



The 7 Most Common Mistakes in Marketing & Sales Alignment

An Executive Guide

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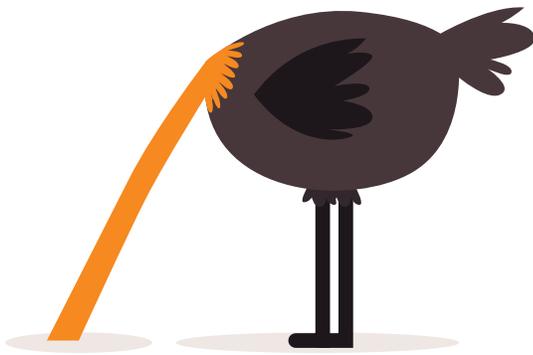


Introduction

Sales and Marketing are two of the most customer-facing functions in any sales organisation. They are what a customer gauges the business on and they are the organisation's growth engine. So you would think that there can be no higher priority to the senior management team than to ensure these two vital teams work together as effectively as possible in order to present the best possible image to the market and to entice customers to buy from them, rather than from their competitors.

So, what stands in the way of getting Sales and Marketing to support each other effectively?

Here are Seven of the Most Common Mistakes:



1. Doing Nothing

The worst mistake you can make is to turn a blind eye to problems. Yet, denying that there is a problem, that there is room for improvement, and merely accepting the status quo can magnify issues that would otherwise be manageable. For too many companies, sales and marketing departments are working in silos, blissfully unaware of the need to adapt to the changing world that surrounds them. Too many organizations have taken this path and have suffered for it. How did Kodak miss the digital-camera revolution? How did Canon not see the threat from smartphones with in-built cameras? You see, doing nothing is a dangerous thing.



2. Going for "Quick Fixes"

The world is increasingly impatient and our attention spans are becoming shorter. Combine that with the short term results outlook in many sales organisations and it is no wonder that when problems arise we look for quick fixes. However, shortcuts rarely work when it comes to sales and marketing collaboration. When sales reps do not make their targets, many organizations try to fix the problem with short-term solutions. Let's look at some of these quick fixes:

Provide more sales training

This is a popular but increasingly ineffective “solution”. Why?

Firstly, the success of a sales methodology is hugely dependent on the individual’s ability to carry it off, which means that there is no “one size fits all” method.

Secondly, just sticking a bunch of reps into a sales training program for a few days and sending them back out into the field will not make a difference. This has been known for a long time.

The nineteenth-century German psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus found that 87 percent of new knowledge is forgotten within 30 days if it is not reinforced. What do you think happens to the newly trained know-how within 30 days after your sales training? That’s right, reps revert back to their old ways.

Hire more sales reps

The rationale for this popular choice is sound: if X number of reps bring in Y amount of revenue, then more reps will bring in more revenue. However, bringing more reps into a flawed sales and marketing environment will not yield the desired results. Besides, the hiring process itself is fraught with risk of getting the selection wrong. Plus, it can take 3-6 months for a rep to ramp up to their full selling potential, during which time they are an enormous cost to the business. It’s a risky choice for employers.

Generate more sales leads

Surely, this is the best way to boosting sales results ? Well, it would be if all your sales lead creation and management processes were perfect, if sales and marketing were working harmoniously together to generate, nurture, hand over, close and report on the progress of leads perfectly. If that is not the case, why would you want to spend good money creating more leads only to see them dry up and go nowhere, thanks to a flawed sales and marketing process? Stuffing more leads into a flawed process will not resolve your sales effectiveness problem.





3. Having no-one responsible for sustained sales and marketing collaboration

Sales and marketing obviously need to work together in order to reach the right prospects and to boost sales effectiveness.

For such cooperation to be possible, cross-functional processes need to be in place to make sure that both sides are in alignment. But how are you going to ensure that the collaboration remains sustainable and effective? You can't rely on CRM or any other technology to do that for you. You need human intervention. So, not putting a referee in place to continuously intermediate between Sales and Marketing is a gross oversight.



4. Ignoring the people / human dimension

IT will not create a miracle for you. Technology is just a tool, not a solution. So, when attempting to foster a cooperative relationship between sales and marketing people, it is important to address the human dimension as a priority. Only then will it be appropriate to move on to HOW each department can support the other; only then can we move on to setting up joint processes and metrics.



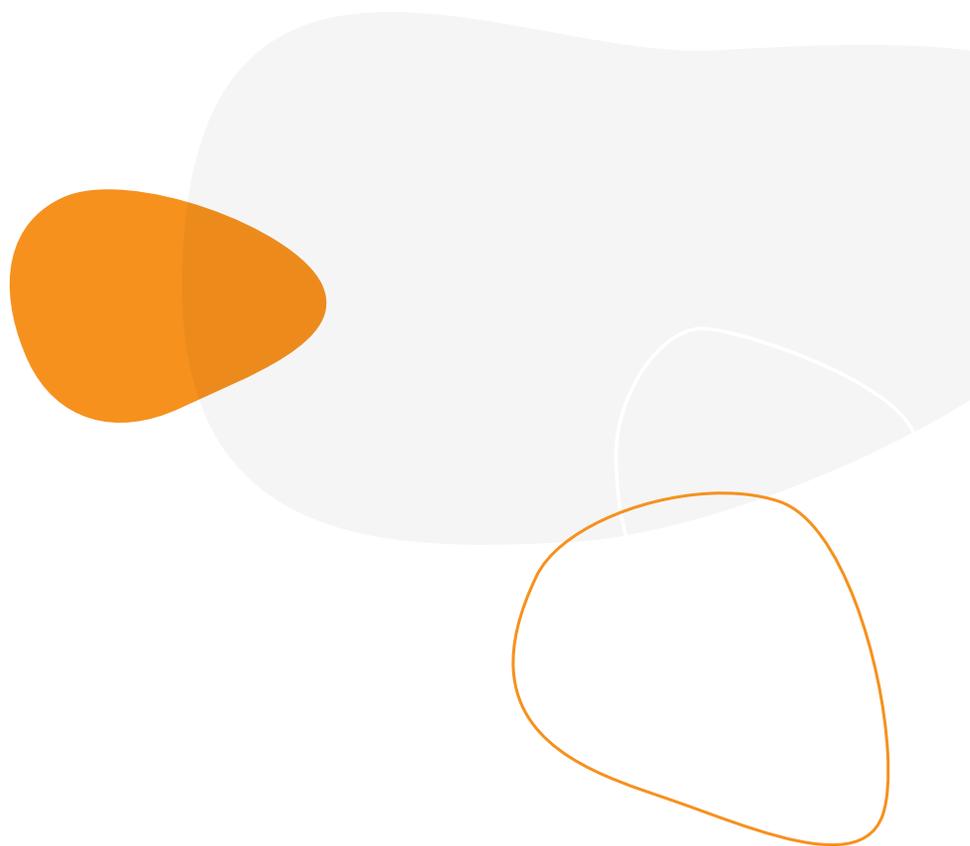
5. Believing that technology will deliver a miracle

There are many technology vendors out there who promote their latest "solutions" and promising the world. However, technology relies on people using it effectively. Even the most sophisticated technology will remain ineffective if you don't have your people and your business processes aligned.



6. Trying to implement change without executive support

Implementing reforms can be an uphill battle when business change touches on corporate culture. As laudable as it might be for middle managers to attempt cultural change, such optimistic projects are often doomed to failure. They need executive buy-in.



Conclusion

So, what to do?

Luckily, there is a well-proven and easy-to-implement method available to you to bring your marketing and sales functions together to collaborate more effectively.

A method that encompasses the human, processes and technology elements of collaboration between Sales and Marketing functions and people, one that respects and attends to the respective competencies and objectives on both sides to boost sales revenue, improve customer experience and lift staff engagement.

It is called The OneTEAM Method® and it is available to you right now.

Contact Us

More details are available at www.peterstrokorbconsulting.com

Client testimonials are at www.peterstrokorbconsulting.com/testimonials/

About Peter Strohkorb Consulting International



Peter Strohkorb Consulting International is a specialist business consulting firm.

We work with CEOs, Marketing and Sales Leaders and with their teams to lift sales revenue, profitability, staff experience and customer loyalty all at once.

Peter Strohkorb Consulting International has a proven methodology and a low risk, step-by-step path to your business growth and ongoing success.

Our OneTEAM Method® leverages your 'productivity trinity' of People first, Processes second and Technology third in a holistic approach that minimizes your risk and cost, yet delivers sustainable business growth.

We will be delighted to discuss your specific requirements.

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