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How to Improve Lead Quality Through Enterprise Digital Transformation

By **Stephan Bajaio,** CMO at TurnoverBnB

Plotting out your high-need and high-value clients is the easy part. Getting the data you need to determine which clients have high needs and which ones are potentially high-value, **that's where digital transformation meets lead generation head-on**.

Getting it right starts with remembering your organizational initiative—why does your company do what you do and how does it help others. From there, you need to make sure your initiative is filtered into the three necessary pieces of successful digital transformation *(drum roll, please)*: process, people, and technology.

Process

When you layer new technology on top of flawed processes, you get poor results. Let me say that again. When you layer new technology on top of flawed processes, you get poor results. Broken processes are one of the main reasons both digital transformation and lead generation strategies fail across enterprises.

I know that no enterprise sets out to create a broken process. Most of the time, these processes become dysfunctional over time. The risk is higher for older enterprise organizations, where departments like IT, marketing, sales, communication, and content all live in silos because "that's the way we've always done it."

These departments tend to be built out over time with varying degrees of technical expertise. As a result, processes often break or don't exist between these departments. Turning attempts to collaborate into quicksand that team members avoid at all costs. Since most of these teams lack shared goals, they borrow time and resources from each other without helping them reach their goals. From their perspective, it feels like every time they collaborate, they get more work that doesn't bring them any closer to a promotion.

The first and most essential step in breaking down those silos is to stop the finger-pointing between your sales and marketing teams. You've probably heard the term "sales and marketing alignment" over and over again. Yet only a select number of businesses have mastered this key strategy.

SMBs have done it well. Workforce management company Motus, for example, now delivers $1M in revenue per week consistently with high-functioning sales and marketing alignment. It's not as easy for enterprises, but these five tips from Michael Bruh, my former colleague at Conductor, can give you a great starting point.

Once you align sales and marketing, make sure content, marketing, and communications work in unison, too, especially from a goal-setting perspective. Here's where this alignment pays dividends:

Let's say your content team sets their goals based on volume, while your marketing team sets their goals on leads. If marketing asks content to optimize a specific content asset, they're essentially adding rework to the plate of a content

team that's looking less at optimization and more at churning out a set number of net new blog posts each week. But if marketing and content are aligned on their goals, these types of conflicts will disappear.

Once your teams are fully aligned, you can start collectively working toward achieving true modernization for your lead generation efforts. Aim to answer these critical questions:

- Where are our best leads coming from?
- How will we score our leads more effectively?
- Who is our ideal customer that comprises the highest-quality lead?
- What is our process for helping leads find the right solution and improve their experience with our brand?
- How will we talk to leads who aren't yet ready to purchase?
- When should we disqualify leads?
- What happens to a lead once it's disqualified?

While knowing each of these answers is imperative to building a successful lead generation process, I'd like to focus on the one that almost nobody talks about: lead disqualification.

When most enterprise marketing teams find a lead that's not the right fit, they first think about *themselves*. In other words, they say, "I don't want to waste my sales team's time with this lead."

That's the 100% right thing to do. But you also need to consider the needs of the potential lead you just disqualified. Once you have a conversation with them, how will they react? Will they be disappointed? Will they feel rejected? Will they get perturbed? If they're annoyed by a real or perceived brushoff, it could tarnish your brand's reputation.

For all of these reasons, I recommend building value into the disqualification process. I'll use the team at Conductor as an example. They are an enterprise SEO platform. So, what happens when they receive an inquiry from a CMO at an SMB who is interested in finding an SEO partner?

They don't dismiss her or try to squeeze her into a platform that could be too expensive or complex for her company. Instead, they recommend other platforms designed specifically for SMBs. They also give the prospect direct contact information, when possible, for people who can help them explore those solutions.

Taking this extra step sends this disqualified prospect a signal that **you're here to help educate prospects and support their efforts** even though your particular solution isn't built for their needs. That's a brand enhancer and a customer satisfier.

The bottom line: Be upfront about what you do, and don't do, in your emails, phone conversations, and content marketing assets.

Once you optimize your processes and answer the hard questions, you'll have the structure in place to help you:

- **Create fully realized buyer personas** compiled with insight from sales
- Flesh out your MQL vs. SQL methodology, so you don't overwhelm your sales team
- Develop an in-depth lead scoring process
- Accurately **map content to buyer journeys**
- Use data to inform **website migration** and customer experience initiatives

People

The next step in setting up your enterprise for lead generation success through digital transformation is **surrounding yourself with the right people and experts**. Your internal team and vendors should help you identify and implement the right measurement, technology, and processes that can benefit your enterprise long-term.

From an internal standpoint, engaging the right people means going one step further than aligning sales and marketing teams. You'll need the support of everyone from the C-suite down to the practitioner level if you want to implement an effective lead generation funnel. You also will likely need solution providers who will work with you as true partners.

For the purposes of this guide, I want to focus on people through two internal lenses, both of which are intertwined. First, within your marketing operations and sales teams, I recommend dedicating a single person or team with the **sole purpose of mining data and analytics.**

The goal here is to select people who aren't your normal sales or marketing hires. They should be agnostic, and their compensation shouldn't be tied to any specific sales or marketing performance. **Their only mission is to serve as a third-party vetter of lead generation metrics** both before and after acquisition.

Why is this important? Because in siloed organizations, it's all too easy to have a person embedded with a marketing team, for example, who will tweak the data to prove to the C-suite why their department's case was the right one.

By **appointing an unbiased colleague to vet your data**, you show that you're a marketing leader who understands two essential truths: That many marketers aren't great analysts and that the data you review and share within your organization is 100% trustworthy.

My second people-focused tip on digital transformation and lead generation: **Don't develop a marketing strategy or campaign without agreeing on measurement first.** Trust me, there's no worse feeling for a CMO than giving your C-suite a high-energy presentation on campaign results and then finding yourself fielding a bevy of questions as your CFO, COO, and CEO question the validity of your data. With pre-agreed upon metrics, the focus of these conversations will turn to results and reasons rather than a discussion over whether the right thing is being measured.

So, before you put on your strategic thinking cap, **choose the right people to help you identify and agree on the most valid measurement possible**. Think measurement first, and get all business leaders on board. Doing so will reduce your risk of demoralizing C-suite conversations and, more importantly, the potential negative impact those types of discussions will have on your frontline marketing team. It also will give you a clearer vision of what lead generation success will look like.

Technology

With your processes optimized and your people aligned, it's time to talk about the technologies that can help you shift into high gear with your digital transformation and lead generation strategies.

Much like with processes and people, **your martech stack must be fully aligned**. If it's set up incorrectly or doesn't provide the data you need, attribution will turn into a fragmented, manual process that will eat up your team's time and morale.

Solutions to consider within your tech stack include:

- **Enterprise marketing attribution solutions** that bring companies the benefits of automation

- **Customer relationship management (CRM) solutions** that help you track every interaction with potential and existing customers

- **Marketing automation solutions** so you can build and deliver campaigns that will entice your potential buyers

- **Enterprise SEO platforms** that can help you manage, implement, and measure your brand's organic search presence and use key data to understand what your audience wants and needs, in their own words, as expressed in search engines

- **Sales intelligence solutions** capable of helping you better identify your buyers down to their IP address

If you're truly committed to digital transformation, you'll need to keep one thing in mind: When it's time to transform digitally, it's time to democratize data.

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After all, one of the underlying reasons enterprises invest in digital transformation is because they're in a mad dash to find and secure opportunities before their competitors do. With data volumes soaring across businesses, finding those nuggets of information that can bring you leads faster is too big a job for one person or even one department.

That's why **your data must be accessible to anyone in your organization who needs it.** To make the most of access to this data, you must also build awareness and increase understanding across all departments of what the data can provide. Then, when a team member or leader identifies something that may seem unrelated or want to dig deeper into, they know that the data may be readily available to do so.

With best-in-breed marketing technology and democratized data, supported by the right people and processes, you'll fully transform into an enterprise that can:

- Improve the quality of their leads

- Enhance lead scoring

- Develop enhanced content strategies like personalized drip campaigns centered around specific buyers' pain points

- Improve the customer experience with fewer website bounces and less abandonment

- Investigate business challenges or opportunities with a deeper, more nuanced understanding empowered by multiple departments

> **Have questions about how to calculate marketing ROI accurately within your enterprise? Try these 4 strategies.**

Where does your digital transformation stand today?

Today's toughest business problems won't get solved with yesterday's lead generation strategies. Modernizing your customer acquisition strategies can only happen when digital transformation gets fully integrated across your processes, people, and technology.

If you're ready to transform, we're here to help. **Try a free demo of Conductor today** and learn how we can help you better understand your target audience, improve your website experience, and boost your enterprise's search engine results.