



# How to Improve B2B Sales and Marketing Alignment

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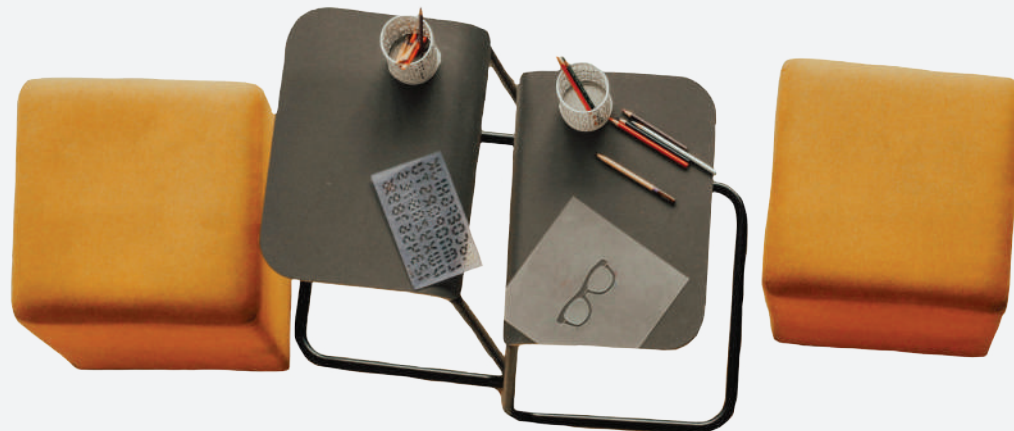




It's no secret that optimizing sales and [marketing strategies](#) is essential when it comes to facilitating the growth of your business. However, getting sales and marketing effectively aligned and optimized is not something B2B firms have historically been, well... very good at.

But fear not, establishing synergy between both of these strategies is a relatively straightforward process, if you are willing to put in the work.

Let's explore a few core concepts regarding the importance of sales and marketing alignment.■



# ENSURE THAT BOTH STRATEGIES SHARE IDENTICAL GOALS



As you may expect, the proper alignment of your sales and marketing teams involves working toward shared goals. For example, a goal that both departments strive toward could include targeting a mutually agreed upon list of accounts. This is a very common practice known as [account-based marketing](#), or ABM.

Using an account based marketing approach allows business to more effectively align sales and marketing goals and put in place mutual metrics for success. Let's take a look at a brief example.

*David is the Commercial Vice President of a B2B company that makes measurement and control devices.*

*For the fourth quarter of the year, he wants to generate at least \$500,000 in revenue and generate at least 100 new qualified leads from his ABM target list. With this information in mind, his marketing team and his sales team would both be able to work toward hitting metrics that lead to ABM account growth.*

*In the above scenario, David's marketing team could focus on lead generation and conversion by using targeted ads on LinkedIn to engage prospects and get them in the sales funnel. The marketing department can then use nurturing strategies, consisting of email marketing and retargeting ads, laying the foundation for sales employees to close deals with these prospects. Since those individuals will already have a familiar relationship with David's company from the brand building work done by marketing, the sales funnel should move more efficiently.*

Of course, the exact manner in which this plays out will heavily depend on your industry, the size of your company, etc. However, setting common goals for both departments is always highly beneficial. ABM is a powerful way to help ensure alignment.





## ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BOTH TEAMS



The above example is not going to be very effective if your sales team and marketing team don't actively communicate with each other. It's up to your marketing team to acquire leads and establish a relationship with clients, and it's your sales team's responsibility to leverage the foundation that has already been laid in order to increase sales numbers.

You should take any steps necessary to ensure that both teams are consistently on the same page.

For example, you could hold weekly meetings that get both departments up to speed with where the other is currently at. Upper-level employees from both teams should also regularly communicate with each other and convey crucial information back and forth.

For instance, the head of your marketing team should be proactive about supplying your sales team with data that allows them to move forward with their own processes.



# MARKETING SHOULD COME FIRST



As previously mentioned, one of your marketing team's core responsibilities is to establish a relationship with your clients in order to understand as much as they can about their industry, their problems, and their commercial operations.

At a fundamental level, you also need to ensure that the correct type of prospect is being targeted. Sales and marketing teams should work toward co-developing an ideal customer profile, or ICP, to ensure that you are more accurately spending your time and resources toward generating qualified pipeline.

Initiating a touchpoint with your ICP all begins with your marketing strategy, and your sales strategy cannot function correctly if your marketing tactics are not dialed in.

Messaging is extremely important when crafting the first touchpoints in your buyer journey. Going through exercises to properly define your ICP, their needs, and their business problems will help you craft much more meaningful content. After all, you can't expect someone to do business with your company if they don't understand the value that you have to offer.

You'll need to consider factors like:

- The industry vertical you are targeting
- Size, age, and geographic location of companies in the target market
- Most prominent issues within the industry and how your solution addresses them
- Level of awareness of the solution that you provide
- The job functions that your buyers hold within their organizations

In general, the more thoroughly you understand your ideal lead, the more efficiently you'll be able to target and communicate with them. From here, your sales team can move in and help them make the decision that's best for their company.

Once marketing strategies, messaging, and targeting are complete, the next step is making sure that marketing content and assets are being put to work by BOTH sales and marketing teams.

One major breakdown is that marketing content all too often goes unused by sales. In fact, up to **80% of marketing content** goes unused by sales reps. This poses a major problem for getting ROI out of marketing's hard work.

**Sales enablement solutions** can be a very effective tool to help improve sales and marketing alignment and ensure that your sales team always has access to marketing and sales content. More on this later.



# LEVERAGE CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS



A cardinal rule of modern B2B business - you should be passionate about collecting and leveraging **your clients' feedback**. The recent introduction of the commercial **flywheel** concept heavily focuses on the importance of sales, marketing, and customer support functions all working together in your business to keep momentum.

A brief synopsis of the concept is that you are building your commercial operations around the full customer cycle – attracting the prospect, engaging them, then delighting them after they have converted into a client.

**Customer testimonials** and referrals can be an incredibly powerful tool to help your sales teams validate the value of your solutions and build equity with potential clients.

If you don't already have a strategic focus on gathering and leveraging customer testimonials, you should make this a priority in your strategy. The ROI you can generate here is massive and the activity alone creates a natural collaboration between sales and marketing.

Let your sales team guide marketing by serving up opportunities to engage with top clients and learn how they use and value your solutions. The more conversations marketing team members can conduct the more equipped they will be to fully understand your market and your customers. This leads to a wealth of value beyond just creating higher quality customer testimonial content.





# IT'S EASIER TO RETAIN THAN ACQUIRE



Let's go back to the flywheel concept for a moment to reinforce our next point. On average, it's far easier (and cheaper) to retain an existing customer as opposed to acquiring a new one to replace them. Both sales and marketing teams still have work to do even after you've made a sale to a client, and it's increasingly going to mean a partnership with customer support as well.

We could easily write another full article on post-sale customer success strategies (stay tuned for that one...) but we'll summarize here.

Much like we discussed at the beginning of this article, the success or failure of your post-sale strategies will greatly depend on how well the teams are aligned and communicating.

A few questions worth asking yourself:

- Does your marketing team have a post-sales nurturing cadence to keep ongoing touchpoints with your clients?
- Does your sales team frequently engage with customer support to ensure that they are up to speed on all of the post-sales activities and startup plans?
- Does your customer support team provide customer feedback, insight, and references back to your sales and marketing team?

Remember, the flywheel model works only when the momentum is kept all the way through the customer experience.





## Tools for Sales and Marketing Alignment

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There are many digital tools and platforms on the market to help facilitate better sales and marketing alignment. CRM and marketing automation are staples at this point. If you don't have both then you are already behind the game.

Account based marketing tools are also another popular solution right now to help teams work more tightly in sync around goals for targeting and converting prioritized accounts.

The newest and arguably most effective tool in the modern B2B tech stack is a sales enablement platform. These systems help marketing and sales teams consolidate all of their marketing, sales, and training content into one central system that can proactively suggest activities for sales reps, based on data and machine learning.

If you are interested in learning more about sales enablement solutions and how they can drive results for your business, [contact us today](#) for a demo of Klyck.io, a sales enablement solution that was designed specifically for the needs of complex B2B businesses. ■





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