



INTELLITEK SYSTEMS



Digital Body Language Success Guide

The Game Has Changed.

Your next customer will research and evaluate your products through Websites and online networks long before you salespeople get involved. Just as consumers now search and buy online, B2B purchasing in an online world has transformed into an interactive process driven by the customer, not the vendor. In fact, a call to your salesperson may be the last step in the buyer's journey, significantly limiting their influence and expertise that has long driven the buying discussion.

Yet there is an emerging vanguard of innovative companies that have learned how to decode the online behavior of their prospects early on in the buying process to gain competitive advantage and win more business. This online behavior- Website visits, downloads, email responses, and more- is what we call Digital Body Language. Its cues can identify buyers and reveals their intentions to salespeople.

Executive Summary.

Compare reading buyers digital body language to the traditional B2B transaction, a function dominated by sales and rooted in face-to-face interactions. The best sales professionals were highly adept at reading buyer body language and buying signals revealed during in-person meetings, such as business luncheons, order presentations, and product demos. Nuances of facial expressions, eye contact, raised eyebrows, head nods or crossed arms, could tell savvy sales professionals much about its prospect's buying disposition. He or she could then address objectives early to improve the odds of closing a deal.

These skills and measures are no longer enough to provide value-based interactions. Because the buying cycle for B2B products and services has moved online, the evolution of the Web is enabling easy access to competitive product information and peer feedback. This is transforming how companies and individuals research and evaluate prospective solution providers. With the buyer in the driver's seat, salespeople get less face time with clients.

Buyers are more educated and have greater leverage in the negotiation process. To succeed in this environment, fast-moving businesses are adopting their marketing and sales processes to the digital body language of their prospects.

Digital body language is the online equivalent of the facial expressions revealed around the negotiating table. It is comprised of Website visits, content downloads, keyword searches, and email responses. In many ways, online buyer behavior provides the most accurate picture of prospect interest and intent. By analyzing the timing, frequency and clickstream data of Website visits, marketers can zero in on the buyer's pains, concerns, and motivations.

The caveat with digital body language is that it is generally invisible to sales. By the time the average salesperson is aware of the electronic dialogue that has taken place between company and prospect, it is often too late to influence the buying process, scope of the engagement, or combat competitive threats.

To maximize the value of their respective roles, sales and marketing professionals realize how important it is to present a united front by aligning their communications and engagements with prospective buyers.

This alignment is also supporting internal efficiency and success, impacting the bottom line. Organizations that make a concerted effort to address these changes in the buying process consistently increase the conversion rates, shorten sales cycles, and improve win rates. Conversely, those businesses that cannot track, analyze, and communicate the online behavior of their prospects will find themselves increasingly disadvantaged in a competitive marketplace.

How to Manage the New Buying Process.

Before the organization can adjust its marketing and sales process to manage and measure digital body language, it must first understand how the buying process has changed. The accessibility and speed of the Web greatly eases the discovery and consideration processes that buyers go through. This is especially true for typical B2B considered purchase products and services involving a buying committee or a defined decision-making process, where most of the buyer's research and evaluation moves to the Web.

The old protocol of sending a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) to prospective vendors has in many cases been replaced by downloading and evaluating white papers, case studies, product specs, and pricing sheets. In many cases, vendors and their sales organizations are unaware that they are being evaluated by a buyer, and therefore don't have the same opportunities to cultivate a meaningful role in the decision-making process. In other words, they are losing out where it counts.

This is because they do not have visibility into the buyer's digital body language.

How to Navigate the New Sales Process.

With the evolution of buying behavior, it is surprising that the sales process for many companies has remained stagnant. Given the rapid migration to an online buying process, salespeople have fewer opportunities to be in front of prospects to pick up on the visual cues and signals that help reveal their key topics of interest or pain points. For example, according to benchmark data by MaaS Communications, sales reps today are spending significantly less time performing what are strictly customer facing sales activities that they were just a few years ago. Data indicates that they spent exactly 15% less time between 2014-2016 than they did between 2011-2013.

This is reflected in the movement away from the formal RFP, still a common purchasing process where all relevant vendors are given an opportunity to submit bids. In the current climate, many buyers conduct their own anonymous evaluations and typically only talk to a short list of potential vendors before making a decision.

This poses a much greater risk that a company can be completely left out of the selection process if they are relying solely on relationships and cold calls to connect with prospects at the right time in the buying cycle.

Embrace Your Online Buyers.

The good news for B2B marketers and sales organizations is that the online world has not only provided tools for buyers. Online tracking and analytics packages provide intelligence for organizations to better understand and serve customers.

Online behavior provides insights into the buying cycle that had been previously unavailable to the sales team. Prospect information that was once relegated to the salespersons "wish list" is now available by tracking their digital behavior. This provides more detailed visibility into the dynamics of an organization's buying process, down to Website visits and research completed. This knowledge empowers sales to deliver more relevant collateral that demonstrates value and advances them through the sales cycle.

Reading and Responding to Digital Body Language.

To benefit from digital body language, businesses must make investments in people, process, and technology. Simply switching on a business intelligence tool is not enough. Significant process changes are usually required on the part of both marketing and sales organizations.

Industry experts recommend taking a phased approach by focusing on the following best practices:

- Accumulate digital body language by integrating marketing channels on a single marketing system of record to build comprehensive prospect profiles.
- Communicate digital body language to the sales organization and other business stakeholders by integrating the marketing system of record with CRM or sales automation systems.
- Evaluate digital body language using advanced sales lead scoring systems that compare a prospect's explicit information against implicit indicators of buying intent.
- Accelerate the sales process with real-time sales alerts, notifications of prospect Web activity, and marketing responses.
- Cultivate the digital body language of prospects with personalized lead nurturing campaigns that drive them back to the Website.
- Validate marketing spend with closed loop marketing systems the measure marketing's impact on revenue and pipeline.

Reaping the Rewards of Comprehensive Digital Body Language Strategies.

Companies that adopt these marketing best practices become highly attuned to the digital body language of their prospects. They align their marketing and sales teams around information and intelligence- two of the most important tools for a sales team to succeed. Recognizing that sales instincts and personal relationships are no longer enough to excel in an Internet world, high-performance organizations see that marketing holds the keys to identifying the right influencers and key issues within a buyers organization.

The rewards for firms that track customer digital body language include increased sales, faster growth rates, and shorter sales cycles. By being the first responder when prospects begin to research a purchase, companies gain competitive advantage and improve sales effectiveness. By aligning marketing departments more closely with sales and measuring the results of campaigns, these organizations increase the effectiveness of promotions. Conversely, businesses that cannot track and analyze the behavior of top prospects are likely to find themselves at a competitive disadvantage going forward.

Given the rapidly changing environment in the B2B world, the question is not whether a business can afford to invest in digital transformation, but whether it can afford not to make the change.





Intellitek Systems was started July 7, 2008 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The company was founded on the premise of delivering the power of ERP software to small and mid-market companies by maximizing customizability to meet the unique needs of SMBs while keeping costs low. Since then, Intellitek Systems has ramped up its marketing efforts and on-boarded 100s of satisfied customers.



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