

Identifying alignment points

It's time. Your company must integrate your marketing and sales departments in order to be a viable competitor in your industry. No matter the industry. Both departments want to see growth and revenue increases, right? To achieve the same goals they must build each other up instead of tearing each other down.

Each stage in the buying process requires marketing and sales alignment – even stages that are entirely marketing-focused or entirely sales-focused. **Here is our list of seven alignment points your company needs in order to be successful:**



Acquisition

- Define every attribute of your target customers (industry, company size)
- Agree on target quantities for new leads based on a predetermined time period
- Define hot leads and agree on processes to send directly to sales



Nurture

- Agree on whether or not to contact new prospects by phone and what data to gather from them (title, company, email address, product needs)
- Define sub-stages including the behaviors and attributes of each of the members
- Agree on information (newsletters, webinar invites, asset downloads) that prospects should receive at each sub-stage



Qualification

- Define every attribute of a sales-ready lead
- Agree on lead-scoring rules (which website pages to score, what's considered the 'most valuable' pages)



Hand-off

- Agree on a pre-defined process to transfer new leads to sales
- Agree on what lead data is the most important for sales reps to know
- Define methods to link new leads with existing accounts (for attribution reports)



Acceptance

- Agree on how quickly sales will contact a new lead, including how many contact attempts they'll make
- Define your process for returning rejected leads to a nurture campaign or removing them from system altogether



Selling

- Define your own set of rules for alerts to sales based on a lead's behavior in the marketing automation system (website engagement, social engagement, email engagement)
- Define your rules to drive messages in marketing systems based on lead status in sales
- Agree on process to develop and distribute sales collateral to leads and track their usage



Service

- Define sales/service alert rules based on customer behaviors in your marketing automation system
- Define your process to deliver marketing messages during operational interactions
- Define your process to integrate loyalty programs with operations

For each item on the alignment list, your team will need to define the specific activities to align - including the individual goals of the marketing department, sales department, and, most importantly, the customer. **Everyone must then develop and deploy treatments that meet those goals**, create measures that monitor execution and track results, and continually review performance to find opportunities for improvement.