

TOP SALES

FEBRUARY 2018

# MAGAZINE



## THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

Robert Junke  
Dave Kurlan  
George Brontén  
Jay Mitchell  
Jim Cathcart  
Tony J. Hughes  
Tibor Shanto  
Sandler Training  
Kevin Eikenberry  
Dr. Tony Alessandra

## ALSO INSIDE

Details on the  
Launch of  
Top Sales  
Roundtables

Excellence Is a  
Direction, Not a  
Destination

An interview with Sandler Training CEO Dave Mattson





## The Most-Realistic Way Sales Can Create Content That Connects With Buyers



You may read that headline and want to correct it immediately. Sellers across all industries have heard this sage advice for a couple years now: Sales and marketing need to work better together to create sales-ready assets that speak to a target buyer.

Typically, on a broad level, this advice translates to sales providing marketing insights that marketing then uses to create these sales assets. While bridging the gap between sales and marketing teams sounds simplistic in writing, it is anything but that in practice.

The truth remains:

- Sellers spend upwards of two days a week creating their own content (CMO Council).
- 60-70% of B2B content created is never used — the most cited reason for why being because the topic is irrelevant to the buyer audience (Content Marketing Institute).

- Lost sales productivity and wasted marketing budget costs companies at least \$1 trillion a year (101 B2B Marketing and Sales Tips from the B2B Lead).

These statistics fail to even brush on the alternative side of how the empowered B2B buyer shops for their solution, which more or less is autonomous.

These statistics may disappoint any sales and marketing leadership — and rightly so. But what if sales and marketing leadership embraced the realities of how sales and marketing currently work? What if leadership could leverage the current sales and marketing situation to their company's — and buyers' — benefit?

According to CSO Insights: “Companies with dynamic, adaptable sales and marketing processes reported an average of 10% more salespeople on-quota compared to other companies.”

But how can leadership achieve “dynamic and adaptable” sales and marketing processes?

### 1. Sales and marketing still need to collaborate.

Regardless whether part of the sales or marketing team, each member of an organization is working toward a shared revenue performance goal.

Likewise, every member of an organization wants to connect a targeted buyer with the organization's solution. To ensure that marketing and sales agree on these goals and align in their efforts, bring them together regularly and often. Invite marketing to support the sales cycle. Invite sales to campaign planning meetings. In these frequent interactions, sales and marketing are able to:

- Agree on important information like the target organization and buyer personas, assets needed for the sales cycles and more.
- Encourage each to own their own expertise and strengths, as well as enable one another to excel in their strengths.
- Track and measure past and current efforts.

For example, marketing may be creating a sales-ready asset that checks all their boxes but that fails to connect with the buyer out in the field. Unless sales brings that feedback to the marketing team, the issue may never be resolved.

## **2. Sales needs compelling, relevant messaging to captivate the target buyer, no matter the other variables.**

Many buyers (8% according to Forrester Research) believe sellers are self-serving, focused on their own objectives only. Beyond this already negative assumption by the buyer, the messaging that sellers push to buyers leaves a wanting gap in what sellers expect or need. Now more than ever – at a time when the buyer has more power than ever to forgo working with a seller by gathering information online – messaging needs to be relevant, compelling and consistent. The messages sellers share with buyers needs to feel personal – but that same messaging needs to work across media, online and in-person. Achieve this by going back to point No. 1: align sales and marketing, agree on a target persona, and create consistent and compelling messaging everyone upholds.

## **3. Modularize content to make it dynamic and accessible to sales on a need-by-need basis.**

In a perfect world, marketing would create content that sales would use with the buyer. As already discussed, this is far from a perfect world. Sales still often creates its own content – 26.3% according to CSO Insights. Instead of arguing with this fact and all the statistics that back it up, let us instead embrace a compromise, where marketing still enables sales – yet provides sales the freedom to create content that is useful, relevant and dynamic. If marketing modularizes messaging and content, and sellers have access to that content, sellers can create materials on a need-by-need basis. Marketing's efforts become integral to the overall success (i.e., revenue performance). The seller's efforts exceed the buyer's expectations. Revenue performance goals are easily met.

What remains lacking, even with these three steps underway? A technological solution to bring these steps to life. One solution we have seen do this well is Mediafly Evolved Selling™ technology. They provide a platform for sellers to create and adjust presentations and materials simply in a way that makes sense to individual buyers and is nimble enough to edit and adjust in a cab while a seller is on the way to meet with a buyer. This technology brings together relevant research insights and buyer input and analytics to guide the seller's content creation. All in all, this technology helps marketing better enable salespeople, and salespeople better connect with buyers.

As you press forward, ensure marketing and sales are synced on the plan and executing in partnership with one another. Throw out any idea of a “hand-off” from marketing to sales and, instead, embrace the opportunity to partner throughout the entire journey. ■

**Jay Mitchell is President, Mereo LLC and Revenue Performance Advisor & Board Member. Find out more [here](#)**