Refactored

Sometimes It’s Good to Be an Enabler

A Marketing Leader’s Guide to Enabling Sales

For both marketing and sales leaders, expectations are changing at an accelerating pace. In sales, many quota-growth expectations are outpacing economic conditions—yet prospect buying behavior seems to change daily, forcing sales organizations to evolve their tactics.

At the same time, the trend to hold marketing teams accountable for revenue continues, leaving even experienced marketing leaders scrambling to learn new strategic skills. Add to that the challenge of keeping up with developments in account-based marketing, big data, technology stacks, artificial intelligence... all add complexity to your day.

To succeed, **marketing and sales teams must work together,** collaborating and providing mutual support to reach shared goals.

Best Practices for Basic Sales Enablement

Empowering your sales team doesn't have to be a grand quest or an expensive undertaking. Consider starting with a few best practices that can build trust and produce some early wins. You'll be surprised how fast things take off from there.

1. Align Your Efforts

According to SiriusDecisions, B2B organizations with tightly aligned sales and marketing operations achieved **24% faster revenue growth and 27% faster profit growth** over three years. That's reason enough to explore ways to improve collaboration between the two departments.

2. Empower sales

One of the primary goals of sales enablement is to empower your sales organization to succeed alongside marketing. When marketing teams understand what sales people need and consistently provide them with the right support, Marketo notes, your company can become **67% better at closing deals.**

3. Target demand generation

Demand generation is a key way that marketing can support sales departments. But, according to Marketing Sherpa, **73% of B2B leads are not sales ready,** so sales people still spend enormous amounts of time hunting leads. You can't enable robust demand generation if you don't know which targets sales is trying to hit.

73% of B2B leads

are **not** sales ready

Ready to get your teams working together?

Read on to learn why Sales Enablement is an imperative for many organizations—and some practical tactics to help your teams work together effectively.

How Did We Get Here?

Many marketing and sales teams are so overwhelmed trying to keep up with the changing environment that they've stopped talking to each other—and that's bad news for everyone. The problem has become so big that organizations are building an entire cost center around dedicated sales enablement teams, primarily to facilitate communication between sales and marketing. In 2017, CSO Insights reported an **81% increase** in such cost centers, all to support sales in a way that marketing and other departments used to do as part of the normal course of business.

What does this mean for marketing leaders? First, if you want to see your company succeed **and** increase your personal value to your employer, then it's the right time to seize a unique opportunity. By counteracting the divisiveness that has sprung up between these teams over the past decade and embracing sales-marketing collaboration, you can implement a level of alignment that can increase the successes of both teams while delivering significant cost savings for your organization.

Just What Is Sales Enablement?

Trying to determine whether your company should join the nearly 60% of organizations that have dedicated sales enablement resources? It can be hard to know when there are so many conflicting definitions of sales enablement out there. **Perhaps a simple description will suffice:**

> **"Sales Enablement is the alignment of sales and marketing teams on the goals, strategies, processes, and activities that optimize the company's ability to meet or exceed revenue targets."**

Start Real Conversations to Align Your Teams

If marketing and sales have been working in silos, the first step is to establish formal communication processes that will help you align your efforts and stay connected. To get started, try these steps.

1. Learn how sales sells.

Schedule a weekly call between marketing managers and sales to understand where the funnel, pipeline, and revenue stand against goal. Ask questions. Update sales on new campaigns and content. Then disseminate the learned information to all marketing team members.

2. Document marketing and sales service level agreements (SLAs).

According to HubSpot, companies that implement specific SLAs between marketing and sales are **34% more likely to experience a greater year-over-year marketing ROI** than those without SLAs in place. Start small by documenting:

- The parameters of the service that marketing will provide to sales (e.g., types and number of leads)
- How sales will follow up with those leads (e.g., timeframe, number of attempts, format)

You can move into more comprehensive SLAs as trust begins to build.

3. Live a day in the sales life.

Have marketing team members shadow a sales person for a day. Take note of everyday tasks, listen to sales calls, These members should then communicate what they learned to the rest of the team to build understanding.

4. Know your target.

Have sales and marketing collaborate to determine what your ideal customer looks like and who the various personas are within those accounts. Ask key questions such as:

- How do they consume information?
- What are their pains?
- What content does sales need to push a persona from one stage of the buyer's journey to the next?

Be sure to confirm what sales says by conducting customer interviews; sales doesn't always have a 360° view.

Document
your marketing and sales **SLAs.**

Power Up Content That Empowers Sales

Is your marketing team creating content and collateral that sales isn't using? Once you have aligned your teams on shared goals, the next step is to produce resources to support those goals. These steps will take you a long way in the right direction.

Collaborate with sales to ensure that you are providing **sales content,** not just makreting content.

1. Create content that supports a sale.

Collaborate with sales to ensure that you are providing the resources they need for effective sales efforts at each stage of the buyer's journey. Marketing content is usually pain driven, to generate interest in a solution. Sales content should be designed specifically to address the objections of each persona at each stage of the buyer's journey.

2. Create a content portal.

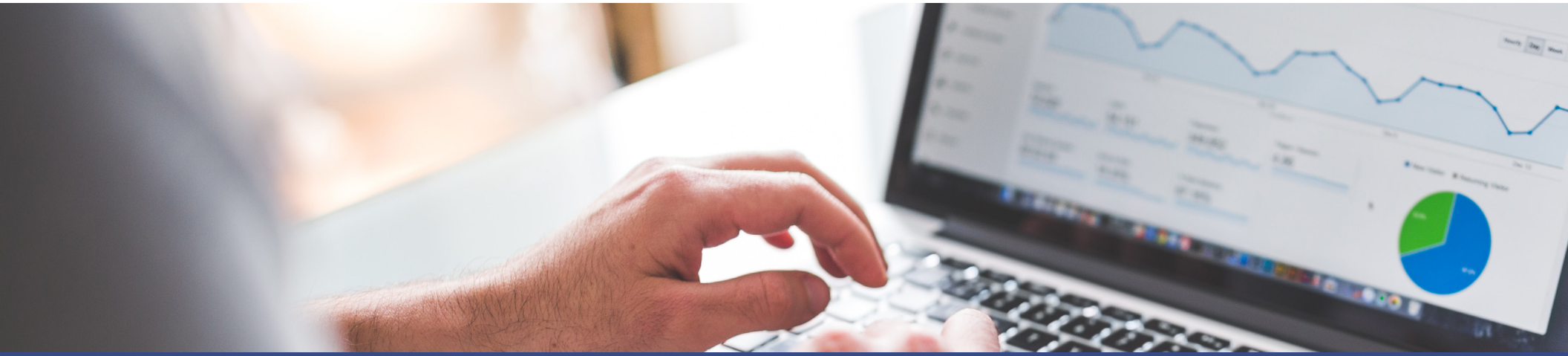
Put your new resource materials in a central portal for your sales team and channel partners, and help them discover the benefits of using it. As you build more valuable sales content, the sales team will likely start asking you to send them copies one-off. Point them to the portal instead. They'll quickly learn the power of a centralized content hub.

3. Dream together.

Help your sales team build a "Dream Account List," if appropriate. Too many sales teams simply pick companies off a list, based on what they think they know about those leads. Marketing can provide the metrics and data to build a solid list of target accounts that are most likely to buy and remain great customers.

4. Pre-write for efficiency.

Provide your sales team with templated social media content. Train them in its use: how often to post, where to post, when and how to personalize content, and how to engage effectively with target accounts.



Generate the Right Leads

Both quantity and quality count here. Leads are essential, but even more critical is providing the **right** leads to boost sales' close rate. Communication is key as you complete these steps.

Execute

the right kinds of campaigns with flexible **precision.**

1. Work with sales to determine your optimal sales strategy.

Will an account-based marketing (ABM) strategy that focuses on a few large accounts get you to your revenue goal, or do you need to cast a broader net? Regardless of the strategy, work hard, work fast, measure results, and be ready to pivot as those results dictate. Talk it through so that you can implement the right approach.

2. Reverse-engineer the ideal marketing-sales funnel.

What is the close-win rate? What about the conversion from marketing qualified leads (MQL) to tele-qualification accepted leads (TAL) rate? Only when you know these details can you calculate exactly how many leads are needed to hit your target (and get your bonus).

3. Don't let analysis paralysis derail you.

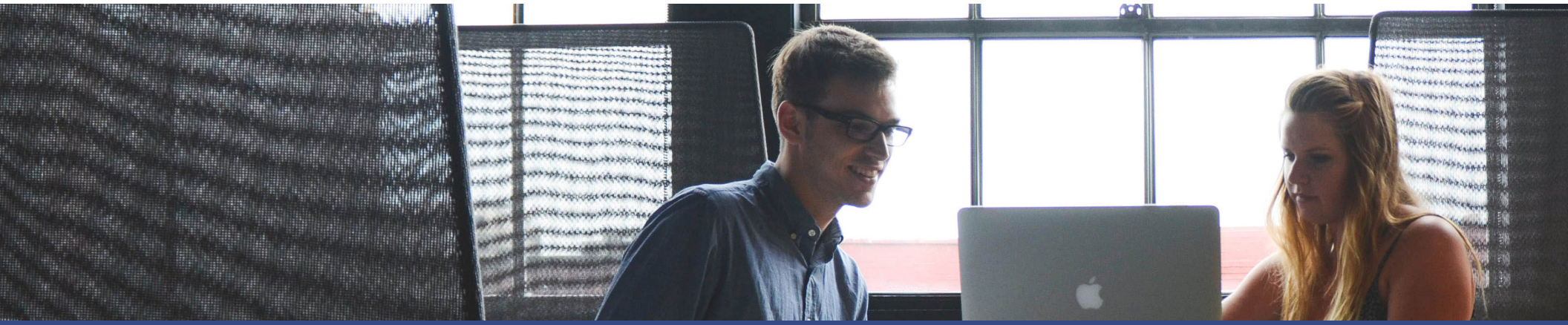
Collaboration can turn into decision by committee, causing delays in execution. Collaborate early, create efficiently, gather feedback, edit if necessary—and launch. Consensus is great but launching on time is better, and you're still the marketing expert.

4. Build—and use—dashboards in your CRM.

Both marketing and sales teams should have a real-time view of where your funnel stands. Using your shiny new reverse-engineered funnel goals, track where you are against goal on your dashboard for all to see. It will likely become the primary tool for discussion in your meetings with the sales team.

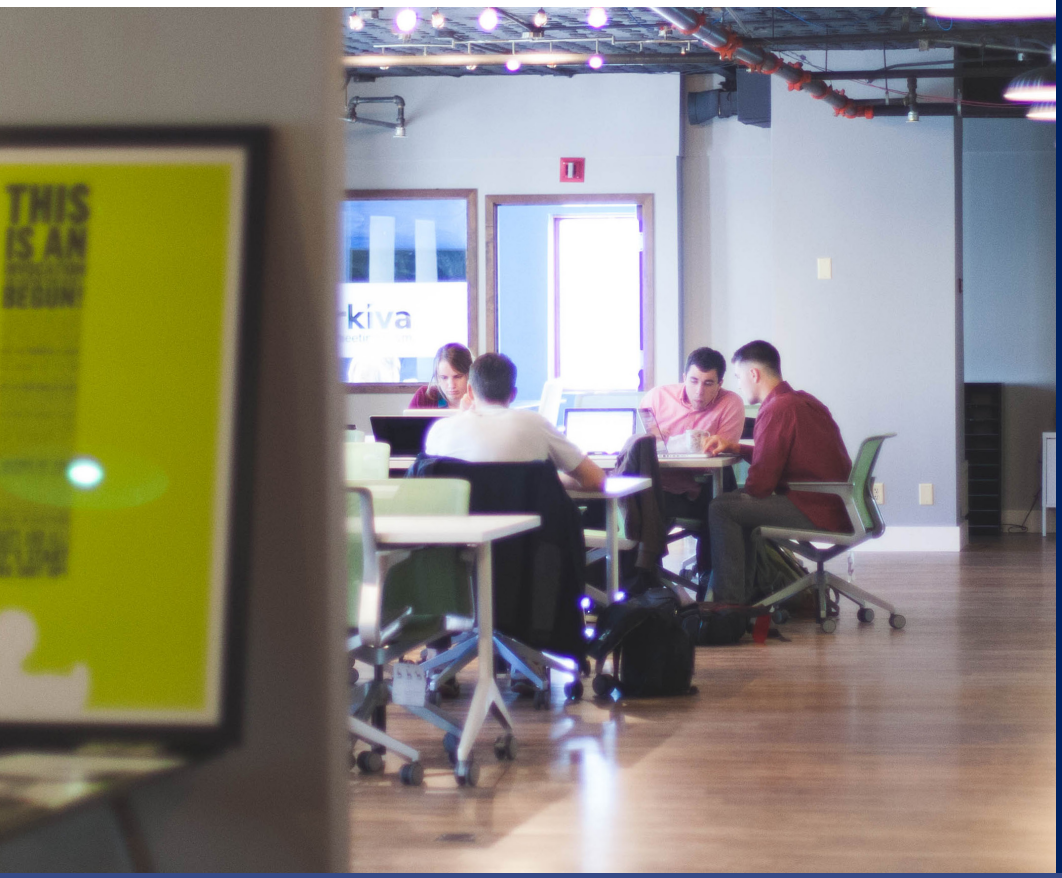
5. Celebrate success, and create urgency around challenges.

When you experience a win, make a big deal about it both within your team and with other stakeholders. Doing so will build excitement and momentum for the next challenge. And when things inevitably don't go as planned, use the course correction as a catalyst for communication and get prompt buy in from the entire team.



Just Get Started

Sales enablement is not just another buzzword. It's a necessary focus for corporate success and professional survival today. The good news is that it's easy to get started. Open the dialog with your counterpart in sales, find ways to help sales be successful, and demonstrate the vast value that marketing can bring to the table. If you're consistent and effective with your efforts, sales will begin to rely more on marketing, their results will improve—**and you all win.**



Refactoring Sales Enablement: Assess Your Situation

If you're like most marketing leaders, you're probably trying to decipher how to develop the level of sales enablement your company needs to be successful. But limited financial and personnel resources, combined with the ever-increasing responsibilities of today's sales and marketing teams, can make the project seem daunting.

Refactored can help. Our team has the broad experience necessary to help you enable sales:

- Build a productive relationship with your partners in sales (or vice versa)
- Develop and execute an awesome demand-generation plan
- Design and produce sales tools to help your team kick butt

Ready to get started? Let's talk.

Learn more at **refactoredmedia.com/enablement**

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About Us

Refactored is a full-service digital agency that specializes in marketing for complex, B2B companies that need to speed up, get unstuck, or start from the ground up. We develop and execute strategies based on deep industry understandings, audience insights, and recognition of the right channels and technologies to accomplish your goals. Our clients don't just achieve incremental gains. They leap forward. ***Momentum Begins Here.***

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