IDEAPAPER

# Marketing & Sales: Two Teams, One Goal

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Marketers know that the work we do in our sphere has the potential to have an outsized impact on the sales team. Marketers have intimate knowledge of which messages and content are resonating with consumers, but we also need sales teams to let us know what they're hearing in the field. What do our customers need? What are their goals? Why aren't we closing deals? Marketers don't always know the ins and outs of customer challenges like sales teams, and we need their knowledge to help drive business growth and performance.

Similarly, sales teams know that marketing can drive awareness and increase their pipeline. Without marketing, sales would be reduced to blanketed cold calls/emails with hopes that they can find a chance encounter. But when empowered by marketing data such as popular search terms, topics that receive the most engagements, or buying intent, sales teams can close deals more effectively.

Despite the integral and symbiotic nature of these two teams, we often find them siloed, working completely separately, or "sharing" information (usually abstract metrics) back-and-forth without providing actionable insights. There's not nearly enough discussion about the challenges and inefficiencies we've created across two major parts of the revenue team: the siloed data, broken processes, and ineffective communication. What marketing does affects sales and vice versa; the MarTech stack is just as important to driving company revenue forecast as Salesforce.

Teams must find a way to not only bridge the gaps between sales and marketing but to also build an efficient working relationship across both sides of the revenue team. Rather than lobbing jargon-filled data between teams, find opportunities for information "baton passes," or chances to hand off information and insights in a useful way. One function cannot succeed without the other — we're all on the same revenue team, so it's time to act like it.

## Marketing and sales — we belong together

Marketing and sales need each other and are inextricably linked. Marketing needs to create leads and sales needs to sell and close those leads. Marketing builds the company's ability to sell; sales ensures the overall company's viability and health. Essentially, a great marketing team is rendered useless without a great sales team and a great sales team is left with inefficient workflows without a great marketing team.

To help narrow the gap between the two teams, marketing leaders should consider their MarTech stack from both a marketing and a sales perspective when contemplating new investments. Breaking down silos and enabling a free flow of information between the teams will create more efficient processes. To keep both teams in mind, it's important to start considering revenue technology, or "RevTech," investments as opposed to strictly MarTech ones. By shifting your mindset to think more holistically about the revenue team's needs, you'll avoid choosing a technology that only benefits one side.

When evaluating which technology to deploy to meet your joint sales and marketing goals, it's critical to answer a few key questions.

**Does the technology support our joint goals and use cases?** Too often, marketing teams will only think about their needs. Instead, define the joint goals and needs of the entire revenue team. To start, you can identify capabilities you're lacking to help determine the tech you need; however, don't focus solely on the solution, think about your end goals and work backwards to determine which technology can help you achieve them. For example, as a marketer, your goal should never be just impressions or even clicks; it should be awareness, engagements, pipeline creation, and ultimately, revenue. By shifting your mindset to think more holistically, you can identify technologies that can better meet your overall needs rather than one tactical key performance indicator (KPI) that only the marketing team will care about.

**How does the technology generate ROI for both teams?** Technology investments shouldn't be one-sided. What works for one team may not always work for both. Be sure to understand not just what the positive return is for marketing, but also what the impact will be for sales. You want to invest in a tech stack that works toward your joint goal: increasing your revenue.

**Does the technology integrate with my existing systems?** This may not be your first rodeo. Chances are you have a CRM that permeates your business already, and you'll need tools that work together seamlessly. The tech you invest in should integrate into your existing tech investments, with a keen eye to not exile data from one department or create additional stovepipes of data.

**How will implementing this solution affect our work processes?** Often a forgotten part of investing in a new tech is the changes teams will have to make to their current processes. Do these changes help bridge the

gap between teams? Will they facilitate more efficient workflows? In many cases, marketing can make technology decisions that have the potential to simplify workflows for sales (sometimes even within sales) and improve sales rep productivity. It's critical to ask these questions prior to making any investment.

**Will this tech help both teams understand our customers holistically?** Data reigns supreme in the marketing world. Sales, too! Tech investments such as advanced web analytics can help the revenue team both market to and sell to customers better by uncovering what content is resonating, how users are finding their way to your site, and what they're clicking once they get there.

**How will the solution drive revenue?** Some platforms are focused on maximizing your bottom line like Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) for email, which makes shopping even easier for customers. Some are focused on saving time such as tools that automate marketing tasks and enable you to focus on higher priority items. But many are focused on a variety of functionality that doesn't end up increasing pipeline or revenue. Prioritize platforms that make you money instead of just costing you time, resources and money.

**Can the technology grow with our organization?** Some platforms can't scale to suit the needs of a global enterprise and some have too many bells and whistles (and costs!) for young brands. Ensure that you are plugged in to the go-to-market strategy for your company and fully understand the growth trajectory that is being pursued. By staying connected, you can anticipate the future needs of the revenue team to ensure they are met and that as you grow, the tech can grow with you, so you don't have to repeat the process in a few years.

**Does the solution span and impact the entire customer journey?** You don't want a solution that brings in top-of-the-funnel leads that don't convert and rapidly get stale. You also don't want a solution focused on your bottom-of-the-funnel sales process to go under-utilized. The best tech drives leads that convert at an elevated level through insights and analysis.

**Does the technology bridge the gap between sales and marketing?** Any tech that aligns systems, joins capabilities, or promotes collaboration between teams is better than one that has the potential to pull teams further apart. A unified tech stack can accomplish goals faster, bring in more high-quality leads, and create a more efficient revenue program.

## MarTech vendors need to become RevTech advocates

The problem isn't only on the buyer-side of things — plenty of marketing platforms focus solely on the marketing side of the coin. They focus intensely on traffic: driving people to a website, having them open an email, or engaging as many as possible to like a tweet. But are these people going to buy whatever the brand is selling?

MarTech vendors need to be deliberate in how their platforms will ultimately drive revenue. One of the first steps in doing so is ensuring that their platform is being utilized to its fullest capability. On average, marketing leaders are only utilizing about 58% of their MarTech Stack's potential. Product marketers should communicate information to customers showcasing the functions that they're not utilizing. Leveraging more capabilities leads to better marketing programs, which will ultimately drive sales.

## How marketing can help sales beyond generating leads

Working closely with sales teams is a sure-fire way to help them. Forming a process for repeatable, actionable data-sharing benefits the entire revenue team. When coupled with a process for sharing feedback so each side understands how the information they provided was acted upon, you can create a more efficient program via open communication. Tightly aligned sales and marketing teams achieve an average of 27% faster profit growth over three years, showcasing that more unified teams are better performing teams.

Generating new quality leads should be the number one priority of any successful marketing team, but there's more to the revenue puzzle than that. For example, it's six to seven times easier to sell to an existing customer than it is a new one. Marketers need to focus on not only new prospects but also upselling and cross-selling current customers. Customer marketing programs can help retain

and grow existing customer spend and reduce the pressure on sales to fill the gaps left by churn. You need to create content, host webinars, and communicate your product roadmap to your customer base.

Another equally worthwhile strategy for marketing to engage is to truly get to know your ideal customers and ideal customer profile (ICP). Unfortunately, sometimes this is a science experiment done with research firms and performed in a silo. Marketing defines the personas and the broad-brush firmographics who have needs and budget to purchase but lack the hands-on insights of where deals are won or lost. Sales has this insight but are not necessarily analyzing and gleaning robust insights from this to truly prioritize and target specific companies. Tech stacks that safely compile data on your customers — with their permission, of course — are crucial to the knowledge foundation between both sides of the revenue team.

## How marketing can ensure high-quality leads

One of the most important ways marketers help sales teams are through the leads they create. Marketers must focus on delivering high-quality leads. It seems obvious, right? Yet 79% of marketing leads never convert into sales. There are myriad reasons, including leads being too top-of-funnel, leads not being in an active buying cycle, the "wrong" leads getting passed to sellers, lack of coordination between sales and marketing on most optimal follow-up based on lead engagement, wrong solution fit, competition, and sales execution. One antidote is to provide better prioritization for sales of where to focus and spend their time. The best way to do this is through lead (and account) scoring, aligning content and programs to your ICP and their needs, and

providing sales insights to leverage in their follow-up. Better leads result in more narrow sales funnels and higher close rates.

There is a lot of research on how to develop effective lead scoring models. The best models incorporate both behavioral scoring (activities the lead undertakes) and demographic/firmographic scoring (attributes about the person or their company). They are built collaboratively with multiple parts of the revenue organization, tested extensively, and are consistently refined based on data and expected results.

Long gone are lead scoring models where enough email opens and clicks convert a lead to a marketing qualified lead (MQL). They could be security bots that scan and click your emails. Similarly, downloading an ideapaper doesn't necessarily mean that the person who downloaded it is a relevant buyer or interested in your product. If the person downloading the asset is an intern doing research, they shouldn't become an MQL and get passed to sales. What's more important is identifying and scoring based on personas (more senior decision-makers get more points than analysts) and also classifying the type of content (Total Cost of Ownership calculators get more points than blogs). Score the accounts based on their fit to your ICP or leverage intent insights.

What's most important is that lead scoring models are aligning with who relevant buyers are, at the "right" companies, when they are in the process of evaluating and making a technology purchase. Marketers need to consistently assess and tune their lead scoring, and solicit feedback and insights from sellers, in order to achieve the most optimal conversion waterfall possible.

## How Acoustic empowers marketers to support sellers

Acoustic enables marketers to support sales in a variety of ways. Our platform is built to support the entire revenue organization, not just marketing or sales.

Powerful audience segmentation helps marketers create better, more targeted campaigns. This, in turn, results in better leads for the sales team. With more personalization in marketing programs, marketers can create a more customized customer journey. These facilitate more in-depth, contextual conversations between sales reps and the customers they're looking to serve. In the end, they're more likely to convert.

Our advanced analytics solution helps create custom dashboards that can help both marketing and sales teams reach their goals. Our dashboards are highly customizable, enabling you to track any KPI that works for you and your teams.

Our lead scoring solution is also customizable to work with you and what makes sense for your brand. Acoustic enables marketers to score leads based on both action and contact at the enterprise level. We also streamline the marketing and sales relationship by helping marketing teams avoid sending leads prematurely to sales, ensuring their time isn't wasted.

Tealeaf, our customer experience analytics solution, can also help brands create better customer experiences. While this, at its core, is a marketing tactic to help retain customers, the result is less pressure on sales to fill the gaps left by what would've been a churned customer.



Finally, Acoustic works with an ecosystem of partners and integrations that connect marketing and sales teams into a unified system. By connecting to your existing systems, you can create an even more powerful revenue team and process.

Our mission is to develop a more human approach to revenue generation. Our platform and each solution are designed to seamlessly nurture consumers into loyal customers, providing a human touch long lost in the marketing world.

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## To learn more about how Acoustic can benefit your team, <u>get in touch with us today</u>.

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*Acoustic is an independent marketing cloud with the open platform needed for success in a dynamic world. We're reimagining marketing technology by lessening the burdens of repetitive asks and equipping marketers with powerful technology that is simple and easy to use. We give marketers more time to do what really matters—to think bigger and put themselves back into the work. We help marketers aim higher, bringing humanity back into marketing. Acoustic serves an international client base of more than 3,500 brands, including Fortune 500 companies, providing digital marketing, marketing analytics, content management, personalization, mobile marketing, and marketingautomation solutions.*