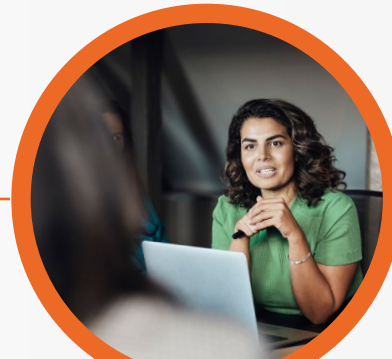
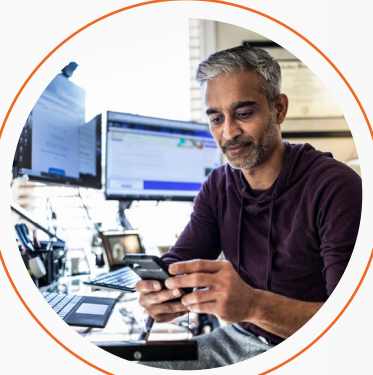


Gartner B2B Buying Report

How to adapt your sales and
marketing strategies to the current
state of B2B buying







A combined digital and human-led selling approach delivers the best value to B2B purchasers

Seventy-five percent of B2B buyers say they prefer a rep-free sales experience, but self-service digital commerce purchases are significantly more likely to result in purchase regret.

Revenue and retention leaders must be able to identify the right mix of digital and human assistance in the modern B2B buying experience to close high-quality deals.

Gartner regularly collects data to maintain an up-to-date view of the preferences and behaviors of the modern B2B buyer. In this eBook, you'll learn:

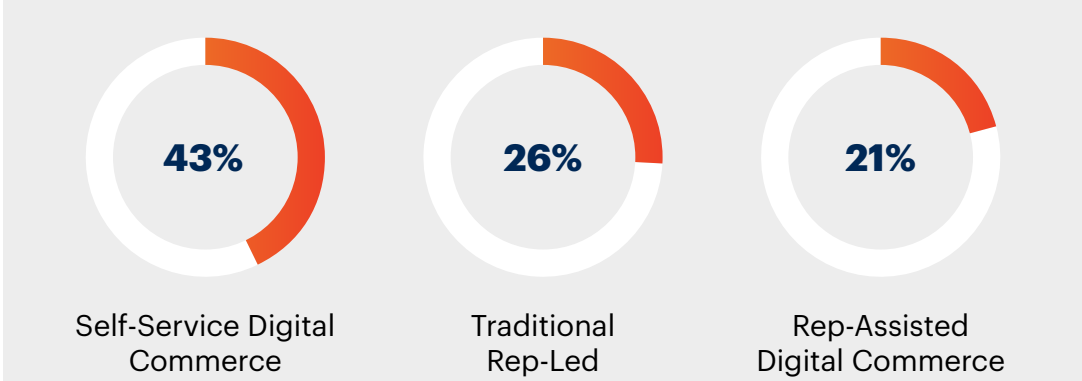
-  Why a hybrid selling approach is critical to client success
-  Attributes of digital and human selling that are most valuable in driving profitable purchasing decisions
-  How to integrate digital and human interactions to close high-quality deals
-  Actions CMOs and chief sales officers can take to deliver a unified buyer experience that improves deal quality



B2B buyers face a paradox: They prefer digital but make better purchases with a rep in the mix

Digital and Human Integration Drives Effective Buying

Percentage of buyers who report high purchase regret by purchase completion method

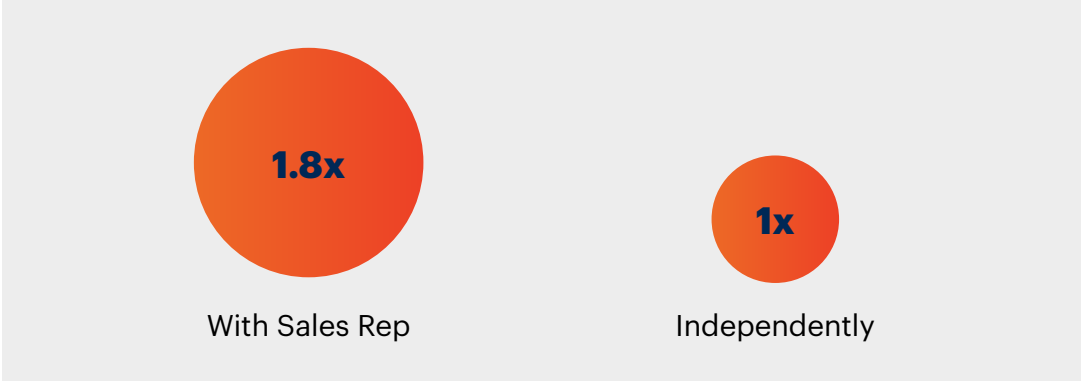


n = 441 B2B buyers who completed a purchase
Q. How did your company make this purchase?
Source: 2022 Gartner B2B Buyer Survey
Note: Percentages calculated based on stated level of agreement with a series of questions associated with purchase regret. Colored segments represent the proportion of respondents who scored at least a 6 "Agree" out of a 7-point scale.

Buyers who made a digital self-service purchase are **1.65 times more likely** to regret a purchase than traditional, rep-led buyers. Rep-assisted digital purchasing paths cut **buyer regret by half** compared with self-service digital commerce.

Reps Maximize the Value of Digital Tools

Likelihood of buyers reporting a high-quality deal by how they used supplier-provided digital technologies



n = 503 B2B buyers who used at least one supplier-provided digital technology
Q. Which of the following best describes how you used the following [supplier]-provided digital technologies?
Source: 2022 Gartner B2B Buyer Survey
Note: Circles represent the proportion of respondents who reported a high-quality deal and are indexed to the proportion of respondents who used supplier-provided digital tools independently.

B2B buyers are **1.8 times more** likely to complete a high-quality deal when they engage with supplier-provided digital tools in partnership with a sales rep.

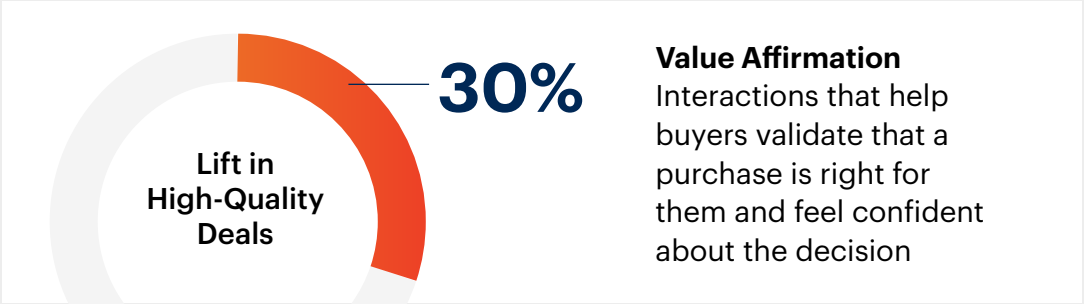
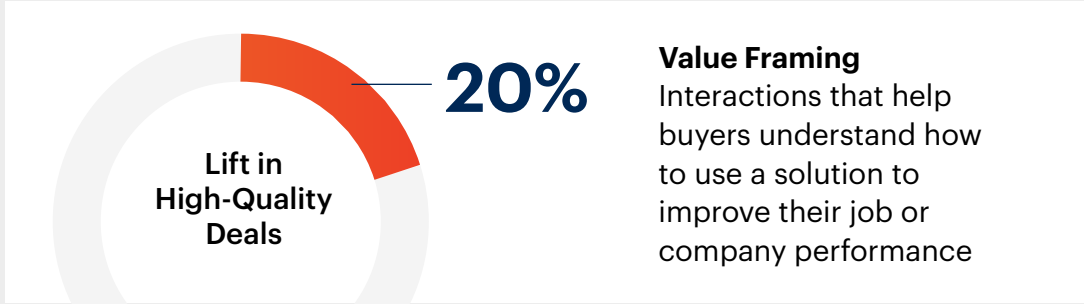
Value framing and value affirmation drive high-quality deals

The B2B buying journey is highly complex and uncertain.

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.

Adding to the challenge, 99% of B2B purchases are driven by organizational changes — such as a digital transformation or operational changes — and 66% of B2B buyers say the amount of change in their organization is overwhelming.

Value framing and value affirmation simplify the process. Two-way interactions that integrate both digital and human assistance contextualize value for the buyer. This helps reduce buyer uncertainty and improves the quality of deals.



n = 771 B2B buyers
 Source: 2022 Gartner B2B Buyer Survey
 Note: Value framing and value affirmation impact the likelihood of a high-quality deal through a third variable, value clarity. Colored segments represent the change in likelihood of a high-quality deal from low to high value framing and value affirmation. High value framing and value affirmation represent respondents who scored at least a 6 “agree” on each respective index. Logistic regression mediation model with controls for respondent age, function, company revenue and industry, buying group size; cost, method and location of purchase, planned vs. ad hoc buying effort and recency of purchase.

On the digital side, deliver value-framing and value-affirming content across channels

Value-framing and value-affirming content can and should be applied across a range of digital channels, especially on a brand's website.

The examples below illustrate how a brand might offer both value types through website content and features aligned to key tasks along the buying journey.

	Problem Identification	Solution Exploration	Requirements Building	Supplier Selection	Solution Ownership
Value Framing	Article on top industry challenges	Peer benchmarking data	Video product demo	Product specifications chart	Video showing how to deploy product
Value Affirmation	Calculator to estimate problem costs	Product selection tool	Product configuration visualizer	Ratings and reviews	Prompts for service based on usage data

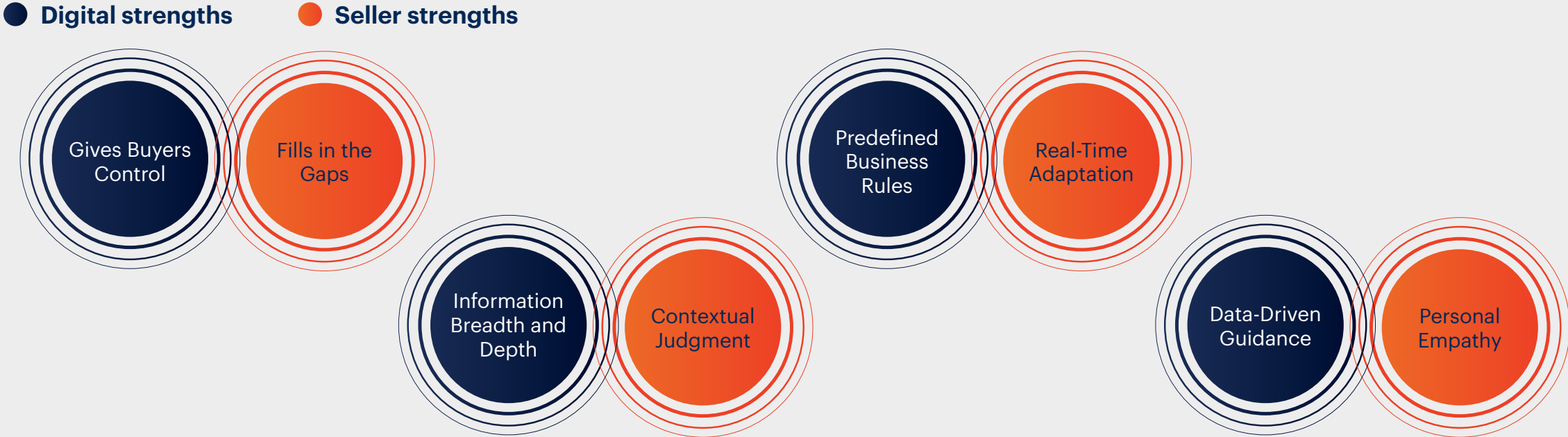
Source: Gartner

[Learn more about the tasks, questions and challenges buyers face across their broader buying journey. ↗](#)

On the human side, equip sellers to enhance digital engagement by leaning on the strengths of both

Buyers are **2.3 times more likely** to experience value affirmation from supplier reps than from supplier digital channels. But sellers often struggle to help buyers feel confident and in control of their purchase.

An added layer of expertise is required to contextualize key solution details for individual buyer situations. Good sales enablement tools can help address this gap.



Source: Gartner

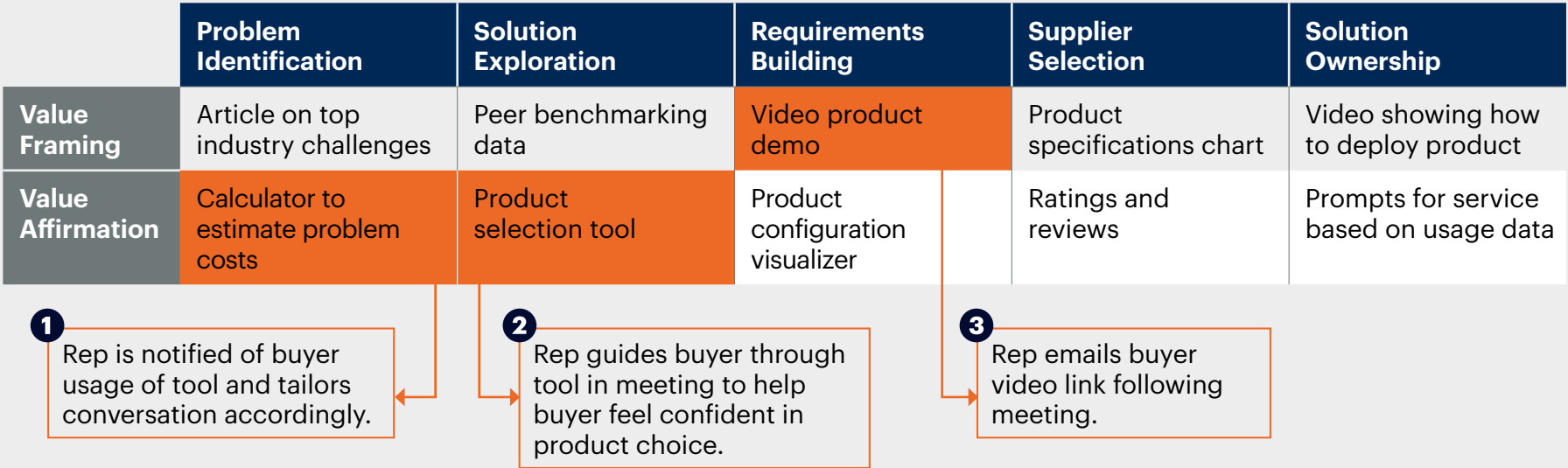
Integrate value-framing and value-affirming content — and buyer engagement data — into the seller workflow

When mapping out the buyer journey, strive for integrated, unified engagement — and be sure your value message is consistent across channels. Buyers are **2.8 times more likely** to complete a high-quality deal when they perceive high information consistency between a supplier’s website and that supplier’s representatives.

This example provides a typical rep-assisted digital buying experience — the type of purchase experience that leads to the least amount of purchase regret.

Integrating the Digital and Human Experience

Sales rep usage of digital commerce for buyer interactions






Source: Gartner

Actions




To match buyer demand for digital engagement, revenue and retention leaders should create a digital experience that is optimized to support a self-service buyer journey through a combination of touchpoints that offer both value-framing and value-affirming benefits.

Simultaneously, revenue and retention leaders should arm sellers to augment that digital experience by serving as an added source of value affirmation through the use of digital tools and application of digital buyer engagement data.

CMO actions

 <p>Push the organization to embrace digital while educating stakeholders on the combined value of human and digital. Benefit From B2B Digital Commerce: Improve Cost, Revenue and CX ↗</p>	 <p>Create high-value digital interactions by deploying both value framing and value affirmation across channels and content. CMOs: Embrace Catalytic Marketing to Drive Profitable Growth ↗</p>	 <p>Arm sellers with digital tools, data and guidance to offer value affirmation through an integrated buyer experience. 4 Activities for a B2B CMO to Align Marketing and Sales ↗</p>
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CSO actions

 <p>Collaborate with marketing to create an orchestrated buyer engagement that delivers a consistent message across all supplier touchpoints. Integrating Sales & Marketing to Drive Demand ↗</p>	 <p>Ensure that the orchestrated buyer engagement strategy steers buyers to seller interactions at high leverage moments, when sellers can add value beyond digital. Integrate Digital and Seller Customer Interactions to Drive High-Quality Deals ↗</p>	 <p>Equip sellers with the tools to understand customers' digital buying behavior, so when sellers do engage, they're able to offer a contextualized, tailored experience. Case Study: Building Transparent B2B Buying Journeys ↗</p>
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Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools on sales and marketing strategies:



Webinar
CSOs, Integrate Sales and Marketing to Drive High-Value Deals

Learn how progressive organizations align commercial strategy and operations to deliver higher value deals.

[Watch Now](#)



Case Study
Building a Unified Commercial Strategy

Discover how a leading software company increased revenue by 48% YOY by creating a single commercial engine.


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Research
CMOs: Embrace Catalytic Marketing to Drive Profitable Growth

Resist the pressure of a “more is more” mentality for a quality-over-quantity ethos for long-lasting impact.

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Webinar
Marketing Leaders, Drive More Commercially Productive Digital Engagement

Identify capability gaps for personalized digital engagement.

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