

Signal-Led GTM™: The Operating Model for How B2B Actually Buys Now

Pipeline is no longer the source of truth. Here is what growth leaders need to see instead — and how to build it.

~5%

of B2B buyers are actively in-market at any given moment, per the Gartner / Forrester consensus.

70%

of Chief Sales Officers say their account-growth strategy misses key opportunities.

Most

of the buying journey is typically finished before a seller is ever contacted (6sense research).

The Blind Spot

Most GTM organizations were built for a market that no longer exists — one where demand was abundant and speed to respond was the whole game. That world drove teams to treat pipeline as the source of truth. Pipeline is not the source of truth. It is the output of decisions buyers already made somewhere else. By the time an opportunity is visible in the CRM, the buying group is largely formed and a shortlist already exists.

Where It Breaks: The Forecast

This blind spot shows up first in the forecast. Reps report stage and confidence; leadership rolls it up and calls it pipeline health. But most deals do not die with a clear no — they decay quietly, through missed follow-ups and fading engagement, until the window closes and the buyer never formally says anything at all. A forecast built on stage and rep sentiment cannot see that happening until it is too late to act.

The Shift Leaders Must Make

Leads	→	Signals
Pipeline	→	Pre-intent visibility
Activity tracking	→	Signal governance
Late-stage competition	→	Early-stage influence

What Signal-Led GTM™ Actually Means

Signal-Led GTM™ is not a sales tactic. It is an operating model that decides who to pursue, when to engage, and what to say based on live evidence of buying motion — not a quarterly account list or a stage in the funnel.

The Day 1 List™

The specific accounts showing the strongest evidence of buying motion happening right now — replacing "who should we target this quarter?" with "who is entering market today?" so effort goes where the odds are already shifting in your favor.

Signals the Model Tracks

- Executive leadership changes
- Funding and capital events
- M&A and market expansion
- Technology modernization programs
- Organizational restructuring

SIGNAL-LED GTM™ IN PRACTICE

DealPursuit

Most CRMs still forecast off stage and rep confidence, not evidence. DealPursuit visualizes buyer signals across open pipeline, flagging which deals are moving and which have gone quiet — so the forecast reflects reality, not optimism.

“Stop pursuing stories. Start pursuing deals.”

QUESTIONS FOR EVERY CEO

1. What signals do we track before an opportunity even exists?

2. Can we tell when a buying group is forming inside a target account?

3. How many deals do we lose without ever being seriously considered?

Believing your GTM is working because it used to is the most expensive assumption a CEO can make.

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Sources: Gartner / Forrester buyer-readiness consensus; 6sense Buyer Experience research; Lucrum Partners, "The Market Moved. Your GTM Didn't." (2026); SpurlQ deal-decay research (2026); DealPursuit product positioning (2026). Signal-Led GTM™, Signal Blindness™, and Day 1 List™ are trademarks of Lucrum Partners, LLC.