



Build a “Smarketing” Team

Sales can learn to work with—
and love—marketing

Gina Miller, Vice President, Director of Customer Experience

What You'll Learn

- Top ten indicators of lost opportunity for sales-driven organizations
- Ten ways you can reap rewards now through a more collaborative team-inspired approach

Dear Executive,



Not long ago, I was talking with a regional sales manager who rolled his eyes when I told him I was in marketing. He said that he never gets a lick of help from marketing. “They are just placing ads in magazines and sending out emails. How hard is that?” I quipped right back, “Has anyone asked you to weigh in on what you need more of?” Of course not.

We know sales is not an easy job. A career in sales means you’re always on the phone, on the road, and on-call with customers. You’re only as good as your results, yet your company doesn’t invest enough in advertising, so nobody knows why they should buy your product. You’re getting questionable leads that don’t convert. Nobody else understands how hard your job really is.

Sales vs. Marketing—it’s the Great Divide in many sales-driven organizations. Simmering beneath the turf warfare, there’s a lack of understanding and appreciation for each other’s roles and talents. The mildest result of this divide is a fuming frustration with “the other side.” The biggest impact is a loss of revenue, plus poorly invested sales and marketing resources. Does this sound familiar to you?

There’s good news ahead. Some of today’s most innovative business-to-business organizations have discovered that the differentiated competitiveness they need is only possible when sales and marketing work synergistically. CBD has worked with many such companies, putting them on course to realizing the benefits of a more integrated sales and marketing approach. This is not easy to achieve; you can expect to encounter numerous operational and cultural hurdles on the way.

We’ve found that the first step is usually to get everyone on the same page about why it’s so important to their business, and what untapped potential they are leaving on the table. Over the years, we have observed many similarities in the challenges endemic to the sales-centric organization—issues that are the inevitable result of not wholly welcoming the marketing team into the conversation.

Inside, you’ll find a handy list you can use to see if you’re missing out on some key opportunities. And to help you see the abundant potential in the collaboration of sales and marketing, we’re including a follow-up list of “smarketing” rationales.

Enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gina M. Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gina M. Miller
Vice President, Director of Customer Experience

Build a “Smarketing” team.

Sales can learn to work with—and love—marketing.

Sales vs. Marketing—it’s the Great Divide in many a sales-driven organization. Why should you bridge this divide? It’s simple: improved sales and higher return on resources.

After many years tackling this issue, we’ve come up with our top list of signs that your sales-driven organization is leaving money on the table by not inviting the marketing team and the sales team into each other’s worlds.

Top 10 signs that it’s time to take stock:

- 1. Your organization is presenting products and services in a way that reduces the business to a commodity offering.** Does your sales process suffer from an over-reliance on collateral, promotional fire-sales, a “brochure” approach to websites and PowerPoint product demonstrations?
- 2. Engagements center on price and volume, instead of value, benefits and brand differentiation.** When your sales team reports that they lost a huge sale to a competitor based on price, it’s a wakeup call.
- 3. Sales calls become transactional instead of consultative; reactive instead of proactive.** Does your sales team have the time to anticipate, or are they just taking the order?
- 4. Quotas trump relationship cultivation.** The sales quota is one of the biggest barriers to business growth, because your sales team is focused on low hanging fruit while your secondary prospect tiers are ignored.
- 5. There’s an overreliance on the relationship of the sales representative with the customer.** If your customer talks to no one but their rep, they’re not building a relationship with your firm.
- 6. Reps report that they receive too many unqualified leads.** This is a red flag that both the sales engagement and the prospecting process need to be re-examined.
- 7. There is a significant lack of data with which to make strategic decisions.** When sales team members are the only individuals responsible for collecting prospect and customer data, you are only going to capture a small percentage of the valuable information that can help you drive growth.
- 8. Sales teams are out of touch with new trends and technologies.** Customer needs, behaviors and motivations do shift over time. Customers are engaging with you in new and unique ways. Technology is changing the nature of your market. How is the sales team leveraging this knowledge?
- 9. Key individuals are in a cushy comfort zone.** Over the years, a little complacency has crept into the culture and your people are no longer competing aggressively.
- 10. Account growth is flat.** Sales is focusing on new business, not growing existing relationships.



6. Sales accelerator. What salesperson doesn't want to shorten the sales cycle? Marketing can help you anticipate sales objections and streamline conversion activities. Tools and materials that overcome the most common sales objections can pay for themselves the first time they are used—like the consultative sales engagement kit we recently built for a leading manufacturer.



7. Heat generator. When it comes to generating hot, qualified inquiries, webinar attendees and booth visitors, marketing does it best. Sales teams don't have the time to segment data and keep the lead engine running. Marketing knows how to be creative and achieve an acceptable cost per lead.

8. Buzz agent. Social media is incredibly important, but do you really want your sales stars to spend their time on it? Business buyers look to your website first, and your buzz next. Marketing can take the time to turn your top sales performers into thought leaders that establish credibility and drive inquiries.

9. Action prompter. Can sales devote time to stay top-of-mind? Does their process ensure delivery of the most appropriate message at critical times in the cycle? Do they have the resources to powerfully pinpoint influencers and deliver relevantly targeted offers? This is where marketing can really help. Imagine a COO walking down the hall to ask an engineer if they've heard of your product. We recently targeted three deep into a short list of qualified companies, and this is what happened; leading to a huge sales win.

10. Resource optimizer. When sales is answering simple service, order status, and billing questions, you're wasting money. One of CBD's clients recently conducted a brainstorming meeting of operations, sales and marketing personnel. At the meeting, a sales rep complained that they were so busy with administrative details that they couldn't get to all their fresh leads. It so happened that a marketing manager had some information on a technology that might help. Operations and marketing followed up, and now the client has one of the most innovative, cost-saving self-service platforms in their sector.



Take it on, **and keep pushing.**

If your organization has struggled with creating a more collaborative partnership between sales and marketing, it's important that you don't give up. When both groups come to the table, they can form a multi-discipline team to augment each other's strengths and weaknesses.

The organizations that are gleaming the most benefit from functionally integrated teams do so because they are committed to appreciating the value of each discipline and each individual. Leaders within these organizations foster both a challenging and inclusive culture. However, extraordinary measures are sometimes needed to move an organization in the right direction.

Two years ago, a visionary CMO we know was trying to lead the sales team to growth through his marketing strategy. His mistake was in assuming their cooperation. He generated hundreds of highly qualified leads that never even got contacted. A few months later, the tables were turned. They put the marketing budget into the hands—and the accountability—of the regional sales managers. Suddenly sales was at stake for marketing results in a whole new way. Sneaky? Certainly. Effective? Undeniably.

A better way to effect positive collaboration might be to give us a call. We offer a highly effective discovery session to identify the issues that are getting in the way of greater profitability for your sales-driven organization.

CBD Marketing services related to this topic include:

- Branding and positioning
- Sales cycle mapping
- Value proposition development
- Audience mapping and messaging
- Marketing alignment with the sales cycle
- Balancing technical and marketing language
- Leveraging C2C
- Strategic social media marketing
- Collateral tools to drive consultative engagements
- Lead nurturing strategies and tactics
- Vertical strategies and targeted campaigns
- Internal marketing and communications
- Product demos that differentiate



About CBD Marketing

CBD is a B2C and B2B marketing services agency that clarifies and articulates what's most meaningful about your brand, product or service and helps you build more intimate and profitable relationships with your customers.

At the heart of everything we do is a deep understanding of the rational and emotional drivers that inspire your customers' choices. At CBD, "market what's meaningful" is our mission, guiding all disciplines from brand development to media strategy, from public relations to creative..

Let's Talk!

To talk about how CBD can help you create moments that matter to your audience and better connect them to your brand, product or service, please contact Doug Davila, Director of Business Development at 312.661.1050 or ddavila@cbdmarketing.com.

About the Author

Gina Miller, Vice President, Director of Customer Experience

Fifteen years ago, while pursuing a career in business and operations management, Gina Miller took the reins of a database marketing firm—a role that would change her life. Out of this experience grew a passion for results-focused marketing and analytics. Now a senior integrated marketing generalist, Gina serves as CBD's VP, Director of Customer Experience. In this capacity, she spearheads customer and employee research initiatives and strategic marketing planning and execution for both business-to-business and business-to-consumer clients.

As a business manager in her "former life", Gina focused largely on improving performance through cross-functional team building. It's been her experience that "the departmental silos that were originally created to foster productivity are actually extremely inefficient. Innovative companies will find ways to increase productivity through growing and mining complementary talents throughout the organization." In fact, says Gina, "We'll see a lot more companies naturally moving this direction, because of the team-based, collaborative work style preferred by Gen Y." But you don't have to wait to enjoy the benefits. "It's low hanging fruit," says Miller, "A cooperative sales and marketing team simply makes more sense than two completely independent teams measured on different scales. This is a way for companies to see immediate sales revenue improvement and increased marketing effectiveness."