Pre-work Assignment

≡ Key Learnings	Effect of Digital and Social Media Marketing in B2C and B2B Sales Process
≡ Pedagogy & Pre-Readings	B2B and B2C
≡ Session topic	Sales & Channel Management

EMBA 2020 A

Pre-work Assignment: Sales & Channel Management

To strengthen your understanding of Revenue Fetching Function, use your own company as a basis (B2B or B2C) to learn and practice more on the topic. You can engage with the Sales Teams of your Company and seek information on how they go about managing Sales and Channel issues and challenges.

Pre-work Reading: (**Completed**)

You are required to probe and ascertain the following:

a) Sales and Channel Management - The Meaning.

b) The traditional method of Selling and allowing customers to access the Company's offering.

c) The Challenges faced in B2B and B2C Sales & Channel environments.

Pre-work Assignment: (**Completed**)

Answer the following questions in 1-2 page document without divulging any confidential information:

1. How has technology impacted the Sales process? Are Sales people any more required? In other words, can the company sell without Sales personnel or allow Targeted Customers to gain the benefits offered? Give examples as illustrations of how this is done.

Answer: Technology innovations (e.g. digital and social media marketing) automated most of mundane or repetitive tasks earlier required in the sales funnel processes [e.g. awareness → lead generation → customer onboarding → after sales support → customer relations (up-sales, cross-sales and customer retention) → end of life]

Still some of the below steps in the sales process technology is not able to automate

- **When we try to identify the customer need and want through customer interview, site visit or ethnography.**

- **When we need to resolve customer issues and concerns while using our products.**

- **When we need to build customer personal connect to sell one time high valued product (e.g. car, house, jewellery etc.) or preferably B2B long tenure product (e.g. cloud SaaS Product, Aircraft engine etc).**

Though company reduce the sales and customer touch points but still in some steps where customer empathy or emotions need to be taken care, company need sales personnel to address those problems. Here are few of my personal experiences or examples.

For B2C Customers

- **For B2C customers where <u>switching cost is low </u>(e.g. medicine, FMCG products), company should not require sales personal except during launching the product. For such product, once the product launch, if the product is innovative and customers #JTBD those products will remain and succeed in the market and become cash-cow else the product will die gradually. Such company don't need sales personal to support the sales process.**

- **For B2C customers where** <u>switching cost is high</u> **(e.g. home appliance, water purifier, laptop, car, house etc.), sales personal add value to create awareness and educate the customer about the product but can't influence customer to buy the product, rather customer validate through online review or personnel reference before buying the product. Here after sales support is on the area where company need technical after sales service personnel to resolve the product issues.**

For B2B Customers

But for B2B customers, sales personal are needed because:

- **B2B relationships are personal.**

- **The B2B buying process involves a lot of decision-makers, and the buying cycle is long and complex.**

- **B2B buyers have complex procurement processes.**

- **B2B buyers need many ways to pay.**

- **Data for multiple channels may be siloed.**

- **Shipping B2B has its own set of requirements and constraints.**

- **B2B buyers need to find more complex products just as easily.**

2. Why does the company lose sales? Provide a diagnostic explanation.

Answer: Company lose sales because many of the reasons, some of them are could be:

- **Product is not helping customer #JTBD for which he hired the product.**

- **Better product available in the market with competitive price.**

- **Product quality is not as expected or commitment is not fulfilled.**

- **Price is high or value proposition is low than competitors products in the market.**

- **Product is out or shelf most of the time when customer needed or poor supply chain.**

- **After sales service is not good and poor customer service.**

3. How can the postmortem of a lost order be done?

Answer: Postmortem of a lost order can be done through product, price, team competitiveness and sales process and approval retrospections:

- **First start with product competitiveness in the market with quality, availability, price and after sales support compare to direct, indirect or substitute product available in the market. if ok then:**

- **Second start with sales and marketing team performance and competitiveness regarding creating awareness, educate about the product and sustaining curiosity till leads converted to purchase. If ok then:**

- **Third start with sales and approval process are efficient enough to help customer buy the product hustle free.**

Do this retrospection along with all the stakeholders to identify the real cause of lost order by considering everyone's point of view, and this knowledge will help to fix the similar business in future and end to end sales process going to be robust gradually. Retrospection should be regular exercise irrespective of lose or win order.

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4. Today customers have a wealth of information and certainly don't like to be chased. Is it possible to reverse the process i.e, the customer chases and seeks to interact with company personnel? Keeping this goal in mind, devise a new Sales and Channel design for your Company.

Answer: Though customer don't like to be chased but like to be aware, informed and educate about the product so that they can purchase as and when they will be needed.

In the current age of automation and social media marketing, if the product is excellent it don't need marketing or sales personal to sale the product rather the product awareness and value will spread exponentially through customers word of mouth and online review. Overnight product will be super success and vice versa is devastating.

E.g, In current time Apple product are so intuitive, innovative and excellent service, that once anyone buy apple product (e.g MacBook, iPhone, iPod, iPad etc.) they never go to any competitor inspite of premium price. Because Apple created the integrated value proposition (through hardware, software, iTune, AppStore, iCloud and now with own chipset) which none of the competitor match.

My last company HPE sales various serves, storage, networking and compute hardware product to is customers across globe through physical channel. On 2018 HPE decide to transform the company from perpetual to As A Service company through new HPE GreenLake Central Hybrid cloud platform (https://www.hpe.com/us/en/greenlake/featured.html) and I was part of HPE GreenLake product team. With two years we were able to build HPE GreekLake Hybrid cloud platform through which HPE sale all of its portfolio of products through Pay as you go pricing model and HPE on the way to transform to co-location Cloud as a Service organisation by 2022 with a tagline "Bring Cloud to Your Data" (https://www.hpe.com/us/en/discover-more-network/events/hpe-greenlake.html).