

# Sales and marketing working



Photo: Yan Krukov

**S**ales and marketing are traditionally two distinctive approaches to the same end – yet all too often operate in silos.

Marketing is strategy and lead generation; sales is the implementation of that strategy. So, it is vital for businesses to close this loop to create an approach which supports up-sell and cross-sell opportunities as well as new business development.

The ultimate aim must be to make everyone's life easier, therefore weekly meetings are advised at which targets can be set for both departments.

There are many other ways to make sure missions are aligned which have been articulated by our contributors this month, when asked how they ensure their Sales and Marketing teams are joined up and pulling together in the same direction.

CANDICE CUNLIFFE  
F6

"The relationship between sales and marketing often ends once leads are handed over. Over 25% of businesses describe their sales and marketing teams as misaligned, and 43% of teams lack accurate shared data on target prospects. Here's how you align your sales and marketing teams: Set joint sales and marketing targets, starting with your overarching goal and working backwards; ensure sales and marketing work together to define your ideal customer, which will drive better leads and deliver more conversions; invest in a CRM that joins up your sales and marketing, and supports both up-sell and cross-sell opportunities; automate sales and marketing tasks. You'll see a 14.5% increase in sales productivity, a 12.2% reduction in marketing overheads, and more leads and conversions. Make this your priority. Because when sales and marketing are aligned, you'll enjoy shorter sales cycles, lower market entry costs, lower cost of sales, and more revenue."

CRAIG HERRETT  
PROVU

"In 2021 we developed an Operational Committee (OpCo) to empower our teams to implement changes. Both our Sales Manager and Marketing Manager are part of this. As an initial kick off they sit together and discuss the targets and objectives for the year. They then work closely to identify the opportunities which will support them in achieving their targets. This enables them to develop the sales and marketing strategies side-by-side. As members of the OpCo, they also work with other members to review sales analytics and develop our strategy alongside the wider company. For us, this works really well and welcomes some great ideas which are sometimes a little left field!"

BERNIE MCPHILLIPS  
PANGEA

"It can be tricky in the channel, where you need to balance your messaging between what partners and end-users both need. Talking directly to customers, sales teams often learn key knowledge about the market; but that knowledge doesn't always make it back to the marketing teams. Knowledge sharing and integrated workflows are key. Marketing needs to know who the sales team's ideal customers are. Sales needs to know what the marketing team's campaign plans look like, what collateral they can take to partners, and so on. It's like football. If sales is your striker, marketing is your creative midfielder; you need both working together to score any goals. We do celebrate wins together and give credit where it's due. As the ones who strike the deals, sales historically get the glory; but often, these deals begin with marketing successes like webinar views, website visits, collateral downloads and so on."



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SUSIE WARDELL  
EVOKE TELECOM

"In every progressive business, sales and marketing work together to deliver a program that creates awareness, interest, desire and generates action. However, to achieve a silo free, joined-up sales and marketing function, alignment must come from the top. With a business lead responsible for both functions, performance comes through a channel with a single joined up strategy supported by an open feedback mechanism. The road to sales success always begins with marketing, who must provide and maintain a compelling product portfolio. The winning combination is that irresistible blend of problem-solving core solutions and services, supported by complementary products that enhance customer experience. This in turn provides those up-sell and cross-sell opportunities that enable sales and other business areas to regularly engage in added value conversations with customers and prospects alike. This we find delivers not only customer success stories, but also the very best type of new business lead - referrals!"



BRITT MEGAHEY  
BARCLAY  
COMMUNICATIONS

"Often, a disjointed process between sales and marketing teams comes about from which metrics are determined important by both parties. Traditionally, sales teams are focused on closing deals, whereas marketers tend to have their own metrics for tracking success. The solution is developing well-defined objectives and a mutually understood strategy to deliver results. Providing a holistic view of data enables us to align our sales and marketing teams. Creating personalised content that solves problems, helps to educate and nurture leads before they are fed into the sales pipeline. These then become high-converting 'Sales Qualified Leads'. Ensuring both teams are reactive is also essential. Marketing is often a case of trial and error; finding a mix that works for your target market. Having an open line of communication between the sales and marketing teams allows for strategy changes to be made, helping to successfully achieve our objectives."



LAUREN MCMANUS  
GAMMA

"At Gamma our two favourite sayings are 'feel connected' and 'work smarter, together'. They won't sound groundbreaking, but these obvious sentiments are so often lost in business practice. A marketer generates a lead. A salesperson picks it up and pursues conversion. Sadly, this transfer stage can be where the conversation between departments starts and ends. Do your marketers know which assets their sales colleagues are most likely to use? Do sales relay customer pain points to inform future campaigns? What frictions or bad data are clogging up the sales funnel? Communication breakdowns can foster a lack of accountability. The solution is relationship management. Clear processes and feedback channels ensure all departments are pulling in the same direction, leading to shorter sales cycles and increased marketing revenue. This era of hybrid working may have pulled teams further apart geographically, but the modern workforce can be as collaborative as it is remote."



ANTONY BLACK  
WAVENET

"Harmonising and bringing sales and marketing teams and the respective approaches together can come with challenges. Wavenet Wholesale takes a holistic approach that results in dynamic and adaptable processes and people. We achieve this through the following: emotions – both sales and marketing colleagues have each other's back, they have built great professional relationships, and recognise and celebrate each other's successes and achievements; processes – clear, repeatable processes ensure that everyone understands expectations and the impact their actions have on the wider team; communication – a continual feedback loop provides both teams with information on what is performing well and what needs to be improved. First-hand knowledge from the sales team complements the marketing team's evidential data that outlines what content and information are responded to. We mirror this approach with partners, ensuring we support, educate and equip them, ultimately working as a collective towards the same goal."



IAN ROWAN  
WILDIX UK

"Marketing creates leads before the sales process can even start, but they occupy two complementing spheres with major overlap; without interest there would be no one to sell to! We start alignment by deciding what the sales targets are for each year. Then, marketing activities are built around generating the revenue and partner numbers we want to establish in the sales pipeline. Based on conversion ratios, we understand exactly how many leads are required to be generated by the marketing team. Both teams must employ the same ideology, communicating the same message from interest to proposal. We use a concept called 'ValueSelling' whereby our marketing messages focus on the value of the opportunity, as does our sales process. As a result, we're all working towards a common goal. However, marketing activities must have clearly defined goals, letting us put a value towards each activity and show a positive ROI."



SHAHRAM  
BAGHERZADEH  
LOOP VOICE AND DATA

"Aligning sales and marketing needs to start with the alignment of planning and goals. We make sure our sales plan and marketing plan align and support one another, for more effective use of budget. It is also important to configure your sales pipeline stages in your CRM to work well with the lead nurturing that happens in your marketing automation system. Preferably it's all in one system and your teams can see what is relevant to their roles. Agree on lead scoring and lead metrics, that way every lead and opportunity is followed up, at the right time. No lead goes cold, cross-sell and up-sell possibilities are identified, and more opportunities are won. A focus on customer experience management, with an active asking and listening function across sales and marketing is characteristic of a perfect sales and marketing function, ensuring you are always understanding current customer needs and meeting them."

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