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Developing Asia-Pacific (APAC) Sales Excellence: Engineering Plastics Business for Internal Strategy

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Abstract

This paper examines sales excellence development in the APAC engineering plastics business, where it is necessary to fortify the internal strategy with regard to understanding customer, market study, marketing alignment, relationship management and identifying opportunity. A mixed-method research design was used where 30 professionals in various APAC markets were selected to participate in the research based on a structured 5 in-depth question survey and qualitative discussions. The results show that the sales in organizations have an excellent customer knowledge and relationship management skills, but their business processes remain disjointed and overly experience-oriented. Qualitative insights are an essential part of market analysis and market segmentation, and there is little use of analytical tools and analytical framework based on internal data. Moreover, the alignment in sales and marketing is not uniform, which means that it should be better connected between strategic and implementation goals and company values. Another area that was not developed fully was cross-regional collaboration and intelligence sharing, which restricted proactive market sensing and opportunity appraisal. The results of the study suggest the use of standardized analysis tools, strengthening cross-functional coordination, and institutionalizing customer intelligence training, strategic planning, and training in digital market sensing. All in all, the study will contribute to the picture of how APAC-based engineering of plastics organizations can go beyond relationship-based to insight-based, sales systems of strategic alignment that will help to sustain growth and regional competitiveness.

Keywords: Sales Excellence, Engineering Plastics, APAC Market, Internal Strategy, Market Intelligence, Customer Understanding

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1. Introduction

The engineering plastics industry faces a significant strategic value in the Aia-Pacific (APAC) region especially in the areas where there is high demand of high-performance, sustainable, and application-specific solutions. As the demand in the various industries, including automotive, electronics, and construction, mounts pressure on organizations in this area, they are under pressure to localize strategies, speed up technical interaction, and improve commercial responsiveness.

Market Intelligence (2024) estimates that the engineering plastics market in Asia-Pacific (APAC) will increase by USD 34.89 billion in 2024 and USD 45.67 billion in 2030 estimating CAGR 5.5%, owing to the high rate of urbanization, technology, and the rising demand in the packaging, electronic, automotive, and construction sectors. The use of engineering plastics in the automotive industry is also speeding up due to policy reforms and increased production of electric vehicles (EVs). In the meantime, construction industry especially in Japan is embracing high performance, more sustainable materials. These tendencies represent a general movement towards innovative products, quality, and eco-friendliness in the region (Market Intelligence, 2024).

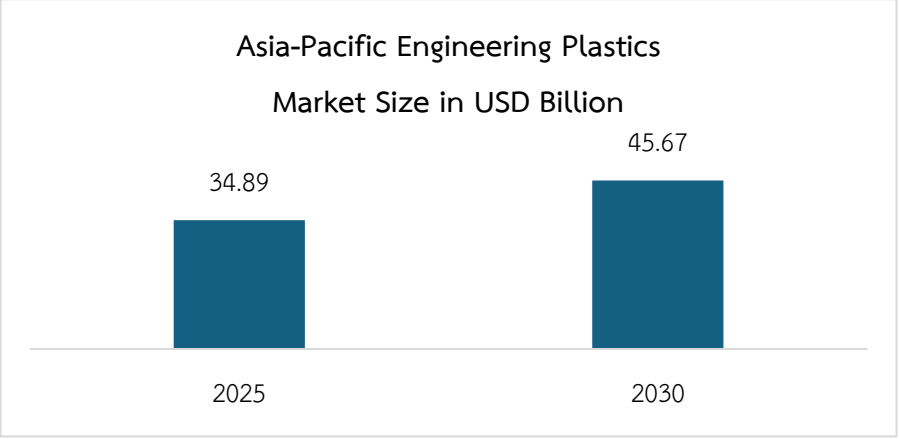

Figure 1: Asia-Pacific Engineering Plastics (EP) Market Size in USD Billion

Source: Market Intelligence (2024)

This study examines the present position of sales and marketing functions of the APAC operations of an engineering plastics company with a specific reference to internal alignment, customer-focused performance and development of the product after sales. The research is a result of a rising internal awareness that although the market potential is big, implementation is still disjointed among the sub-regions and therefore, the lead generation, customer retention, and the effectiveness of marketing is not uniform.

The industry of electric vehicles (EV) is growing at a very high pace, which is part of a larger industrial change in the whole region of APAC which directly affects the need of engineering plastics. EVs manufacture is supported by strategic policy, foreign direct investment, and localization of business operations by the major OEMs, including Chinese and Japanese (Monjagapate & Smitintu, 2024). This boom is not only the indicator of the growth in the production of automotive but also the demand of high-performance plastic components of EVs, such as the lightweight body parts, connectors and battery modules. Consequently, the engineering plastics industry is likely to take a central part in facilitating regional supply chains to satisfy the changing needs in the industry.

The determination of the effective sales strategy in the Southeast Asian polycarbonate sheet industry is closely connected with the structuring of the brand management according to the region. Effective companies are focused on four main strategic pillars, which are product innovation, local market adaptation, strong channel networks, and consistent after-sales services. Localization including assigning regional distributors, designing product sizes based on market needs, and providing market sensitive prices are important when involving industrial B2B customers. It is important to note that companies that invest in the training of local dealers, attending trade fairs and offering onsite technical assistance have significantly increased retaining more customers and increasing the market share. Indicatively, SheetTech Asia had been successful in retaining customers by 81% after the product diversification strategies to suit the regional demand and MaxShield Panels had been able to increase its market share 28% with the green branding strategies (Zhang and Zhang, 2025).

It asserted that as of 2030, EP market will have increased to USD 163.4 billion, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.7%, and a volume of 35,419.9 kilotonnes (KBV Research, 2022). Consumer appliances are one of the many uses that the product can be applied in, with demand making up more than USD 23 billion of the application in 2022. This increase

is explained by the growth of disposable incomes and the desire of consumers to use durable and efficient as well as multi purpose products. Polycarbonate, a significant branch of EP, is important in facilitating this demand because it has mechanical strength, transparency, and can withstand high temperatures. Also, engineering plastics are also finding their way in the electrical and electronics (E&E) industry where they are very good insulators and thus they are suitable in components like housings, switches, and connectors. The application of EP materials is further enhanced by development of the technology in injection molding and techniques of process. Nevertheless, as KBV Research (2022) claims, alongside these opportunities, it is the high cost of production of the engineering plastics that has curbed the growth of the market, especially because of the costs of raw materials and special additives which still remains an obstacle to larger industry implementation.

Even with the growing amount of academic research on the topic of sales strategy and marketing performance, the current empirical studies are mostly limited to the study of individual salesperson behaviour or generic functional fit (Leigh and Marshall, 2013; Strahle et al., 2013). There is little empirical research that studies sales-capability development at the organisational level in the field of B2B selling in the industrial market, particularly the developing markets in Asia-Pacific. Although past research highlights the importance of analytical capability (Peesker et al., 2022), relationship management (Zhang and Zhang, 2025) and strategic alignment, they do not have integrative models that explain how these dimensions interact to support internal sales excellence.

Within the engineering plastics industry, commercial practices in the Asia-Pacific region are still relationship-based with analytical adoption in a piece-meal fashion and no co-ordination of sales and marketing activities. This state of affairs creates a strategic looseness between experience-based customer interaction and market intelligence that is evidence-based to limit scalable performance to various regional markets.

Based on the analytical-capability framework developed by Peesker et al. (2022) and supported by the sales-marketing alignment theory (Strahle et al., 2013), the given research will focus on studying the internal sales excellence according to the organisational-capability approaches. The targeted objectives of the research are:

1. To assess the main dimensions of sales excellence, that is, customer insight, market segmentation, sales-marketing interface, relationship management, and opportunity identification in the context of Asia-Pacific engineering plastics.
2. To examine how analytical capability and cross functional coordination affects commercial effectiveness in regional markets.
3. To have an integrated internal strategy framework that will enable the shift to relationship-based selling to insight-driven sales excellence.

Through aiming at these, the research presents empirical data on how industrial B2B organisations can operationalize sales excellence using systematic analytics, coordinated planning, and institutionalized customer intelligence in the new markets in Asia-Pacific. Using a combination of qualitative data and quantitative measures, the study will help to develop a specific internal strategy to reach sales excellence in the entire APAC. The results would be used to make future choices in training, organizational design, resource utilization and go-to-market (GTM) calibration in the engineering plastics business.

Table 1: Sales Strategies in the Polycarbonate Diol Market

Sales Strategy Focus	Description / Approach	Strategic Objective
Performance Differentiation	Emphasizing superior properties such as durability, flexibility, and stability in polyurethane and coatings.	Position products as high-performance materials in industrial sectors.
Sustainability Focus	Promoting bio-based and recyclable polycarbonate diols with low VOC emissions.	Align with global environmental standards and customer ESG goals.
Regional Localization	Partnering with OEMs and local customers in APAC to ensure supply reliability and responsiveness.	Strengthen local market penetration and customer trust.
Solution Selling	Providing technical consultation, co-development, and tailored product support.	Build long-term client relationships and brand credibility.
Data-Driven Targeting	Using market analytics and segmentation to identify emerging opportunities.	Enable targeted, consultative selling and agile decision-making.

Source: Verified Market Reports (2025)

Verified Market Reports (2025) indicated that the sales strategy of the Polycarbonate diol market revolves around differentiation of performance and positioning as having sustainable products. Asahi Kasei, Kuraray, and other companies are companies that encourage high performance materials that are eco-friendly, both in automotive applications, coatings, and in construction applications. Localized collaborations increase the responsiveness in the APAC region whereas solution-based selling, which incorporates technical support and research and development collaboration, improves customer relationship. The growing adoption of data analytics and digital tools also allows a more targeted and customer-oriented sales engagement in the entire engineering plastics market.

2. Literature Reviews

Zhang and Zhang (2025) discuss the management of the brand and sales strategy in the polycarbonate sheet sector in Southeast Asia, where the authors identify four key success

factors, including product innovation, localization in the market, robust distribution channels, and dependable after sales services. Their research highlights the necessity to adjust to the local market necessities by offering products in a more localized way, charging them differently, and providing them with the support of the dealer. Moreover, Zhang and Zhang (2025) assert that companies that made investment in dealer training, technical service, and on site support were discovered to have better customer retention and brand loyalty. Long-term success in industrial B2B markets is more of relationships and quality service-based rather than just product based.

According to Leigh and Marshall (2013), some of the most important priorities in sales strategy research relate to the necessity to make the academic work more aligned with the actual business results. They divide sales research into three fields namely strategic direction, sales force management, and performance measurement. The authors claim that it is essential to change the emphasis on the individual behavior and address the aspects at the level of the organization and cross-functional integration. They also observe the increased relevance in terms of enhancing sales performance of technology and analytics. Their work can be used to base future research that would seek to relate sales strategy with the overall business objectives.

Strahle, Spiro and Acito (2013) discuss the way in which failure to align marketing strategy and sales goals can undermine the overall business performance. Their analysis demonstrates that even when corporate strategy focuses on maintenance or cost control, the sales managers usually seek to increase volume resulting into inconsistent strategies. The authors emphasize that there is a lack of effective communication, performance measures, and reward systems between marketing and sales activities to facilitate proper execution of the strategy.

Ebuzoeme (2024) examined how marketing strategies have influenced sales performance of a manufacturing firm in Nigeria based on the 4Ps framework of product, price, place, and promotion. The results of the research indicated that product and place strategies had a high positive impact on the sales performance, promotion is somewhat less positive, and pricing has no significant negative impact. According to the resource-based perspective, the study focused on the fact that marketing performance is improved with proper utilization of organizational resources. The research arrived at the conclusion that the enhancement of the quality of products, package, and distribution, as well as re-evaluating pricing policies, can generate a considerable improvement of sales performance.

According to Dorle (2016), successful selling involves strategic thinking; it entails planning, negotiating, and psychological intelligence. The paper emphasizes the integration of personal attributes and traits like intuition and flexibility, together with market awareness in order to formulate dynamic strategies by successful salespeople. Dorle differentiates between the classic and the modern approaches which implies that the traditional strategies are the basic ones, whereas the modern sales are characterized by innovation and flexibility.

The world market of polycarbonate compounds is growing at a fast rate and it has been stimulated by the increased demand of the product in the automotive, electronics, construction and consumer goods industries. Its most notable characteristics such as high impact resistance, optical clarity, and thermal stability make it the perfect material to use in lightweight vehicle components and components that are long-lasting and enduring (Fernandes, 2025). The performance of electronic factory and production efficiency are being improved with technological innovations such as nanotechnology and Industry 4.0 automation. Asia-Pacific is the leading region in the market development because of the industrialization in both China and India, and North America and Europe are concerned with sustainability and improved production. The larger companies like Covesto, SABIC and LG chem have not given up on research and development and strategic alliances as a way of ensuring competitiveness (Fernandes, 2025).

The role of analytical skills in enhancing sales performance in digitally transforming organisations was examined by Peesker, Kerr, Bolander, Ryals, Lister and Dover (2022). Their findings indicated that sales managers with greater analytical competence displayed a highly effective performance in relation to strategic decision making, accuracy in sales forecasting and team performance. The research also discovered that analytical capability helps in improving the interpretation of market data, determination of customer needs, and sales strategies by a manager as they contribute to organizational goals.

In addition, Peesker et al. (2022) reported that analytical skills are most efficient in the presence of good interpersonal and leadership competencies, which proves the importance of having a balanced competence in sales management. Those companies which invested in analytics training and cross-functional collaboration showed increased flexibility and increased growth of revenues. The authors of the study concluded that the development of analytical

skills in sales leaders does not only enhance operational performance but also enhances competitiveness advantage in the long term in data-driven markets.

Verified Market Reports (2025) indicate that performance differentiation, sustainability, and regional responsiveness are the sales strategies in the polycarbonate diol market. Covestro and Asahi Kasei companies place polycarbonate diols high-performance materials to increase the durability and flexibility of polyurethane. Sustainability has turned into a major selling point, and the manufacturers market bio-based and recyclable products to meet the environmental requirements and customer ESG concerns. In APAC, companies take localized sales strategies with the help of the OEMs in order to make sure about the reliability of supply and responsiveness. Moreover, the use of solution-selling models, when the company integrates product knowledge with technical cooperation to build stronger relationships with the customer, is common with many companies. The report also reports a rise in the application of data analytics to determine new markets and streamline go-to-market strategies, which are a wider industry shift in the direction of insight-driven, customer-based sales excellence.

2.1 Research Gap and Contribution

Despite the large body of literature related to sales strategy, customer relationship management, and marketing alignment in industrial markets (Leigh and Marshall, 2013; Peesker et al., 2022; Zhang and Zhang, 2025), most of the empirical studies are focused on the developed Western economies or examine sales effectiveness at either conceptual or functional level. There is little empirical information that explores the nature of how internal sales excellence has been developed within the Asia-pacific engineering plastics industry especially as regards to organizational capability that embraces customer insight, analytical market segmentation, sales-marketing alignment, relationship management and opportunity identification. Further, a priori research mostly focuses on the competencies of salespersons or generic marketing initiatives, but there is lack of research which analyzes the operationalisation of sales excellence at regional commercial level in multiple markets in the APAC region with heterogeneous maturity rates.

This research aims to address these gaps by providing empirical evidence based on multi country APAC providers and suggesting a unified internal model which connects customer insight, analytical ability, cross-functional alignment and market intelligence. The study provides the much needed practical knowledge on the ways in which the engineering plastics companies

can reposition themselves to adopt insight-based sales excellence of relationships based selling in the emerging and established APAC markets.

3. Methodology

3.1 Conceptual Framework

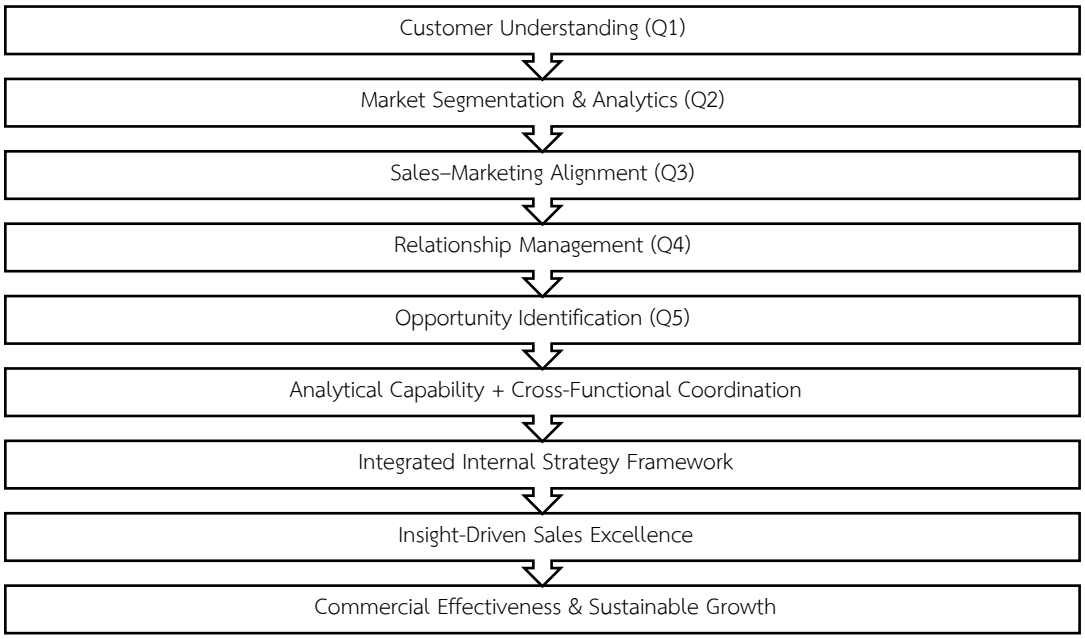

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 shows how the combination of customer understanding, analytical skill, sales-marketing coordination, relationship administration and sensing of openings can help the transformation of relationship selling to insight sales excellence in APAC engineering plastics markets.

3.2 Research Design

The research design used in this study was descriptive to evaluate sales and marketing strength in the polycarbonate business in APAC. The study was based on the framework offered by Peesker et al. (2022), who emphasized the role of analytical and interpersonal skills in the sales performance and attempted to assess the impact of these competencies on customer

engagement, marketing performance, and business performance in the engineering plastics market.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

The structured questionnaire was used to collect the data, which was done using a questionnaire form, which was collect in Quarter 3 in 2025. The instrument imprisoned 5 questions which encompassed customer knowledge, marketing planning, lead generation, communication, presentation, after sales services and competitive awareness. The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, whereas qualitative information about the sales capabilities and challenges was received through open-ended questions.

3.4 Participants and Sampling

The convenience sampling was also used due to the limitation on logistics that came with reaching geographically spread APAC markets and the commercials that is confidential in nature. The respondents were selected based on their first-hand experience in customer interaction, sales performance and technical support to ensure the applicability of the feedback that is obtained. A sample of 30 participants is arguably small by the standards of a large population like the APAC market, although the study is focused more on the depth of experience of the professionals in the leading commercial practices than the large population coverage. This means that this method fits within the exploratory organizational research, whereby expert-based sampling is applied to produce strategic information on developing internal capability.

3.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze quantitative data in order to define important trends, average scores, and gaps in capabilities. Thematic coding was used to analyze qualitative responses in order to determine recurring trends in the analytical thinking, interpersonal effectiveness, and cross-functional collaboration. As per Peesker et al. (2022), the correlation between analytical competence and overall sales performance was the focus of the analysis.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

The regional managers reviewed the content validity and clarity of the questionnaire. Internal consistency checks and consistency of quantitative and comparison of qualitative

findings and feedback were used to guarantee reliability. The ethical standards involved keeping all the company and participant information secret.

The validity of the instruments was done by the expert review by regional sales managers and subject matter specialists, whereby, clarity, relevance and compatibility between the items and the objectives of the research were assessed before the collection of data. The questions of the questionnaires were structured based on the found literature, specifically Peesker et al. (2022) and Zhang and Zhang (2025) to enhance the content validity.

Due to the exploratory nature of the study and the confidentiality limitations of the organization where the study was conducted, no formal pilot survey, including statistical reliability testing (e.g., Cronbachs alpha), was conducted. In its turn, reliability was also addressed, methodological triangulation was provided, the combination of the Likert-scale responses with the qualitative interview data, and the thematic consistency checks among participant responses.

Moreover, the participants were chosen using the sample of direct participation in sales and business activities, which also contributes to the increase in the construct validity with the help of expert-based sample. There is a merging of both the quantitative tendencies and the qualitative inferences, which substantiate the relevance and reliability of the conclusions.

Table 2: Literature-Supported Questionnaire Items for Developing and Nurturing Sales & Marketing Skills

No.	Original Question	Relevance to Research Focus	Supporting Literature
1	How effectively do you identify, interpret, and respond to customer requirements within the APAC engineering plastics market?	Measures customer orientation, a key foundation of sales excellence.	Marketing Intelligence (2024)
2	What approaches or analytical tools do you use to evaluate and segment target markets in the APAC region?	Captures market insight and analytical capability, essential for strategic planning.	Monjagapate & Smitintu (2024)
3	How effectively are sales and marketing plans aligned to support business objectives in the APAC engineering plastics sector?	Evaluates strategic sales and marketing alignment, central to internal sales excellence.	Zhang & Zhang (2025)
4	What relationship-building strategies are applied to strengthen long-term customer partnerships and ensure mutual value creation?	Focuses on relationship-building and trust, critical in B2B engineering markets.	Peesker et al. (2022)
5	How proactively do you identify and assess emerging market opportunities, and communicate key insights across the APAC commercial organization?	Reflects market agility and strategic foresight, key to long-term competitiveness.	Fernandes (2025)

4. Research Result

4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Participants

A sample population of 30 respondents was used in the study, which was representative of the employees employed in the polycarbonate business in 8 countries in APAC. Those that were incorporated were professionals in India (3), Korea (6), Taiwan (1), Thailand (5), Japan (8), Indonesia (1), Malaysia (1), and Vietnam (2).

Table 3: Distribution by Job Function

Position	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Sales	25	83.3%
Technical	4	13.3%
Extra / Support Role	1	3.3%
Total	**30**	**100%**

Among 30 respondents, 83.3% were in the sales jobs, as the main focus of the study was on the development of sales capabilities. A lower percentage (13.3) was technical support functions, and one respondent (3.3) was in the auxiliary position.

Japan (26.7%), Korea (20.0%) and Thailand (16.7%) were the most represented responds (greater than 60% of the total sample). This allocation is a sign of the significant presence in the market and concentration of customers in the Northeast and Southeast Asia of the companies.

The 8 countries will be represented in the multinational to offer the coverage motivated by mature markets (Japan, Korea) and emerging markets (Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, and Taiwan) markets of APAC so that the sales and marketing practices can be compared in the different levels of market maturity. The composition of the sample is in line with the aim of the study to get a general view of the sales capability differences in polycarbonate industry.

Table 4: Q1 How effectively do you identify, interpret, and respond to customer requirements within the APAC engineering plastics market?

Rating (1–5)	Description	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely low	0	0%
2	Slightly	3	10.0%
3	Moderately	6	20.0%
4	Very well	18	60.0%
5	Extremely well	3	10.0%
Total		**30**	**100%**
Mean = 3.7, SD = 0.78			

Table 5: Q2 What methods do you currently use to identify and understand our target market?

Theme	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Representative Response
Direct customer interviews / surveys	11	36.7%	"Engage directly with potential customers through interviews to gather qualitative insights."
Field visits and trade shows	8	26.6%	"Visit customers, attend trade fairs, and discuss trends with design and OEM teams."
Data analytics and trend tracking	6	20.0%	"Utilize data analytics to understand customer behavior and preferences."
Customer profiling / segmentation	5	16.7%	"Create detailed profiles of ideal customers based on purchasing patterns and demographics."
Total	**30**	**100%**	

Note: This qualitative question was thematically coded into four main approaches.

Table 6: Q3 Do you have a clear marketing plan that outlines our promotional strategy?

	Description	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Not at all	1	3.3%
2	Slightly	3	10.0%
3	Moderately	10	33.4%
4	Very well	12	40.0%
5	Extremely well	4	13.3%
Total		**30**	**100%**
Mean = 3.5, SD = 0.93			

Table 7: Q4 What strategies do you employ to build lasting trust with customers and achieve Win–Win outcomes?

Theme	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Representative Response
Transparency and open communication	10	33.3%	"Being transparent and responsive during issues to build reliability."
Technical and problem-solving support	9	30.0%	"Provide consistent technical support and evidence-based solutions."
Relationship continuity and reliability	6	20.0%	"Maintain long-term reliability and follow up on performance."
Collaborative innovation	5	16.7%	"Work with customers on co-development and new applications."
Total	**30**	**100%**	

Note: This qualitative question was thematically coded into four main approaches.

Table 8: Q5 How do you investigate opportunities to enter new markets or segments?

Theme	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Representative Response
Team communication and sharing	9	30.0%	"Discuss trends and opportunities with internal and regional teams."
Market monitoring and trade journals	8	26.7%	"Subscribe to trade magazines and attend industry conferences."
Data-driven analysis and forecasting	7	23.3%	"Use internal reports and competitive benchmarking to identify new applications."
Customer collaboration and feedback	6	20.0%	"Collect insights during customer meetings and share internally."
Total	**30**	**100%**	

Note: This qualitative question was thematically coded into four main approaches.

5. Discussion

5.1 Understanding and Responding to Customer Requirements

The Question 1 analysis, which was based on the following question How effectively do you identify, interpret and respond to customer requirements in the APAC engineering plastics market? demonstrated that the respondents were highly customer-oriented. However, the mean of 3.70 (SD = 0.78) indicates that the majority of respondents had rated themselves as very/extremely effective in their grasp and response to customer needs. It shows that the sales teams in the APAC region have effectively developed skills of interpersonal and technical engagement that allows them to single out the expectations of certain clients and offer custom-made solutions.

Nonetheless, qualitative responses implied that some extent of this customer knowledge would be related to informal contacts, such as visiting the sites, testing the products, and personal relations, but not the systematic data gathering. Although the methods are conducive to the development of close relationships, they can also restrict scalability and cross-market consistency. This also corresponds to the results of Market Intelligence (2024) which

pointed out that in industrial B2B markets, customer insight is more likely to be based on personal experience as opposed to formal analytics. To turn the APAC operations toward sales excellence, it is recommended that the institutional knowledge-sharing should improve and that integrated CRM systems should be implemented in order to turn customer experience into operational intelligence.

5.2 Evaluating and Segmenting Target Markets

In Question 2, Which strategies or analytical tools do you use to analyze and segment target markets in the APAC region, showed that employees tend to use direct engagement strategy like interviews, visits to customers, and trade shows to determine the potential segment. Such data-driven instruments as analytics software and competitive benchmarking were mentioned less often, which indicated an existing breach between experiential and analytical market knowledge.

This observation implies that teams have a high level of qualitative insights, but they still need additional market analytics and segmentation skills. According to Monjagapate and Smitintu (2024), one of the challenges organizations in emerging APAC markets have to deal with is the difficulty in moving towards the evidence-based sales analysis, instead of focusing on relationship-based analysis. Reinforcement of data interpretation, competitor intelligence and segmentation modeling would assist the company in identifying customers of high value more effectively as well as match market strategy to long-term growth goals.

5.3 Alignment of Sales and Marketing Plans

In Question 3, How successful are the sales and marketing strategies aligned to the business goals in the APAC engineering plastics industry, the responses showed that it is moderately aligned with the overall mean of 3.50 (SD = 0.93). The majority of the participants claimed that their marketing plans are clear but it can be enhanced by combining with sales execution and technical support functions.

This partial congruency is indicative of a larger organizational issue facing multinational B2B companies, in which regional teams might be operating in silo. These results are also in line with Zhang and Zhang (2025) who pointed out that strategic alignment of the marketing and sales functions has a direct impact on commercial responsiveness and market responsiveness. In order to strengthen this alignment, APAC operations must formalize collaborative planning

cycles, common performance indicators and cross-functional communication practices, making sure that the marketing intelligence is reflected in the sales strategies at the field level.

5.4 Building Long-Term Customer Relationships

In Question 4, What relationship-building strategies are used to build long-term customer partnerships and guarantee mutual value creation? indicated that transparency, reliability and technical collaboration are the core factors in maintaining trust in customer relationships. More than 60% of the respondents had made clear communication and constant support their core pillars of relationship strength.

Such results can be compared to the results of Peesker et al. (2022), who have established trust-based relationships and consultative engagement as major predictors of sales excellence in industrial markets. Another theme that respondents emphasized on is the importance of adding value to the services, developing solutions together, and being receptive to the concerns of the customers as a way of gaining credibility and customer loyalty. To enhance this aspect further, the company may sign a relationship management model that combines technical, commercial, and service operations through a single customer interaction model.

5.5 Identifying and Communicating Market Opportunities

In Question 5, How proactively do you recognise and evaluate new market opportunities, and communicate major insights across the APAC commercial organisation, the responses showed that teams stay attentive to the industry news, participate in trade shows, and communicate insights within the company. Nevertheless, it is still fragmented with minimal application of structured analytical tools or centralized systems of sharing knowledge.

This implies that there is a high level of consciousness of emerging opportunities and lack of formalisation of the market intelligence processes. According to Fernandes (2025), the organizations that combine systematic market scanning and internal communication systems have a higher probability of maintaining long-term growth in unstable regional conditions. Thus, APAC engineering plastics team ought to contemplate the adoption of an official market intelligence system, in which trend information, customer response, and competitor activities are orderedly recorded and shared among groupings.

5.6 Summary of Discussion

Across the five capability dimensions examined, the APAC organization demonstrates strong customer orientation, moderate analytical capability, and high relational strength. However, opportunities exist to enhance data-driven market segmentation, cross-functional alignment, and structured knowledge management. The integration of digital tools, CRM analytics, and regional coordination mechanisms would help institutionalize current best practices and advance the organization toward sustainable sales excellence.

Collectively, the findings reinforce the notion that sales excellence in the APAC engineering plastics market requires not only strong interpersonal and technical engagement but also a systematic, intelligence-driven approach to market understanding, relationship management, and strategic alignment.

6. Strategic Development for Sales Skills

6.1 Strategic Recommendations based on Q1 Findings

The Question 1 analysis showed that the majority of respondents believed that they were very effective when dealing with customer requirements (Mean = 3.88, SD = 0.78). In the region, they have a strong customer-oriented culture: about 74% of them considered their capability to be very well. Nonetheless, the data of interviews showed that, even though employees show great interpersonal and technical skills of engagement, data sharing mechanisms are not well-organized and structured across countries. This is in line with what the Marketing Intelligence (2024) pointed out that in many industrial B2B markets, experiential and relationship-based insights are more likely to drive markets than formal analytics.

At least some informal strategic practices are also already in place within the company, such as customer alignment training achieved via workshops, peer discussions and regional meetings, which were pointed out through the qualitative feedback. In spite of the fact that these initiatives encourage collaboration, they are not standardized to a sufficient extent and need to be institutionalized. The other application described by the respondents pertains to the application of market and competitor intelligence tools even though they are not uniformly used: purchase data monitoring to monitor trends in the industry and customers. This result confirms Zhang and Zhang (2025) who underline the role of cross-functional integration and systematic knowledge-sharing to improve the performance of sales. In addition, Peesker et al.

(2022) claim that structured customer knowledge management and consultative selling are essential elements of the excellence of industrial sales. Thus, it is proposed to introduce an APAC-wide customer intelligence center to be able to gather, coordinate, and share customer data with the regional teams to provide a more data-driven and consistent response to the customer engagement.

6.2 Strategic Recommendations based on Q2 Findings

The analysis of Question 2 indicated that the majority of the respondents depended on qualitative techniques to learn about the market dynamics, including interviews with the customers, visits to the field, and trade fairs. Only a small fraction of 37% used interviews or surveys to collect customer insights, with only five out of ten using data analytics or trend-tracking solutions. This shows that the customer knowledge is still more of a relationship-oriented knowledge, implying a high people-focused sales culture in the organization. Nonetheless, the infrequent application of analytic tools and frameworks of systematic segmentation indicate that evidence-based decision making remains immature across the APAC activities. This observation is in line with Monjagapate and Smitintu (2024) who noted that a significant number of organizations in the emerging markets have difficulties when it comes to transforming relational to evidence-based sales analysis.

Interview information also revealed that there are a number of strategic practices to enhance market evaluation and segmentation. Respondents highlighted the importance of being trained in data analytics with the help of applications like Power BI, Tableau, and Excel dashboards to increase their capacity to analyze customer trends and incorporate quantitative data in decision-making. Moreover, respondents also emphasized that persona-building workshops would be helpful to create a full-fledged customer profile that would include both qualitative and quantitative information as well-help to design more specific marketing strategies. This method is consistent with Marketing Intelligence (2024) that focuses on the combination of analytical and experience-based knowledge to reach a balanced customer comprehension. Moreover, the respondents proposed enhancing positioning strategy coaching to enhance customer messaging alignment with business value propositions, sustainability objectives, and segment-specific priorities. Similar to what Zhang and Zhang (2025) contend, systematic segmentation and positioning can help organizations to synchronize their sales and marketing strategies, making them more responsive to the entire market in general.

6.3 Strategic Recommendations based on Q3 Findings

Analysis of Question 3 showed that the respondents felt that there was moderate alignment with the mean being 3.5 and SD = 0.93. Whereas 36% of the respondents said that their marketing plans were clear and well-defined, most of them (64%) said that they were moderately or slightly developed. These results indicate that despite the awareness among employees of the significance of the marketing and sales integration, it is not well implemented in the APAC markets. The findings new that there was no co-ordination between the sales and marketing functions especially in the aspect of converting the knowledge of customers to structured promotional and strategic campaigns. This is consistent with Zhang and Zhang (2025) who discovered that poor cross-functional integration would inhibit commercial responsiveness and strategic implementation in a B2B organization.

The existing practices and areas of improvement were revealed through interview data. Marketing planning and alignment training were highlighted as a necessity by the respondents since most of the teams have no systematic structure linking customer profiles to business strategy. It was suggested to use such tools like SOSTAC, alignment of the goals, or the 4ps model to standardize the planning process and be able to make sure that there is congruence between marketing operations, sales targets, and regional developmental aims. Moreover, respondents suggested alignment workshops as a source of promoting digital marketing, value propositions, and audience segmentation in a consistent manner. Such practices resonate with Fernandes (2025) who also stressed the importance of integrated marketing planning and data-driven coordination to make sales effective within the region.

Also, the research concluded that shared learning and ongoing improvement might be supported through peer-based sessions of sharing the best practices by high-performing teams that shared campaign templates, planning techniques, and lessons learned. This is corroborated by the findings of Marketing Intelligence (2024) who opined that institutionalizing knowledge sharing improves organizational learning and strategic responsiveness in industrial sales environment.

6.4 Strategic Recommendations based on Q4 Findings

The Question 4 analysis provided four overarching strategic themes that were found on the basis of the interview data: transparency and open communication (33.3%), technical and problem-solving support (30%), relationship continuity and reliability (20%), and collaborative

innovation (16.7%). The results have shown that the customer confidence in the APAC engineering plastics market is majorly based on keeping open communication, offer of constant technical assistance, and reliability in follow-ups on a project. Companies in markets like Japan, India and Vietnam stressed that responsiveness and reliability ensure that credibility and customer loyalty is attained in the long run. This finding is consistent with that of Peesker et al. (2022), who found that transparency, responsiveness, and consultative engagement are the predictors of sales excellence in industrial B2B markets.

The qualitative interviews also found out that transparency and reliability coupled together is viewed as the best mechanism in developing and maintaining trust. The respondents observed that active communication, timely detection of problems, and provision of evidence-based solutions can contribute to making the company a preferred business partner, but not a transactional supplier. The finding is consistent with Zhang and Zhang (2025) who highlighted that customer collaboration and technical value creation increase the sustainability of partnerships in the long run. Also, team innovation, especially in co-development project and joint application testing had been indicated to be critical in winning-win results within the automotive and electronics industries. Nevertheless, a great number of these practices are not formalized and could use a systematic implementation into the corporate process of the company.

On the basis of these insights, a number of strategic recommendations are given. To begin with, the interpersonal communication and conflict resolution may be improved with the introduction of Trust-Building Communication Workshops. Second, Customer KPI Discovery and Mapping Training would be an effective way of ensuring that sales teams can decide and pinpoint with the strategic goals of customers, which include sustainability, performance, and cost efficiency. Lastly, a Strategic Value Selling Program has the potential to establish consultative selling practices as a matter of institutionalization, making the firm an innovation-driven, solutions-oriented partner, which would be a recommendation in line with Fernandes (2025), who highlighted the importance of structured relationship management to realize long-term sales performance in the APAC industrial market.

6.5 Strategic Recommendations based on Q5 Findings

Findings from the Question 5 revealed that the majority of the respondents used informal and experience-based processes instead of formal systems of analysis. The qualitative

information demonstrated that there are four broad themes: team communication and sharing (30%), market monitoring and trade journals (26.7%), data-driven analysis, and forecasting (23.3%), and customer collaboration and feedback (20%). These data show that although employees closely monitor the situation in the market by reading trade publications, benchmarking and meeting customers, there is no organized intelligence-sharing procedure and coordination across the regions. This disconnect is an implication of incoherency in the capturing and dispensing of market insights throughout APAC, which leads to slow reactions to developing trends. These results are congruent with those of Fernandes (2025) who underlined the fact that the organizations that managed to formalize their intelligence systems and have predictive analytics capabilities are in a better position to maintain growth in unstable regional markets.

The responses during interviews also indicated that the main sources of finding new opportunities are customer touchpoints and internal conversation, but these interactions are mostly unstructured and informal. Lack of formal processes of capturing and sharing of insights across markets underscores the importance of formalizing knowledge management. In line with the Marketing Intelligence (2024), it would be beneficial to create a centralized market intelligence framework and joint communication platforms to convert disjointed insights into action plans. The prospective use of AI-based tools, dashboards, and digital analytics systems, which could predict the market changes, were identified by the respondents as well, as the technologies could resolve the challenges of responding to the local and being coordinated on the global level.

On these understandings, a number of strategic recommendations were suggested. Structured Market Sensing Workshops might improve the ability of staff to gather and analyze market data in a systematic manner and Trend Communication Protocols (e.g. standard reporting template or monthly digests) could make cross-team information flow more efficient. Moreover, Global-to-Local Strategy Sessions and Digital Resource Training would encourage the alignment of various countries more closely and enhance analytical capability. These actions resonate with those made by Zhang and Zhang (2025), who said that competitive agility in B2B industrial markets is essential to maintaining success in cross-regional communication and data-driven decision-making.

Table 9: Key findings and Strategic Recommendations

Focus Area (Question)	Key Findings	Strategic Recommendations
Q1. Understanding and Responding to Customer Requirements	Customer orientation is high (Mean = 3.70, SD = 0.78) with personal relationship and informal interaction being the primary resource the respondents use. Customer insights are an experience-based and not data-driven one.	Establish an institutionalized CRM and knowledge sharing system, codify customer insight training and strengthen cross regional data integration.
Q2. Evaluating and Segmenting Target Markets	Qualitative tools (e.g., interviews, visits) are used by teams the most and there is little utilisation of analytics and data-driven segmentation. Representative of a discrepancy in the ability to analyze.	Training Data analytics (Power BI, Tableau), persona-building workshops and improved segmentation modeling should be provided to integrate both qualitative and quantitative knowledge.
Q3. Alignment of Sales and Marketing Plans	Intermediate relationship between sales and marketing (Mean = 3.50, SD = 0.93). Organizational planning is not well structured in many teams.	Introduce joint planning workshops, use OKR/SOSTAC models, and promote the session of best practices sharing to align marketing.
Q4. Building Long-Term Customer Relationships	Some of the important themes include trust, transparency, and reliability. The relationship-building practices are informal but effective.	Implement Trust-Building Communication Workshops, Customer KPI Mapping Training, and a Strategic Value Selling Program to put the process of managing relationships on paper.
Q5. Identifying and Communicating Market Opportunities	Teams are based on the informal communication, trade journals, and meetings. The market sensing is unstructured and is not using formal data tools.	Hold Structured Market Sensing Workshops, set Trend Communication Protocols and implement AI based predictions and digital dashboards of proactive market intelligence.

6.6 Practical Implementation Roadmap

To make the suggested strategic suggestions practical, the current study converts the pertinent findings into an action plan that outlines short-term, mid-term and long-term projects.

Table 10: Practical Implementation Roadmap for APAC Sales Excellence

Action	Responsible Unit	Expected Outcome
Conduct CRM training and standardize customer data entry across APAC	Sales Excellence Team / IT	Unified customer database and improved knowledge sharing
Launch Trust-Building Communication Workshops	HR / Regional Sales Managers	Improved customer engagement consistency
Implement Power BI / dashboard reporting for market segmentation	Sales Operations	Data-driven customer targeting
Organize quarterly Sales–Marketing Alignment Workshops	Marketing + Sales	Better alignment of campaigns and sales execution
Establish APAC Market Intelligence Hub	Regional Management	Centralized opportunity tracking and trend forecasting
Institutionalize Strategic Value Selling Program	Commercial Excellence	Stronger solution-selling capability

7. Conclusion

Regarding academic contribution, this research expounds the already available literature on sales excellence by placing the contextual development of organizational sales capabilities in an APAC engineering plastics industry. In contrast to the previous studies, where the majority of studies concentrate on the specific sales performance or generic marketing models, the current research combines the customer orientation, analytical market segmentation, sales-marketing alignment, relationship management, and opportunity sensing

into a single inner strategy scheme. The results draw region-specific and show that experiential knowledge can be institutionalized using structured analytics and cross-regional coordination, which contributes to the empirical knowledge of sales excellence in emerging industrial markets.

This study investigated how sales excellence has evolved in the APAC engineering plastics business, and the study has been conducted in five aspects including customer understanding, market segmentation, marketing alignment, relationship management, and opportunity identification. The knowledge gained after interviewing 30 experts in the region confirmed that teams are very customer-sensitive and technically competent, but structured analysis, strategic planning, and inter-regional partnership are still gaps. The research established that there is a general high level of understanding of customers, which is more grounded on subjective experience than on systematic models. Qualitative insights are mostly used to conduct market analysis and market segmentation with a small portion of data analytics. The degree of marketing alignment is moderate since a significant number of plans are not clearly linked to the business objectives. Relationship management was a strength, and it focuses on transparency, reliability and technical problem-solving but they are informal and market specific. Most of the respondents are proactive in tracking and interacting with customers in the process of identifying new opportunities, although the intelligence sharing between countries is inconsistent. The next essential steps should be strengthening data-driven decision-making, formalizing cross-regional knowledge exchange, and improving analytical and communication skills. Finally, the results indicate that the sales organization of APAC is well-based on customer orientation; however, the shift towards a more organized, insight-based and strategy-focused model is needed. Through institutionalization of the analytical tools, integrated planning and perpetual capability building, the company will be in a position to attain sustainable sales excellence and will stay competitive in the dynamic engineering plastics industry.

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