ACCELERATE YOUR RECOVERY BY KEEPING AND ACQUIRING NEW CUSTOMERS

A Commercial specialist's guide to a customer-centric approach for sustainable business growth







INTRODUCTION

Our 4-part guide to accelerating growth provides you with sound knowledge and practical advice for increasing profitability and elevating your business to the next level.

These are generic principles, and each business should adjust appropriately to fit their situation and profit objectives. Each section contains **Top Tips** and downloadable **Workbooks** including some handy ready-made templates.





Commercial Acceleration has over 25 years' experience working with world class brands. We've helped organisations through major transformations and generated millions of extra income for them. Basically – been there, done it!

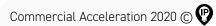
We're really good at helping businesses grow and maximise profits. That's why we have received a number of awards.













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PART 1

Customer obsession is the root to growing big and strong

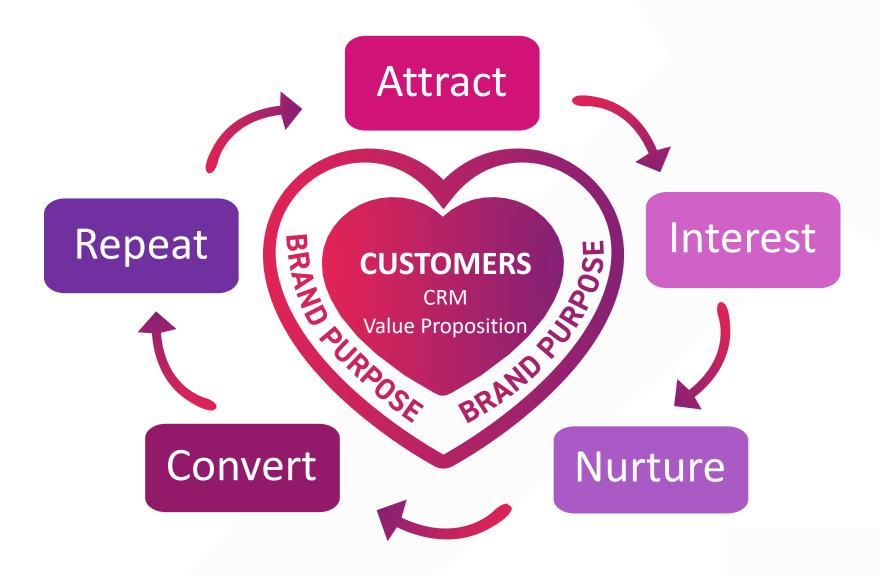




Research by Deloitte found that customer-centric companies were 60% MORE PROFITABLE compared to companies that were not focused on the customer.









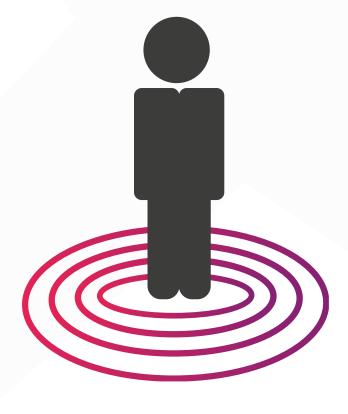
The key to business growth is having a **deep understanding** of your customers – their loves, likes, needs and pain points. By providing value through product and service solutions you will meet, or even exceed their wants and needs.

Going deeper into the customer's mindset will bring you clearer insights that will help you take care of them better. This approach is vital to building strong and long-lasting customer relationships.

This continual understanding and taking care of them (serving them), is vital to building strong, long-lasting customer relationships.

By being **customer centric** and putting yourself in the shoes of the customer, you can **anticipate their needs** and delight them with products and services they hadn't considered before. They might even spread the word – the ultimate form of brand flattery!

By putting customers at the core of your business and leveraging CRM data, it enhances the customer experience which increases **customer lifetime value** through repeat business.





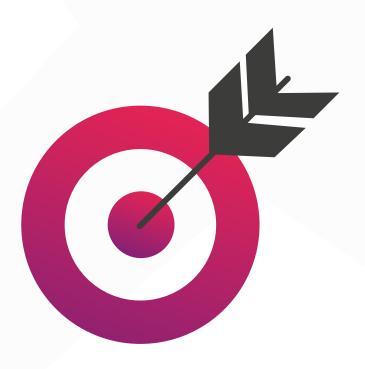
Clarity of your **target market** is essential as **everything else will follow this**

A target market is a **specific group** of people you want to reach who are the most likely to buy your products or services. They share common characteristics like demographics and behaviours. Your brand proposition, positioning, messaging (including your tone of voice) and offering will all be informed by knowing as much as possible about your target customer.

As a priority to getting started your business will have created target customer persona(s) and customer segmentation (the division of potential customers into discrete groups that share common characteristics) research.

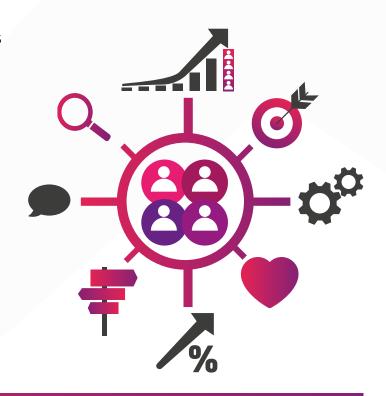
It is important to constantly ensure that you have clarity of who is your target market, and carefully consider any changes to your target market.

Shifts in the landscape trigger a reassessment of your target market in terms of how their needs, wants and behaviours change. In some instances, the target market might have changed.





- **Conduct audience research** to understand who is already using your products or services look in your CRM, Google analytics, social media analytics etc
- **Get clarity** on who you are serving by developing a target customer persona (B2C), or ideal client profile id B2B. *Workbook link A*
- Call customers to understand their changing needs
- Obtain and act on regular feedback of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction
- Undertake a customer segmentation exercise
- CRM quality checks to ensure all information is up to date
- Measure customer centricity via churn rate, repeat purchase rate, Net Promoter Score, Customer Lifetime Value





What do you stand for?

Once you have pure clarity of your ideal customer, you can develop a **value proposition.** A positioning statement that explains what benefit you provide to who and how you do it uniquely well. This articulates **why** someone would want to buy from your company rather than your competitors. It succinctly explains the value of your products and services. Companies may have several value propositions for separate products, services or buyer personas.

Where do you play in the market?

Your company's **positioning** helps you connect with the right customers and helps to boost your sales. Your customers will **perceive your brand in a certain way –** distinct and superior to others and in a combination of factors - value, service, quality, reliability etc. Positioning is the single greatest influence on a customer's buying decision.



Value proposition is one of the most important conversion factors.

Source Hubspot



Why are you here, what is your Purpose?

Research by Edelman shows that more and more consumers are interested in knowing why a business exists and its beliefs. This is referred to as the brand purpose. A powerful brand purpose sets out a company's intent to improve the world and successfully connects with its audience on a personal level.

An example of a brand purpose from Crayola is "Encouraging children to be creative and enabling parents to inspire them."

Cleansing beauty brand, Dove®, states "Discovering the value of 'real beauty' and improving self-esteem worldwide."

The purpose should be woven throughout a **distinctive customer experience** across all channels. Research shows that purpose-driven businesses benefit financially.







In the United States and United Kingdom

90% of consumers say that

Brands have a responsibility to take care of the planet and its people*

* According to Wunderman Thompson Data



agree that if they perceive a brand is putting profit over people



* According to the 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer



Telling the world

Once you have defined your uniqueness, you can construct **clear and compelling messages**. Messaging should **make you stand out** and hook prospective customers through **connecting** and **resonating** with them.

Depending on which stage in the buying journey the customer is at, you will need different messages and offer a different **call to action** about what you would like the customer to do next.

Messaging always needs to be relevant and meaningful depending on market conditions. Personalised messaging is more engaging and yields more loyalty.





Marketing plan

Once you have established all of these strategic components outlined on the previous page, the marketing channels can be selected.

There is a common mistake in many businesses to jump straight into the promotional tactics, without careful consideration of the target market, compelling messaging and how to reach them effectively. This results in wasting money through targeting the wrong people, with the wrong message, on the wrong channels.





Harvard Business Review reported that in the last 3 years:





of consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable brands

Source Neilsen



- Define your **uniqueness** with a Value Proposition **Workbook link B**
- Undertake competitor research
 Workbook link C
- Make sure your brand purpose is authentic, connects with what your target audience values and has a positive social impact
- Be clear on your differentiation by defining **Unique**Selling Points (USPs) Workbook link D
- Create a positioning map to understand what your customers think about you and your competitors
 Workbook link E

- Based on your brand purpose, create a Tone of Voice to ensure consistent and engaging communications over all media
- Use attention grabbing headlines and images
- Tailor messaging to be relevant to each stage of the buyer journey and their segments/personas, and make it all about the customer
- Using the 'rule of 7', ensure all communications reach your audience many times (at least 7) before expecting results – research proves messages are more effective when repeated
- Ensure that you have defined all of these strategic elements before you complete a marketing plan





PART 2

Customer experience excellence

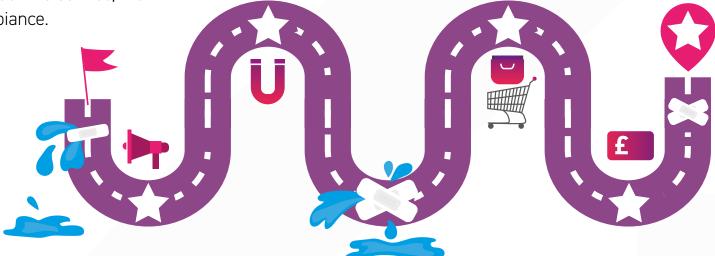




The end-to-end customer journey needs to be outstanding. You need to be delighting your customers every step of the way to ensure retention and create advocates from their loyalty.

People are purchasing the whole experience, which is so much more than just the products. For example when going to a restaurant – the experience is about the service, the product, the ambiance.

Often, due to inadequate training or weak processes, there are many breakages in the customer experience causing profits to spill. This is called the 'leaky' bucket. Acquiring new customers is costly and so it is important for companies to identify and fix any leakage touchpoints.





A moderate increase in Customer Experience generates an average revenue increase of



for a company with \$1 billion in annual revenues.

Source Temkin Group



Mapping the journey

Drawing out your customer **journey map** is useful to ensure the key touchpoints and omni-channel experiences are seamless, simple and user-friendly. You will **know where improvements need to be made** from hearing customer feedback, reviewing competitors and taking yourself through your own customer journey.

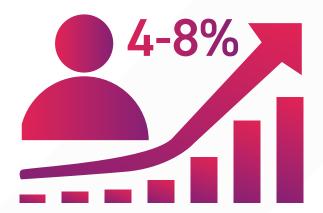
Why not ask yourself:

Is more information needed on the website?
Is there a good follow-up process?
Does all the marketing collateral have a call to action?
How good/bad was the purchase process?





Bain & Company's analysis showed that customer experience leaders grow revenues 4-8% above their market.





- Map out your customer journey(s) and identify the gaps that need to be improved. Workbook link F
- Track metrics to show you what points are not working
- Qualitative data -Constantly review customer feedback and improve accordingly
- Gather quantitative data from analytics and adapt the customer experience to stay relevant





One Growth Team

Often leakages occur because **departments work in silos**. You need your sales, marketing and operations people working in harmony as a single **Growth Team** to optimise the customer experience.

Work through the customer journey collectively to understand the process, content and tools used throughout the cycle – and their efficiency.

As the customer journey is not necessarily a linear one, marketing and sales need to be in constant collaboration. A shared **metrics scorecard** will provide clarity and direction for addressing the gaps and glitches.





- Ensure **alignment** between departments to act as one team sharing the goal of revenue growth
- Using universal metrics, **set financial targets** and other positive objectives
- Monitor solutions activity regularly
- Learn from findings, prepare for next round of activities





In Accenture's annual Global Consumer Pulse Research (GCPR).

of customers indicated that their brand loyalty is heavily influenced by customer service experiences.



Service - The Wow Factor

It is clear that to increase profits, excellent service needs to be a priority for businesses. Think through the ways that your business can go the extra mile to surprise and delight through personalised and memorable experiences that will create customers for life.

But it's not always easy. Competition might be tough and markets are changing all the time. The experience economy requires constant innovation or re-invention as a key source of value. The right course of action is informed by understanding customer's moods and mindset. This means learning and adapting as a way of business life forever.





AMEX research shows that consumers are willing to spend

20% £

to do business with companies that deliver excellent service.



Alarmingly, U.S. companies lose more than



due to poor customer service.



- Give customers more than they expected
- Review other brands that you feel demonstrate best in class service
- Make enquiries by calls or surveys to understand their experiences of your product or service
- Focus on the **very first customer experience** what is the ideal vs real impact?
- Always offer a **solution**
- Have a very quick response time and personalise it
- Thank people for their business
- Think what you can do for customers to make them feel special





The moments of magic - those critical interactions

A moment of truth occurs between the customer and vendor that can leave a long lasting positive or negative impression on the customer. These are the moments that will have a more significant impact on a customer's level of happiness with the brand. It is important to establish these 'moments that matter' - and make them spot-on!

This powerful emotional connection can increase genuine loyalty – a form of brand-devotion – and maybe the start of a beautiful love affair!

It is widely accepted that c.85% of buying decisions are made on emotional needs rather than rational needs. Therefore, by focusing on the moments that matter, businesses can put themselves ahead of competitors and create advocates. Identifying these precious moments relevant to your business can be done through customer research. For example, at a hair salon, a moment that matters is the consultation at the beginning where a customer feels really understood about which hairstyle they are looking for - a refreshment will be the bonus! At a hotel, it could be the moment a guest enters their room and sees a personalized welcome card or a thoughtful gift of local specialties.

C.85% of

buying decisions are made on emotional needs rather than rational needs.



- Identity the moments that matter hallmark these as "gold-spots" so no process /colleague misses an opportunity to improve the moment
- What measures can you take to **surprise and delight** your customers?
- Can you **personalise** at appropriate points (without incurring costs)?





PART 3

Optimising Commercial Levers



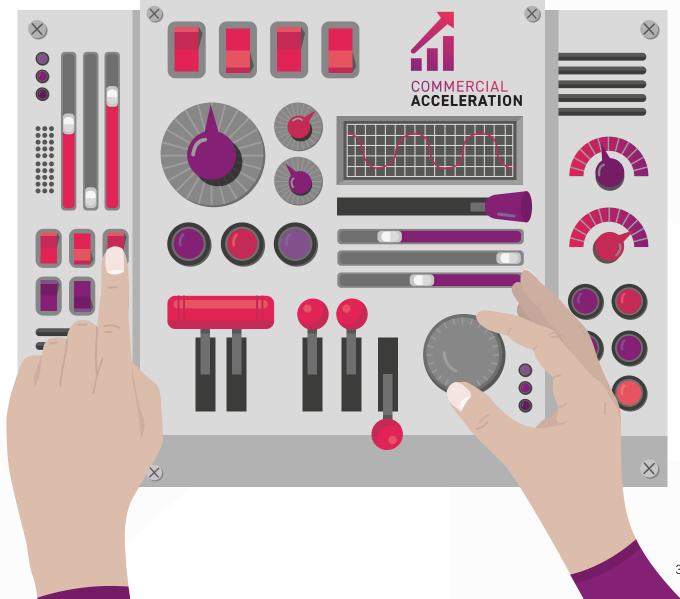


There are a multitude of levers to pull to **generate value** and **unlock** revenue opportunities.

Small changes can dramatically increase performance and grow your business. It is good practice to continually re-evaluate these levers in line with market conditions and changing consumer behaviours.

Key to business success is an understanding of business figures through tracking the data metrics and adjusting activity accordingly to optimise performance.

In this chapter you will find some key profitability levers.





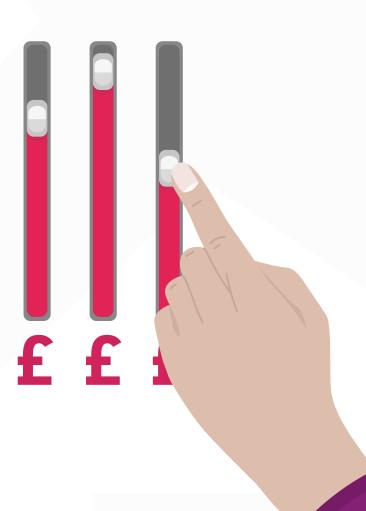
Increase the value of every purchase transaction

Pricing can be a silver bullet to growing profitability, as profit is a direct result of your pricing strategy.

A key growth lever is increasing average order value. Pricing should be reviewed regularly to ensure the business has a clear understanding of where it is positioned vs the market average.

The pricing strategy needs to be in line with its desired positioning, the ideal is an offering that is niche or differentiated with its own unique value, so that people do not focus so much on the actual price point.

This also makes it more difficult for customers to compare your price to similar products or services.





- Up-selling Encouraging customers to purchase a comparable higher-end product than the one in question.
 It adds in little additional cost, but increases significant perceived value and experience - e.g. McDonalds upsize small to medium sized fries, FitBit to FitBitPremium
- Cross-Selling Inviting customers to buy related or complementary items e.g. Amazon "if you like this, you might like this"
- Bundling Adds more value via a package e.g. M&S £10 meal uses items that would cost more per item if purchased individually

- **Tiered options** different packages with additional features and benefits e.g. Bronze/Silver/Gold
- Providing a free gift when a monetary value has been reached
- Freebies Buy 1, get 1 half price





Love, buy, repeat! Increase frequency of repeat purchase

The longer you can keep a customer the greater the profit. Businesses should focus on **customer life-time value** by continually serving existing customers with an excellent customer experience that suits them. Loyalty, high lifetime value and advocacy is the goal – happy customers who keep buying and buying again.

Research shows that retaining a customer is 7 to 25 times **more cost effective** than acquiring new customers. Existing customers are also more likely to spend more – three times more per visit according to the Adobe Digital Index. **Investing in relationships** with your customers and engaging with the supporting communities is critical to your growth.







Increasing customer 5% retention rates by

increases profits 25% > 95%



Source Bain & Company



TOP TIPS

- Have a database of past customers and communicate with them and ask them to come back
- Create a loyalty programme people are 80% more likely to shop at stores that offer a loyalty programme according to a study by TechnologyAdvice
- Introduce a fee-paying membership or subscription as a regular revenue source
- Develop a **VIP** programme to make your repeat customers feel like they have access to something others don't

- Focus on retaining the most highly valuable existing customers (the 80/20 rule – focusing on the 20% of customers who bring in 80% of revenue)
- Send out regular emails (e.g. welcome email, monthly newsletters) and include the recipient's name in the subject header if possible to increase open rates by 50% (source: Lifecycle Marketing)

Continues...



TOP TIPS

- Offer incentives for repeat business e.g. 10% off next purchase
- Host events to engage your customers and encourage spontaneous purchase opportunities
- Build genuine, long-lasting relationships
- Provide consistently brilliant customer service

- Gather regular feedback to understand how to adapt to changing customer needs and fix improvement areas
- Understand why people leave
- Use tactics like daily deals and coupons
- **Retargeting** can bring 14.6% of browsers back to your website (source: Journal of Marketing Research)



Go forth and multiply - Increase the number of customers

Another option is to increase your customer base. The formula for increasing customers is **Leads x Conversion**. However winning new business is generally more costly (at least 5x) and usually quite challenging. There needs to be a **consistent flow of quality leads** coming into the pipeline.

Through measuring the **lead generation effectiveness**, you will
know which channels (e.g. Direct mail,
Facebook, Google ads) provide the
best results and lowest cost per lead
and sale.





The probability of selling to a new prospect is 5-20%



The probability of selling to an existing customer is

60-70%

Source Marketing Metrics



TOP TIPS

- Increase quality lead generation by continuing to test,
 measure and adapt the most effective lead-generating activities
- Increase conversions by asking for the business, following up effectively, overcoming objections, building relationships and using limited offers
- Use compelling offers
- Offer **free-trials** or samples
- Sell on value, experience and differentiation, not on price
- 'Smarketing' align sales and marketing with shared data, metrics and targets
- Build relationships people buy from people not robots

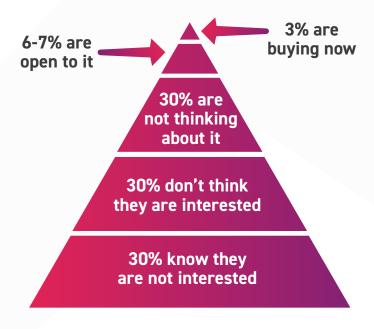
- Offer realistic rewards to incentivise marketing and sales teams for hitting their targets
- Create **engaging, useful and tailored content** (e.g. video, blogs, e-books, webinars, etc).
- Prove you are trustworthy customers make their choices based on trust which is established by the brand continually demonstrating relevant expertise
- Keep them informed **educate with relevant content** according to the buyer's journey stage
- **Use emotional selling** 80% of purchasing decisions are based on this. Sell the benefits and lifestyle value (how your product makes someone's life easier/better) vs the features (what your product is or does) and price point



Master the Follow-Up

Follow-up is one of the best ways to accelerate revenues and profit. Yet it is surprising how many businesses do not have a systematic process to aid the purchase and ultimately enhance the relationship. Without follow-up, you will experience longer sales cycles and substantial prospect drop-off.

Only a small percentage of people (3%) are ready to buy when they first engage with a business. The large majority of prospects require nurturing. Nurture your potential customers by educating them with useful content (e.g. videos / FAQ / case studies / testimonials) and building trust, so that they can move down the funnel to eventually purchase. Consumers need to know, like and trust before they buy.





At the start of the follow-up the enquiry needs to be responded to quickly (ideally within 10 minutes) as research shows that 30-50% of sales go to the vendor that responds first.

Subsequently, there needs to be a continual stream of follow-up to stay connected with the prospect and demonstrate expertise for solving their problem.

Research states that prospects need eight touchpoints (a benchmark average number) before they purchase. This can be done in **multiple media** formats such as video, emails, text or calling direct – but it is wise to ask the prospect which is their preferred choice of communication.





A survey conducted by Prof. James Oldroyd at MIT showed...



the odds of qualifying a lead



if you contact them 30 minutes after an enquiry



drops by a factor of 21 times



compared to a 5-minute response.



TOP TIPS

- Ensure you have an **optimised follow-up system -** consistent, lengthy enough and creative
- Get close to your customers by **communicating with them regularly,** knowing their questions, and sending out lots of useful **content**
- Focus on retention monitor customer churn and customer satisfaction scores
- Keep CRM system up to date and always record last activity
- **Personalise** subject headers, videos, emails and **tailor messages** depending on which stage of the purchase journey they are at
- Monitor follow-up data to ensure that responsive levels are being adhered to, tested and adapted based on what is working





Power of Referrals

Referrals are very important for growth and are highly effective as they are recommendations which people trust, and they also save significant costs. Yet surprisingly many businesses do not encourage or incentivise them.

Referral business closes & converts more than 70% of the time

On average, referral programs increase new customer acquisitions up to



TOP TIPS

- Build relationships with customers converting them into advocates for your business
- Ask for referrals
- **Develop a referral incentive programme** e.g. an introduction fee of 20% for new business that converts from the referrals
- Use **customer reviews and testimonials** in your marketing activity as social proof that genuine customers trust your product/brand. This could influence 68% of the purchasing decision





90% of consumers

read online reviews before visiting a business.

Source Bright Local



PART 4

Adapting to stay relevant





The world is constantly changing which is influencing customer needs. We need to be **agile**, **creative** and **innovative**. We need to review and evolve how to do things differently and better in order to meet the needs of new market shifts. Staying close to customers is critical so that decisions are based on their pain and gain points.

Businesses can adapt whilst staying true to their positioning, values and purpose. Re-evaluate your marketing and sales levers – e.g. message, media, price, etc – to make sure you are fit for the current situation.



As Charles Darwin said:

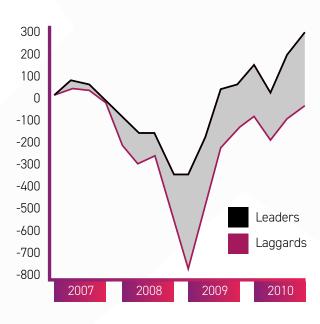
"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change".



There are many great examples of companies that have reinvented themselves and created new opportunities because of the changing times. Established brands such as Lego and Walt Disney have strengthened year on year due to a keen understanding of consumer desires. Then there are the recent game changers who have had to adapt further despite being relatively young companies such as Netflix, Apple, Uber and Amazon. These businesses managed to stay relevant, anticipated trends and embraced innovation.

In times of crisis, like the recession of 2007-09, research has shown that it is the **companies who prioritized customer experience** that delivered much higher shareholder returns. This reinforces the importance of **customer-centric** focus – and it being a winning strategy in recession.

Marketing should be viewed as critical investment, not as an easily cut outgoing. There is substantial research to show that the speed of recovery (which can be up 9x as fast) and gain in market share depends on continuing to invest during recessions.





TOP TIPS

By reviewing the '6Ps' below against your current situation and practices you will get a good idea of how to adapt your business for a more profitable and successful future. Workbook link G

- Price: The actual amount the end user is expected to pay for a product
- Place: How/where the product will be provided to the customer. Distribution is a key element of placement
- **Product:** Tangible goods or intangible **services** that meet a specific customer need or demand
- **Promotion:** The marketing communication strategies and techniques which may include advertising, sales promotions, special offers and public relations
- **People:** This includes everyone who is involved in the product or service whether directly or indirectly
- Process: The systems and processes that deliver a product to a customer

NB: This list is not exhaustive and can be supplemented by additional levers such as Partnerships



TOP TIPS

- Stay abreast of **future trends** and think through the implications for your business in terms of how to evolve to stay ahead of the curve and adapt where possible
- Stay **very close to your customers** (through regular communication and surveys) and be aware of their changing needs, capturing the information to enable your plans to adapt successfully
- Use the creative tool SCAMPER to help creatively think through how to adapt
- Focus on a few authentic changes at a time to make it manageable





SUMMARY

Unlocking the value to your business





This guide has shown that growth comes from being customer obsessed, focusing on the experience and commercial levers that matter, and evolving to changing times.

Part 1 talked about the key to business growth is having a deep understanding of your customers. From this intimate knowledge of their needs and wants, your business can ensure it delivers value. This clarity will guide your direction of your value proposition, the reasons you are different from competitors, and how to craft your unique and compelling messaging.

In **Part 2** we examined the importance of having an excellent customer experience. Having a well-thought out and seamless customer journey that delights customers is the key to repeat business.

Part 3 went through a multitude of commercial levers that will make more money for your business.

Optimising your retention strategy and follow-up system are two powerful ways to increase profitability.

Adapting to business is an every-going business need, and **Part 4** looks at the different ways that companies can re-invent themselves to a 'new' normal and thrive.





If you need help unlocking the value in your business to increase profitability, we are here for you.

We will help by working out exactly what needs to be done, how to do this, and help you to get it done.

We would love to support you to maximise your profit and take your business to an exciting, new level of growth.



Our Services



Profit Max®



Sales & Marketing Optimisation



Branding



Business Development



Leadership and People Solutions



Successful Customer Experience

We are an **independent**, **results-driven** consultancy that helps businesses **grow** through **optimising** their **sales**, **marketing** and **revenue opportunities**.

Commercial Acceleration provides a fresh and **expert perspective** to help you **acquire** new customers and drive more **value** from existing relationships.

With **25+ years experience** working in senior commercial and marketing roles, we offer best practices, tools and solutions to **drive** profits.



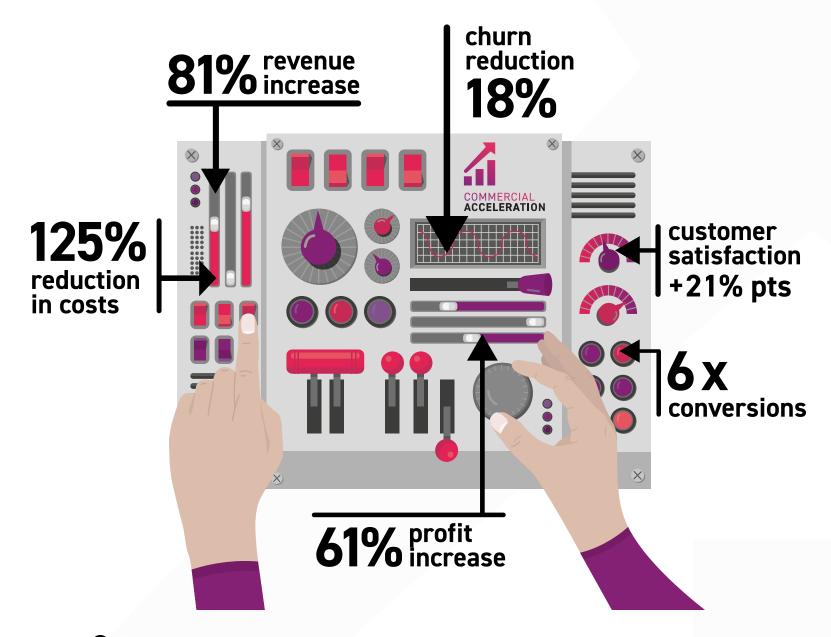


6 Steps to Massive Results

Profit Max® is a proprietary programme that diagnoses the growth opportunities and provides solutions. We can perfectly tailor the project to your business needs and budget.









Benefits

- Commercial excellence expertise
- Accelerate revenue results through leveraging proven best practices and tools
- Adapt your business to stay relevant in changing times
- Collaborative approach from the inside-out to drive sustainable results
- Hospitality and leisure specialist
- Tailored solutions specific to your challenges
- Dedicated contact throughout project





Call: +44 (0) 2035 388 018 | +44 (0) 7736 784 810

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GLOSSARY





Customer-centric The act of taking a customer-focused approach to business

CRM A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system helps manage customer data

B2B Business to Business

B2C Business to Customer

Churn rate The rate at which customers stop doing business with an organisation

Net promoter score Measures the willingness of customers to recommend a company's products or services to others. It is used as a proxy for gauging the customer's overall satisfaction with a company's product or service and the customer's loyalty to the brand

Tone of voice How the character of your business comes through in your words, both written and spoken

Omni-channel Is a multichannel approach to sales

Metrics scorecard Used to identify, improve, and control a business's various functions and resulting outcomes

C. Circa approximately e.g. c.85%





WORKBOOKS





Worksheet A: Target Customer Persona (B2C)



Sources & influence Websites / Blogs / Social Media:	
Magazines / Books:	
Thoughts / Leaders	

Goals & values			

Challenges & pain points

Buying decisions



Occupation:

Industry:

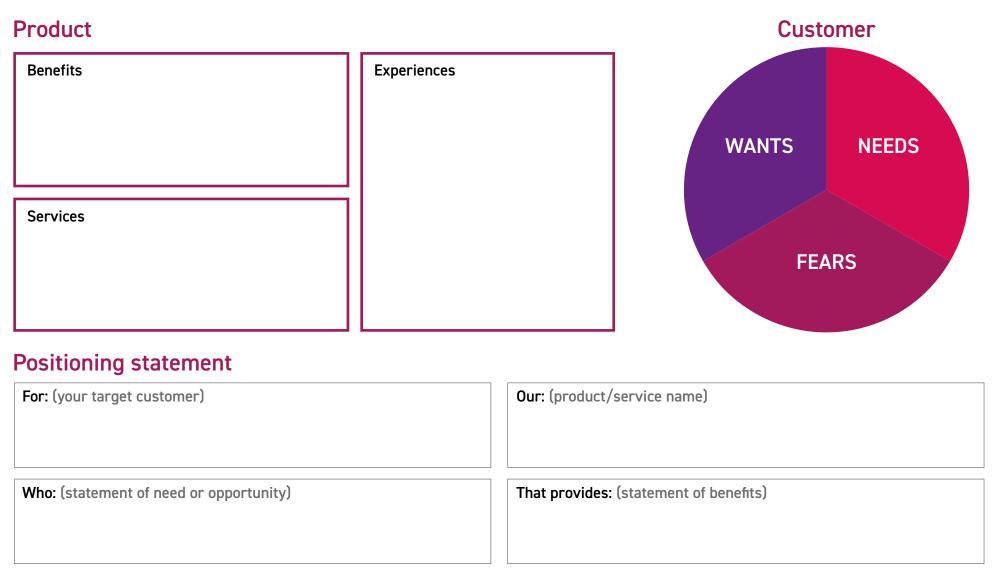


Worksheet A: Ideal Client Profile (B2B)

Industries			
Size	Geography		
Budget	Annual revenue		
Job titles	No. of employees		



Worksheet B: Value Proposition & Positioning Statement





Worksheet C: Competitor Research

	Your Company	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Overview				
Target market				
Marketing strategies				
Products & services				
Price				
Distribution				



Worksheet C: Continued...

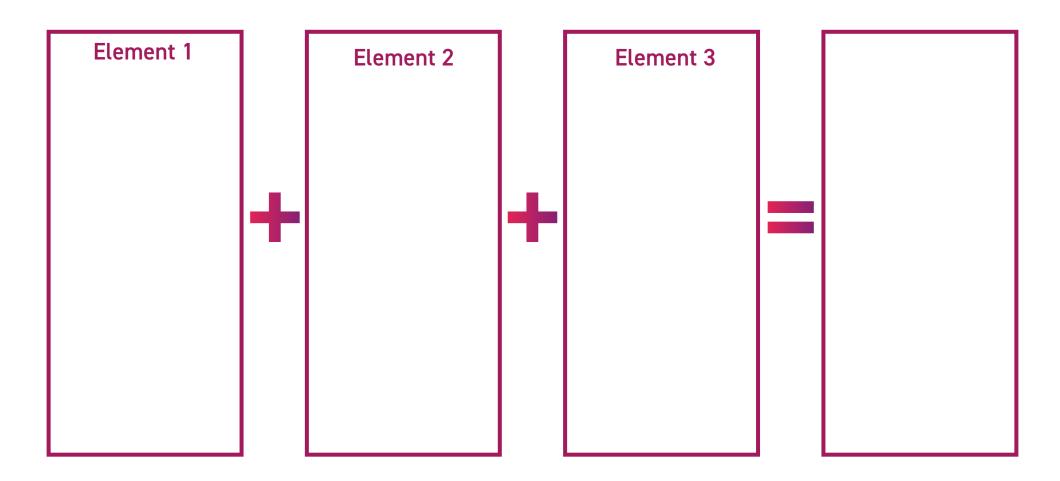
	Your Company	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Experience				
Strengths				
Weaknesses				
Opportunities				
Threats				

Worksheet D: Differentiators



Why are we better?

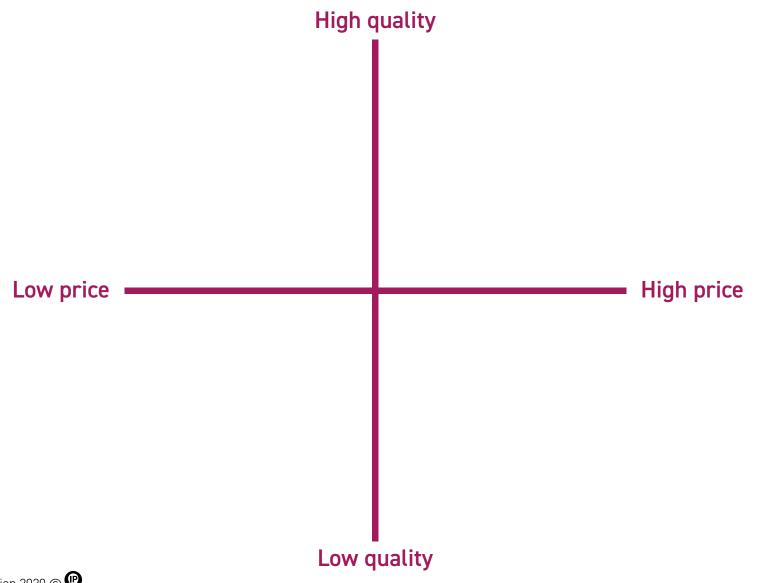
Identify features and unique selling points that will entice prospective customers to purchase



Worksheet E: Positioning Map



Place your product /service where is most appropriate





Worksheet F: Customer Journey Map

Stages	Awareness	Consideration	Acquisition	Service	Loyalty
Customer activity					
Touchpoints					
Customer expectation					
Experience 1-5					
Business KPI					
Departments					



Worksheet G: Adaptation Commercial Framework

	Now	Going forward
Customers		
Price		
Product & Service		
Place		
People		
Promotion		
Process		