



# Building Content for the Buyer's Journey

9 questions to help sales and marketing teams draw a content map to guide prospects from **discovery to purchase**

# The Content Maze

Today, sales enablement is an imperative for many organizations. Instead of continuing on a trajectory in which marketing brings in leads and sales brings in revenue—and the two paths never cross—organizations are realizing that both sales and marketing are responsible for revenue, and that profits only increase when the two teams are mutually supportive.

One area in which sales and marketing have a tremendous opportunity to collaborate effectively is in the creation of content.

Education of prospects, both before and during sales interactions, is essential, and it's important to remember that the ultimate goal of content creation is to foster sales.

Respondents to Refactored's [2018 Sales Enablement Benchmark Survey](#) reported that there is a significant need for better content to support sales activities.

These statistics speak to a real need for compelling, high-value content that connects with prospects and customers and helps them move to the next stage in the buyer's journey.

Marketing leaders need to take ownership of mapping out the content that sales needs.

But where do you start—and how can you leverage the content you already have, while identifying the content you still need to create?

**41%** of sales teams have access to some buyer-stage content, **but** gaps exist.

Only **16%** of sales team members have exactly **the tools they need** to accelerate and close deals.

This eBook outlines considerations and questions that will help your teams identify gaps and begin to plan content additions by persona and demand type within each buyer's journey stage.



# Buyer's Journey Considerations

Marketing and sales teams should begin their content planning with a shared understanding of some fundamental principles.

## Most of the early buyer's journey happens without human interaction.

According to CEB, 57% of the purchase decision is made before engaging with a sales representative.

## Content is key throughout the buyer's journey, even in sales interactions.

According to SiriusDecisions, 79% of B2B buyers find content provided by sales to be very to extremely valuable.

## Learning preferences matter.

Knowing **what** specific buyers prefer to learn from your company—and how they prefer to consume that information—is critical and unique to your company.

## You will need to *invest* in understanding your personas.

Buyer persona information can be gathered by marketing through customer interviews, customer surveys, sales interviews, CRM data mining, prospect surveys, and other means.



## Understand Your Personas

It's important that your teams start with a shared understanding of who your potential buyers are, their roles in the buying process, and their needs.

Typically, the product marketing team builds out buyer personas with the assistance of sales. However, in smaller organizations, other marketing resources might need to step up to complete this important work.

Initial persona research and development can be conducted by an agency with the support of your internal marketing and SME teams.



---

Only **25%**

of respondents feel that they have and are effectively utilizing a comprehensive set of **buyer personas**.

---

Once you have defined a set of personas, use the questions on the following pages to help your sales and marketing teams clarify the type and direction of content that each persona needs **at every stage in the journey.**

## Awareness & Education Phase

When prospects first enter your site or engage with your company—at the top of the funnel—they are primarily interested in learning about something that matters to them. They are likely not thinking about your company or your product; what they are thinking about is the challenge that set them back this month, a problem they have to solve, or an ongoing issue that they constantly have to work around.

This phase is all about prospects and what they need. For **each persona**, answer these questions:

1

### What are your prospects' goals and challenges? Better yet, what are the pains they don't even know they have?

Top-of-funnel content should focus on issues—whether prospects know about them or not—but only at an educational level. This is not the time to talk about product.

2

### How do prospects prefer to gather information?

For known goals and challenges, how does this persona prefer to research solutions? Do they look for information from analysts, peers, whitepapers, videos, infographics, or other sources? For issues you want to educate them about, find out where they gather industry or job-role information, including trade publications, events, webcasts, and so forth.

3

### What are the consequences of no decision?

Content must also define the pain prospects will experience if they don't do something. Again, at this stage, the goal is not to talk about your product or differentiate you from a competitor; it's to overcome the inertia of the status quo.



ENGAGE

## Evaluate Solution Phase

Remember that when prospects are evaluating potential solutions, they often are still doing those comparisons on their own, before they speak to your sales team. It's essential for you to predict the kinds of information they will be looking for and overcome any roadblocks they may find that could eliminate your brand from the running.

This phase is all about helping prospects see how your brand and solutions can help solve their problems and accomplish their goals. For **each persona**, answer these questions:

### 4 How does the market view your brand?

Does your brand carry either a positive or negative image in the general market? If public opinion is positive, you should have content that takes advantage of that good reputation. If it's negative, provide content that helps counter unfavorable opinions. Case studies, testimonials, and even personal letters and videos from company leaders can make a big difference.

### 5 How much competition is out there?

If your company is bringing a new-concept type product to market, you might not have much competition. But if your offering is a little more commoditized, you will need to consider content that overcomes inevitable objections that are raised through comparisons with alternative solutions. Anticipating those objections and comparisons—and having content to refute them—will be critical to sales.

### 6 What are your unique differentiators from the competition?

You should know what your company and product(s) do better than anyone else, and your differentiation story should permeate all of your content and messaging.



## Selection Phase

You might expect that as prospects move further into the sales funnel, the approach to educating them could become less complex. You might also be surprised to learn that your expectation is incorrect. At this stage of the journey, buyers begin asking for more specific information about your product and its capabilities, your company and its operations, pricing, support, service level agreements, and so on.

This phase is all about helping prospects justify their decision to choose your solution—to themselves, their fellow stakeholders, and their management—so that they can complete the purchase and be a hero to their organization. For **each persona**, answer these questions:

### 7 How many players are involved in the decision-making process, and what are their agendas?

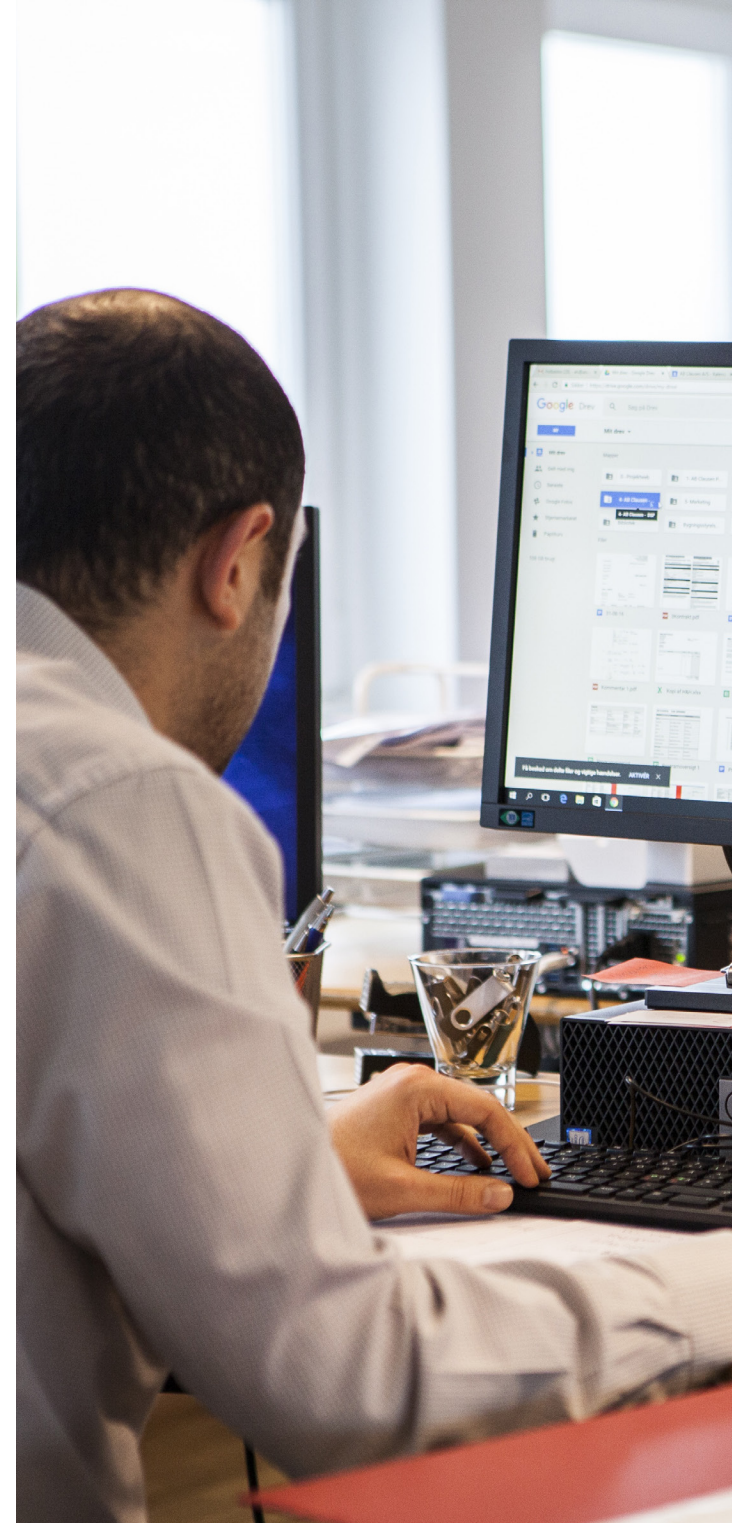
Some buyer scenarios can involve 10 or more committee members—each with a different agenda. It is essential to know who the typical stakeholders are. Be sure your teams have personas and content built out for each stakeholder to optimize the sales process.

### 8 What are the selection criteria your buyers use to evaluate the available offerings?

Each persona will likely have a different set of reasons and concerns as they look at your solution. End users might be seeking to make their own jobs easier; IT leaders might be concerned with how a purchase will impact their bandwidth; finance execs will be concerned with cost. You need to know these concerns and be prepared to address them.

### 9 Will buyers be including training or support considerations in their evaluations?

Depending on your offering, your buyer committee members might have concerns about deploying and supporting a solution. Do you have the content to put these concerns at ease?

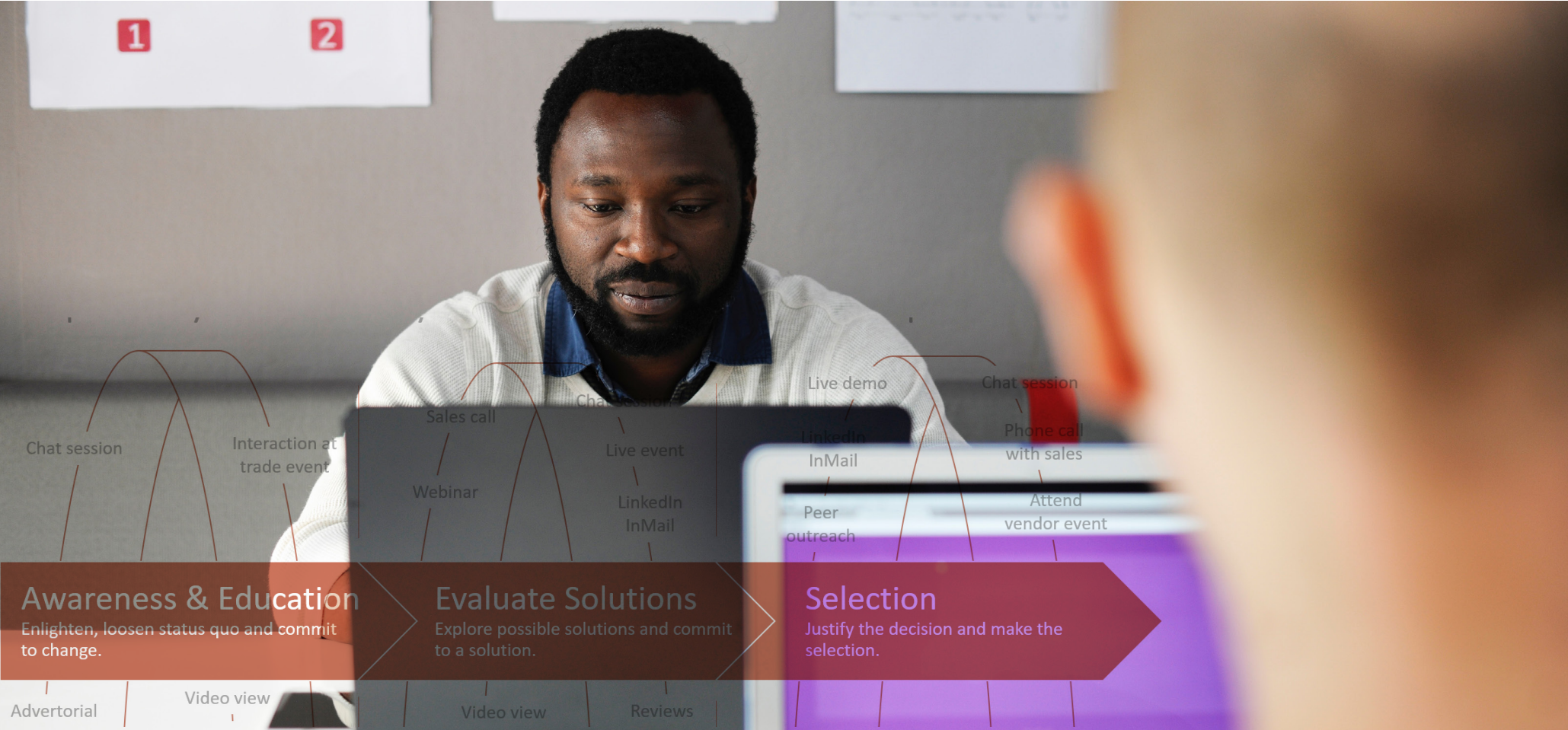


# Content Throughout the Journey

Once you have defined your prospects' content needs through the buyer journey, you have the foundational elements you need to build a **content map**.

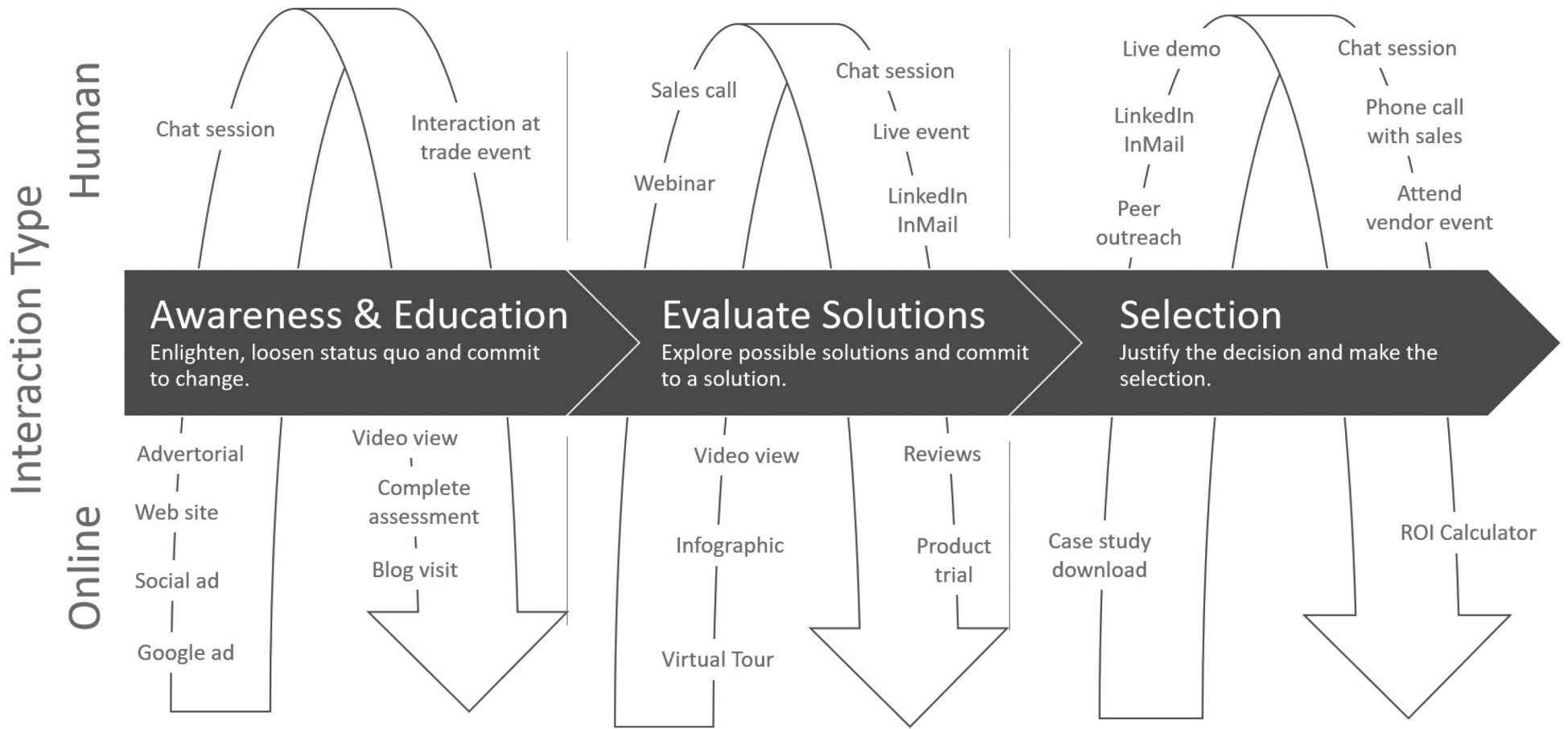
**On the following pages, refer to the example to see where different types of content may fall in the journey. Then, use the blank template to**

- ✓ map where your existing content falls in each buyer's journey;
- ✓ identify content gaps; and
- ✓ determine what types of content you need to create to help prospects complete their journeys.



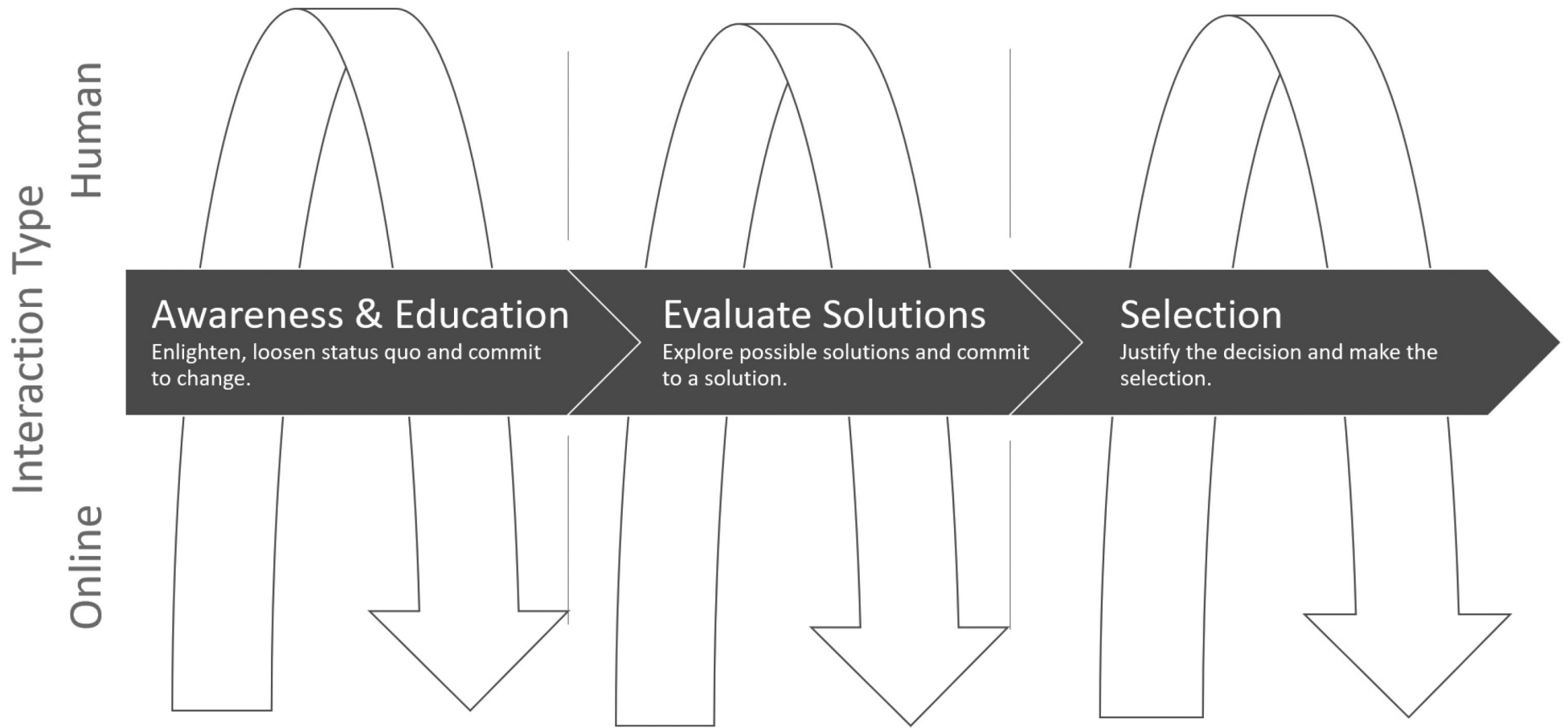


# Example



\*Content based on the SiriusDecisions Buyer's Journey Map

# Template



\*Content based on the SiriusDecisions Buyer's Journey Map

**You don't need to do it alone.**



**Refactored is here to help** with anything your team needs in your content mapping process, from facilitation of the sales and marketing relationship to web development and comprehensive content creation. **Contact Us.**



## About Us

Refactored is a full-service digital agency that specializes in marketing for complex, B2B companies that need to speed up, get unstuck, or start from the ground up. We develop and execute strategies based on deep industry understandings, audience insights, and recognition of the right channels and technologies to accomplish your goals. Our clients don't just achieve incremental gains. They leap forward. ***Momentum Begins Here.***

Connect with us at [www.refactoredmedia.com](http://www.refactoredmedia.com).

### Contact Information

[hello@refactoredmedia.com](mailto:hello@refactoredmedia.com)

970.545.4171

©Refactored - All Rights Reserved

For more information, visit  
**refactoredmedia.com.**