



BRIDGING THE SALES AND MARKETING DIVIDE

www.conversica.com



CONTENTS

3	Introduction
4	How Sales and Marketing Perceive Their Relationship
5	Sales and Marketing Pain Points
8	Solution
10	How AI Assistants Can Help Strengthen the Relationship
12	Endnotes



INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Sales and Marketing, much like any other relationship, can be challenging. That said, it's undeniable that the partnership between Sales and Marketing is critical. It's one of the most important relationships for driving success within a company. A lack of alignment in the Sales and Marketing relationship can result in missed opportunities and decreased revenue.

Solutions based on AI technology can also contribute to bringing all these necessary elements together and make these relationships better.

In a recent Conversica-commissioned study, Propeller Insights surveyed more than 100 Sales and Marketing professionals across the country. This survey revealed that the vast majority – **87% of Sales and 93% of Marketing professionals** – say their relationship is “very important.”

In addition to that, both parties agree that this critical relationship has room for improvement. 64% of the participants in this survey agreed that the relationship between Sales and Marketing in their organization was good, but could be better.

One of the top reasons that Marketing and Sales partnerships, just like normal relationships, fail is because both parties feel that their partner is not contributing enough to positively impact their financial goals.

With Sales and Marketing being so critical to the growth and revenue of organizations,

these issues can have a big impact on both organizational culture and the bottom line.

The bigger problem is that this relationship issue reaches beyond an opportunity improvement for a minority of the group surveyed is truly struggling. These professionals describe a Sales and Marketing relationship that ranges from tense but workable, to dysfunctional.

We know that the Sales and Marketing relationship is critical to an organization's success. We also know that the majority of working Sales and Marketing professionals feel that their relationship needs to be improved. The question becomes: Where can companies go from here? How can they create more cohesion between Sales and Marketing departments?

The answer starts with giving these teams the tools they need to gain more insight and to make each of their jobs easier. With access to the right tools, Sales and Marketing can become the perfect pair. Conversational AI and AI Assistants can add both scaling opportunities and rationalization to the Sales and Marketing process.



The question becomes:
how can organizations improve
the relationship between Sales
and Marketing teams? It starts
with more communication,
collaboration and shared
accountability.

HOW SALES AND MARKETING PERCEIVE THEIR RELATIONSHIP



Sales and Marketing professionals both play key roles in driving success within a company. The Sales and Marketing process has to align to increase revenue and take full advantage of all opportunities.

Sales and Marketing professionals also both see the importance of their relationship. However, when we dig into how each department describes their relationship with the other, Marketing departments are a bit more optimistic. 38% of Marketing professionals say there is perfect synergy. In contrast, only 27% Sales professionals share the same sentiment.

Clearly, there's a disconnect between the departments and what the state of their relationship truly is. However, in general, Marketers believe that they're more strategic and that Sales professionals are a bit unfocused. In turn, Sales professionals believe that Marketing professionals are out of touch with what's going on in the market.

The reality though, is that the way this relationship is perceived is supported by more than just the claims made by each department. There are more specific points of friction that make these relationships challenging.

To create a healthy partnership between both sides, transparency and communication is key.

SALES AND MARKETING PAIN POINTS

To create an effective partnership between Sales and Marketing professionals, we first need to understand the pain points that impact each department.

Pain points from a Marketing perspective:

Low Marketing-influenced revenues

How much does the Marketing team impact overall revenue? They generate, engage and manage leads, but it can be difficult for both sides to see these results. Marketing teams need to measure KPIs that show the business impact and give Sales teams insight. Measuring these activities presents an opportunity for Marketers to reach their goals faster, break the status quo and optimize their campaigns. Based on these results. Marketing's focus may need to shift and Marketing may need to take extra steps to positively impact business and achieve their KPI goals.

Disappointing Marketing ROI

Marketing professionals are under pressure to show that the plans they execute have a direct impact on ROI. This can be challenging. The majority of the time, Marketing isn't the department that seals the deals – Sales does.

Poor insight into Sales lead follow-up

One of the most prominent issues for Marketing is that there isn't much cohesion during the follow-up process from Sales. That lack of insight can lead

to issues when managing and nurturing different leads and accounts.

In fact, 21% of the Marketing professionals who responded to our survey say that poor insight into the Sales lead follow-up process is an issue.

Marketing is also constrained by the following limitations of their current processes and systems:

- Unable to follow-up with all leads properly:** While the Marketing team does their best to reach and qualify leads, follow up is a different story. Following up is a key part of the Marketing and Sales process but there's only so much time in a day and each lead has individual needs. While some leads may be ready to talk with a Salesperson, other leads need more nurturing. Managing this process can be overwhelming without the right resources or with a small team.
- Lead scoring is not perfect.** In theory, lead scoring is a great system to help organizations prioritize the actions they take with what leads. That said, the system isn't perfect. A lot of data has to be collected about a lead before Marketing teams can truly determine where a lead fits in the pipeline with great accuracy.



SALES AND MARKETING PAIN POINTS (CONT'D)

Pain points from a Sales perspective:

Not enough SQLs

According to our survey, the number one problem that Sales has in their relationship with Marketing is that they don't get enough leads. 25% of the professionals surveyed say they don't get enough Sales qualified leads (SQLs).

Too many low-quality MQLs

All leads are not created equal. This is something that the Sales team knows well. Marketing goes through a process to qualify and "own" the leads that they generate. However, only some of these leads will be a good fit for the organization. That means that there are often many low-quality MQLs to sift through.

Time wasted on poor quality MQLs

With so many leads to manage, a lot of time is wasted on poor quality MQLs. This is frustrating for Sales because often, it turns into a cycle that can be difficult to get out of. When time and resources are dedicated to poor quality MQLs, better opportunities are missed.

Sales is also constrained by the following limitations of their current processes and systems:

- Not enough bandwidth to handle all MQLs.** Marketing is constantly filling the pipeline, but the truth is that Sales doesn't have enough bandwidth for all the leads that get sent their way. Without an easily scalable system, it's close to impossible for teams to analyze and engage every lead.
- Lead qualification is repetitive.** Salespeople need to communicate with the right leads to make a sale. However, because lead qualification is such a repetitive process, some things get lost in the shuffle. Sales professionals can get bogged down by these mundane tasks. That impacts their ability to quickly qualify leads and engage them.
- Lead qualification is time-consuming.** On top of the qualification process being repetitive, it's also time-consuming. Lead qualification is important but there are also many other critical tasks that are part of Sales professionals' day to day roles. This often leads to lead qualification not being done as well as it could be. As a result, good opportunities for the organization get overlooked.
- Cherry picking of MQLs.** Cherry picking is a natural response for Sales and Marketing professionals. It's wise to spend time on "hot" leads. The truth is, there's nothing wrong with spending time on leads that will likely turn into a client or customer. However, problems start when cherry picking MQLs turns into neglecting warm leads. Not putting in the nurturing and follow up work it takes to move more leads through the pipeline results in lower revenue.



SALES AND MARKETING PAIN POINTS (CONT'D)



- Follow-up is too slow.** According to data from Conversica's most recent Sales effectiveness report, contacting a lead within the first hour increased the likelihood of qualifying the lead by seven times compared to a two-hour window, and 60 times in comparison to companies waiting 24 hours or longer. The reality though, is that for many organizations, the follow-up process is too slow. The number of leads is difficult for the Sales and Marketing teams to manage.
- High SDR turnover.** HubSpot describes the issue of high Sales Development Rep (SDR) turnover as an epidemic. Keeping professionals focused and happy with their work is a problem for organizations and results in a high turnover rate. This constant movement of reps has a huge impact on growth.
- Sales reps only make an average of 3 touches.** Most Sales reps only connect with qualified leads 3 times, on average. This can happen for a variety of reasons but the bottom line is that three touches is not enough. In fact, companies with the fastest growing revenues are most likely to attempt to contact a lead five to eight times.

While Sales and Marketing both focus on an organization's growth, both also agree that the #1 tension between them is that Marketing is more forward-looking and Sales is focused on now.

Both departments have strengths that contribute to success. For example, Marketing is relatively good at scale through automation but has limited ability to personalize engagement with prospects. Sales is relatively good at creating a personal connection with customers but has difficulty scaling their efforts in a cost-effective manner.

SOLUTION

Building trusted relationships internally among Sales and Marketing comes down to transparency and communication because each department plays a role in meeting company goals. More than half of the professionals surveyed say that improving communication between the two departments is the best way to improve their relationship.

Our survey results also show that 50% of Sales and Marketing professionals say that working towards the same goal is what brings them together. Knowing each other's strengths, weaknesses and how to work together effectively is empowering and leads to better results.

When businesses establish processes and tools to build trust relationships, they create another level of understanding. This translates into building better relationships and experiences for both prospects and customers.

To keep the relationship between Sales and Marketing healthy, you need to optimize. The key elements that are important for any close partnership or relationship also apply to Sales and Marketing.

Optimizing with Conversational AI

AI Assistants for Sales and Marketing can help companies achieve organization-wide consistency.

In fact, both Marketing and Sales professionals say that Intelligent Virtual Assistants could help improve the relationship between the two departments.

According to our survey, 87% of Marketers and 93% of Salespeople agree that using Intelligent Virtual Assistants can improve their working relationship.

How to Select an AI Assistant

An Intelligent Virtual Assistant, or more specifically an AI Assistant for Conversational Marketing and Sales, performs like your best Sales and Marketing professionals. The AI Assistant writes, reads and understands emails and text messages and takes the right actions at the right time. Conversational AI can also take Sales and Marketing efforts to the next level. It's instantly scalable and works 24/7.

A good AI Assistant is typically company objective driven and has two main purposes. The first is to help companies nurture leads throughout their lifecycle and have more personalized interactions with potential customers and leads.

The second is to take repetitive tasks off the plates of Sales and Marketing professionals with purpose-built conversations that are ready to use.



SOLUTION (CONT'D)



Conversica AI Assistants for Conversational Marketing and Sales are built to help companies interact with more leads at scale and dislodge leads when they get stuck. The following capabilities make this possible:

Authentic lead follow up

AI Assistants bridge the gap between Sales and Marketing professionals and automated Marketing tools. Emails powered by Conversational AI are personalized and context-sensitive so that your leads always get a message that feels like it was meant for them. When Marketing receives an inbound lead, the AI Assistant generates responses with a goal of determining what leads are ready for a call with a Sales rep, and which leads need more nurturing via Marketing.

Multiple interaction channels

AI Assistants engage leads through email, SMS, and website chat. Conversational AI's ability to communicate across channels means AI Assistants can engage contacts in real-time or on the customer's time. It's all about meeting customers when and where they are.

Dynamic conversations (two-way)

Our AI Assistants allow you to follow up with leads via two-way conversations over website chat, email, and SMS text in multiple languages. That means every lead can engage with your organization in a convenient, personalized way.

Context from CRM

The AI Assistant gathers new or updated phone numbers and passes those to the Salesperson for follow-up. It also updates the CRM or Marketing automation system. This helps ensure that all the data that Sales and Marketing teams have is accurate and complete.

Conversica AI Assistants help with personalization and scale at the top of the funnel and bottom of the funnel. This makes it easier for Sales and Marketing professionals to build strong relationships with more qualified leads and meet them where they're at in the buyers' journey.

Conversica AI Assistants are pre-trained on millions of conversations. This means that whether the team needs to engage leads, re-activate their interest or win back past buyers, Conversational AI for Marketing and Sales can help. Conversational AI gets the ball rolling on those interactions and provide insight on when leads are ready to take the next step.

HOW AI ASSISTANTS CAN HELP STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONSHIP

AI Assistants can help strengthen the relationship between Sales and Marketing by providing benefits to both departments and enabling them to work better together.

According to our survey results, professionals from Sales and Marketing both overwhelmingly agree that Conversational AI can help improve the relationship between these departments. They see the benefits of using AI Assistants to help improve the quality of leads, make both departments more successful, boost morale and eliminate much of the grunt work involved on both sides.

The Benefits of AI Assistants for Conversational Marketing and Sales

Engage 100% of leads

Unfortunately, we only have so much time in the day. This means that often, leads fall through the cracks because individualizing messages and follow-ups for each lead can be a challenge. AI Assistants eliminate this problem and help companies engage 100% of their leads.

Run lean

Without automation, engaging all your leads can be a time-consuming process that requires a lot of work behind the scenes. With Conversational AI Assistants, organizations can run lean by putting more tasks on autopilot and allowing their team to focus on other intensive tasks.

Don't waste time on low-quality leads

AI Assistants can help you determine if leads are a good fit for your product or service. That way, low quality leads get off your radar early, so that you can focus on leads who are more likely to convert.

More prospect meetings

Sometimes, it can seem like Sales and Marketing teams spend all their time answering inquiries and following up, without much to show for it. AI Assistants help organizations pinpoint leads who are ready for a Sales call, which results in more prospect meetings.

Happier workforce

The truth is, everyone has a bad day now and then and employees can get bored following the same routine day in and day out. AI Assistants help companies achieve higher employee satisfaction by taking mundane work off their plate.

Boost Sales productivity

AI Assistants can automate the follow-up process and boost Sales productivity overall. This allows you to free up your Salespeople so that they can focus on more sophisticated and productive conversations.



HOW AI ASSISTANTS CAN HELP STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONSHIP (CONT'D)

Close more deals

Every Sales and Marketing professional wants to convert more leads. Conversational AI helps Sales and Marketing teams convert more leads in every step of a campaign and turn prospects into Sales-ready leads. This means that Sales can close more deals, faster.

Move more MQLs to a conversation

When a lead is ready and qualified, AI Assistants seamlessly hand off the conversation to a Salesperson on your team. This helps Marketing teams push more qualified leads to a productive conversation with Sales.

More accurate lead qualification

Marketing teams strive to take advantage of every opportunity that comes from their campaigns, but that isn't where the work ends. AI Assistants also help Marketing teams achieve more accurate lead qualification.

Higher engagement rates

AI Assistants dislodge leads when they get stuck. This helps Marketing teams generate interest and re-engage with leads and customers.

Better visibility into lead follow-up

More insight is always better. With AI Assistants, Sales and Marketing teams get more information and insight on the process of follow-ups.

More accurate lead information

AI Assistants gather critical information about leads throughout the communication process. This creates a more complete and accurate profile on every lead, ensuring that Marketing and Sales teams can easily access correct information.

More high-quality leads for Sales

Real AI Assistants can craft compelling messages, read and understand responses, and take appropriate action. This consistent messaging and personalization is key to providing more high quality leads to Sales teams.

Conclusion

As Conversational AI provides Sales and Marketing teams with 100% coverage, by leveraging an AI Assistant, these teams can finally rest assured that they are leaving no lead behind. And better yet, in adding Conversational AI to the mix, Sales & Marketing finally can reach alignment and become that Perfect Pair.



END NOTES

Metrics and Insights around the relationship between Sales and Marketing professionals in this report were gathered for a Conversica-commissioned Sales and Marketing Collaboration study. Over 100 Sales and Marketing professionals were surveyed for this study by independent research firm Propeller Insights.

HubSpot SDR Source: <https://blog.hubspot.com/Sales/prevent-sdr-burnout>



About Conversica

Conversica is the leading provider of Conversational AI solutions that help enterprise marketing, sales, customer success, and finance teams attract, acquire and grow customers at scale across the customer revenue lifecycle. Conversica AI Assistants serve as digital team members and autonomously engage contacts, prospects, customers, or partners in human-like, two-way interactions at scale to drive towards the next best action, whether that's scheduling a sales meeting, gauging interest to buy additional products or services, or politely but persistently collecting overdue payments. Processing over a billion interactions, the Conversica Conversational AI platform integrates natural language processing (NLU & NLG), decision &

policy management, business process automation and deep learning capabilities to drive customer engagement across multiple digital communication channels and languages.

The Conversica platform supports over 50 integrations into the most popular MAP and CRM platforms and offers an open API for custom integration.

To learn more, visit www.conversica.com and follow the company on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

