

# Sales & Marketing Alignment Survey Results

**PULSE  
REPORT**

## Sales and Marketing: A Tale of Misalignment

A [LeanData](#) survey examining the current state of Sales and Marketing Alignment at B2B companies has found that those two departments have a hard time speaking the same language. Among the key findings, we learned that **51 percent of marketers** said they are not satisfied with the level of communication between the teams. Also, **53 percent of sales** professionals said they are not happy with the support that marketing is providing to them.



**51%**

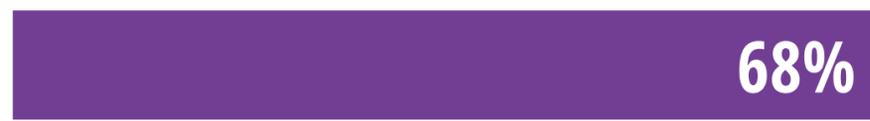
**of marketers said they are not satisfied with the level of communication between the teams**

Yes, we know. You're shocked. Shocked! Who could have imagined that sales and marketing have a problem seeing eye-to-eye? We really needed another survey to tell us that? Thank you for confirming the obvious.

But while you might have known in your gut that there's trouble in business paradise – and maybe you're experiencing that stress-inducing tension every day – respondents to the LeanData survey provided numbers to show that sales and marketing misalignment is a very real issue that's causing unnecessary strain. It's not just you. The survey, which drew responses from nearly 500 business professionals, suggests the problem is widespread and that the teams often are working with an alarming level of distrust in one another.

### Here are some survey highlights:

- **68 percent of marketers** said that up to half of their leads are either ignored or disqualified by sales. Meanwhile, **51 percent of sales** professionals said they disqualify up to half of the Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) handed over by their colleagues.



**68%**



**51%**

- **65 percent of salespeople** rated the overall quality of leads they receive as average, poor or terrible.
- Salespeople indicated their team sources a majority of all **closed-won deals at 60 percent**. When compared to responses from marketing, sales was 41 percent more likely to claim responsibility for sourcing more than half of all deals.
- **48 percent of sales** respondents said they don't trust the pipeline and revenue attribution numbers that marketing reports. And maybe they shouldn't because an astounding **39 percent of marketers** said they don't even trust their own numbers.

**41%**



**48%**



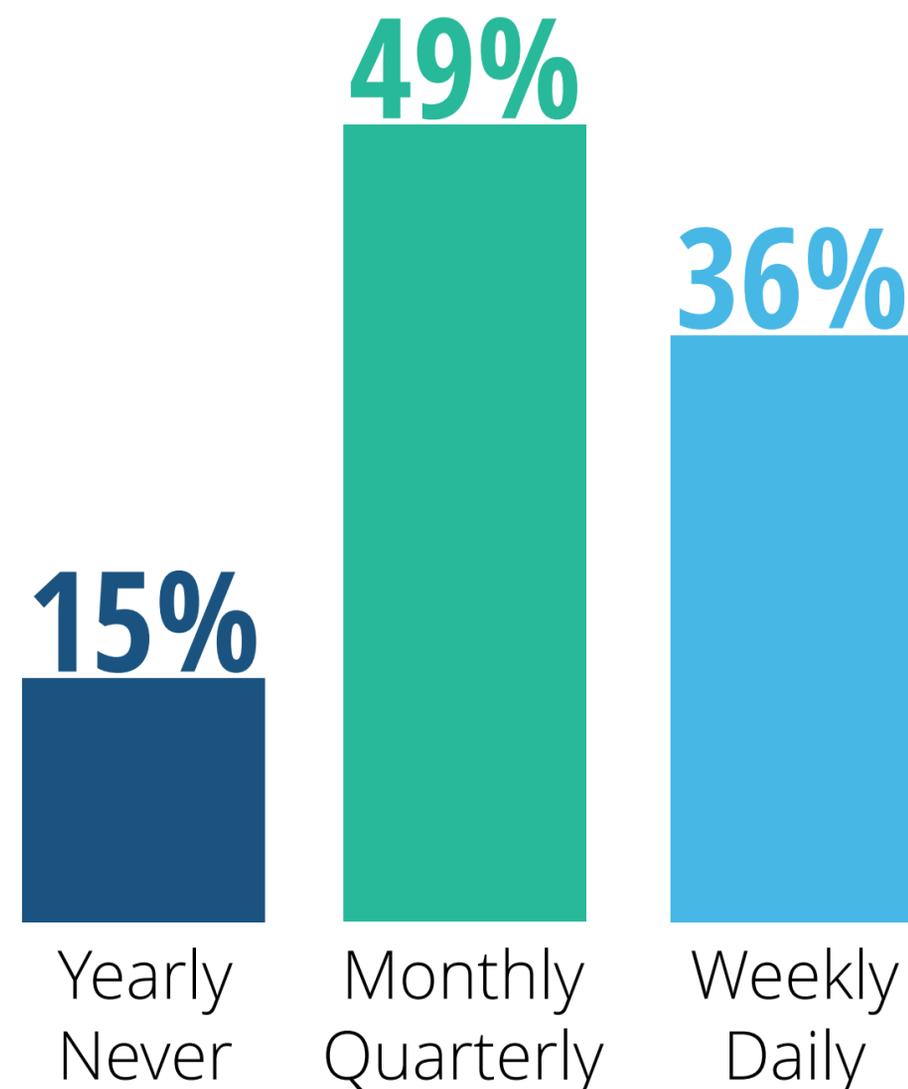
**39%**

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- **38 percent of salespeople** said they are unaware of marketing's goals.

## Frequency of Sales & Marketing Meetings



- Of all respondents, only **36 percent** said the two teams meet on a daily or weekly basis at their company. **8 percent** said they never meet.

"We conducted this survey because there clearly has been a problem," said [Adam New-Watson](#), the chief marketing officer at LeanData. "We wanted to better understand the the full scope as well as the sources of the issues. What we found is not encouraging. There's just a lack of trust between the two teams. We found that there's no malicious intent – just a general queasy feeling where the teams don't want to deal with one another in a productive way."

In fact, sales and marketing professionals both largely indicated an admiration for the hard work of their counterparts. For instance, **64 percent of marketers and 70 percent of salespeople** rated the relationship with their counterparts as either good or excellent. Still, the survey found that the teams are not functioning together in an efficient, cohesive fashion.

And again, that's not exactly a news flash. "Sales and marketing misalignment is a forever situation," said [Trish Bertuzzi](#), president and chief strategist of The Bridge Group. "It's one of the biggest problems in business, and it's always been that way. Everyone always thinks that it's something personal, and that's actually the wrong way to look at it. I mean, who cares if they like each other? It's just about if they have shared goals and objectives."

Too often they aren't shared, according to the survey. But the results also provided a glimmer of hope that it doesn't have to be that way.



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## How Account-Based Marketing (ABM) Improves Alignment

LeanData found that the picture isn't all doom and gloom. In fact, dig a little deeper into the results and there are encouraging signs that sales and marketing might not always be destined to be oil and water.

An important theme of the survey is the noticeable difference between the responses of business professionals using Account-Based Marketing strategies and those who are not. Salespeople and marketers at ABM companies indicated that there was better communication, a higher trust level with their counterparts and less friction between the teams.

**20%**

**more likely that sales understands marketing's goals.**

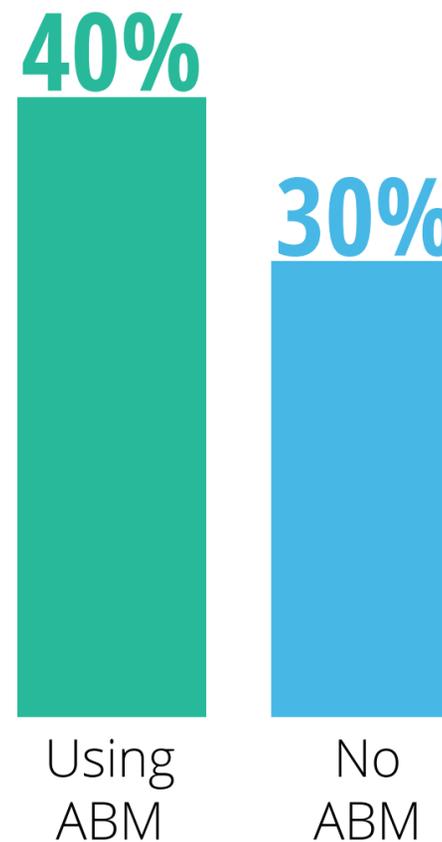
**more likely that sales trusts the numbers marketing reports.**

**20%**

## For instance, survey found:

- Sales teams at businesses practicing ABM are **20 percent** more likely to trust the attribution numbers reported by marketing and also **20 percent** more likely to understand marketing's goals.
- ABM marketers said sales follows up on their leads **25 percent** more – saying that it occurs **40 percent** of the time compared to just **30 percent** at companies not utilizing ABM strategies.

**ABM Marketers are 72% more likely to focus on quality over quantity.**



**72%**

- ABM and non-ABM marketers are just as likely to track revenue attribution. But ABM marketers are **12 percent** more likely to believe their own data.
- With ABM, companies are **122 percent** more likely to have daily or weekly strategy sessions between sales and marketing than businesses without ABM.
- Sales teams in companies not using ABM are **10 percent** more likely to rate the quality of marketing-generated leads negatively.



**ABM businesses are 122% more likely to have daily or weekly strategy sessions between sales & marketing**

- Businesses using ABM are **72 percent** more likely to focus on driving quality leads rather than a quantity of leads
- ABM marketers are **10 percent** more likely to nurture leads through the entire sales process, not just at the top of the funnel.

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Account-Based Marketing is a strategy designed to have sales and marketing working together to penetrate target accounts in a changing B2B landscape where sales cycles are longer and include a greater number of influencers. These results suggested that while ABM may not be viewed as a magical “silver bullet,” business professionals believe that greater alignment between the teams is providing incremental improvements that give their companies an edge over competitors in winning deals.

“Sales and marketing alignment clearly is not a new problem,” said New-Watson. “It’s existed as long as I’ve been in marketing, and our data proves to me that it hasn’t completely gone away. But it doesn’t have to be like that. There is obvious improvement for businesses using Account-Based Marketing.”

Several survey respondents, who believe that alignment is critically important, also offered their thoughts on what could be done to improve the relationship between sales and marketing.

- **David Friedlander**, product marketing director at a storage startup, stressed the need for common metrics. “Have a shared dashboard view that everyone agreed on and was accountable for,” he said.
- “Ensure that marketing and sales are speaking the same language to the customer,” added **Leslie Alore**, senior manager of global marketing operations and automation at Iron Mountain. “Despite best efforts, it seems the messaging (that) marketing is putting out to customers/prospects is different than what sales is saying. This seems to be a problem regardless of the size of the company. This can only be solved by opening lines of communication across all levels within sales and marketing, ensuring marketing is providing visibility to their activities and messaging, and training sales to take the time to look at this information.”

- **Jon Harmer**, vice president of marketing at interaction analytics firm Nexidia, said he has seen examples of marketing teams feeling like they were “crushing” it, and yet the sales department believing the leads passed along were “useless.” But that disconnect can be reduced by both focusing on their common purpose: The customer. “Be a fly on the wall for deal conversations – hear objections and the nuanced ways they are presented and handled,” Harmer said. “Really aligning on our customer’s problems is the key here for both sales and marketing.”
- “Marketing needs to stick to their agreements and analyze the feedback,” said **Josh Hill**, the principal consultant at Marketing Rockstar Guides. “Sales must stick to the process and salespeople have to be open to new ways and not (a) ‘That’s the way I sell, so too bad’ mentally. I’ve been on both sides and this is the best way to work.”

# About LeanData

**WE'RE PASSIONATE** about simplifying the B2B sales process through data-driven marketing. Our technology is purpose built for Account-Based Marketing and target-account selling strategies. LeanData customers like Marketo, Cloudera Inc., and DemandBase are seeing increased revenue attribution and greater sales productivity.

To learn more or receive a demo on account-based reporting, campaign-to-opportunity matching, marketing influence, or account-based nurturing, click here:

[Learn More](#)

*LEANDATA SIMPLIFIES LEAD MANAGEMENT SO YOUR COMPANY'S SALES ORGANIZATION CAN FOCUS ON CLOSING DEALS.*

- Match inbound leads to accounts, opportunities and customers
- Auto-route leads to the right owner
- Auto-convert leads to contacts using custom business rules
- Nurture leads and contacts based on account-specific details
- Measure marketing effectiveness from campaign to close



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