SALES DEVELOPMENT:

Recover and Grow into 2021

Tips from a B2B Sales Development Agency Leader

The B2B sales development landscape is always changing. Buyers have access to far more information to help them make an educated buying decision prior to even talking with a salesperson. As a result, the sales development team landscape continues to become more complex and sophisticated. Any good sales / marketing leader must be aware of the evolution of the overall process – not just what's happening in their company. Included in this guide are key B2B sales development trends to make note of as we start the second half of 2020.

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Lead Management Pitfalls.

Have you ever thought about what happens to the various leads that come into your organization?

Where do they go? Who follows up on them? Is the process defined and consistent? What are the results? Do they tell you your best lead source?

Section 01
Lead Management Pitfalls

PITFALL 1: LEADS NOT BEING QUALIFIED.

Generating leads is always a rewarding feeling. However, leads that are not qualified correctly can potentially be doing more harm than good. When leads are not initially qualified, it can put a sour taste into the mind of those tasked with following up on them. Having a sales team that isn't bought in is the quickest way for any lead generation initiative to fail.

SOLUTION:
RESEARCH TOOLS & SALES INTELLIGENCE SOFTWARE.

You may have heard an adage of "garbage in, garbage out" which often refers to the state of the data in a database. As a sales development representative, having effective tools to research data to identify key account and contact data is essential - not just for data quality, but also for data efficiency and speed of prospecting.

Sales intelligence software helps companies bring in new data from external sources, but it can also allow users to merge, append, and cleanse existing data to improve their sales and marketing efforts to build lists of leads, prospects, and accounts. Many of these tools are able to directly integrate into CRMs allowing for the research process to be a seamless part of the sales development representative's prospecting process.

Check out our blog regarding sales development tools to see which sales enablement and research tools might best fit your business.

Section 01
Lead Management Pitfalls

PITFALL 2: LEADS NOT TRACKED EFFECTIVELY.

Once you have your scoring/qualification process in place, it's important to be able to report on the leads that you have and track them through the qualification and sales process.

The most common issue here is when companies attempt to manage each of their various lead sources through multiple people, processes, and departments. Leads are often managed through phone and email with no process or CRM system in place as the common vein throughout the company. As a result, visibility is lost as to what happened with the lead making it nearly impossible to determine if the lead was qualified, effectively managed, nurtured, and ultimately resulted in closed business.

SOLUTION:
UTILIZE CRM TO EXPAND YOUR LEAD GENERATION AND LEAD NURTURING.

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Two of the CRM leaders that we see continuing to set the bar in the CRM space are Salesforce and HubSpot. Check out the list of leaders in this space.

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Section 01
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PITFALL 3: NO INITIAL LEAD FOLLOW UP.

Following up on a NEW hot lead is the number one priority of any lead generation program. However, if your process is designed in such a way that NEW hot leads are routed to a sales team, immediate follow up may not be their number one priority. Sales reps have current customer and account management demands that take their time and attention. They have current deals they are trying to close that often take priority. Following up on that inbound lead isn't always a top priority for your sales rep.

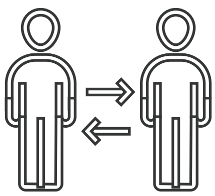
Timely follow up can be the difference between a closed deal and a lost opportunity. Prompt lead follow-up is often the first impression a prospect has with your organization. Many companies assume and believe their sales reps are promptly following up on leads. Don't assume or guess when it comes to lead follow-up. Take the time to find out exactly what is happening in your organization.

SOLUTION:
SALES ENGAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY.

Sales engagement technology software streamlines the sales process through integrations with sales communication channels and tools, management of sales messaging and materials, and automation of tasks, messages and workflows.

An effective sales engagement tool is a sales development rep's best friend. It helps ensure consistent messaging and outreach, as well as, increases efficiency and output through ease of navigating and prospecting large data sets.

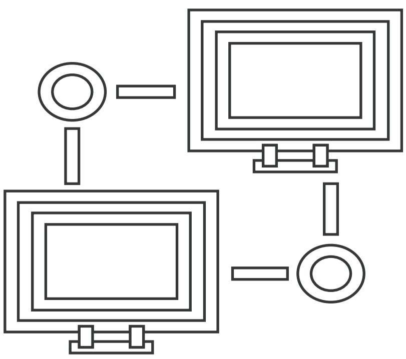
By standardizing both messaging and the overall sales experience, teams can report on the effectiveness of specific messaging and tactics while also reducing administrative tasks for sales representatives.



Section 01
Lead Management Pitfalls

PITFALL 4: LEADS NOT BEING NURTURED.

Not all leads are ready to sign on the dotted line when you initially reach out to them. The prospect may simply be gathering information, they may be looking for potential vendors, or they may not even be a fit for your organization. The prospect needs to be nurtured. Nurturing a lead can often take months, perhaps even years. Closing a sale in one thing, qualifying and nurturing a lead or potential buyer is another. There is a process involved to stay in front of them, let them differentiate your product/service from your competition, earn their trust, and then eventually win their business. An effective process of staying in front of the prospect and demonstrating how your organization is different from all the other competition in the market is what often drives success. Having a sales team that is not equipped to do this ongoing nurturing can have a very negative impact on overall future sales. An effective lead nurturing process is what generates new business from new customers.



Section 01
Lead Management Pitfalls

SOLUTION:
MARKETING AUTOMATION.

While CRM is the cornerstone of logging and tracking every step of the customer journey, using an effective and robust marketing automation software helps organizations by simplifying tasks that the marketing/sales teams previously handled manually.

While the name sums it up, automation is essential when it comes to the execution of effective marketing strategies. Once you develop the ideal journey of a prospect or a customer, a marketing automation tool allows you to ensure the journey is executed at the exact time and trigger you prefer. Rather than relying on individual team members to execute each of these activities, effectively leveraging a marketing automation platform can improve efficiencies and save both time and money.

Maybe the most important component of a marketing automation software is the ability to effectively report on your marketing campaigns to measure the impact of an entire campaign across segments and channels against KPIs and campaign ROI, as well as the impact of campaigns on company revenue.

Two of the leaders that we see continuing to set the bar when it comes to Marketing Automation are HubSpot & Pardot.

Once you identify that you have the appropriate team in place to follow-up on leads, make sure that everyone is on the same page with what the organization's expectations are for ongoing lead nurturing is. If the team believes that leads should be producing immediate sales-ready opportunities, but the program was designed to create that “open door” to create relationships, there is a disconnect that will result in a program that doesn’t meet expectations for the prospect or the sales team.

Not managing pitfalls can have a negative impact on any lead generation effort making it difficult to accurately assess whether the campaign itself was not effective or if it was the management downstream that caused the issue.

In extreme cases, we have seen these pitfalls result in the shutting down of lead sources that were, in fact, producing exactly what the organization was looking for and set out to achieve, but their inability to manage downstream resulted in what appeared to be no results. Inbound leads should be accurately tracked, scored, and reported on so you know where to spend marketing dollars.

Section 02
Keys to Building

Keys to Building Strong Sales Development.

As the B2B sales development landscape continues to change and advance, sales and marketing leaders need to continue to evolve with it. Ensuring that your team stays focused on the right areas can help best position your team for sales development success. Other components should be investigated like chat and lead attribution and added as your sales development matures.

BE AVAILABLE WHEN USERS ARE ON YOUR WEBSITE WITH CHAT SERVICES.

With marketing efforts continuously evolving, many organizations are driving website traffic from a variety of different sources including organic search, paid search, and social media. Many of these sources are geared towards driving anonymous visitors to your website. While form fills will continue to be a relevant stream of leads, website chat is becoming increasingly more utilized by B2B prospects as their first engagement point with a company.

Incorporating chat management as a lead channel to your Sales Development activities in a trend that continues to increase across organizations. Not only does having chat on your website provide another means of capturing leads and engagement, but also allows for more real-time conversation outside of phone and email with prospects.

Organizations are developing sophisticated chat-bot processes to help funnel prospects to the appropriate rep and then transitioning from a bot over to a live-person for real-time conversation. In many cases, marketing automation and/or CRM platforms such as HubSpot and Salesforce are incorporating chat technology into their software to allow for seamless integration and tracking of these interactions with prospects.

Section 02
Keys to Building

FOCUS ON ATTRIBUTION.

As the landscape of B2B marketing and Sales Development continues to evolve and become more complex. Organizations are looking for ways to quantify and associate revenue dollars to all aspects of their Marketing & Sales funnels.

Marketing attribution is a reporting strategy that provides visibility on the impact of Marketing and Sales Development strategies on a deal/sale.

Historically, organizations spent the majority of their time trying to associate revenue to lead source. However, in today's landscape, the steps necessary to progress a lead from its source to a closed deal are becoming increasingly complex. As a result, Marketing and Sales Development teams are seeing an increased need to be able to associate attribution towards each step, campaign, and touch along the funnel to be able to accurately report and tie revenue to each step of the funnel.

If your organization is unable to show and/or report on attribution, this needs to be a focus. And with CRMs, you can start to begin to track attribution.

Section 03
Position as an Industry Leader

How to Position Yourself as an Industry Leader.

As a sales development agency who specializes in capital equipment, supply chain, and transportation industries, our team of sales development representatives (SDRs) places well over 230,000 prospecting calls in the first half of 2020 to companies across the country in need of supply chain, transportation, and/or material handling services and equipment.

Section 03
Position as an Industry Leader

Given the unprecedented rapid-changing landscape in 2020,
we have been able to

33% INCREASE IN COMPLETED CALL RATIO

(% of Calls Able to Speak with Decision Makers)

POSITIONING.

Customer Service & Partnership Focus

Companies in customer service industries are being met with increased demands and stress. As we work with our partners within these key businesses and have a strong outbound sales development effort, we are producing opportunity results to get our clients in front of prospects who are open and seeking help. Some questions to ask to keep in mind:

- Is your organization providing emergency relief efforts during this time?
- Has the extra up-time and equipment used caused increased need for servicing/ repair/parts?
- Sample Introduction

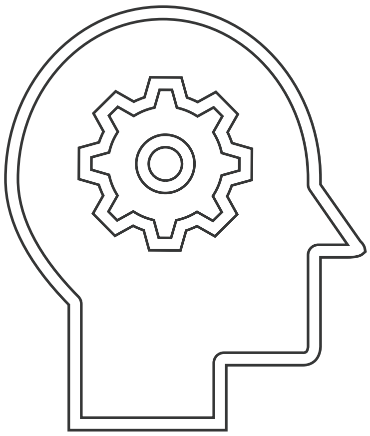
"Good Morning/Afternoon, this is [NAME], reaching out from Company Name, (Insert Description of Company). I'm on the Business Development team and I'm reaching out to companies that may be impacted from the virus and wanted to see if there were issues that have affected you that we might be able to help support?"

Section 03
Position as an Industry Leader

Gauging Current Provider Confidence
Due to the continuously changing landscape, companies are being forced to evaluate their confidence level with existing providers and asking themselves things such as:

- "Does my current provider have the ability to perform our contracted agreements?"
- "Is there a lapse in service due to the existing providers increased workload?"
- "Does my current provider have the scalability and bandwidth to support our increased demand?"
- "Is my current provider providing me the level of visibility and transparency that I need?"
- "Is my provider effectively communicating their plan to respond and adjust to the current market?"

Coordinating Next Steps
With social distancing being a focus for many individuals and businesses, companies have taken steps to limit and even shut down face-to-face interactions and meetings. Many companies are not allowing people into their facilities. As a result, our SDRs have changed the ask from physical appointments/meetings to WebEx and conference calls.



THE CONCEPT DIFFERENCE.

Whether your lead generation strategy is focused on inbound, outbound, or a mix of both? An effective sales development team is vital in connecting Marketing and Sales. Identifying, connecting with, and qualifying leads are some of the key responsibility's sales development handles in the front-end of the sales process.

Concept is redefining sales development. Our full-service agency specializes in the design, implementation, and execution of B2B sales development strategies for our clients. We partner with our clients to help them reach their sales goals. Our sales development, digital marketing, and CRM services help give businesses a 360-degree view of their sales and deliver lead management solutions. Concept's difference is that we become an extension of your team specializing in the front-end sales pipeline to help you bring in sales-qualified leads.

WE OPEN THE DOOR.
YOU CLOSE THE DEAL.

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