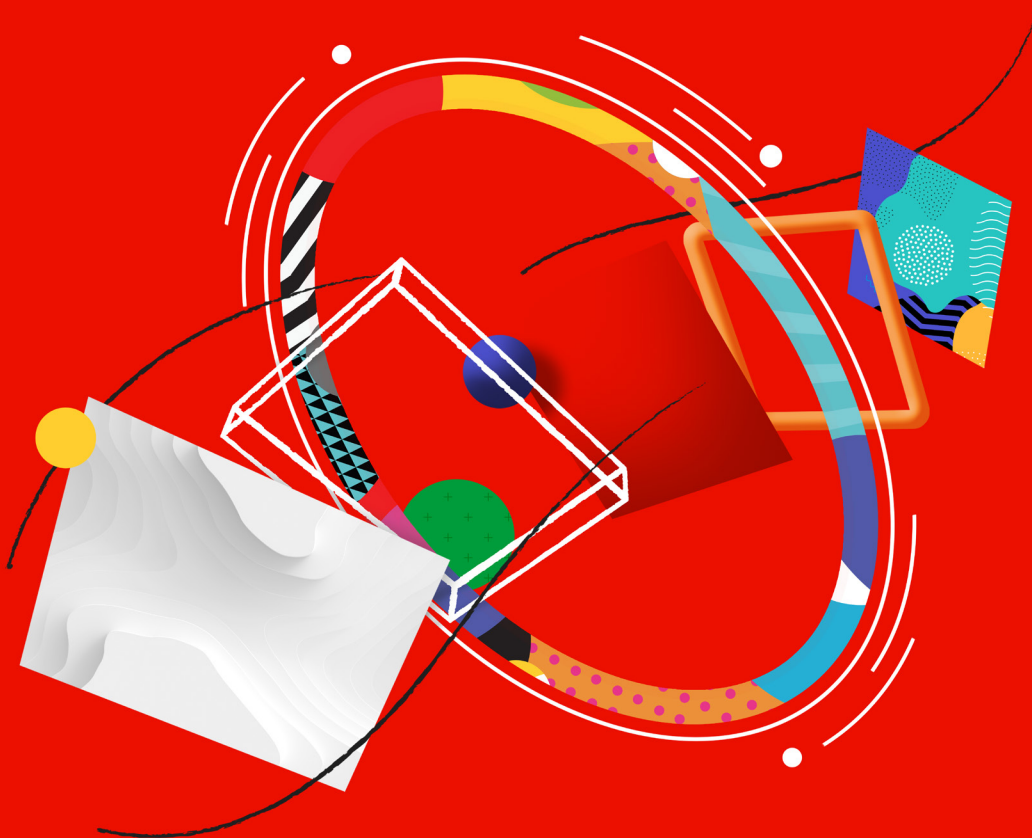




B2B COMMERCE

# Getting to "yes" with content-powered commerce

Five tips for creating a content-powered commerce experience that helps B2B buyers make faster, more confident decisions.





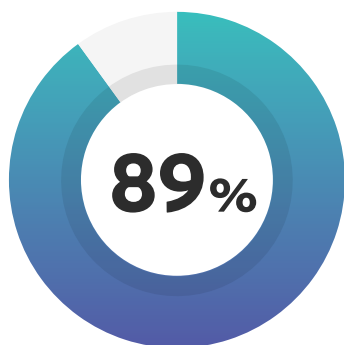
## Content is more important to B2B sales than ever

Fifty-nine percent of B2B buyers now prefer to research online instead of talking with a sales rep.<sup>1</sup> And the typical B2B purchase decision is 57 percent complete before a customer ever contacts a sales rep.<sup>2</sup> That's why B2B organizations have embraced content marketing. Some have adopted a hyper competitive approach to get ahead—rushing to build more content than the competition.

But too much content can backfire. B2B buyers can be overwhelmed by too much information. At the same time, more than half of all B2B purchases are made by committees composed of multiple stakeholders who have various distinct interests. What does this mean for your content strategy? Your B2B e-commerce site must get the right content in the right amount to the right people. In other words, you need content-powered commerce.

**This guide outlines five tips for delivering content-powered commerce that make it easier for B2B buyers to find the right content and make better buying decisions.**

### How content makes the sale



of B2B buyers say their winning vendors “provided content that made it easier to show ROI and/or build a business case for the purchase.”<sup>3</sup>

# 1. Define your buyers' customer journey and key personas

Before you develop your content plan, you need to know how your customers shop and who they are. This means defining their customer journey and key personas.

If your product is simple or consumable, like janitorial supplies, your buyers' customer journey may be straightforward and involve only a few personas. You may also make almost all sales online.

If your product is costlier and more complex, has multiple configurations, or involves co-development, the customer journey may include more steps and more stakeholders. You may also sell some products online and others through a more traditional offline sales process—or maybe each of your larger customers buys through a secure and highly-customized e-commerce portal. The more complex the customer journey is, the greater your opportunity to use content as a way to answer questions and clarify next steps.

## Ask these questions:

If you aren't entirely certain what your buyers' customer journey looks like and where the right content could reduce friction, you may want to interview sales reps and customers, asking:

- **Who** is involved at each step of the purchase (procurement, IT, etc.)?
- **What** do you want to happen at each step? What kind of action should be taken?
- **Where** do sales typically get stuck?
- **What** kind of information is missing or hard to find?

**Know how your customers shop and who they are. Use content to answer their questions and clarify next steps.**

## 2. Make content an integral part of the commerce experience

Content should be a part of your entire commerce experience, from beginning to end. It should answer buyers' questions, reduce uncertainty, and eliminate obstacles to purchase. Once you have defined your personas and understand what your sales cycle looks like, you can begin to identify content that can accomplish these goals at each stage of the customer journey.

Most B2B product searches begin with Google, which means your commerce experience actually begins before buyers click through to your site. To engage B2B buyers at an early research stage, it's critical to make sure your content and product SKUs are seen by Google and ranked as highly as possible. At a minimum, you'll need to understand what search terms your customers are using and integrate those terms into your content in meaningful ways.

A search engine optimization (SEO) provider can help increase the visibility of your content in search engines. Or you can simply focus on creating in-depth, useful content for your niche. Google no longer ranks content on how many keywords are crammed into a single article. Instead, today's algorithms focus on surfacing comprehensive and authoritative content that humans—not bots—will want to read. In addition, Google ranks faster-loading, mobile-friendly sites higher. If your e-commerce site doesn't play nicely with mobile, you may need a redesign before you invest in more content.

**Content should answer buyers' questions, reduce uncertainty, and eliminate obstacles.**

### Dig a little deeper

Later in the customer journey, buyers spend less time on Google and more time on your site doing directed research. You can use content strategically to help them find what they need faster.



## When buyers are actively interested in your product, they look for these specific types of content:

**Demonstrations:** Buyers want to see how your product works, whether it's an advanced medical device or a standing desk. Videos of the product in a "real-world" environment, how-to-use-it content, and instructions for scheduling an in-person demo can all be of immediate use to buyers.

**Product specifications:** Buyers need to know if your product is an exact fit for their requirements, and they need to know it sooner rather than later. Detailed, easily searchable product specifications can save customers time by helping them rule certain products out or in.

**Pricing:** Many B2B companies treat pricing as a competitive secret, but this approach often backfires. If you make it difficult for buyers to find pricing for your products, they may assume you're too expensive. Or they may spend time researching options that don't mesh with their budget. Including product pricing on your website—or a calculator that provides non-binding estimates—can help reduce buyer frustration and move sales forward.

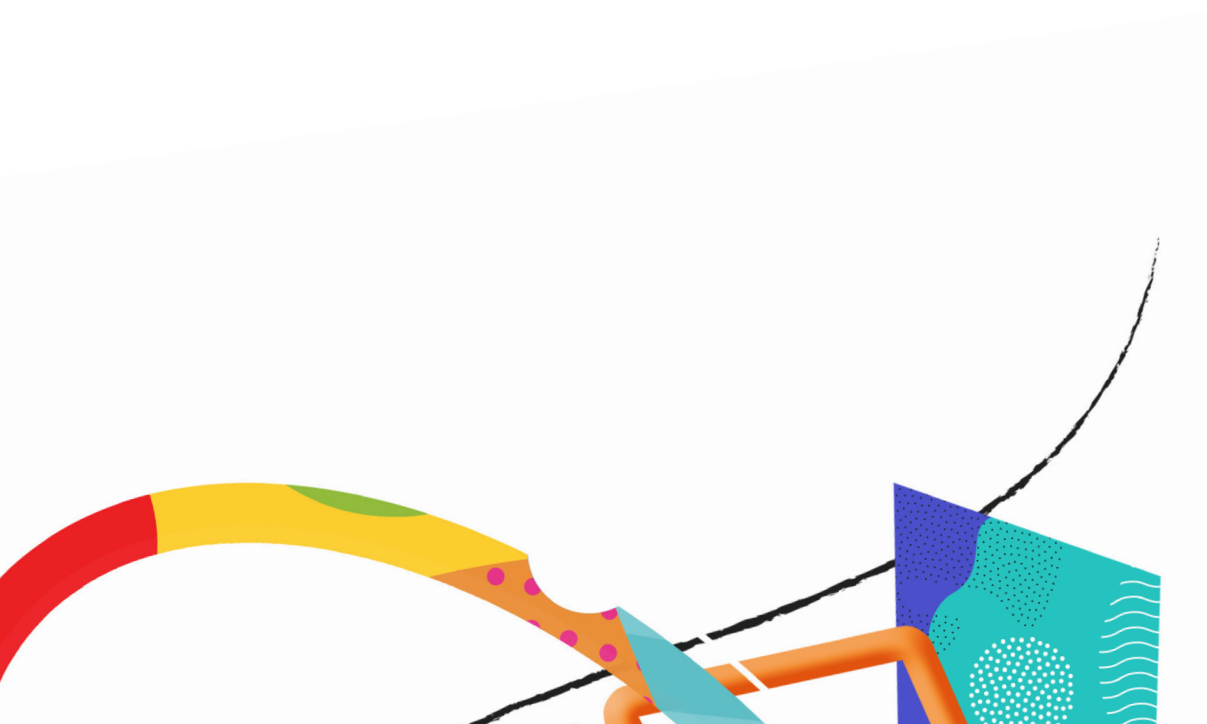
**Inventory:** Buyers need to know if your product is available now. And if it isn't, they need to know when it will be. Ideally, this information should appear up front with basic product information rather than in an error message that appears only when your customer tries to buy something that's out of stock or is not yet released.

**Find a salesperson:** Some buyers have questions your website just can't answer. When that happens, they need to be able to contact a salesperson fast. Online chat can help in these situations. So can a contact form with a guaranteed response time, or even a plain old phone number.



# Content powers commerce at each stage in the customer journey

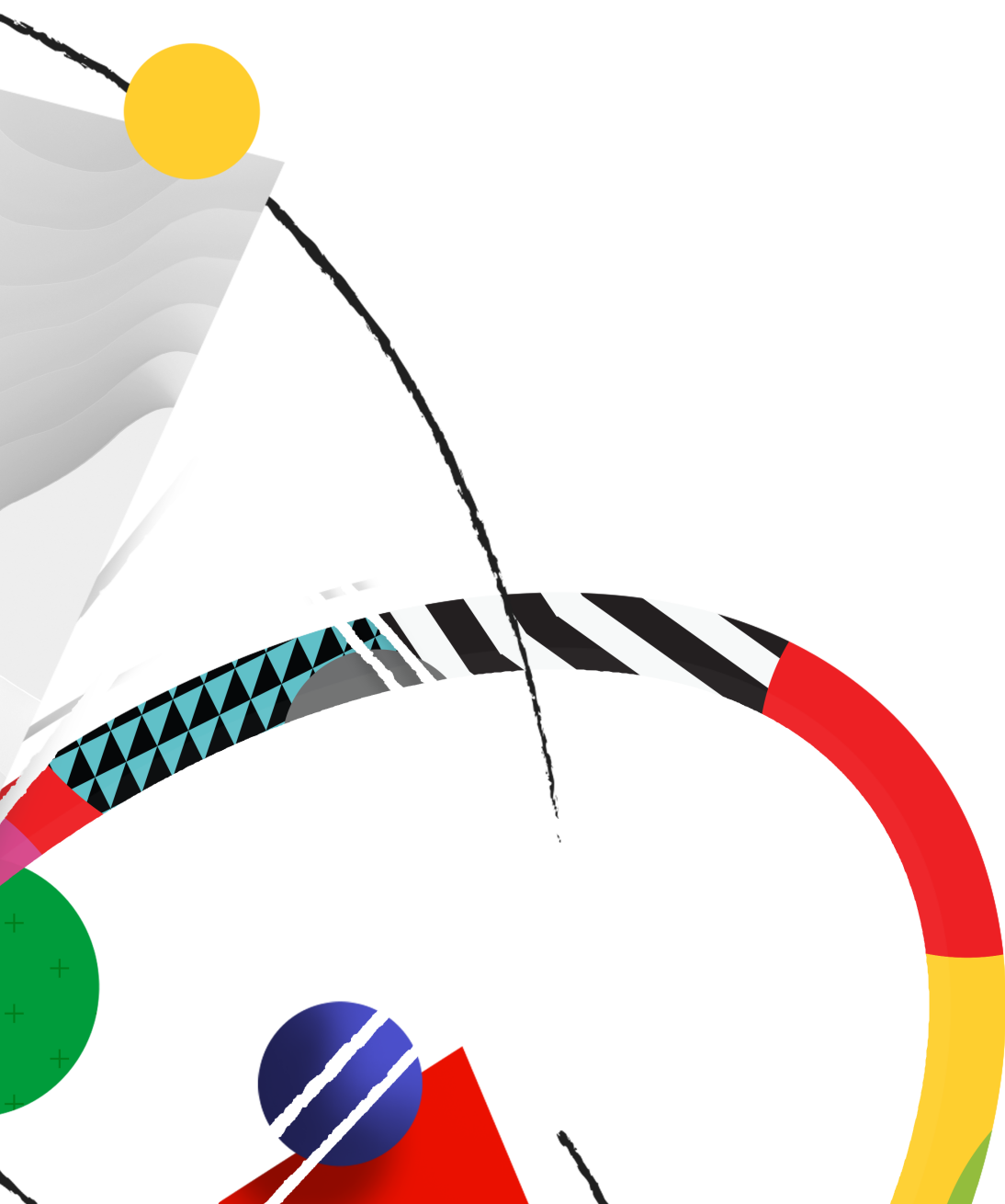
Stage of the customer journey	Customer goal	Content options
Research	Become familiar with a product category and get to know leading providers	SEO-friendly content such as best-practices blog posts, rich product descriptions, product reviews, and “explainer” videos
Interest	Evaluate leading products and make a short list	Informative content such as general pricing, customer testimonials, product videos and imagery, and product specifications
Consideration	Decide between two or three products and make a purchase	Decision-oriented content such as binding price quotes, ROI projections, technical specifications, risk and compliance documentation, etc.
Existing customer	Get help using products and placing new orders	Helpful resources such as user guides, technical manuals, parts diagrams, maintenance schedules, and account details



### 3. Let buyers choose their own path

Matching buyers to the right content can make the purchase experience feel more personalized and relevant. One easy way to connect buyers with the right content is to simply ask who they are. For example, buyers might choose their title or function from a short menu the first time they visit your site. Or you can use AI-based personalization tools like Adobe Target to deliver a custom experience based on how visitors interact with your site.

You can also encourage buyers to set up a customer account so they can receive a more tailored experience and log in for quick access to saved content, price quotes, and order histories. User accounts also let you send emails with personalized content and special offers.



# Case study: Ergodyne

## From confusion to content-powered commerce at Ergodyne

**Ergodyne harnesses the power of content to deliver a better e-commerce experience and make more sales.**

Based in Saint Paul, Minnesota, Ergodyne is a pioneer in the development of workplace safety gear, with a company mission of reducing jobsite injuries to zero. But Ergodyne is also a pioneer in content-powered commerce. The wildly successful B2B e-commerce experience the company created is both easy and engaging. Here's how they did it.

**Listen to customers:** Buyers told Ergodyne that their e-commerce experience was confusing—and they were right. Buyers had to navigate across three different sites to research, shop, or place orders for Ergodyne's Tenacious Work Gear® merchandise.

**Define customer types and needs:** Ergodyne worked with solution partner Echidna to conduct extensive user experience testing, which included user interviews. They quickly identified several distinct user types. Some distributors—not especially tech savvy—knew what they wanted and liked to order via desktop. Others wanted to learn about Ergodyne products on a mobile-friendly site. And everyone wanted an easy checkout experience.

**Design for flexibility:** Ergodyne redesigned their e-commerce experience to be equally usable on desktops and mobile devices.

**Keep content consistently excellent:** Ergodyne created a content plan to ensure content is consistently engaging across different user experiences. Users see detailed product information and resources, including enhanced images and videos. And the Tenacious branding is visible throughout the customer journey.

**Add user-generated content:** Ergodyne allowed Tenacious testers—loyal customers who test and review products—to post about their experiences and show off photos and videos, building credibility with potential buyers.

**Streamline product discovery and ordering:** Ergodyne made product discovery significantly faster. Instant search, sorting, filtering, faceting, and quick-view functionality help users compare Ergodyne's 15 different tool belts. Meanwhile, quick order forms, quote lists, and printable pages improve usability and make ordering a breeze. The end result? More page views on more devices—and higher sales.





## 4. Build your e-commerce content map

Once you have defined your buyers' customer journey and identified key personas and their needs, you can begin filling in your e-commerce content map. Your content map contains the different types of content and experiences for each key persona at each stage of the customer journey.

To learn more about creating content-powered e-commerce experiences, [visit our resource library](#).

Here is a content planning worksheet for a B2B e-commerce company with a simple sales cycle and three key personas:

Customer journey	Personas		
	Office manager	IT manager	Procurement
Research			
Interest			
Consideration			
Order			
Post-sale			

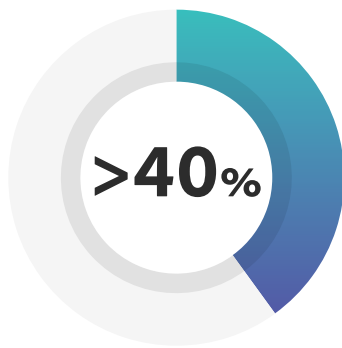


## 5. Don't forget the mobile experience

It's a myth that B2B buyers are only shopping on a desktop. Mobile-friendly content drives or influences, on average, over 40 percent of revenue in leading B2B organizations.<sup>4</sup> And that figure is likely to increase sharply as Google continues to surface mobile-friendly sites over older designs. As millennials research and buy B2B products in growing numbers, your mobile experience will become even more important.

An excellent B2B mobile experience should be highly personalized and content rich. It should also integrate phone functions like the camera and push notifications, and it should perform well even in low-connectivity environments.

To learn more about building content-powered commerce for mobile platforms, [visit our resource library](#).



of revenue in leading B2B organizations is influenced by mobile-friendly content drives or influences.<sup>4</sup>



# How Adobe Commerce delivers content-powered experiences

## Content-powered commerce goals

## Helpful Adobe Commerce features

Design a custom experience that stands out from competitors

Complete flexibility with access to code as well as themes and purpose-built extensions

Update content faster, create content for different personas and market segments, let users browse product recommendations and reviews

“No code” content creation and updates  
Segmentation and targeting tools that match customers with product recommendations and special offers  
Integration of user-generated product ratings and reviews

Create a high-quality mobile experience blending content, personalization, and interactivity on any device

Progressive Web Apps web pages that deliver a content-rich, app-quality experience even in low-connectivity environments

Deliver a true B2B experience

A wide range of B2B functionality out of the box, such as quick ordering, requisition lists, quoting, custom catalogs and price lists, company accounts, and more

**Adobe Commerce is a flexible platform that lets you design content-powered commerce experiences to drive B2B sales.**

## Key takeaways

**B2B buyers make decisions before even talking to a sales rep.** Quality content—and making sure people can find it—is more important than ever.

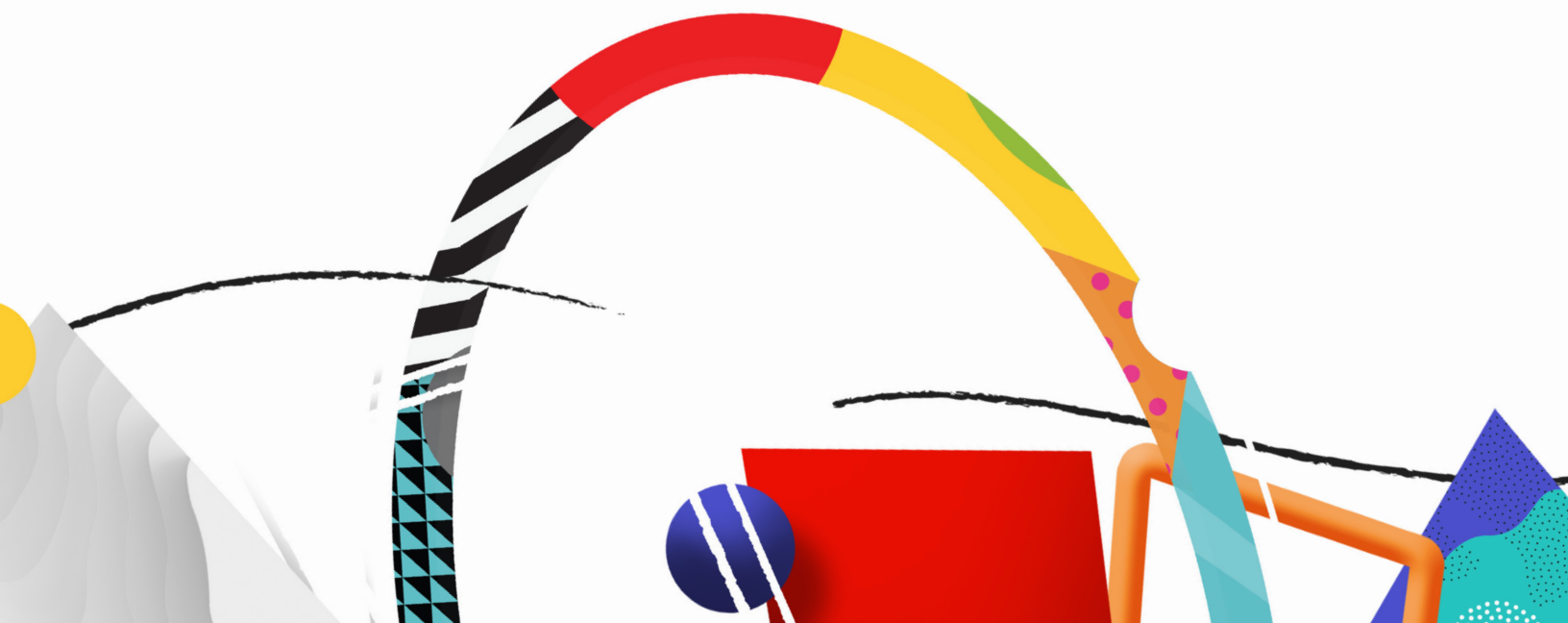
**More people are taking part in buying decisions.** Getting the right content to the right people on the right device can accelerate the sales cycle.

**Content-powered commerce can target** relevant content to each key B2B persona.

**To get started with content-powered commerce,** you need a well-defined customer journey and a flexible, content-friendly commerce platform.

# About Adobe Commerce

Adobe Commerce is the world's leading digital commerce platform. With Adobe Commerce, you can build engaging shopping experiences for every type of customer — from B2B and B2C to B2B2C. It's built for enterprise on a scalable, open-source platform with unparalleled security, premium performance, and a low total cost of ownership. Businesses of all sizes can use it to reach customers wherever they are, across devices and platforms, including marketplaces. It's more than a flexible shopping cart system. It's the building block for business growth.



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