A Go-To-Market Strategy Primer

WHITE PAPER

No. 1

A company's **go-to-market** (GTM) **strategy** is one of the most important levers to improve key business outcomes. At its core, a GTM strategy is the way a company aligns to the evolving needs of its customers – it is the interface at which the company sells to and serves its customer base and interacts with new prospects. It involves the most strategic questions a company can ask.

symmetrics GROUP

Introduction

Consider the following true story.

> *I was frustrated. I had just hung-up the phone after talking to my fourth call center representative. I had called one number for my credit card and another number for my checking account, and they still kept passing me back-and-forth. I was clearly not seen as one customer.*
>
> *I had also sent the company a note via a web form and tried a chat session, but neither of them seemed to fix my problem. All I wanted was to rectify a mistake the bank made when they debited my checking account twice for a credit card payment. After my sixth call to them and second manager discussion, they told me it would be ten days before the money could be returned to the original account. On top of this, one of the call center representatives tried to sell me on an upgrade to my checking account.*
>
> *I had called the company six times, submitted a web form, engaged in one chat session, spoke with two managers, and I still had to wait ten days for my money to be returned to my account. They also tried to up-sell me after my experience had gone sour, which was after my third call to them. Lastly, they admitted that they were culpable for the mistake after quite a bit of prodding on my part, but nothing could be done to shorten the waiting period.*

Most for-profit companies want to maximize their revenues and minimize their costs and risks, all the while providing a delightful customer experience.

The majority of companies are not there yet, however, especially not on a consistent basis. The previous story is not that atypical and probably resonates with many readers. A lot of companies are continually refining and optimizing their key business outcomes and often looking for a Silver Bullet[1] or at least trying to identify the key levers to pull or dials to turn to improve their results.

With that backdrop, a company's go-to-market (GTM) strategy is one of the most important levers to improve key business outcomes. At its core, a GTM strategy is the way a company aligns to the evolving needs of its customers – it is the interface at which the company sells to and serves its customer base and interacts with new prospects. It involves the most strategic questions a company can ask, such as:

1. **What *markets* do we pursue?**
2. **Which *customers* do we target?**
3. **Which *channels* fit with how our customers buy?**
4. **How do our *offerings* fit with our markets and channels?**
5. **What is our unique *value proposition* to each target customer?**

[1] In folklore, the Silver Bullet is understood to be the only kind of bullet that is effective against a werewolf, witch, or other monsters. The connotation for business is that there is a single thing you can do that will solve all of your problems.

This Whitepaper will provide you with a basic overview of the strategic questions above, while arming you with questions and ideas to start the most critical of discussions – how your GTM strategy should be structured.

A GTM STRATEGY

Many people think a GTM strategy is all about the routes or channels-to-market (e.g., direct sales, telechannels, eCommerce, etc.), which is a key part but is not the whole story. If you try to sell large, complex system integration projects to small businesses, you aren't going to be successful regardless of the channel utilized. The offering-market fit is misaligned, and the value proposition won't resonate. Figure 1 depicts the key elements of a GTM strategy[2], which will be discussed in more detail later in the Whitepaper.

Strategic Questions

Just as with a company's overall corporate strategy, you would still ask the typical strategic question set for each GTM element – markets, customers, channels, offerings, and value propositions.

1. **Where are you (current state)?**
2. **Where do you want to go (desired state)?**
3. **How do you get there (strategic options)?**

Additionally, the typical strategic planning triumvirate would also apply.

1. **Situation analysis – a thorough and thoughtful analysis of your current situation**
2. **Strategy formulation – how you will get from point A to point B (the solution path)**
3. **Implementation – how you will implement the strategic programs and projects to execute against your formulated strategy**

The GTM strategy is no different than creating strategies for other areas of the business; it's just focused on more of the front-office (i.e., marketing, sales and service) and the key GTM elements.

[2] For further insight into strategy, see MarketingProfs.com, Marketing Strategy Defined: What You Need to Know (and Why You Need to Know It) by Michael L. Perla

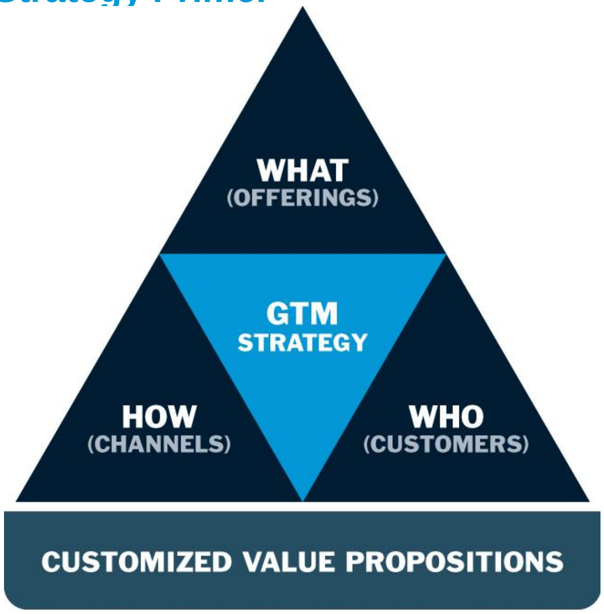

Figure 1

An integrated, or holistic, GTM strategy includes a methodical analysis of markets, customer segments, channel economics, offerings, value propositions and a host of other enabling factors that are involved in formulating an integrated strategy. Taking anywhere from 12-24 months to successfully implement, a new GTM strategy should not be seen as a quick-fix prescription for a current quarter shortfall but rather as a long-term strategy to increase revenues, decrease go-to-market costs, and improve the customer experience.

The front-office triad of marketing, sales and service, which is part and parcel of a company's GTM strategy, can account for 20-30% of a company's cost structure[3], and is the key revenue generator and engine for top-line growth. A better-optimized GTM strategy can add 10-15% to the bottom line by improving market selection, customer alignment, and channel productivity.

1. What *markets* do we pursue?

Going after the right markets is one of the most important elements in your GTM strategy. As you've seen with various fads and waves (e.g., dot-coms, pick a technology category, etc.), surfing the right trend and market can mask a lot of ills. As the classic Warren Buffett quote reminds us: "It's only when the tide goes out that you learn who's been swimming naked." When everyone is enjoying good times and growth, you don't know who has taken on excessive risks or picked the wrong markets, segments, or messages.

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[3] Per the McKinsey Quarterly, *Five ways CFOs can make cost cuts stick*, May 2010, SG&A costs for the S&P 500 from 1998 to 2008 remained about the same (~22%), while Cost of Goods Sold (COGS) decreased by about 250 basis points. There is a significant opportunity to better manage cost of sales and SG&A.

Within business-to-business (B2B) market segmentation[4], most companies look at three key factors:

1. **Vertical (or industry)**
2. **Geography (or region)**
3. **Company size (e.g., revenue, market potential, # of employees)**

One market might be financial services, and it could include the mid-market and the Global 500 (e.g., vertical and size slices). The market may have a regional focus (e.g., North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, etc.) depending on the nature and degree of the geographic differences (e.g., buying centers, rules and regulations, micro-segments, etc.).

In a simple example, if you utilized three market segmentation factors and had three levels for each factor (e.g., three main regions pursued or revenue size bands, etc.), you'd have up to 27 different market segment combinations, and that's a simplified model. Also, if you have different competitors in a specific segment, you are in a distinct market and it should be pursued as such.

In essence, there are many more markets that you can profitably pursue, so you have to crisply define where your offerings and messages most resonate and differentiate you from the competition[5].

As many strategists know, strategy is all about trade-offs and often what you don't do – markets and customers you don't pursue, offerings you don't launch, or channels that you don't build-out. Market selection then is a balancing of trade-offs and expected return on investment, with a sprinkle of timing and luck.

At a high level, there are five steps for targeting new markets:

1. **Develop a list of all possible markets you could pursue (the relevant universe)**
2. **Develop your assessment criteria to test each market. For example,**
   a) Market size
   b) Growth rate
   c) Barriers to entry
   d) Strategic alignment
   e) Ability to compete
   f) Market economics
3. **Assess each market for fit, alignment, and addressability**
4. **Validate and/or test each market with key internal/external stakeholders**
5. **Prioritize and refine your markets and market strategy on an ongoing basis**

In general, highly attractive markets will be attractive to competitors as well. Just as a great house will have multiple offers, markets are no different. In the past, the financial services market was attractive to many new

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[4] Business-to-consumer (B2C) segmentation is often much richer and nuanced in its segmentation bases than B2B – it might include psychographics, need drivers, persona development, behavioral signatures, etc. Some B2B companies are becoming more advanced in their segmentation, but it's more the exception than the rule.

[5] One caveat to this statement is the idea of a disruptive innovation (see Clayton Christensen's work) , which may appear to be an inferior market or offering at first glance, but grows to overtake its rivals as some "marginal" or new segment will value it in a way that is not easily predicted.

entrants and upstarts given their high margins and growth story, but that market is a bit less bright today. In the end, as important as markets are, it's the prospects and customers in those markets who make the ultimate buying decisions.

Which *customers* do we target?

There are a number of adages around the importance of customers, which may seem trite but are often good reminders of their centrality to a business. It all starts and ends with the customer. Sam Walton is said to have remarked that if you are ever confused, go talk to your customer. Or Peter Drucker's famous quote: "The purpose of business is to create and keep a customer."

A GTM strategy should be no different – if you don't consistently capture voice of the customer data, you will almost certainly miss the mark with regards to your GTM performance and ongoing strategy[6]. There are numerous ways to collect information about your customers – focus groups, web surveys, one-to-one interviews, advisory boards, and various other methods.

At a minimum, there are three kinds of customer information that you should collect, regardless of method.

CUSTOMER NEEDS – STATED AND IMPLIED

A needs assessment is a typical occurrence in seller, offering or project discovery sessions[7]. It is a systematic process for uncovering gaps between current and desired conditions. Some common questions include:

- **What needs are you trying to satisfy?**
- **What problems are you trying to solve?**
- **How do you know there is a problem?**
- **What are you trying to achieve?**
- **What is your vision for a solution?**

The needs should be both broadened and narrowed – the former by asking about the bigger picture; the latter by decomposing the needs into their constituent elements. Customers also express their needs through their behaviors and budgets or spend.

For example, if you think of a budget as a way to weight needs, a software integration project that captures 30% of the discretionary budget is probably a more important need than a 2% budget line item to train all the marketers on project management methods. You can also look at how customers spend their time and what problems take up the most energy and effort – this is how you better understand implied needs.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

The quick question is what sort of experience or relationships do customers want to have with your company, if any. Some customers would prefer quick-and-easy interactions, while others would prefer a much deeper relationship. Figure 2 outlines some types of experiences that customers may want and some examples of companies that orient themselves, to some degree, to that experience.

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[6] The one qualification, however, is that not all customers know what they want and sometimes you have to shape their vision to see what's possible (e.g., Apple)

[7] For example, understanding the needs of a prospect/customer, the marketing requirements for an offering or the scope of a project

Type of Experience[8]	Company Examples
Transactional / Low Cost	Amazon or TD Ameritrade
Consultative / Advisement	Accenture or PwC
Enterprise / Ecosystem	IBM or Cisco
Hybrid / Multichannel	Dell or Bank of America

Figure 2

The goal of customer experience management (CEM) is to not only satisfy your customers but to have them become advocates or raving fans of your company, brand, and offerings. From a GTM strategy standpoint, CEM should be an integral part in terms of measuring and managing a customer's cross-channel interactions to improve and optimize their experience. In a 2010 Forrester Research study, 90% of the executives surveyed said that customer experience was very important or critical to their firm's strategy, while 80% said they wanted to use it as a form of differentiation[9].

In general, the increase of customer-centric or customer intimacy strategies vs. product or operations strategies[10], which are often less durable and differentiable, has been a key driver of optimizing the customer experience.

Witness the rise of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software in the '90's as a way to measure, monitor, and track customer relationships. CRM initially gained strong traction in verticals that wanted to stop the inexorable trend to commoditization, namely, high tech, financial services, and telecommunications. Each of these verticals shifted to a more customer-centric strategy and often compensated their sales professionals on customer satisfaction and loyalty metrics, which has some empirical foundations. Customer satisfaction has been shown to be positively related to increases in shareholder value, revenue, and return on equity[11].

In summary then, CRM and CEM are complementary and should be integrated and aligned to ensure a match of internal (CRM) and external (CEM) perspectives.

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[8] This is adapted from Neil Rackham's work in *Rethinking the Sales Force*

[9] 2010 State of the Customer Experience, Forrester Research. Surveyed 141 Executives from Large North American Firms.

[10] This idea of "generic" strategies around customer intimacy, operational excellence and product leadership is often attributed to Michael Treacy and Fred Wiersema's works/books, where they generally argue that a company should major in one of the value disciplines to be successful. They present various case studies in their books to substantiate their models.

[11] See the www.theasci.org and www.cfigroup.com – various studies and analyses

Customer Buying Behavior – Macro and Micro

As many sales professionals know today, the average customer is much more informed than they were ten years ago. There is a plethora of free and helpful content on the web, including a proliferation of micro-targeted blogs and wikis and an increasing number of user-generated vendor and product reviews that are often unfiltered and candid. The buyer also has more ways to interact with a company – internet, chat, social media, contact centers, direct sales professionals, and partners, among others. Keeping aligned with the buyer as they freely navigate myriad channels and content sources is more-and-more challenging and important[12].

In the last five or so years, there has been much more focus on aligning the sales process to the buying process. A buyer-aligned sales process is more likely to engender strong resonance with a buyer as you are lock-step with their needs and purpose. If the customer is still at a discovery and learning stage, and you are trying to close them, you will be misaligned, and their experience will be dissatisfying.

Buying behavior is both macro and micro – there is the channel level and process or pipeline level. What behaviors do customers exhibit with both inter- and intra-channel interactions? In other words, which channels do they select and prefer, and how do they behave within a channel, such as working with a field sales professional or a call center representative. Per the strategic question set, there are three main questions:

- **How do customers (would stratify by segment) currently interact with your company, and what is their satisfaction level?**
- **How would customers desire to interact with you?**
- **How do you design, develop, and deploy your desired state CEM/GTM strategy?**

There should also be an economic vetting before you decide to shift your GTM structure. For example, there are some customers who are currently unprofitable or have a negative lifetime value[13] and may want more services and resources from you in the future.

This could be a small customer who wants more personalized, face-to-face service or a large, global customer who is very demanding and has significant negotiating power. In both cases, unless you can shift them to a better economic model and/or they change their purchasing behaviors, it may not make sense to retain them as customers[14]. Quality of revenue is often more important than quantity of revenue. It's imperative to focus on customers with the highest potential in terms of repeat purchases and larger average deal sizes. The paradox is that less is often more.

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[12] This applies to both B2C and B2B as the lines are blurring. Witness the consumerization of IT - some studies show that 95% (IDC study) of employees have purchased at least one device and use it at work. Both B2C and B2B buyers have more content sources and devices to access and navigate buying options.

[13] Customer lifetime value (abbreviated as CLV, LCV or LTV) is the net present value of the cash flows that would be attributed to the life of a customer relationship. There is typically a netting of lifetime value minus acquisition and/or retention costs to determine current or future customer profitability.

[14] There are other strategic reasons to keep customers, but the 80/20 or 90/10 (Pareto relationship) is that a lot of customers are not profitable for you and may not be in your sweet spot as a target customer

Which *channels* fit with how our customers buy?

Quite simply, a channel is a way that you link your offerings to your customers. It may be through a face-to-face seller, the internet, or a business partner.

Most of us have traversed numerous channels over the course of our lives buying different products and services. Some examples might be:

- **Direct sales – buying a car from a sales professional on a new car lot (this also dovetails with other channels – it's a dealer or partner channel to the brand owner or car manufacturer)**
- **eCommerce – buying a book from Amazon**
- **Call or Contact Center – buying some clothing from L.L. Bean over the phone or having a chat session with someone at Dell as you are configuring a new computer**
- **Retail – buying food and household goods from a grocery store chain or Target**
- **Partner – buying a new cell phone from a Verizon authorized dealer or partner**

The examples above are more business-to-consumer (B2C) oriented – as they're relevant to most – but there are similar variants on the B2B side as well, such as buying new supply chain software from an account executive (direct sales) and then using a consulting partner of theirs (e.g., Accenture) to implement it. Figure 3 depicts a typical view of the different channels-to-market that could be built-out or utilized by your company.

Figure 3

A lot of frustration occurs when channels don't "talk" to each other, as explicitly referenced in the story at the beginning of this Whitepaper. A classic example for a B2B sales professional is when they meet with one of their customers and are not aware that their inside sales team has also been calling on their account, as well as one of their business partners. From the customer's perspective, this disconnect is also frustrating in that the vendor does not appear coordinated, and it can be confusing as to who they should work with – field sales, inside sales, or a partner.

This situation is sometimes referred to as channel conflict, and rather than being an issue, per se, it can be quite insightful. The conflict can help to inform your next steps. For example:

- **Define, document and re-communicate your company's rules of engagement with both internal and external channels (e.g., inside sales and business partners)**
- **Revisit your voice of the customer efforts to ensure you know how your customers want to buy (e.g., the customer may want to execute a simple eCommerce transaction, work with a value-added partner or go directly to a field sales representative)**
- **Re-assess your market and customer segmentation strategy (e.g., which channel is best equipped to manage demand and maximize the customer experience)**
- **Evaluate your channel economics in terms of expense-to-revenue (E/R) ratios and the volume, throughput and capacity of your channel mix**

The other key element to consider is channel economics. There is a reason that Delta Air Lines charges a fee to buy an airplane ticket via their call center vs. Delta.com. An internet interaction costs them pennies – the infrastructure is already built-out and is scalable – while a call center transaction may cost them from twenty-five cents to a few dollars, depending on whether it's on- or off-shore or more integrated voice response (IVR: the classic phone trees we all enjoy) oriented. In another B2C example, the all-in cost to acquire a new consumer banking account is 15% to 45% lower through the internet than a branch or call center[15].

Figure 4 is a high-level illustration of the general cost per interaction for each channel and whether the channel is high or low touch. The outlier boxes (in blue) indicate some situations that may not fit the traditional trend – a sales professional that is a "walking brochure" (i.e., everything the seller says is already in your brochures or collateral – no new insights) or on the other end, a rich application of web technologies that provides more touch but at a lower cost than a direct sales interaction.

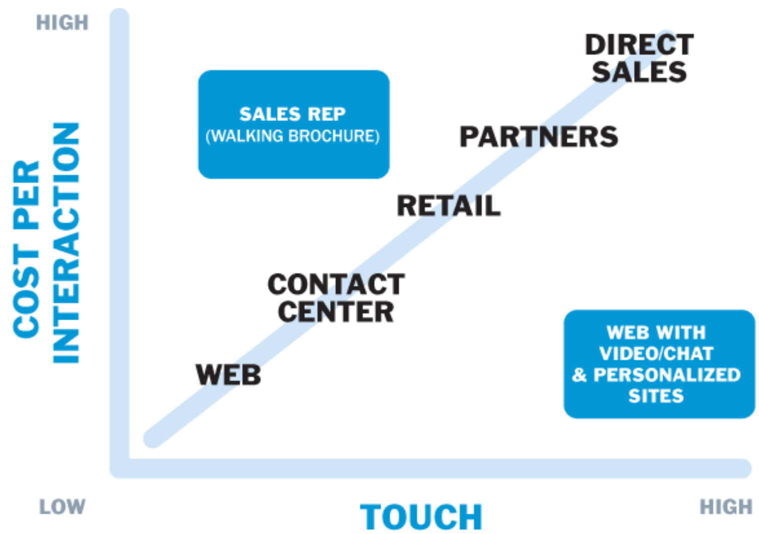

Figure 4

[15] McKinsey & Co., *The Future of Retail Banking.* Banking on Multichannel, November 2010.

Some key discussion questions for the channel area include:

- **Does the channel fit your offerings? Highly complex or high touch offerings are unlikely to be sold through more "impersonal" channels (e.g., eCommerce, Contact Center).**
- **How do your current and future customers want to interact with you – what are their channel preferences?**
- **Can the channel handle the throughput? Is the channel ready for the expected demand (e.g., problems could include an eCommerce site that goes down; an inside sales team that can't cover their quota and begins to voluntarily leave, etc.)?**

How do our *offerings* fit with our markets and channels?

One of the first rules of developing your GTM strategy is ensuring your offerings fit your channels. Some examples of what is *unlikely* to work include:

- **Selling complex consulting services over the phone or via the web**
- **Selling basic home office products door-to-door or with a direct sales force**
- **Selling complex legal or audit representation services via an outsourced call center**
- **Selling a $100m Boeing 747 airplane over the web**

The aforementioned examples seem a bit silly, but they engender some feelings that can be quite insightful. There are offerings where the person selling them is very important, particularly professional services but also products that are expensive or that have a long life. Figure 5 outlines some key dimensions to assess when evaluating offering-channel fit.

<table>
<tr><th>#</th><th>Dimension</th><th>Key Offering Question</th><th>Simple</th><th>Complex</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Definability</td><td>Is it well defined?</td><td rowspan="5">• Paper Clips
• Paper Towels
• Envelopes</td><td rowspan="5">• Supply Chain Software
• Boeing 747 Jet
• Audit Services</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Customizability</td><td>Can it be customized?</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Substitutability</td><td>Can it be easily substituted?</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Negotiation</td><td>Is there room for negotiation?</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Purchasing Risk</td><td>What is the risk of a bad decision?</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 5

In light of the dimensions in Figure 5, there are more and more complex offerings being bought today over lower-cost channels (e.g., web, contact center), such as legal and consulting services, computer hardware and software, and automobiles. With the availability of high-end video and audio conferencing, plus the cost of airplane travel, there are an increasing number of strategic meetings, software demos, and complex transactions taking place where all the parties are not in the same room but may be face-to-face via a high-fidelity video screen (e.g., Cisco TelePresence) or conference. There are still situations where it makes sense for the seller and buyer to be in the same room, but that seems to be shrinking.

What is our unique *value proposition* to each target customer?

As we've written elsewhere[16], although value is often in the eye of the beholder, there are some standard methods around determining what is valuable. In general, there is some sort of netting of tangible and intangible benefits and costs. This net value is then compared (could be formal or informal) to other uses of time, resources and capital. The key point to explore with customers is what's important to the person you are proposing to and how do they weight specific benefits and costs.

For a B2B situation, the seller may be calling on a CEO and VP of Marketing, and they will want to customize their value proposition accordingly. The CEO may over-weight stock price impact but under-weight a new onboarding process, while a VP of Marketing may over-weight a new product or market launch but under-weight earnings per share growth. On the B2C side, some customers will pay a premium for more features and functionality, whereas others want the product as simple as possible[17].

The lesson is that you must engage your customers in a dialogue to understand what they over and under-weight and what truly resonates with them. Developing your value proposition in a corporate vacuum is a recipe for failure.

Like many endeavors, it helps to use a test and iteration approach with real targets and messages to improve the language and delivery of your value proposition. Also, it should be crisp (no long-winded prose) and include some quantitative proof points that can be verified and supported. Business metrics and financials are such a common short-hand because they cut through the "weasel words"[18] and ambiguous messages that are so common in buzzword-laden marketing materials.

Some important points to test with regards to your value proposition include the following:

- **What do you want people to think (after hearing it)?**
- **What do you want people to feel?**
- **What do you want them to believe?**
- **What do you want them to remember?**

Figure 6 graphically depicts the value proposition elements and the critical feedback loop to test, iterate and improve them with customer targets.

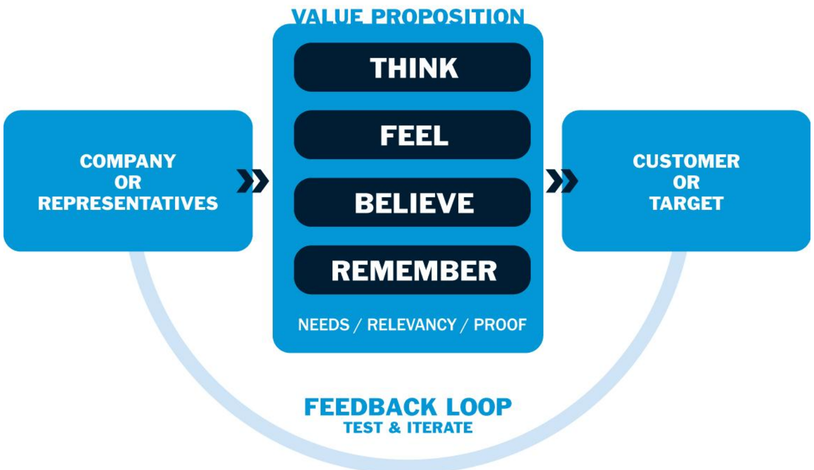

Figure 6

[16] See Marketingprofs.com – *What's Your Value Proposition?* by Michael L. Perla

[17] See highly-featured "smart" phones vs. big button phones that are often marketed to senior citizens

[18] A weasel word – an informal term for words or phrases that are designed to create an impression that something meaningful has been said, but in fact, only a vague or ambiguous claim has been communicated.

Value propositions are not just for customers. They are also for partners, employees, and investors. Similar to customers, they should be created and refined after some test and iteration cycles with each constituency for maximum impact.

LESSONS LEARNED

Having witnessed and created many GTM strategies and variants, there are numerous lessons learned that are both insightful and instructive. The following is a list of ten things you should do.

1. **Go back to see if your business cases were accurate and what you can learn from over/under-performance – embed these insights and lessons in your next business case effort**
2. **Measure, monitor and track your key performance metrics via a weekly, monthly, and quarterly cadence so you can make mid-course adjustments to strategies, investments, and resources**
3. **Don't exclusively focus on potential or future customers (e.g., new logos) to the detriment of your current customers, who can become more dissatisfied and look to defect**
4. **Don't try to force customers to a specific channel without giving them a choice, especially if they deserve an option (e.g., they are a premium customer)**
5. **View channel conflict as an opportunity to exploit the inherent need and demand of the market and your channels vs. a major problem where you just exit or close certain channels**
6. **Systematically test your offering-channel-segment mixes – do certain customer segments want to interact with you differently and are your offerings a good fit for the respective channel**
7. **Create an ongoing feedback loop with your customers to stay in tune to their changing needs**
8. **Ensure you customize your value propositions for each customer target, role, or profile so you aren't perceived as generic, undifferentiated, and unfocused**
9. **Don't rely on a single metric to determine your GTM effectiveness (often revenue) without evaluating both quantity and quality of results across the GTM landscape**
10. **Hold each GTM stakeholder accountable for their performance-to-plan – assuming they have clear and vertically-aligned targets to begin with**

MONDAY MORNING METRICS

There is no avoiding the use of metrics or analytics in almost anything you do in business today, as shown by the significant growth in business intelligence and analytics applications in recent years, as well as the M&A premiums that acquirers have paid to get into the market space[19]. Measurement and performance tracking are not only required in many circumstances (e.g., financial statements), but it's often the best way to understand the business and define what's important and predictive.

Figure 7 includes some metrics or potential key performance indicators[20] that you could use to measure, monitor, and track your GTM performance. Given the holistic nature of a GTM strategy, there is no single metric that will meet all of your needs. An integrated dashboard that includes market, customer, channel, and offering performance is needed to make targeted GTM adjustments and changes.

GTM Area	Metric Area / KPI	Comments
Markets	Market Share % (Revenue)	Can use revenue or units
	Relative Market Share %	Can use top 5 competitors
	Market Contribution %	Market concentration, growth and trends
Customers	Customer Experience Index	Can be a combo of retention, sat and others
	Wallet Share %	Share of addressable spend
	Customer Loyalty %	Review customer flow dynamics
Channels	Expense / Revenue % (E/R)	Expense and revenue of each channel
	Channel Mix %	Channel concentration, growth and trends
	Channel Performance-to-Plan	The channels performance vs. plan
Offerings	Offering Performance %	Year-over-year performance of each offering
	Profitability % by Offering	Is the value message being realized
	Revenue % from New Offerings	Can use <1 year depending on typical lifecycles
Value Propositions	Win Ratio %	Does your proposition allow you to win more
	Competitive Replacement %	Are you able to displace the competition
	Margin % Trends	Gross, operating and net – value

Figure 7

[19] According to Gartner (2011), business intelligence spending has far surpassed IT budget growth. For M&A, see the recent buying sprees (and valuation multiples) of IBM, Oracle, SAP and others into the BI/Analytics software and services space.

[20] The word potential is used here in that generic KPIs (e.g., # of sales calls) are working hypotheses that might be predictive – a meaningful indicator – in your company, but need to be tested with your company data to confirm

Conclusion

Executing an integrated GTM strategy with a high degree of aplomb is not easy. You need only look at your experiences as a consumer and buyer to get a feel for the situation. Consider some examples below:

- **Company channels that clearly don't talk to others, e.g., web site forms and call center representatives who are not only fragmented, but can't seem to pass your information to another representative or channel without dropping you or your information**
- **Marketing materials (e.g., direct mail) that not only have your name wrong (and often multiple misspellings), but also focus on a company's separate product areas without considering you as a single customer of their firm**
- **Companies that try to sell you more of their offerings when you are not only dissatisfied with your current relationship, which they don't ask you about, but are on the verge of defecting to a competitor**
- **Companies that fight you over a low dollar transaction or service issue when your lifetime value is 25x the value of what they are arguing about**
- **Companies that acquire another company and position their new holistic value and solutions, but have separate phone numbers to call or web sites to visit for each brand or solution. Their sellers call on you separately each selling their specific product slice – the one they get compensated for vs. the whole solution**

In closing, the bad news is that there is no Silver Bullet for fixing many GTM problems – not unlike most strategic and multi-faceted business issues. The good news is that in the pursuit of a comprehensive GTM strategy, you can learn a tremendous amount about your company and markets, which can have a material impact on your results across a broad spectrum of business outcomes – financial, customer, and process.

As an example, in keeping with the story at the beginning of this Whitepaper, online banking and call centers account for 55% of banking transactions today, and online is growing at almost three times any other channel. In terms of results, some large regional banks have created over a quarter of a billion dollars in incremental revenue via a consistent multichannel experience[21]. Learning about your markets, customers, channels and how you create and communicate value is not to be overlooked.

As Jack Welch said: "An organization's ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage." We couldn't agree more.

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[21] McKinsey & Co., *The Future of Retail Banking.* Banking on Multichannel, November 2010.