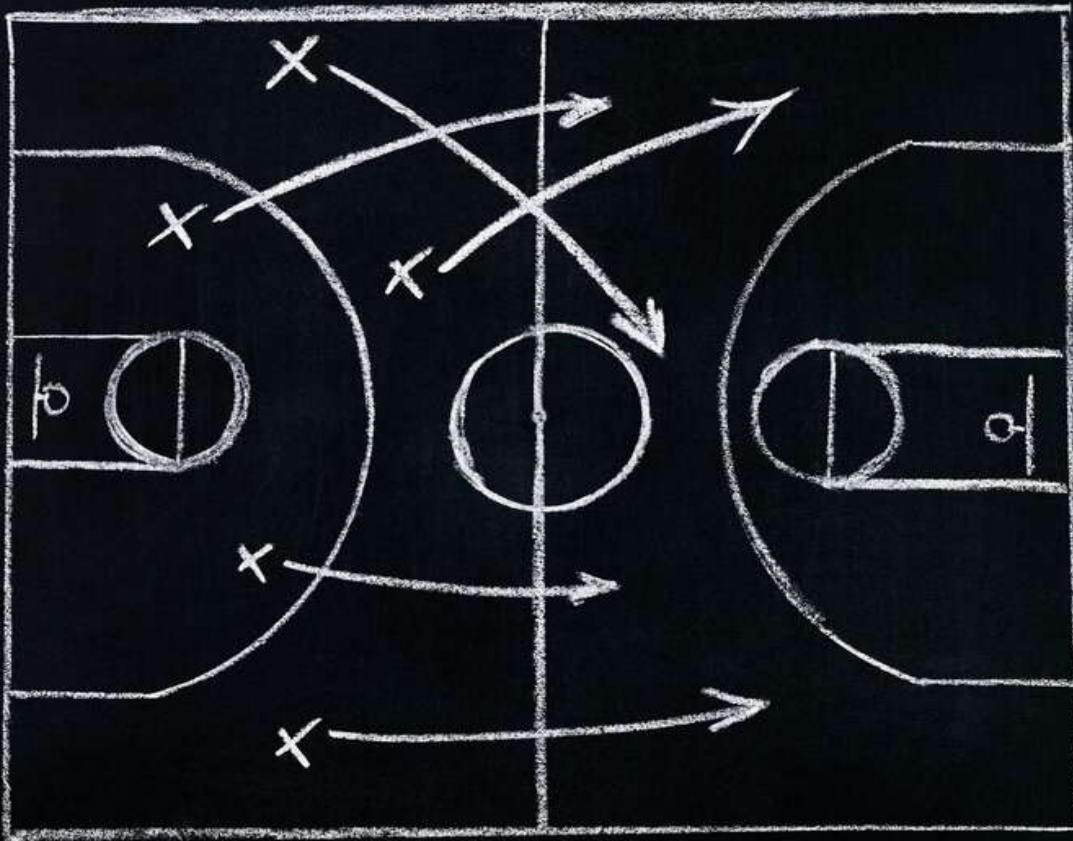


The Sales & Marketing Playbook... A Critical Growth Tool



Proprietary Research from Lawrence Innovation, LLC

By Kelly Lawrence

Like winning sports teams, successful business development teams use playbooks. Read on to learn how a sales and marketing playbook can improve project hit rates and accelerate growth.

In sports, it is common for the coach to translate the team strategy into a tactical playbook. The playbook may contain the season schedule, the team's plays, conditioning plans for each player to improve, stats on the competition and how to exploit competitors' weaknesses. In other words, the playbook is a critical tool to ensure every player is aligned with the coach's vision, knows their role and can execute the tactics needed to win.

In business as in sports, successful teams use playbooks, particularly in areas of new business development. Read on to learn how a sales and marketing playbook can improve project hit rates.

In this whitepaper, you will learn:

- What a Sales and Marketing Playbook is
- Why Every Business Needs a Sales and Marketing Playbook
- When To Use a Sales and Marketing Playbook
- What Information a Sales and Marketing Playbook Contains
- How To Develop The Right Content For A Sales and Marketing Playbook
- How To Ensure the Content Remains Relevant

What Is a Sales and Marketing Playbook?

A sales and marketing playbook outlines the strategy and tactics a marketing and sales team need in order to move prospects from the top of the funnel to closed new business. The playbook serves as a training tool to align your internal & external teams on how to position and close sales for your new product or service.

Ever use distribution partners? Distribution partners can be a great advantage with their access to end-use-customers, but without the necessary product training and reference guide, distribution partners will be unable to fulfill their potential. Imagine you have many customers and thousands of products to promote to them. Which do you choose? The ones that you believe will be the most successful. Typically, these are the products backed with a solid value proposition and the tools to effectively communicate that value proposition along with the logistical details every sales person needs in order to deliver. In other words, sales people tend to promote the products they believe have the highest likelihood of positively impacting their wallets and helping their customers. The playbook gives your sales team their reason to believe and is a critical tool in positioning your offer.

Why Does My Business Need a Playbook?

A good playbook can mean the difference between a successful and failed new product or service launch. One challenge sales people face is having the right information for buyers when those buyers are ready to buy. According to Chet Holmes' *The Ultimate Sales Machine*,

at any given time only 3% of buyers are ready to buy. Providing your sales team with a playbook gives them a reference tool so they are ready once those buyers progress through the sales funnel and are ready to engage the sales person for more hands-on interaction that progresses the sale to a close.

Let's say your sales team is trained on a new product in January. In March, the product officially launches. An integrated marketing communications campaign is utilized to introduce the product. In July, one of your best buyers has had seven to twelve touch points and is now ready to engage a sales person. It's been seven months since you completed the initial sales training on the new product with your sales team. For the sales person to be ready with value adding information that progresses and closes the sale, the playbook serves as a critical reference tool.

When to Use a Sales and Marketing Playbook

A sales and marketing playbook is a particularly beneficial tool when new tactics are needed for a marketing and sales team to deliver results. A common use is when introducing a new product or service. It can also be utilized to explain the tactics for targeting a new market or when changing your business model.

In many organizations, those responsible for new business research and strategy are different team members than the marketing team responsible for lead generation, the communications team responsible for executing the integrated marketing plan and the sales team responsible for closing business. Much is learned by the new business development team during the [Discovery](#) phase. Learnings should include:

- What profitable problem(s) does our solution solve?
- What value does our solution create?
- How much more are customers willing to pay for our solution versus the next best alternative?

When knowledge is successfully transferred, the right conditions are created to win. If you want to hold your price and maximize ROI on your solution, knowledge must be successfully transferred before your sales team meets with procurement to close the deal.

What Information Does a Sales and Marketing Playbook Contain?

A sales and marketing playbook should clarify roles and responsibilities, outline the marketing communications plan, timing and customers that will receive these communications as well as the process for when and how leads will be transitioned to the sales team. It should provide enough market information and terminology to build the sales person's confidence and level of expertise including the rationale for entering the new market or developing the new product/service. It should define where to hunt (ie target

customers and where to find them), key questions to quickly qualify leads, value proposition and how to communicate it. It should also contain logistics and pricing information needed to close business. It can also be used to educate on value pricing approaches to maximize ROI and profitability. It should include frequently asked customer questions, an overview of competitive alternatives, common customer objections and how to counter them.

Contents

- [Market Overview](#)
- [Value Chain](#)
- [Target Customers](#)
- [Positioning](#)
- [Competition](#)
- [Questions to Ask](#)
- [Selling Points](#)
- [Performance](#)
- [Countering Objections](#)
- [Pricing & Logistics](#)
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Target Market A Playbook

A good playbook can mean the difference between a successful and failed new product launch. A playbook serves as a training tool to align your internal & external sales teams on how to position and close sales for your new product. It addresses current state of the market, target customers, key questions to quickly qualify leads, your value proposition and how to communicate it. It also contains logistics and pricing information needed to close business and can be used to educate on value pricing approaches to maximize profits.

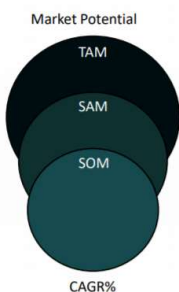
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Topics typically covered in a Sales and Marketing Playbook.

How Do I Develop the Right Content for My Playbook?

Early market research including market trends, customer interviews, and competitive alternatives is critical to understanding the profitable problems to solve and identifying how your company will provide an offer (a product and/or a service) that delivers on desired outcomes and commands value. Information gathered through this research can be matched to your internal competencies to design customer solutions. For more details on this front-end-of-innovation process and how we can help, please contact [Lawrence Innovation](#).

Market Map – High Level Segment Comparison



Market – Description of concept

Situation	Strategy	Tactics
Trends What are the major trends that make this an opportunity?	How We'll Win / Value Proposition What is unique about our offer? What makes it resonate with decision makers & influencers?	Arenas Where we will be active.
Unmet Needs	Business Model / Economic Logic How will we make money?	Vehicles / Channel How we will get the product to customers.
Customers Who will we sell to? Decision makers & influencers.	Capability Match Do our capabilities match market profitable problems to solve?	Staging What will be our speed & sequence of moves?
Competition What is the next best alternative?	Market Potential / Profitability Is the opportunity big enough to matter?	Customer Validation & Refinement How we will validate & improve on customer value proposition & communication.

Research and analysis supporting a Market Map like the one above can be used to generate your Sales and Marketing Playbook.

How Do I Ensure the Content Remains Relevant?

Have you ever tried to get sales teams to share best practices? I have. In over two decades of product launches, I have learned that using the terminology “sharing best practices” with sales teams is rarely successful at getting them to open-up and share. However, when I’ve used a playbook and I host a discussion with sales on what is and what is not working, they tend to share a lot of feedback. This feedback can then be used to strengthen the playbook and ensure the content remains relevant. The updates can be shared with the full team (or for global players, across regions) so everyone gets the benefits of “sharing best practices” while using terminology that resonates. The result? A valued and effective selling tool that is referenced often and lives outside the circular file.

LEARN MORE

Lawrence Innovation regularly publishes innovation and business development insights and resources at lawrenceinnovation.com/insights.

Check out Episode #137 of the *Custom Apparel Start-ups Podcast* guest starring Kelly Lawrence, founder and CEO of Lawrence Innovation as she discusses the value of sales and marketing playbooks.

<https://customapparelstartups.com/episode-137/>



Episode 137 – Marketing Playbook - Custom Apparel Startups



ABOUT KELLY LAWRENCE

Kelly Lawrence is a recognized B2B growth expert. For more than two decades, Kelly has helped numerous organizations around the world – large and small - accelerate results including Berkshire Hathaway’s Lubrizol, Fortune Brands’ Moen, privately held small businesses and start-ups.

When you choose to work with Kelly, you gain a partner who cares about growing your business just as much as you do. Driven by the voice of the customer, Kelly converts insights into practical, action plans that yield higher revenues, higher margins and increased ROI for her clients and their downstream customers. She strives to build win-win value chain partnerships and connections that generate demand.

Kelly earned an MBA from Cleveland State University and an undergraduate degree in management from Case Western Reserve University. She is an AIM Institute certified coach, serves Cleveland SCORE as a subject matter expert, and is an associate consultant with Smithers Pira.

ABOUT LAWRENCE INNOVATION

Lawrence Innovation has a mission of helping industrial B2B companies accelerate organic growth by converting market insights into practical action plans that deliver results. Clients learn new business development strategies: how to stay in touch with customers through deep dialogue, develop the right offers, develop and communicate unique value propositions and nail a profitable business model with proven revenue streams. Lawrence Innovation provides access to high-caliber, business-growth expertise, while working with clients to make a significant impact. Lawrence Innovation operates as an independent consultancy with strategic alliances for zero overhead to deliver real business growth talent and the tools of a large firm at significantly lower costs with greater flexibility than hiring additional full-time staff. Learn more at lawrenceinnovation.com.