



# REASONS

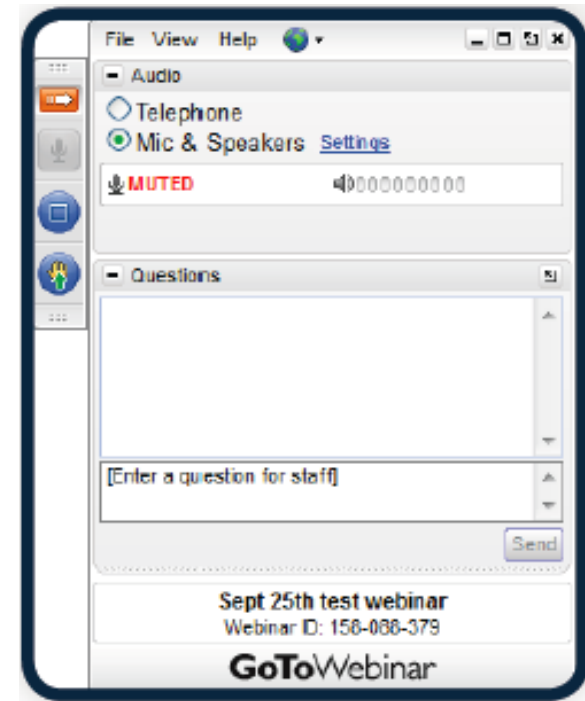
most B2B companies  
fail at marketing...

...and how to avoid their mistakes!

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# Thank you for joining us today!

1. All attendees are in listen only mode
2. Questions are anonymous to the audience
3. Submit written questions within “question box” on GoToWebinar console at any time during webinar.
4. Questions will be answered during the Q&A section at the end



# Presented by Lisa Shepherd

- Founder of The Mezzanine Group
- 20 years of experience working with B2B companies across all industries and sizes
- B2B marketing blogger for PROFIT Magazine
- Nominated for the Top 40 Under 40 and the Canadian Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Awards.
- Author of the recently published *The Radical Sales Shift: 20 Lessons from 20 Leaders on How to Use Marketing to Grow Sales in B2B Companies*.



# Learning a New Skill: B2B Strategic Marketing



Product + Operations + Sales

**≠ Success**

**New skill in the mix:**  
Strategic Marketing

# Why Strategic Marketing, Why Now?

**The Radical Sales Shift:** The B2B buyer completes anywhere from **66% to 90%** of their purchasing process before engaging with salespeople.

- How do you engage prospects early in the process? **MARKETING.**
- Marketing gets companies found when a prospect is looking for solutions.
- Marketing nurtures leads until they're ready to talk with a salesperson.
- Marketing makes sure the sales team has effective tools to convert prospects to customers.

# Why 'strategic' marketing?



Many B2B companies focus on tactical or 'ad hoc' marketing, when they should focus on strategic marketing

Here's a common scenario:





# REASONS

why B2B companies don't succeed  
with strategic marketing...

...and the steps you can take  
to avoid the common traps!

# Poorly defined value proposition

Most B2B companies cannot answer the question:

***“Why should we buy from you?”***

## How to tackle the issue:

- Articulating your value proposition is powerful. Commit to working on it.
- Don't be a perfectionist. Your value proposition will evolve.
- Get others involved, especially customers.

***“A business is a value delivery system.”***

*– McKinsey & Company*

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## Weak Messaging

Messaging is the way value propositions are communicated to the market. Most B2B companies don't have compelling messages.

### How to tackle the issue:

- **Be specific, objective and quantifiable** – For example, “We return calls to customer service within 4 hours, guaranteed.”
- **Repeat, repeat and repeat your message** – Once you have defined your messaging statements, repeat them in everything!

# No Marketing Foundation

Strategic marketing is a lot like building a house. You pour the foundation, ensure that it's strong, and then you build the structure.

## How to tackle the issue:

- Don't leap into campaigns, as tempting as it is to do so. First establish your foundation (the unsexy structural work like defining target markets and messaging) and then move on to campaigns.



# Short-term Thinking

Many companies think they will see results in one quarter or one year.

**In reality, it takes 2-3 years to fully achieve the benefits of strategic marketing for B2B companies.**

## How to tackle the issue:

- Recognize that strategic marketing is like courtship.
- Determine an approximate, realistic timeline for results from your marketing.
- Rule of Thumb: Foundation takes 6-12 months. Then, once campaign marketing is started, it could take 3 weeks, 3 months or 3 years to see results, based on sales cycle.

# Shiny Object Syndrome

**“I was talking to my neighbour and this marketing tactic really worked well for his company. We should try it.”** – Many B2B business leaders

## How to tackle the issue:

- Stop taking an ad hoc approach and instead take a strategic, integrated approach to marketing:
  1. **Define your target market and how you are going to reach them**
  2. **Build and execute a roadmap including a budget and calendar**
- Listen to your marketing gatekeeper. Let them do their job. They will know whether or not the new marketing fad will work for your organization.

# Focusing on Features, not Benefits

B2B companies love to talk about their product or service but they forget that customers need to understand how they will benefit before they buy.

***“Sell the good night’s sleep, not the mattress”***

## How to tackle the issue:

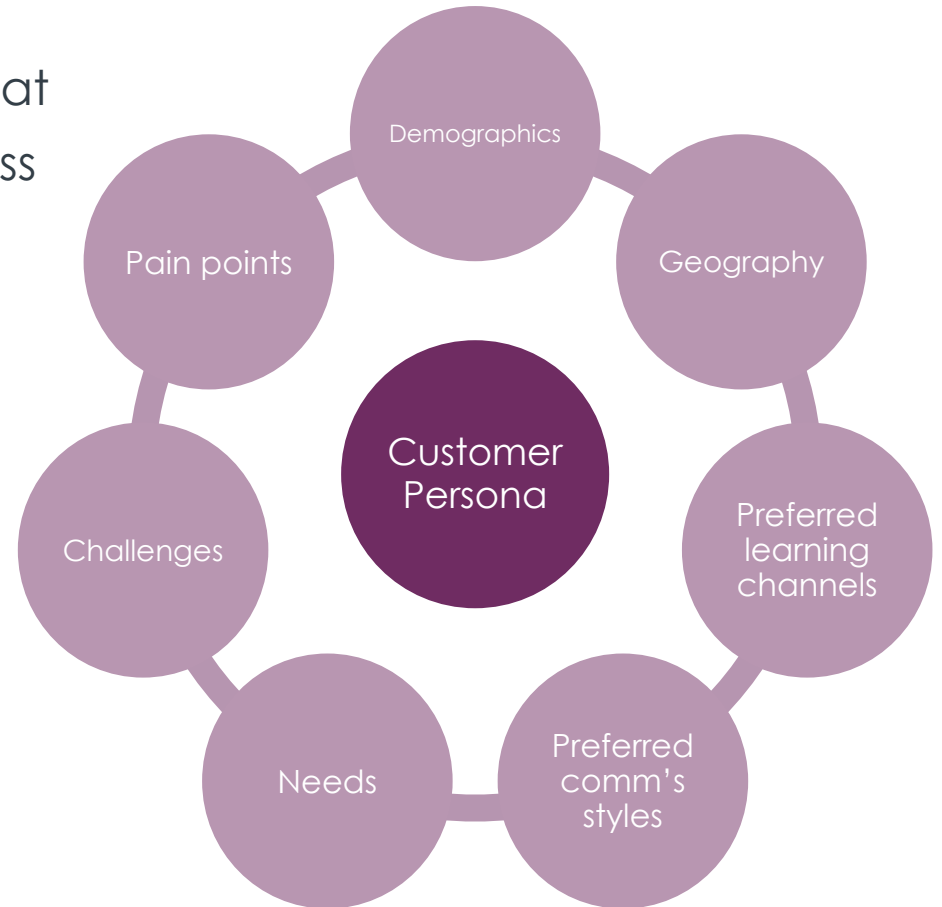
- **Recognize that customers are buying because of the benefits to them:**  
There will be decision makers who want the specifications, but if you only discuss specs, you are merely a commodity.
- **Articulate how your product benefits customers more than your competitors’:**  
How does your product or service surpasses that of other options to achieve the results your customers seek.

# Not knowing/defining Customer Personas

Buyers are **48%** more likely to consider solution providers that personalize their marketing to address their specific business issues. But **only 44%** of B2B marketers use buyer personas.

## How to tackle the issue:

- Participate in sales calls. B2B marketers need to hear what the customer is saying, in order to incorporate customer needs into messaging, collateral, the website, etc.
- Get others involved. Work with an outsider if you can, or go through a process to define who the personas are and take a structured approach.



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## Summary:

Strategic marketing is the new competitive advantage for B2B companies. How strategic is your marketing?



A clearly defined value proposition



Effective messaging



A solid marketing foundation



Long-term perspective



Not falling prey to shiny object syndrome



Focusing on benefits not features



Defining customer personas

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When companies address these  
7 issues, they double to triple  
their marketing results

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To ask a question, type it into the Questions Panel located in the bottom right portion of the screen.

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# Thank you for joining us today!



Lisa Shepherd, Founder- The Mezzanine Group  
416.937.8376 • [lshepherd@themezzaninegroup.com](mailto:lshepherd@themezzaninegroup.com)  
[www.themezzaninegroup.com](http://www.themezzaninegroup.com)