

THE MANIFESTO

# Why Everything You Were Taught About B2B Marketing Is Wrong

— And What Replaces It

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SEVEN MOVEMENTS. ONE CONCLUSION.

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## OPENING STATEMENT

This is not a marketing document. Put that thought down immediately.

This is an indictment. It is a forty-year forensic examination of why B2B companies keep failing at the one thing they cannot afford to fail at — finding and winning new customers. It names the culprits. It presents the evidence. And it offers the only logical conclusion available once you have seen the data clearly.

If you are a CEO, a founder, or a revenue leader at a B2B technology, SaaS, or professional services company — and if you have privately suspected for some time that something is fundamentally broken — read on. What you suspected is correct.

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## PROLOGUE

# How We Got Here

It started with commission-only salespeople. Low basic salary, high risk transferred entirely to the individual. Business owners wanted new revenue at minimum exposure to themselves — and a hungry salesperson on the road seemed like the answer. In the UK especially, salespeople have always carried a cultural stigma. Necessary, but not quite respectable.

Then came email. The promise was immediate: this is cheap. MarTech vendors told every CEO that a database and a broadcast tool was all they needed. Pay-per-click followed in the early 2000s — cheap traffic, measurable, scalable. Then gated PDFs, trading content for email addresses. Then marketing automation platforms promising to nurture those addresses into pipeline. Then demand generation. Then ABM. Then SDR teams industrialising the cold outreach that everyone privately admitted didn't work.

At every single step, across four decades, the promise was identical: new business, low cost, low risk.

The sales commission model transferred risk to the individual. Every subsequent wave transferred cost to a SaaS subscription. CEOs were told, repeatedly and by credible voices, that finding new customers was getting cheaper. And they wanted to believe it — because the alternative, that it was structurally hard and always had been, was not something anyone was selling.

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Twenty years of marketing automation data later, the failure rate hasn't moved. But nobody talks about it — because admitting the MAP didn't work means admitting the ABM didn't work, and the PPC didn't work before that. So instead, the industry pivots to the next shiny thing. In 2026, that thing is AI.

**The problem was never the tool. It was the model. And no tool fixes a broken model.**

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## MOVEMENT 1

# Nothing Changed Except the Door

In 1952, a salesman knocked on a door, introduced himself, and asked for five minutes of someone's time.

In 2026, a BDR sends a LinkedIn InMail, introduces themselves, and asks for fifteen minutes of someone's time.

Seventy years. Different door. Identical outcome — because the person on the other side still doesn't want to hear from you until they're ready. They never did.

That is not a criticism of salespeople. It is an observation about human behaviour that has remained constant across every technological revolution the sales industry has claimed would change everything. The telephone didn't change it. Email didn't change it. CRM didn't change it. Marketing automation, ABM, Sales Navigator, intent data platforms, and AI-powered outreach sequences haven't changed it either.

## **What changed is the cost of pretending otherwise.**

In 2026, B2B companies collectively spend billions of pounds per year on an operating model designed around the assumption that buyers will identify themselves before they're ready, fill in forms before they've finished their research, answer cold calls before they've decided they have a problem, and respond to outreach from vendors they don't yet know or trust.

**They don't. They never have. And the data proving it has been sitting in plain sight for over a decade.**

## The Crime Scene

Let us examine what forty years of B2B sales observation combined with a decade of systematic research actually shows.

### **The tool explosion that produced nothing.**

In 2011, Scott Brinker published his first Marketing Technology Landscape. It contained 150 products. By 2024 it contained 14,106. By 2025, 15,384 — a 9,304% increase in fourteen years. This is the largest peacetime accumulation of commercial software the world has ever seen, concentrated almost entirely in a single business function: marketing.

What did B2B pipeline do during the same period? It went backwards. In 2024, up to 70% of sales reps missed quota. Average quota attainment across B2B organisations fell to 43% — down from 53% in 2020. In 2025, 42% of B2B companies missed their growth targets entirely, up from 32% the year before. More tools. More spend. Worse results.

**This is not a coincidence. It is a structural consequence.**

### **The cost no one audits.**

Zylo's 2025 SaaS Management Index puts the average cost of SaaS applications at \$4,830 per employee per year. Apply that to your own business. A fifty-person B2B company is spending approximately £190,000 annually on SaaS before anyone has done a day's productive work. A 250-person company is approaching £1 million. And Zylo's own data shows that 53% of those licences go unused within thirty days of purchase.

The average company now holds 275 SaaS applications. The average marketing technology stack alone sits at 28 tools — with the top ten percent of companies running 91. The average CMO uses only 42% of the MarTech capability they have purchased, down from 58% in 2020. They are buying more, using less of it, and achieving less with it.

And the average tenure of a CMO is eighteen months.

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That last statistic deserves a moment of stillness. Eighteen months. Three months to understand the business, twelve months to implement a plan, three months to explain why it didn't work before being replaced by someone else who will repeat the cycle. Boards of directors have become expert at firing CMOs. They have not yet become expert at questioning the model those CMOs were hired to execute.

### **The consultancy capture.**

Here is where it becomes uncomfortable.

B2B business owners who want strategic guidance turn, quite reasonably, to the respected names: Gartner, Forrester, Sirius Decisions. These organisations produce the research that shapes GTM investment decisions across every technology sector in the world.

The same organisations receive substantial fees from MarTech vendors who wish to appear on their quadrants and in their reports.

Gartner tells B2B CEOs to invest in marketing technology. Gartner's own research simultaneously confirms that 83% of B2B buyers conduct all their research digitally before engaging with a salesperson — and that 75% of them want to remain completely anonymous while doing so. The technology Gartner recommends was built to capture those buyers before they're ready. The buyers refuse to be captured. Gartner knows this. The cycle continues.

**This is not a conspiracy. It is a system optimising for its own continuation, not for your revenue.**

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#### MOVEMENT 3

## **The Truth About How B2B Buyers Actually Behave**

Somewhere along the way, the B2B industry accepted a deeply convenient fiction: that business buyers behave like consumers.


They do not. They never have.

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When a consumer buys trainers, they respond to brand advertising, follow social trends, and make an emotional, personal decision from discretionary income. The feedback loop is fast. The consequences of a bad decision are small.

When a CEO evaluates a new technology platform for their business, the dynamic is entirely different. They are spending the company's money, not their own. They are accountable to a board, to shareholders, to a team. The decision may take months or years. The consequences of a wrong choice are significant. And — critically — they do not want a vendor anywhere near that evaluation process until they have already formed their own view.

86% of prospects self-serve so that they can remain anonymous until they're ready to buy, and they won't speak to a salesperson until they're ready — and that can take nearly five years, in line with strategy and tactics planning.



**Five years of anonymous self-education. Five years of reading, comparing, evaluating, watching, listening — before a single conversation.**

LinkedIn's own research confirms that 75% of B2B buyers want to remain anonymous throughout the buying process. Gartner says 83% complete their digital research before engaging with any salesperson. Forrester showed years ago that less than 1% of prospects who enter a so-called marketing funnel ever become revenue-paying customers.

These are not fringe findings. These are the consensus of the largest research organisations in the world, repeated across a decade of studies. And they directly contradict every assumption on which demand generation, marketing automation, ABM, and outbound prospecting are built.

B2B buyers do not give out personal email addresses to vendors they don't yet know. They do not fill in gated content forms. They do not welcome cold calls. They do not appreciate reverse IP lookup tools identifying them and triggering a BDR sequence.

They want to learn, in their own time, at their own pace, without pressure. They want to feel informed enough to calculate their own ROI before a conversation begins. And they will buy — when they are ready — from the company they have come to know, trust, and understand over the months or years of that private evaluation.

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Marketing automation hides your content from those buyers and from Google. Gated forms prevent the self-education they require. Cold calling interrupts a process that has barely started.

**The entire model runs directly against the grain of how B2B buyers have always behaved.**

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#### MOVEMENT 4

## The New Model: Broadcast B2B Selling

Given everything above, there is only one logical response.

Stop chasing buyers before they're ready. Start being visible to all of them, all the time, so that when any individual buyer reaches the moment of readiness — whenever that is, from three months to five years from now — you are the company they already know.

This is not a passive strategy. It is an infrastructure strategy. It requires discipline, consistency, and a complete reorganisation of how a B2B company thinks about the relationship between marketing, sales, and time.

The core principle is simple: you cannot scale a business through one-to-one relationships. You cannot cold call your way to sustainable growth. You cannot build a relationship personally with every potential buyer in your total addressable market. But you can broadcast to all of them simultaneously, every week, with content that educates, builds trust, and positions your company as the authority in your space.

### **This is Broadcast B2B Selling — BB2B.**

Not broadcast in the passive, spray-and-pray sense that has been abused by email marketers and PPC campaigns. Broadcast in the original, powerful sense: you occupy a channel, you produce a regular programme, you build an audience that chooses to return because what you offer is genuinely useful — and you let that audience self-select when they are ready to become customers.

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The weekly live show is the spine of this model. Not because live streaming is a trend, but because it is the only mechanism that allows a B2B company to simultaneously reach every potential buyer in its market, deliver genuine educational value, maintain complete anonymity for the viewer, and create the accumulating familiarity that precedes trust.

A viewer who has watched your show for six months knows who you are, understands what you do, has evaluated whether you can help them, and has done all of this without you spending a penny trying to find them. When they are ready, they raise their hand. The relationship already exists.

This is not theory. At salesXchange, we have been running this model live. In three months, the data shows 34,833 LinkedIn impressions, 19,111 email sends to a verified CEO database, a 48% average email open rate — more than double the B2B industry benchmark — and over 1,761 verified PDF downloads of ungated content. The pipeline is building. The methodology is working.

Not because we invented clever tactics. Because we built an infrastructure aligned with how B2B buyers actually behave.

## **The conversation that proved the methodology.**

The Associate Vice President of a \$200 million enterprise software company — 19 years at the same organisation, responsible for building their entire UK and European commercial operation from the ground up — saw a comment someone made on one of our LinkedIn posts. He connected. He spent three days reading, watching, evaluating in complete anonymity. Then he sent a message: “Hi Nigel, can we fix a time to understand your offering?”

During the conversation that followed, the point was made directly: marketing departments are devoid of any real understanding of what happens in the commercial world. They push demand generation, lead generation, ABM, paid click, and telesales cold calls. Yet nobody — in any of those organisations, at any point — has ever sat down with a senior buyer and asked a simple question: “How did you buy last time?”

There was a long pause. Then: “And then you called me?”

Another pause.

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“The fact that you called me — and that we’re talking right now — completely blows the entire marketing infrastructure you currently have out of the water. Because you’re no different to anyone else. No different to me. I won’t speak to anyone until I’m interested. And if I’m interested, I’ll contact them.”

He smiled. “You’re absolutely right.”

At the end of the conversation, he said: “Shall I mention this to the CMO — or shall we keep it quiet and do this in the UK first?”

That is not a case study. That is the methodology demonstrating itself, in real time, to the exact person it was designed to reach. He did not respond to a cold call. He did not fill in a form. He was not identified by a reverse IP lookup tool. He watched. He evaluated. He decided. And then he picked up the phone.

**This is how B2B buyers have always behaved. The infrastructure simply needs to be built to serve that reality.**

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## MOVEMENT 5

# The Infrastructure That Makes It Real

Any strategist can argue for a different approach. What separates BB2B Selling from every other methodology in this space is that the infrastructure to execute it has already been built.

The sX Operating System is a six-layer commercial infrastructure designed to replace the entire GTM function. Not supplement it. Replace it.

**sX Reach** manages constant market exposure — social media, email, banner advertising — operating at 600 posts per month without requiring daily human intervention.

**sX Live** is the broadcast engine — weekly live show production, clip distribution, podcast syndication, and the audience-building mechanic at the heart of the model.

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**sX Connect** is the pipeline activation layer. When a prospect raises their hand, the system does not produce a lead for a BDR to call. It produces a fully prepared meeting: the prospect researched, the proposal generated, the slide deck prepared, the cost comparison built — all delivered to the salesperson within minutes of the meeting being booked.

**sX Ops** is the commercial telemetry layer — tracking every interaction from anonymous social media engagement through to pipeline value and closed revenue. Everything is measured. Nothing is guesswork.

**sX Hub** is the intelligence layer — a continuously growing proprietary knowledge base, built from course transcripts, live show recordings, original articles, PDFs, and published IP, structured for AI retrieval and queryable at every layer of the system. This is the tone-of-voice engine. Every piece of content the system produces draws from it. The more you add, the more coherent and authoritative everything that follows becomes.

**sX Course** is the training and transformation engine for your entire GTM organisation. It ensures every leader and contributor operates from a unified, modern mental model. The OS gets filtered through existing thinking without it — which is why the course comes before go-live, not after.

The crucial point is the headcount comparison. The conventional GTM model for a 100-person B2B technology company demands five to eight marketing staff, a suite of 28-plus SaaS tools averaging £3,800 per employee per year in licence costs, plus agency fees, production costs, and the inevitable CMO replacement cycle. Total cost: well over £400,000 per year, frequently significantly more.

The sX OS can be operated by four people. Two on production. Two on market engagement. The infrastructure cost is fixed, owned, and not subject to annual price increases from seventeen different SaaS vendors.

**This is not a theoretical saving. This is the structural argument that every B2B CEO in a 25-to-250-person company needs to hear.**

## Why the Timing Has Never Been Better

### The sophistication gap.

There is a pattern worth naming directly.

The most technically advanced B2B companies in the world — the ones building AI-native platforms, automating mission-critical enterprise workflows, processing complex decisions at scale for global financial institutions — are selling themselves using the least technically advanced GTM model available.

Marketo. Pardot. HubSpot. Eloqua. Demand generation. SDR sequences. The same platforms, the same playbooks, the same assumptions — running identically across every competitor in every category.

You could take the marketing department from any mid-sized B2B technology company and move them one step clockwise into a direct competitor. They would settle in immediately. Same systems. Same software. Same strategy. Same KPIs. Same agency relationships. Nothing would change — because nothing is different.

And that standardisation is precisely why it fails. When every company in a category is creating the same noise in the same channels using the same tools, no single company achieves the sustained visibility that gets them onto an anonymous buyer's shortlist. Roughly 10% of available enterprise deals are won by companies that happened to be visible when the buyer was ready. The other 90% go to whoever the buyer already knew.

The gap between product sophistication and GTM sophistication has never been wider.

### The AI research layer.

Every GTM methodology that exists today was designed before the current AI era. They are being retrofitted for it. SPIN Selling, the Challenger Sale, MEDDIC, ABM, demand generation — all of them predate the AI infrastructure layer and are being awkwardly adapted to include it.

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BB2B Selling was architected alongside AI. The intelligence layer, the content generation pipeline, the RAG-enabled knowledge base, the daily article production — these are not features added to a legacy model. They are the operating model.

B2B buyers in 2026 are increasingly using AI assistants to research vendors before they ever visit a website. Perplexity, ChatGPT Search, Google AI Overviews — they draw on indexed, structured, opinionated content from verifiable expert sources. Generic MarTech content, written to templates by rotating agencies, has no author, no point of view, no depth of expertise. It will not survive in the AI research layer.

Content built on years of B2B sales experience, grounded in live operational data, written with a specific and defensible point of view, structured for RAG retrieval — that is what gets cited. That is what gets found. That is what builds the reputation that makes a buyer, three years into their anonymous evaluation, decide that you are the company they want to speak to.

**The window to establish this position is open. It will not remain open indefinitely. The B2B companies that claim the authoritative voice in their category through consistent, expert, AI-native content in the next twelve to eighteen months will hold that position for a decade. The companies that continue retrofitting their broken MarTech stacks will watch their discoverability erode further.**

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## MOVEMENT 7

# The Call to Arms

You have two choices.

The first is to continue. Continue with the 275-application SaaS stack at £3,800 per head per year, 53% of which will go unused. Continue hiring CMOs every eighteen months and watching them cycle through the same failing strategies with new vocabulary. Continue funding BDR teams to make cold calls at a 300-to-1 success rate. Continue gating your content behind forms that 90% of B2B prospects will refuse to fill in. Continue watching 70% of your sales team miss quota while your marketing department reports impressive MQL numbers that never become revenue.

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The second choice is to stop. Stop doing B2C marketing in a B2B world. Stop buying the argument that one more platform, one more integration, one more campaign will fix a structural problem that no amount of tooling can address.

Relearn how B2B buyers actually behave. Understand why the model you were sold was designed for someone else's buyer, not yours. Build an infrastructure that serves your market on their terms, at their pace, with genuine educational value — and then wait, consistently and visibly, for the buyers who are ready to find you.

## **The machine that tells you what happens next.**

The course is not the destination. It is the beginning of a closed loop.

Every piece of content goes out daily. Every engagement is tracked. Anonymous buyers research, evaluate, and decide in their own time. When they are ready, they act — and the first action is buying the course. That transaction is not a lead. It is a signal. It confirms the buyer, begins the qualification for the OS, and feeds directly into the revenue model in real time.

The buyer completes the course. They understand the problem. They understand the methodology. The logical next step — which they arrive at themselves — is to implement the OS. The conversion is not a sales process. It is a conclusion.

Within the first year of operation, the closed loop generates enough data to move from forecast to prediction. Not projection, but signal: which content is performing, how many anonymous buyers are in advanced research phase, what the conversion rate is tracking at, and therefore what the pipeline looks like three to six months ahead.

John Wanamaker, the American retail pioneer, famously said in the late 1800s: "Half my advertising is wasted. I just don't know which half."

One hundred and twenty-five years later, with \$300 billion per year in global SaaS spend, 15,384 marketing technology products, and a 43% average quota attainment rate, the B2B industry has answered his question.

It was the half that treated business buyers like consumers.

BB2B Selling is the alternative. It has been forty years in the making. It is running live. The data is in the system.

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## The door is open. No one is going to knock on yours.

— Nigel Maine, Founder, salesXchange

*Sources: Chiefmartec MarTech Landscape 2025 — Scott Brinker & Frans Riemersma · Zylo 2025 SaaS Management Index · Gartner Marketing Survey 2026 · LinkedIn B2B Buyer Anonymity Research · Forrester B2B Funnel Conversion Data · Harvard Business Review Business Failure Statistics · Bain & Company B2B Growth Report 2026 · AeolusGTM State of B2B Revenue 2026 · Clearbit State of B2B Marketing Teams*

### THE NEXT STEP

## You cannot install a new operating system on a machine still running the old one.

Discovery is where we calculate whether the sX OS makes commercial sense for your specific business.

[salesxchange.co.uk/gtm-ceo/gtmos-audit-questionnaire](https://salesxchange.co.uk/gtm-ceo/gtmos-audit-questionnaire)