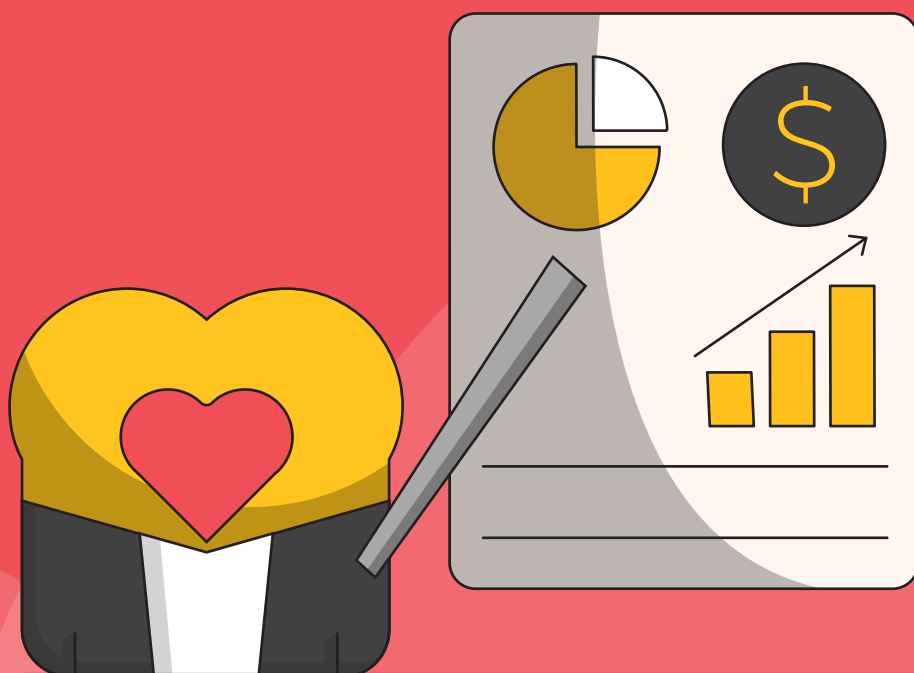




# Building a Holistic Sales & Marketing Partnership

A Buttered Toast eBook





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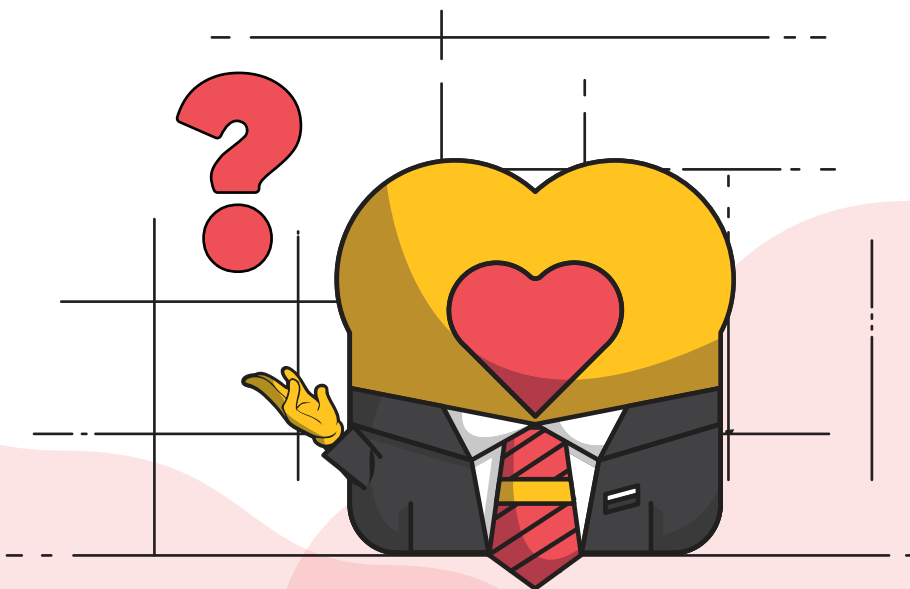
Sales and marketing partnership is the holy grail for all types of companies, B2C or B2B. One that's sought after but rarely achieved. And it's no secret why: Aligned teams perform better, work more effectively, and bring home the bacon.



The misalignment of sales and marketing teams has plagued companies since... well, forever. Historically, sales and marketing teams have worked in silos and are treated as entirely separate entities from one another. This is a huge oversight for too many companies, and a missed opportunity to see them complement each other.

Marketing typically owns the top-of-the-funnel (TOFU), while sales take care of the bottom-of-the-funnel (BOFU). Once a lead is ready for sales, it gets handed off and, in true misalignment fashion, said lead sometimes never hears from marketing again.

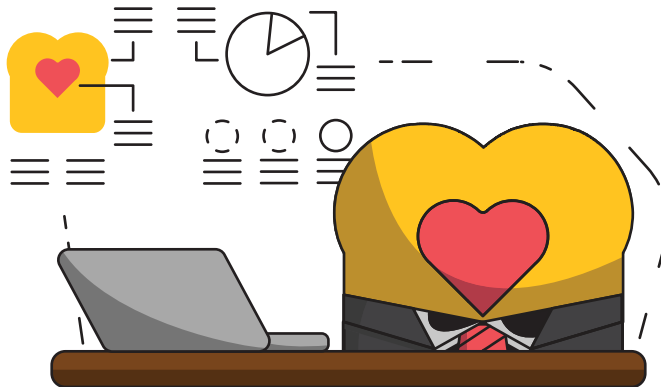
In today's world, this linear and imperceptive process should no longer be tolerated. Customer engagement evolves as constantly as technology. Customers are constantly engaging with brands long before they purchase, and well after a deal closes. Lead handoffs end up lost, and duplicate communications can sour a buyer's perception of your business — resulting in lost revenue. Sales and marketing partnership is a key factor of delivering a true, seamless customer experience.



# The Real Score Between Sales Teams and Marketing Teams

**At Buttered Toast, we've seen it time and time again: a disjointed, misaligned sales and marketing partnership benefits no-one.**

It only leads to wasted time and resources. Often, the disagreements between the two teams become convenient scapegoats for missed targets.

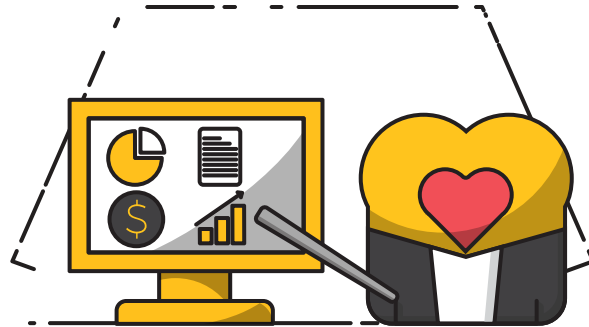


- 5.6/10 is the average "grade" for sales and marketing partnership at tech companies. (Hubspot)
- 60 to 70% of B2B content becomes useless as the topics are irrelevant to the buyer audience. (Forrester)
- The #1 challenge sales and marketing teams face is that their departments work in silos, and they aren't aware of what's going on with each other. (Kiwi Creatives)
- HubSpot also reported that misalignment between both sales and marketing teams costs a staggering \$1 trillion a year. (HubSpot)
- 79% of marketing leads never convert due to a failure to nurture consumer connections. (HubSpot)
- Of the leads that do get passed to sales teams, 73% of them are never contacted. (HubSpot)
- Only 12% of sales executives believe that MQLs are important. (LinkedIn)
- 46% of marketers report that data quality and accuracy negatively impact marketing optimization. 28% say data is siloed and difficult to access. (Invoca)
- In LinkedIn's State of Sales survey, 49% of B2B buyers in Europe say they experience inconsistent messages from sales and marketing most of the time.

There are concrete, practical steps that, when applied carefully, not only keep sales and marketing off each others' backs but help them work harmoniously together to achieve their goals. Encouraging a true sales and marketing partnership is no longer just nice-to-have, it must become a critical business objective in 2022 and beyond.

# Sales and Marketing in a Nutshell

Both Sales and Marketing share the same goal: securing business and helping their company grow. But how they do this differs significantly.



## Sales

- Centers around the present
- Focused on one-to-one transactions
- Focused on opportunities
- Makes a push
- Tried and tested practices
- Allows for a two-way dialogue
- Driven by human interaction
- Provides short-term advantage

## Marketing

- Centers around the future
- Focused on multiple transactions
- Focused on strategies
- Pulls people in
- Constantly evolving tactics
- Directs one-way messages
- Driven by metrics
- Facilitates long-term sustainable success

# Friction Points Faced by Sales and Marketing Teams

There's a plethora of pain points that make sales and marketing partnership a challenge in itself.

Marketing teams from early stage startups tend to be fairly small as they don't have large budgets and resources. The sole responsibility to drive those top of funnel leads lies on the marketing teams. They're expected to start raining leads into the top of the funnel because of marketing activities, especially if it's very early on and their brand awareness and penetration.

Sales teams, on the other hand, are often judged and compensated on their ability to close deals and acquire qualified leads. They tend to not focus on brand building exercises of nurturing and retargeting campaigns.

Sales teams often think that marketers are out of touch with what's really going on in the marketplace. Marketing teams, on the other hand, are blamed for their tendency of not getting the message right, or not really understanding granular customer needs. Marketing teams often perceive sales teams as short-sighted, and sometimes too focused on individual customer experiences. They tend to think that sales are insufficiently aware of the larger market, and perhaps blind to the future.

- Marketing says they're bringing SQLs, but Sales aren't closing.
- Sales says the lead-scoring is off, or something is up, because the leads aren't good enough.
- Marketing says they need more insights from sales on what customers want.
- Sales says Marketing aren't getting their messaging right.

The list of challenges goes on. Long story short, each function undervalues the other's contributions. What is the secret sauce that can help strengthen the partnership between sales and marketing?



"The reality in any company is that no one has a better understanding of customer pain points and needs than the sales team. It's just a fact. They talk to them every day. They're the ones who interface are trying to sell, they're hearing objections. They're hearing why things aren't selling, they're hearing why competitors are beating them. And we often find that there's a real deficient level of communication from sales to marketing."

- Matt Owen, Head of Content, Buttered Toast



Increasingly, the companies who succeed are the companies who can move from a fragile sales and marketing alignment to a true sales and marketing partnership. Companies need to do everything they can to bring these two departments closer together, so that they can achieve common ground when it comes to the buyers' journey.

## Why Sales and Marketing Partnership Matters

- HubSpot has found that organizations with excellent sales and marketing partnership close 38% more deals and achieve 27% faster three-year profit growth.
- They also achieve 208% higher revenue than organizations with disconnected marketing and sales teams.
- In a study by Marketo, companies with aligned marketing and sales teams were 67% more efficient at closing deals. Aligning both teams can lead to a 209% growth in marketing revenue and a 108% better lead acceptance.
- Marketing and sales partnership leads to 36% higher customer retention.
- 87% of sales and marketing leaders say collaboration between sales and marketing enables critical business growth.
- Organizations with aligned departments can achieve up to 38% higher sales win rates.
- 85% of sales and marketing managers said that aligning sales and marketing was their single biggest opportunity to improve performance. (LinkedIn)
- Aligned teams close more and churn less. Businesses with strong sales and marketing alignment are 67% more effective at closing deals and 58% better at retaining customers. (LinkedIn)
- One company saw a revenue rise of over 10% and more good-quality leads when they held weekly sales and marketing check-in meetings. (Databox)

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"Our experiences of sales and marketing work better when it's holistic, because they have the same goal. If we look at a blended approach to attracting nurture and converting prospects, with marketing and sales being responsible for these different touch points along this omni-channel way of looking at it, then tensions might not run so high because the goals and attribution are shared."

- Jessie White, VP of Performance, Buttered Toast



# Start a Holistic Partnership, Not a Competition

A true partnership allows both teams to become increasingly proficient at homing in on shared objectives, and collaborating to achieve them. We've seen it all before: the right tools, processes, and ideas can get it done. Here are solutions that both sales and marketing teams can work together to achieve



## 1. Identify Your Buyer Personas to a T

In modern sales and marketing, identifying your buyer personas is the guiding light from which all goals can be focused on. Personas are essentially the target audience of your sales and marketing efforts. They are the ones you want to take the desired action once they receive your branded message.

From a marketing perspective, personas are the answers to crucial marketing questions: "Whom are we talking to? Who are we creating this for?". Your customer personas will give you clarity when creating projects on content, demand generation, as well as SEO strategies.

As for sales, they are a treasure trove of knowledge when it comes to understanding your buyer persona. They're the ones on the ground, talking to customers, hearing their wants and needs. When it comes to shaping your buyer personas, sales teams can bring you qualitative, first-hand information!

## 2. Multifunctional, Cross-Platform Content

A lack of understanding regarding what content to create for each stage of the sales and marketing funnel is a common cause of poor lead performance. Ensure that your B2B sales team is armed with the marketing tools they need to answer questions, show value, and nurture leads further down the sales funnel.

Both teams need to sit down with each other and figure out what information would be most beneficial to prospects at specific stages in the buyer's journey. By providing the best content, customer service, and personalization to pipeline efforts, this will lead to more collaboration and transparency between sales and marketing teams.

### 3. Establish Baseline Data

Marketers need to establish baseline data, so both teams can accurately prepare a budget and make informed decisions. For marketers, establishing baseline data can be the difference between success and failure. The problem is most companies don't bother with baseline data. This process requires a lot of patience to come up with consistent and statistically significant baseline data, without sacrificing a large chunk of your budget.

The results could be useful when applied to subsequent campaigns. Teams can measure the incremental effect of marketing collaterals, particularly promotions, which can also aid sales teams moving forward.

### 4. Contextualize the Data

For a sales and marketing partnership to truly work, you need to restructure your customer journey into a single customer experience. This allows both teams to contextualize data, and track prospects across the entire funnel. If executed correctly, that positive effect on customer engagement will carry right through the sales process.



"Customer experience is the number one driver of growth in 2021 and beyond. This has been happening for a while, but 2020 really accelerated trends in digital transformation and buyer-seller relationships and there is no going back."

- Yamini Rangan, Chief Customer Officer, HubSpot



### 5. Sync Assets and Resources Used by Both Teams

B2B digital marketing can also bridge the divide between sales and marketing teams as it holds the keys to communication channels with potential customers. When you develop intelligent sales enablement materials, your teams can work together to deliver insights and recommendations. Consider leveraging sales and marketing automation, so both teams can gain insight into prospects and customer behavior through automation tools.



## 6. Communication and Transparency

We can't emphasize this enough: Companies need to establish a culture of open and constant communication between teams. When your sales and marketing teams are aligned and in regular communication, information can be flown freely from department to department.

Your sales team can tell the marketing team what is and isn't working so that the marketers can adjust strategies based on what they've been told. If both teams also implement the lead scoring method with software that allows them to do it, it means they can both focus on only targeting the best-qualified leads and not wasting time on the bad ones.

Both teams need to be fully engaged on an ongoing basis with content creation, strategy planning, and campaign building and execution.

## 7. Define Shared Metrics of Success

If sales only focuses on closed-won opportunities, and marketing only cares about lead scores and MQLs, then each department will indisputably measure success by different standards. This accentuates the gap between the top and bottom funnel, as both functions need to build off of each other to nurture leads in order to ultimately lead to conversion. To truly encompass a full sales funnel, it is critical that both teams align on at least one or more metrics that definitively represents measures of success.

## 8. Analyze and Utilize Sales Feedback

Marketing teams need to ask the sales teams of their genuine opinion about the actual sales process to learn what has resonated with people.

Marketing won't always produce great leads; there will be times they might not always get the messaging spot on. They're only human, they can mess up. So can salespeople. A consistent feedback loop needs to exist between the two teams.

Schedule regular meetings (monthly or even bi-weekly) with the sales team. Establish processes that allow salespeople to transfer customer feedback to the marketing team. At the same time, marketing can pull insights from the data they collect from customer engagements. Forwarding those insights to salespeople can help them understand client preferences better.



"When sales give feedback, marketing should take that and make it actionable. When they've heard everything from the group, they can then use that to optimize, accelerate, or augment programs."

- Melissa Leon, Managing Director, Buttered Toast





# Work Towards a Shared Goal: Keeping Customers Happy

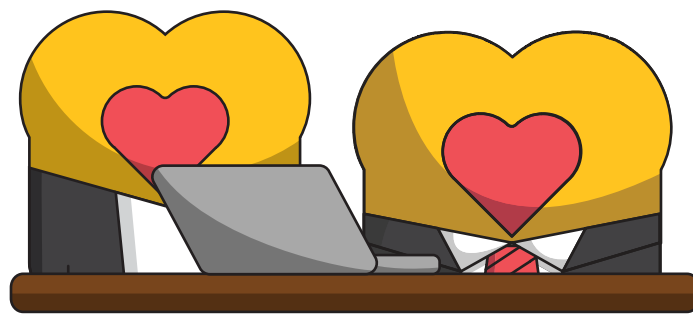
Remember that no matter how well aligned your departments are, B2B customers don't care much for the internal workings of the business they buy from. What they want is a great product, and an even greater customer experience. Effective engagement and better revenue generation all depends on how you strengthen and empower your sales and marketing teams.

## Build Trust Between Teams to Add More Value

Sales and marketing teams partnership shouldn't be treated as a one-off activity. It's an ongoing process that can add incomparable value to your business, one that requires constant communication and empathy.

Truth is, sales and marketing teams are two sides of the same coin, and with the right processes and attitudes in place, they can coalesce like a well-oiled revenue machine without stepping on each other's toes. One more thing to always remember: the customer's satisfaction should ultimately be the heartbeat behind whatever actions your sales and marketing teams decide to make.

Whatever the sales and marketing challenges, there are solutions to solve them using the right combination of strategy, communication and technology. Let our team of experts fill you in on how Sales and Marketing can create a lasting alignment and partnership.



**Buttered Toast can help you and your team  
meet your digital marketing goals.  
Get in touch for a quick chat today!**