

COVID-19 has had an impact on almost every area of business. However, for marketers, it extends beyond simply a change in revenue targets. As content consumption goes up, in-person events fall off the marketing calendar and all sales move to digital channels, marketers need to recalibrate how their lead-to-revenue pipeline is structured and how their goals may need to shift.

WHY IT MATTERS

As sales and finance teams recalibrate their revenue goals, how marketing contributes to this needs to shift. However, a change in buyer behavior can profoundly change how effective existing marketing processes are. Marketers can therefore not simply shift their KPIs in lockstep with sales targets. As content consumption and webinar viewing increases, marketers should consider how they recalibrate lead scoring and the qualification of leads. Otherwise, sales risks being inundated with leads that ultimately do not contribute to pipeline and take them away from core tasks.

If bottom-of-funnel inquiries (such as demos or 'contact us' form completes) are falling, sales enablement becomes more important. Webinars can provide both valuable engagement data for sales to use to tailor outreach — and also an opportunity for them to speak to attendees in real-time. If marketing teams are not already dedicated to customer marketing, they should do so as a priority.

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

“Preference for digital now ~2X more than traditional sales interactions; self-serve, digital ordering methods now prioritized” [McKinsey B2B Decision-Maker Survey](#)

“Senior VPs, Individual Contributors, and Senior Employees all took less time between their second request in 2019” a trend we expect to see other titles follow based on everything moving digital [NetLine Content Consumption Report](#)

“In the wake of COVID-19, 96 percent of B2B companies have shifted their sales model either partially or fully to remote selling.” [Chief Marketer](#)

DATA IMPLICATIONS

The Q2 period may provide some insight into how the lead-to-revenue model in your organization has changed. Collate the data and information you need now to set pipeline goals which are as realistic as you can make them. Reassess lead scoring and qualification processes. Segment content and webinar touchpoints and CTAs by customer journey. Not all engagement should be weighted equally.

ALLOWING YOU TO BOTH TRIAGE AT-RISK ACCOUNTS AND IDENTIFY THOSE RIPE FOR UPSSELL OPPORTUNITIES

Provide more contextual information and data for sales teams so they can engage with leads that might not be as 'bottom of the funnel' as previously. Prepare for a greater emphasis on customer marketing. Look to ensure the key data for existing accounts is present within your CRM and marketing automation systems, allowing you to both triage at-risk accounts and identify those ripe for upsell opportunities.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Strategy and Process

- Be proactive in negotiating end-of-year pipeline goals with finance and sales. Accept that buying cycles may lengthen.
- Redefine and recalibrate your lead-to-revenue targets in response to the changing environment.
- Consider pivoting more to customer retention metrics, proactively influencing renewal and upsell opportunities.
- Set expectations that sales teams may need to work harder when engaging marketing-qualified leads in the new environment.

Data and Measurement

- As content consumption increases, recalibrate your lead scoring and qualification.
- Provide sales teams with contextual engagement data to tailor conversations and encourage the use of assets where engagement can be tracked.

Action

- Provide touchpoints in content across the buyer journey, so that you can segment more effectively as consumption increases.

Technology

- Connect engagement data for sales directly into their workflow (e.g. on CRM lead/contact records) to enable better conversations.

Audience Experience

- Be mindful of the business environment in the current climate. Tailor messaging and engagement with empathy in mind, accepting that fewer leads may be ready to buy.