

Keeping Up with the New Manufacturing Buyer

The ultimate guide to staying up to date with the latest customer experience trends in manufacturing



Embracing the New Manufacturing Buyer Experience

Tacton is the leading Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) SaaS partner for design to sales automation for industrial manufacturers. Our trusted configuration engine provides the backbone for your customers' fast and flawless digital experience.

Tacton named a *Leader* in the **Gartner® Magic Quadrant™** for Configure, Price and Quote Application Suites.

Gartner.

The manufacturing industry is undergoing a seismic shift, driven by a confluence of technological advancements, changing market dynamics, and the evolving expectations of a new generation of buyers.

The days of relying solely on traditional, relationship-driven sales approaches are rapidly fading as digital transformation reshapes the B2B landscape. Manufacturers now find themselves navigating a complex environment where speed, agility, and customer-centricity are no longer optional—they are imperative for survival and growth.

Today's buyers are more informed about the products and companies they want to purchase from. **Over 80% of the buying process now occurs without engaging a vendor (Gartner), it was 67% just 3 years ago.** These new customers also want the same exciting and personalized experiences they encounter in the B2C world.

This change means that manufacturers must rethink their go-to-market strategies, leveraging digital tools to create seamless, omnichannel experiences. The ability to offer customized solutions quickly and efficiently has become a competitive differentiator.



Over 80% of the buying process now occurs before a buyer engages a vendor

Manufacturers are looking to expand their reach while ensuring to maintain loyalty with their existing customer base now more than ever.

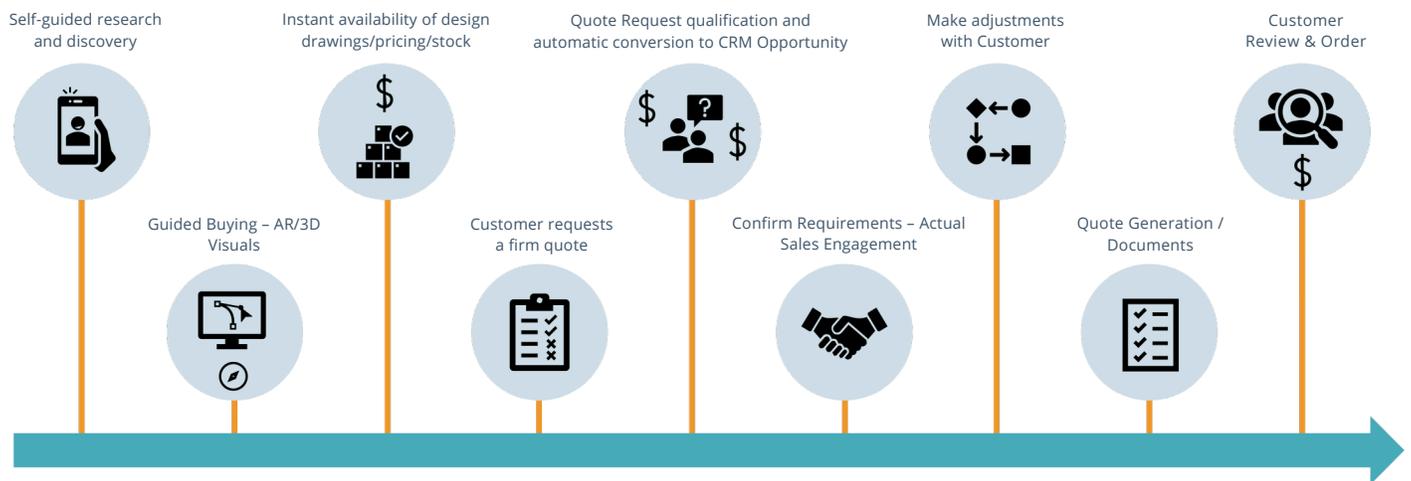
With disruption to regular operations becoming a constant with the pandemic, businesses are striving to make the overall buying experience a priority.

Let's take a deep dive into the new digital-first customer buying journey and how leading manufacturers are finding using this to create new opportunities for their business.

The Ideal Buying Journey for the New B2B Manufacturing Buyer

In today's fast-paced manufacturing landscape, customers expect an agile, personalized, and immediate buying experience like what they encounter in the B2C space. The ideal journey begins when customers visit a manufacturer's website, where they can quickly access a self-service platform that guides them through the product configuration process.

Advanced tools like 3D visualization and augmented reality allow customers to see how their configured products would look in real-world environments, making the experience both engaging and informative.



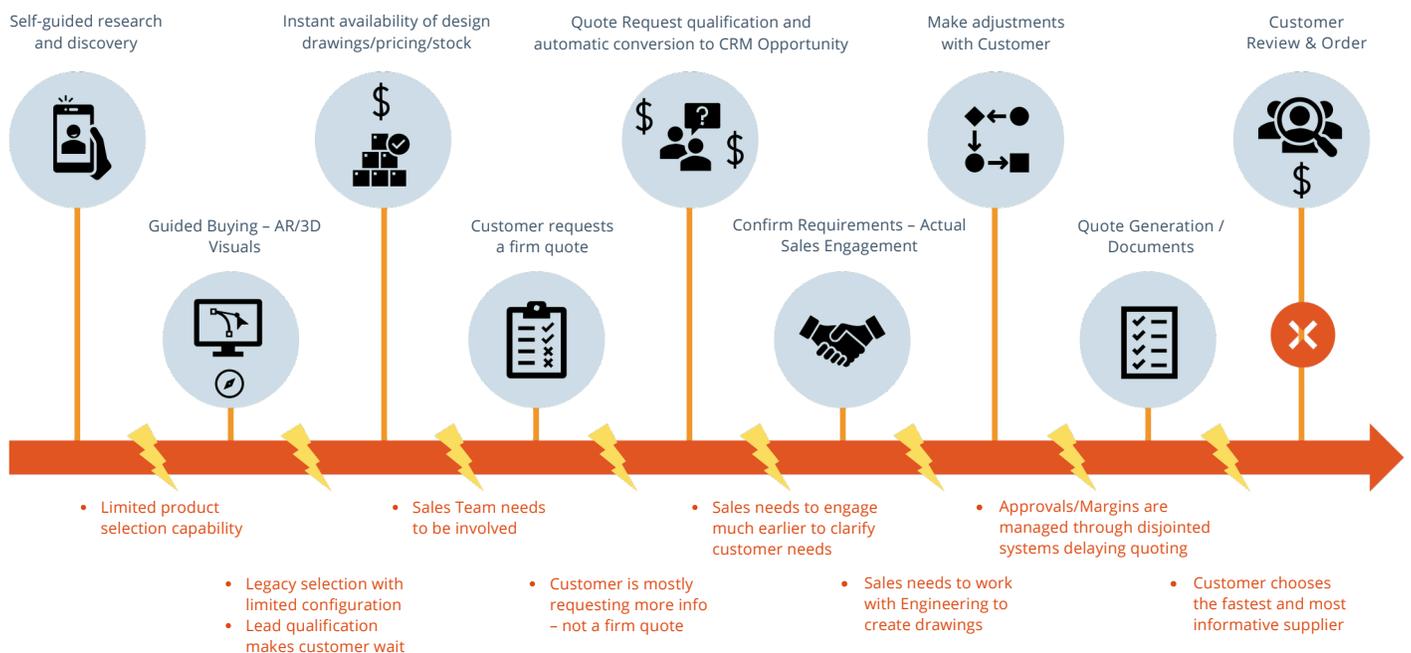
After configuring their products, customers can instantly view pricing, access design drawings, and check product availability. They can then request a firm quote, which is seamlessly qualified by an inside sales team and tied directly to a CRM opportunity. Once the configuration is approved by the sales manager, any necessary adjustments to margins or pricing can be made, and an updated document is generated for the customer. The final design is then sent into production, completing a smooth and efficient buying journey.

While this ideal journey offers a streamlined and satisfying experience for the customer, the reality is often far more complex. Manufacturers face numerous challenges in delivering such a seamless experience, from outdated processes to technological limitations. These obstacles can lead to slow response times, inaccurate quotes, and ultimately, lost sales opportunities as customers turn to competitors who can meet their needs more effectively.

Overcoming Challenges in the Buying Journey

Although the ideal buying journey is well-defined, implementing it in practice can be challenging for manufacturers. Many companies struggle to provide a self-service product selection on their websites, offering only basic equipment information instead of interactive configuration tools. Rather than utilizing 3D visualization, these manufacturers may rely on static images and parametric product selection, making it harder for customers to fully understand their options.

This lack of robust self-service capabilities can slow down the sales process, as inside sales teams are left to manually qualify leads and gather the necessary information to generate quotes. Without a comprehensive initial configuration, manufacturers often find themselves unable to offer firm quotes, leaving customers frustrated by the lack of clarity and increasing the likelihood that they will seek out alternative suppliers. The disjointed process between sales and engineering further exacerbates delays, leading to extended lead times and poor overall customer experience.

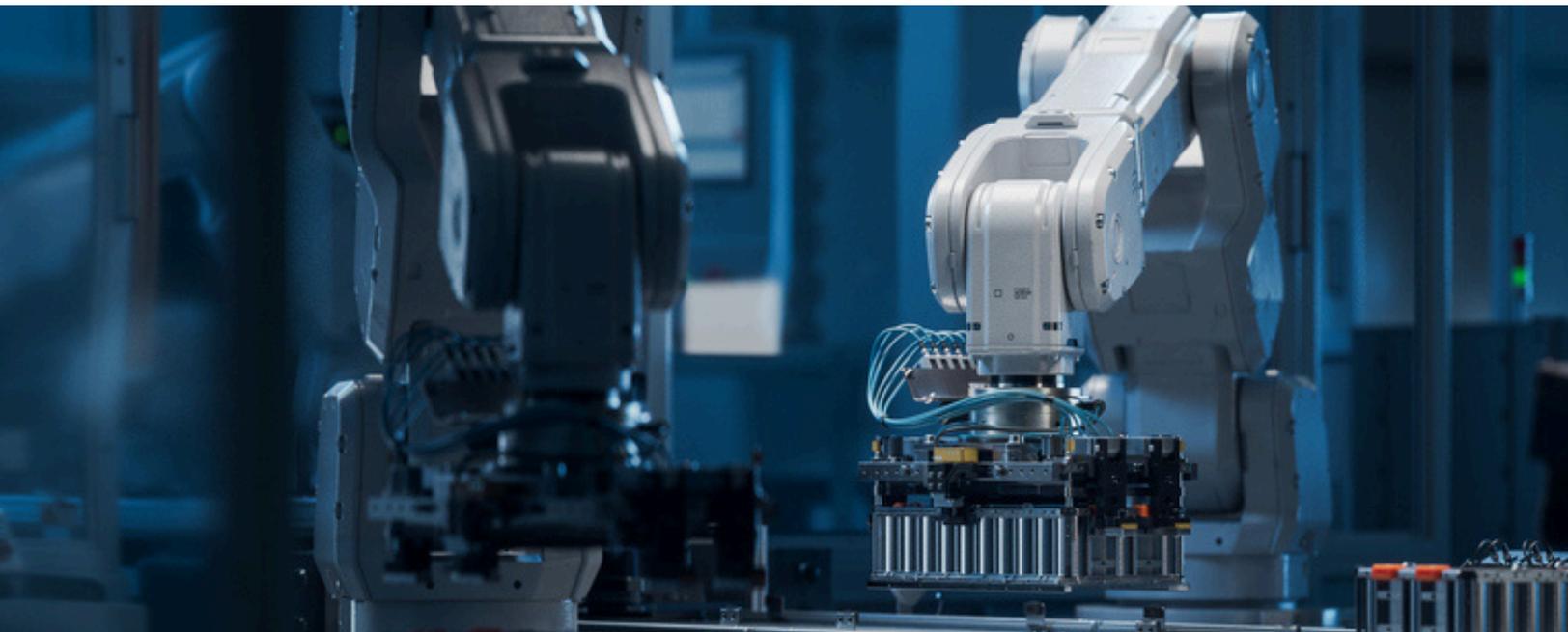


To successfully navigate these challenges, manufacturers must focus on enabling a truly customer-centric journey that removes barriers and enhances the buying experience at every touchpoint. By embracing digital transformation tools like **Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) solutions**, manufacturers can streamline the buying journey and deliver the seamless experience that today’s customers expect.

Meeting the Expectations of the Modern Buyer

The shift in buying behavior towards a more B2C-like experience is largely driven by a new generation of decision-makers who have grown up in a digital-first world. These buyers have specific expectations that manufacturers must meet to remain competitive:

- ✓ **Rich and informed decision-making:** Modern buyers want to gather as much information as possible before engaging with a sales team. They expect a wealth of product data, application details, pricing transparency, and additional documentation readily available online.
- ✓ **Accurate and transparent information:** Buyers require precise and up-to-date information on product capabilities, availability, sustainability, and pricing. Transparency in these areas is crucial to building trust and enabling informed purchasing decisions.
- ✓ **Seamless communication channels:** Effective communication with the right individuals, such as account executives who are already familiar with the customer's needs, is essential. Buyers do not want to restart the process with each interaction; they expect continuity and a personalized experience throughout their journey.
- ✓ **Differentiated buying experience:** Simply providing basic product information is no longer sufficient. Buyers seek an experience that sets the manufacturer apart from the competition, offering unique insights and a deeper understanding of the product before making a purchase decision.



Transforming the Customer Experience with CPQ

The past few years have seen manufacturers face declining market shares due to global competition, pandemic-related disruptions, and supply chain challenges. In such a competitive environment, it's crucial for manufacturers to enhance their customer experience to turn potential quotes into actual orders.

With 70% of quotes never becoming orders, manufacturers need to capitalize on customer interest by responding quickly and accurately.



*Of quotes never become orders**

CPQ solutions are instrumental in reducing quote times from days to minutes. Traditional manual processes, which rely heavily on back-office functions for every quote or price revision, are slow and prone to errors.

This not only leads to lost revenue but also drives customers to seek alternatives. Tacton's CPQ solution simplifies configuration, enabling non-technical sellers and buyers to configure complex equipment independently, without the need for technical support. The solution ensures that every configuration includes a correct sales bill of materials (BOM) and accurate pricing, providing customers with the final net price upfront, eliminating guesswork.

**Data is collected through Tacton's surveys with actual customers.*



Tacton Trusted Configuration

Sales Made Simple for Complex Manufacturing

When prospects visit a manufacturer's website, they want to visualize how the products they configure will look in their real-life environments.

With CPQ, manufacturers can offer customers **the ability to explore configured products using visualization and augmented reality**, creating a seamless buying experience that connects customers directly to the brand. By integrating CPQ into the web experience, manufacturers empower customers to configure highly customized industrial products based on their specific needs.

Guided selling, combined with 3D visual configuration, allows customers to see every change they make in real-time, ensuring they are fully engaged in the process. Advanced visualization capabilities, including augmented reality, provide an immersive experience that mirrors the B2C buying journey, resulting in higher quality leads with minimal manual intervention.

Responding to Disruption with Agility

The last two years have underscored the importance of being prepared for the unexpected. Supply chain disruptions have made it increasingly difficult for manufacturers to fulfill customer orders on time. Customers now expect timely delivery of their products, and any delays can damage trust and lead to lost business.

CPQ solutions facilitate a seamless data handshake between customer needs, order fulfillment, production schedules, and the supply chain. This ensures that any configured product can be delivered within the agreed budget and timeframe, providing customers with the flexibility to explore alternative options if necessary. By embracing digital tools like CPQ, manufacturers can minimize errors, improve lead times, and deliver a more reliable customer experience.

In a rapidly changing manufacturing environment, it's essential to find new ways to respond to customer needs. Relying on outdated manual processes that lead to incorrect quotes, slow lead times, and a poor customer experience can harm both your brand and bottom line. That's why leading global manufacturers are turning to Tacton to help them digitally transform their sales processes and enhance the customer journey.

Discover how Tacton can support your business in meeting the demands of today's manufacturing buyers.

[book a demo](#)

Headquarters:

Stockholm

*Klara Norra Kyrkogata 33 SE-111 22
Stockholm Sweden*

Chicago

*750 North State St. Floor 12
Chicago IL 60654, USA*

Regional Offices:

Karlsruhe

*Wachhausstrasse 1, 76227
Karlsruhe, Germany*

Tokyo

*Ginza Six 6-10-1 Ginza
Chuoku Tokyo, 1040061*

Warsaw

*Sienna 39 00-121
Warsaw, Poland*

Transform your sales journey with Tacton CPQ

Implement seamless configuration to order processes, real-time visualization, and streamlined operations across all channels. Discover compliant and sustainable solutions tailored to your needs. Book a demo call to elevate your customer experience today.

[book a demo](#)

 Tacton is a leading SaaS company trusted by global manufacturers. Tacton Trusted Configuration simplifies sales for manufacturers of complex products. Tacton's Configure Price Quote software is named a Leader by Gartner in the Magic Quadrant for CPQ Application Suites and is recognized for its advanced product configuration and visualization capabilities.

 Tacton's founders pioneered computer-based product configuration which today powers Tacton CPQ and CAD Design Automation. Since 1998, Tacton is trusted by global customers such as ABB, Daimler, MAN, Scania, Siemens, Xylem, and Yaskawa. It is co-headquartered in Chicago and Stockholm, with regional offices in Karlsruhe, Warsaw, and Tokyo.