

# How to nimbly manage the complete customer journey in 2017 by aligning marketing, sales and service processes

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Key takeaways:

01

How to ensure organizational growth in 2017 by blending key business processes into a single driving machine

02

Why connecting the dots between marketing, sales, and service is essential for gaining a 360-degree customer view

03

How streamlined data sharing between departments can ensure better customer experiences while enhancing core business operations

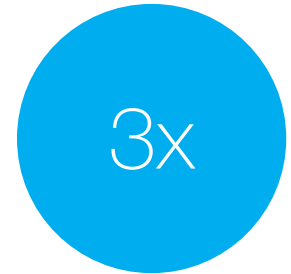
## Silo effect as a stumbling block to organizations' success

At first, the misalignment of sales and marketing processes looks like an easily fixable issue. At the same time, departments operating in siloes are a huge obstacle that prevents many organizations from achieving their strategic goals.

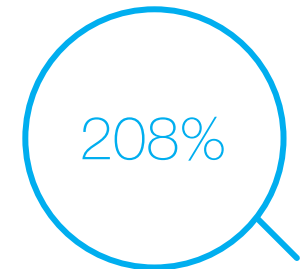
According to recent research studies, companies that aligned sales and marketing generated 208% more revenue from their marketing efforts. At the same time, when such alignment doesn't happen, about 75% of companies eventually drop leads that aren't ready to make an immediate purchasing decision. Even launching a simple nurturing campaign for leads that are not sales-ready can provide you with a significant competitive advantage.

Connecting marketing, sales and service efforts into a unified machine helps to prevent sales pipeline leakage and enables organizations to develop quality relationships with existing and prospective clients.

Understanding how marketing, sales, and service departments cross over – or don't – reveals a lot about what must be taken into consideration in any business development strategy. While marketers and sales professionals use their own business processes automation tool, and each of these tools serves the department that employs it, not all organizations have the ability to gain a 360-degree view of their customers.



Alignment of sales and marketing impacts revenue growth up to 3 times.



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## Joining forces to achieve better results

By shrinking the gap between marketing, sales and service, you'll find new ways to use your current resources to increase the reach and effectiveness of your marketing program, draw in new customers as well as retain and enhance existing relationships by sharing knowledge about customer needs easily among your entire team. Together, your teams can improve customer loyalty and satisfaction, which leads directly to increased sales.

For example, if your organization has a field service team, don't overlook what front-line service personnel can tell you about current products and branding, as well as what new types of products customers might need.



*Tip: Highly-aligned organizations achieved an average of 32% year-over-year revenue growth while their less aligned competitors saw a 7% decrease.*



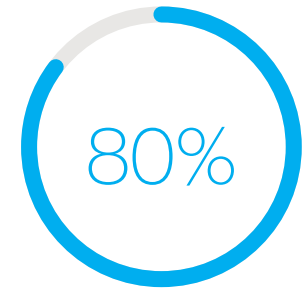
## Lead management as a constant strategic initiative

Proper lead nurturing provides short sales cycles, higher conversion rates and more revenue per deal. The interdependence of sales and marketing departments is readily apparent, but how well these teams work together has a tremendous impact on the bottom line. For example, if the marketing department is given a chance to nurture the leads that salespeople initially disqualify, it can then turn those leads back over to the sales team when they become sales-ready. The leads stocked in your database should be kept with or sent back to marketing to be nurtured until they do finally become sales-ready.

According to another benchmark study, more than 80% of marketing leads never convert into sales due to lack of lead nurturing.

The lead who's not ready to buy now (but expresses an interest) may just choose another vendor if you don't keep them engaged with personalized communication.

*Tip: Keep communication going. Another research shows that it takes an average of seven touches to convert a "suspect" to a "prospect." Use marketing automation tools to deliver continuous messaging appealing to your prospective buyers. Studies suggest that 28% of marketing teams using marketing automation reported an increase in the average deal size from a marketing qualified lead that was passed along to sales; the credit goes to the stronger relationships resulting from nurturing buyers.*



More than 80% of marketing leads never convert into sales opportunities due to lack of lead nurturing.

## Streamlined data sharing between sales and service

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service

The synergy between sales and service improves service level, increases referral activity and results in greater customer retention.

sales

The potential for crossover between sales and service departments may not seem as obvious at first – until you consider that sales collects a history of communications, quotes, and orders associated with each customer. This information gives service agents a better picture of the customer's needs and allows them to provide a seamless personalized customer experience. Rather than having to reconstruct the process, service agents have access to the options already offered and questions already posed to the customer, ensuring that this information won't be unnecessarily repeated. This makes the customer feel that working with the company is similar to working with a single individual.

Clear business process ownership cemented by congruent goals and measurements is the basis of all high-performing organizations. Synergy and alignment between the two critical areas of sales and service delivery enable each to perform more efficiently and effectively.

*Tip: The process-driven CRM will provide an efficient method for managing the entire sales process from lead generation to tracking of customer orders. Employ CRM software that will help you to speed the information flow between business units, accelerate performance and achieve service excellence.*

# Customer loyalty from exceptional and seamless customer experiences

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marketing

service

Today, seasoned marketers are expanding their focus to encompass customer engagement across the customer lifecycle.

There are many advantages of synergy between service and marketing that are being frequently underestimated by many organizations. Service departments typically collect customer surveys and feedback, to obtain information that can be leveraged by marketing as a matter of routine. This eliminates the need to engage additional sources to better understand customer needs and preferences. And that, in turn, not only minimizes errors in positioning products, but also helps create better product developments and marketing strategies.

Marketing is no longer solely responsible for customer acquisition. Marketing and service tend to focus on certain parts of the customer journey. Actually, they both play an integral role throughout the entire route from acquisition to loyalty. Social is another area where alignment is necessary between marketing and service. With a proper level of alignment, marketing can run the primary social identity and provide a consistent brand, language and tone across every communication channel.

*Tip: Focus on the customer at every single touch point. The only way that these teams can attain true alignment is to map out a single customer lifecycle, quantified within the unified IT environment. Regular communication about what's working, what's not, and how to improve is also essential. Knowing what customers have been experiencing and where they are along their journey is a key part of establishing trust, for which both marketing and service are responsible.*

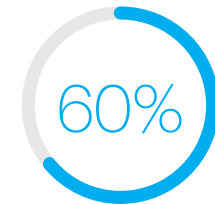
## Marketing, sales, and service on one platform

Poor customer service experience has forced more than 60% of global consumers to avoid a brand or company in 2016, while 75% of customers have spent more money due to positive interactions with customer service personnel.

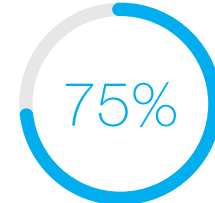
An alignment between marketing, sales and service unites your entire organization in the common goal of creating value, thus maximizing both efficiency and customer satisfaction. When departments use different business applications, it is difficult for them to merge into a single driving machine. Connecting sales, marketing, and service departments on one platform allows you to manage the entire customer journey, coordinate messaging and leads, and optimize the lead flow process.

Ultimately, this provides a 360-degree view of the customer, which allows departments to provide a more streamlined customer experience. Each department holds only one piece of the puzzle, and if this information isn't shared freely, the customer experience becomes disjointed and aggravating. For example, if the customer has already discussed options with the sales department and the service department then asks the same questions, the customer will feel that the company is not cohesive and may be irritated by having to repeat information.

*Tip: Choose a CRM system for your organization that combines products for automating your marketing, sales and service processes while also providing intelligent tools to deliver better customer experience and boost operational efficiency. This way you would be able to more effectively manage the complete customer journey – from lead to order, and to ongoing account maintenance.*



Poor customer service experience has forced more than 60% of global consumers to avoid a brand or company in 2016.



75% of customers have spent more money due to positive interactions with customer service personnel.

## Conclusion

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marketing

sales

service

Greater connection between marketing, sales and service increases ROI by allowing your organization to track customers and ensure that their needs are being met by the right department at the right time.

Here are a few recommendations for achieving shorter sales cycles, higher close rates and more revenue per transaction:

- Ensure that marketing and sales departments have a common definition of what counts as a “qualified” lead, and a clear understanding of which leads should be handled by which department
- Make it a matter of routine for the service department to share all customer feedback with the marketing department
- Similarly, make it a standard practice that any customer data collected by the sales department is shared with the service department
- Develop personalized messaging to have your prospective and existing customers engaged based on shared data from different departments.
- Once you’ve got the nurturing down to an art form, develop a strategy that would include upselling to existing customers as well as tactics to increase retention.



## Conclusion

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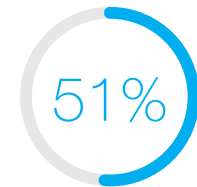
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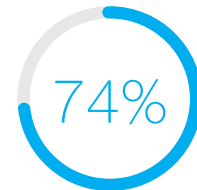
service

The more you know about your customers, the greater your ability to provide what they need and desire is. 56% of customers reported having to repeat their questions or concerns at least once over the course of a customer service interaction and 62% report having to contact companies multiple times to get their issues resolved. Giving your customers a streamlined experience by ensuring communication and cooperation among departments therefore provides a competitive advantage. 70% of executives also identify cost savings as a key benefit to connecting departments and data on one platform.

Connecting the dots between marketing, sales and service has been shown to benefit both customer and company alike, thus should be a key component of any business strategy.

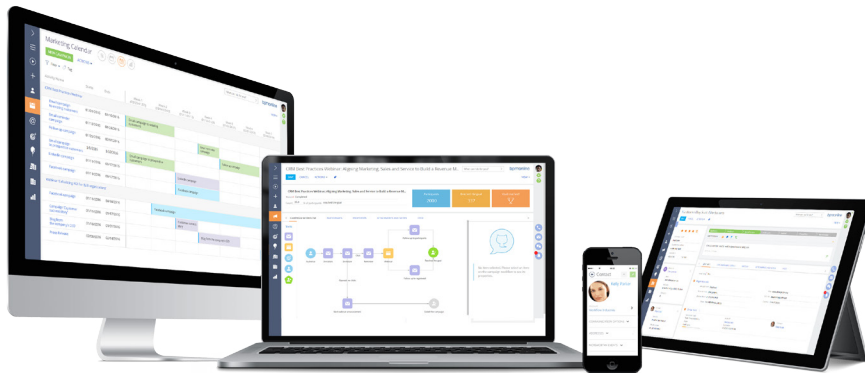


Sales and marketing alignment remained among the top priorities among marketers in 2016 with a jump from 51% last year.



74% of contact center managers say a better software user experience for agents can improve the customer experience.

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