



# THE B2B DIGITAL SHIFT

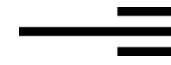
B2B buying behaviour is changing fast.  
And most websites haven't caught up.

Find out what's happening, why it matters,  
and the B2B website mistakes that make  
you invisible to buyers.

A BIGFORK REPORT

2026





## WHAT IS THE B2B DIGITAL SHIFT REPORT?

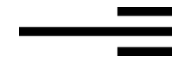
As a specialist B2B web agency, we've seen a fundamental shift in B2B buying behaviour.

The B2B buying process is increasingly moving online, which makes your website the most important marketing and sales asset.

But most B2B websites aren't designed to accommodate this shift. If a company's website isn't built for how buyers research, compare, and decide in 2026, it's not just underperforming. It's invisible.

This report breaks down what's changed in buying behaviour, why it matters, and what B2B companies can do about it.

We analysed the latest research from Forrester, Gartner, and LinkedIn, and combined it with the biggest mistakes we see on B2B websites.



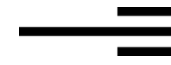
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- Summary



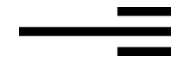
# KEY TAKEAWAYS





## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1. 71% OF B2B BUYERS ARE MILLENNIALS OR GEN Z**  
They expect speed, ease, and the ability to do independent research without talking to sales.
- 2. BUYERS EVALUATE SUPPLIERS BASED ON CAREER RISK**  
Website content that builds trust with buyers and reduces risk is key to make their shortlist.
- 3. AI IS BECOMING A GATEKEEPER FOR B2B WEBSITES**  
Buyers are using AI to research and shortlist suppliers.  
If a website content is unclear or poorly structured, AI tools will skip it.
- 4. B2B WEBSITES MUST LEAD WITH STRATEGY, NOT DESIGN**  
They must effectively answer buyer questions.  
Not be designed for the boardroom.



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### **5. DIFFERENTIATION IS A PROBLEM FOR B2B WEBSITES**

Too many B2B websites look the same. If a B2B company doesn't stand out, it won't be remembered when buyers make their shortlist.

### **6. HIDING PRICING CREATES FRICTION**

45% of buyers are most frustrated by lack of transparent pricing. Even directional pricing builds trust and attracts better qualified leads.

### **7. MOST B2B WEBSITES ONLY OFFER ONE PATH FORWARD**

Buyers spend 83% of their journey researching independently. If every page ends with "Contact us" conversions will be low.



THE B2B INDUSTRY  
HAS CHANGED.

HAVE YOU?



## B2B BUYING BEHAVIOUR IS EVOLVING QUICKLY

B2B buyers are carrying out much of their own research online. Gone are the days of expensive trade shows and traditional business meetings.

Now, B2B customers want B2C type online experiences. They talk to sales people less, using channels like websites and social media instead .

This shift is happening at a rapid speed. Let's look at exactly why.

75% of B2B buyers prefer a rep-free sales experience.

[B2B Buying - Gartner](#)

94% of B2B buyers said they use AI in their buying process

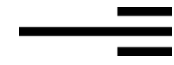
[Forrester](#)

66% of B2B buyers expect B2B website experiences to match B2C ones.

[BigCommerce](#)



## THE RISE OF TECHNOLOGY AND AI



In 2025, 94% of B2B buyers said they use AI in their buying process, compared to 89% in 2024.

Source: [Forrester](#)

B2B buyers are using generative AI as a tool to research, filter and shortlist potential companies.

If your website content is unclear or poorly structured, AI tools may skip it entirely and recommend your competitors instead.

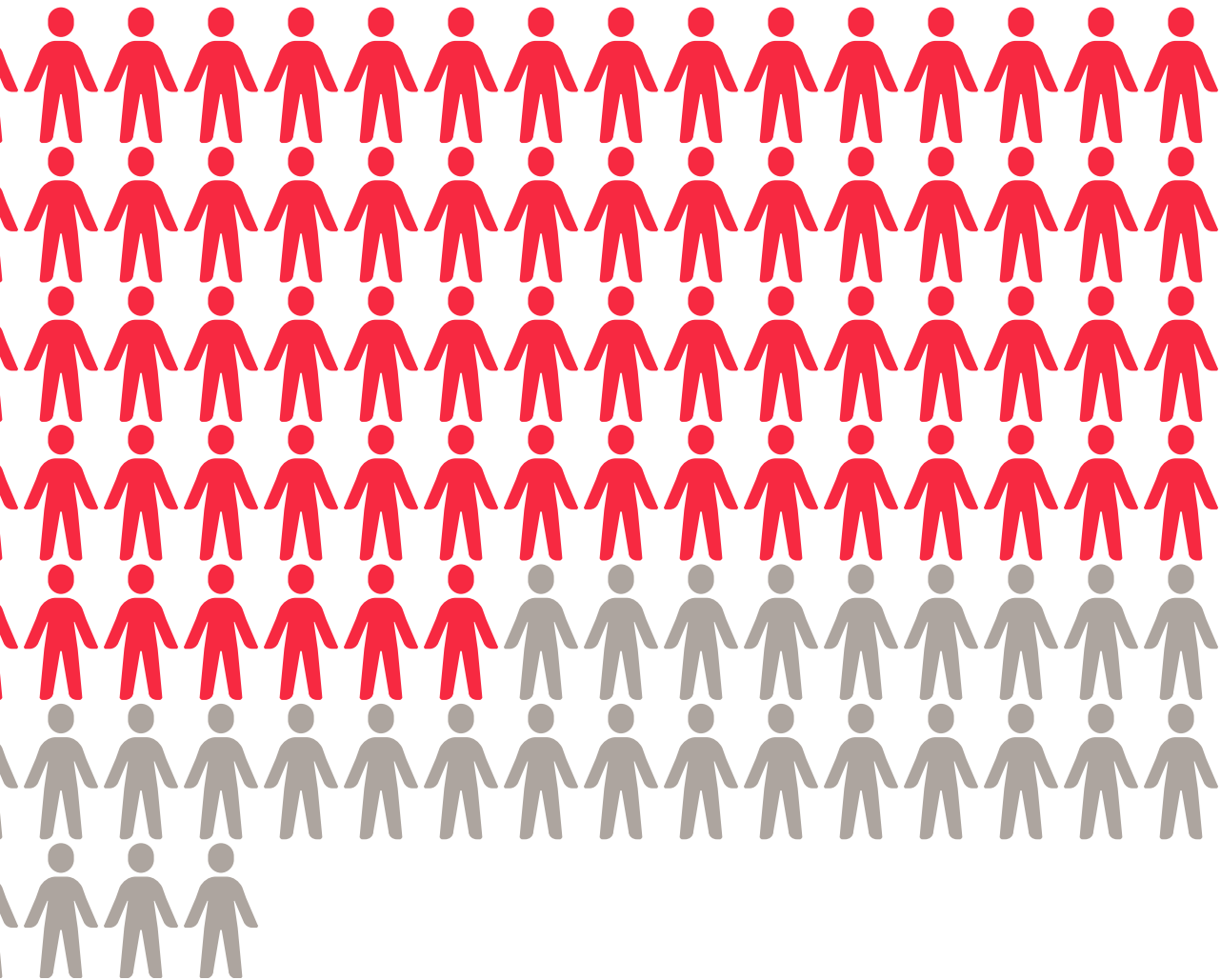
While brand reputation determines authority in AI search<sup>\*</sup>, LLMs still need to be able to read, interpret and navigate your website easily in order to confidently recommend you.

Designing a website for humans as well as AI visibility is the challenge that B2B businesses must overcome.

<sup>\*</sup> [Share of search vs share of LLM, Hallam](#)



## A DIFFERENT GENERATION OF B2B BUYERS



# Did you know that over 71% of B2B buyers are now Millennials or Gen Z?

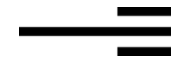
Source: [Sopro B2B buyer insights](#)

These generations grew up with technology and online marketplaces that delivered speed, efficiency and autonomy.

They expect clear direction, useful content, instant chatbot support, and self-service purchasing. There's very little tolerance for outdated websites, long manual forms, or being told to "speak to someone in sales" and wait for an answer.

Buyers can research you, compare you, and rule you out (or in), before you know they exist.

So, if your website doesn't meet their expectations, you're not considered.



## MIRRORING B2C ONLINE EXPERIENCES

**B2B customer experience ratings are less than 50%, compared to B2C ratings of up to 85%.**

Source: [McKinsey](#).

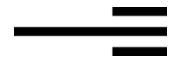
B2B buyer expectations are rising. They want their buying experience to be as good as B2C offerings, with websites acting as customer support tools rather than a sales person.

Having a quality website user experience helps B2B companies stand out from competitors, improves customer satisfaction and increases customer loyalty.

The companies that invest in better digital experiences for customers, are the ones that keep them.

**75% of B2B buyers said they'd switch to a supplier that offers a better online buying experience.**

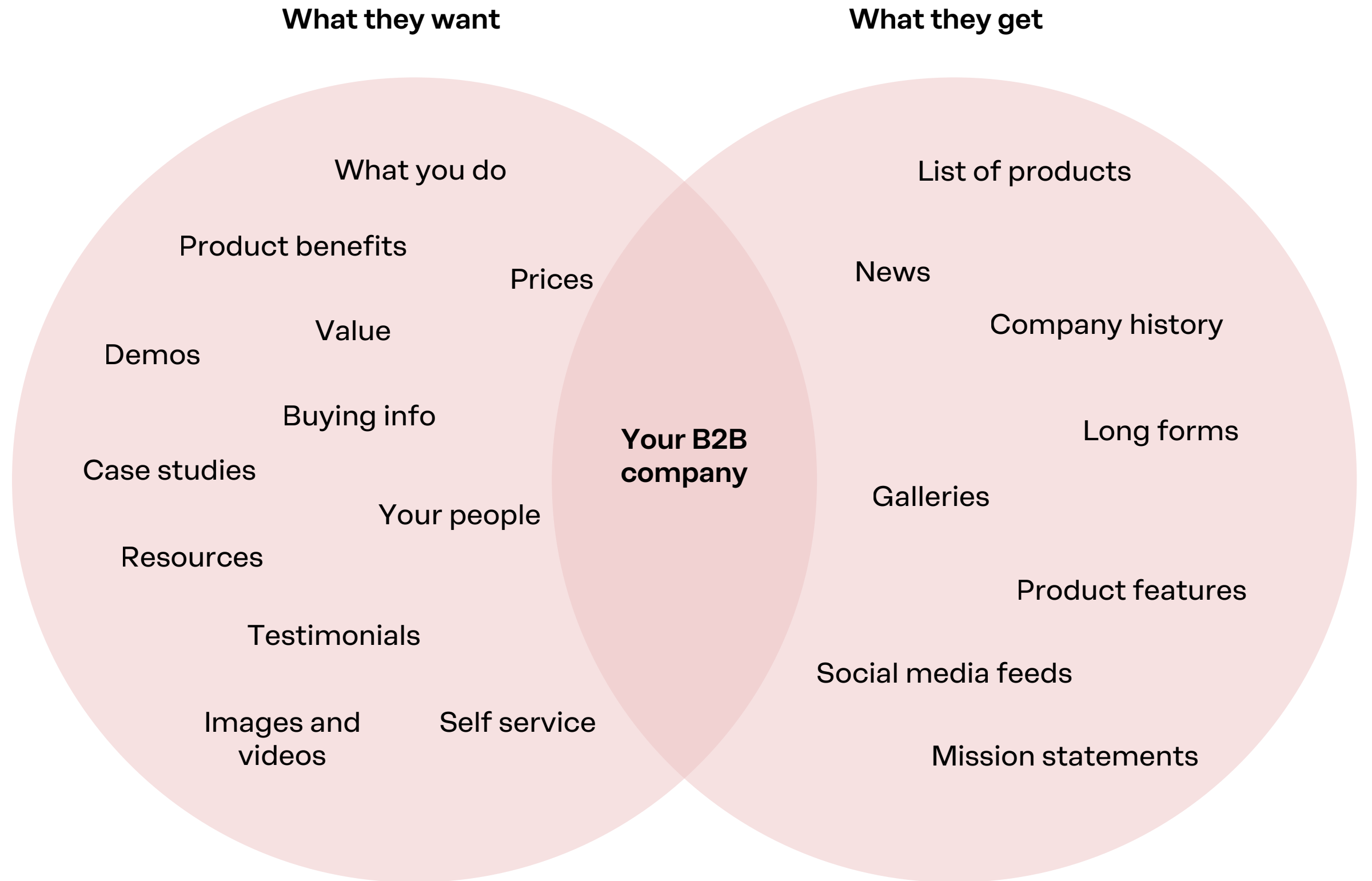
[2025 B2B Buyer Report, Sana](#)



## TRADITIONAL B2B WEBSITE CONTENT IS OUT

Research from the Content Marketing Institute identifies that there is a big disconnect between what B2B buyers want from a website and what they get.

**Where does your website stand?**



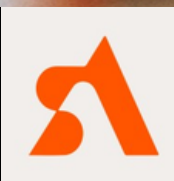


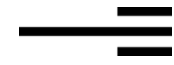
In organic social, one of the biggest shifts we're seeing in B2B is that buying behaviour is becoming more human and community-driven.

Organic social and online platforms are being used as a discovery platform.

Buyers use social platforms to validate expertise, compare opinions, and relate to their audiences.

Jess Tucker, Managing Director, Social Allies





## THE COST OF STANDING STILL FOR B2B COMPANIES

B2B companies that do not adapt to this digital shift, risk being left behind.

Investing in an online presence isn't a nice to have. It's not just about having a website. It's a whole adaptation to the digital buying journey.

The biggest cost of standing still will be lost sales and fewer customers. Then it's losing trust, becoming invisible, and handing deals to competitors.

If you're reading this report, you're already ahead.

**At least 80% of B2B sales interactions between buyers and suppliers now happen in digital channels.**

[Martial Group](#)

**Companies that prioritise buyer experience close deals 31% faster.**

[Dentsu](#)



# COMMON B2B WEBSITE MISTAKES TO AVOID

## GETTING YOUR PRIORITIES WRONG



BIGFORK

# Too many B2B websites prioritise design over achieving goals.

Your pages have beautiful visuals, smooth animations, and everything is on brand. But your website doesn't convert.

## Why does this happen?

The brief was "a modern, easy to use website" when it should've been "a website that generates more leads".

"My old boss used to judge our website designs by how they'd look printed out for his office wall."

Colin Richardson, Digital Design Director, Bigfork

The best B2B websites are built strategy-first. Start by understanding your objectives and your customers. Then design around that.





APPEALING TO THE  
WRONG PEOPLE

## When you try to please everyone, you don't please anyone.

Most B2B websites suffer from the same problem; they're made for the company, not the customers. Every department has a different priority:

- Sales want long forms to qualify leads for them.
- Marketing wants brand storytelling.
- Product teams want feature lists.
- The CEO wants to show off the company history.
- IT want the tech stack on the homepage.

If the website doesn't speak directly to the customer and tell them what they want to know, they'll leave.

**TIP**

You have less than 10 seconds to make a first impression. Your home page should communicate what you do, who you work with, and why it matters. If yours doesn't, it's time to make some changes.



NOT INSTILLING  
CONFIDENCE

## B2B companies must give buyers more confidence to buy.

Research from [LinkedIn](#) shows that decisions are emotional as well as logical. We're only human after all.

The number one emotional factor wasn't about making the right choice, it was not making the wrong choice. 34% of buyers surveyed said their top emotional buying factor was if they could confidently defend their decision if it went wrong.

This means B2B websites need to demonstrate trust and to convince buyers they won't be let down. Which requires content like testimonials from real people, case studies from the right industries, relevant accreditations, and details about the processes.

**TIP**

Look at every product page, case study, and testimonial on your website. Ask yourself: how does this help a buyer defend their decision to choose you as a new supplier?



## LEAVING GAPS IN THE B2B BUYERS JOURNEY

# Don't neglect any part of the funnel.

Databox research suggests that 67.4% of B2B content teams focus almost entirely on top-of-funnel content with just 4.7% creating content for buyers who are close to a purchasing decision.

B2B buying journeys are rarely linear. Companies that create website content for every stage of the buying journey are more likely to get noticed by buyers.

Full-funnel website content helps build trust and gets you onto potential customers' shortlists.

95% of the time, the winning vendor is already on the buyer's shortlist before any sales contact is made.

[CXL](#)



# Examples of content that works well on B2B websites, for each stage of the B2B sales funnel.

## AWARENESS

- Industry articles
- E-books
- Educational videos
- Informative blog posts
- Differentiated value proposition (what you do and why you do it well)

## CONSIDERATION

- Reviews/ testimonials
- White papers + guides
- Webinars
- Comparison guides
- Product datasheets

## DECISION

- FAQs
- Demos + trials
- Content about company people and processes
- Case studies
- Pricing pages
- ROI calculators and product selectors

## LOYALTY

- Company growth, investments and training
- Product roadmaps or updated features
- Case studies with existing clients



LIMITED PRODUCT  
PAGE INFORMATION

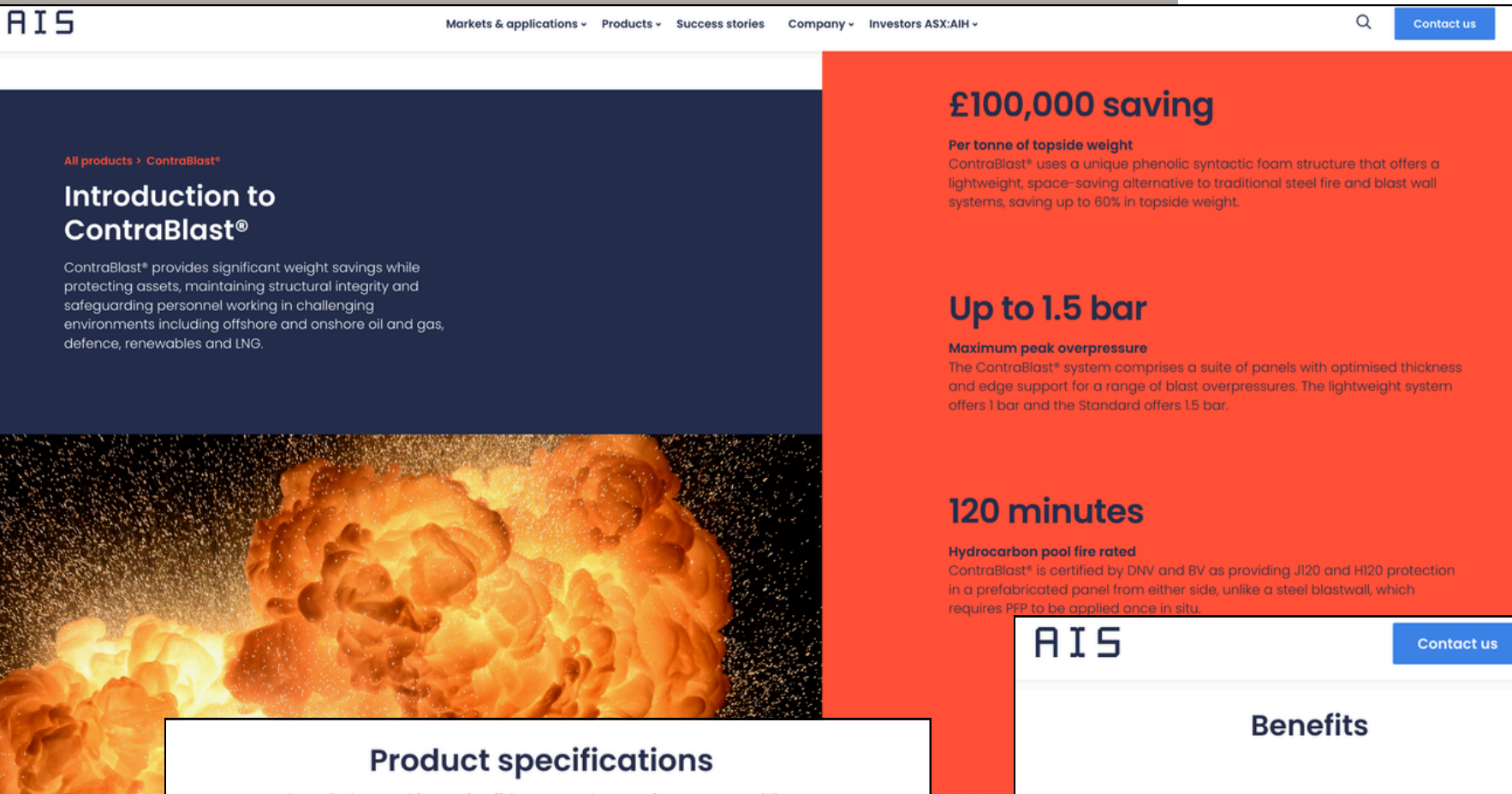
Buyers are frustrated with not having enough product page info to make a decision.

Many B2B companies fall into the trap of listing the features of products of services. But that isn't what sells.

Product pages should lead always lead with benefits. On top of that, buyers want to see:

- Specs
- Demos
- Images / videos
- Prices
- Availability
- Documents
- Reviews
- Case studies
- Product comparisons
- The buying process

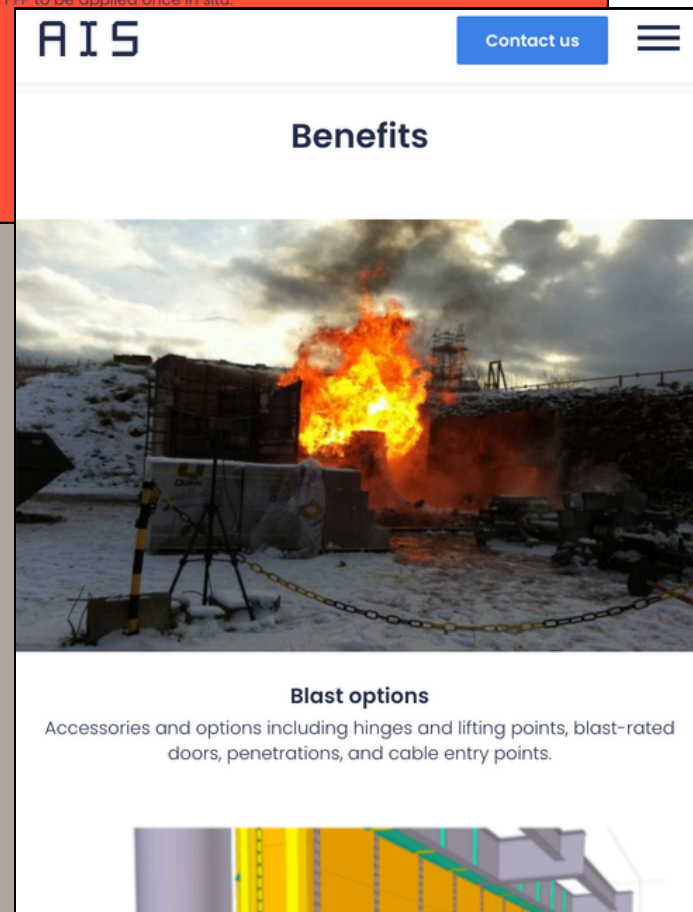
# FOOD FOR THOUGHT — A STRONG PRODUCT PAGE



### Product specifications

Extensively tested for use in offshore or onshore environments providing significant weight saving over steel blast walls.

- IMO 2010 FTP Code Part 3 – IMO Resolution MSC 307(88), under a hydrocarbon HC fire curve according to EN 1363-2:1999
- ISO 22899-1:2009 – Determination of resistance to jet fires of passive fire protection materials
- The ContraFlame® MS400 foam (at the ContraBlast® panel core) has also passed HHF jet fire scenarios for 60-minutes duration
- ISO 20340 – Accelerated ageing and weathering of the D2004 laminate system which meets the performance requirements of NORSOK M501 edition 6th Feb 2012 system one.



This example shows a good B2B product page from AIS; a global supplier of insulation, fire protection, buoyancy, and cable protection systems.

This page works because it has:

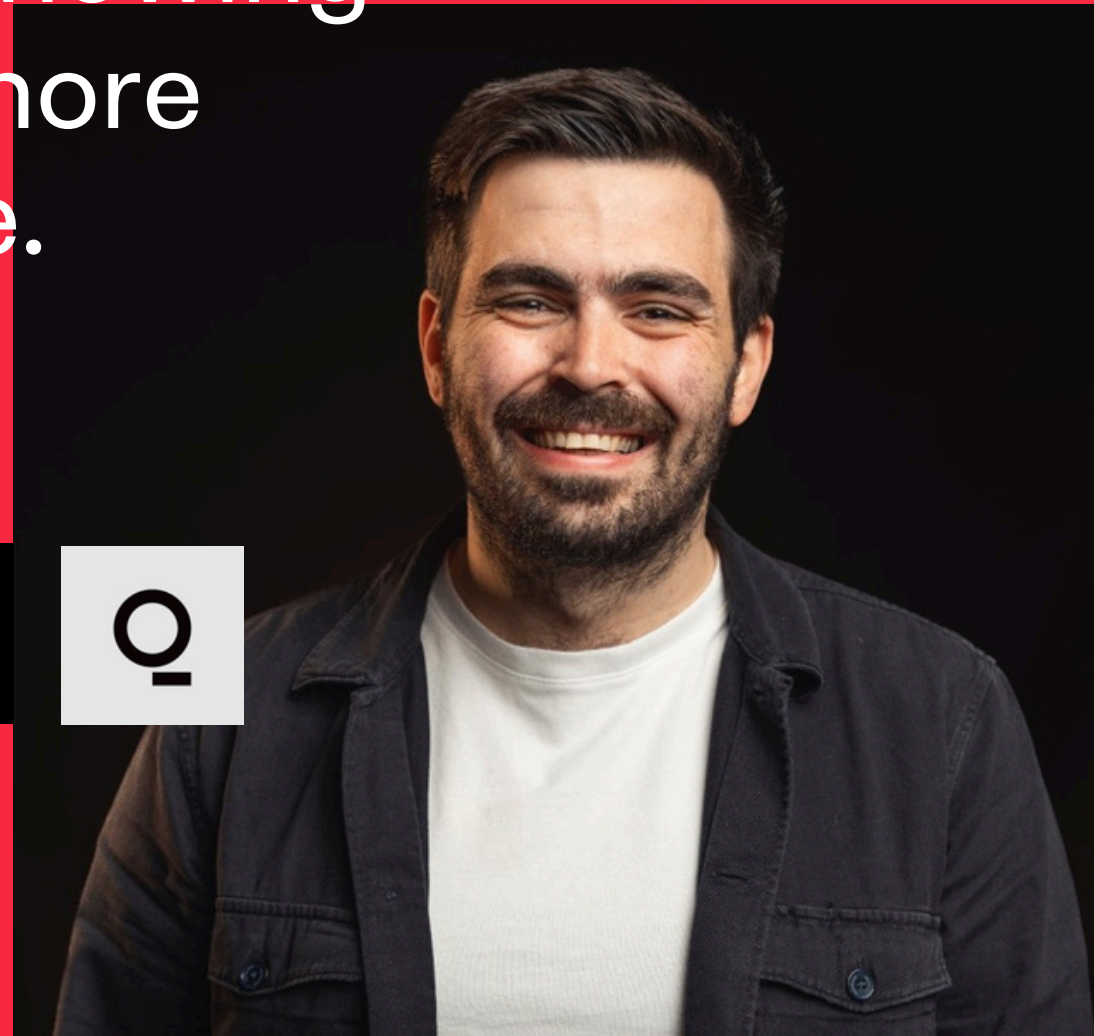
- Eye catching images.
- Key benefits immediately listed.
- Technical product specifications.
- Different ways to use the product.
- Bullet points making it easy to read.
- Safety features to reassure buyers.
- A contact form at the bottom (good for conversions).



77% of B2B buyers\* said their last purchase was difficult and complex, and Google research suggests customers form an opinion on a brand in milliseconds.

That's why having a clear value proposition, simplifying where possible, and clearly showing features and benefits have never been more important for landing page performance.

Nathan Lomax, Director & Founder, Quickfire Digital



\*Source: [B2B Buying - Gartner](#)



LACK OF  
DIFFERENTIATION

68% of B2B buyers\* agree with the statement:

“Many of the brands I see at work have very similar marketing and communications messages — they all sound and act the same.”

Differentiation from competitors is a clear issue in B2B marketing, and this is reflected in their websites. Buyers see the same messages, benefits, and products on suppliers websites.

Companies need to up their game and stand out from their competitors. Buyers wants to see what makes each potential supplier different, not just another self-appointed “market leader”.

How can customers choose your business if they can't remember it?

\*Source: State of marketing to engineers 2025, Trew Marketing



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT — HOW TO STAND OUT

**In numbers**

- 28,000  
Monitoring 28,000+ turbines globally
- 35  
Operating in 35+ countries around the world
- 160GW+  
Taking part in 160GW+ of due diligence projects
- 158  
Number of engineering projects completed each year
- \$12 billion  
Trusted to protect more than \$12 billion worth of assets worldwide

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Product Range > Earth Trainers > Suffolk Trailer

### SUFFOLK TRAILER

**LARGE CAPACITY  
ROBUST & DURABLE**

About this product:

- OVERVIEW
- FEATURES
- DOWNLOADS
- GALLERY
- OPTIONS
- VIDEO
- DIMENSIONS
- 3D FEATURES
- ROLL OVER SHEET SYSTEMS

**OVERVIEW**

Heavy duty monocoque tipping trailers with a world-wide reputation for strength and durability. The Suffolk Trailer is designed and engineered to maximise efficiency, optimising the strength to weight ratio and enabling you to deliver full payloads with a low carbon weight.

Available in 9 to 24 tonne models with an impressive array of standard features and a wide choice of options, you can build the Suffolk trailer to your exact requirements. Suitable for grain, silage and general purpose haulage.

**BATEMAN**

Menu

- 420 weekly wage offered
- 2 years to earn your qualification
- 180 apprenticeships successfully completed

**Ready to Build Your Future?**

Let's look at your options. How do you see yourself starting off?

- Join us as an apprentice under the national government apprenticeship scheme. [APPRENTICESHIPS](#)
- Join us as a trainee, where hands-on experience and structured learning pave your path. [TRAINEE](#)
- Or explore our wide range of roles to see which one fits with your skills and interests. [NOT SURE](#)

**claxton** | Decommissioning | Conventional Energy Services | Renewables | Company | Contact us

## Cutting through complexity

Our teams cut through complexity to deliver certainty when it matters most - providing trusted, high-performance solutions for difficult and unexpected challenges across the global energy transition.

Differentiation is about making sure your B2B website stands out from others in your industry.

Some tactics for differentiation include:

- Having a clear value proposition.
- Demonstrating market specialisation / expertise.
- Proving quality customer experience or results.
- Communicating company values and principles.
- Highlighting unique technology.
- Using premium website engagement effects.
- Creating a stand out website design.

A person wearing a dark jacket and a hat is standing in a dense forest, looking through binoculars. The background is filled with green foliage.

## NO WEBSITE SEARCH TOOLS

Efficient search and navigation options makes research easier for your B2B buyers.

For example, navigation and search tools include:

- Autocomplete and search suggestions
- Product / content filters (category, brand, size)
- Quiz-based searching
- Search via chatbot / live chat
- Mega menus

A red arrow pointing to the right, containing the word 'TIP' in white capital letters.

### TIP

Learn from your search data. B2B buyers often use different names for your products which means they won't always find your pages. Search data shows what they call your products and you can use this information to optimise your website.



NOT HAVING PRICING  
TRANSPARENCY

# Protecting prices only introduces friction into the buying journey.

Buyers are tired of the guessing game.

They understand that complex B2B solutions often need custom quotes, but **offering a price starting point, range or guide** builds trust and immediately confirms whether the product or service is in budget.

Not only does this save a lot of time for buyers and suppliers, it also attracts more qualified leads for the sales team.

45% of buyers are most frustrated by a lack of transparent pricing on B2B websites.

Source: [Sopro B2B buyer insights](#)



## USING GENERIC CALLS TO ACTION

# B2B websites must guide the user and not just limited them to 'Contact Us' .

Buyers only spend 17%\* of the journey engaging with suppliers. The rest is independent research.

If the only route is "speak to a human", companies are ignoring 83% of the buyers journey.

Consider all parts of the funnel and steer people to content to support the stage they're at. Calls to actions that guide users towards downloads, calculators, case studies, company information, FAQs.

### TIP

Think about what your visitors want from the page they're on. Home page visitors want credibility — who are you, what you do, why should I trust you? Whereas product page visitors are looking for details and demos.

Every CTA needs to be persuasive and personal — "Talk to our experts" and not just "Contact us".



Vendors need to wake up to the fact that B2B buyers have gone digital.

Your website needs to help them through most of their buying journey if you want get on their shortlist.

I still see too many B2B companies treating their website like an online brochure instead of a growth asset.

Mark Ellaway, Director, Bigfork





# THE BIG SUMMARY



B2B buying is becoming increasingly digital and marketing teams must design their website to support the entire customer journey.

B2B companies still rely on sales teams to support buyer decisions. But that's not that they want.

The best B2B websites give buyers the confidence to move forward in the sales process, whether that's more research, making a shortlist, or wanting to speak to someone.

The companies that don't do this risk losing customers and becoming invisible.





# WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOUR WEBSITE?

If you're looking to improve your B2B website, Bigfork is the answer.

We design and build tasty new websites, or our website optimisation service works improves the one you already have.

Want to read more helpful insights?

Visit [www.bigfork.co.uk](http://www.bigfork.co.uk).

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