



Redefining sales to thrive in the connected economy

The future of sales



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About KPMG's 'future of'

Sales and the new front office

To succeed in the future, sales leaders must:

- 1. Maintain intimate and real-time understanding of customers:** To deliver on the promise of personalized and differentiated customer experiences, sales will need to leverage internal and external data that helps sellers understand customer intent. This will require harnessing internal data across the organization and external data where appropriate to answer questions such as: What do they want to buy? How will this purchase fit with previous purchases? What is their mindset and current perception of the company? What do they value? What alternatives are they considering?
- 2. Dynamically manage investments in sales channels and resources:** With a more intimate knowledge of customers and analytically driven insights on channel and seller effectiveness, sales organizations will be able to better develop channel strategies, coverage models, and territory assignments to improve customer interactions and sales outcomes. In doing so, sales will not only improve customer experiences, but also increase ROI on sales investments by better managing sales capacity.
- 3. Create personalized offers and purchasing options:** Sellers will be armed with tools and insights to craft personalized offers to customers and in the case of more solution-oriented sales, offer flexible purchasing and service consumption options. For

some this will mean creating the right bundle with best price and terms for both parties. For others, this will mean crafting personalized service offers where the solution is consumed over time on a subscription or usage basis.

- 4. Adopt more connected and augmented ways of working:** Advances in collaboration technology, knowledge management tools, and analytics capabilities will enable new ways of working that improve seller experience and effectiveness.
- 5. Demand and embrace more seamless integration across the front office:** With continued growth in digital commerce and "as-a-service" business models, marketing, sales, and service will need to work more seamlessly by developing cross-functional processes, embracing changing roles, and maintaining one source of truth for customer insights.

Technology advances, competitor innovations, changing customer demands, and other market dynamics will require that sales leaders continuously monitor and adjust sales models. Organizations that can consistently deliver on their customers' expectations will establish themselves as valued partners/providers to their customers and create powerful differentiation from their competitors.

This future of sales paper discusses the factors that are driving the need for change and the actions companies must take to meet customer expectations in the future.

To see other "future of" publications, go to read.kpmg.us/futurecustomerconnections or register for our customer first: real insight to receive additional reports as they become available.

Leading and landing with the customer

The future of sales

Preparing for the future of sales starts with a customer-centric strategy. Today's customers know what they want, when they want it, and how they want it. With countless options at their fingertips, customers can easily switch products or providers when their needs are not met. This means companies must provide the right service, via the right channel, and at the right time at an appropriate value price.

As insights from data become more precise, companies will be better equipped to anticipate rather than react to customer needs.

New ways of enhancing choice and personalization will continue to evolve, as will the automation of many aspects of capturing signals from current clients and prospects, generating demand, ordering, service, and delivery, leaving human players free to focus on higher value tasks.

Key among these will be relationship management—integrating the resources and expertise of front-office functions such as sales, marketing, and service to design and deliver fully customer-centric experiences that are differentiated and personalized.



Walt Becker
Lead — Sales Transformation
U.S. Customer Solutions
Practice
KPMG in the U.S.
E: waltbecker@kpmg.com

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Executive summary



Executive Summary

Armed with more information than ever before, today's customers are reshaping how they buy, and as an extension, demanding changes in sales processes. As they become accustomed to always-on, digitally enabled, personalized purchasing in their day-to-day lives, they are demanding the same across the board. The future success of sales organizations rests upon their ability to continuously anticipate and deliver against these fast-changing expectations.

CSOs will need ways to understand and anticipate the motivations of their increasingly empowered customers and meet them on their own terms. As large-scale data capture creates ever-more intimate portraits of customers, analytics will provide new insights about what to sell, who to sell it to, and how to sell it. Sales strategies and models will need to shift from being largely company or product centric to those that are rooted in customer needs and intentions.

At the same time, CSOs must ensure enhancements in the customer experience translate to a real return on investment. This will require a data-driven approach to determining how best to reallocate limited sales resources of both people and capital against market and customer segments to optimize return on investment. As an example, enabled by better information, CSOs may choose to fully automate low-value and/or high-volume transactions, freeing sales capacity to focus on higher-value interactions.

Today's customers do not distinguish between marketing, sales, and service in their interactions with a business, so these historically separate functions need to establish cross-functional business processes that break down the traditional silos. The case for a connected front office is intuitive as all three functions deal with the same customers, contribute to the overall customer experience, and harvest the all-important commodity of customer data.

Selling to the connected customer requires the complete retooling of go-to-market models including the product or service portfolio, interaction model, channel strategy, processes, talent, and systems. The goal is a digitally integrated enterprise, with "benefit to the customer" informing all strategy, execution, and behavior.

The connected customer

KPMG sees four developments driving a "Connected Customer"

Customer as a "place of business"

In an on-demand world, sellers of goods and services follow their customers wherever they happen to be. The front office is digitalized and virtualized. Walls between "inside" and "outside" become membranes.

Relevant, empathetic, real-time interactions

Engagement will be paced by the customer, who expects personal recognition and validation, enjoyable engagements, and real-time transactions or issue resolution.

Rich, multi-channel, easy engagement

While the underlying mechanics of the digital economy are technologically complex, customers expect ease and simplicity. They want frictionless interactions through the channel of their choice and seamless movement across channels.

Solutions, not products

Awareness of touchpoints has moved outside the enterprise walls, into target markets. Customers are increasingly buying solutions, not just products, forcing businesses to become part of a larger experience ecosystem that includes concepts such as the cotesting and co-creation of solutions.

If you are thinking these four customer expectations apply equally across marketing, sales and service, we agree. That's why we believe front office functions must join together to transform around the customer.

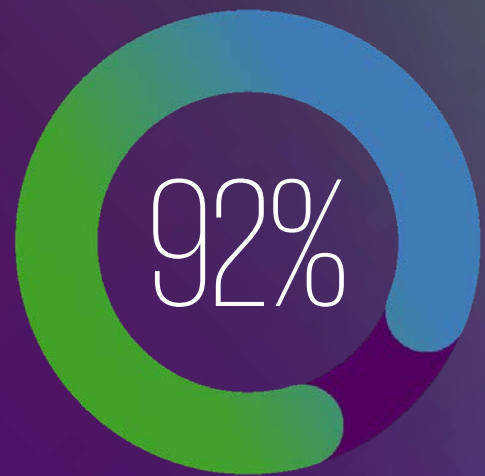
The moving target

What is the future of sales?

The traditional sales function is in the midst of the biggest changes it has faced in the last 100 years. The sales role has traditionally been organized around internal business objectives, institutional knowledge of markets and customers, and current incentive models with an appreciation for, but little to no real accommodation of, customer needs. It is a sales model predicated on a passive customer. Today's customers—whether B2B, B2B2C, or B2C—are anything but passive. We call them “connected customers”: digitally savvy, always on, with expectations of personalized solutions through their channel of choice, frictionless transactions in real time, and a seamless experience across all parts of the business.

This new era of “connected customers” means that successful sales organizations must understand how customers want to interact with the business and what they want. As a consequence, the sales model needs to be redesigned to accommodate customers and cost-effectively deliver on this desired interaction.

Armed with more information than ever before, and shaped by the Customer Experience (C/X) revolution, these customers are rewriting the rules of the game. This has huge implications for sales organizations, which are now scrambling to respond, with mixed success.



92% of customers say **tailored engagement based on past interactions** is very important to winning their business.

Source: Growing Pains, CEO Outlook KPMG 2018

Five years out

Processes, technology, people, data

There is little question that the seismic trends reshaping sales will result in a radically different sales dynamic, with the customer gaining the upper hand. A significantly altered relationship between businesses and their customers will demand that sales organizations develop new strategies, operating models, tools, and talent in order to stay relevant in the years ahead. Five years out, here is what we see:

1 Personalization in both experience and offers, at scale: Massive data capture from multiple sources will create ever-more intimate portraits of individual customers. As sales embraces the bundling, unbundling, or reconfiguration of products and services, personalized solution selling will replace generic sales pitches, even for smaller-ticket purchases—informed by what’s happening to the customer, their company, and their industry at a given moment.

2 Analytics augment sales decisions and processes in real time: Already a must-have for sales organizations, analytics will become the basis for converting customer insights into sales—what they want to buy and how to sell it to them. Predictive and prescriptive applications will identify customers and activate “next interaction” based on purchase history and customer purchase preferences. Arming sales teams with the relevant insights is critical, but contextualizing how these can benefit them to convert sales, alongside the key timings required to make it effective, is the key to maximizing these insights. Insight derived from analytics will also identify low-value activities to automate or eliminate and empower the sales representative to meet the demands of rising customer expectations and graduate to becoming an intellectual capital resource for customers.

3

Pervasive innovation sets the C/X pace:

Technology and analytics will power a wave of innovation that will extend across the front, middle, and back offices that set the pace for meeting the ever-rising bar of customer expectations. C/X expectations for B2B and B2B2C buyers are already conditioned by personal consumer interactions with B2C market leaders like Amazon, Apple, and Uber. This consumerization of B2B influence will accelerate.

4

4 Redefining the sales representative: Technology will enable companies to automate (or eliminate) low value-added activities for both the customer and the sales representative, or offload them to a lower-cost resource. In both instances, sales representatives will be freed to work on higher-value activities. The changing nature of the essential duties of a sales representative will lead to a need for new sales roles and different skill sets to drive adoption, usage, and retention. For instance, salespeople who can bring skills in critical business thinking, collaboration, and creativity will be at a premium, as will data-literate talent who can turn data into insights to power sales.

5

5 Continuous training: As future-tech impacts markets and channels, sales will invest more in ongoing, hands-on, high-quality training to keep talent data literate and current with the technology essential to their jobs. Though product training has historically been a strong suit for sales, training will need to reflect the transition from single transactions to complex bundled solutions and more sophisticated solution selling. Training strategies will be required to include ways to consider more lateral ways of considering sales. By focusing primarily on outcomes, sales training will evolve to direct resources to help them “win in the market” and focus on outcomes such as cross-

Five years out

(CONTINUED)

selling and upselling. Sales will also add behavioral training to help salespeople persuade customers to move to self-service or low-cost channels, when person-to-person interaction is not required. Indeed, the paradox of training going forward is that seemingly distinct skills, i.e., technical and soft skills, will coexist as equal partners to further sales effectiveness throughout the organization.

6

Sales becomes a catalyst for value creation:

The leading edge of B2B and B2B2C sales will evolve beyond consultative problem solving. Offering solutions and design thinking will produce breakthrough innovation in partnership with prospects. Sales representatives will cultivate a trusted persona, inspiring buyers with new ideas, offering solutions, pushing back on the status quo, driving change, influencing buyer decision-making, and helping buyers navigate points of resistance within their organizations.

7

Increased ability to serve key relationships more effectively:

Through the reduction of low-impact, high-noise activity, sales representatives have the ability to better serve their territories, accounts, and relationships. This will pose a new quandary; reap the benefits of this improved process by taking increased profit, use this added resource to invest in the improvement of key relationships further, or do a bit of both.

8

AI-powered sales enablement: AI will be embedded into CRM systems that will exist in the cloud. This access will transcend time and location, making data and insights available without

limitations to the sales professional. AI will not replace human sales skills but augment them.

9

Stronger organizational partnership: Buyers of solutions will interact with marketing, sales, and service interchangeably during the customer lifecycle. With this new approach, businesses will be required to provide more accurate forecasting before longer-term budgeting can take place. To support a consistent, superior customer experience for the business as a whole, sales will work closely with marketing and service in networked, user-driven organizations. High-stakes decisions such as budgeting, resourcing, reporting lines, and KPIs will be undertaken in concert across the front office, focused around customer priorities.

10

More third-party partnerships: With the continued shift toward a service-based economy, traditional product-based companies will seek to enable their offerings to be delivered as a service or solution. As this transition occurs, sales will need to establish partnerships to not only expand customer reach, but also to increase the value of their offers. Developing an ecosystem of partners will be critical for expanding market potential, enhancing solutions, and increasing value of sales and service interactions.

Implications for the sales organization

Today, the customer decides how they will engage with the business, and the very best sales organizations retool their go-to-market models accordingly: the product or service portfolio, interaction model, channel strategy, processes, talent, and systems.

The key tenets of change

Technology advances will become the catalyst for change within sales divisions. Successful companies will monitor this change to the status quo and ensure these changes allow for an equal or an improved sales experience. If an increased cost of value is proving to be higher, it empowers the business to change how a product is priced and can improve the customer experience.

Fundamental to adapting to a changing sales landscape is the need to understand what customers want, how they want to make purchases, and how they interact with the business. This insight will determine the overall interaction model for delivering the desired customer experience, along with the sales model that will support the way the customer wishes to interact.

Robust data collection and analytics will be essential to developing a deep understanding of the customer, as well as measuring the performance of a sales organization's sales and interaction models and assisting in the intelligent allocation of capital and human resources. Furthermore, this creates a need to allocate resources (at a higher cost) to the most critical interactions. However, this presents the opportunity to automate or eliminate the less valuable and/or high-volume interactions.

Expect to see the emergence of "customer-journey economics." Data and analytics will drive greater clarity of how organizations can optimize the trade-offs that exist in the customer experience versus cost-to-serve equation, as well as customer profitability and lifetime value. Understanding customer-journey economics will help sales to develop an

optimal channel mix strategy, in part by experimenting with low-cost-to-sell or self-service channel options for low-margin or routine transactions, freeing resources that can be allocated to high-value activities.

The future of sales belongs to those willing to put aside old ways based mainly on internal preferences, and regroup around "outside in" thinking, with the customer prioritized in everything they do.

As CSOs consider the path forward, there are a few basic things to keep in mind. First, piecemeal fixes yield piecemeal results. The future of sales demands nothing less than sales transformation in which all aspects of strategy and execution form a disciplined and well-integrated whole.

Second, strong linkage across marketing, sales, and service is essential. Customers will not and cannot be expected to distinguish their interactions between different parts of the business. CSOs need to ensure that all platforms, processes, and channels that customers might want to buy through are optimized and seamless. As new models are designed and built, roles, responsibilities, and support infrastructure need to be in place before going to market. Creating this integration is further explored in our white paper, **The connected customer: Future of the front office.**

At KPMG, we utilize an eight-step process that can help sales organizations achieve the degree of change necessary to successfully adapt to a new sales era.

In order to excel at customer service, businesses must now:



Clarify needs for personas



Identify future-state sales journeys



Design process to enable customer's journey



Define KPIs and metrics



Understand required data and its availability



Quantify costs to optimize outcomes



Align business and technical architecture



Identify win themes to help drive adoption and ROI

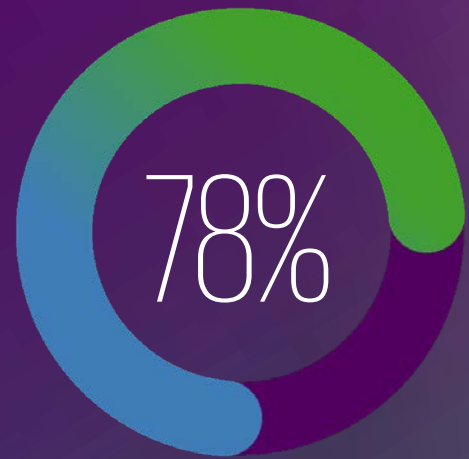


Clarify needs for personas

All businesses need to determine if they are offering the right products and services to the right market. Forward-looking sales organizations take this historic mandate further: to meet customers on their terms, the business commits to thoroughly understanding them, so their priorities can shape the interaction model.

Customer or buyer personas—hypothetical profiles that represent the traits of important target-market segments—make clear how each customer defines value. Using data and analytic insight, progressive sales organizations can produce personas that show what customers look for, their attitudes and concerns, their needs, how they weigh alternatives, what factors influence buying, and how they perceive service value.

To develop personas, some businesses have successfully turned to design thinking approaches such as workshopping, where sales professionals can collaborate in person to share insights. Others have turned to AI, as a powerful accelerator that supports rapid creation of proxy customers and tests alternative case scenarios.



of sales reps have data insights on customers' propensity to buy... among them, 85% say **this makes them more effective in their job.**

Source: State of Sales, Salesforce Research, May 2018.



Identify future-state sales journeys

To effectively serve their customers, businesses must understand how customers typically interact with the business through journey mapping. Journey maps serve to identify the varying stages in the customer journey in close detail. This translates as every touchpoint being assessed and accounted for, from the moment the customer expresses interest, to the actual purchase, and through to service and support follow-up. Data and analytics help unpack every variable, dependency, and casual relationship. Journey mapping helps businesses understand which interactions most impact purchase decisions and influence the customer experience. This grounding in how customers interact today helps inform how to chart the future-state sales journey.

AI will empower companies to build intelligent journeys based upon previous and emerging consumer patterns. This technique allows for companies to understand behavioral indicators (“gateway” activities), which can better predict sales forecasts, the net takeaway being the sales process and systems built around them. An example of this is car purchase routes. Understanding that customers assess their needs, e.g., they require an SUV to accommodate a growing family, they will conduct research to identify their preferred choice. The main opportunity for sales representatives is in identifying the key touchpoints that could have friction or could improve the process to allow for considered upselling. This allows for challenges to the status quo, e.g., Carvana and its car vending machine. This process can guide and improve the customer experience to provide a sales model to accommodate it.



73%
of customers agreed
that [a sales representative’s]
standards for how companies
interact with [him/her]
are **higher than ever**.

Source: State of Sales, Salesforce Research,
May 2018.



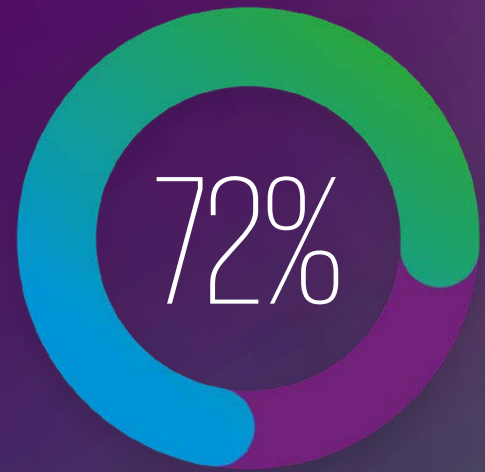
Design processes to enable customer journeys

Historically, sales organizations chose the way they would interact with their customers, based on their internal priorities, and went to market with that model. Now, in an on-demand world, customers are a “place of business”; sales organizations must follow wherever their customers happen to be.

Tomorrow’s sales organization takes its own customer-persona and journey-map inputs and then builds the interaction model to match them, to deliver the experience the customer wants.

The model needs to focus on how sales delivers the desired customer experience—channels, activities, frequency of interaction, and resources needed. The model design addresses roles and responsibilities, sales coverage issues (size and structure), and desired skill sets.

Customer-first interaction models require sensitivity to customer habits. Shifts in interaction models need to be carefully managed and, ideally, tested before being rolled out at scale. Customers who are happy with the way they currently interact with a company can easily be alarmed by changes in that relationship and will need to be insulated from dramatic changes.



of customers agreed that they expect vendors to **personalize engagement** to their needs.

Source: State of the Connected Customer survey, Salesforce Research, April 2018.



Define KPIs and metrics

Metrics and KPIs are the same powerful management tool they have always been. CSOs will need to update these measures, with the right mix of indicators that balance short-term priorities with those that reflect long-term value creation, as defined by the customer.

As businesses move from a single-point-in-time transaction to a solution with multiple customer touchpoints, effective KPIs will prioritize total lifetime customer value over immediate performance. New metrics might include indicators of customer satisfaction and trust, such as customer relationship longevity, share of wallet or the creation of follow-on service and sales opportunities.

Importantly, new KPIs will need to be designed in concert with marketing and service to reinforce collaboration and create a consistent customer experience.



While sales leadership is holding reps accountable for great customer experience, quotas aren't falling by the wayside. In fact, metrics like **customer lifetime value have explicit ties to both experience and business performance.**

Source: State of Sales, Salesforce Research, May 2018.



Understand required data and its availability

Data is more essential than ever for organizations that want to move beyond gut assumptions and toward strategy and behavior based on facts. For the CSO interested in sales transformation, data and analytics need to support maximum sales productivity in the form of top-line growth.

CSOs must first understand what data is needed to deliver and measure the desired customer experience and develop a strategy of how to collect it. External data feeds—including those captured via intelligent objects and the Internet of Things—offer the greatest possibility of adding billions of additional data points to the analytic mix and creating a 360-degree view of the customer. Data privacy requirements continue to lead the conversation and should be considered at every step of the process. Getting these elements right drives not only “what happened” but “why it happened” and “what is going to happen” insights that can guide decision makers effectively.

After that, the CSO must build or configure the analytics tools that are essential at every level of the organization. AI-driven analytics promise to be a game changer for CRM applications, with their ability to extract insight from huge sets of external data. These tools afford a deeper understanding of the customer by showing buying behavior, interaction preferences, and channel choices, supporting the kind of personalized selling that the connected customer demands.



**of high performers
versus underperformers
are more likely to
prioritize leads based
on data analysis—and
half as likely to prioritize
based on intuition.**

Source: State of Sales, Salesforce Research,
May 2018.



Quantify costs to optimize outcomes

CSOs must understand what their delivery costs are, what their customers are willing to pay for, and how to allocate resources for a profitable return on investment. CSOs will identify touchpoints and transaction types where it makes sense to invest in high-touch solution selling, as well as where customers could be perfectly happy interacting via portal, app, website, or chatbot. E-commerce has given sales organizations additional channel options to tap previously unexplored markets—particularly small-to-mid-sized or difficult-to-reach markets—without the associated expense of valuable human talent.

Automation offers some cost-efficiency promise for the CSO but is not a universal solution. The proportion of activities that can be automated will be different from business to business. Basic standard products might be fully automated, while high-end, custom-designed equipment or components may only be automated in the status-alert or reorder stages. More complex products, services, or solutions will still require high-touch human support.

Ultimately, identifying the costs of customer engagement activities is a necessary prerequisite to achieving the objective of optimizing the customer experience/cost-to-deliver balance.



E-commerce has given sales organizations additional channel options to tap previously unexplored markets—particularly small-to-mid-sized or difficult-to-reach markets—**without the associated expense of valuable human talent.**



Align business and technical architecture

CSOs can use powerful advances in data, analytics, and digital technology to maximize the top-line revenue production of their sales representatives. Our central premise is that customer priorities must drive technology configuration and integration. Enabling technology such as CRM must support the sales model, sales processes, and data management activities—fully aligned with the way customers want to buy from and interact with the business.

AI-powered CRM can identify the high-impact customers with which the sales representative should spend time, helping producers focus their personalization or consultative-selling efforts where they are most likely to make the greatest financial impact. It can also help sales representatives identify the best actions in real time, with insight that clarifies what messages are likely to work, and when to use them. When combined with mobility features, they can deliver insight at the point of sale, linking the field representative to the central sales-support staff.

Technology will help automate many routine sales-support tasks, so CSOs can offload, redeploy, or eliminate low-value activity and free up sales professionals to spend time on critical customers and high-value activity. It will assist with the sharing of information and leading practices, so sales representatives can learn from and apply the approaches of top-producing peers.



of high-performing salespeople foresee a big role for guided selling that ranks potential opportunity value and suggests next steps.

Source: State of Sales, Salesforce Research, May 2018.



Identify win themes to help drive adoption and ROI

All major process or technology change brings behavioral and cultural challenges along with it. Getting all stakeholders to buy into sales transformation is an underappreciated factor that often spells the difference between success and failure. CSOs need to work both from top down, at the level of the C-suite and their front-office peers, and from the bottom up, through the ranks of the entire sales organization.

Strong ROI-based rationales are the most proven way to secure endorsement across the front office and from the C-suite. Typically, these business cases include estimates of both one-time investment and ongoing operating costs and projected benefits, as measured in revenue or margin growth. These business cases can help prioritize investment and sequence initiatives, sometimes by offering pave-the-way opportunities for early-stage cost recoupment.

For sales representatives and sales support professionals, getting new operating models to successfully “take” is a matter of presenting and demonstrating “what’s in it for me” benefits, on a role-by-role basis. The general principles of change management apply: a clearly stated vision, articulated benefits, executive-level sponsorship, and frequent, consistent communication through the entire transformation process.



Strong ROI-based rationales are the most proven way to secure endorsement across the front office and from the C-suite.

Getting there

How KPMG can help

KPMG works with sales organizations to help them accelerate their revenue and profit growth.

We take a wide-ranging approach, helping clients leverage the power and results that come from integrated efforts. We use the following seven-step process to reach solutions that will be unique to every sales organization, depending on its objectives, challenges, size, and maturity:



Understand customer needs

Helps sales leadership teams identify target markets, customer segments, and unique value propositions. Includes the understanding of customer buying criteria and preferences, the definition of customer journeys and personas, and the identification of journey friction points for moments that matter.



Identify future-state sales journeys

Defines the future-state experience for each customer persona/product. For some businesses, the future-state journey may revolve around multichannel models. For others, the desired goal may be greater customer engagement, whether it is face-to-face or digital.



Align the sales organization to deliver

Designs roles, structure, coverage model, and sales processes to support and enable each customer journey while also increasing ROI on

sales investments. This step also identifies the mindset, skills, and behaviors of each specific role within the sales organization, which will permeate all levels of talent management, from hiring to coaching and mentoring to rewards.



Define KPIs and metrics

Establishes or refines performance metrics for key business measures, such as sales performance, market share, product mix, customer profitability, and experience metrics.



Understand required internal/external data

Defines the data needed to allocate sales resources, enable processes, and improve customer interactions. Assesses internal or external sources for all required data and creates the plan to acquire them.



Quantify cost of engagement activities

Establishes the business case to secure buy-in from key stakeholders. Includes estimates of one-time transformation investments and ongoing operating costs to determine affordability and expected benefits, as measured in ROI terms such as cost savings and revenue or margin growth.



Design and deploy CRM and systems solutions

Conducts gap analysis on the sales model, from current state to target state. Focuses on end-to-end CRM solution architecture: high-level design, vendor selection, detailed design, configuration, integration, testing, training, and adoption.

Sales transformation as a journey

From KPMG's perspective, the future of sales belongs to those willing to put aside old ways based mainly on internal preferences and regroup around "outside-in" thinking—awareness of and benefit to customers prioritized in everything they do. Businesses willing to invest time, attention, and resources in sales transformation can look forward to faster growth, boosts to their top and bottom lines, and access to currently untapped markets.

CSOs can't undertake sales transformation alone. They need journey partners, with the cross-functional experience to collaborate with marketing and service, the stature to help secure C-suite sponsorship, and the end-to-end capabilities to take them from vision through implementation.

If you want to find out how we can help you, let's talk.



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Walt Becker
Lead — Sales Transformation
U.S. Customer Solutions
Practice
KPMG in the U.S.
E: waltbecker@kpmg.com

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