



# Sales Strategy 2023 Focus



Art Waskey

Art Waskey is a speaker who truly delivers. In addition to a 45 year career in sales and marketing, Art is the author of multiple books on selling and a monthly column *The Art of Sales*. He shares these insights as an in demand event and conference speaker as well as leadership coach.

B2B buyers today have an abundance of goods and services to choose from. This makes pitching your products more challenging. As a distribution consultant I am constantly asked how best to fine tune sales strategies to meet buyers' expectations in 2023. My answer is to focus on the customer experience.

## Here are four ways to do that. 1. Increase Personalization.

Always remember, you are selling trust and value. Listen to the nuances in your customer's voice — not just his words. Personalize each sale. By showing empathy and kindness when problems arise you build trust. My best B2B relationships have developed from projects in which I have helped a customer out of a tight spot.

In a recent [blog](#)<sup>1</sup>, Michael Buscemi, Director of SMB at G2, stated, "I don't think trust has fundamentally changed, because you've always needed trust with your prospect or your customer in order to build a relationship that is

founded in mutual respect. However, I think the way our information is available today has made it [trust] more acute in the minds of buyers and sellers."<sup>2</sup> **Use today's technology to ensure you personalize your approach to each customer and build trust.**

## 2. Advanced product knowledge.

Today's buyers start their research for a product or service online. A survey last year by *DemandGen Report*, found that 77% of B2B buyers did not talk with a salesperson until after they had performed independent research. Thirty-six percent of buyers didn't engage with a sales rep until after a short list of preferred vendors was established.<sup>3</sup>

In this kind of research environment, you need to be the product expert. It is imperative that the sales team has hands-on experience with the product or service it sells. As an example, when our bathrooms needed updating I researched the latest designs online.

1. Michael Buscemi, Director of SMB at G2, [sales/sales-strategy-for-new-buyers-journey](#)

2. How the Buyer's Journey is Changing in 2023 and 7 Ways to Keep Up, According to G2's Director of SMB Sales, January 5, 2023

3. 2021 B2B Buyers Survey: As Buying Committees Expand, Unique Patterns Emerge Among Different Stakeholders, 2021-[b2b-buyers-survey](#)



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Only then did I invite a couple of local sales companies to demonstrate their products to me. My order went to the company that convinced me of the value of their installations.

### 3. Know the value-added requirements of all stakeholders.

A typical manufacturing decision-making team is made up of executive, management, operations, and purchasing staff. According to a recent [SMB survey](#)<sup>4</sup>, 80% of companies have buying committees which influence purchasing decisions. Seventy-one percent have additional stakeholders that have input during the buying journey — up from 61% in 2021.<sup>5</sup>

In their book *Agile and Resilient*<sup>6</sup>, authors Richardson and Sharer report: “Three big changes we have identified where sellers need to become more adept are: selling to committees, working with purchasing/procurement, and selling to the C-suite” Sellers must tailor their conversations, marketing messages, and sales tools to each of these areas of focus. The best sellers will know the value-added requirement of all stakeholders.

4. SMB survey, sales-strategy-for-new-buyers-journey

5. How the Buyer’s Journey is Changing in 2023 and 7 Ways to Keep Up, According to G2’s Director of SMB Sales, January 5, 2023

6. Agile and Resilient by Richardson and Sharer

7. IndustrialDistribution, what-omnichannel-actually-means-for-distributors

8. What ‘Omnichannel’ Actually Means for Distributors, Benj Cohen, January 5, 2023

### 4. Constantly improve your technology.

Develop an omnichannel presence in 2023. Advanced software is paramount to the future of your business. According to [IndustrialDistribution](#)<sup>7</sup>, “Omnichannel refers to the connection of all systems, platforms, departments and sales channels. With omnichannel capabilities, distributors can provide customers with a consistent experience across all touchpoints. With AI, that experience isn’t just consistent – it’s seamless”<sup>8</sup>.

**To stay relevant, you must ensure you are constantly honing your eCommerce software with the latest capabilities.**

### Focus on the customer

Sales Strategy 2023 is about what you can control — attention to your customers. Know the current market expectations and pursue sales success with a relentless focus on the customer experience.

## 5 KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Sales strategy 2023 focuses on customer experience.
- Personalize your approach to each customer and build trust.
- In today’s research environment, the seller must be a product/service expert.
- The best sellers will know the value-added requirement of all stakeholders.
- Constantly hone your eCommerce software with the latest capabilities.