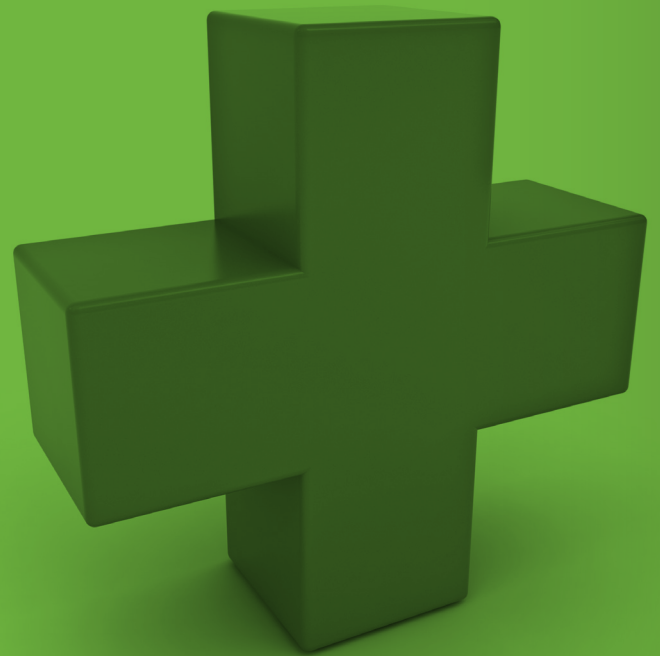


Unifying Your Marketing + Sales Teams



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Unifying Your Marketing + Sales Teams

In the not so distant past, for many B2B companies the responsibility of driving revenue was given to sales. Marketing was, and often still is, an afterthought. It seems that only the largest and savviest B2B technology companies, have figured it out. Marketing is a valuable investment.

In the B2B companies that do understand the value generated by their marketing investment, more often than not there is tension between the marketing and sales departments. When you think about it, this tension is a natural outcome of the position these departments are put in.

Like the classic business case (typically cited as the first use of game theory in business), the Prisoner's dilemma clearly explains why this tension exists. The pressure to deliver results is on and comes from all directions. And unfortunately, people under pressure will often do and say things that they might not otherwise. Which gives way to plenty of incentives for people to point fingers at the other side (or department in this case) when things aren't going as well as planned, and for taking credit when things are going great.

Unified Marketing + Sales

This whitepaper seeks to show you how to break the barrier between your marketing and sales departments. Your team will be stronger as a result and your company will see the effects with a higher return on your marketing investment.

STEP 1

The first step is to acknowledge the new reality of the B2B buyer's journey. The B2B buyer is now empowered in a way they never were before. The buyer has access and visibility to unprecedented amounts of information at just the click of a mouse. Estimates range to as high as 60% of the buyer's journey is complete before sales gets the chance to form a relationship. Often larger investment decisions (big-ticket items) are now team decisions with a wide range of roles weighing in, from champion, to subject matter expert, to finance and on.

STEP 2

The second step is to take advantage of the amazing leaps in cloud-based tools that have been made recently. These will not only drive your marketing, but will also give you the magical ingredient to marketing + sales harmony that has been missing, data. To get meaningful data, which is now possible for B2B companies of all sizes, you need an integrated marketing automation and CRM suite that will enable you to track your marketing efforts through to revenue.

STEP 3

The third step is to recognize that while there is still a typical buyer's journey, it is now becoming more and more individualized. This requires marketing and sales to partner in ways that historically haven't been necessary, or for some organizations, even possible.

The visibility of where a lead is in the sales cycle, and what the best next steps are, must now be actionable, tracked in real-time, and highly individualized. The organizational response at any given time may come from marketing, inside sales or outside sales depending upon circumstances. Unifying your marketing and sales team will help provide the real-time insights that guide optimum allocation of internal resources.

STEP 4

The next step is to be understanding and implementing Inbound Marketing best practices. But it is essential to realize that inbound marketing is a necessary ingredient

in your marketing, but it's not the only one. Other pieces include your branding, your website, your sales enablement, your lead management and your customer engagement strategies. Each play an important role in your marketing mix, and when implemented together, result in an end-to-end solution that delivers customers and drives revenue.

In the B2B space, it's important to stand out. Not only visually, but also with your value proposition and messaging. Over the years, we have found that many of our B2B clients struggle to identify these key aspects of their organization, which is why we recommend working through a branding exercise. As a result, you will discover the essential ingredient for your success: your bold claim, meaning what it is that your company does better than anyone else, why your prospects and customers should be excited about it, why they can only get this result from your company and why they can trust your team to deliver.

STEP 5

Once you've uncovered your value proposition, the next step is to ensure your website reflects that. Your website should be your best salesperson, generating high quality leads for your sales team. But ultimately sales needs to be armed to not only compete (which we refer to as sales enablement), but to win.

Unified Marketing + Sales ensures that your competitive advantage remains consistent all the way through the buyer's journey, and that your brand positioning and representation supports this. And by using inbound marketing best practices, you can begin tracking lead behavior at an individual level. We've found that the best indicator of lead qualification is their digital body language, meaning how they interact online.

STEP 6

Armed with the right technology, knowledge and high-quality execution, your marketing + sales teams are in a position to establish an SLA (service level agreement). In this model, marketing and sales have an agreement on lead quantity, scoring and responsibilities for moving the sale forward.

With the appropriate platform in place, your marketing team has the ability to make effective decisions in how to allocate

marketing investments to maximize results. And on the other side, sales can see exactly where marketing is contributing to revenue generation. Marketing is held accountable and is empowered to drive results, and sales is now supported but must share credit where credit is due.

THE MARKETING + SALES FORMULA

Unified Marketing + Sales combines:

The expertise and resources to become a new breed of marketing and sales organization, driving a new breed of competitor, one that is precisely positioned for success

+

A technology platform built to make your website your best salesperson, that is responsive to the individual buyer's journey, maximizes marketing and sales efficiency, and provides actionable, real time data through a dashboard that meets the needs of everyone involved

+

A Service Level Agreement where:

- Marketing accepts their responsibility to generate Marketing Qualified Leads (MQL)
- Sales accepts that they must partner with marketing to nurture Sales Qualified Leads (SQL)
- Both sides agree on a lead-scoring model based upon data to identify MQLs and SQLs

+

A brand that is designed to win business and is consistent all the way through the buyer's journey. A positioning that generates excitement about your vision for the future and that elevates you above the competition, generating a level of trust with your prospects that closes deals

MAPPING IT TO THE SALES FUNNEL

From top-of-funnel awareness, to middle-of-funnel brand preference to bottom-of-funnel trust, your marketing must support the sale the whole way through. Miss any of these steps, and you miss the deal.

There has never been a more exciting time to be involved in B2B marketing. Small and mid-market B2B companies now have affordable access to technology platforms and

expertise that were once only the domain of the largest B2B technology firms. These disruptive technologies are changing the game for both marketing and sales.

To compete today you need to integrate your marketing and sales to a depth not possible a few years ago. Fortunately, cost effective, cloud based, enterprise level digital platforms

give you control and agility, while driving marketing efficiency and insights, which drives results.

Your marketing and sales organizations can, and ultimately will, want to work as a team toward a common goal when given the ability and the support necessary.

The New Breed Unified Marketing + Sales Model

