

4 WAYS TO BETTER COOPERATION BETWEEN MARKETING AND SALES

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LOOKING AT THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



For some time now, the trend has been moving away from the traditional sales funnel towards integrated customer experience. But too often, marketing and sales act side by side – work in data and information silos. Lack of communication leads to redundancies, overlaps and, ultimately, a suboptimal customer experience. Here are 4 ways to increase the collaboration of marketing and sales – from first contact to completion.

From consciousness to interest, intention to buy, decision-making phase and conclusion. Modern technologies and social media have turned both the chronology and dynamics of the sales funnel upside down. Thus, the customer journey often begins by entering a search term, even before brand awareness; and is usually evaluated via online platforms before a purchase intention becomes apparent. In short, the old distribution of roles between marketing and sales is now falling short.

The 4-way concept





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Common goals

Only those who have the same goals like to pull together. The first step in a growth-oriented collaboration between marketing and sales should therefore be the introduction of common targets and key figures, such as specific sales targets or the increase in conversion rates. Common goals require – and promote – more intensive communication and collaboration between sales and marketing.

Shared platform

CRM platforms contain business-relevant customer and campaign data. As a central source of information and database, they facilitate planning, operational implementation and analysis, shortly – the concerted cooperation between marketing and sales. CRM technology ranges from simple and cost-effective to highly complex and investment-intensive. However, each platform should meet the following requirements:

- Comprehensive customer information
- Ability to share marketing and sales-related content such as case studies or white papers
- Track operational sales and marketing processes, such as lead generation
- Campaign data for sales and marketing campaigns
- Centralized pooling of information by channel (e.g. online marketing, social media or mobile)

Shared dashboards

Through individually defined KPIs, but with generally accessible dashboards, the teams keep track of the individual as well as the common goals or the current performance. This constitutes not only information, but also especially in the highly competitive sales sector, an additional motivation to be more committed to the common goals. Joint incentive actions can be visibly adjusted, retrieved and joint successes celebrated.

Harnessing common strengths

Through direct customer contact sales teams have their finger right on the pulse of the customers and the industry. A valuable source of information for marketing teams in planning, targeting segmentation, and the operational implementation of campaigns. Conversely, marketing materials whose content is specifically tailored to micro-audiences support the sales force even better in the sales pitch. In short, when marketing and sales learn from each other instead of competing with one another, the entire company wins.



Case study – blue-tomato

Starting from humble beginnings as a snowboarding school and garage shop in Schladming, Austria, Blue Tomato have established themselves as one of the world's major omni-channel retailers around snowboarding, skateboarding and other branches of the boarding sports and subculture. This year, the company is celebrating their 30th anniversary of success in an otherwise dipping industry. How does Blue Tomato do it? Let's take a closer look.



Common goal – genuine passion makes for good business

Blue Tomato lives and breathes passion for boarding and the accompanying lifestyle. This is not only true for founder Gerfried Schuller. Even since he retired as Blue Tomato's CEO in 2017, it has been the company's creed to on-board people with a passion for the sport and subculture. This allows common goals to be defined and lived out of the same passion and vision. Of course, passion alone won't make a company successful. It often makes a big difference however, when it comes to factors essential for long-term economic success: ideas, engagement, stamina – and a credible enthusiasm that spreads. Common goals cannot be defined any better.

Shared platform – mastering your niche

From the start, Blue Tomato focused on a niche strategy. Growing together with the emerging snowboarding trend, they extended their product range around a clearly defined core, from snowboard to skateboard to surfboard to longboard to free skiing. In this niche, Blue Tomato offers an extremely broad range of established and new brands, which spoils their individualistic clientele with choice. All this on a shared platform for successful marketing and worldwide distribution. At the same time, the company still consciously positions itself as non-mainstream brand, staying true to their target buyers who strongly identify with their subculture lifestyle.

Joint implementation –innovative channel management

Blue Tomato has always jumped on innovative sales channels early. It was a pioneer of ecommerce already by 1999 and has been an early investor in promising trends to do with the customer journey ever since.

This includes a detailed localization of European country markets as well as a well-developed social media presence, but also personalized mobile content according to geo data. Since they were acquired by public US-American streetwear retailer Zumiez in 2012, Blue Tomato has become more visible on the high-



streets: so far, more than 30 stores across Germany, Austria and Switzerland complete their multi-channel offering.

Harnessing common strengths – strict client focus

30 years after company was founded, CEO Adam Ellis regards Blue Tomato customers as more powerful than ever before and sees their journey through sales channels as decisive factor for the company's success. Consequently, KPIs were defined across all channels to act on the pulse of the target audience and further sharpen the customer-centric brand strategy.

Conclusion

Better collaboration between marketing and sales teams plays an essential role in the growth of each company. The most important steps to promote the joint action of the teams:

- Set common goals to promote cooperation
- Use cross-departmental platform solutions
- Use the multi-channel approach to best serve the customer journey
- Common view of the customer journey for comprehensive overview, motivation and tracking of progress
- Recognize strengths and use them for the joint process

Further articles on this topic

<http://deloitte.wsj.com/cmo/2018/02/20/how-sales-and-marketing-can-align-to-drive-growth/>

<https://sujanpatel.com/marketing/sales-marketing-can-work-together/>



A software solution of

UPPER Network GmbH
Seering 5/4
8141 Premstätten
Österreich

T +43 (0)1 804 88 333 50
F +43 (0)1 804 88 333 90
info@marmind.com

Managing director:
Mag. Peter Ramsenthaler

Firmenbuchnummer: FN263577P
UID: ATU 61836419

www.marmind.com