

Why Should We Buy From You?

If every sales executive could effectively answer this question, their ability to close new accounts would improve.

However, value proposition is often an illusive comparator that can be difficult to articulate, and differentiate from a competitor.

Often, senior management is unaware of how challenging a requirement this can be for its sales force, and that this may be a key reason why sales results are not where they need to be.

Here is an example of one client's experience when their sales force took the SalesIQ *Value Proposition Alignment Test (VPAT)*, a tool we use to help measure value proposition alignment within an organization.

A Test with **ONE** Important Question

At first management thought members of their sales team would be adept at answering the question, "Why should we buy from you?" After all, theirs is a well-trained, seasoned sales team, with years of industry experience.

However, as we toured from region to region, meeting with senior management, sales executives, and product managers, it was interesting to hear how their sales teams answered the question, "*Why should we buy from you?*"

Across a group of about 250 sales executives, only a very small percentage were able to list ten points of differentiation. Nearly 85 percent couldn't get past five, and many could only list two or three.

More interesting were the specific points of differentiation they listed. These included answers like "We work harder", and "We're smarter", were most frequently cited. Other frequent responses were "We are great to work with", and "We understand the customer's needs."

The Need for Alignment

The purpose of a 360° - analysis is to ensure that no matter where your organization is accessed by your customers and prospective customers, whether it be through marketing communications, investor communications, industry lectures, sales presentations, proposals, or through the delivery of products and services, every member of your team is able to articulate, with confidence and consistency, your organization's true value proposition, as seen through the eyes of your customers.

Driving Differentiation

A 360° - Value Proposition Alignment Analysis begins with gaining an understanding of how and in what ways your organization adds superior value.



For more than 20 years, SalesIQ has served many of the nation's Fortune 1000 companies, and the world's most successful organizations. We are consultants and strategic partners, helping our customers drive more sales, with minimized sales cycles, and costs.

Headquartered outside of Charlotte, NC, SalesIQ is a subsidiary of Fletcher/CSI, a world leader in B2B Competitive Intelligence consulting. SalesIQ provides research, analysis, and consulting in these, as well as other customized sales and competitive market intelligence programs:

- ☒ Value Proposition
- ☒ Win/Loss
- ☒ Competitive Threats
- ☒ Best Practices
- ☒ Customer Satisfaction
- ☒ Prospect Pre-Qualification
- ☒ Lead Generation

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Qualitative survey methods are used to obtain candid customer feedback that serves as a powerful testimonial to your organization's key strengths.

Comparing these perspectives with research conducted similarly across competitor clients is the means to clearly understand key points of differentiation, which for your prospective customers, serve as the deciding factors in *"Why should we buy from you?"*

Identifying Gaps in Alignment

Benchmarking interviews are important to establish a baseline from which to build, and to identify where gaps in alignment exist. Conducted throughout our client's internal organization, these interviews serve to understand internal perceptions that drive communications emanating from key members of the team.

In this client's case, we learned that senior management and marketing communications saw factors such as commitment to diversity, financial strength, a recognized brand, and corporate citizenship as all key differentiating value propositions for their clients.

However, from their own customers and prospective customers, we learned that these traits, while reasons to be invited to an RFP, did not play to a customer's need for improved value. In fact, these factors did not enter into the decision-making process or serve to differentiate our client in any way when their prospects were making the ultimate purchasing decision.

The SalesIQ study revealed key differentiators that current and prospective customers valued most included:

- Service quality
- Scalability of service
- Flexibility/Customizability
- Responsiveness
- Price-to-value

The study also identified specific examples and other insights into each of these categories that served to provide depth of understanding. This feedback enabled sales teams to help customers conceptualize real value and make purchasing decisions based upon these key-differentiating features.

In the final analysis, SalesIQ also learned that customers from various industries perceived value

differently, so value propositions needed to be aligned by market segment.

The net result of the 360° - Value Proposition Alignment program was that it strengthened our client's ability to effectively market, propose, and ultimately close new accounts, through a superior ability to answer the question, *"Why should we buy from you?"*

Sales Intelligence is Key

For more than two decades, SalesIQ has played an essential role in improving the sales performance of many of the world's leading organizations.

SalesIQ delivers accurate and highly actionable sales intelligence, coupled with insightful recommendations that measurably improve new business success and customer retention, while minimizing sales cycles, and costs.

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