

PERSPECTIVES: BUYING CENTERS

B2B marketers struggle to reach the growing team of diverse stakeholders that make purchase decisions. It's hard to get a handle on these "buying centers," largely because they are so nuanced. This short Q&A is intended to help marketers understand the mindset of their prospective buying centers in order to better deliver content and experiences that meet their expectations.

What exactly is a B2B buying center?

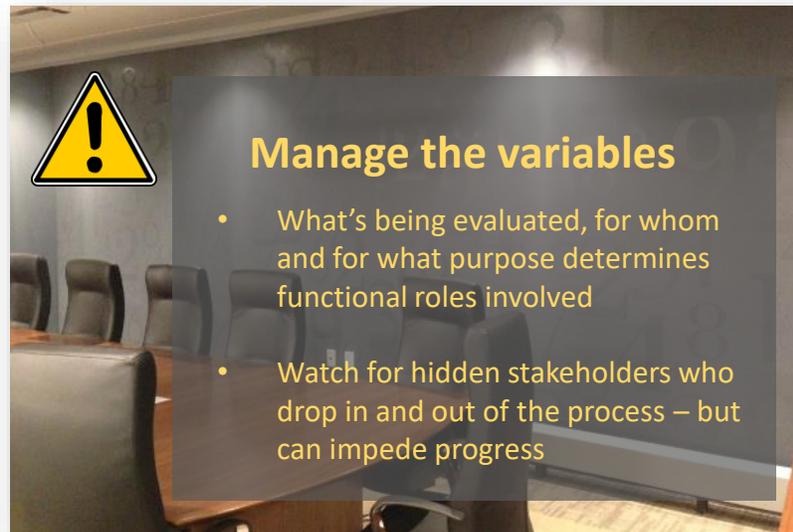
A buying center is the team of stakeholders evaluating vendors, platforms and services. Sometimes referred to as a DMU (decision-making unit) or buying committee.

Who participates in the buying center?

Typically, it's a cross-functional team comprising budget owners, technical experts, direct and indirect end users, procurement and project managers.

How many people are part of a buying center?

Size depends on the type and level of investment, potential business impact, industry and company size. The group can range from 3 or 4 to as many as 20 stakeholders involved in a purchase decision.



What are some of the key challenges in reaching the buying center?

Given these dynamics, sales and marketing teams face considerable challenges, such as:

- Identifying all the stakeholders involved
- Understanding their pain points and what they need to know
- Creating content relevant to individual roles and the group at large



“*Getting them to reach consensus is not easy. There are varying agendas, KPIs, levels of expertise, degrees of influence and different generational preferences to contend with.*”

Sales Director

How do you get started mapping this out?

- 1 Document the top 3-5 possible **purchase scenarios**
- 2 Use your **Buyer Personas** to help answer these questions:
 - ✓ Who is part of the evaluation process?
 - ✓ What is their role and influence? When do they engage?
 - ✓ What keeps them up at night?
 - ✓ What do I know about their hot topics? Their industry?
 - ✓ How do they search?
 - ✓ How should – and shouldn't – we message to them?
 - ✓ How do they prefer to consume their content?
- 3 Work with **Sales and Demand Gen teams** to deliver an efficient and personal (but not invasive) customer experience (CX) to help guide your buyers along the path-to-purchase



How can ComBlu help?

We have been connecting our clients and their buyers for more than 25 years. We can:

- ❖ **Fill the gaps.** ComBlu has been providing buying center analysis for companies like Cisco, VMware, Sitecore and Capital One for many years. Tap our skills to supplement yours.
- ❖ **Bring deep domain expertise** of B2B Buyer behaviors and preferences across multiple sectors, particularly in Technology and Financial Services.
- ❖ **Engage your stakeholders** and colleagues upfront and along the way so that everyone is informed and aligned.
- ❖ **Refresh the data** when industries and strategies shift and new roles emerge.
- ❖ **Audit your current or planned experience** to see how it stacks up against buyer preferences

Where to learn more?

[Multigenerational
Buying Center
Matrix](#)

[Inside the Mind
of the B2B Buyer](#)

[The Hitchhiker's
Guide to a Content
Journey 2 \(Buying
Center\)](#)