

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 \(Buying
Center\)](#)