

HOW TO WIDEN YOUR SALES NET WITH LEAD MANAGEMENT

The manufacturing sector is struggling to emerge from recession so smart companies are automating lead management in the channel to widen their sales network.

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Now more than ever, marketers in the manufacturing sector need to play a more significant role in helping their sales teams establish new ways of meeting their quotas and creating new opportunities.

One easy way to do this is by using lead management techniques to widen your territory sales net and generate more new business opportunities through your channel partners, who often lack the sales and marketing resources they need to generate demand. This can be easily managed through automation software, modern versions of which are easy to integrate with CRM and a range of other reporting systems, giving you and all of your channel partners one view of customer data.

This can not only make optimising the channel easier; it can deliver a whole host of other benefits that can boost sales revenue and conversions.



RESEARCH BY GARTNER
has shown that businesses that automate lead management see a 10% or greater increase in revenue in just 6-9 months.

Manufacturing businesses that rely on sales from distributor and dealer networks are also deploying Partner Relationship Management (PRM) solutions to link their efforts and ensure their channel partners can access the sales and marketing tools they need to sell their products.

CHANNEL OPTIMISATION

To make the most of the network you can access through your channel partners and develop new business opportunities, you can use automated lead management solutions to:

01. ENABLE PARTNERS TO DEVELOP MORE OPPORTUNITIES WITH BRANDED 'OUT-OF-THE-BOX' CAMPAIGNS

You can supply your channel partners with campaigns that are easy to adapt, quick to deploy and simple to extract engagement data from. You'll also protect your branding by preventing individuals from creating their own materials.

By implementing lead management solutions for reporting and intelligence, you can better understand the impact your sales and marketing efforts are having in your channels. You can then refine your strategies and develop repeatable processes for success.

This is especially important today as over the past five years the average sales cycle has lengthened by 22%, with three or more decision makers now involved in the buying process.

02. INTEGRATE WITH PARTNER SALES PROCESSES TO ALLOCATE, NURTURE AND CONVERT LEADS

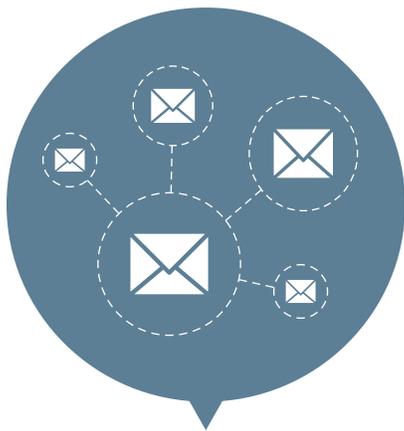
Leads can be automatically marketed to by your partners or automatically passed over to your partner's CRM solution. The status of those leads can then be routed back into your own lead management system, so you have full visibility of engagement levels and revenue pipeline. Enabling your partners to nurture leads as well as generate them can deliver multiple benefits, including:



03. USE LEAD SCORING ACROSS REGIONS, SALES TEAMS AND PRODUCTS

Align your partner marketing lead scores with in-house scores to ensure that leads are nurtured using the right content at the right time (as has been identified in your content marketing strategy). The confusion and arguments that used to surround what qualifies a good lead should become a thing of the past.

To be successful today, businesses need to be customer-centric. Company-focused communications no longer engage with prospects and customers in a meaningful way, so you must develop tactics to help your partners align messaging across all digital channels. Enable them to align with your content marketing strategy to provide educational, value-based content and meaningfully interact with your prospects and customers.



04. EXECUTE MDF-FUNDED EMAIL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS AND NEWSLETTER CAMPAIGNS

Partners don't always claim their MDF-funds and take part in the campaigns you run as they feel they don't accurately reflect their brands or incorporate their knowledge of their particular niche or territory. But with the right lead management solution, they can easily adapt your campaigns to their needs.

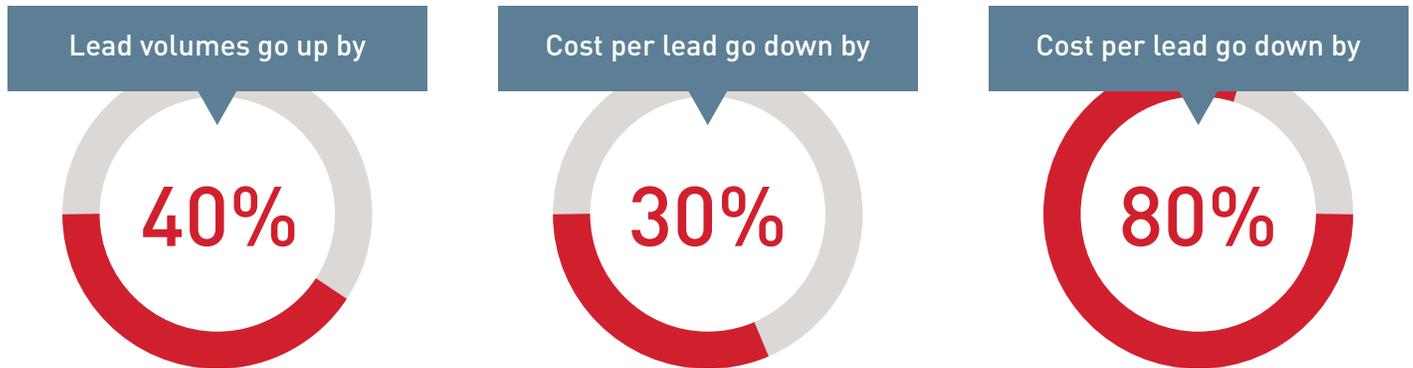
05. MEASURE CHANNEL PERFORMANCE

With all of your channel partner marketing being routed through a lead management solution and back into your CRM, you can easily see which partners are delivering the most leads and which need further support to be successful.



WHY SHOULD YOU BOTHER?

Experience has probably shown you that channel partner sales and marketing is more effort than it's worth. But times have changed. To counteract the sluggish economy, your channel is a very important tool. Using a lead management system can deliver impressive results that bring more profit to your business. [Automating your channel partner marketing can see:](#)



Wanting to cash in on these impressive statistics, smart businesses are now getting in on the act: benchmark research from SiriusDecisions indicates that while only [18% of B2B organisations are currently using a marketing automation platform to manage their lead processes](#), that number is expected to swell to [40% by 2016](#).

MAKING IT WORK

To drive participation in your channel, you have to provide education and resources that show the benefits to the partner of getting on board. Your channel partners need to believe that it is in their best interests to use the solutions and the content you provide; so you have to make clear what needs to be done, what the benefits are to them and to you, and incentivise them to adopt these new processes. In some cases you may need to introduce penalties if they fail to make updates, such as losing rewards, rebates, discounts and other support.

Once the software and processes are in place, launching new products and communicating new marketing messages will be much faster. Get it right and you will all reap the rewards of more engaged prospects, better qualified leads and, ultimately, more revenue.



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Hardware and Software, Engineered to Work Together