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Unfair competitive advantage

If your CRM is a *BATTLEGROUND* for sales versus marketing, both teams are doomed.





Here's something I've seen lots of B2B businesses learn the hard way: you can have the fanciest tech stack in the world, but if sales and marketing aren't aligned, you're suffocating growth.

That might sound melodramatic, but it's true. Many companies don't even realise that their sales and marketing teams are siloed and out-of-sync – until the situation gets resolved, profits go up, and everyone finally sees just how dysfunctional things had become.

If you're a marketing manager, you probably already know the symptoms of this dysfunction. Sales grumbling about lead quality. Marketing rolling their eyes at poor follow-up. A CRM that no-one trusts. And a monthly performance meeting where everyone's just trying to dodge the blame grenade.

So, yeah. Alignment isn't a box-tick exercise. It's the oxygen your pipeline needs to breathe.

The real blocker isn't budget. It's silos.

We've seen this up close. Misalignment doesn't start with bad campaigns or missed targets. It starts with structure – i.e. sales and marketing reporting into different directors. They sit on different floors, they join different meetings. One talks about personas, the other talks about pipeline.

And when they don't share a common goal, what you get is two separate strategies that target the same audience, but have almost nothing else in common.

Teams that are siloed in this way don't share in big wins – they celebrate in isolation. And if sales and marketing people don't feel like they're all on the same side, they'll eventually start treating each other like opponents.

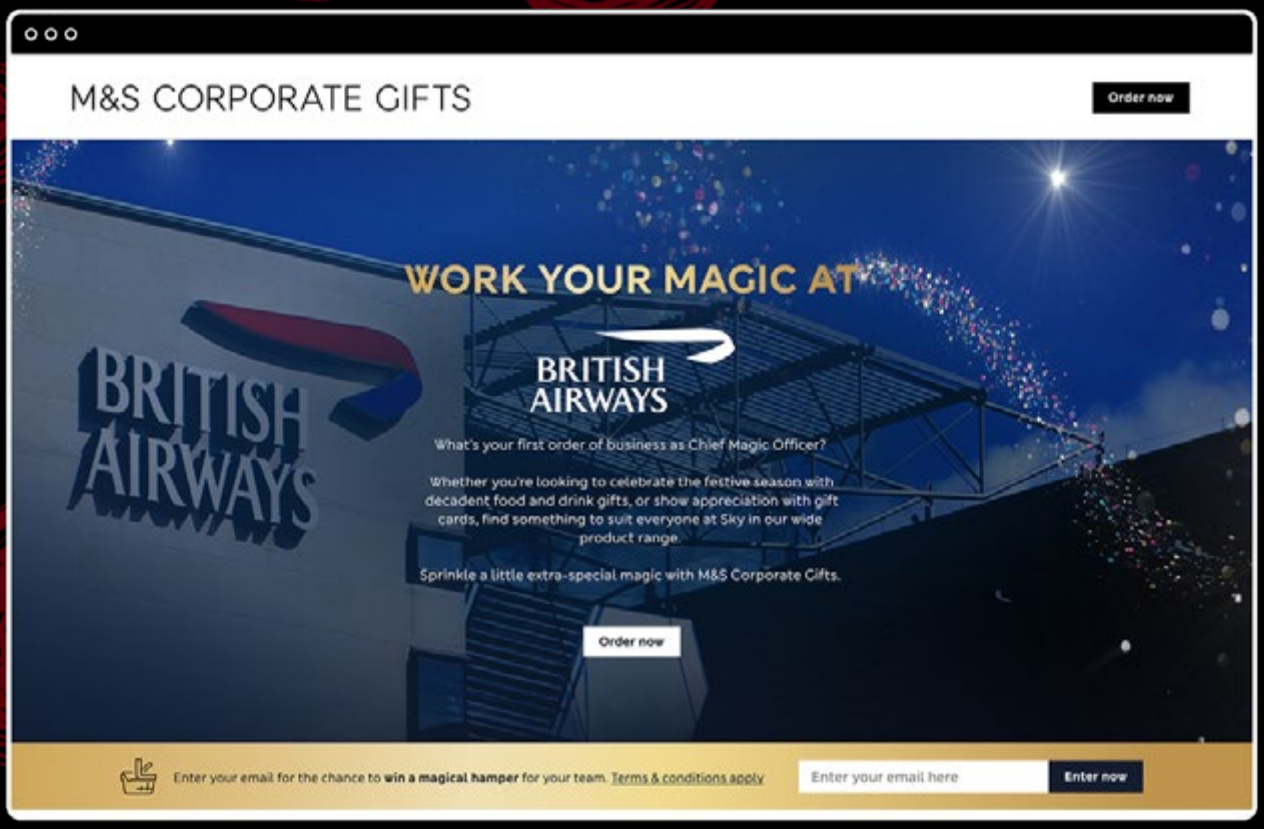
Silos aren't a natural quirk of company culture – they're a direct threat to growth.

CRM: the battleground where alignment goes to die.

CRMs were supposed to fix this. A shared source of truth. A place to track leads, measure performance and bridge the sales/marketing divide.

In reality, however, they often become the scene of the crime. Leads tagged inconsistently. Contact records full of guesswork. Notes that nobody reads. And – worst of all – leads dumped into the system without context, left to rot. That's not (just) a tech issue. It's a mindset issue. CRMs only work when both sides own them – when sales and marketing both see the data as something they're responsible for, not something to be blamed for.

Silos aren't a natural quirk of *COMPANY CULTURE* – they're a direct threat to growth.



We saw this clearly when we worked with M&S Corporate Gifts.

They wanted to ramp up B2B sales in the run-up to Christmas. But their existing systems couldn't keep pace. So we helped them rebuild their tech stack from the ground up, centred around HubSpot, with lead routing and scoring based on criteria set by both sales and marketing. We then showed the M&S team how to use the stack to close the loop between the two departments.

The result?

1375% ROI

£4 MILLION in revenue.

Stop lobbing leads over the fence

One of the most damaging habits in B2B marketing is treating leads like they're someone else's problem.

Here's a scenario that probably sounds familiar. Marketing gathers up 500 MQLs from a gated piece of content. Sales opens the list – with no context, no scores, no signals – and groans. None of these people are in-market. Half the job titles don't match. And there's no record of how they actually engaged.

That's not a pipeline, it's a dumping ground.

It's easy to blame sales for ignoring leads. And it's just as easy to blame marketing for poor quality leads. But that blame culture gets nobody anywhere.

Alignment doesn't mean becoming best mates – the sales and marketing teams don't need to be bantering it up in the pub every Friday. Alignment means agreeing on the definition of a lead, together. It means building shared metrics that don't favour one team over the other. And it means asking: are we moving buyers forward, or just moving names from one spreadsheet to another?

Putting ongoing feedback loops in place will greatly benefit both teams. As an example: when a sales team can see what content a lead has engaged with – such as specific guides, webinars or product pages – they can tailor their outreach accordingly. Instead of a cold approach, the conversation feels relevant from the off.

In turn, the marketing team learns about the kind of content that's attracting serious prospects, and the potential paths to conversion that that content is creating.

That's how a proper feedback loop creates momentum, not wasted effort.

That's not a pipeline, it's a *DUMPING GROUND.*



Don’t chase numbers, chase context

One reason misalignment persists is because the targets don’t match. Marketing is often incentivised by MQL volume; sales, by closed-won revenue. But the number of MQLs is meaningless if no one agrees what an MQL actually is.

Context is everything. How did they engage? What have they seen before? Are they in-market, or just curious?

Without that, it’s all noise. Worse, it’s distracting. Sales wastes time on leads that were never ready. Marketing wastes time defending tactics that never had a chance.

A joined-up team agrees on what matters. Not because it’s in a playbook, but because they built it together.

Marketing isn’t the colouring-in department

In some B2B companies, marketing is still seen as a service function. It’s the team that does the slide decks. They make pretty PDFs. They run fun events. But sales? They do the real work.

This isn’t just insulting, it’s damaging. Because it hides the true value that marketing brings, including up-to-date insights into buyer behaviour and brand perception. The things that make a massive difference to conversion and overall growth.

But smart marketers aren’t trying to ‘win’ an internal turf war. By proving marketing is a commercial driver – not a cost centre – they earn their seat at the table. And when marketing and sales start operating as one, the business stops gasping for air. It starts to breathe freely, and to grow.

Want your sales and marketing teams working in sweet harmony? Let’s talk – get in touch.

