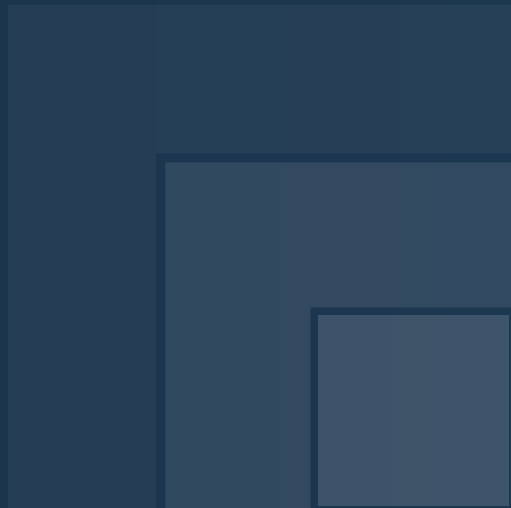


Making Marketing Materials that Work for Sales

Why most marketing content goes unused
today – and how to fix it.

Kvadrant Consulting Whitepaper
April 2024



About Kvadrant Consulting

In B2B, the way customers are buying is changing.

From being mostly in-person to including a blend of digital and physical touch points and more stakeholders.

This shift has massive ramifications for the way companies should structure and run their sales & marketing functions.

At Kvadrant Consulting, we help companies navigate this complexity, make the right choices and configure their sales & marketing engine to generate profitable organic growth.

Being deeply specialized and senior-driven, we help companies within domains such as commercial strategy, value propositions, organizational design, product launches, sales & marketing operating model design, lead generation engines, capability building, sales enablement and advanced analytics.

About the authors



Charlotte Ramsby

Director, *Marketing Excellence*

cra@kvadrant.dk

+45 2086 3298



Nanna Blicher Albert

Sr. Analyst, *Marketing Excellence*

nba@kvadrant.dk

+45 4272 8611



Introduction – Making Marketing Materials that Work for Sales

According to a recent article by [Harvard Business Review](#), companies that strategically place marketing at the heart of their growth initiatives consistently outshine their competitors.

The concept, long embraced by B2C companies, is finally now beginning to gain recognition among B2B enterprises as well – more and more companies are acknowledging the transformative potential of marketing in driving growth, even in complex B2B.

“Companies that make the decision to put marketing at the core of their growth strategy outperform the competition.”

Harvard Business Review, March 2024

Well of course, not every single B2B company has been completely oblivious to this until now.

Yet for a few of the first movers, the emphasis has traditionally been on brand positioning campaigns, participation in industry fairs (with loads of budget for creative execution and merchandise), or the development of technologically advanced, "personalized" corporate websites designed to boost customer awareness and interest.

In other words, Marketing departments are traditionally focused on investing heavily – and primarily – in top-of-the-funnel content development and activation.

While such content activities does indeed serve its purpose, an often-neglected aspect within B2B marketing strategies – especially among departments with the resources to innovate – **is the crucial connection to the sales department.**

All too frequently, the sales team is left with the metaphorical day-old scraps rather than a slice of the freshly baked, enticing sourdough bread that Marketing has available. For many marketers, “sales assets” often constitute sales presentations loaded with extensive imagery, compelling value propositions, and highlights of cool product features. They may also include a detailed messaging framework that explains the interconnections between different brand and product messages or a nicely designed product one-pager suitable for distribution in meetings.

Yet the reality is that these assets do not offer sellers any value and often they go unused. Marketing simply does not have a clear picture of what is really needed.

This disconnect is a missed chance to harness the full power of marketing content to fuel sales activities, build a more unified strategy, and significantly grow market presence.

Companies that work on aligning their sales and marketing teams, focusing on how they can support each other better, are more likely to tap into the full power of marketing. It's not just about getting leads; it's about closing deals.

“

Companies that work on aligning their sales and marketing teams, focusing on how they can support each other better, are more likely to tap into the full power of marketing.

It's not just about getting leads; it's about closing deals.

”

Who's this guide for – and how to read it.

Through this guide, we aim to address the specific challenges that Marketers face in creating impactful marketing materials that effectively support the sales process and contribute to a coherent business strategy.

Whether our readers are looking to refine their existing materials or to innovate with new approaches, this whitepaper serves as a comprehensive guide, offering insights, best practices and real-life industry cases for inspiration.

Our goal is to enable Marketing leaders to not only conceptualize but also execute marketing materials that are both effective and aligned with sales goals, ensuring a unified approach to market penetration and customer engagement.

If you are a marketing leader striving to enhance the synergy between marketing and sales, aiming to leverage marketing materials as a powerful tool for business growth, this whitepaper is designed for you. It promises to equip you with the knowledge, strategies, and inspiration needed to make a tangible impact on your organization's success.

We've structured the guide in 5 different chapters – from setting the scene to practical ideas for content creation to considerations about pitfalls to avoid.

If you don't know much about the topic, we encourage you to start from the very beginning. If you're already aware that something needs to change – or in the process of changing it – you may skip ahead to chapter 3.

Happy reading!

1 The sad reality of “sales assets”

Chapter 1 delves into the challenge of underused B2B marketing content and the critical misalignment between sales and marketing teams.

2 A new buyer reality = new ways of working

Chapter 2 examines the shift in B2B buying behavior, emphasizing the need for a more synergetic relationship between marketing & sales.

3 Assets that sales will love

Chapter 3 offers an overview of various internal and external assets that empower sales across the funnel.

4 Common pitfalls to avoid

Chapter 4 reveals key pitfalls to avoid when developing content – and offers practical advice on how to address them.

5 Closing remarks

Chapter 5 includes a few closing remarks and final motivation to get started creating marketing materials that work for sales.

1

The sad reality
of Marketing
“sales assets”

Far too many resources are wasted on content that never see the light of day

The primary responsibility for developing content for sales to support campaigns, product pushes, or product launches predominantly falls within the domain of the marketing department.

Sadly, research shows that **despite the considerable resources invested in content creation by B2B marketing organizations, 60–70% of the content goes unused***

A significant portion of that content has comfortably settled on a website shelf, or in an asset management system, without ever reaching its intended audience of buyers. So, while we for the past decade have been screaming that ‘content is king’ and B2B companies have been ramping up the efforts to produce content in all different formats, it's never truly used to engage and convince buyers – especially not by the sales department.

The natural question thus becomes: why are sellers are not using the content that the marketing department spent blood, sweat, tears, and money on creating?

Research shows that one of the most common reasons for the underutilization of sales material is that sellers simply do not like the content.

Astonishingly, **9 out of every 10 B2B sellers do not utilize sales material as they perceive it as irrelevant, outdated, and hard to customize to meet prospects' unique needs.**

In addition to content quality concerns, several other factors contribute to the failure of marketing-created sales assets:

- **Sellers lack awareness** of newly created content, resulting in reliance on outdated, familiar materials.
- **Sellers encounter difficulties** in locating and accessing the newly created content when they need it.
- **Sellers lack understanding** of how to effectively utilize content or recognize its value in the sales process.

60–70% of marketing content is never used by sales – despite the many resources that go into planning & development



9 in 10 B2B sellers don't use the material because it is irrelevant, outdated, and difficult to customize.



* Forrester research

The true cause is often hidden in misalignment between sales & marketing functions

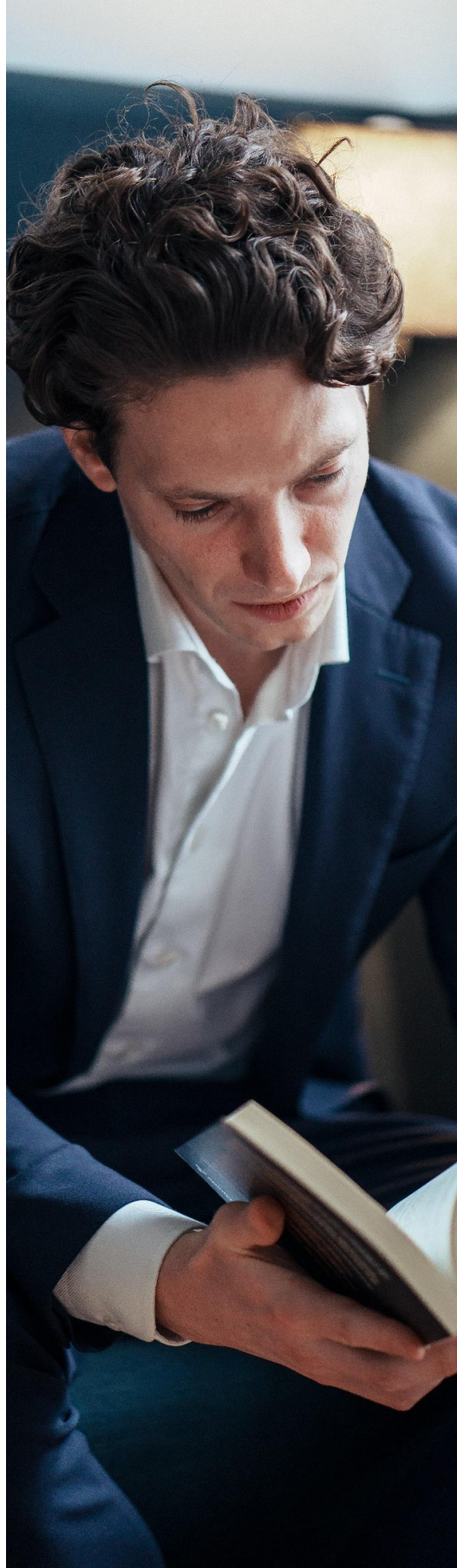
While these factors are all worth noting, they're more often than not simply symptoms of a much more significant illness: a notable misalignment between sales and marketing functions.

A key insight leading to this revelation is that despite sellers not actively utilizing the materials typically created for them, 59% of marketers believe that they understand the content needs of the sales teams – yet only 35% of sales reps share this belief, revealing a significant disconnect.*

This misalignment undermines internal effectiveness and motivation, ultimately impacting productivity and overall effectiveness. Moreover, it has tangible effects on revenue targets, as it creates a gap in meeting buyer expectations. According to HubSpot, Sales-Marketing misalignment costs organizations a whopping \$1 trillion a year!**

When sales assets fail to resonate with buyers, it leads to diminished customer experiences, potentially resulting in lost opportunities and decreased customer retention. Hence, bridging this gap is critical for fostering internal cohesion and achieving sustained business success. This only becomes even more true when looking at how modern B2B buyers research and purchase their solutions and services today.

* Kapost research
** HubSpot



A change of mindset required for Marketing Professionals

One of the core reasons for the misalignment taking place between marketing and sales is that marketing often has a very simplistic view of the sales process (not necessarily the buying journey) of complex B2B solutions.

They're laser-focused on developing materials that will help generate leads. Create the lead and the deal will close. The consequence is that while a myriad of materials is developed for 'upper funnel' activities, sales enablement is reduced to some product launch slides and a corporate PowerPoint deck.

The main difference between marketing and sales as a function or specialty is that **marketing thinks in messages, whereas sellers participate in conversations.** Sales reps need to be equipped to lead relevant conversations, which rarely follow the logic of a creative product presentation.

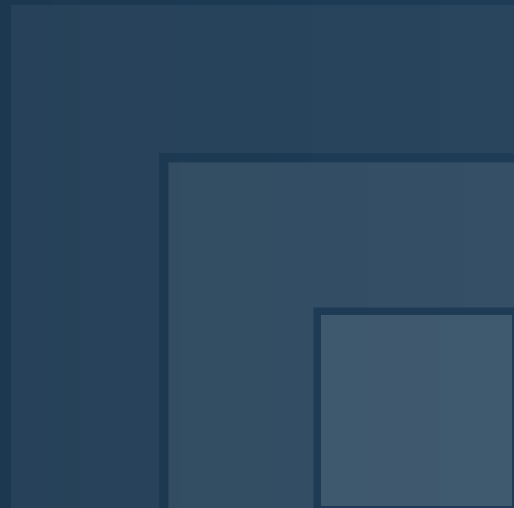
Conversations seldom unfold precisely as anticipated, which means that sellers cannot just start stating insights and value propositions the way they are pushed through all other channels. Instead, they need Marketing to support with content and tools in a more diverse way to enrich the interaction that sellers have with customers. This entails turning insights and value propositions into engaging conversation starters and thought-provoking questions to help sellers navigate buyers who are hesitant or object to any statements.

Thus, developing marketing assets to work for sales, requires a change in mindset for marketing professionals in terms of how we understand the needs of our frontline teams. It involves recognizing that effective sales enablement goes beyond merely providing materials; it requires a deep understanding of the challenges and requirements faced by sales reps in their interaction with customers.





A new buyer
reality = new
ways of working



A new buyer reality = need for new ways of working

Over the past couple of decades, businesses have radically changed the way they buy.

One notable change is that decision-making processes have become more distributed across the organization, giving a more diverse set of people influence on what is being bought and from whom it is bought. Today, an average of 6.8 stakeholders* is involved in a typical B2B purchasing decision – from senior executives to functional specialists and procurement professionals.

Additionally, with the rise of digital channels and information accessibility, B2B buyers increasingly prefer self-service options, where they autonomously can explore different digital platforms to conduct research.

As often stated, buyers are now 60-70%** through their decision-making process before initiating contact with a sales rep.

These changes have forged that buyers now have different expectations for sellers entirely.

Buyers get frustrated when the information they receive from the seller does not align or is not consistent with the information they have collected from other channels such as the website or social media and when the sales rep is too focused on the product without grasping the buyer's specific context or needs.

In other words, buyers get frustrated when they encounter a lack of uniformity in information across all channels, spanning from social media advertisements to the company website to interactions with sales reps.

Research shows that at least 60% of B2B buyers want sellers to demonstrate:

1. Knowledge of their industry and the issues facing their industry
2. Knowledge of their company and the challenges facing their company
3. Knowledge of what solutions can help them address these challenges in the most valuable way.

In this new reality, sales reps must possess deep knowledge and expertise not only about their own company's offerings but also about their customers' and prospect's businesses. And they need to be completely attuned to the messages pushed by Marketing for top-of-funnel communications.

Buyers simply do not differentiate a conversation with a seller differently than reading a white paper or product description – it is all an extension of the same brand. Nurturing aligned sales and marketing strategies, messaging, and assets is thereby crucial for optimizing effectiveness and achieving desired outcomes.

While it takes more effort, the reward for alignment is great. According to HubSpot, companies with aligned sales and marketing teams are 67% better at closing deals and generate 208% more revenue from marketing efforts.*

* Harvard Business Review

** Gartner

*** HubSpot

“

Buyers simply do not differentiate a conversation with a seller differently than reading a white paper or product description – it is all an extension of the same brand.

Nurturing aligned sales and marketing strategies, messaging, and assets is thereby crucial for optimizing effectiveness and achieving desired outcomes.

”

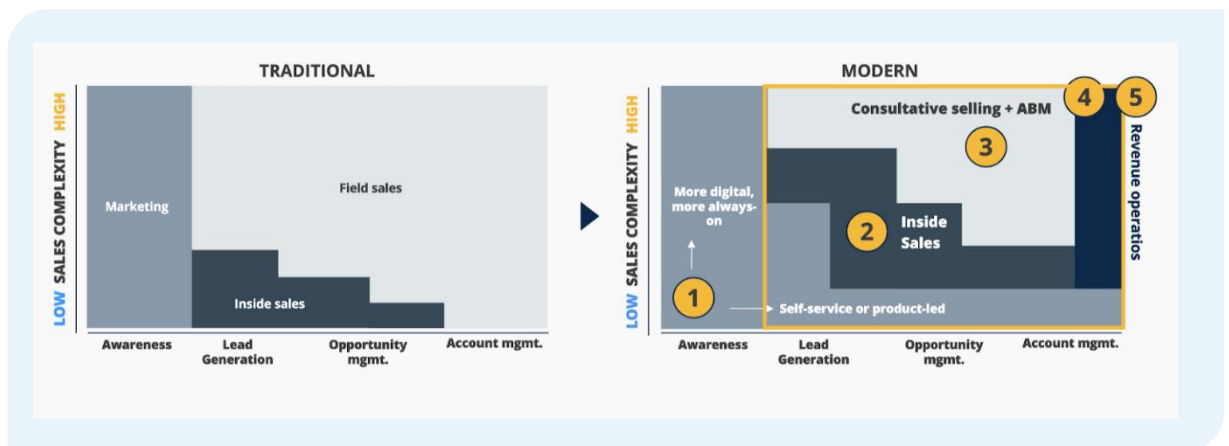
Urgent need for a synergistic relationship between sales and marketing teams

Sales professionals are expected to demonstrate keen insight and act as key advisors to help their customers (actual and potential) understand what is happening in their industry, and what the key challenges, threats, and opportunities are. Put simply, customers expect sellers to have a much wider field of vision than previously.

This task is easier said than done, with sales reps already having to juggle multiple activities and client relationships.

Hence, the evolving expectations of modern B2B buyers underscore the necessity for a synergistic relationship between sales and marketing teams.

This trend has profound implications for how these teams operate, collaborate, and contribute to the overall business strategy and forges a move to new – and more modern – way of selling entirely, where Sales & Marketing are aligned and responsible for different tasks but with the same goal in mind.



Case highlight

Marketing reorganization

A global enterprise software company was losing market share and relevance as the competition was heating up in an increasingly competitive category. The marketing organization primarily focused on creating assets and supporting existing channel partners. There was no measurable impact on business and weak commercial engines and collaboration with sales.

A newly hired CMO alongside Kvaadrant Consulting completely redesigned the purpose, strategy, targets, organization, and value drivers for their 70+ marketing team across local and global roles in ~3 months.

The company went from being a no/low growth company to growing 25%+ the following year.

What even is ‘Sales Enablement’ – and who owns it?

The way the B2B sales and buying process has evolved has resulted in a more complex buying cycle and a massive shift in customer relationships. Buyers are choosing to delay interactions with sales and tend to ignore traditional tactics, such as outbound phone calls and emails.

To meet customers where they are, sales and marketing professionals must work together to shorten the intricate new type of sales cycle, increase revenues, and improve conversion rates. A commonly cited method of aligning sales and marketing is sales enablement.

Sales enablement is normally classified as a strategic, ongoing process that equips sales teams with the tools, resources, and training they need to sell effectively. It's designed to improve sales productivity and efficiency, enabling sales representatives to better engage with prospects and customers throughout the buying journey.

Traditionally, sales enablement has been owned by the sales function entirely, with Sales Management responsible for overseeing the strategy and ensuring its alignment with sales goals and objectives. Yet with the move towards more buyer empowerment, Marketing plays a critical role in sales enablement by creating and managing the content, tools, and resources needed to support the sales process.

However, according to HubSpot, 76% of content marketers neglect sales enablement when conducting marketing campaigns. So, while marketers may perceive themselves as providing some form of sales content support, they are ultimately falling short of fully enabling sales teams to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

As mentioned, we often see Marketing teams focused on developing and activating upper-funnel content with some beginning to focus on the development of buyer enablement assets – content & tools that supports the buyer's decision-making journey from start to end.

Yet, failing to link and align these two central disciplines is a major lost opportunity and source of frustration for the buyer receiving disparate information along the journey.

Sales Enablement: Primarily focuses on empowering sales teams with the right tools, content, and knowledge to sell more effectively. It's about ensuring sales professionals have everything they need to engage prospects, handle objections, and close deals.

VS.

Buyer Enablement: Concentrates on facilitating the buyer's journey by providing prospective customers with the information and support they need to make informed purchase decisions. It involves creating easily accessible, understandable, and useful content and tools for buyers.

Dividing and conquering true enablement assets

Linking sales and buyer enablement is integral to a holistic go-to-market strategy, focusing on aligning sales processes with the buyer's journey to facilitate a smoother, more effective purchase decision.

While some thought leaders suggest that there should be no separation between sales and marketing when it comes to sales enablement, this idea proves more idealistic than pragmatic in practice.

In reality, achieving complete integration between the two functions is often challenging. Instead, a more practical organizational approach acknowledges marketing's strength in content creation and sales' effectiveness in enforcement. Thus, the optimal strategy recognizes marketing as the primary creator of resources and sales as the key enforcer of sales enablement initiatives.

The upside is that both sales and marketing play integral roles and can rightfully claim ownership in driving various initiatives forward. Sales teams possess invaluable firsthand experience and insights into customer interactions, enabling them to grasp specific challenges, objections, and needs encountered throughout the sales process.

On the other hand, Marketing teams bring expertise in content creation, messaging, and branding, which are essential components of effective sales enablement. They have the skills to craft compelling materials that resonate with target audiences and facilitate meaningful conversations between sales reps and prospects.

Additionally, marketing teams often have access to valuable market research and data analytics, empowering them to identify trends and opportunities that can inform sales enablement efforts.

Five simple organizational rules that can help you structure your development

1.

Foster collaboration between sales and marketing to identify essential resources for the program, such as content, guides, and sales training.

2.

Entrust marketing with the primary responsibility for generating the majority of the required information.

3.

Allocate part of the responsibility for training the sales organization to the marketing function – don't limit yourself to classic 'sales training'

4.

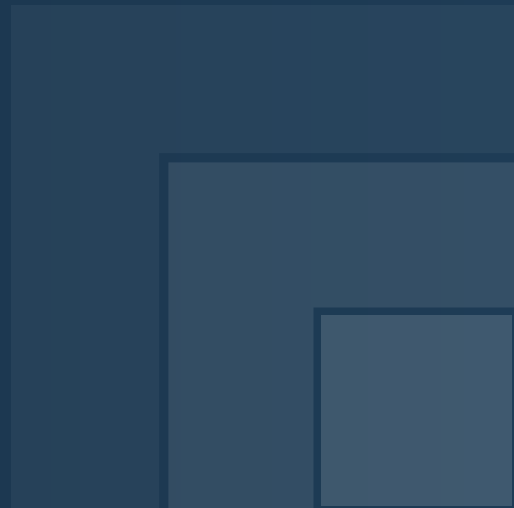
Recognize the pivotal role of sales operations in operationalizing the provided content as part of the sales enablement program.

5.

Hold sales mgmt. accountable for ensuring the effective implementation of the sales enablement program.

B

Assets that sales
will love



Marketing tools that sales will love

With the right calibration and collaboration between the sales & marketing functions, you're already on your way to realizing much greater impact from your content development efforts. But what assets should you then focus on creating? What is a great 'sales' asset?

A critical step in developing successful assets for sales requires reframing your perspective **from what sales need to what buyers truly need**. This will ensure your entire go-to-market function is oriented around meeting — and exceeding — buyer expectations. By adopting this approach, every action you take to enable sales will, by default, enable your buyers to purchase. Typically, these assets can be categorized into external and internal resources.

Internal assets

Internal assets are content consumed by sales people and are **designed to build skills and knowledge**.

They are often overlooked by marketers, perhaps because they are less common or developed by other departments. However, it is critical to embed them into the marketing department's content planning process as it is the only way to ensure that materials are rightfully updated and that messages are consistent across the buying journey, thereby reducing buyer frustrations.

These assets encompass various resources such as buyer characteristics, meeting preparation sheets, objection handling guides, sales scripts, playbooks, and email templates.

External assets

External assets are customer-facing assets that can be shared by sales people, and are designed to provide value messaging to the prospects who are in different stages of the buying journey. Materials like white papers, product demos, ROI templates, case studies, and pitch decks serve this purpose.

In many instances, there often exists an overlap in the content shared across various channels, including on the website and in different nurturing flows.

This is primarily due to our buyer-centric approach, aiming to assist our buyers in making the right decisions, irrespective of where they are in the buying journey.

Internal assets are content consumed by sales people and are designed to build skills and knowledge.

VS.

External assets are customer-facing assets that can be shared by sales people, and are designed to provide value messaging to the prospects who are in different stages of the buying journey.

Internal assets

Buyer insights & characteristics

A buyer characteristics sheet provides insights into the common pain points, reasons, and relevant opportunities experienced by stakeholders in the buying process.

A good idea is to complement the overview with a value matrix that connects your value propositions to different pains for sellers to quickly connect pains to value. Such a sheet help sellers increase the relevance of a sales conversation and **ensure complete consistency in your communications!**

Meeting preparation sheets

The meeting preparation sheet is another valuable tool, closely connected to the buyer characteristics sheet.

Essentially, the meeting preparation sheet helps sellers turn value propositions into (quantifiable) questions, that will help the buyer realize a need or a pain.

A meeting preparation sheet with great market insights, questions, or talking points **greatly minimizes the time spent for the seller preparing for a call while ensuring that all communication is coherent with your go-to-market strategy.**

Objection handling cheat-sheets

When developing content for sales, marketers are often laser-focused on helping them understand value propositions – but an often forgotten yet critical element is how to handle objections. Most sellers meet plenty of push-back when presenting their solutions to their customers. **While these objections can be frustrating to deal with, successful handling can lead to good business outcomes.**

Recommendation: Engage with sellers in identifying objections and give them talking points rather than the exact words to say!

Commercial insights library

A great commercial insights library consists of data and statistics about current trends and dynamics that are affecting buyers' environments that help sellers find mobilizers, establish credibility, and position themselves as trusted advisors.

This library should also help uncover potential challenges that the buyer may face due to the emerging changes in the environment – as well as common approaches to overcome them. The idea is that sellers can pick and choose insights from the library fit to the specific buyer archetype and situation.

It enables sellers to qualify and discuss current buyer challenges and potential solutions to overcome them.

External assets

Product demos

Many B2B companies tend to overcomplicate what they're selling, wrapping it in layers of layers of value that ultimately diminish the ability to understand what it actually is that buyers may end up with in their shopping cart.

Of course, some products are more demo-able than others, but regardless of whether you work with a super complex SaaS product or with heavy equipment for the construction industry, any B2B marketing department should spend time figuring out how to best demonstrate the unique features of their product. In doing this, it is critical not to overload the demo with value propositions and purpose. Show what it does and how it stands out.

Relevant product demos are highly useful for distribution anywhere in the funnel – embed them in your website to support consideration or hand them to sales to show in meetings. If live demos are a better fit for your product, write demo scripts for sellers to ensure they have all the main talking points at hand alongside the ability to handle questions and objections.

A solid product demo clearly demonstrates how the product works and the value it provides. To maximize relevance and truly empower salespeople, go beyond a generic product demonstration, and create demos for the different industries you serve. **This will make it much easier for buyers to understand and consider your product.**

Buyer guides

A buyer's guide is a golden piece of content designed to help customers make a buying decision by providing all the information they need in one place.

A good buyer guide includes e.g. general solution characteristics, product-specific functionalities, estimated resource need, similar product comparisons or "vs." comparisons and testimonials – but a GREAT buyer guide includes tools and assets to support the customer in making the right decision, including ROI and TCO calculators and vendor checklists.

A buyer guide plays a pivotal role in the modern buying process. It aligns with the self-service preferences of the current buyer, provides a more personalized buying experience, and can ultimately lead to improved outcomes. **Besides using it on your website or for lead-generation activities, sellers can use it as a personal follow-up following a discovery call to act as a trusted advisor to the prospect.**

External assets

Pitch decks

A well-designed, buyer-centric sales presentation or pitch deck is a great supportive asset, which can also be shared after the initial meeting.

It is important to always remember that the goal is to have a discussion with the buyer - not just talk about your products. A great pitch deck follows the psychological buying process, has an outside-in approach, and includes commercial insights, reference stories, and business cases.

Design your pitch deck to enable relevant conversations. Consider your segmentation when doing this. Is it based on function, size, mindset, or something different? What is the main objective of the stakeholder you're sitting at the table with?

Importantly, do not just focus on explaining value - provide contextual cues about the buyer's company or industry to help decrease the risk associated with the purchase and **ensure you instill urgency by identifying the compelling event that will have the buyer go "I need this now"**.

Case highlights

#1: Development of targeted pitch decks for relevant sales interactions

Kvadrant Consulting helped a global BioSolutions company in driving sales directly toward distributors as part of a new go-to-market model.

In order to increase the commercial traction with the targeted distributors, Kvadrant Consulting developed a product-specific pitch deck, sales tools, and collateral to help customer-facing functions have successful meetings with distributor prospects. Additionally, Kvadrant provided the local sales team with stakeholder understanding and sales enablement guidance for effective execution on the ground, while continuously monitoring progress.

#2: The buyer guide - a single asset being the best source of new leads

An internal SaaS company focused on enterprise customers needed to be able to guide customer's buying process while establishing itself as a credible category leader.

In close collaboration with internal design competencies, Kvadrant Consulting researched and created a Buyer Guide serving as a tool for buyers to make the right considerations ahead of investing in the category & how to drive such a buying process while navigating a complex vendor landscape and many internal stakeholders. The asset is used in both sales outreach as well as marketing activation, with the buyer guide **being the best source of new leads in the category, still running 2 years after its creation.**

Your assets should always aim to answer common buyer questions

The assets we've just been through are critical assets to help support sellers in having engaging and relevant conversations or to stimulate buyer interest in the market.

As a rule of thumb, any asset you create should seek to answer some of the common questions that buyers may have.

Think about a common question and then translate that into a NEED that you can help address. Far too often, we see marketers focusing primarily on the very first question "how is it better than my current solution", but there's many more unknowns that needs to be addressed to successfully move buyers along their decision journey.

Typical buyer questions

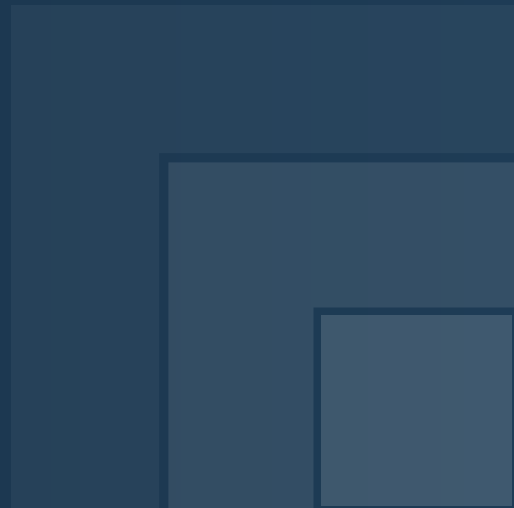
1. How is it better than my current solution?
2. How are you different from competitors?
3. How does the business case look?
4. What problems should we prepare to face?
5. How do I sell it to my coworkers or manager?
6. How does it look / what does it do?
7. Who else uses it?
8. What does it cost?
9. What does the payment plan look like?
10. How long does it take to implement?
11. What support will I get for onboarding?

What they need

- = Value propositions
- = Competitor comparison
- = ROI calculator
- = Change story
- = Business case
- = Demo
- = Success stories
- = Pricing
- = Offer model
- = Implementation guide
- = Customer Support

4

Common pitfalls
to avoid



Common pitfalls to avoid when developing efficient Marketing content

Now that you know WHAT assets your Marketing department should focus on developing, there's nothing stopping you from getting started – regardless, here's a list of pitfalls that you should avoid at all costs when developing marketing materials that work for sales.

Pitfall #1: Developing assets that focuses too much on your product:

Marketing and sales materials often fall into the trap of being overly product-centric, focusing primarily on features and unique selling points (USPs). While it is of course essential for buyers to understand what your product offers, it's even more crucial to first establish the customer's need for such a product. The aim should be to guide customers toward recognizing or uncovering a need they might not have been aware of, thereby setting the stage for how your product can address this need effectively.

Do's

- ✓ Focus on how your product solves specific problems or addresses the needs of your target audience.
- ✓ Ensure your content communicates the benefits and value your product brings to customers, rather than just listing its features.
- ✓ Engage your audience with storytelling that places them at the center of the narrative, showing how your product can positively impact their day-to-day task or business.

Pitfall #2: Working in functional silos:

Encouraging collaboration across various departments—marketing, sales, product development, and customer service—is essential for creating marketing materials that resonate and perform. This is especially relevant for large complex organizations or enterprises where 'marketing' is spread out across teams such as product marketing or brand marketing. Not viewing such functions as one – or at least connected – is a serious pitfall for optimizing the impact of your marketing investment. But that's a whole separate topic.

Do's

- ✓ Encourage collaboration between different departments, such as marketing, sales, product development, and customer service.
- ✓ Break down silos by establishing cross-functional teams or regular inter-departmental meetings to discuss strategies, share feedback, and align on goals.
- ✓ Foster a culture of open communication and shared objectives, where the success of one team contributes to the overall success of the organization.

Pitfall #3: Focusing on individual ‘vanity’ metrics

Far too often, Marketers make the mistake of focusing too much on surface-level metrics that don't necessarily correlate with the actual business objectives or the effectiveness of marketing efforts in driving sales and customer engagement. Vanity metrics can include things like page views, likes, and followers, which might look impressive on paper but don't offer meaningful insights into how well the content is converting prospects into customers, generating leads, or engaging the target audience in a way that moves them through the sales funnel. An overemphasis on improving vanity metrics can result in misallocating resources towards tactics that increase these numbers without actually contributing to the bottom line or improving customer engagement in a meaningful way.

Do's

- ✓ Shift focus from vanity metrics, such as page views or likes, to more meaningful metrics that align with your business objectives, like lead generation, conversion rates, and customer engagement.
- ✓ Establish clear goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) for your marketing assets that directly relate to your sales objectives and overall business strategy.
- ✓ Regularly analyze and interpret data to understand the impact of your marketing assets on sales performance. Use these insights to make informed decisions and optimize your content strategy.

Pitfall #4: Lack of defined process for Content Development:

One significant pitfall in content development is the absence of a structured process, leading to inconsistencies in quality, messaging, and alignment with your content or business objectives. Without a clear framework encompassing planning, research, content creation, review, and distribution, efforts can become disjointed and less effective. Implementing a structured process for content creation is crucial for producing high-quality marketing materials.

Do's

- ✓ Implement a structured process for content creation that includes planning, research, development, review, and distribution phases.
- ✓ Clearly define roles and responsibilities within your content development team to ensure accountability and streamline workflows.
- ✓ Regularly review and refine your content development process based on feedback and performance metrics to improve efficiency and output quality.

Pitfall #5: Not investing in training

Allocating resources for ongoing training and professional development is critical for maintaining a competitive edge in your marketing and sales teams. By investing in these opportunities, you ensure that your team members are continually updated on the latest industry trends, tools, and content available to help them adapt and excel in their roles.

When training, you also have a unique opportunity to source new insights to help feed your content priorities by encouraging a culture of knowledge sharing – e.g. getting insights from the last sales calls, questions, objections, etc. This approach allows employees to benefit from one another's experiences and expertise, fostering a collaborative learning environment that may both improve their skills – and your content.

Do's

- ✓ Allocate resources for ongoing training and professional development opportunities for your marketing and sales teams. This ensures they stay up-to-date with the latest trends, tools, and best practices.
- ✓ Encourage knowledge sharing within your organization, where employees can learn from each other's experiences and expertise.
- ✓ Evaluate the skills and competencies of your team members and identify areas where additional training could enhance their performance and contribution to content development.

Case highlight

Frontline upskilling increases capability and motivation

A leading Danish manufacturing company was experiencing significant misalignment between their commercial product communications and how these were deployed by sales. Together with Kvadrant Consulting, an investigation process was initiated, and insights showed that salespeople were having trouble understanding how to use the developed materials and lacked various tools to help handle sales conversations more efficiently.

Kvadrant Consulting helped optimize all materials according to insights and developed and deployed a large training program for frontline upskilling to increase go-to-market efficiencies and outcomes.

The training program received the highest NPS score in the company's history, and salespeople became much more capable and motivated to use the materials and messaging in their sales process.

5

Closing remarks

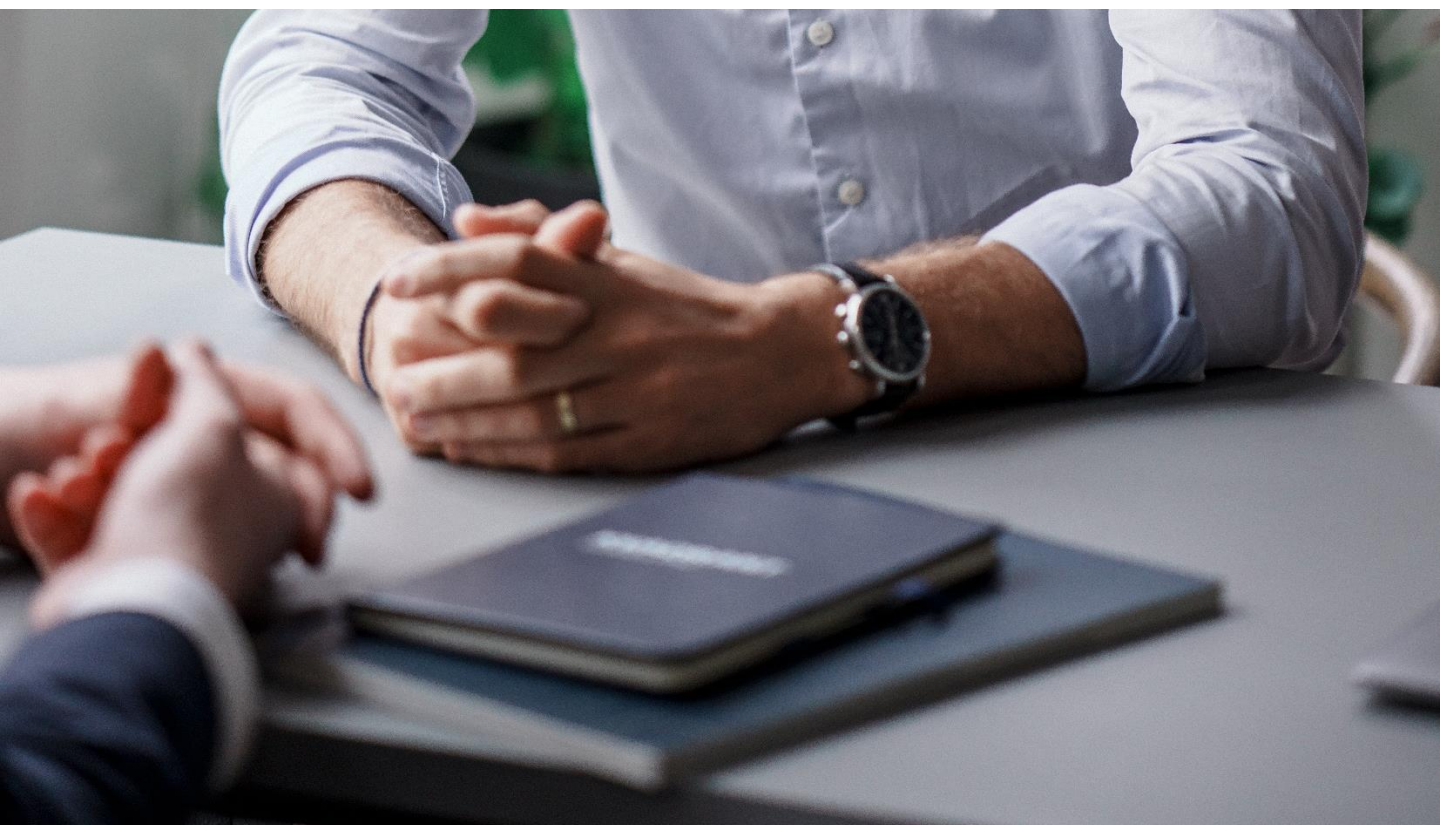
Content is king – but making it effective and valuable takes hard work.

Today's B2B buyers are changing. They prefer to research and choose products on their own, which means salespeople need to become better advisors. This change isn't just a job for sales; marketing also must step up and create materials that help sales teams have better conversations with buyers.

For B2B companies, success means bringing sales and marketing closer together. This involves building a team culture where everyone works together, making sure marketing materials are carefully made to meet sales needs and the buyer's journey. It also means investing in training so that both sales and marketing understand how to deal with today's complex sales environment.

Companies that work on aligning their sales and marketing teams, focusing on how they can support each other better, are more likely to tap into the full power of marketing. It's not just about getting leads; it's about closing deals.

Starting on this path might seem challenging, but we hope the guidelines in this whitepaper are a good place to begin. By following them, companies can improve how their go-to-market and content activities and get a slight advantage in today's competitive B2B world.



Any further questions? Reach out to



Charlotte Ramsby

Director, *Marketing Excellence*
cra@kvadrant.dk
+45 2086 3298



Nils Lindner Koch

Partner, *Marketing Excellence*
nlk@kvadrant.dk
+45 2969 1495



Mikkel Bach-Andersen

Partner, *Marketing Excellence*
mba@kvadrant.dk
+45 40411331



Brian Egholm Andersen

Partner, *Marketing Excellence*
bea@kvadrant.dk
+45 2466 3584

KVADRANT
CONSULTING

www.kvadrant.dk
2024

KVADRANT

CONSULTING

