BLUE RIDGE PARTNERS®
The Revenue Engine

"I need more MQLs," Said No Chief Sales Officer EVER!

Eliminate the Friction between Marketing and Sales to Supercharge Growth

Why wouldn't a CSO want more leads? If Marketing has gone through the process to qualify a lead, why wouldn't Sales be enthusiastic about the help? The issue is complex and has a lot to do with a business' evolution into a organization that can scale and drive sustained, profitable growth.

Scaling Often Means Silos

In the early stages of growth, there may be no formal "Marketing" function at all, or perhaps only 1-2 individuals managing it reactively. Since the business is small, there is good communication and collaboration, and everyone is well-versed in the company's products & services, targets, and objectives. However, once serious growth sets in, the Marketing function gets "professionalized" and carves out a role for itself in demand generation. The problem comes when Marketing and Sales no longer communicate closely and begin to form distinct ideas about the characteristics of a good prospect.

In many of our clients, silos start forming and Marketing and Sales both think they know what "good" looks like and the other team doesn't – invariably leading to friction. As a result, Marketing develops what they believe to be great "qualified" leads for Sales, which Sales then ignores or rejects as not worth their time. To further complicate the issue, many of our clients hire BDRs/SDRs to help with "lead generation" to bridge the gap, but never clearly define the role, responsibilities, reporting relationships, and KPIs. What results is a waste of time, energy, and money. The bottom line is, ***CSOs do not want "leads," they want "qualified opportunities."***

Changing Behaviors to Break Down the Barriers

The key to resolving this challenge is to get Marketing and Sales working as a synchronized team with the common objective of finding and winning new customers and maximizing the potential of current customers – in other words, breaking down the silos! Many companies have moved to a Chief Revenue Officer (CRO) structure – that may include combining Marketing and Sales – to address this issue. But until roles, objectives, processes, incentives, and performance management get aligned, behaviors will not change.

Marketing needs to aggressively find winnable, meaningful opportunities for Sales to close, and Sales needs to participate in the discussion of what a winnable, meaningful opportunity looks like

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(qualification criteria) leveraging the data and analytic rigor often found in marketing and revenue operations. This needs to be an ongoing process (e.g., monthly, quarterly). When the silos come down and trust re-emerges, amazing things happen – targeting becomes a science, messaging and differentiation become crisp, campaigns start generating new accounts and new buyers in existing accounts, sales productivity increases, deal volume and velocity through the pipeline accelerates, and everyone starts making more money.

One client was able to nearly triple salesperson productivity within two quarters after breaking down silos and realigning marketing and sales resources into joint working teams with aggressive, mutually reinforcing incentives.

Case Example

We partnered with a fast-growing global software unicorn struggling to sustain its momentum.

THE PROBLEM

The company had enjoyed rapid success, but organizational silos were stifling growth.

- Structure, roles, and responsibilities didn't keep up with the company's expansion
- The CEO was deeply involved in sales, but left marketing to its own devices
- As the demand and lead generation function matured, it became disconnected from sales, creating a debilitating chasm between the two

THE SOLUTION

By breaking down these silos, we rebuilt trust and mutual respect. This shift led to:

- An integrated, customer-focused demand and lead generation engine, aligned with sales
- Increased sales accountability
- A transformed growth culture via a company-directed sales model

THE RESULT

In just one year, the company **doubled** both its number of qualified new opportunities and its win rate.

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More Barriers to Break Down with Existing Customers

A similar challenge is often found in managing/expanding existing customers. In the early stage of a company's development, a single person can manage a relationship, handle service and satisfaction issues, and look for opportunities to expand the account. As accounts expand and customer needs grow, a division of labor emerges, often leading to the formation of Account Management teams, a Customer Success team, a Customer Service team, and maybe an Inside Sales team for the long tail of smaller customers. These teams become siloed as well, each with their own metrics and objectives, and communication begins to suffer. We frequently hear customers of our clients complain that they have trouble knowing "who to talk to anymore" and the relationship starts to deteriorate as a result.

As with the Marketing/Sales challenge, the "silo mentality" in serving the existing account base needs to be eliminated, creating a seamless organization that is focused on a common set of ***customer-centric objectives*** (e.g., quality, service, growth) where roles, processes, and communications are clear and well-integrated. Easy to say, but harder to make happen. A typical situation that arises with our larger clients is the disconnect between the overall relationship management objectives of a global account manager and the parochial interests of a local account manager, whose primary objective is closing a deal in their territory, regardless of broader considerations. Aligning interests and incentives has proven to be a major differentiator for many clients in unlocking the full potential of strategically important customers.

As pressure to sustain better than market growth and enhance valuation intensifies each year, businesses are evolving at ever greater speeds. To create a business that can scale cohesively and sustain accelerated growth, the revenue-generating assets (people, processes, systems, data) must be driving to the same goals and be tightly integrated with the growth strategy. Marketing, Sales, Channels, Inside Sales, Account Management, Customer Support, Customer Success and all the functions and systems that support these roles need to be considered as part of a ***"commercial coverage model"*** or ecosystem that is laser focused on the customer and can evolve seamlessly as business and market conditions change.

Creating this kind of collaborative, customer-focused structure in a mature organization takes discipline and intention, but it is worth the investment of time and resources to set companies up for success in the long run – and all the growth they can handle. Blue Ridge Partners has worked with over 1,200 companies on helping improve Go-to-Market (GTM) models and maximize commercial effectiveness over the past 22 years. This experience allows us to quickly identify gaps between functions and siloed behavior that disrupts commercial productivity and to define an actionable approach to adjusting roles, responsibilities, metrics, and other factors to align the commercial processes with the needs of the customer.

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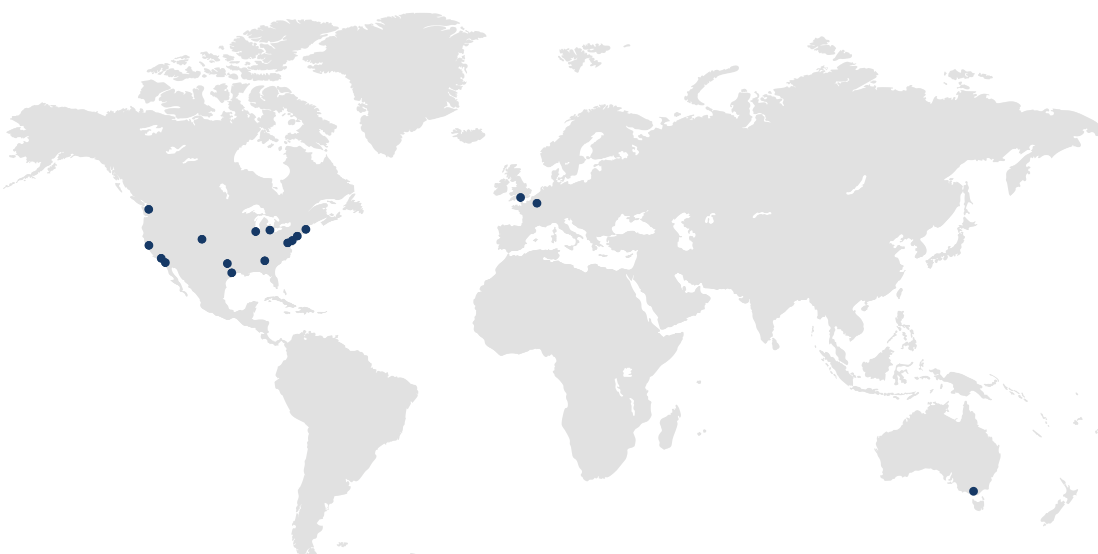
Why Blue Ridge Partners?

Blue Ridge Partners is recognized as the most experienced impactful and respected firm that is exclusively focused on helping companies accelerate profitable revenue growth. We have worked with over 1,200 companies worldwide on commercial model transitions, strategic pricing engagements and due diligence assignments. We are known for rolling up our sleeves, being pragmatic in our analyses and delivering tangible results that focus on the "how" of execution. Based on our significant experience we have amassed extensive knowledge of the issues that affect revenue performance.

For further information please contact us at **info@blueridgepartners.com** or visit us at **www.blueridgepartners.com**.

Our Locations



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