

From Pricing to Profitability

Why the real shift isn't about technology

Recently, AIT hosted a leadership event in Sweden, in conjunction with our partner in pricing, Conga.

Throughout the discussion, one theme came up repeatedly: organizations are changing the way they make pricing decisions.

This change is not driven by technology alone. Instead, their approach to pricing is starting to show its limits.

In many organizations, pricing still sits across spreadsheets, local rules, and individual judgment. Sales teams negotiate based on experience, pricing teams provide guidance where they can, and decisions are often made under pressure rather than with full visibility.

That leads to familiar issues: different prices for similar customers, slow turnaround on quotes, and margin being given away without a clear view of the impact.

None of this is new.

What's changing is how seriously companies are starting to treat these concerns.

Why Pricing Remains a Consistent Priority

Pricing has a direct and measurable impact on business performance. There are few areas where small improvements create such a significant financial outcome.

Pricing is your most powerful profit lever

- Inconsistent customer pricing
- Frequent manual approvals
- Lack of quote traceability
- Delays in quote generation
- Inaccurate reporting and forecasting

A 1% improvement in price can increase operating profit by up to 8%.

"If you're going to do AI in the commercial space and B2B sales, it's the most obvious place to start where you get the most return on your investment." -Nick, Pricing Consultant at Conga

The Shift is Already Happening, Just Not All at Once.

The evolution of pricing isn't a sudden overhaul. It's happening gradually, and in many cases starts with how pricing decisions are framed.

In many businesses, the primary question is still:

“What do we need to do to win this deal?”

But that question is slowly being replaced with something slightly different:

“What price gives us the best chance of winning while still protecting margin?”

That shift sounds simple, but it changes behavior. It means looking beyond the immediate deal and bringing more context into the decision: what similar customers have paid, how sensitive this customer is to price, and what has worked (or not worked) before.

It doesn't remove judgment, but it makes that judgment more consistent.

The Importance Of Speed

The topic of speed resurfaced often throughout the event not just pricing accuracy, but how long it actually takes to respond.

As Jochen, RVP North & South EMEA at Conga, summed it up:

“It's about the time that you need to prepare for your offer.”

One example shared was a quote that took 21 days to produce. By the time it was ready, the customer had already moved on.

That's not unusual in complex environments, but it highlights something important: slow internal processes can lose deals just as easily as poor pricing.

Reducing that turnaround time even by a few days can make a real difference.

Trust is Still the Sticking Point

Trust is one area where event participants continue to tread lightly. Pricing decisions are closely tied to customer relationships.

If something feels inconsistent or difficult to explain, it quickly creates friction—both internally and externally.

As Jonathan E. Pautler, CEO at Articulate IT, put it during the discussion:

“Pricing can erode trust, but good pricing is comforting, creates trust, and makes businesses succeed.”

People don’t just want a number. They want to understand where the number came from and have the context to stand behind it.

These tools need to support how people work not override it. If technology feels like a black box, it won’t be used regardless of how good it is.

The discussion consistently showed that the hard work isn’t about advanced technology. It’s about getting the fundamentals right.

- Data quality
- Consistent processes
- Clear ownership of pricing

Without those in place, it’s difficult to build anything more advanced.

Tue, Group Pricing Manager, an AIT/Conga Customer, shared a practical approach:

Focus first on building consistency and trust in pricing, then layer in more capability over time. It’s not complicated, but it does require discipline.

It All Comes Back to the Basics

What Comes Next

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ArticulateIT is a boutique consultancy that helps advanced B2B companies in their digital transformations and drives the everyday improvements that drive margin, speed, and competitive advantage.

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