Digital Transformation:
From Obstacle to Opportunity





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Executive Summary

- Buyers expect digital engagement throughout the buying process, regardless of purchase complexity.
- For marketers, digitally transforming the customer experience can elevate lead generation and conversion.
- To generate more sales-ready prospects, your digital engagement phase should be *longer.*
- Providing digital assets isn't enough — marketers must create self-engagement tools that increase buyer affinity.

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Let’s start from the beginning …

What is digital transformation, really?

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Digital transformation is all about speed

"There are very few secrets out there anymore. The only competitive advantage becomes the speed aspect."

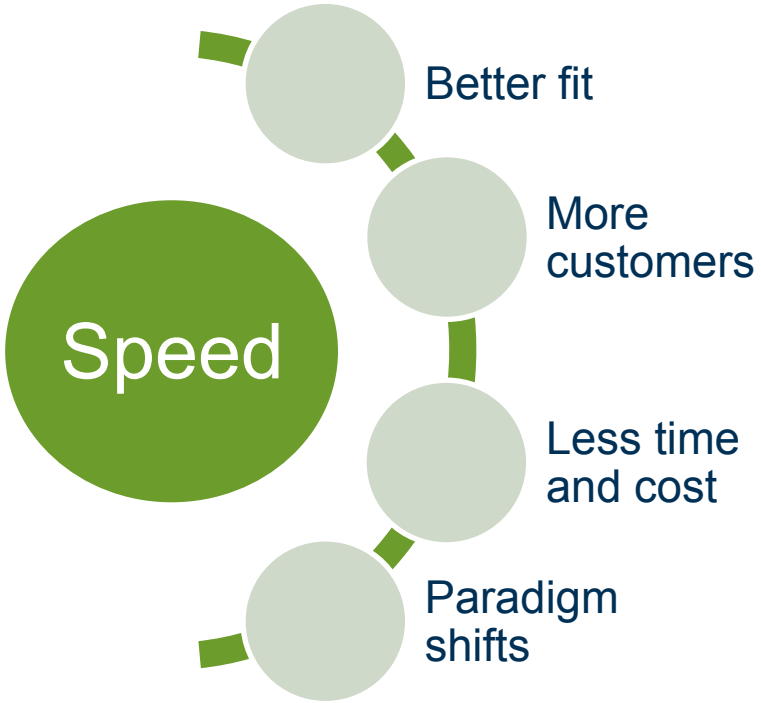
— Rollin Ford, CIO of Walmart



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Specifically, speed to customer satisfaction



- You shouldn't sacrifice quality to move faster
- Digital transformation enables new ways to serve customers better and faster

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Digital transformation is enterprise-wide

It should shape every part of your organization:

- R&D
- Manufacturing
- Operations
- Marketing
- Sales
- Everything!



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But for now, let's talk about what it means for marketers.

Because buyers usually engage with marketing first …

Marketing should have a stake in everything related to the buyer's journey.

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Marketing has two jobs in the buyer's journey:

- Creating a consistent buyer experience, using:
  - Marketing automation
  - Campaign management
- Listening to what buyers want, using:
  - Interactive web content
  - Web applications
  - Mobile applications
  - Digitally enabled human touchpoints

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And whatever kind of company you are, you need digital to make that happen.

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But are you taking advantage of digital as much as you could?

Is the status quo good enough?

(We don’t think so.)

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In fact, for a lot of companies, the MORE digital the buyer's journey is, the better.

To see why, ask yourself this …

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What's the goal of marketing?

"Marketing should result in a customer who is ready to buy."

Peter Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*

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That’s why sales and marketing alignment matters

- Marketing works with sales to determine what makes a lead qualified and ready to hand off.
- Qualification usually focuses on two things …

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First, capacity

- Could this company buy our product?
- Are they …
  - The right size?
  - In the right industry?
  - In the right marketing segment?

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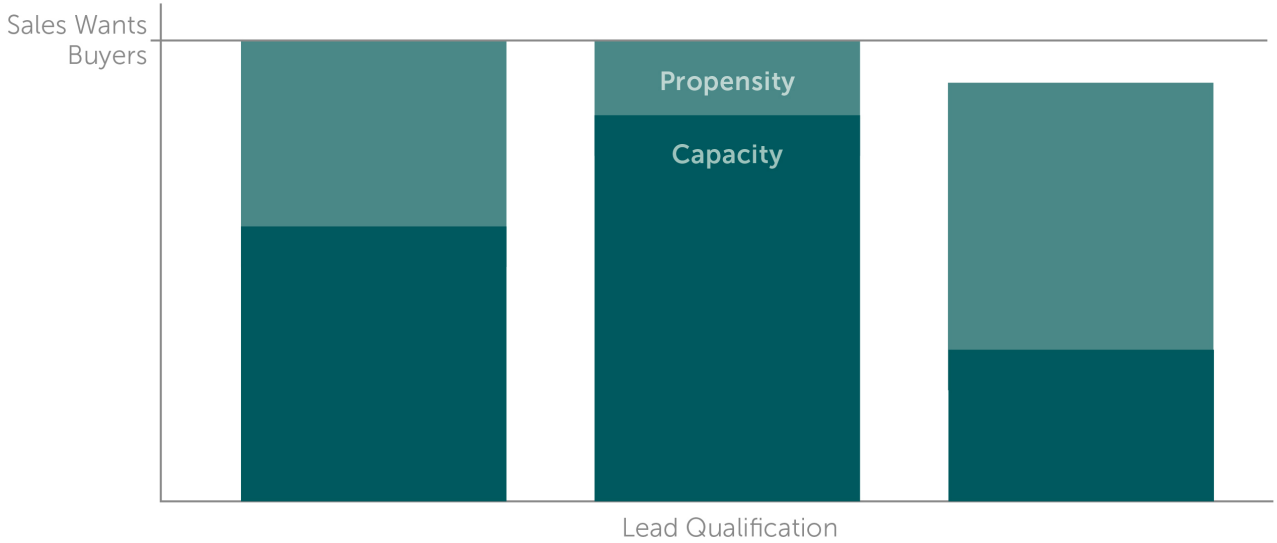
Second, propensity

- Are they likely to buy our product now?
- Think BANT:
  - Budget
  - Authority
  - Needs
  - Timeline

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To recap, when does sales want buyers?

When capacity and propensity are right!



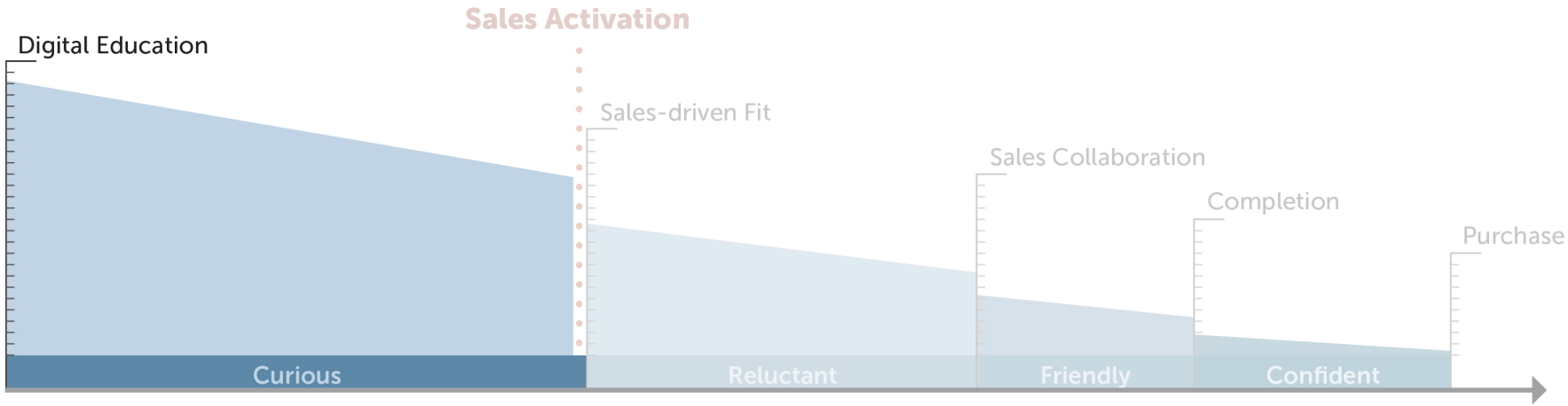
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Here's how that plays out across the funnel …

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First, buyers research your company online

Marketing uses gated content to capture information and measure capacity and propensity.



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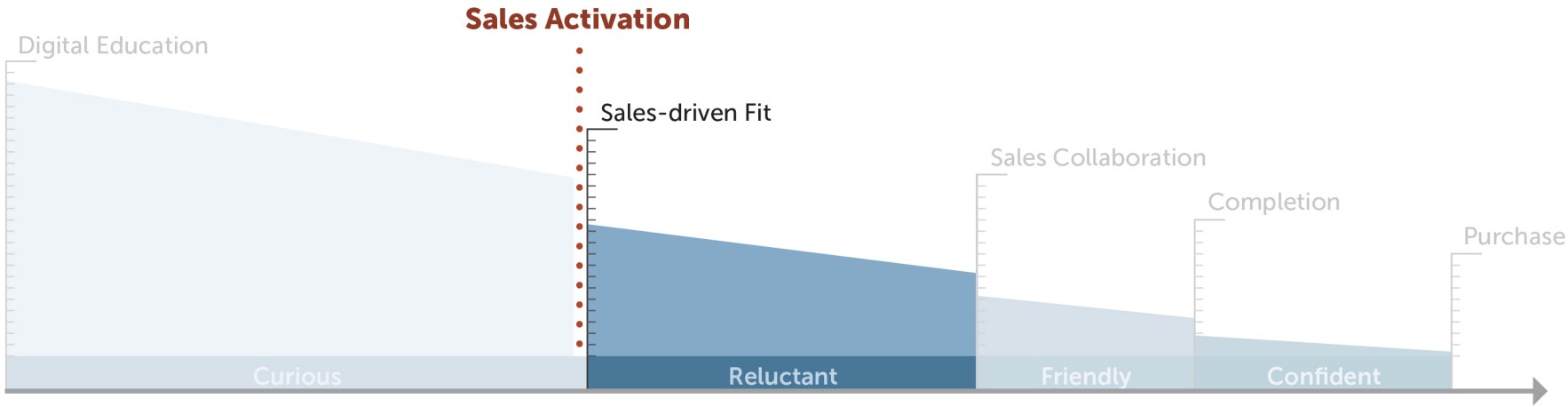
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Then, once capacity and propensity are established …

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It’s time for sales activation!

Marketing forwards leads to sales … whether those leads like it or not.

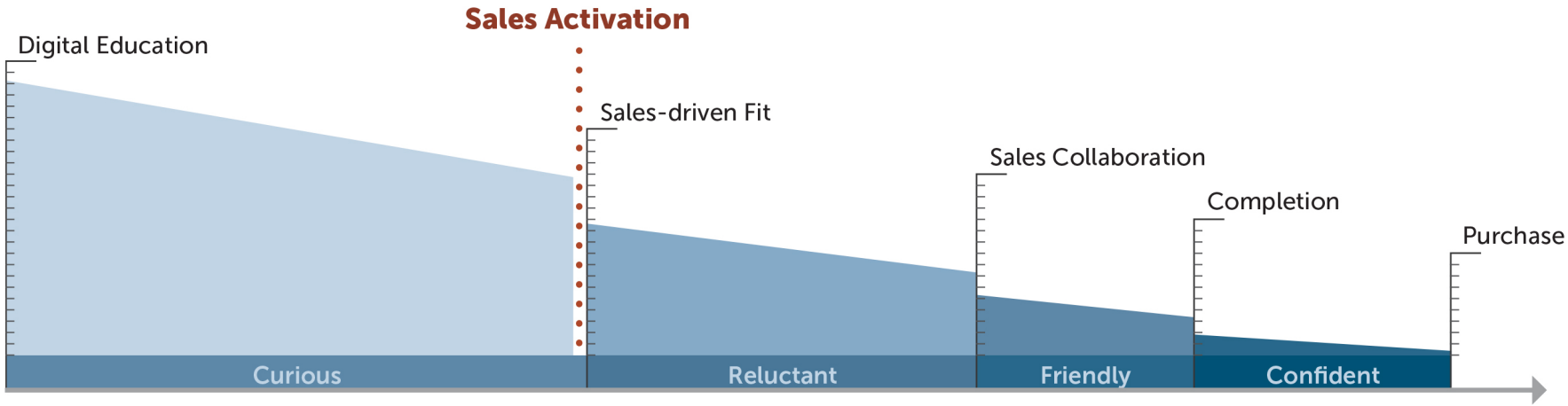


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But what if buyers aren't ready for sales?

You get reluctance and friction, and some buyers leave the funnel … for your competitors.



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What's going wrong here?

(Hint: You're not asking the right question!)

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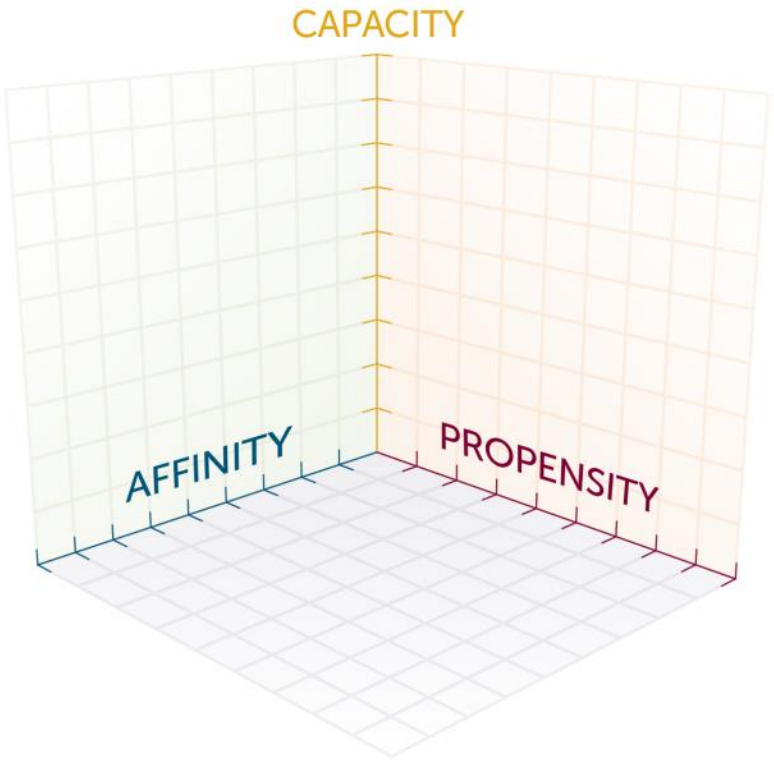
Capacity and propensity measure when sales wants to talk to buyers …

But what about when buyers want to talk to sales?

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That's called affinity!

- Capacity and propensity are both important …
- But affinity is the key missing piece.
- Affinity is how much a buyer wants to buy from *you.*



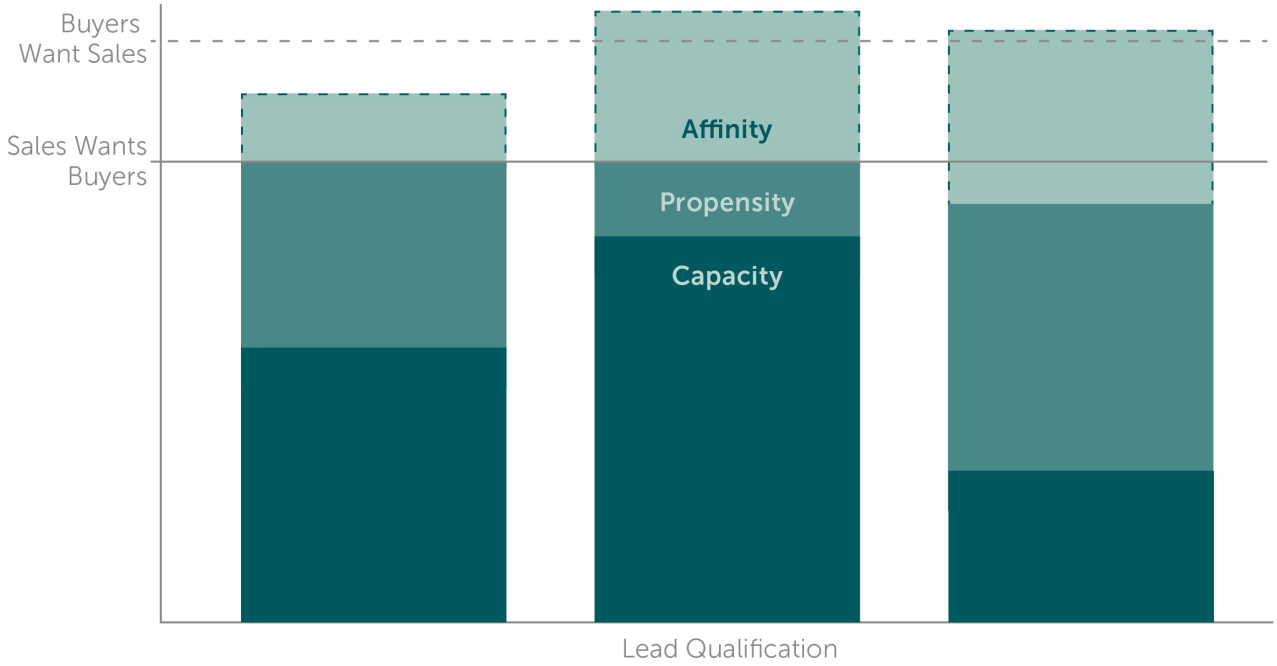
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Capacity + propensity + affinity = Sales-ready buyers

Don’t just align sales and marketing.

Align sales and marketing with your buyers!



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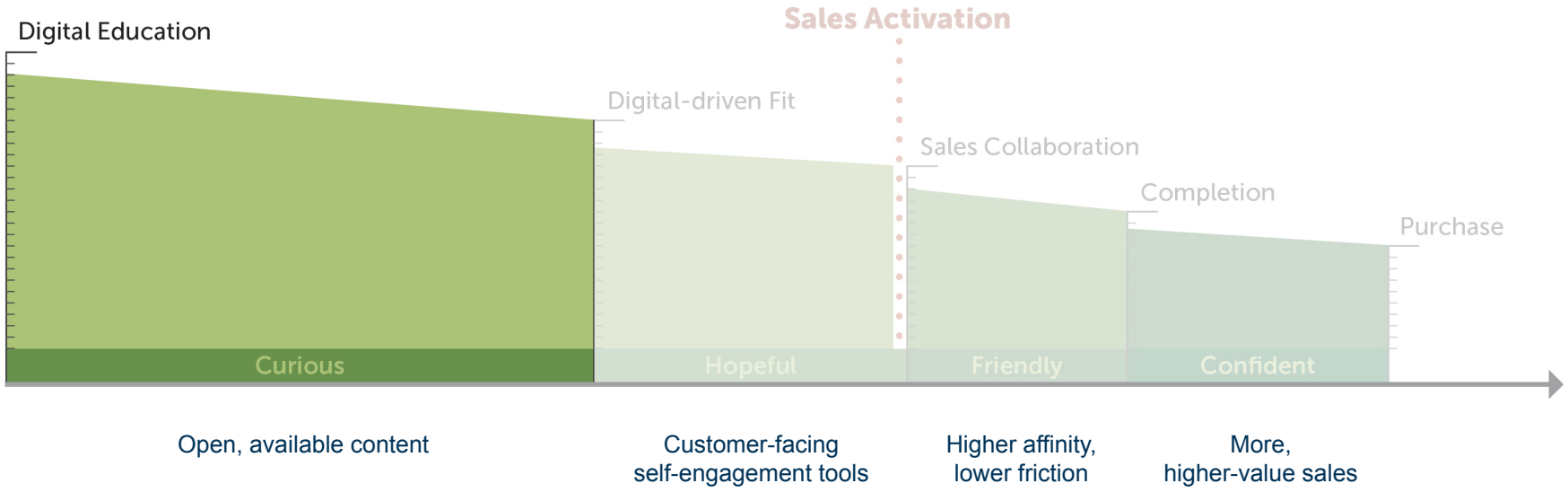
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Now, let’s look at what adding affinity does to your funnel.

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Buyers still start out with digital education

But content is open, available and easy to find.

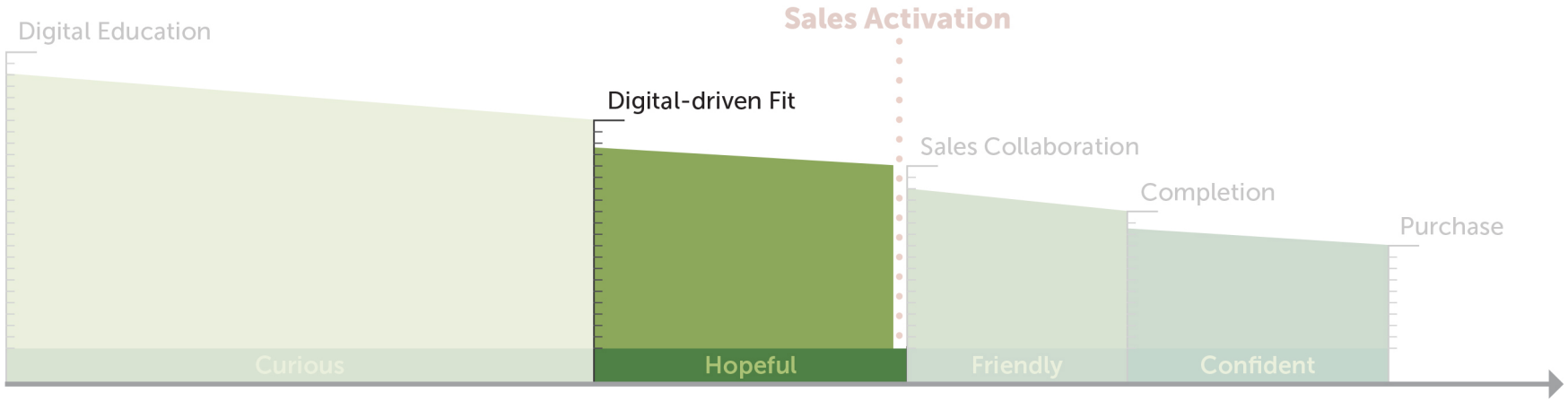


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Fit is established digitally

Marketing provides digital tools that get buyers excited and informed about your solution.

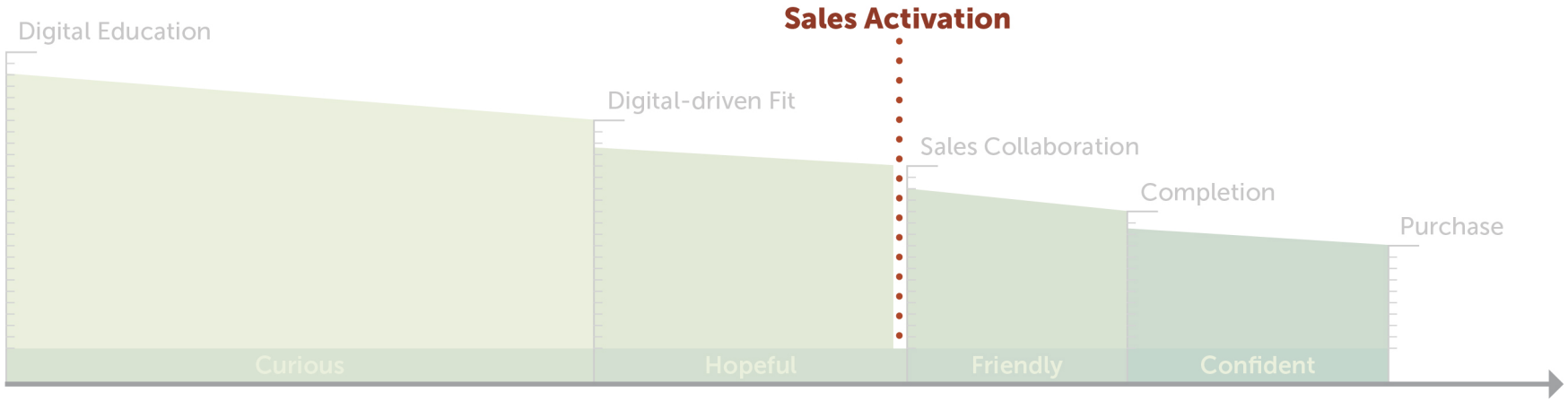


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Now it’s time for sales activation!

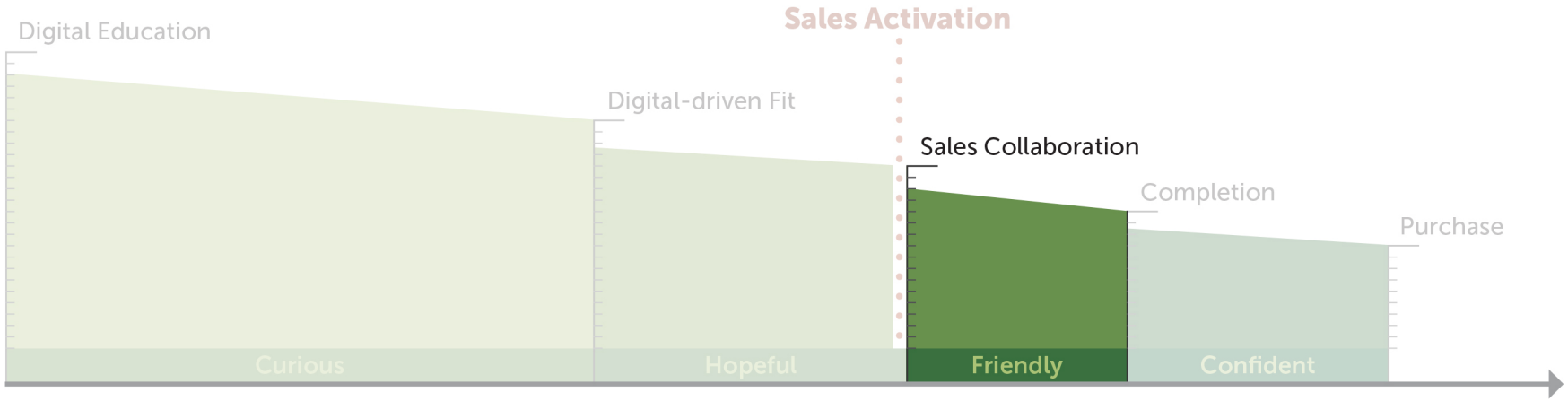
It’s further down the funnel, but because you’ve already built affinity, there’s no friction. In fact …



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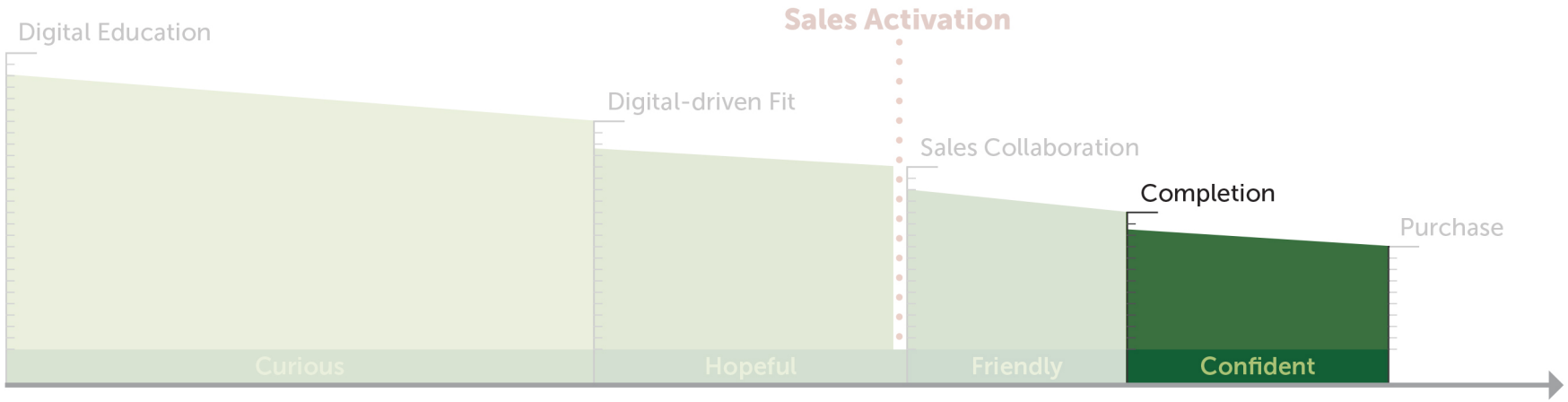
There’s hope and excitement!



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Plus … more confident, closed leads



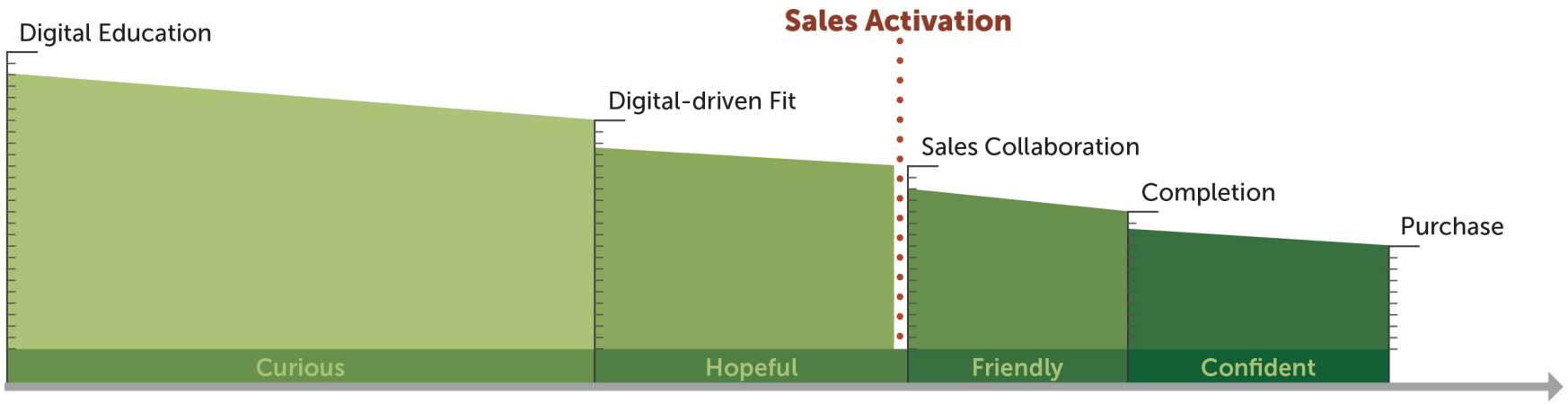
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We know delaying sales activation feels counterintuitive …

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But it makes a huge difference!

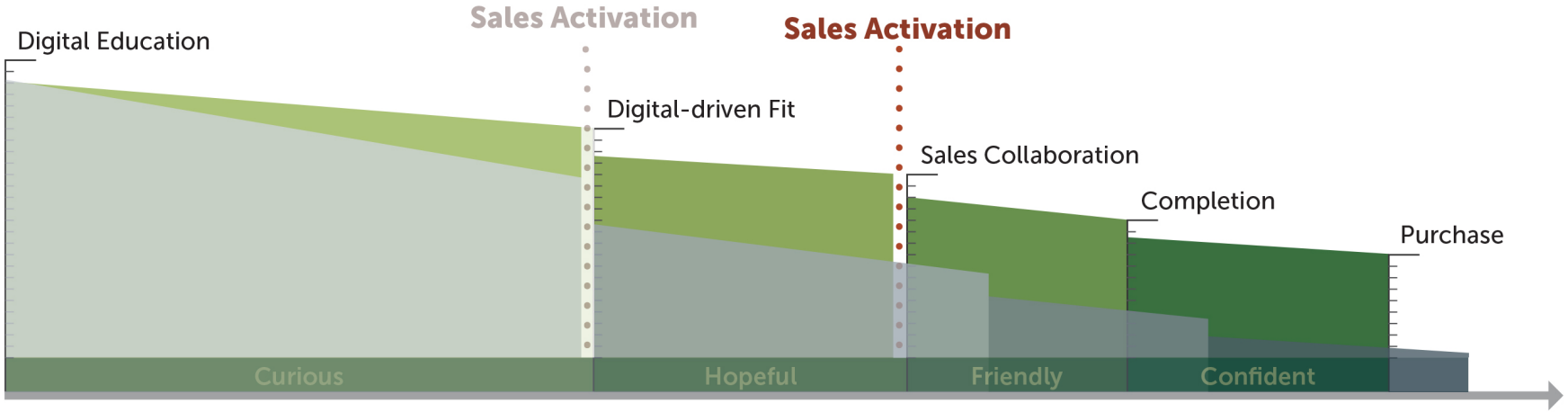


Buyer-controlled

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But it makes a huge difference!



Buyer-controlled
(vs. Sales-controlled)

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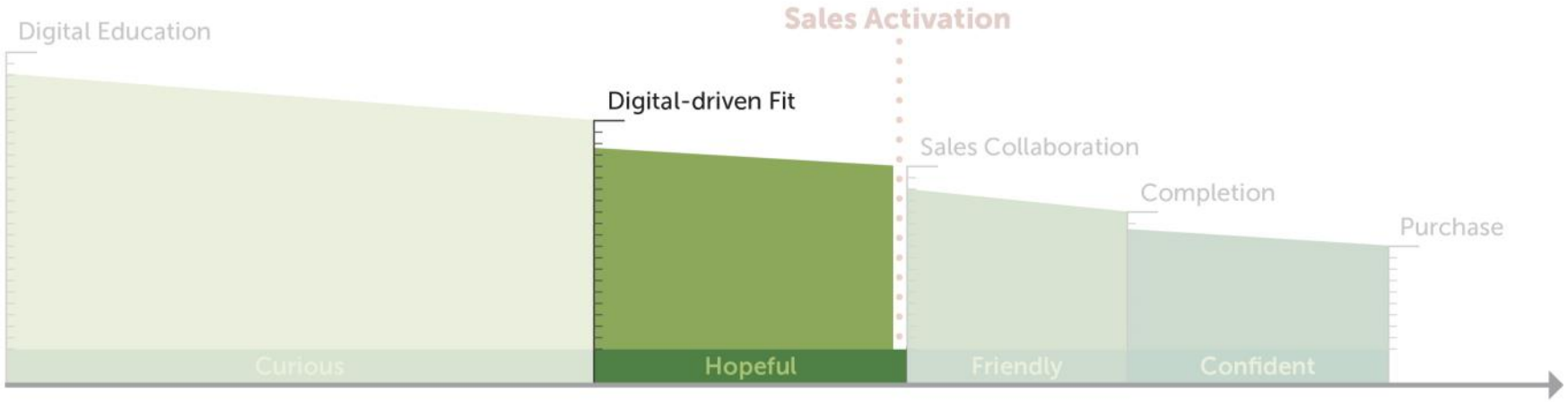
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More confident closed leads in less time? Who doesn't want that?

But what should you do to make it happen?

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It’s all about establishing digital-driven fit



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Usually, sales drives fit

- Sales is highly interactive.
- They explore the buyer's situation, and use their product knowledge to give expert advice.
- But … they can only reach so many people.



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Marketing is better at scale

- Marketing is great at reaching many people at once.
- They can segment their messaging …
- But getting truly personalized is harder.



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What if you could get the best of both worlds?

The interactivity of sales, plus the reach of marketing?

You can — with digital engagement tools that better meet buyers' needs.

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Digital engagement tools should:

- Listen to buyers' needs
- Ask follow-up questions
- Demonstrate comprehension
- Reduce complexity
- Deliver insight on fit



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Sounds like a really great sales conversation, right?

It should.

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But what kinds of tools can behave like a salesperson?

Let's look at a few categories of digital tools …

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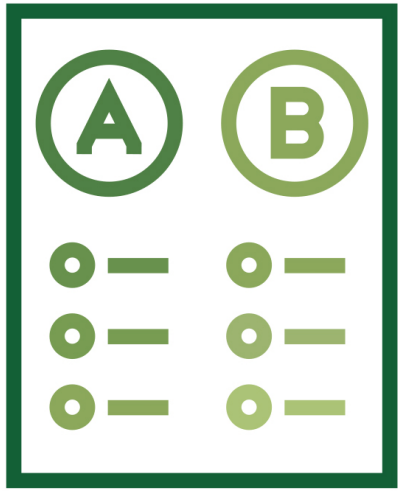
Simulations



Give buyers a tangible sense of what your solution can do — instead of a list of features and benefits.

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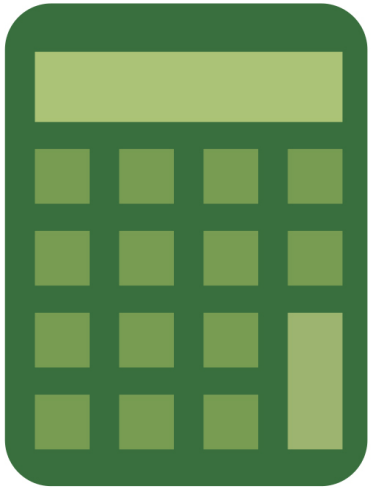
Assessments



Ask buyers questions to identify challenges and demonstrate the need for a solution.

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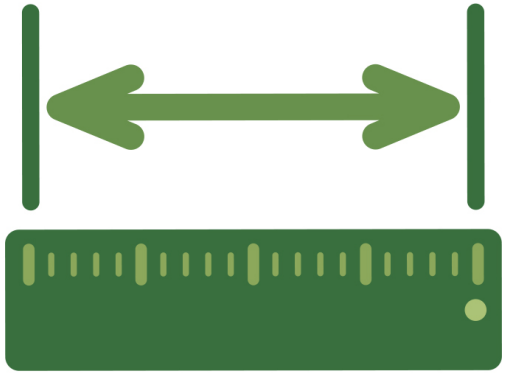
ROI calculators



Help buyers see how investing in your solution will pay off, and prove you're worth the money.

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Product configuration



Let buyers identify the exact product that meets their needs, and get a ballpark cost estimate.

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e-Commerce



If it’s possible for your business,
let buyers make purchases online!

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Gamification



Let buyers measure their success with your product — and make them more likely to buy from you again.

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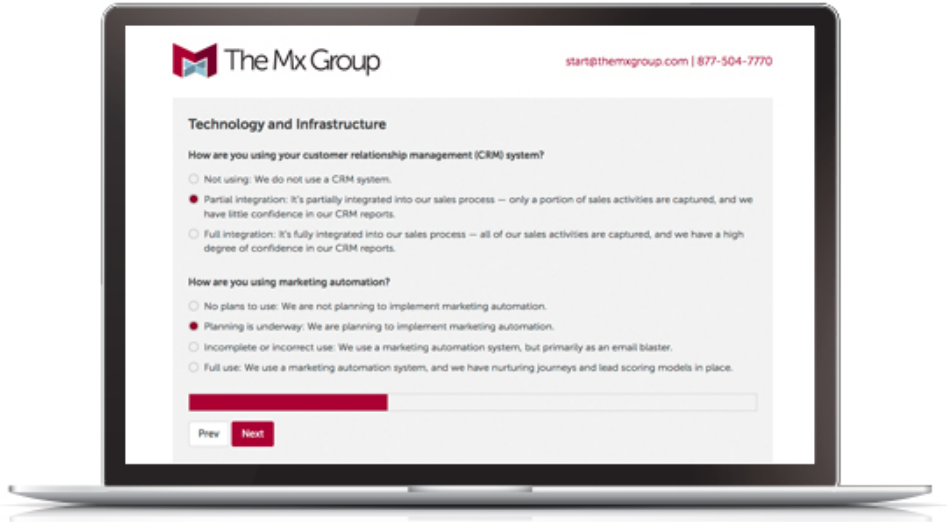
Great!

Now let’s look at some real-life examples.

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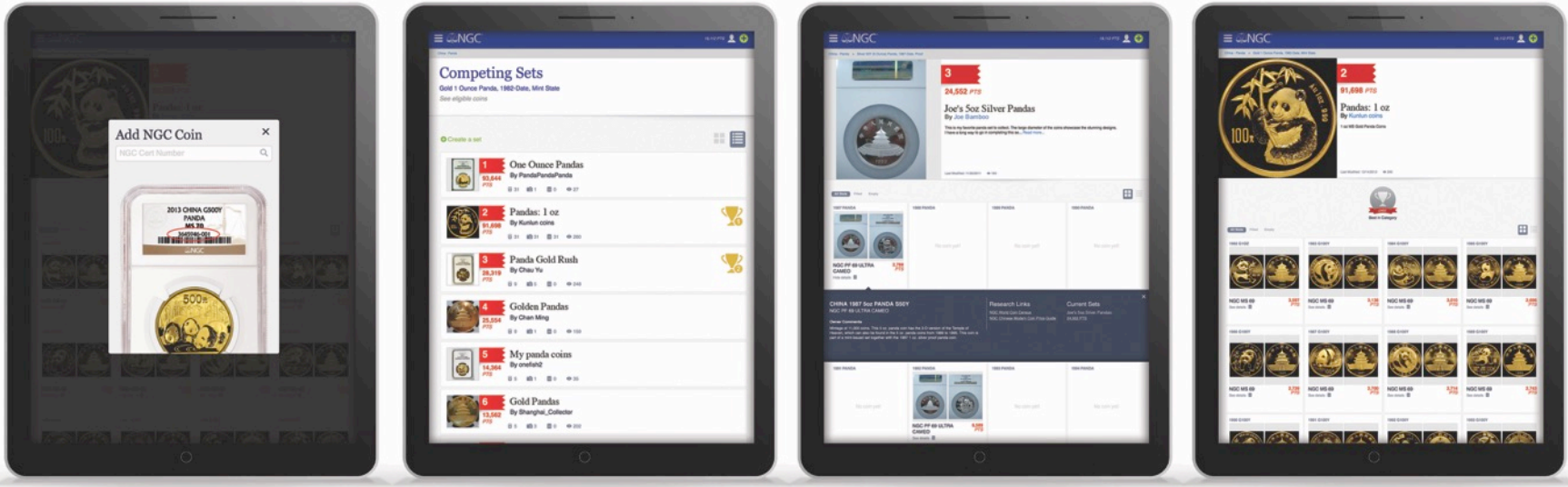
Example 1: The Mx Group's Modern Marketing Assessment

It assesses your marketing operations, identifies challenges, and suggests areas for improvement — all online.



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Example 2: Gamification with the NGC® Registry



By gamifying coin collecting, customers are far more likely to use NGC® grading services again and again.

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So, to review …

1. Digital transformation lets marketers overcome their biggest lead quality and conversion challenges.

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2. Digital transformation isn’t one-size-fits-all. It’s as unique as your business.

3. Delaying sales activation and extending digital engagement lets you close more sales faster.

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4. Digital tools can build affinity and get more customers ready to buy.

5. Digital transformation improves conversion rates and revenue growth.

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So … what are you waiting for?

Get out there and make it happen!

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Let's continue the conversation!

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