

UNCOVERING URGENCY

Why 'Creating Urgency' Is Bullsh*t



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How many times has one of your leaders said “Have you created urgency?!”

I bet a LOT of you have asked for tangible examples on how to do that, and not gotten many back either.

Let's be real: almost all examples of creating urgency in the B2B sale are BULLSHIT.

It's easy to create urgency in B2C through discounts, promotions, limited editions, pricing, and other factors – and it's effective because one buyer controls the entire process.

In a B2B sale, those discounts, timelines and false “urgency” levers will often blow up in your face, and cost you time and trust with your customer over a longer, more complicated sales cycle.

WHY?

So what is urgency in B2B?

We've heard the phrase “time kills all deals.” Why is it true?

Because pain is an emotion, and all emotions will fade over time unless validated/reinforced.

Urgency is an emotion. It's as susceptible to the same peaks and valleys as all others.



Now add the complexity of a B2B sale. Large buying committees, multiple decision makers. Every one of those stakeholders has emotions, and those emotions are not the same across the board.

So the next logical question: “Why don’t I just create urgency in the remaining stakeholders?”

You can, but ultimately you’re in the same predicament. The emotion will fade over time.

In most B2B sales, urgency will not drive a buying decision tomorrow. Managing that emotional high for multiple stakeholders over a period of time is incredibly complex, BUT it can be done.

HOW?

A surefire way to utilize urgency is to:

- 1) Identify the business problem and validate its impact by a business case or need that will drive the sales process.**
- 2) Revalidate the problem and impact at every stage over the cycle.**
- 3) Tie those efforts to decision makers and large scale problems, needs, or goals.**

And this is why I say creating urgency is bullshit. Because you cannot manufacture a compelling business case as easily as you can trigger an emotion.



PRACTICAL APPLICATION?

To provide a practical example of how, I've split urgency into two categories that are distinctly different from each other:

1) Creating Urgency – triggering emotions by bringing a new problem or capability to an unknowing business, or highlighting a problem that exists.

Introducing a new market trend, category, capability or value that is going previously unrecognized, or calling out common persona and industry-specific problems that buyers face.

2) Uncovering Urgency – discovering the business case/need that validates emotional urgency, which creates a viable pathway to solving a business problem and completing a sale.

Specifically, uncovering needed ROI/COI, executive sponsorship & goals, missed opportunities and capabilities as a result of the previous identified business problems.

EXAMPLE:

Let's look at the recent buzz about ChatGPT, and everyone trying to adopt generative AI overnight.

1) PROSPECT: "Brian, we are struggling to write marketing content at scale. Have any ideas?"



ME: “This is a common customer complaint. We have an AI platform that can write all of this for you in seconds, requiring only few inputs from your team.

How would that solve your issue?”

PROSPECT: “We’ve heard of AI and don’t want to miss out. Our CMO talks about it all the time. Sounds amazing! Can you show us a demo?”

ME: Sure, happy to walk you through all of that on Tuesday.



#1 ANALYSIS

- We don't uncover urgency when we hear their emotional high talking about AI, and the mention of the CMO.
- We book a generic demo without asking about specific problems.

So the question is do you think their urgency will be the same on Tuesday for that demo? What exactly are we showing them? How will it tie to solving a larger problem?

This demo will be run-of-the-mill, not customized, and rely on wishing and hoping their team will advance us to power. And the odds of that are not great. We all know these opportunities die on the vine.

2) PROSPECT: "Brian, we are struggling to write marketing content at scale. Have any ideas?"

ME: "The market is ripe with content writers. Why not hire more?"

PROSPECT: "We don't have the budget to invest hundreds of thousands into hiring more writers. Also we have all struggled internally to optimize our content language with popular keywords – we're stuck and need a solution."

ME: "What effect are those two issues having on your team's content marketing goals?"



PROSPECT: “We’re not hitting our goals! We’re unable to deliver the amount of quality content pieces required of us each quarter. As a result, lead conversions are down, pipeline is down, and the new CMO is asking why.”

ME: “That’s terrible! But sounds like the CMO has put 2 + 2 together that AI may be a potential solution, is that why he’s talking about it?”

PROSPECT: “I think so, he tasked us with looking at some options to bring to him to fulfill both.”

ME: “I can see why, this sounds like an issue that rolls all the way up to the company’s most important priority – revenue. We have an AI platform that can write 99% of your content, incorporating only a few inputs from your team. It costs a 1/5th of what hiring a content writer would cost, and is deployable in 24 hours. Interested in seeing how it works?”

PROSPECT: “Sounds amazing! Can you show us a demo focused on incorporating keywords and also the time it takes for us to manage it?”

ME: I’d be happy too – and from what it sounds like, your CMO would want to see this too. Most of our customers bring theirs in at this stage for the very same reasons, and then the CMOs can give their blessing to a further evaluation if we can solve your problems.

PROSPECT: “Yes, absolutely, he will need to sign off on this, I will make sure he attends.”



#2 ANALYSIS

- When asked for ideas, we resisted the urge to pitch and provided an alternative solution.
- As a result, we uncover a problem by learning that an alternative is not financially viable AND doesn't provide a desired feature that solves another problem.
- We inquire about the urgency we are hearing from them and learn it's executive driven, tied to marketing performance. These are the beginnings of a business case...
- The suggestion to bring the CMO to the demo tests their urgency and commitment, will give us executive access, and elevate our problem solving and business case discussions to their level.
- Our demo is better prepared to focus on solving two problems and showcase the positive outcomes the prospect needs.

Example #2 uncovers urgency tied to a CMO priority, and aligns next steps to continue that discovery process and showcase how we can help in a specific way.





CONCLUSION

The next time you hear someone spouting off about creating urgency, challenge them to provide examples and/or show them this guide. Remember, to utilize urgency...

- 1) Dig in to identify the problem's impact**
- 2) Revalidate it always**
- 3) Align those efforts upwards to power/strategic goals**

If you can't accomplish that, it's probably not a top-of-mind problem, and no amount of discounting levers or free product is going to change that.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brian Wolff is a sales and customer success leader with 15 years of B2B sales and marketing experience.

As Founder & CEO of The Wolff Den, he's passionate about making himself and fellow revenue professionals more skilled, confident and successful in their roles.

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