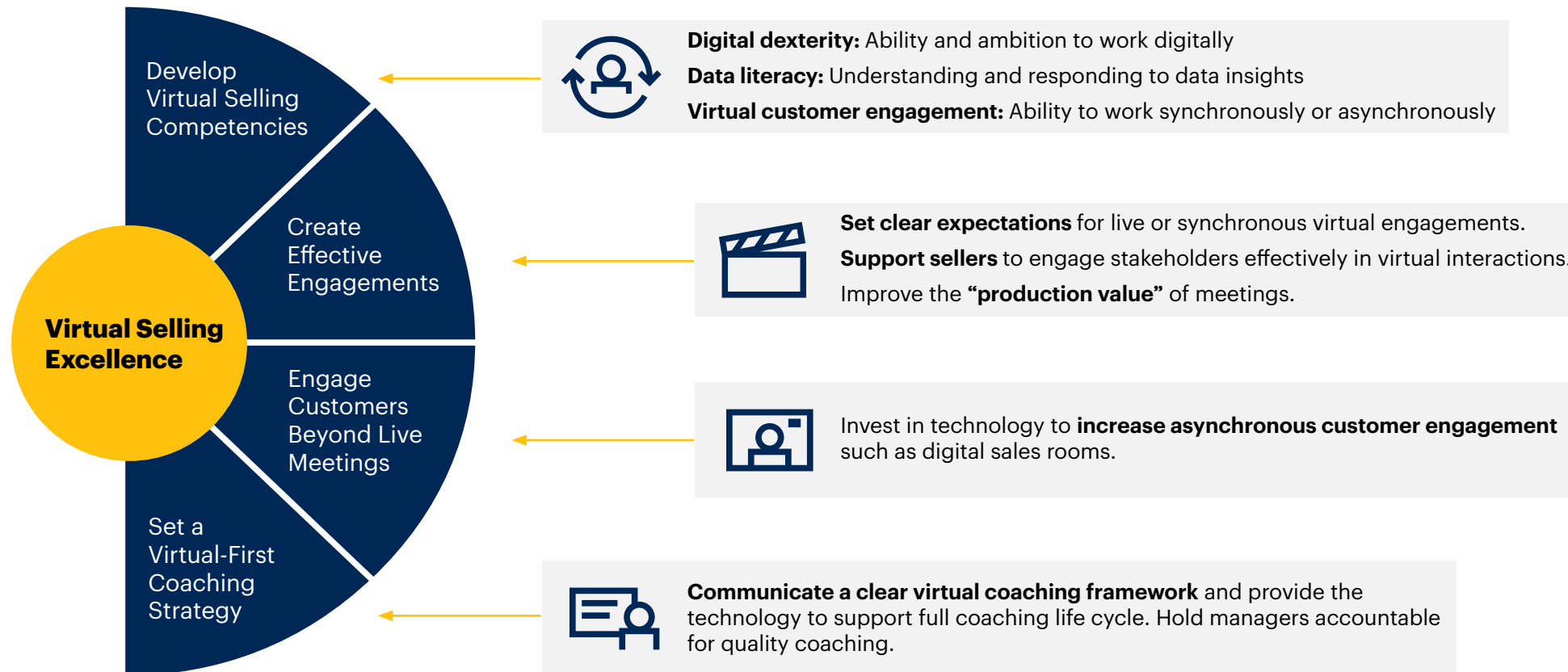


Create an AI-augmented sales function by prioritizing technology investments.

Create Confidence-Boosting and Immersive Digital Experiences



Hire and Develop Flexible Sellers Able to Deliver Rep-Mediated Digital Experiences



Create an AI-Augmented Sales Function by Prioritizing Technology Investments

Two key actions to address foundational data issues



Implement cross-functional collaborative governance policies to improve data quality throughout the organization, address system incompatibility and improve AI's impact.



Create data literacy programs to help sellers draw their own insights from analytics and understand why they must modify their behavior based on AI recommendations.

Prioritize future AI-investments based on business value and feasibility

- None
- ◐ Low
- ◑ Medium
- ◒ High
- ◓ Very High

		Business Value			Feasibility	
		Cost Efficiency ¹	Revenue Growth ²	Business Viability ³	Technology Maturity ⁴	External/Organizational Factors ⁵
1	Price Optimization	◓	◓	◓	◑	◑
2	Lead Scoring	◑	◑	◑	◑	◑
3	Cross-Selling and Upselling	◑	◑	◐	◑	◑
4	Demand Generation	◑	◑	◐	◑	◑
5	Territory Optimization	◑	◑	◑	◑	◑
6	Customer Lifetime Value Analysis	◓	◓	◓	◐	◐
7	Lead Discovery	◑	◑	◓	◐	◐
8	Sales Content Personalization	◑	◑	◐	◐	◐
9	Knowledge Management	◑	◑	◑	◐	◐
10	Sales Forecasting	◑	◑	◑	◐	◐
11	Guided Conversations	◑	◑	◐	◐	◐
12	Opportunity Scoring	◑	◑	◓	◐	◐
13	Account Intelligence	◑	◑	◑	◐	◑
14	Relationship Intelligence	◑	◑	◑	◐	◐

¹Includes operational efficiency

²Includes additional revenue streams

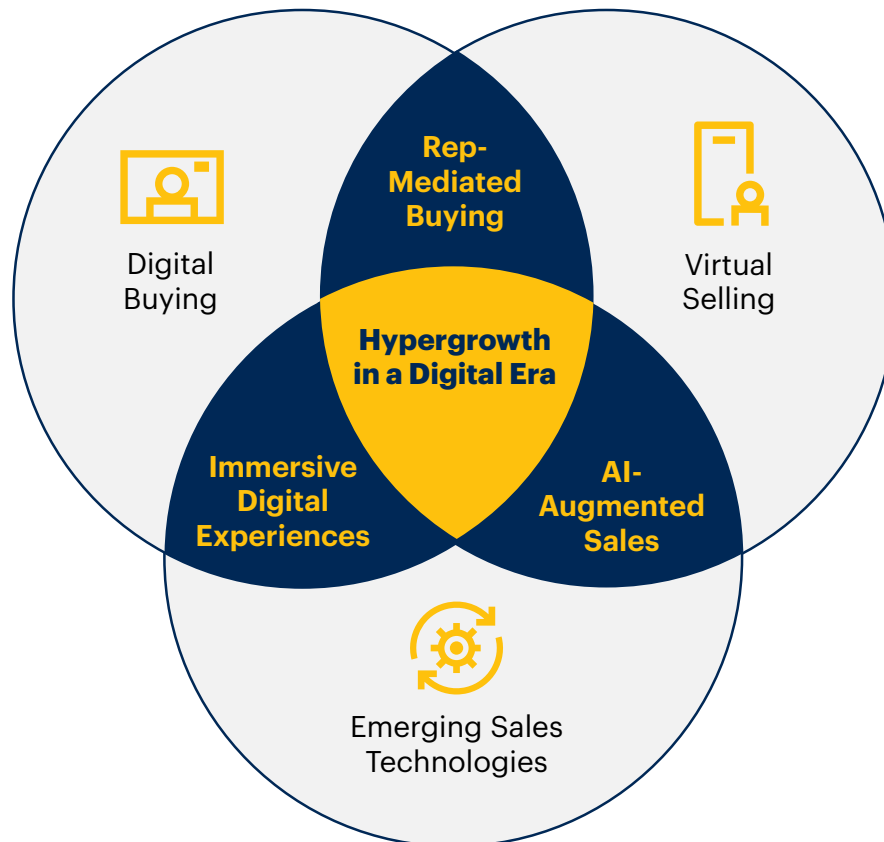
³Includes investments for sustainable business transformation

⁴Includes requirements for acquiring data of sufficient quality and quantity

⁵Includes legal and ethical considerations, stakeholder adoption, available skills and infrastructure readiness

Source: Gartner

Three Overlapping Trends Create One Opportunity for Hypergrowth







CSOs who drive market-leading growth in 2022 will:

- Give digital buyers the **confidence-boosting and immersive digital experiences** they need to make a high-quality purchase
- Hire and develop flexible sellers able to **deliver rep-mediated digital experiences** in virtual environments
- Overcome foundational issues holding back emerging sales technology investments to **create an AI-augmented sales** function

Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for sales leaders:

 <p>Research Future of Sales</p> <p>Learn how to build a buyer-centric digital-first sales function.</p> <p>Download Report</p>	 <p>Research Build a Better Strategic Plan for Your Function</p> <p>Turn your strategy into action with our tools and templates.</p> <p>Download Templates</p>	 <p>Resource Hub Future of Work Reinvented</p> <p>Reinvent where, when and how we work to maximize employees' engagement and productivity.</p> <p>Learn More</p>	 <p>Journal Gartner Business Quarterly</p> <p>Stay up to date with the most compelling research on organizational issues that cut across the C-suite.</p> <p>Download Now</p>
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