

HOW TO OPTIMIZE YOUR SALES FLOW BY CONTROLLING YOUR CONTENT

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE



THE B2B MARKETING & SALES PROCESS IS PROFOUNDLY BEING RESHAPED

B2B companies operate in an era where the B2B marketing & sales process is profoundly being reshaped. Using insights-based sales has never been more important. The main driver for this is B2C behaviour which is now spreading over to the B2B arena. B2B buyers now look for the same digital experiences and features that they encounter as consumers.

The new buyer's experiences and expectations are shaped by B2C leaders such as Apple, Amazon, and Netflix. In these expectations, themes such as branded experience, immediate supply of relevant information and a seamless professional experience are key.

82%

**OF DECISION-MAKERS
THINK SELLERS ARE
UNPREPARED**

Source: Sirius Decisions

Prospective buyers are increasingly conducting research themselves online (outside their contact with a sales rep) through third-party websites, buyer reviews, blogs, social media and more.

So, in the new B2B marketing & sales-process content, responsiveness and providing a branded experience with a proper follow-up are key in delivering an optimal Customer Buying Experience. For this to happen, both Marketing & Sales need to step up their game to stay ahead.

"Companies that get it right can drive impressive results, including, in our experience, 15% to 30% improvement in marketing efficiencies (such as reduced cost per lead), 20% to 50% increases in digital ROI, and a two- to threefold improvement in marketing-driven lead conversion across the entire purchase journey."

Source: *Building an Integrated Marketing and Sales Engine for B2B*, Boston Consulting Group, July 2018

SO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

Companies need to provide their prospects with a seamless transition from online engagement to offline interaction, and they need to do this by working on the following areas:

Content needs a far more prominent place in offline interaction. This means that Marketing needs to work on providing Sales with more and more impactful content.

For Sales, this means that it is paramount to have immediate access to all digital content (complete and up-to-date) and being able to effortlessly and interactively bring this up during any commercial meeting.

Every offline interaction represents an opportunity to establish your brand. In a world where products differentiate less and less on features, it is your brand that sets you apart. The content and the way it is presented and shared need to be an integrated brand experience.

65%

OF CONTENT NEVER GETS USED (ON AVERAGE)

Source: Sirius Decisions

To 'close the loop', Marketing needs to understand which content is used and not. This will help to invest more in content that impacts revenue. Measuring the ROI on how content is used by Sales is key.



86%

OF B2B BUYERS SAY THEY SEE "NO REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUPPLIERS"

Source: Webbiquity

58%

OF PIPELINE STALLS BECAUSE REPS ARE UNABLE TO ADD VALUE

Source: Webbiquity

HOW IS CHANGE SECURED?

An absolute requirement for a change to happen is that Marketing and Sales need to work from shared targets and thus create a culture of mutual alignment.

But what can also move both departments together is a shared digital platform that both Marketing and Sales can use to create, share, and measure the impact of content.

Choosing such a digital solution with the right mix of functionalities for your company's requirements is key.

The challenge here is not to over engineer the solution with excess functionality to enable proper adoption amongst the sales team.

32%

OF ORGANIZATIONS SAY SALES ENABLEMENT WILL BECOME THEIR TOP PRIORITY IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS.

Source: Hubspot, 2017



THE 5 REQUIREMENTS OF A DIGITAL SALES SOLUTION

1. Turn the concept of how alignment on content takes place around: from pull to push

In traditional solutions, salespeople need to go to content. Think about file servers or intranet solutions where salespeople need to take action. They need to log in, check for themselves if new updates are available or prepare content for meetings and then pull these to their device. Of course, this is not the most efficient process, since each salesperson needs to do this individually and marketing is often consulted if content cannot be immediately found.

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Source: Hubspot, 2017

In a research, it was shown that 58% of salespeople found it very difficult, sometimes even almost impossible to easily find the content that they needed. In the same survey, it was confirmed that sales reps spend a staggering 31% of their time searching for content, and curate materials for meetings.

But more importantly, the result of this, is that sales often work with not updated and incomplete material, all of which has a profound impact on the Customer Buying Experience.

In the new world, content is automatically pushed to salespeople on any device and is also available offline. They are effortlessly aligned with the latest and uniform content and can spend their time maximizing impact during sales engagement and closing deals, not aligning themselves with content.

2. Enable cross-selling and knowledge sharing

Companies are positioning themselves more and more as solution sellers rather than product and service vendors. Also, propositions are increasingly integrated beyond traditional business units. As a result, salespeople need to work with more comprehensive and complex propositions and perform more cross-selling activities. This development makes an effortless alignment of marketing content even more important, as salespeople need to constantly accommodate themselves with a broader and more complex proposition portfolio.

THE 5 REQUIREMENTS OF A DIGITAL SALES SOLUTION

3. Your brand sets you apart

The brand sets you apart: when content is accessed, presented and shared, it needs to be from a branded environment.

4. Let the sales content follow the conversation and not vice versa

Sales are used to traditional methods of interacting with customers: one-dimensional slide presentations. However, in the current B2B Sales process, prospects are better informed and have higher expectations of a sales meeting which means that very rarely, sales meetings will take place via a linear storyline.

Therefore a digital platform should enable Sales to present in a non-linear way to 'wow' the customer and exceed the expectations the buyer has in this age.

In short: 'wow' the customer.



5. Analytics will get you there

How sales are using content is usually a black box. Marketers extract insight from the analytics to determine which content is key for motivating customers to purchase, and which content is no longer relevant.



CONCLUSION

We hope you found this guide useful. Implementing the steps described in this guide in your sales process will already put you on your way to take control of your sales content.

However, if you want to turn it up a notch and see how a sales enablement platform can enable you to manage all of your content from one place, consider SCAURA.

You'll be amazed about what analytics-powered sales can do for your revenue...

SCAURA is a leading-edge sales enablement platform that helps medium-sized companies to align marketing with sales by delivering the right content to the sales team at the right time, the customer buying experience is enhanced and sales results will increase.

CURIOUS TO LEARN MORE?

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