

Digital Transformation in Sales: Evolving the Art of Customer Engagement

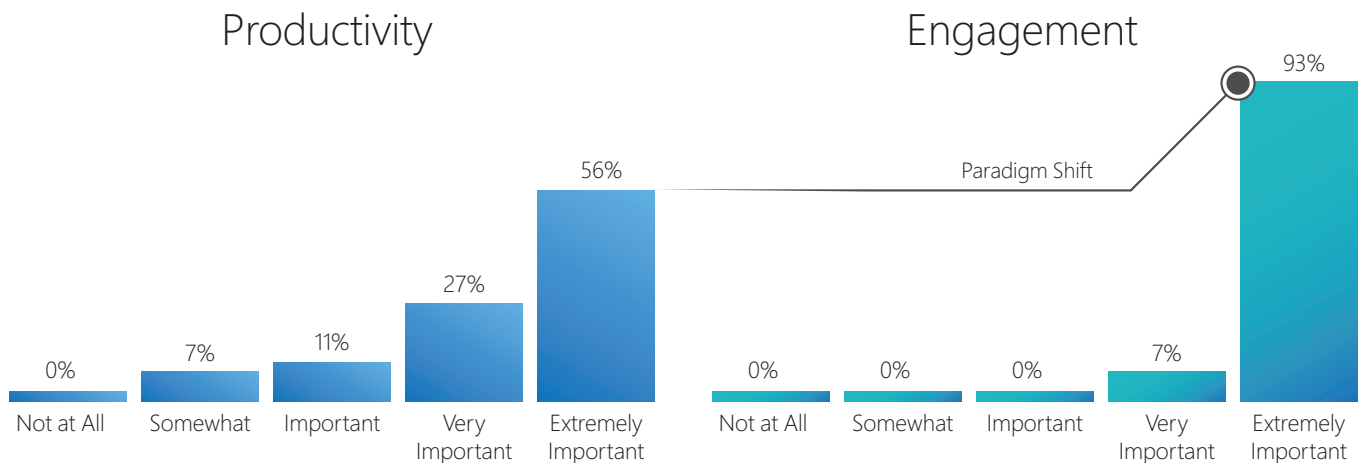


The realignment of, or new investment in, technology and business models to more effectively engage digital customers at every touchpoint in the customer experience lifecycle.

- Altimeter Group

For sales organisations, customer engagement is about more than touchpoints—it’s about everything that happens in between personal and digital encounters. Customer engagement requires an organisation-wide commitment to creating meaningful connections, building relationships and nurturing those relationships to establish trust and keep your brand top-of-mind.

Customer engagement drives every interaction, every process and every decision—and it’s the key to driving sales. In fact, respondents from a May 2016 Microsoft survey of sales leaders across multiple industries ranked customer engagement as the #1 driving force behind sales versus tactical drivers like automation and productivity.



Considering this paradigm shift, top-performing sales organisations are prioritising digital transformation to unlock greater revenue growth. They understand the vital role technology plays in customer engagement and they seek technologies that continually help them evolve their customer engagement capabilities.

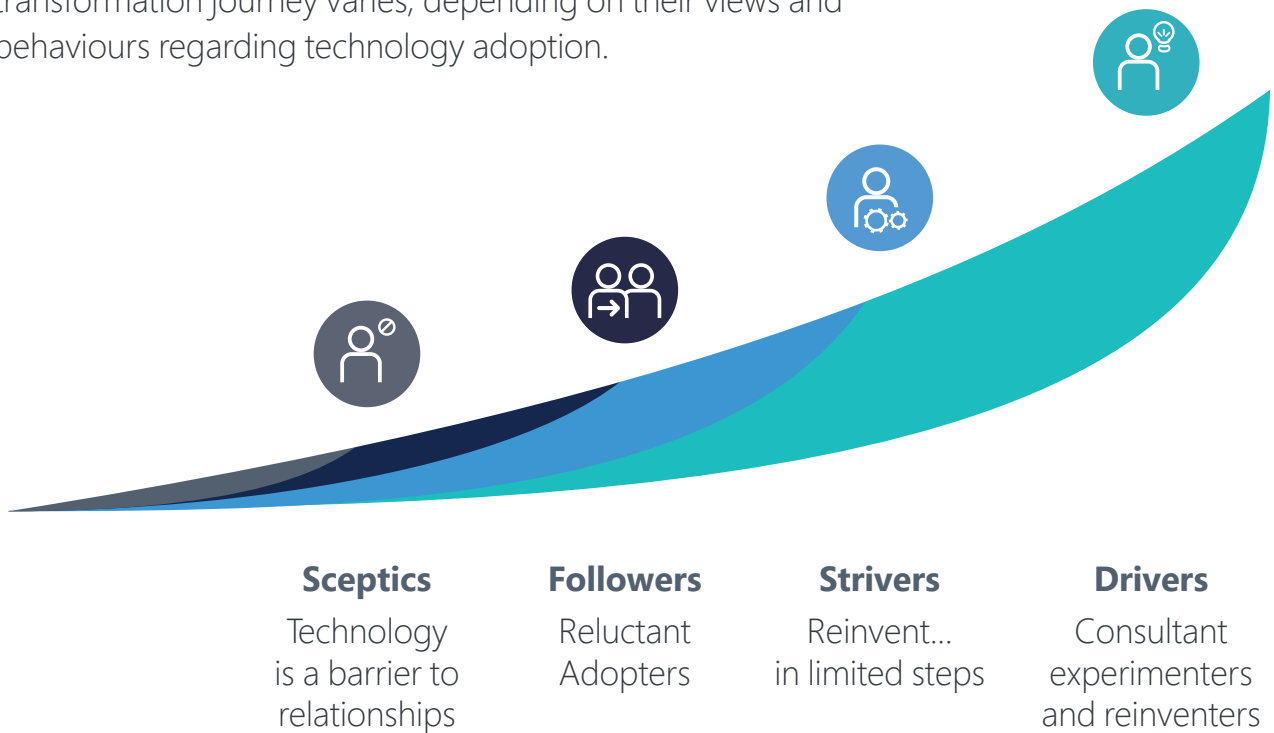
Often referred to as Strivers and Drivers, these organisations use technology not at the expense of relationship building, but as a key additive, complementing the human side of customer engagement.

Innovative sales teams use technology in ways that help them foster strong relationships and drive authentic customer engagement. Most notably, they're taking advantage of data analysis and prescriptive insights that inform customer trends and help create tailored customer experiences.

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Navigating the Digital Transformation Journey

Most sales organisations are adopting technology to some degree to drive customer engagement. Where they are in their digital transformation journey varies, depending on their views and behaviours regarding technology adoption.





Sceptics

Organisations that have yet to begin a digital transformation journey are embracing technological tools that—while they may seem rudimentary—are invaluable to their sales teams.

For instance, mobile phones are crucial in enabling sales reps in the field to connect with their customers from virtually anywhere via calls, texts and emails.

Sales leaders in this stage of transformation, however, are hesitant to increase their adoption of technology that creates opportunities to drive deeper customer engagement. Their hesitation often stems from cultural approaches to sales—for instance, believing that technology cannot meaningfully enhance traditional customer engagement touchpoints, like face-to-face interactions.



Followers

As organisations begin to evolve on their digital transformation journey, they look for technologies that will allow for deeper engagements. They start to see the benefits of moving beyond introductory tools and adopting technologies like customer relationship management (CRM) tools to increase productivity, reimagining the capabilities of their sales teams.

While sales leaders in this stage believe in productivity tools to help their teams close deals, they hesitate to adopt further technologies, often due to frustration.

A key struggle is internal adoption and maximum utilisation of the tools available to their sales teams, and a lack of investment and support from senior management to continually drive the organisation forward on the digital transformation journey.



Strivers

Organisations who reach this point in their digital transformation journey are committed to evolving their customer engagement capabilities. This is where organisations start to see a cultural shift in the way they view and approach technology, with sales leaders prioritising digital transformation as an organisation-wide initiative—garnering support from the top down.

Additionally, these sales leaders empower their teams by listening to what they need, and then investing in intelligent technologies that automate core productivity tasks and streamline collaboration, all in an effort to sell more. These include CRM tools and solutions that improve day-to-day operations for automation and reporting.

Strivers are characterised by their willingness to adopt tried and true technologies proven to drive customer engagement, but they lack rapid innovation and experimentation.

Drivers constantly experiment with advanced technologies and seek every opportunity to engage customers and gain a competitive advantage.



Drivers

Sales organisations in this stage know there is no definitive end to the digital transformation journey. Drivers constantly experiment with advanced technologies and seek every opportunity to engage customers and gain a competitive advantage. Even when technology fails them, they continue to invest and experiment.

Like Strivers, Drivers take a hands-on approach to technology adoption, ensuring that it's initiated from the top down. And like Strivers, they also empower their sales teams through tools that help them effectively engage customers and be more effective in their day-to-day operations.

What sets drivers apart is their adoption of advanced frameworks and analytics tools that provide those deep, prescriptive insights that we know allow sales teams to engage more effectively and deliver tailored experiences to their customers.

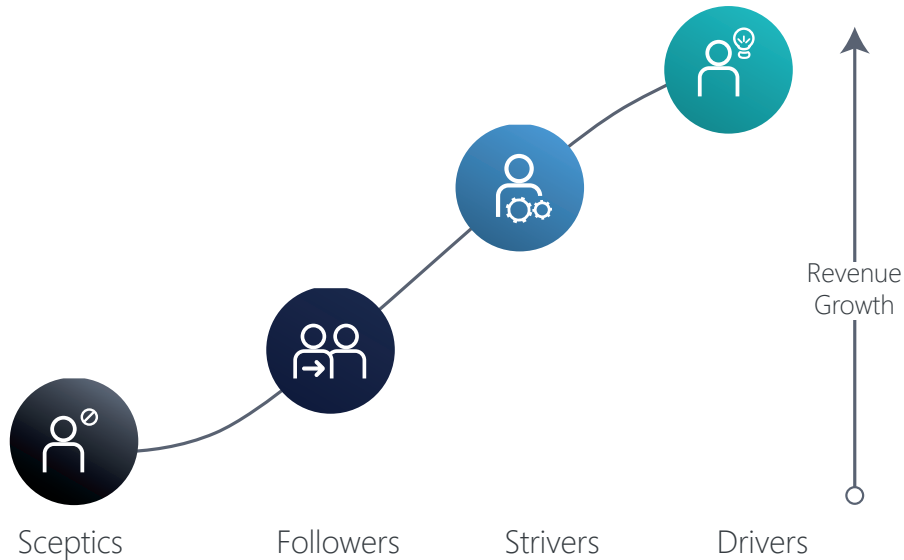
Drivers of digital transformation are evolving the art of customer engagement, using technology to complement what they're already doing to effectively engage customers and drive sales.

Digital Transformation in Action

[See how a global software company is using a modern cloud solution to drive digital transformation.](#)

Digital transformation and revenue growth

It turns out that there may be a direct correlation between digital transformation and revenue growth. You'll see in the following graph that organisations from the May 2016 Microsoft survey identifying as **technology Drivers** enjoyed a **50% increase in revenue growth**:



On the other hand, organisations reluctant to evolve on their digital transformation journey—whether that be due to cultural barriers, issues with internal technology adoption, lack of support from senior management or other reasons—missed out on opportunities for revenue growth.

It Starts With You

Digitally transforming your sales organisation is an evergreen journey. It's an ongoing process that needs to become part of your organisation's culture, and it requires commitment and initiation from sales leaders like you.

You have the power to influence change. When your reps have tools that can help them be even more effective in engaging customers, driving sales and growing revenue, the benefits of digital transformation will be clear—to them, to you and to the entire organisation.

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To see how Microsoft Dynamics 365 for Sales, part of the next generation of business applications from Microsoft, can help your organisation successfully navigate transformation, visit: [URL]