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THE B2B
MARKETER'S ROADMAP
TO MARKETING
AND SALES
SUCCESS

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MARKETING AND SALES TEAMS SHARE A LOT IN COMMON...

including the crucial roles they play in customer engagement, revenue generation and organizational growth. When marketing and sales work together in synergy its possible to achieve two-digit annual growth rates and improve a company's chances of closing deals by as much as 67%, according to Marketo. In contrast, a discordant relationship between the two departments will reduce the bottom line and trigger productivity inefficiencies that cost companies around \$1 trillion per year.

Yet, despite their near synonymous functions and tight interdependence, marketing and sales teams often find themselves at loggerheads, sometimes as rivals but mostly as convenient scapegoats for missed targets and epic fails.

In many organizations, they form the stereotypical cat-vs-dog relationship even when they hardly need to at all. What they should be doing is: join forces, execute a unified strategy, and reap the benefits of shared success.

As many YouTube videos and Instagram photos affirm, dogs and cats do get along very well, especially when discipline and mutual understanding override the instinct to protect one's turf and to bite back when threatened. And surprise, surprise: marketing and sales departments are populated not by furry creatures but by human beings who presumably possess the ability to transcend their beastly instincts.

So, what can smart organizations do to prevent the perennial conflict between sales and marketing?



ROLES AND TURFS

People often use the terms “marketing” and “selling” interchangeably. You can’t blame them, especially when it comes to small businesses where both functions are typically performed by a single person or department. As companies grow however, marketing and sales inevitably diverge into distinct functions that are performed by separate teams.

In general, marketing encapsulates all the activities and resources needed to reach and persuade target customers. This includes branding, messaging, advertising, customer research, pricing, PR, social media campaigns, email newsletters, events management and other activities. On the other hand, sales covers everything you do to close a deal and reel in revenues. Often, this involves direct customer engagement via one-on-one meetings, cold calls and sales proposals.

While marketing and sales are held accountable to different activities, they are also working toward the same goal. So, where’s the disconnect?



ROOTS OF CONFLICT

Though marketing and sales are ultimately working for the same goal, there are many factors contributing to the discord, and here are some of the most salient:

- X Ineffective or lack of communication-** In organizations where sales and marketing operate as separate units, establishing adequate interdepartmental coordination remains a challenge.
- X Competition for departmental funding-** Since budget is always limited, not everyone will always get what they want. It's easy to see how disappointment, jealousy and resentment can arise from this scenario.
- X Misunderstood roles-** Inaccurate stereotyping can needlessly sap interdepartmental relationships.
- X Personality/culture clash-** In a competitive and tense environment, disparities in personality traits and priorities can sometimes lead to serious misunderstandings.
- X Overlapping or unclear goals-** While both departments aim for corporate growth, each attempts to do so through different means. Sometimes, coordination between these departments doesn't work simply because each team pursues different goals and timelines.
- X The blame game-** Because silos like sales and marketing teams rarely see eye-to-eye, their understanding and expectations of each other's contributions don't automatically jive with reality. Under a cloud of uncertainty, mishaps — such as missed sales goals — tend to be attributed to the other party.
- X Disparate or unaligned strategies-** Misaligned strategies may lead to redundant efforts, pipeline gaps, massive process inefficiencies, lost opportunities and other negative outcomes.

According to Marketo, at least \$1 trillion dollars is lost annually due to misaligned sales and marketing strategies.

ROAD TO SHARED SUCCESS

Once properly isolated, interdepartmental problems between sales and marketing can be addressed more easily. Here are some steps you can take to keep your sales and marketing teams aligned with each other:



Establish a culture of open and constant communication between teams. If necessary, appoint a liaison officer to bolster the interdependence and collaboration of your marketing and sales operations. Collocate the teams whenever possible.



Clarify the roles and functions of each department. Set the expectations and scope for each role or function. Implement compatible success metrics and performance indicators. Rotate jobs or cross train people from both departments to establish mutual appreciation of diverse roles and functions.



Create a unified marketing and sales strategy. Set the teams to achieve complementary goals. Set shared revenue targets when possible.



Identify an agreed upon definition of a Marketing Qualified Lead and a Sales Qualified Lead. Lead quality is a constant struggle amongst marketers and sellers everywhere. It can be so frustrating for marketers to hear this when they work so hard to generate interest and inquiries for sales, while it's just as touchy for salespeople who struggle to then engage and close leads that are barely more than a contact record. Outline, review, agree and sign so it's established moving forward.



Sync assets and resources used by both departments. Configure pipelines and funnels that link the teams' workflows with customers' purchasing behavior. Enable the teams to use a centralized knowledge base where they draw insights from the same datasets.



Incentivize collaboration. Reward the achievement of shared targets.

KEEPING A UNITED FRONT

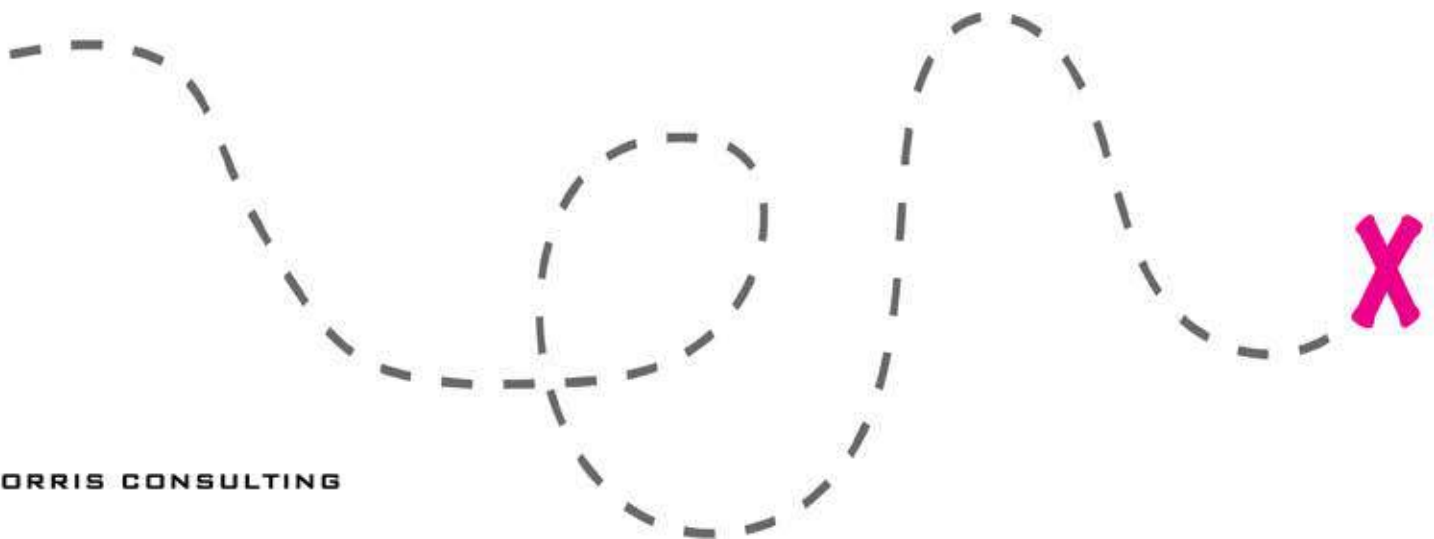
While marketing and sales use distinct funnels and pipelines, the processes involved are so closely linked that the two departments should operate in tandem even when each is led by a different manager. These departments directly impact your bottom line and your organization's survivability. Binding them as interdependent components of a single strategy is your blueprint for growth.

Are your marketing and sales teams waging an endless and annoying tug of war?

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- How closely do the teams communicate with each other? Do they ever collaborate on shared projects? Does each team know key details of what the other team is up to at any given moment?
- Do your marketing and sales teams share an overarching strategy that aligns their respective goals?
- Does each department know the other's objectives and timelines?
- How often does one team cite a shortcoming or oversight reportedly committed by the other team? Is the blame game a constant occurrence in your organization?

If your answers suggest a systemic conflict between the two teams, then it's high time to implement a sales-marketing alignment strategy.



NEED HELP GETTING STARTED?

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