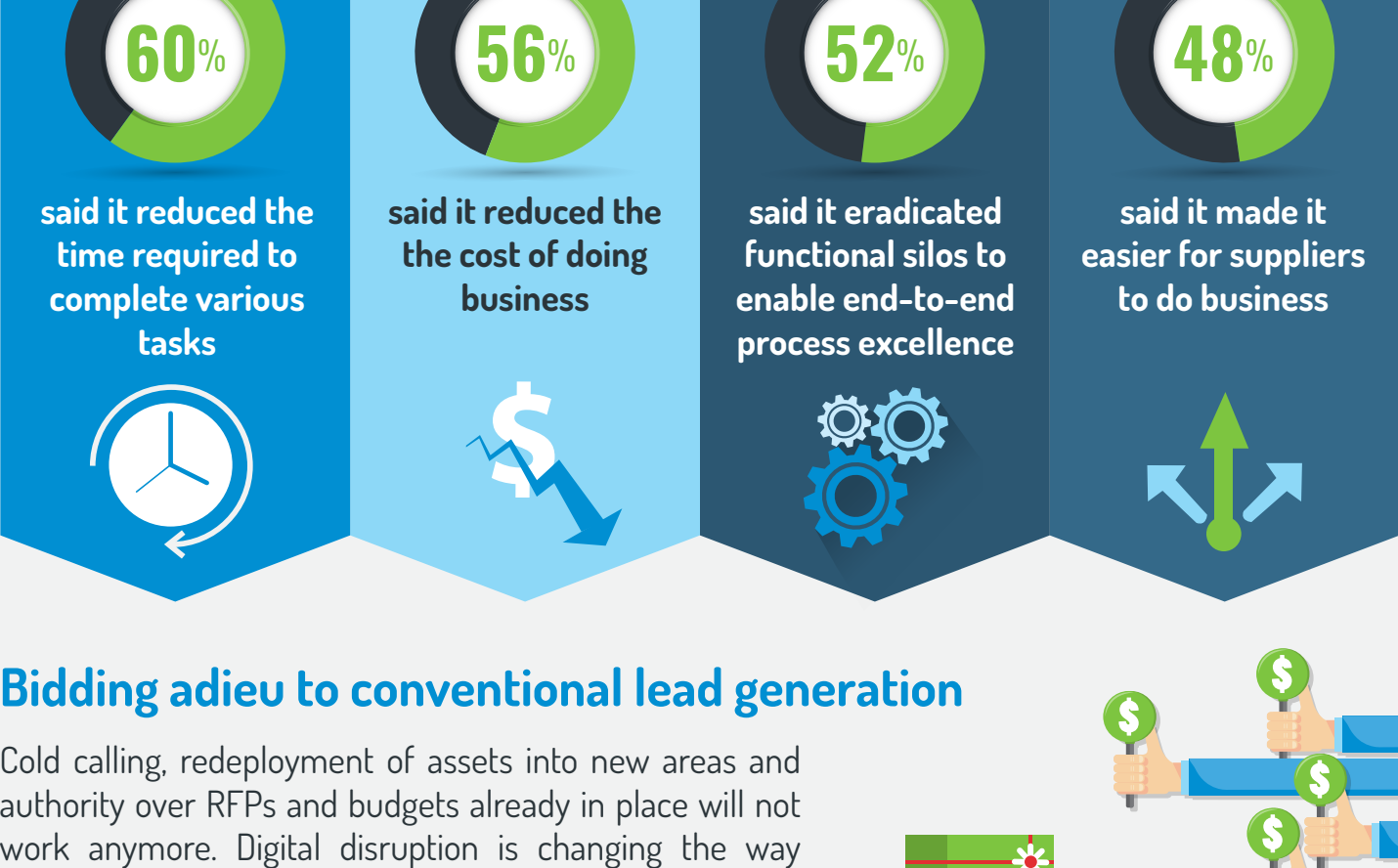


HOW WILL DIGITAL DISRUPTION AFFECT THE SELLING PROCESS?



In today's on-demand and digital world, companies are no longer selling just products or services; it is all about delivering on brand promises, which requires a focus on experiences and outcomes. According to a recent study by Oxford Economics in which over 360 C-level executives were asked **why are firms investing in digital technology**, the responses were:



Bidding adieu to conventional lead generation

Cold calling, redeployment of assets into new areas and authority over RFPs and budgets already in place will not work anymore. Digital disruption is changing the way companies are looking at generating leads, which involves focusing on problem narratives rather than product narratives to engage customers and have conversations.



Instead of calling potential prospects, companies will have to enable referrals by re-segmenting the customer base and optimizing promotional spending across traditional and emerging channels; quantifying customer lifetime value and acquisition costs across various media in particular.

Driving product & process innovation to boost sales

Equipping sales personnel with the right information, tools and content to help them sell more effectively and successfully engage the buyer throughout the buying process in sales cycles is the foundation of sales enablement. Today, sales enablement programs have evolved to meet the demands and requirements of a broader corporate strategy that is embedded in multiple departments with a singular driving force: to achieve revenue initiatives by harnessing the resources and knowledge of the collective enterprise to support sellers.

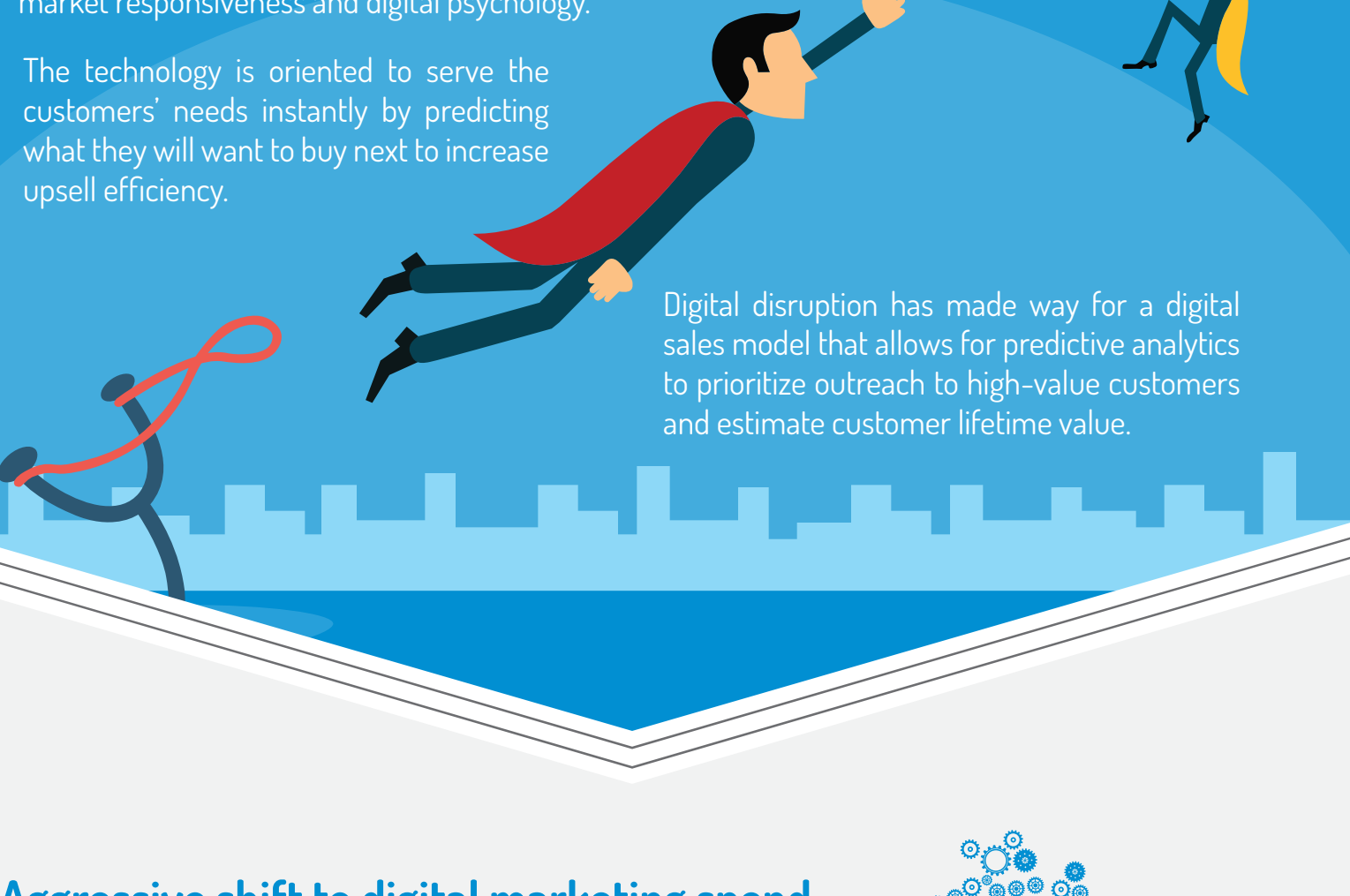


Agility in business operations and sales processes

Digital technology is poised to disrupt not only how B2B or B2C companies do business but also how they win customers. Delivering a service using agile mobile technology applications involves a combination of change management, customer and market responsiveness and digital psychology.

The technology is oriented to serve the customers' needs instantly by predicting what they will want to buy next to increase upsell efficiency.

Digital disruption has made way for a digital sales model that allows for predictive analytics to prioritize outreach to high-value customers and estimate customer lifetime value.



Aggressive shift to digital marketing spend

New customer acquisition spend is shifting to allocating resources that focus on highly segmented digital acquisition marketing. Optimizing digital marketing based on funnel conversion performance has resulted in revenue improvement from 5 to 15 percent. Companies can identify the best prospects at the micro segment level by analysing customer needs based on conversion rates, industries, geographies, search terms, etc.



Omni channel strategies that include the roles of online, mobile, social and brick-and-mortar in the purchasing pathway will have to be defined. Investing in digital infrastructure, including the ability to draw insights from 'big data' will further shape and change selling processes.



Using the product as a sales tool

Trial versions of products allow customers to test the value proposition and companies can use analytics to determine whether they will continue as free users, convert without additional input or with targeted sales attention.

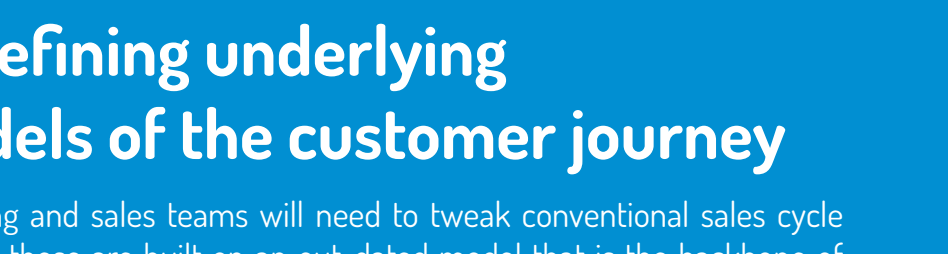
Organisations that do this well can convert as much as 30% of free trials with little to no additional sales spend. They can also customize the user experience with messaging, offers, pathways, personalized landing pages, etc. Sales teams will have to be trained to pitch pricing-per-customer models such as loyalty-based "subscribe and save" programs effectively.



Getting sales teams up to speed quickly

Businesses have started focusing on hiring judiciously and relying increasingly on insider expertise to boost sales training capability and get their field teams ready for the task. Sales processes are being redefined to incorporate the issues and language of the target industry. The tricky part is digital disruption manifests itself in ways unique to each industry as it unfolds on industry-by-industry basis.

Companies will have to define the role of their brand websites and mobile applications in the purchasing process to rework marketing strategies and assist their sales teams with leveraging new and mobile buying segments successfully.



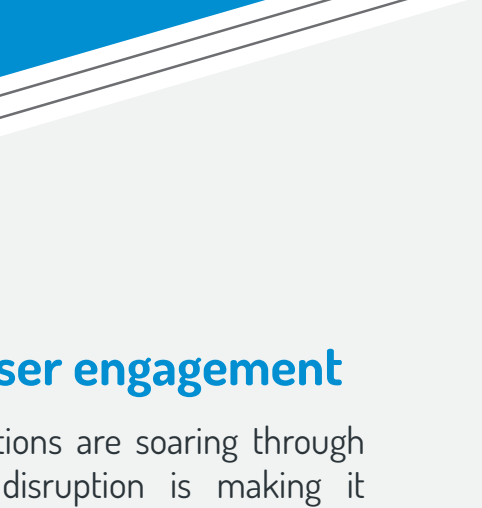
Redefining underlying models of the customer journey

Marketing and sales teams will need to tweak conventional sales cycle maps as these are built on an out-dated model that is the backbone of workflows through any CRM system. With digital disruption, the customer journey is taking a very different route, which necessitates that the sales workforce works with their counterparts to map out the new journey and align their sales cycles and CRM systems to it. For products, large enterprise customers can now research, test, and pay for products with minimal sales touches and without stepping away from their PC.



Increased focus on relationship marketing

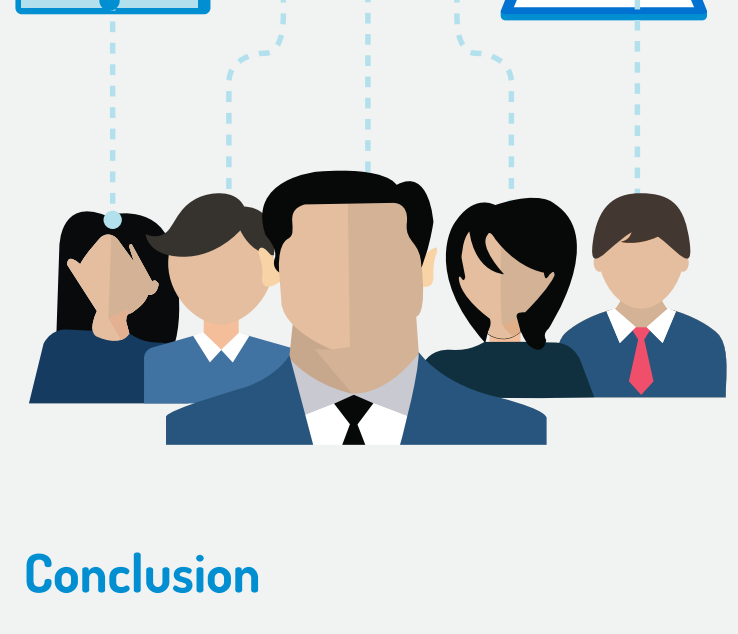
Sales personnel need to embrace relationship marketing by monitoring personal information, industry developments and workflow status in real time. This is fundamental, so that they can bring issues and key issues to the attention of the organisation in a timely manner. Digital disruption is revolutionising the way businesses and industries are forming new relationships. Establishing effective cross-channel assortment and pricing mechanisms and optimizing the use of the 3 Cs (commerce, content, community) across channels to drive traffic and provide consumers with the right information at the right time are integral to sales process now.



Enhancing user engagement

Customer expectations are soaring through the roof. Digital disruption is making it possible for technology for sales professionals to practically read the minds of their customers and leverage this data to create hyper-personal functionality and content when and where they need it.

It is truly the age of the customer, and with them demanding that all brands that they do business with deliver services that are tailored to their specific needs and requirements, adopting advanced technology to fuel sales channels has become critical.



Conclusion

Digital-enabled enterprise sales, a direct result of digital disruption that more closely resembles B2C ecommerce models, is helping companies double their revenue growth and improve their sales efficiency by 30 percent compared to those using a traditional, enterprise sales model. Prioritizing emerging channels such as ecommerce, e-retailing, and online marketplaces as a part of revisiting channel strategy are influencing sales processes.

