

1	The EEE-World	1
1.1	Eagerness	3
1.1.1	Even the Earth is Spinning Faster	3
1.1.2	Technology as a Problem and Solution in One	6
1.1.3	The Culture of Hurry	6
1.2	Ease	8
1.2.1	Ease and Convenience as Drivers of Innovation	8
1.2.2	Convenience Fighting Against the Price	10
1.2.3	Efficiency and Time Saving in Everything We Do	12
1.3	Enthusiasm	13
1.3.1	Enthusiasm as a Driving Force of Progress	13
1.3.2	Enthusiasm Continuum	14
1.3.3	Hunting the Next New Thing	16
	References	17
2	The III-Human	19
2.1	Informed	20
2.1.1	Information Society—How did We Get Here?	21
2.1.2	The Ease of Information Consumption	22
2.1.3	Searching Skills Replace Memory Skills	24
2.1.4	Who Really Needs It All?	25
2.2	Independent	26
2.2.1	Authority Under Pressure	26
2.2.2	Independent and Self-Determined Thanks to the Internet	27
2.2.3	Personalities with Decision-Making Skills are in Demand	27
2.2.4	Self-Determination and Flexibility — Important Trends in the Work Environment	28
2.3	Individualistic	29
2.3.1	The Globalization of the Individualism	29
2.3.2	Individualism as a Core Driver of the Economy	30

2.3.3	Individualism - A Source of Money.....	32
2.3.4	The Individualization of the Entertainment.....	33
	References.....	34
3	The Modern Customer—The PHANTOM.....	35
3.1	Pseudo-informed.....	39
3.1.1	More Information with More Choice.....	40
3.1.2	Research Phase Becomes the most Important Part of the Buying Process.....	40
3.1.3	Highly Informed Customers.....	41
3.2	Hyper- convenient.....	43
3.2.1	Online or Offline: Convenience Wins.....	43
3.2.2	Personal Data in Exchange for a Better Buying Experience.....	44
3.2.3	Traditional Sales Processes Under Pressure.....	45
3.2.4	Sales Between Technology and Human.....	46
3.2.5	Fast, Urgent, Instantly.....	47
3.3	Autonomous.....	48
3.3.1	The Own Opinion Counts.....	48
3.3.2	Loss of Customer Trust.....	49
3.3.3	Self-Directed and Autonomous Procurement.....	50
3.3.4	The Dark Side of Autonomy.....	51
3.3.5	New Buying Tasks.....	52
3.4	Needs-oriented.....	53
3.4.1	Brutal, But True: They Don’t Care About “Us”.....	53
3.4.2	Tailor-Made From the Start.....	54
3.4.3	Needs and Benefit Filter in First Place.....	55
3.5	Tech-savvy.....	56
3.5.1	Technology in the Retail World.....	56
3.5.2	Technology Affinity Has Gone Mainstream.....	56
3.5.3	Always On.....	58
3.5.4	Loss of the Science Fiction Status.....	58
3.6	Opportunistic.....	59
3.6.1	Low Tolerance Levels.....	60
3.6.2	Brand Loyalty—An Outdated Concept?.....	60
3.6.3	The New Loyalty to Convenience.....	62
3.6.4	Traditional Purchasing Processes Now Obsolete.....	63
3.6.5	Is Loyalty Still Affordable?.....	64
3.7	Mutating-Mobile.....	64
3.7.1	Needs and Expectations Constantly in Motion.....	65
3.7.2	Buying Decisions On-The-Go.....	65
3.7.3	Connected and Networked.....	66

3.8	The PHANTOM—Fantasy or Reality?	66
3.8.1	The PHANTOM File—Taking of Evidence	67
3.8.2	Changing Perspectives	70
	References	72
4	KISS the PHANTOM—Grasping the Ungraspable	75
4.1	Know	85
4.1.1	The Inconvenient Truth About the Relevance of Salespeople.	85
4.1.2	The Ecosystem of A Customer Decision	86
4.1.3	Generational Mix: A Blend of Contradictions in Customer Expectations.	89
4.1.4	Rigid Target Group Profiles: Relics From the Past	90
4.2	Ignore	92
4.2.1	Intelligently (not) Getting Out of the Way	92
4.2.2	Trust: An Increasingly Rare Asset	93
4.2.3	The Ariadne’s Thread in the Digital Space	94
4.2.4	Ignoring, But Addressing Individual Needs.	95
4.3	Stimulate	98
4.3.1	Innovation Everywhere, Except in Sales	98
4.3.2	Who Wants To Be A Prey?	99
4.3.3	Shitstorms Lurking Around Every Corner	100
4.3.4	Customer Loyalty Values Instead of Customer Loyalty Measures	101
4.4	Sensibilize	102
4.4.1	Questioning Instead of Answering Questions	102
4.4.2	Provocation With Good Intentions.	103
4.4.3	Differentiation Through Customer-Oriented Content	106
4.4.4	It Doesn’t Always Have To Be a Salesperson	107
	References	108
5	The DECIDE Buying Decision Process	111
5.1	Discover	117
5.1.1	Demand Levels: From Clueless to Acute Need for Action	118
5.1.2	The Existence of a Problem Does Not Yet Imply a Need for Action	119
5.2	Explore	119
5.2.1	Passive and Active Search	120
5.2.2	Different Research Behavior at Different Demand Levels	120
5.2.3	Generation-Specific Research Preferences	122
5.2.4	Digital Natives Transform The Basis for Decision-Making	123

5.3	Consider	124
5.3.1	The Variety of Solutions.	124
5.3.2	Overwhelmed and Paralyzed	125
5.3.3	In Search for Proofs of Value.	126
5.3.4	Self-Service Preferred	126
5.4	Interact	126
5.4.1	Customers are Far Ahead of the Providers.	127
5.4.2	Anywhere, Anytime and in Any Way.	127
5.4.3	Interaction at PHANTOM’s Terms	128
5.4.4	The Quality of the Experience	129
5.4.5	Back and Forth.	129
5.5	Determine.	130
5.5.1	High Level of Activity in the Decision-Making Group	131
5.5.2	Decision or Validation?	132
5.5.3	Decided is Not Yet Decided	132
5.6	Execute.	133
5.6.1	Nothing Is Won Yet	134
5.6.2	Never Put Trust at Risk	135
5.7	The Zigzag Path to a Decision.	135
5.7.1	The Sales Funnel—an Outdated Concept	136
5.7.2	B2C and B2B—Where is the Difference?	139
	References.	140
6	The ENABLE Sales Process.	143
6.1	Educate.	157
6.1.1	Goal: Recognize the Problem	157
6.1.2	Misunderstanding Potential: Not Product Education.	157
6.1.3	Necessary Understanding: Customer-Specific Situation	157
6.1.4	Touchpoints: Digital, Indirect, Passive	158
6.1.5	Key Content: Needs and Problem-Oriented.	159
6.1.6	Buying Center: Recognizing Initiators	160
6.1.7	Content Forms: Provocative and Awakening	160
6.1.8	Activities: Content Distribution	161
6.1.9	Engagement: Open Access to Content.	161
6.1.10	Technology Aspects: Fast, Responsive, Barrier-Free.	162
6.2	Nurture.	162
6.2.1	Goal: Deepen the Problem.	163
6.2.2	Misunderstanding Potential: Do Not Overwhelm With Information	163
6.2.3	Necessary Understanding: Relevance From the Customer’s Perspective	164
6.2.4	Touchpoints: Visible, Barrier-Free, Website-Related.	164

6.2.5	Key Content: Neutral, Product- and Vendor-Independent	166
6.2.6	Buying Center: Addressing Problem Owners	167
6.2.7	Content Forms: Knowledge-Based	167
6.2.8	Activities: Provide Content Passively	168
6.2.9	Engagement: Digital, Anytime, From Anywhere.	170
6.2.10	Technology Aspects: Data-Based Personalization.	171
6.3	Affirm.	173
6.3.1	Goal: Affirm Need for Solution	173
6.3.2	Misunderstanding Potential: Benefit Instead of Self-Presentation	174
6.3.3	Necessary Understanding: Connecting Customer Problems With Own Offerings	174
6.3.4	Touchpoints: Research-Related	176
6.3.5	Key Content: All Solution Options	177
6.3.6	Buying Center: Identify All Stakeholders	180
6.3.7	Content Forms: Distribution Before Production	180
6.3.8	Activities: Pull Before Push.	182
6.3.9	Engagement: Unenforced.	186
6.3.10	Technology Aspects: Analytics and Automation	187
6.4	Brainwash	189
6.4.1	Goal: Create the Right Perspective	190
6.4.2	Misunderstanding Potential: The Product is Not the Goal	190
6.4.3	Necessary Understanding: Irrational Decisions.	192
6.4.4	Touchpoints: Easy, Direct Contact Options	194
6.4.5	Key Content: Shake Up	196
6.4.6	Buying Center: Keeping the Goal in Mind	197
6.4.7	Content Forms: Attention!	198
6.4.8	Activities: Questioning Assumptions.	198
6.4.9	Engagement: Hybrid Interactions	200
6.4.10	Technology Aspects: Artificial Intelligence	202
6.5	Leverage.	202
6.5.1	Goal: Minimize Decision Load	204
6.5.2	Misunderstanding Potential: Do Not Manipulate, But Enable	205
6.5.3	Necessary Understanding: More Is Not More	206
6.5.4	Touchpoints: Personalized and Interactive.	207
6.5.5	Key Content: Contextual Recommendations.	208
6.5.6	Buying Center: Create Urgency Among Decision Makers	210
6.5.7	Content Forms: Options with Recommendation	211
6.5.8	Activities: Customer Key Content Map.	212
6.5.9	Engagement: Personalized and Contextual	215
6.5.10	Technology Aspects: Data	216

6.6	Easy-Buy	217
6.6.1	Goal: Easy To Do Business With	220
6.6.2	Potential for Misunderstanding: Technology Without Business Perspective	220
6.6.3	Necessary Understanding: Digital-Virtual-Human	222
6.6.4	Touchpoints: Mobile, Voice, Social, Multi-Channel Commerce	225
6.6.5	Key Content: Focus on the Value Chain	226
6.6.6	Buying Center: Access to the Project Implementation Team.	227
6.6.7	Content Forms: Fast, Easy Buying Options.	228
6.6.8	Activities: Building Trust.	230
6.6.9	Engagement: Customer Experience in Focus	232
6.6.10	Technology Aspects: Individual Buying Experiences	234
6.7	The Big Picture—Bird’s Eye View	236
6.7.1	New Sales and Marketing Roles	238
6.7.2	Focus On <i>Buying</i> Process Instead of <i>Sales</i> Process.	240
6.7.3	Understanding Outstanding Customer Experience	241
6.7.4	Focus On Value Instead of Information	242
6.7.5	The Technology Intelligence	243
6.7.6	Customer First, Not Technology First	244
6.7.7	Leading Sales Instead of Controlling Sales	245
6.7.8	Rethinking Customer Loyalty	246
	References	248
	How Does This Knowledge Help Me?	251