



WHITEPAPER

Struggling with Slow CPQ?

Performance Challenges and How to Solve Them

Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) is a cornerstone of digital sales enablement for your team. With global changes in supply chains, work forces, and buyer patterns, CPQ plays a critical role in your business technology stack. According to market research firm Technavio, the **CPQ software market is expected to grow by USD 1.14 billion during 2020-2024.**

However, with this reliance and investment in CPQ software, enterprise businesses struggle with performance issues - slowing revenue, wasting resource time, and frustrating your sales associates and customers.

In this white paper, we look at why these performance challenges happen and how to go about addressing them.

FORRESTER®

A 2018 Forrester survey found that 75% of global B2B companies classified as “masters” in terms of B2B eCommerce maturity had already purchased or fully adopted online request for quote processes.

How CPQ Slowdown Happens

If you’re an enterprise business, you have complex business rules, multiple systems and processes, and likely a lot of historical complexity. When your CPQ system is taxed with doing everything correctly, it slows down - leading to slow actions, pages timing out, and frustrated users. There are three common factors contributing to CPQ performance issues:



Business Complexity

For your business, you likely have a lot of complexity not only in your CPQ, but also your CRM, backoffice, and commerce. You’ve needed to write complex rules in order to meet your business requirements. Over time, these rules add layers of complexity, impacting your CPQ performance.

System Acquisitions

As your business acquires new companies, you need to integrate separate systems to your existing system. These systems may be older, more complex, or simply different from the processes you have in place. Having multiple systems, exceptions, and rules creates additional complexity between different processes that can slow CPQ down.

API Calls

A third factor that often impacts performance is the number of API calls happening within your system. Misuse of APIs or improper APIs calls that request too much information can cause system delays. If your CPQ is SaaS based, those regular API calls to update rules will effect your CPQ system.

How This Impacts Your Bottom Line

These complexities degrade your CPQ performance and your user experience. It can make running CPQ more resource-intensive, more frustrating, and less efficient. It becomes a people problem: making it harder to train and retain your team and customers. And it becomes a money problem: slowing down your revenue.

Your One Key Metric: Time to Quote

As in any project, we recommend starting with clear, measurable objectives. For CPQ performance issues, it's a simple metric: reducing the time to quote (also known as quote cycle times). Your time to quote has impacts for your sales, marketing, and operations organizations.

Sales leaders care about long quote times because it reduces sales' team efficiency and impacts quote to close ratios (slower quotes are less likely to close). According to Louis Columbus, writing in Forbes: *"It's been my experience that manufacturers who are **the first to produce an accurate, complete quote win the deal at least 60% of the time or more.** Reducing quote cycle times increases close rates quickly."*

Sales reps know that long quote cycles can mean that their prospects lose interest. Operations understand how resource-heavy CPQ tooling reduces efficiencies and takes away profitability. Marketing leaders find that long quote times harm your business' perception and reputation.

How to Approach Fixing Your CPQ

Once you've identified the challenge, you'll need to bring expert support to understand and resolve your performance issues. This team needs to include an experienced architect and at least one developer (more if you have a very complex project or shorter timeline). Together, an architect and developer will:

- Isolate where the performance exists (e.g. specific action/s or button/s)
- Review the code
- Look at integrations
- Log timestamps to see what code is causing what issues
- Analyze performance logs and see which of the functions is taking up a lot of time
- Assess how to optimize the code, integrations, and processes

A note: sometimes **it's not the code, it's the process**. If your business processes are extremely complex or convoluted, the best performance solution will be to change your process. This will need to be a discussion with your business and sales operations teams.



Gartner®

"Increasing competition in the manufacturing industry puts pressure on organizations to reduce costs, improve customer experience and increase profitability.

Organizations armed with digital forces are disrupting business models with new value

propositions. *This disruption causes a challenge for manufacturing organizations but is also a chance to adopt digital themselves."*

APIs vs iFrame

We can assess the right solution for your business: whether headless APIs or iFrame. Each has benefits and drawbacks. While APIs are the forward-thinking solution - giving your CPQ tool more features and flexibility - iFrames have their benefits. Because APIs are relatively new, it's easier to find experienced and efficient solutions to fix performance issues. If your system is very complex, you may have additional performance issues with an API approach. The choice you make will have to be specific to your business and your challenges.

Understanding Your Users

Do you know where and how your users struggle with your CPQ interface? In addition to the technical performance issues, a customer journey mapping exercise can reveal the user interface opportunities to create a more effortless experience. A comprehensive CPQ journey mapping will include:

- Research and analytics
- Interviews with your sales, pre-sales, outside sales, and customers
- Collaborative journey mapping workshop

Through this process, you can uncover where, why, and how to improve your user experience - including your UX, UI, copy, and design. Done successfully, it reveals opportunities to address users' pain points, alleviate fragmentation, and, ultimately, create a better experience for your reps, partners, and customers.

Journey Mapping Phases



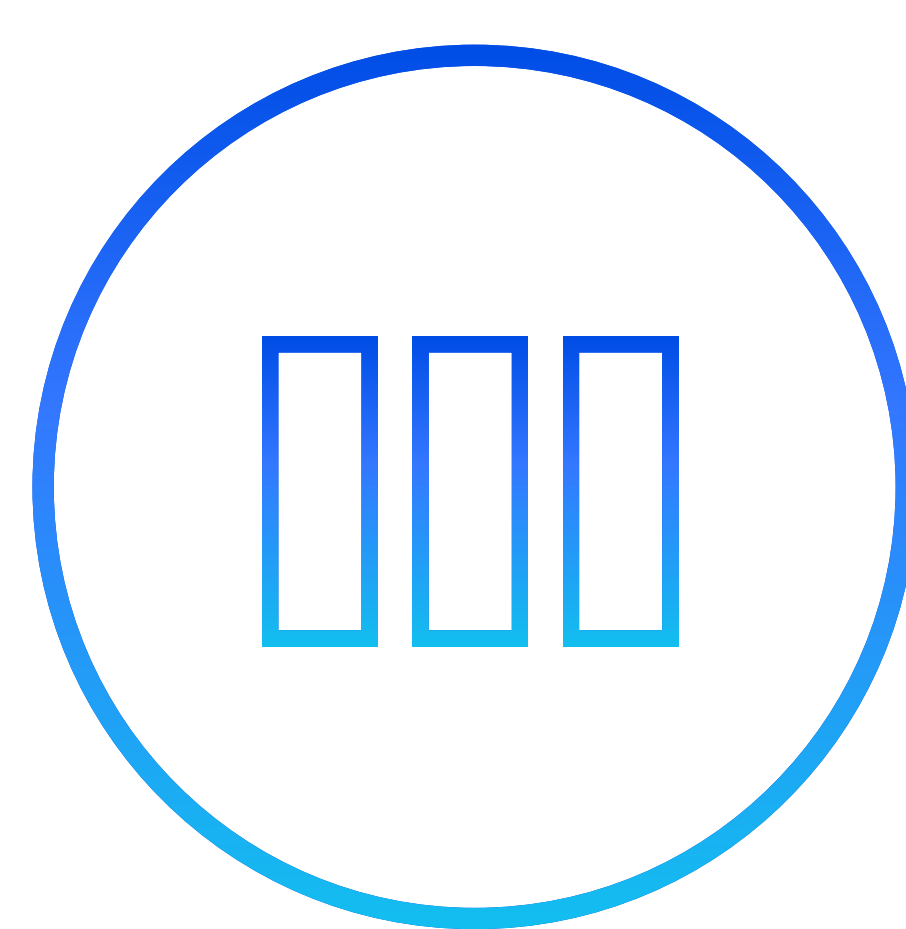
Persona Interviews

Understanding the key actors and their point of view



Key Scenarios

Real or anticipated sequences of events, tasks or process.



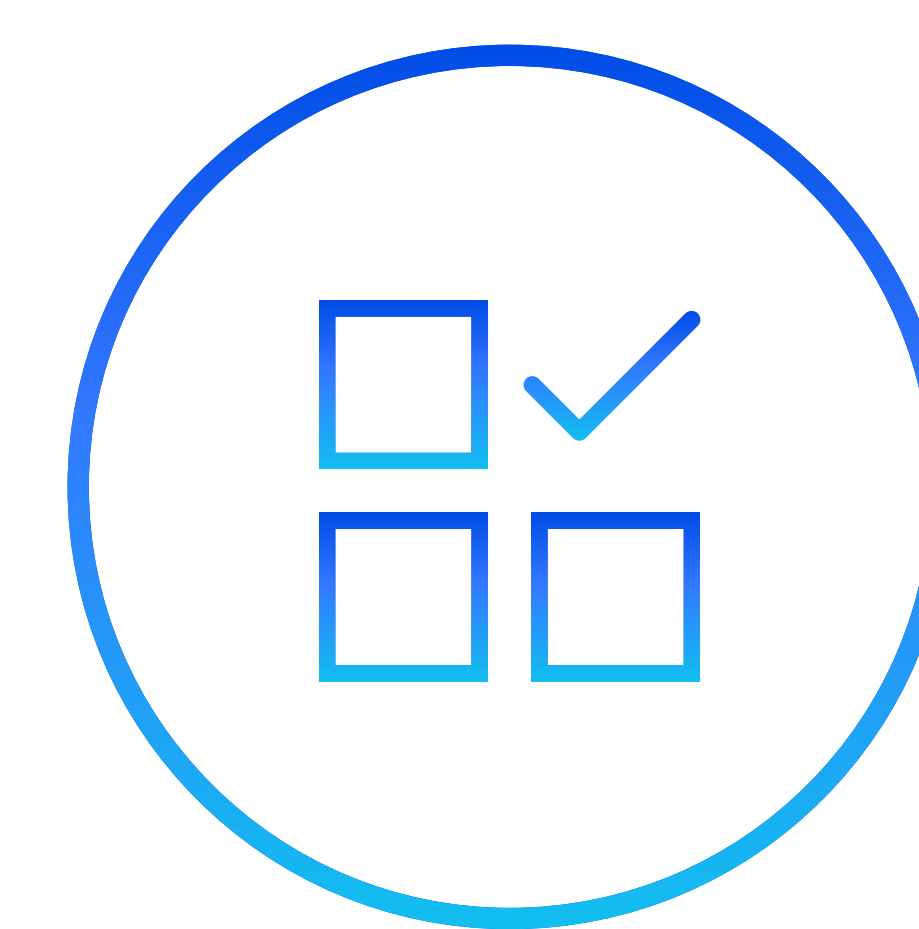
Journey Phases

Logically related segments of a user's journey.



Mindset

How users feel at different phases of that journey.



Opportunities

Insights gained from mapping reveal needed changes.



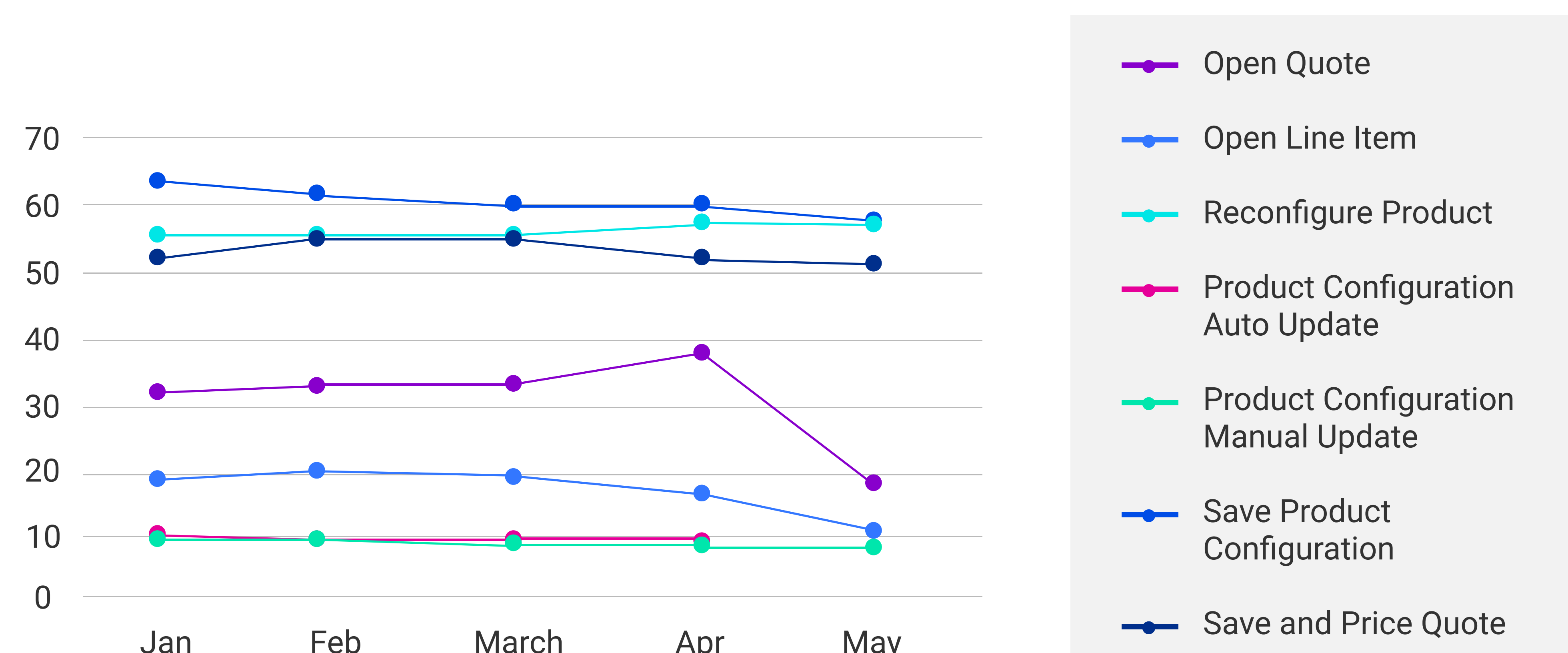
Workshop

Shared activity builds a big picture view, empathy and alignment.

Results from CPQ Performance Optimization

Enterprise businesses work with Object Edge to unlock measurable performance results. See an example of a manufacturer struggling with complex orders and slow quotes below. **In just 4 months, quote times improved an average of 18%, including reducing the time to open quotes from 29 seconds to 15 seconds.**

30 Product Line Quote Performance



We are here to help.

Is CPQ slowing down your sales reps, partners, and customers? We find and fix the code, integrations, and processes to change that.

Claim your free audit:
<https://www.objectedge.com/cpq-health-check>

About Object Edge

Established in 1994, Object Edge is an award-winning digital consultancy working with leading global brands and manufacturers. In a challenging digital landscape, we help businesses differentiate and compete by serving their customers, partners, and associates through effortless digital experiences. We design, implement, and support content, commerce, and CPQ with a data-driven, highly collaborative, and best-in-class team. Learn more at [objectedge.com](https://www.objectedge.com) or find us on LinkedIn.

Thank You.

As a thank you for downloading this white paper, we're giving you a free discovery call.

[SCHEDULE YOUR COMPLIMENTARY CALL HERE](#)