

# 5 Ways Sales Is Changing Forever

What does “the shopping experience” mean when everyone can use dozens of shopping carts on their smartphones? We had a chance to chat with John Fairclough, CEO of Resicom, about how his company can optimize the store environment in an age when in-store shopping competes with one-click buying.

## About the Host

“Chad is a proven sales and marketing executive with 20+ years of experience building successful revenue generating teams. Relentlessly focused on training and coaching to leverage the ValueSelling framework, Chad has a tireless dedication to helping companies focus on the value-creation chain. • He has built global sales and marketing organizations focused on the F500; trained teams and executives on strategies to increase revenue and market-share, and worked on large-scale, enterprise projects in a variety of industries with clients including Verizon, Microsoft, Minnesota Vikings, Ingersoll Rand, and others. His unique style and dedication to the success of people he works with makes Chad a force to be reckoned with and an invaluable asset to companies focused on growth. • Chad holds an MBA from Regis University – Denver, and a BA from University of Southern Indiana.”

Link to the podcast:

<https://www.valueprimesolutions.com/sales-john-fairclough/>



# John Fairclough on 5 Ways Sales Is Changing Forever

**Chad:** *You're listening to the B2B Revenue Executive Experience, a podcast dedicated to helping executives train their sales and marketing teams to optimize growth. Whether you're looking for techniques and strategies, or tools and resources, you've come to the right place. Let's accelerate your growth in three, two, one.*

*Welcome everyone to the B2B Revenue Executive Experience, I'm your host Chad Sanderson. Today we're talking about creating a world class culture, how that impacts the service you deliver to clients, and how you really need to be selling who you are, not vaporware or some promise that the rest of the organization can't deliver. To help us we have John Fairclough, CEO of Resicom, a company focused on enabling customer experience through construction and facility maintenance. A different side of the CX equation, which you've all heard me talk about before. John, thank you for taking the time today, welcome to the show.*

**John:** Thanks for having me, Chad.

**Chad:** *All right, let's start with the obvious. And how did you become CEO of Resicom? And just a bit of background and context especially around what Resicom does.*

**John:** Sure, thank you. So I started Resicom about 20 years ago, and prior to that I had worked in some family businesses, all my family's in the trades and generation before me and the generation before them. And I had helped one of my uncles grow into his construction business, and his painting company, and from there I went on my own and gave it a shot. Gave it a go.

**Chad:** *And it's been wildly successful it sounds like.*

**John:** It's been a fun 20 year ride, that's for sure.

**Chad:** *So Resicom has an interesting part to play in the customer experience of brand protection area. My background I spent 10 years selling CX digital services had emerged digital and physical spaces. And you guys really focus on the actual construction and maintenance of those physical spaces. So as we were prepping for the podcast you mentioned wanting to touch on culture and how it impacts the services you provide. I'm kind of curious, why that topic? And why now?*

**John:** Well the services that we provide to retailers are really to help them protect the shopping experience. And so it really got us focused in on understanding what the designed experience is, and then what steps can be taken to protect it, or to enhance it. And so all kinds of different projects have come our way to manage the smell of the store. One of clients used to go around and spray cologne bottles, and then they found out the managers were spraying too much or too little, so they installed blowers so that the scent was consistent. Right?

And so just addressing all of the senses of the shopper's experience and the role that they play in purchasing. So understanding that the whole person is involved in the shopping decision and paying attention to that, well then we really better know what it is that we wanna be. And when we go out and sell ourselves and pitch our services, we need to make sure that it's true, the promises that we're making we can keep. We've just found that it's super important for the culture of the company to really encourage and promote working in alignment with what we promise.

**Chad:** *And so you've got a couple of things there I wanna touch on. So retail obviously a lot of attention on the retail sector right now, especially with stores that, let's say, didn't invest in their experience, a la Sears. And stores like that. And then you have the higher end stores, you said the cologne thing is funny, I walked into an American Eagle Outfitters one time, and had to turn around and walk about because it was just the scent was overpowering. So I completely understand how those little nuances play into that.*



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**Chad:** *I'm curious, how do you work with your sales team, or your people that are out there building those relationships, how do you work with them to make sure that they really understand all of the nuances that goes into a true design and construction of a physical space?*

**John:** Well the clients bring us in to execute what their vision is. So they may have made a determination that, hey if we changed the color of our walls to light gray, that that's going to make it a more comfortable environment for our customers to linger. And if the longer they linger the more they buy. Or some other research or something that they've done. So we help them execute the test, then they derive the data from that and then maybe go out and roll that out fleet wide. So we're involved on that piece of it as well as any other ideas that they wanna try.

I mean, it's harder to do things better, faster and cheaper if you're not trying something new. So we get involved in a lot of those prototypes because we understand that that's what our doing. Our mission here is to try to find ways to better connect. And as you're doing that, it's a theory, and by prototyping and beta testing, you're proving out the theory that then gives you the green light to go forward with a project. And so when it comes to our sales team, basically we call them client advocates.

And their role is to understand the objectives of the client, and then bring those back to our team to look at from a bunch of different perspectives to provide something of value to them.

**Chad:** *So it goes a step beyond just the typical, hey here's a spec go build my store. It's really a collaborative ... It's almost a blend between the services side and the execution side of it, working in collaboration with a customer to make sure that their vision that they have is actually the right vision. Because maybe they may have some of the wrong ideas, it wouldn't be unusual in some of the cases I've seen. But then making sure that your sales people, your advocates, are with them. Are they with them all the way through the process?*

**John:** Well sure. And so most of our accounts, we don't really get hired on a project by project basis. We have accounts that we land, that we then take care of the projects as they come up. So we have an ongoing gig rather than a project specific type of relationship typically. That relationship is really one we're regularly reviewing. Our clients, I mean we're dealing with some of the most sophisticated buyers in the world, right? I mean, our clients are recognizable names, they're household names. So when those companies are buying services, we're dealing with a professional buyer. We're not dealing with someone that this is something that they do with 5 or 10% of their time. A lot of times these people are in charge of millions and millions of dollars.

So we have to bring value to them. And to do that, we better understand what their objectives are and then provide options that will meet that. And again, everything is just pushed for better, faster, cheaper, we call it smarter. You know?

**Chad:** *Everybody wants it better, faster, cheaper. And you probably can't tell me, but I'm dying to ask, and if you don't respond to the question then I'll leave it alone. But, the new McDonald's they just unveiled in I think it's Chicago that everybody's saying looks like the Apple Store. I don't suppose you guys were involved in that one?*

**John:** We were not, but it's pretty cool what they've done.

**Chad:** *It was amazing, right? It was an amazing evolution of that in store experience. McDonald's kind of been playing with that a little bit, dealing with also the health issues, right? So the totality of what they sell and the environment in which you're experiencing it. It was an interesting unveil, at least from an outsider's standpoint.*



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**John:** And then Tesla imitated the model as well, so that the whole Apple Store experience is what Tesla went out and pursued on its own as well. Apple has some of the highest sales per square foot, I think it is the number one sales per square foot retailer out there. And so anytime you're a leader like that, people are gonna look at what you're doing and look to copy it, or to hire your people away so that they can implement the same kind of thing. And there's a lot to be said for the attention to detail and that shopping experience. And you better believe that's part of the culture of the people that are working there, where everybody is zoned in on that.

And as you can figure that out, amazing things can happen. And if McDonald's is successful in this, I mean imagine. You're talking about a business that's built around minimum wage employees, if they can deliver an outstanding... They already know how to deliver consistency, if they're able to up the game in the diner's experience, I mean, there's great opportunity ahead for them.

**Chad:** *Oh without a doubt. I mean you see it all the time, right? In sales enablement and stuff that we do, we call it Sales RND. So we rip off and duplicate from each other when somebody's got a great idea out there and it works, course you would expect it's the greatest form of flattery as they say.*

*You mentioned focusing on the details, and so we're talking about the details of physical space and all of that. I'm curious, how do you enable your sales teams or your advocates to work with customers and pay attention to the details of the process and the impressions that they're making? Because that consistency of brand and experience be what you sell kind of stuff, that starts from the first interaction all the way through execution and assessment. So I'm curious what you found over the 20 years of building the company, what's been really successful in helping those advocates understand that they also need to be paying attention to the details of how they're interacting with their prospects and customers?*

**John:** Great questions. So we're people first. You know a lot of times we forget that, we just follow this process and check these boxes and good things could happen. But like there's laws and then there's the spirit behind the law. Or there's the process, and then there's the spirit behind the process. We spend a lot of time focusing on the spirit behind the process. So we know that the only reason why people should hire us is if we can deliver great value to them. If we can't deliver great value, they shouldn't hire us.

So why don't we focus. And if they do hire us when we can't deliver great value, there's probably not gonna be the longevity that we're looking for in the relationship. So by focusing on the value at the front end, to deliver value, well that all comes out in the people. And so getting our people to understand why we're doing what we're doing is critical. So we have a process when we have the reach out campaign, we don't wanna just send an email that says, hey we're interested in providing this service for you, give us a call. We actually wanna go visit their locations, we wanna have something insightful to share in there. So it takes a lot of research. And then there's a custom message just for that person, based on where they maybe have worked before, or based on things that are inside of the store.

And we call out why we're a great fit right in the opening paragraph. Because of your geographic presence, where they're located, the finishes they have within their store, and how important the in store shopping experience is to them. Because of those three things, this is why we think you're a great fit and why we'd love to talk. Because these are some of the results we've had with companies like you. Being that specific on it is demonstrating that this is our space, right? We can bring value here. We can make a meaningful difference.

And our whole item that we're trying to get across to people is that together we can get a lot more value out of your budget. And so that's really everything for us around saying that. So we take the step by step process that the different reach outs and all that, and we use that as a way to educate our people on why each of those questions or each of those items is important, so that we have a more prepared, a more informed advocate out there representing our company.



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**Chad:** *I'm gonna can that, you just summed up everything that we talk about all the time when we work with clients, and I love it. It literally brought a tear to my eye, because most of the sales people out there, we train them on product or service or whatever it is. And we unleash them. And then we're surprised why all they wanna do is talk about their product, rather than take the time to understand the person that you're approaching, their perspective and what they may find valuable. And I think it's extremely powerful. It seems like you guys have tapped that equation and seen the success as a result of it.*

**John:** Thank you. We got a lot of great people working I think.

**Chad:** *And so, okay, 20 years we've been growing the company. What things have you learned from a cultural standpoint to keep the employees engaged in the vision? Create the perfect environment to get the most out of employees while also simultaneously rewarding them? What kind of things have you uncovered, or lessons learned around culture development?*

**John:** Appreciate the perspective that people have, and what they bring to the table as well as the timeline of the work that they're working on. One of my big troubles has always been around the people that have short term time horizons. So if we look at project managers, they're looking at that one project, as they should. That has their attention. And if you don't deliver well on that one project, well then you're putting the relationship at risk, so they have a very narrow focus.

The challenge for me has been, well we've got some longterm objectives. And for a long time I didn't recognize the difference in points of view. I knew I had the winning argument because the longterm health of the company would never do anything in the short term that would compromise it, but without looking to the longterm we really can't decide how we should handle these short term. And if we just give short term the ability to do whatever they want, well they might not be doing things like cross training others. Right?

I had this test in the company, I said, hey who wants the best person in the company to work on every project that comes their way? And you know everybody raises their hand. And then I said, who wants only one person that have any experience working on a project because they're the best one at doing it? And no one raised their hand. You know? So you go back and say, one side you want it, one side you don't. The key to management is gonna be to reconcile those two. To execute the short term with the longterm in mind.

Now sometimes we can't do a lot of the things for the longterm because the short term is urgent. Maybe there's some problem situations that we're dealing with, however we cannot ignore the longterm. So the biggest thing, and I didn't mean to spend so much time on it, but the biggest challenge that I have found, and I've found in other business owners and leaders, has been the lack of recognition around time horizons for the people, and then all the subsequent problems that develop out of it.

**Chad:** *It's a challenge right, you've gotta focus on what the customer needs today, but also focus on what's gonna be best for your company, the person, the individuals in the company, as well as the client longterm. Even sometimes when the client can't look past the next deadline, that's what is key I think to longterm relationships, and mutually beneficial relationships with customers and clients.*

*So as we were prepping for this you mentioned the importance of terminology in an organization. And I wanted to dive into that. That's something that we talk about a lot when we work with clients. Love to get your perspective on the importance of specific terminology in the organization.*

**John:** If you simplify the language you reduce the errors.

**Chad:** *Love it. I love it. And how do you guys go about doing that?*



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**John:** Well, it's a deliberate action, right? If I'm calling something a ticket, you're calling it a work order, someone else is calling it a project, and we need to reduce our language so that everybody understands what's being said. And so building glossaries per client. So we have our Resicom glossary, but then each of our clients, we build the glossary because we have to follow the terminology that they use. And so one company might call it a wardrobe or someone else calls it a closet, someone else calls it a shelf. I mean everybody's got a different name, so we need to know what that is and be able to support the people that are out there.

Any business, I mean if you're looking to drive value you gotta get down to the technician level, the person that's doing the work. Right? And if you can figure out how to make it easier for them to be successful, you're on the path to optimization. It's just where the savings can be, and if you can find a way to make it easier. Well, what makes it easier for them? Knowing what you're talking about, giving them clearer instruction. So all the preparation, then supporting them during the project, being available, answering questions they have. You know whatever minor issues are there. And then if they face a problem, provide the guidance to get out of it. You know we don't wanna leave people up to their own devices that are inexperienced at resolving that issue to make the call. It's real simple.

**John:** If you're not gonna make great decisions, you shouldn't be the one making the decision. [crosstalk 00:15:21] hold onto all these things that make sense, you know?

**Chad:** *Well I find that extremely refreshing because the simplicity. I often talk to companies that have created these extremely complex sales processes, not for the service of the customer or for the sales team that has to execute them, but more just as justification for the existence of sales. I mean, at least thanks to the current political climate we're not the most hated individuals of the planet, I think politicians and lawyers have us beat right now. But most people see sales professionals as a necessary evil. And so that complexity builds itself in as a way of justification. But when you get right down to it as you mentioned earlier, people buy from people, and simplicity and that language. If you can speak their language you build credibility that you did your homework. That you want to make sure they're successful on their terms instead of expecting them to change to the way you see the world.*

**John:** I love it. I love what you just said. It really comes down to people are so worried about looking right, we're all about being right. You know?

**Chad:** *That's gonna be the quote. That's gonna be your quote that shows up on the graphics. I love it. I know exactly what our producers are gonna pull out. That's perfect.*

**John:** Awesome.

**Chad:** *Excellent. So when you look back over the last 20 years, you've learned a lot of lessons, but we're in a really dynamic environment, especially in retail. So when you look for the next five, ten years forward, what do you see on the horizon that both excites you and maybe causes a little consternation for the future of Resicom?*

**John:** Wow. Well so if Resicom's proven anything over the last 20 years it's that it's resilient. So we've evolved multiple times, both from a size standpoint, like as we grew we had to let go of some services that we provided, adjust, change, all of that. And I believe that'll just continue. And we used to be a 100% self performing company and then we evolved into being more of a broker because we found that we could scale up and down much more quickly and we found what was really great about us. And what's great about us is our ability to get it, right? To understand the objectives, to solve the challenges that are in front of us. And make it kind of fun to go through the process where people wanna be a part of it.



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**John:** So actually one of the things that we talk about is, people buy from us because we're easy to buy from, that we're cool to deal with. So with those kinds of things being our makeup, it's not really about the services being provided as it is about the people that are delivering the services. So yeah, as retail evolves, it's gonna be back like it used to be. There used to be the great stores, the refined stores, the boutiques, and then there were the companies that offered everything. And that's kind of what you see going on in the brick and mortar space because there are always gonna be the people that wanna go try on those expensive items.

A lot of women like to go and see what they look like in the mirror and have that whole experience and get together. I mean, so that stuff isn't duplicated online. Maybe the goods transferring from the store to the home, you know maybe that, I mean we can see with Amazon and it's great growth and things. But it's not for everything. And I believe that people that are selling things that people wanna interact with physically before purchasing, I believe you're gonna see an incredible increase in attention to shopping experience. So you see it in the mobile device store. If you go in there, there's people all over you.

**Chad:** *Yeah, I mean there's no easy replacement for a total experience, right? And you can augment it with digital. I think the transfer of goods I think is a great thing that Amazon does. If I know I need a dog leash that allows me to walk my two dogs simultaneously, I don't need to go into a store, I just need it because my dogs are driving me nuts. But if I wanna go buy a mountain bike there's a store here. I'm in Denver, there's a store south of Denver that has an amazing experience from the second you walk in the door, the test riding the bikes, to buying the accessories, to going out of the store. They have it really fine tuned.*

*And it's enjoyable. It's enjoyable to go there, it's not like, ah a gotta go buy a bike. It is an experience that we talk about with friends and family and other people that we meet. So the ability to do that and have access to companies like Resicom, like you do, I think it's gonna be part of what's gonna set retailers apart in the future.*

**John:** Sure hope you're right.

**Chad:** *All right, let's change direction a little bit here. I ask all of our guests kind of two standard questions towards the end of each interview. The first is simply, you're a revenue executive, you're the CEO, so people are gonna be coming at you all the time to try and sell you things. So when somebody doesn't have a relationship with you, or they don't come through a referral, what do you find to be the most affective way for someone who wants to get in front of you to build the credibility necessary to capture 15 or 20 minutes of your time?*

**John:** I like it when it comes through that they know who they're dealing with. That they know who they've reached out to, so the cold ... I mean I'm in a B to B, and my clients are, the things that we buy, we buy a lot of, right? And the things that we sell, we sell a lot of. So we wouldn't be a small account for most people that sell on us. And the accounts that we sell to, we're not aiming to be a small account, we've got a narrow market. So with that in mind, to me the most important thing is to know who you're talking to, or know who you're reaching out to. And demonstrate that in your message.

Like, hey John, I've seen that you have this or that and connect to something that I have, and then give me a really intriguing problem statement. You know? Not, hey would you like to save more money? Oh, okay. You know, that doesn't work for me, not in my area. Now for other niches, but I'm a professional buyer of services. I buy a lot of them. And I'm a professional seller of them, we sell a lot of them. So that kind of thing wouldn't work with me. But give me something intriguing.



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**John:** I mean I've had emails that I've responded to on solicitations where people have mis-spelled things, didn't have things capped. I mean, all of the cardinal sins, I've responded to those emails because behind all of the fluff was the guy who had something that was intriguing to say, and he knew who he was talking to. I like that. So, I'm not a guy... I'm wearing jeans and a t-shirt right now, and this is the way that I go.

**Chad:** *Excellent. All right, last question we call it our acceleration insight. There's one thing you could tell sales, marketing professional services people, one piece of advice that if they listened, you believe would help them hit their targets, blow out their quotas, what would it be and why?*

**John:** I love that you don't link the canned responses. You know, I love it. I really think front and center is that we're people first. We are people first, and we all wanna do good work. We all wanna make a difference. And so when you're worried about how straight your tie is and make sure that you look polished and all that, if that's not who you are, don't be that. Be who you are. So all the good in you should be conveyed out there. When you're being your true self, it comes through. It's passionate, it's not over the top, it's real. And people can feel it, they know when someone's being real.

So my recommendation would be that everybody matters. You know, in different areas, right? So I don't mean like anybody can do this job, no. If your skillset is in developing relationships and caring about delivering value to the other person, then maybe sales or some sort of management is good for you. But I can't take anybody off the street and turn them into a sales person because I'm not process dependent. So number one thing would be, who are you? What are you really good at? What do you really care about? And make sure that you're sharing that, and that's what I would say is, know who you are and accept it, embrace it, and let it shine.

**Chad:** *Perfect. John, for listeners interested in talking more about Resicom or topics that we've talked about today, what's the best way to get in contact with you?*

**John:** The best way would be to email me, [john@resicomeonline.com](mailto:john@resicomeonline.com).

**Chad:** *Excellent. I can't thank you enough for taking time to be on the show, it's been great having you.*

**John:** Thank you so much for having me, Chad.

**Chad:** *All right everybody that does it for this episode. Please check us out at [b2brevexec.com](http://b2brevexec.com). You know the drill, share the episodes with friends, family, co-workers. If you like what you hear, drop us a review on iTunes. Until next time, we at Value Prime Solutions wish you all nothing but the greatest success.*

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