

SPECIAL REPORT

CMO Perspective on the Complex Sale

Developing cross-functional
strategies to accelerate sales
pipeline performance

Special Report

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CMO Perspectives on the Complex Sale

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The complex sale is becoming a reality for many CMOs. The development of strategies to ensure success despite the challenges presented by a complex sale is taking immense priority. To learn more about these strategies, we conducted a study involving nearly 300 CMOs or senior Marketing decision-makers. The results will be analyzed in-depth throughout this Special Report, including lead qualification, scoring, nurturing and defining the funnel for the complex sale. You will also receive valuable benchmark data including key performance indicators and insights from CMOs who participated in the study.

DISSECTING THE COMPLEX SALE

Many organizations are experiencing what is known as a complex sale, or a long-term sales process that often involves selling multiple parties in order to win one new sale. Sales processes of this nature require sophisticated, cross-functional strategies involving both Marketing and Sales teams to accelerate sales pipeline performance.

Any organization can have a complex sales cycle, as it is not highly specific to any product, service or market. Organizations that experience a complex sale typically sell products or services that require a substantial amount of prospect education, ample budgets or both. If the purchase is critical to the business or impacts the highest organizational level of the buyer, this will also lead to a complex sale.

LENGTHENING SALES CYCLES AND GROWING COMMITTEES CONFRONT CMOs

The social and economic changes that have occurred over recent years have contributed to sales cycles becoming more complex. Organizations have been impacted by the struggling economic environment both with limited resources and reluctant buyers. Additionally, the consumer empowerment that has been fueled by social media's growing popularity has set a higher standard for marketers.

Now, aside from generating a high volume of qualified leads, CMOs are greatly challenged with marketing to lengthening sales cycles and a growing number of individuals involved in the buying process. In this report, we'll identify just how long those sales cycles are, how many individuals are involved in the buying process, and how CMOs can combat these challenges.

COMBATING THE COMPLEX SALE WITH CROSS-FUNCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Ensuring success with a complex sale requires sophisticated, cross-functional strategies and collaboration between Marketing and Sales. Marketing contributes their expertise in positioning, messaging, lead generation and communications, while Sales has an intimate knowledge of the prospect and are true experts in what it takes to turn that prospect into a customer. By creating an environment of collaboration between these two teams, their complementary knowledge will be the key to accelerating sales pipeline performance.

Special Reports

MarketingSherpa Special Reports provide marketing executives with concise research, insights and actionable advice, derived from unique market segments for guiding strategic and tactical decision making.

MARKETING TO A LENGTHENING SALES CYCLE

One of the great challenges the complex sale poses to CMOs is a lengthening sales cycle. As sales cycles become longer, the level of effort required by Sales teams to close one sale is amplified. Prospects that take several months to over a year to make a buying decision require generous amounts of education and attention throughout the process until they reach the point when they are confident enough to make a commitment.

We wanted to learn about the average length of sales cycles, and how sales cycle length related to average deal size, so we asked the CMOs who participated in our recent study. The results are included in the following chart:

CHART: AVERAGE LENGTH OF SALES CYCLES BY AVERAGE DEAL SIZE

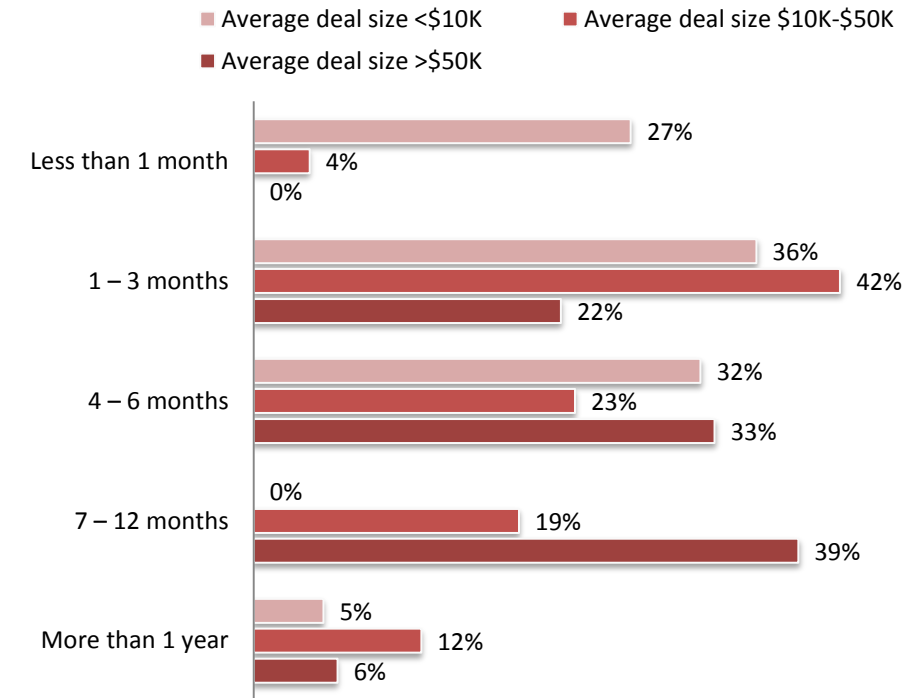
Q. How long is your sales cycle from initial inquiry to purchase?

The results show a direct relationship between average deal size and average length of sales cycles. Overall, as the average deal size increases, the average length of sales cycle increases as well.

With larger purchase amounts, prospects often require multiple levels of approval, requiring the involvement of more parties. As the buying committee grows, a greater amount of time is often needed to convince all deciding parties to make a commitment.

A number of other factors contribute to the lengthening of sales cycles for large deal sizes. Buyers may be delayed because they are waiting for funds to be available. They also may be speaking with a number of your competitors, and completing a detailed analysis of your service or solution to theirs. The overall importance of the purchase to the organization, and its impact on the senior level will draw out sales cycles as well.

Many CMOs are looking for strategies to shorten the sales cycle in order to close more deals that are in the pipeline today and have an immediate impact on the business. It's important to conceptualize that this may or may not be possible with your current audience. The factors influencing them – such as the economic climate – may be out of your control. What is definitely possible is to create a lead management machine



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=297 CMOs

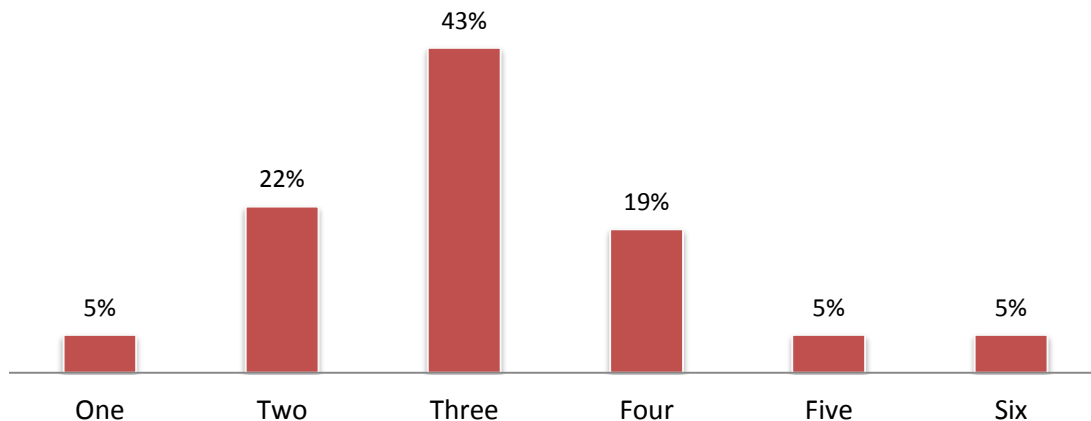
that will consistently drive qualified leads into the funnel, and optimize their progression from one stage of the buying process to the next. This may or may not reduce the time from initial inquiry to close; however, with a growing number of deals closing each month due to greater Sales efficiencies, the problem of a lengthening sales cycle may become less relevant.

MARKETING TO A COMMITTEE

Another pressing challenge to CMOs cited during our study was marketing to an increasing number of individuals involved in the buying process. This challenge creates a bounty of obstacles during the sales process. A salesperson may need to sell four parties on their solution; however they may only be in contact with one of them. The salesperson is then relying on their contact to effectively sell the solution internally. There may be objections and concerns for key decision makers that the salesperson is unaware of. There may be office politics that the prospect is navigating during this purchase that they don't share with their salesperson. These are just a few examples of how marketing and selling a committee can make for a more complex sale.

CHART: NUMBER OF KEY DECISION MAKERS INVOLVED IN B2B BUYING PROCESSES

Q. On average, how many individuals are involved in your prospect's purchasing decisions when they are considering the purchase of your organization's products or services?



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010. N=297 CMOs

Overall, the majority of B2B CMOs indicated that there are two to four individuals involved in their prospect's purchasing decisions.

What can be done to address this challenge? Much like the first challenge of lengthening sales cycles, there are a number of factors out of our control, including the internal purchasing processes and authorization requirements of the prospect. Assuming you don't want to reconsider your pricing strategy and start slashing prices, it will be necessary to work with your prospects and the guidelines they must meet within their organization. What remains in our control are the processes that can be established to qualify leads, identify what stage of the funnel they are in, and customize marketing materials so that they receive the information they want, when they want to receive it.

ACCELERATE SALES PIPELINES WITH LEAD QUALIFICATION, SCORING AND NURTURING

By establishing cross-functional processes to qualify, score and nurture leads, a number of great benefits can be achieved for your business. Sales teams will be focusing their efforts on leads that are far enough along in the sales funnel that they are ready and willing to interact with a salesperson. Since Sales is no longer wasting time calling prospects who aren't interested, or leaving hundreds of voicemails only to receive few returned calls, closing rates increase. Since Marketing will be nurturing non-sales-ready leads until the point when they are ready to speak with a salesperson, a consistent flow of high-quality leads will be delivered to Sales. Part of this flow will come from new leads generated, and others from the database of non-sales-ready leads that become sales-ready.

LEAD QUALIFICATION: A POWERFUL STRATEGY IN ESCALATING SALES TEAM EFFICIENCY

The first step in the process is to initiate lead qualification processes. It is vitally important to your business that you identify what constitutes a sales-ready lead, or how you will determine if an inquiry is actually ready to engage with a salesperson.

A considerable number of B2B organizations set a very low bar for their lead qualification. Often, any lead that fills out a form on a company website, mails in a direct response card or calls in is considered ready to interact with a salesperson. The result of this low-barrier qualification is an ultimate lack of reaching the full revenue potential of the business.

You must qualify early on in the process, and make a determination based on various criteria whether or not a prospect is ready and willing to interact with Sales.

As one CMO shared with us during our study:

"We sell an industrial component in a novel sector. It is important to qualify early and to exclude end-users, as well as others without relevant experience and capability to use our product. So our homepage invites the visitor to select one of two options according to the type of business they are."

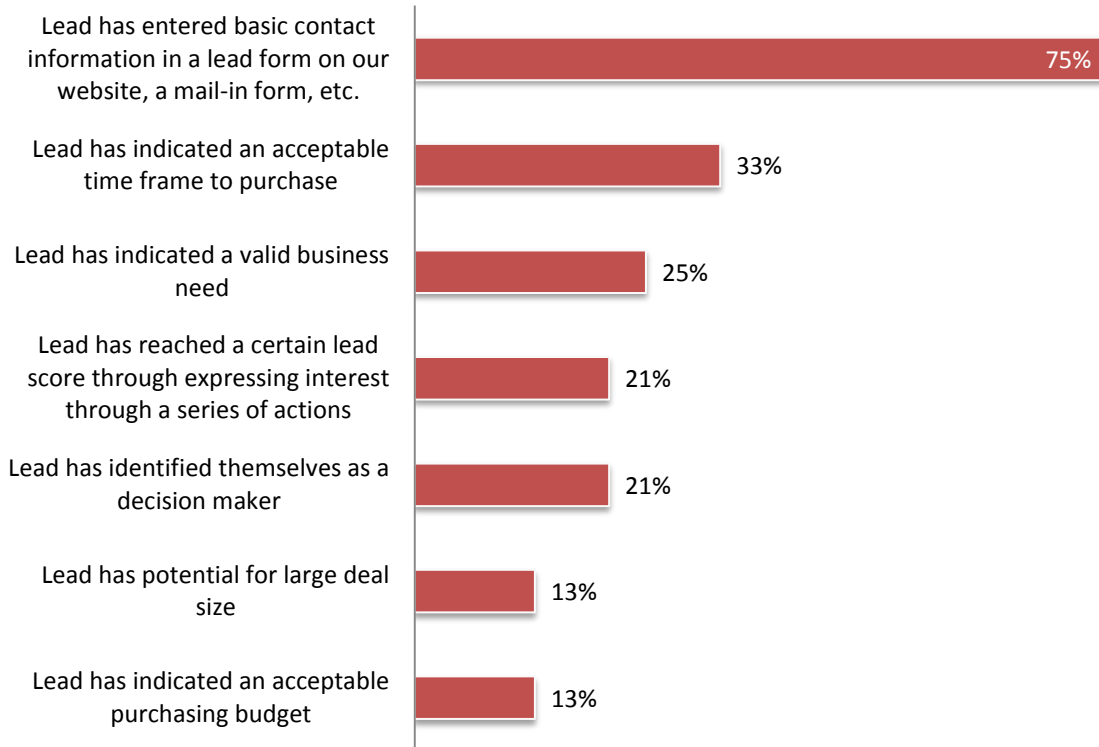
- CMO Study Participant

In order to nail down a definition of what constitutes a sales-ready lead, Marketing and Sales teams must collaborate to identify what criteria is indicative of a prospect's willingness to interact with Sales. This qualification often includes demographic information such as company size or budget and / or behaviors such as website visits, whitepaper downloads and email opens. Once a lead meets the criteria of a sales-ready lead, they can be flagged for sales team distribution and follow up. This process is commonly referred to as the lead being "passed to Sales."

The following chart includes the information that is commonly required before passing a lead to sales, as indicated by the CMOs participating in this study.

CHART: INFORMATION REQUIRED BEFORE PASSING A LEAD TO SALES

Q. What information is required before a lead is passed to sales?



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=297 CMOs

Lead qualification is an area that offers great opportunity for improvement within the CMO community. As represented in the previous chart, there are not a great number of CMOs using multiple forms of qualification.

For example, 75% of CMOs indicated that a lead must enter basic contact information in a lead form. The highest level of participation after that is 33% for an indication of an acceptable time frame to purchase. From there, the participation levels continue to decline. Furthermore, the average number of qualification criteria selected (per CMO respondent) to this question was only two criteria.

What’s truly shocking about this data is that only one-quarter of CMOs indicated that a lead has actually indicated a valid business need for their product or service before passing the lead to Sales. Think about that. For three-quarters of CMOs, leads that may not even have a valid business need for their product or service is being delivered to their Sales teams to close. It’s no wonder that the call from Sales is so commonly “better leads.”

Your Sales team is a group of highly skilled individuals and a tremendous asset to your organization. Why not keep them happy and doing what they do best by screening out leads that are not determined to be sales-ready? By implementing a lead qualification strategy, Sales’ faith in the Marketing department is either amplified or restored. This creates or enhances an environment of respect and collaboration between the two teams, not to mention improved Sales team efficiencies and company revenues.

MAKING THE GRADE WITH LEAD SCORING

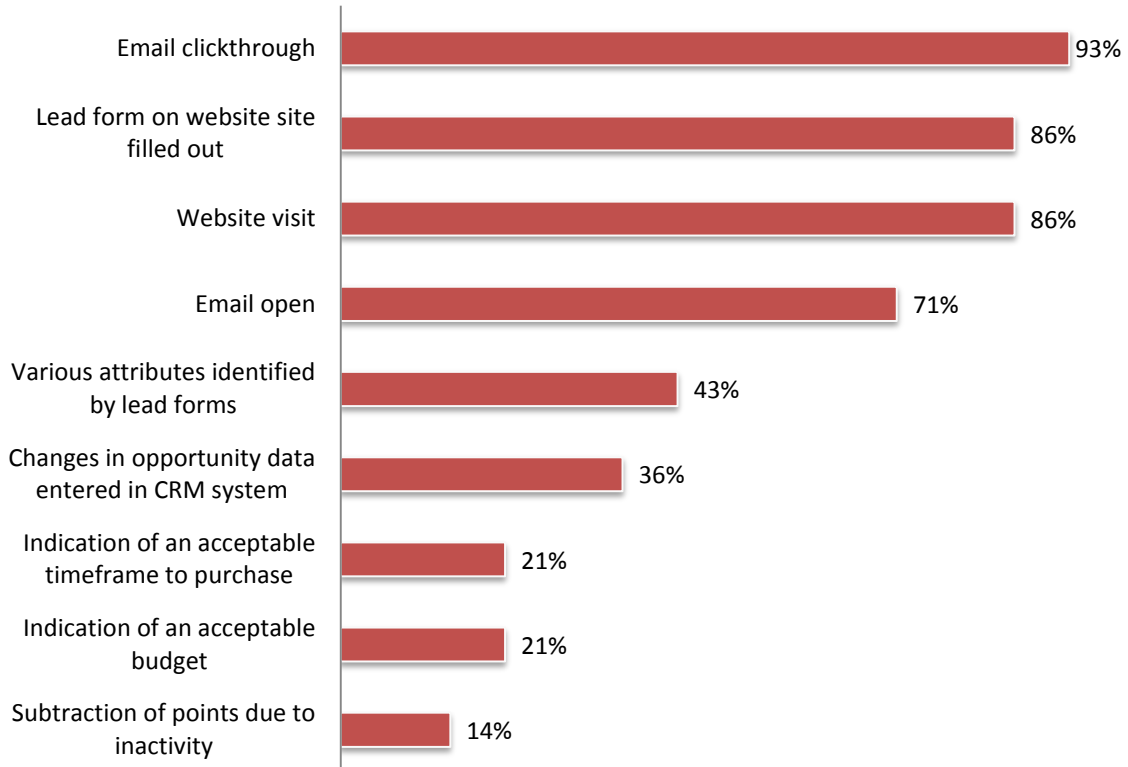
Lead scoring refers to the process of adding or subtracting points towards a lead’s overall score, based on certain criteria agreed upon by Marketing and Sales teams. These criteria are indications of the sales-readiness of a lead.

Once an organization has identified what constitutes a sales-ready lead for their organization, scoring methodologies can be implemented and tested based on their ability to identify leads that meet the criteria.

There are countless criteria that can be considered in a lead score calculation methodology, including various demographic and behavioral characteristics. During our study, we asked participating CMOs to indicate what criteria they consider in their lead score calculations. The results are represented in the following chart.

CHART: FACTORS OF LEAD SCORE CALCULATIONS

Q. What actions or traits are currently considered in your lead scoring calculation?



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=297 CMOs

The most commonly used criteria in B2B CMO lead score calculations are behavioral, such as an email clickthrough or a website visit. These behaviors are excellent indicators of engagement, interest, and ultimately lead quality, which is precisely why such a significant percentage of CMOs use these behavioral characteristics in their lead scoring methodologies.

The subtraction of points due to inactivity presents a true opportunity to CMOs, as only 14% indicated they use these criteria in their lead scoring calculations. For example, if a prospect has unsubscribed from an email subscription, this may be an indication that they are not sales-ready.

Lead scoring is a process that is part art and part science. Implementing a perfect lead scoring system at the first attempt is uncommon, as the usual practice involves refining and tweaking the calculations after they have launched.

HARVESTING SALES-READY LEADS WITH NURTURING STRATEGIES

Once lead qualification and scoring strategies have been implemented, the Sales team begins receiving a consistent flow of highly qualified leads. Marketing must take ownership of the leads that do not pass the sales-ready grade. These leads need to be nurtured with various content and collateral until their interest level has elevated to the point that they are sales-ready.

Lead nurturing processes include consistent and valuable communication with prospects. This communication can take form in a number of means of contact including emails, phone outreach, direct mail, etc. and are commonly referred to as lead “touches.” Various lead nurturing touches may be scheduled, or triggered by an event. A scheduled lead nurturing system would dictate certain timeframes for communication, such as a weekly or bi-weekly email. A triggered nurturing system would deploy certain communications based on an action taken by the prospect. For example, if a whitepaper is downloaded off a company website, an email that is automatically sent is a triggered communication. Many lead nurturing systems include a combination of scheduled and triggered communications.

Lead nurturing content must be highly valuable and relevant to the prospect in order to be effective in harvesting sales-ready leads. To build a lead nurturing system that accomplishes this, CMOs must get personal with their prospects. By understanding the individual concerns and needs of various prospects, CMOs can apply segmentation rules to their CRM databases, and deliver various content that is relevant to each segment.

Segments can be created using some combination of demographics, behavioral characteristics, or overall lead score. As one CMO commented:

“Most of our nurturing is done manually where people are hand selected and added to specific campaigns based on their priority (or score). We've found that regularly staying in touch via email and content offers - articles, blog posts, whitepapers, seminars, webinars, etc. - coupled with consistent phone outreach works well. The content warms them up so it's not a total cold call.”

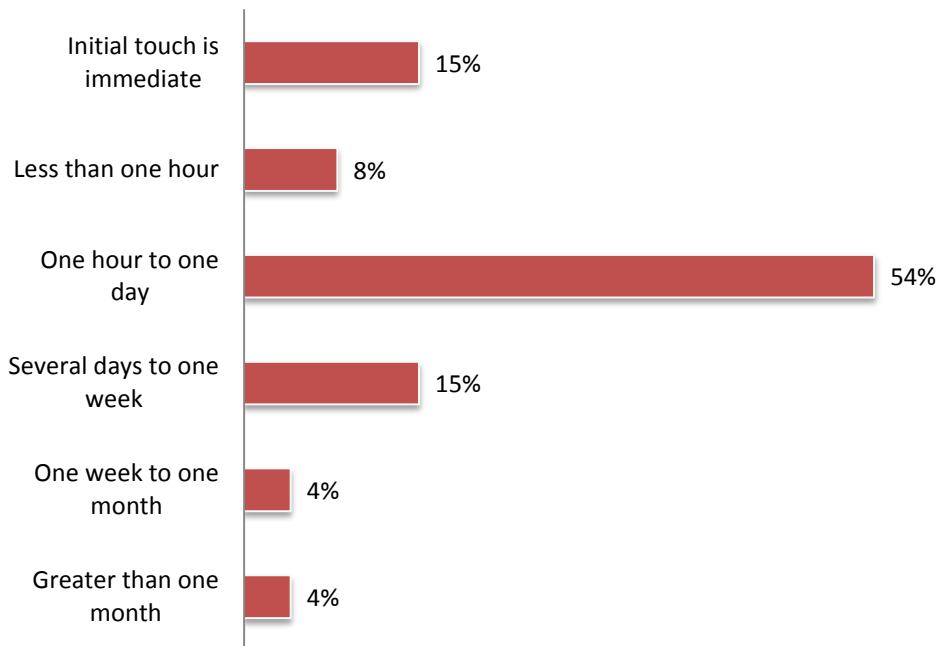
- CMO Study Participant

In addition to delivering valuable content to various segments, the selection of an appropriate timing and frequency for lead nurturing touches plays an integral role in the success of lead nurturing campaigns. The goal is not to inundate audiences with a frequency that is greater than they would prefer, but to deliver communications in a timely manner that is appropriate and helpful to audience segments.

To learn more about the schedule of lead nurturing campaigns, we asked the CMOs participating in our study to indicate their timeframe for initial lead touches, and frequency of lead touches thereafter. The results are included in the following charts:

CHART: TIMEFRAME FOR INITIAL LEAD TOUCH

Q. Approximately how long do you wait for the initial lead nurturing touch once a lead or inquiry performs a desired action, like filling out a lead form on your website or downloading a whitepaper?



Once a prospect has responded to a marketing campaign, the majority of CMOs indicated that their initial lead touch occurs within one day. This is a vital time to execute a relevant, triggered response.

When a prospect responds to your campaign, they may be in the research phase and they may be

evaluating a number of your competitors, even acting on their campaigns as well. The company that responds to the prospect’s inquiry in the most relevant, time-efficient manner will win the greatest first impression. Winning this first impression can go a long way towards ultimately winning the sale.

The first lead nurturing message sets the stage for the sales process, and should establish expectations. This messaging should also be balanced with the needs and interests of the prospect. What campaign did they respond to? What content on your website did they download? What industry are they in? The answers to questions like these can guide the development of the initial lead touch. In addition to catering to the contextual needs of the prospect, these messages should also have the highest level of personalization possible so prospects feel their needs are being addressed as individuals. Post launch, ample testing of content, call-to-action and timing will be required to improve efficiencies.

The execution of initial and subsequent lead touches can be done manually, or with the help of a software solution. There are a number email marketing, content management and marketing automation solutions that include feature sets that will deploy various scheduled or triggered messages. The benefits of such solutions are vast, as they can ensure consistent deployment of lead nurturing touches. As lead nurturing programs become more complex, with multiple schedules, triggers and segments, it becomes nearly impossible to execute them without supporting technology.

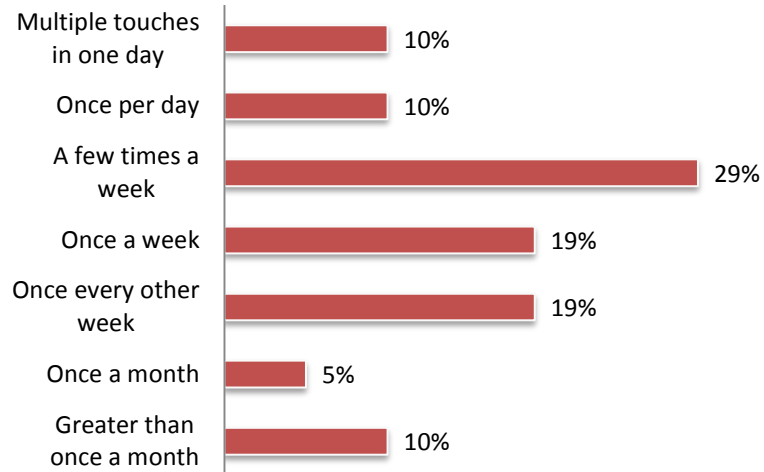


Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=297 CMOs

CHART: FREQUENCY OF LEAD NURTURING TOUCHES

Q. Please select the time frame which best represents the frequency of touches in your lead nurturing campaign.

The frequency of lead nurturing touches can impact lead nurturing campaign performance in a number of ways. If an organization hasn't achieved the right frequency for their audience, open rates, clickthrough rates and overall engagement may suffer. There is also a risk of a growing rate of prospects unsubscribing.



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=297 CMOs

The majority of CMOs have a frequency of a few times a week, once a week or once every other week. For those 10% of CMOs who have a frequency of multiple touches in one day, this is likely a result of an aggressive promotional strategy or an active audience receiving triggered emails for their activity.

The 5% of CMOs who indicated that their lead nurturing touches occur once a month may be nurturing through a monthly newsletter. Monthly newsletters can be a great marketing communications tool; however they are not very effective for lead nurturing. In order to effectively nurture non-sales-ready leads to the point that they are ready to engage with a salesperson, content must be catered to the prospect and meet their individual interests, needs and concerns in a timely and relevant manner. By deploying one monthly newsletter to an entire database, organizations are not delivering content that will be interesting, relevant, and timely to all segments.

BENCHMARKING LEAD NURTURING PERFORMANCE

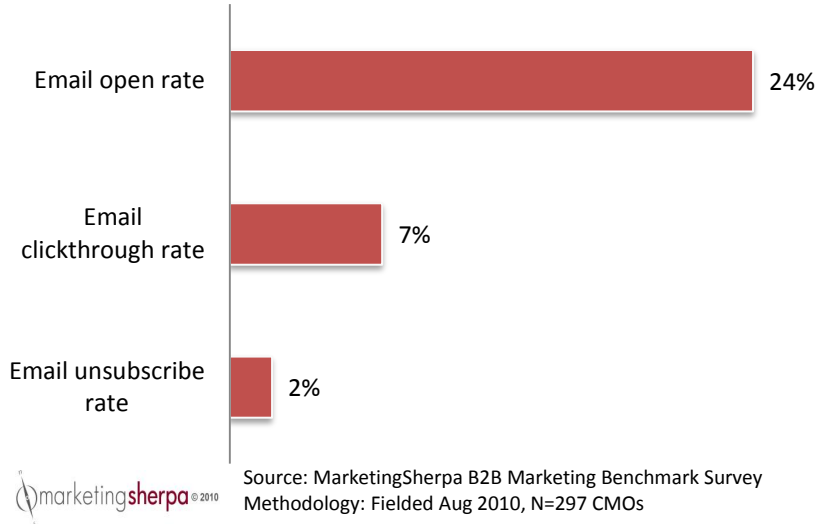
Lead nurturing is a process that requires a significant amount of testing to harvest the greatest amount of sales-ready leads from the database. Perfecting lead nurturing campaigns may be a process that is never truly complete. Continual factors outside of our control including seasonality and economic fluctuations often require revised messaging strategies. New audience segments that are defined over time will require new messaging. Even changes the competition is making to their set of services or solutions can require revisions to lead nurturing campaigns. With all of the changes that are happening in your market, you will find that by adapting your lead nurturing strategies to address those changes can have a significant impact on your results.

In order to monitor the performance of lead nurturing campaigns, benchmark data for initial launch campaigns must be recorded. Future internal progress against initial benchmarks must also be measured. Finally, these benchmarks should be compared to the performance of your peers in the marketing field over time. This final component of analysis will be provided for you in the upcoming chart.

CHART: LEAD NURTURING KPIS

Q. Please indicate your organization’s approximate percentages for the following key performance metrics.

This chart represents key performance indicators for CMOs lead nurturing messages. KPIs vary widely depending on industry, audience, etc., but it is common for nurturing messages to out-perform non-nurturing messages. This is a result of their relevancy and timeliness.



DEFINING THE FUNNEL

Now that marketing is taking ownership of non-sales-ready leads and nurturing them, organizations must shift to adopt a Marketing-Sales funnel, not just a sales pipeline. Funnel stages owned by Marketing must be recognized in order to optimize the rate of sales-ready leads that are harvested from the database. When a lead is sales-ready, the processes involved in handing off leads from Marketing to Sales must be mapped out. Finally, sales funnel stages must be identified in order to optimize lead progression from one stage to the next until the sale is won.

Organizations will have Marketing-Sales funnels of varying complexities depending on their industry, audience, buying cycle, etc. As a basic guideline, we surveyed the CMOs participating in our recent study based on the use of the following funnel stages:

- Registered leads include all inquiries that respond to a marketing campaign by calling in, sending a direct response card, coming through an organization’s website, or responding in some other form
- Rules-validated leads are registered leads that pass the criteria as valid leads which appear to be in the organization’s target market
- Phone-ready leads are rules-validated leads that meet certain criteria agreed upon by sales and marketing teams as a lead that is ready for sales follow-up
- Phone-validated leads are phone-ready leads that have been validated by sales and confirmed to meet agreed-upon criteria
- Sales-ready opportunities are phone-validated leads who are willing to begin the sales process with a sales person and often meet another set of criteria agreed upon by marketing and sales
- Sales-validated opportunities are sales-ready opportunities that have been validated by sales to meet agreed-upon criteria
- Sales-forecasted opportunities meet the criteria defined by sales management for forecasting future deals
- Sales outcome is determined when the sale is won, lost or indefinitely postponed

CHART: DEFINING THE B2B FUNNEL

Q. Please indicate which stages in the marketing-sales funnel below are tracked in your organization.



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=297 CMOs

There is a significant percentage of CMOs who indicated that they have not yet defined a formalized funnel -- nearly one quarter of all respondents. Other than during the first funnel stage of a registered lead, many of the stages show fewer than half of CMOs indicating they recognized them in their current funnel. This may be evidence of less complex buying processes for these respondents, or a lack of a fully mapped-out funnel.

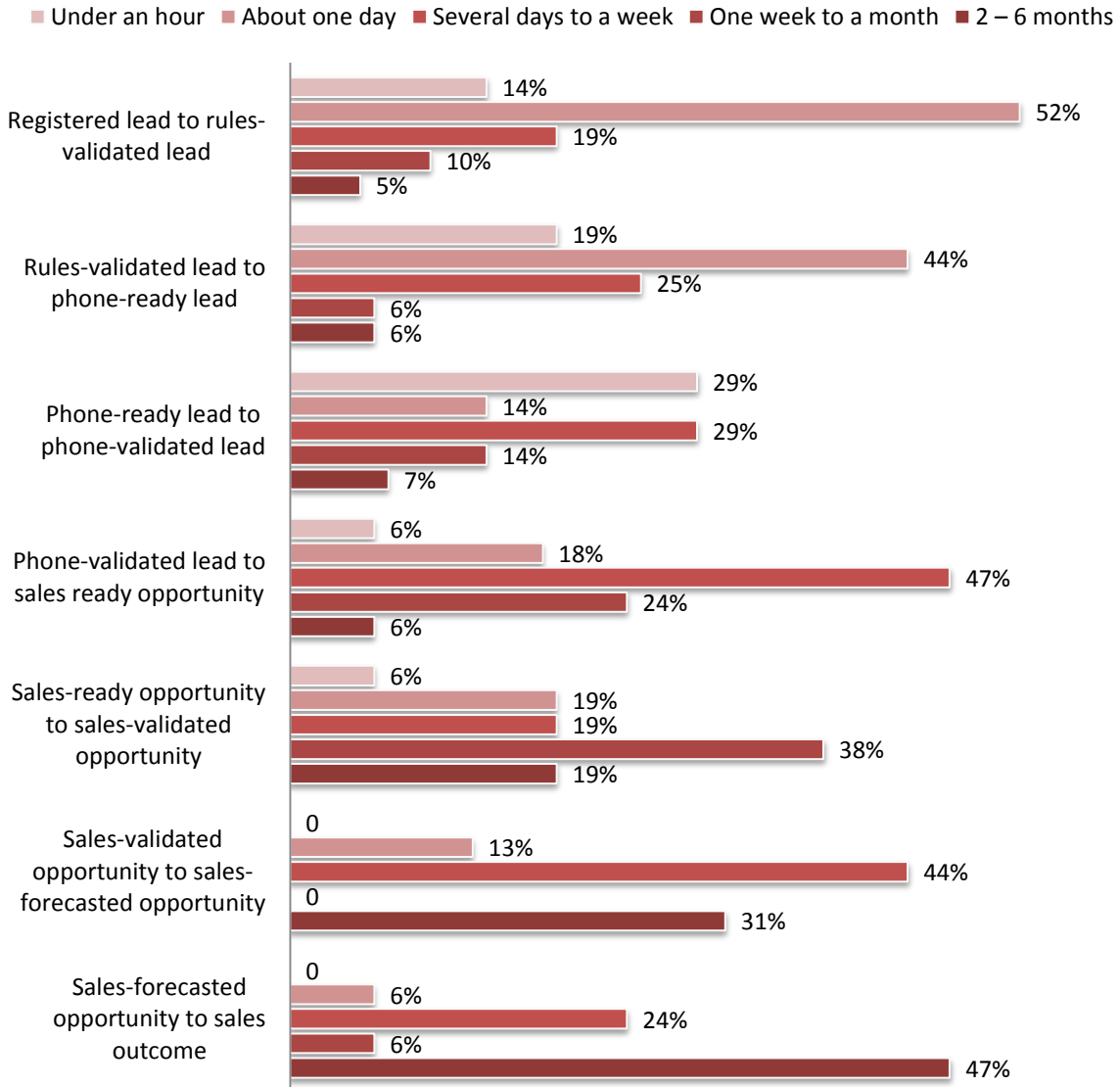
The CMO's role is not complete once the lead has progressed through all funnel stages, the sale has been won and the lead becomes a new customer. The same strategies used to develop lead nurturing campaigns can be put to good use with a customer retention strategy. Why not use these segmentation, personalization, timing and frequency strategies to help improve customer satisfaction?

Making customer retention a priority throughout the organization is good for revenues and reputation. If you have a recurring payment structure, retention strategies will help keep recurring revenues healthy. Even if your organization sells a product that is a one-time purchase, retention strategies will help to keep those customers satisfied. As a result, they will be more likely to refer friends and colleagues to your solution, and less likely to post a negative review about your company on a social media site.

Now that we understand the use of various funnel stages, we wanted to find out approximate time frames for lead progression from one stage to the next. The following chart depicts approximate time frames for various funnel stages.

CHART: APPROXIMATE TIME FRAMES FOR FUNNEL STAGES

Q. For those stages of the sales funnel that you use, please indicate the approximate time frame for which a prospect is in the specified stage.



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
 Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=297 CMOs

Progression from one Marketing-owned funnel stage to the next is typically one day. This shows a high level of effective collaboration between Marketing and Sales teams for those CMOs who have a formal, defined funnel. For funnel stages that Sales owns, progression is ranges anywhere from several days to several months.

The following case study includes a number of key principles covered in this Special Report. Read on to learn how one CMO effectively marketed to different stages of the sales funnel to contribute to a 25% increase in year-over-year revenues.

CASE BRIEFING: MARKETING TO DIFFERENT FUNNEL STAGES LEADS TO A 25% INCREASE IN REVENUES

CHALLENGE

Unlike many B2B marketers, the team at a network management software company didn't typically have to deal with large buying committees. Most of the company's network management and monitoring tools were priced low enough for network managers to buy without committee approval.

But this scenario presented a different challenge: Marketing directly to a group of prospects – network engineers and IT managers – who were notoriously resistant to marketing and sales pitches.

CAMPAIGN

To connect with that audience, the team needed a strategy that put valuable, relevant content directly into prospects' hands. They wanted a buyer-directed process that let prospects reach a point where they could either buy products online or contact a salesperson for specific help in completing a purchase.

The approach included educational content, peer-to-peer interaction, online evaluation tools and automated email. The six key steps they took to develop the strategy to engage buyers were:

Step #1. Design website to mirror prospect profile. The team developed a website that spoke in a tone and style the audience typically enjoys.

Step #2. Create content for different stages of the buying cycle. The team developed a content strategy that acknowledged the different stages of the buying cycle, and gave prospects different entry points to engage with the brand. They created educational content, free tools and consideration stage content.

Step #3. Drive traffic to site through multiple channels. The team used several channels to drive traffic to its website and capture registrations including: Organic search, PPC, third-party media sites and partner sites.

Step #4. Email nurturing to house database. All visitors that had registered to download content were placed in a house database for email nurturing campaigns. They managed email sends based on prospect profile, recent activity and potential stage in the buying process.

Step #5. Track leads to identify names for sales hand-off. The team performed an informal lead scoring process to identify sales ready leads that would be handed off to Sales.

Step #6. Monitor lead flow and model pipeline back to lead source. The team used web analytics, marketing automation and a CRM system to monitor progress of leads through the funnel.

RESULTS

The company posted 25% year-over-year revenue. Open rates on their email campaigns improved by 4-5% and conversion rates nearly doubled.

“We are constantly looking at conversion rates by campaign into opportunity to determine how we can get more immediate impact. We’re asking ourselves, are these the right combinations of activities to drive more opportunities?”

- Company CMO

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

QUALIFY EARLY

Not all leads that respond to a marketing campaign are ready to speak with a salesperson, and passing a lead over to sales too early could ruin your chances for closing the deal. Arrange for Marketing and Sales teams to collaborate on identifying what criteria constitute a sales-ready lead.

This qualification can include demographic information such as company size or budget and / or behaviors such as website visits, whitepaper downloads and email opens.

ESTABLISH AND REFINE LEAD SCORING CALCULATIONS

Now that you have identified what constitutes a sales-ready lead, you will need to establish a lead scoring methodology that will add and subtract points to measure a lead's readiness for sales based on that definition. Marketing and Sales teams will need to collaborate regularly to establish initial lead scoring calculations and refine them as necessary post launch.

Various demographic and behavioral characteristics can be considered in you lead scoring calculation. Commonly used characteristics are behavioral, as the actions a lead takes to interact with a company are excellent indicators of engagement, interest and ultimately, lead quality.

NURTURE NON-SALES-READY LEADS

Now that the Sales team is receiving sales-ready leads, it's up to Marketing to nurture the database of leads that are not sales-ready.

These leads need to be nurtured with various content and collateral until their interest level has elevated to the point that they are sales-ready.

To ensure that the content of your lead nurturing activities is valuable and relevant to your audience, you must create various segments and gain an understanding of their individual needs and concerns. Nurturing campaigns should be consistent, valuable, and timed appropriately to segment preferences.

Lead nurturing campaigns can include scheduled content, delivered based on predetermined timing, and triggered content, which is delivered based on a lead's action.

DEFINE THE MARKETING-SALES FUNNEL

With your new strategies in place, you will need to adopt a marketing-sales funnel, not just a sales pipeline. Funnel stages that Marketing owns, such as registered leads and rules-validated leads, must be recognized in order to optimize the rate of sales-ready leads that are harvested from the database. You will also need to map out a process to hand a lead off to sales once they become sales-ready. Sales funnel stages must be identified in order to optimize lead progression from one stage to the next until the sale is won. Post sale, Marketing can use key nurturing principles to improve customer satisfaction and retention.

CMOs on best strategies for managing the complex sale

"Ongoing nurturing has worked best for us. We need multiple touches prior to making a sale."

"What has worked best for us is implementing integrated solutions that are fully tailored to the customer's needs. Solutions span traditional and digital channels: marketing, strategic communications, public relations, media relations, crisis communications and event management."

"As we reposition up market, personal, relevant, dynamic interactions are most critical to our success."

About MarketingSherpa LLC

MarketingSherpa LLC is a research firm publishing Case Studies, benchmark data, and how-to information read by hundreds of thousands of advertising, marketing and PR professionals every week.

Praised by The Economist, Harvard Business School's Working Knowledge Site, and Entrepreneur.com, MarketingSherpa is distinguished by offering practical, results-based marketing information researched and written by a staff of in-house reporters.

MarketingSherpa's publications, available at www.MarketingSherpa.com, include:

- 960+ Case Studies on marketing from Agilent Technologies to Xerox, searchable by company or topic.
- Annual Benchmark Guides featuring primary research and collected "best of" secondary research on statistics related to search marketing, email marketing, online advertising, ecommerce and business technology marketing.

MarketingSherpa Newsletters

Visitors to MarketingSherpa.com may sign up for their choice of 8 newsletters, including: specific Case Studies for B2B and B2C marketers, email-focused Studies and Career Climber – the best way to find a great marketer or a great marketing job.

MarketingSherpa's Newsletters include:

- Best of Weekly
- B2B Marketing
- B2C Marketing
- Inbound Marketing
- Email Marketing
- Job Classifieds
- SherpaStore
- Chart of the Week

Sign up for newsletters at www.MarketingSherpa.com.

Register for Summits and Workshops at <http://www.marketingsherpa.com> or Contact MarketingSherpa:

Customer Service available M-F, 9-5 (ET)

Service@MarketingSherpa.com

(877) 895-1717 (outside the U.S. call 401-247-7655)

MarketingSherpa Membership

Free Special Reports and 30-Minute Marketers, 20% off all MarketingSherpa publications, training, and events and a Librarian to guide you

MarketingSherpa membership is one of the best deals going. For only \$397 per year, you can get more than **\$1,700 worth of our research** and **20% off of every purchase**. Add in your own research librarian and members-only perks, and this is an opportunity that any serious marketer cannot afford to ignore.

Membership Benefits



- **10+ Special Reports FREE every year (\$970+ if purchased separately)**
Special Reports are an outgrowth of our Benchmark Reports and Handbooks, offering a more focused look at specific areas of marketing. Typically fewer than 15 pages in length, these reports contain a wealth of insights, yet are kept brief to accommodate the busy marketer. Our members get each and every Special Report for free (they are normally \$97 in our store). That's more than \$970 worth of research included for free as part of your membership.



- **The 30-Minute Marketer – FREE for members (normally \$47 each in our store)**
You wish you had an extra day in the week to read about the latest developments in marketing, but warping time and space is not in your marketing budget. The *30-Minute Marketer* is the solution. About twice every month, we go through the most interesting material on a single topic, find additional information and resources, and publish a report that you can read over lunch with time to spare.



- **20% discount on everything!**
Information is power, and marketers spend thousands of dollars every year on MarketingSherpa publications, workshops, and Summits. The math is simple - if you were going to attend one of our Summits and buy a few books, this discount alone would pay for all other membership benefits.



- **Member-exclusive librarian service**
To help our members find the right resources and get the answers they need, we've added a new members-only librarian service. Need to know about a specific area of marketing? No problem ... if we've got research on the topic, our experts will help you find it.



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