

# 1

## The Old World of Sales and Service

“I’m fed up, and I won’t tolerate this anymore!”

I’ve heard many variations on this theme in recent years.

We’re fed up with unwanted phone calls interrupting us at home and at work. We hate wading through hundreds of unsolicited emails. We’ve had it with intrusive social media messages. We’re tired of poor service from companies that don’t treat us with respect or that send us into a phone mail maze that wastes minutes of our time and never connects us with a living person.

We wonder why there is so little humanity when we interact with the organizations and businesses we patronize.

### The Old Sales Model: “Dialing for Dollars”

My first sales job required me to make cold calls to bond traders and convince them to buy our economic consulting services. We had lists of names and numbers to contact that came from directories of people who worked in banks, securities companies, savings and loan associations, fund managers, and government agencies.

## 20 The New Rules of Sales and Service

My sales colleagues and I would psych ourselves into the right frame of mind each morning by drinking a few cups of coffee, maybe telling each other a few off-color jokes (common in the 1980s testosterone-fueled Wall Street markets portrayed in the recent *Wolf of Wall Street* book and film), and discussing the latest stories in the *Wall Street Journal*. On a typical day we might set a goal to contact every person overseeing trading at all the savings and loan associations headquartered in Arizona.

It was brutal work. Most people were unaware of our firm. And my call was but one of the many sales intrusions each prospect would receive during a business day.

We hated cold calling—“dialing for dollars.”

But the technique was necessary because in the years prior to the World Wide Web there were few other ways a potential client might learn about our company.

Unfortunately, many organizations are still operating as if it were 1986, and they continue to focus massive investments on interrupting people with an army of salespeople making cold calls.

Companies like the one I worked for in the 1980s relied on direct sales efforts that invested lots of money. The sales commissions were high. (A big reason I stuck with my sales job even though I hated it was that I made good money for someone who was in his early twenties.)

Indeed, many large organizations have complex and expensive sales training programs with expensive in-house and external experts focused on educating the sales staff in the latest techniques. Complex enterprise software packages are implemented so salespeople can micromanage each sales encounter.

## The Voice of Authority: When the Salesperson Was the Expert

Prior to the web, the salesperson needed to be the expert. The buyer didn't have the ability to go online and conduct independent research; an important aspect of the sales process was the buyers' education by the seller.

Prior to launching her own business as a digital consultant and storyteller, Joanne Tombrakos enjoyed a corporate career in sales. She worked 25 years at media companies selling radio advertising and later advertising to cable television networks. She worked at smaller companies like Beasley Broadcast

Group and large operators including Time Warner Cable. “When I started selling and for many years after, I was the expert,” she says. “I would go to a client and I could tell them everything they wanted to know about radio and television. But when you are selling one medium, you have to know all the other competing media. You need to know print and when the Internet came into play we had to know that.”

Today, in a world in which buyers have the ability to do their own independent research, many customers are more educated than the salespeople they do business with. However, many companies and the salespeople they employ have not adjusted their strategy accordingly. They still rely on cold calls, and they still approach the sales process as if they have the informational upper hand in the relationship.

“That’s the biggest shift for salespeople,” says Tombrakos. “They’re no longer the expert. Today the client knows as much, if not more. The salesperson has to be better prepared. Most salespeople are not using visual tools to help them. Many aren’t even doing something as simple as pointing people to the web. I have a lot of friends who are still working in television ad sales, and they continue to dig in their heels. I think many salespeople are blind.”

While the sales cycle has transformed into a buying process led by the customers, Tombrakos says that there are many simple things a salesperson can do to remain an expert in the new world of digital information. “When I get a new client, I start following them on Twitter. Salespeople seldom take advantage of opportunities like this, as they are still terrified of the digital world. There are so many new ways that salespeople could use digital tools to establish themselves as an expert. It could be something as simple as sharing information on LinkedIn. If they share information with a client, they are likely to be perceived as an expert in a particular area. They should be the one who informs their customers, ‘Hey, I just read this great new book with some fantastic ideas.’ They should be making new connections and establishing their credibility, but most companies are not training their people on how to use digital communications. They hear ‘social,’ and they think it’s watercooler chitchat and nothing more.”

Fortunately, today we no longer have to rely on the cold call, because buyers are looking for what we have to offer. And they know what they want.

## 22 The New Rules of Sales and Service

### The Salesperson Expert versus the Web-Educated Buyer

To illustrate the point about how salespeople used to hold the power position when they were keepers of information, think about the process of buying a car in 1990. You'd be exposed to television and magazine ads. Perhaps you'd purchase a buyers guide such as *Consumer Reports*. You could ask friends and coworkers for advice. But to get detailed information on models, options, and pricing required a dreaded visit to the dealership to talk to the salesperson, who was smugly aware he had all the information power.

Today, how do you buy a car? Do you blindly go to visit the dealership to ask the salesperson? Or do you spend hours on the web learning as much as you can and only visit the dealer when you are ready to buy and already know everything you need to get a good deal?

Remarkably, nearly all companies are still operating in a world as if the salesperson is the king of the information kingdom. Companies insist on driving all online interactions to a salesperson.

One manifestation of this behavior is the insistence by most companies that buyers supply personal details—particularly an email address—before they can get information such as a white paper. When I question marketers about this practice, they tell me that they need sales leads and that salespeople follow up on the information requests.

The idea that you shouldn't give information for free predates the web. Requiring an email registration is simply applying what we did in the past to the new realities. This is far less effective than making information freely available to be downloaded and shared. And it risks losing potential customers who are wary of providing their email address out of fear that it will be recycled and sold to data brokers and spammers.

Are you managing your sales and marketing process using 1995 calculus? Do you assume that salespeople are the fonts of all knowledge and all information flows through them? If so, I think you are less successful than you could be.

Your salespeople should assume that they are the last place a buyer goes, not the first. They must assume that very little of their knowledge is proprietary. They need to facilitate the sale, not control the information.

Think back to buying a car. How do you want the dealer's staff to interact with you when you walk in? Do you want a confrontational relationship where they feel they have the information power? Or do you want the dealer to assume you have already done your research and are ready to close a deal?

It's not just telephone sales and in-store persuasion where companies need to refocus. Consider sales dysfunction at its worst: the business-to-business (B2B) trade show demonstration.

For some markets, the trade show demo is very important. While I was in high school and during the summers of my college years, I worked in a cheese shop. Once a year, I went to New York City to attend the Fancy Foods and Confection Show. Demos were all over the place, many involving tasty treats: cheese, sausage, chocolate, coffee, bread, and more.

Okay, but what about B2B technology companies? Can you imagine anything more boring than a 10-minute screen-by-screen demo by a product manager spouting industry jargon, boring buyers with all the best-of-breed, cutting-edge features of some mission-critical, flexible, and scalable solution that improves business processes using industry-standard technology? Want to scream?

Yes, there are exceptions. But in my experience, the trade show demo is terrible for generating sales and often an excuse fest for both buyers and sellers. The company uses it as an excuse to explain poor sales, and the attendees use it as an excuse to indicate their lack of interest: "Sure, I'll have a free pen, but I'm too busy for your demo."

Nearly all B2B technology company trade show demos are conducted out of laziness. Here's how the dysfunctional process works and why B2B technology demos are so overused. Marketers don't understand their buyers, the problems their buyers face, or how their product could help solve these problems. The simple reason: because they don't get out into the market. Instead these marketers are holed up in their offices where they construct a demo script using reverse-engineered language that they believe the buyer wants to hear based on the product's features, rather than on buyer input. The marketers then recruit salespeople to hang around the trade show booth and lure people in with the promise of a tchotchke or the chance to win an iPad. During the demo the salesperson, under the direction of marketers, goes through each feature while spewing superlative-laden, jargon-sprinkled, gobbledygook-filled hype.

Um . . . This is not effective. It is the old world of sales.

Throughout this book, we'll explore how to move beyond these dusty old paradigms.

## 24 The New Rules of Sales and Service

Any new initiative should start with buyers and your buyer personas. What problems do your buyers have? How can your company solve those problems with technology? How do your buyers describe the solutions?

Business-to-business companies need to rethink the entire trade show experience, not just the demo. I'd ask a more fundamental question: Do you need to be at the trade show at all? And if so, do you really need a booth? The web is a free 7/24 trade show. Consider refocusing your efforts to blogging or a content-rich website or other online initiatives to reach buyers.

### "These Sales Leads Stink!"

Salespeople have traditionally relied on the marketing department to generate sales leads. Sales managers often tell the marketing team: "Get me some good leads! These leads stink! My people can't sell to these!"

And the marketing team responds: "We gave you good leads! Your guys just stink at closing!" Having been in the middle of these discussions at several companies, I've heard them time and time again.

Back in the mid-1990s it was hard to find evidence of love between marketing and sales. At many B2B companies the relationship was downright adversarial. Often, the tension extended all the way up to senior management.

It all stemmed from the sales process involving a "handoff." Marketing generated leads, handed them over to sales, and then the sales team owned them until they closed.

We're in a world now where sales and marketing coexist throughout the entire sales process. Buyers are evaluating offerings throughout the sales process based on what a salesperson says or does and what they see and do on the web and in social media.

Savvy marketing and sales professionals understand that sales and marketing must work together to move prospects through the sales cycle. This is especially important in a complex sale with a long decision-making cycle and multiple buyers, each of whom must be persuaded. The good news is that web content not only can motivate buyers during a lengthy sales cycle but may even shorten it.

### Tell the Truth: The Power of Authenticity

Do you believe these claims?

- Lose 20 pounds in a week, no exercise or diet required!
- My husband is the former oil minister, and I want to give you \$20 million!

Of course not! Scam artists prey on the one person out of a million who is gullible. Everyone else knows these are lies.

How about these claims?

- And now he's making \$30,000 a month from his own website.
- We exceed your expectations.
- The Service Plan covers everything.

Hmm. These statements sound a little fishy too, don't they?

What about these?

- Regular price \$100.
- Our products are [pick one] innovative, cutting-edge, world-class.
- Light.
- Deluxe.

It's so easy for salespeople to slip into little lies. You've got to resist those seemingly small exaggerations and half-truths that harm your brand.

Or how about that often-used claim salespeople make, "We're the best in the industry," when referring to their company, products, and services?

Besides being overused and a cliché, there are a number of problems with "the best in the industry."

The phrase forces people to consider what exactly is "the industry"? Oh, it looks like the company is the best in the home electronics and appliance repair industry. Any claim that requires the buyer to infer that there are implied qualifications hiding within the pitch immediately raises skepticism.

The phrase "the best in the industry" forces a comparison that people weren't necessarily making. You instantly divert people's attention to the competition and what they might have to offer. "Oh, so you're the best in the e-cigarette cartridge industry? That probably means there is a cheaper alternative."

- The leading provider of . . .
- Service that's second to none.

## 26 The New Rules of Sales and Service

- Your call is important to us.
- Due to higher than expected call volume, your wait time is longer than normal.
- We love our customers.
- This is the best price I can offer.

Are you telling the truth? Or making something up in an attempt to sound good while hiding what's really going on?

You know what? Your customers can see through the smoke screen. Anyone who grew up reading *Mad* magazine or watching *The Simpsons* (probably many of you) was trained at a formative age to approach nearly all sales claims with critical and humorous skepticism.

Truth: We're trying to save money by firing customer support reps and therefore average wait time is now over five minutes.

Company claim: Your call is important to us.

I stay at many hotels where there is ample evidence of wasted energy. Some hotels sport massive energy-sucking atriums. Some keep the public areas way too cold in the summer and too hot in the winter.

Yet at these same hotels, you might see a sign in the bathroom or on the bed saying how much they "care about the environment" and inviting you to "save our natural resources" by reusing the towels and sheets rather than having clean ones provided each day.

Here's how the disconnect played out at one hotel I stayed at:

"The Resort features a dramatic, soaring 18-story glass atrium complete with vibrant indoor gardens, flowing waterways, and panoramic vistas of the river."

"One of your shower heads has been turned off in an effort to minimize water usage and protect one of our most precious natural resources."

Does this hotel's owners want to protect the environment? Or do they want an atrium with water fountains and sunlight coming in during the hot day sucking tons of energy? Which story is the truth?

Or maybe this is the truth: Some boneheads convinced the hotel to install these newfangled shower heads, and when the CFO saw the huge increase in water and energy usage, he had a fit and told the boneheads to do something about it, so they made up some hogwash about how they love the environment.

Or this: The hotel owners really want to save the planet but some idiot convinced them that it had to have an atrium and now they are stuck with it.



Your customers can spot hypocrisy a mile away. What are you saying to people? Are you telling the truth?

## Customer Disservice: The Little Things That Drive Us Crazy

Alas, sales has no monopoly on the reasons why so many businesses are operating dysfunctionally today.

It's easy to find countless customer service departments still following the old rules.

For one of my several email accounts, I use EarthLink. I've generally had good service and have been using it since about 1996. But the content in the EarthLink customer service messages I received several years ago made me want to scream.

At that time, I had a prepayment plan that allowed me to save money by paying for a year in advance. When the period was near expiration, I got a message with these instructions:

**\*\*\* Your prepayment plan will be expiring soon \*\*\***

Renew by contacting Customer Service at [service@earthlink.net](mailto:service@earthlink.net).

So I sent an email as directed, and this is what came back:

Thank you for contacting EarthLink,

We received your email, however in order to better serve you EarthLink only accepts replies to outbound email messages or new messages created by completing our online email form. . . . We ask that you resubmit your request using our online email form . . . , or, by inserting the following URL in your web browser:

<http://support.earthlink.net/email>

Using this form will help us direct your email to the right department so that we can provide you with an accurate and timely response.

They told me to email them. When I did, they told me not to. So now, armed with new information, I had to go through a rigmarole with all sorts of drop-down menus, none of which offered me the option to renew my

## 28 The New Rules of Sales and Service

prepayment plan. This after they told me to send them an email, and then said they don't accept email.

Ugh.

Communicating with customers via email is a great way to build loyalty and sell more services. But the content needs to be right. All automatic email messages (as the ones from EarthLink obviously were) need to be checked and rechecked by humans to make certain that the information in them is accurate and makes sense.

Don't ever make your most valuable customers (those who pay up front, in advance, for long-term contracts) jump through hoops to do business with you!

It's not just email support. If you own a car, consider the experience of taking it in for service at the dealership.

You have to call weeks ahead to get an appointment that requires you to miss part of a workday. If the dealership doesn't have a loaner car or courtesy transportation, you need to have your spouse or a friend drive you to work and then back to the dealer.

Inevitably, there's the telephone call with the bad news. Your "rocker arm" or "strut" or some other random part "needs to be replaced" and for some reason this process always seems to cost an extra \$800.

Okay, so let's assume the dealer is honest and you really do need the part to be replaced and it really does cost \$800. Why phone with the news? Why not email me a PDF document or a link to a video that describes the issue and maybe even includes an educational photo of the actual dodgy part on my own car?

Most organizations' customer support efforts still reflect an era when we couldn't communicate well and the inefficiencies that come with it. But it doesn't need to be this way. We'll learn how to do it better.

## "Please Take a Moment to Complete Our Survey": All Take and No Give

I've been getting a bunch of surveys recently. It seems like each time I contact a company or buy something I am asked to complete a survey that "will take less than 10 minutes."

I've been interrupted by big brands that should know better like Skype, Apple, Nike, and AT&T.

Sometimes, they send multiple emails, as if I forgot to complete the survey the first time. Sometimes they even use ALL CAPITALS, such as this one:

REMINDER: AT&T Wants To Know About Your Recent Experiences with AT&T

Dear Valued AT&T Customer,

At AT&T, we value your opinion. We strive to give you the best service possible and that can't happen without your honest feedback. Every voice matters—especially yours! By taking less than 10 minutes to complete a brief online survey, you have the opportunity to make your voice heard. We are specifically interested in talking to you about your recent experiences with AT&T.

Just click below and help us improve in order to serve you better!

How do the customer service people let this happen? It is extremely counterproductive for a company to ask for additional time from their buyers—especially when they have just expended the effort to call customer support or after they have just purchased a product. If a company is so hungry for customer survey information, create a relationship that encourages customers to want to interact and willingly provide feedback at their convenience.

Here's another one:

You recently contacted our Nike Digital Sport Customer Service team for assistance and we would like to hear from you.

It is because of feedback we receive from customers like you that we are able to continually improve our products and services. We won't rest until we've made every effort to provide you with a best-in-class consumer experience. The information you provide will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any other company.

The survey should only take 3–5 minutes to complete. We value your opinion and would appreciate it if you would answer some brief questions and tell us how we did. To access the survey, please click on the Web address below. This survey can be completed on your mobile phone or your computer's web browser.

If you require assistance for a new or existing support request, please contact Nike Digital Sport Customer Service.

## 30 The New Rules of Sales and Service

Thank you for your consideration,  
Nike Digital Sport Customer Service

Rather than taking, companies should be giving. Specifically, they should be delivering valuable content.

“We value your opinion” is not an accurate statement. Rather, it’s “we want to take your time.”

It seems to me that the problem with these surveys is that the people behind them aren’t at all connected to the people who are responsible for educating consumers. (Their concern is evaluating the customer support staff using metrics that measure the satisfaction of people on a transactional basis for each telephone support call or product purchase.)

And the senior executives are so focused on spreadsheets that they can’t even comprehend that the process of gathering that customer service data is actually hurting the company.

The executives in these companies pour over tiny incremental changes in customer satisfaction numbers. “Oh, look! We’re up 1 percent this month!”

They must know that the metrics are based on people who have nothing better to do but fill out stupid surveys.

Don’t they realize that most people, like me, are just annoyed?

### “There’s a Robocall on Line One. It Says It’s Urgent.”

Just because you have my email addresses, it doesn’t mean you should email me your sales message.

Just because you have my phone numbers, it doesn’t mean you should call me with your sales pitch.

Just because we’re connected on LinkedIn, it doesn’t mean you can add me to your distribution list.

Just because I follow you on Twitter, it doesn’t mean you can try to sell me something via Direct Message.

Intrusive, interruption-based sales techniques frequently do much more harm than good. The creation of such a campaign can tick people off so badly that it can actually cause business to fall. It would have been better to do nothing.

In 2012, Democrat Elizabeth Warren defeated incumbent Republican Scott Brown to win the U.S. Senate seat in my home state of Massachusetts.

I predicted the outcome. But not based on politics.

It was Scott Brown's intrusive robocalls. I wrote a piece in the *Huffington Post* before the election in which I said the robocalls would hand the election to Elizabeth Warren. I wrote that Warren would win because voters like me are fed up with being interrupted at home by robocalls pitching Brown. At my home number, we received perhaps 10 recorded ads from Brown support groups, including the Massachusetts Republican Party. We did not receive any calls from Warren support groups.

The idea of spending money annoying people seems like a good sales idea to traditionalists. They buy a list, prepare a script, and reach out to "prospects" to ask for votes.

Are these robocall interruptions supposed to be good? They just tick me off. And I'm not the only one. Other Massachusetts residents I spoke to were also fed up.

People hate sales calls. Some three-quarters of Americans have signed up for the National Do Not Call Registry, which does not currently apply to political organizations. This is something Shaun Dakin is fighting to change with his 500,000-person-strong National Political Do Not Contact Registry.

If three-quarters of Americans signed up to say "no" to sales calls, why the heck would a political campaign think making a sales call is a good thing?

I see examples of this behavior all the time. I am frequently added to email sales lists that I have no interest in. I got one where the person said, "Hello David Meerman. Since we're connected on LinkedIn I thought I'd let you know I added you to my email list. . . ." You don't even know my name. You blew it by interrupting me with an unwanted message. Bang! We are not connected on LinkedIn anymore, pal.

If someone sends me an unwanted sales pitch via Twitter Direct Message, I immediately unfollow that person on Twitter. Gone. Bye-bye.

Just because it has passengers confined in a metal tube for a few hours on a plane doesn't mean USAir should wake me up from a nap to plug its damned credit cards.

I don't go to my local mall food court as much as I used to because the owner, Simon Property Group, installed a television system that loudly advertises stuff to everyone as we are seated and trying to eat.

You don't have permission.

Salespeople need to understand that ownership of an email address or phone number or being followed on Twitter is not permission to intrude

## 32 The New Rules of Sales and Service

with a sales message. The presence of distracting audio and video advertising while dining, waiting in line at a supermarket, sitting in an airport lounge, or at other moments when one may be trying to concentrate on personal thoughts finds few fans.

Such behavior and intrusive pitches do more harm than good. You'd be better off doing nothing.

### Receiving an Email Address Is Not an Invitation to Spam

Many years ago I opted into emails from BMW because I wanted to receive a notice when the automaker released a new addition in its excellent series of original short films. For example, I liked *The Star* featuring Madonna and directed by Guy Ritchie. At the time these films were a new and exciting form of online marketing, and I wanted to know when new ones came out. I wrote about BMW's use of video on my blog back in 2007 and included a mention in one of my books.

Gradually over the years my email address seemed to be added to a number of BMW sales lists that I didn't choose to join. So I opted out of all emails from BMW.

Like most people, I am on a bunch of lists that seem to grow like weeds. Every time I buy something online, I'm added to a new list. I frequently opt out and that's the end of it, but I do not keep a tally of opt-outs. There are just too many, and most companies simply honor my request and stop sending me email.

I distinctly recalled opting out of BMW emails, so it seemed strange that I would mysteriously be placed back on the distribution list against my wishes.

When I received an email from BMW once more, I opted out again but this time I kept a screen shot as a personal record showing that I had indeed opted out from all items in BMW's list.

After that opt-out, I again got an email from BMW!

This one was from BMW of North America with a subject line "Shop BMW gifts on Cyber Monday." This email most certainly arrived after I had expressed my preference to receive no more emails and had recorded the attempt.

I posted my experience in a blog post titled “Is BMW an email spammer?” The post generated 24 comments and many tweets as people discussed what I had gone through.

Companies are frequently too eager to sell something to the poor hapless consumers who in good faith add their names to an email list. But to exploitatively abuse that trust is harmful to a brand.

Soon after I posted this story to my blog, BMW commented.

We came across your blog entry and would like to apologize for your receipt of e-mails from us after you unsubscribed from our mailing list. A now resolved software issue caused some people who opted out of e-mail to be added to two recent mailings in error.

Your entry this week was good timing as, over the last few days, we’ve been addressing the very issue of developing a streamlined process for managing email subscriptions and opt-outs (including “one-click” opt-out). We plan to launch it next year to resolve many of the concerns you’ve raised. BMW takes CAN-SPAM very seriously and we’re dedicated to offering an experience that not only follows the letter and spirit of the law but is easy to use.

Thanks to everyone on the thread for your feedback; we are listening and are looking forward to offering improved experiences for managing email subscriptions in the near future.

Thank you, BMW of North America, LLC.

While the comment and explanation were appropriate, and I certainly recognize that mistakes such as the BMW “software issue” can occur, companies need to consider carefully how they use people’s email addresses to sell them things.

## Adding Social Media to Old School Sales and Support Is Still Old School

Many people proudly trumpet how their company has made social media a part of its sales and customer service infrastructure. While the efforts are to be commended, most of these efforts involve taking the old ways of doing

## 34 The New Rules of Sales and Service

things and simply adding a social component. Social media bolted onto traditional sales does not work so well.

Following the interruption-style sales model by transferring focus from telephone cold calling to interrupting people via social networks like Twitter and LinkedIn is still interruption selling. It needs to change.

The same is true with customer service. It's not enough to add a Twitter feed to your existing traditional 800 number support call center, where people must wait on hold until they finally talk to a rep who is only authorized to read off a script. It needs to change.

## The Old Rules of Sales and Service

I recognize that this chapter has been a bit of a rant. I've taken you through many of the ineffective sales and service strategies and tactics that have been used in the past and either are not as effective in the world of the web or, worse, are downright counterproductive. It feels good for me to relate personal examples where companies have treated me poorly, but I am sure you have your own cases of ineptitude with the companies you deal with.

So here, in one place, are both the dynamics of *why* sales and service were so poor in the days before the web enabled real-time communications, as well as the old rules of sales and service:

### In the days before real-time online communications . . .

- It was very difficult for buyers to find independent information about the products and services that interested them.
- There was no easy way for unhappy customers to voice disapproval of a company in public.
- Both buyers and existing customers couldn't communicate instantly with the companies they did business with or patronized.
- Customers had little say in the products and services they wanted to buy.

### . . . therefore the old rules of sales and service applied:

- The seller had more knowledge and therefore had the upper hand in negotiations.
- Sellers had little incentive to tell the truth about their offerings.



- Companies used agencies to dream up messages rather than communicating with authenticity.
- Cold-calling solicitations were among the most common methods for salespeople to contact prospective clients.
- Customer service was conducted on the company's timetable, so it was okay to place people on hold or take weeks to respond to mail and email.
- The seller was in charge of the sales cycle, parsing out details to buyers on the seller's timetable.
- Salespeople and customer service people used scripts to push buyers and customers down a single path.
- Jargon was rampant.
- Sellers delivered only proprietary information such as their company's white papers and research reports.
- There was very little incentive to fix problems or make customers happy, because there were few outlets for complaining publicly.
- The sales process was generic, and buyers needed to fit into a one-size-fits-all culture.
- Buyers needed to ask the right questions.
- Sales were handled by the sales department, and customer service was handled by the customer service department.

Okay, end of rant.

People hate to be sold to, but in the old days they had no choice.

None of this needs to be true in your business any longer! The world has changed, and your business needs to adapt. In the rest of the book we'll look at what you need to do to be successful in the new world.

