

Never lose YOUR WAY to revenue

The State of Sales and Marketing Alignment in 2025



Table of contents

Key takeaways	2
Intro	3
Why sales and marketing alignment matters	4
Methodology	5
Key insights	6
HOW Sales and marketing alignment impacts revenue	11
HOW Companies achieve strong alignment	14

Key takeaways

1 Targeting the same audience and handing-off engaged buyers from marketing to sales are two crucial metrics for assessing GTM alignment. While **47% of companies** have achieved effective hand-offs, **only 11% report success** in both hand-offs and audience alignment.

2 Better alignment correlates with a higher percentage of marketing-influenced pipeline within the overall pipeline — **up to 29%**. Additionally, marketing influence, on average, contributes to a **65% boost** in conversions from target buying group to pipeline.

3 Companies that demonstrate effective hand-offs and audience alignment attribute their success to the following factors:

- Marketing and sales work together on creating the ICP, selecting key accounts, and identifying contacts within those accounts from the get-go. This process prioritizes retention data over short-term gains.
- Marketing closely tracks first-party engagement data like ad clicks, while sales quickly acts on these signals with outreach.
- Marketing provides ongoing support to sales throughout the entire buyer's journey for a cohesive multichannel buyer experience.

It happens more often than we'd like to admit. Marketing is generating leads, while sales is working to close deals. Yet somehow, pipeline stalls, opportunities slip through the cracks, and fingers point in every direction.

Despite shared goals on paper, sales and marketing often feel like two teams playing different games. Misalignment doesn't just cause inefficiencies. It creates friction that slows revenue growth, frustrates teams, and leaves potential buyers with inconsistent experiences.



That said, some instances of what might seem like misalignment may actually be intentional. Certain GTM programs are designed with distinct roles for sales and marketing that don't require such tight collaboration on the same audience.

Understanding these differences is key to identifying when misalignment is a problem — and when it's simply a strategic choice.

In this report, we want to explore:

- How often true sales and marketing alignment is achieved;
- Scenarios where what looks like misalignment is actually a deliberate approach;
- The role of alignment in driving pipeline generation and boosting conversions from target buying group to pipeline.

Why sales and marketing alignment matters

In theory, sales and marketing have the same purpose: connecting the right buyers with the right solutions. In practice, this relationship often falls short of its potential. When marketing focuses on lead generation and sales works on lead conversion, each team is measured by different KPIs.

Take the classic issue of MQLs. Marketing might generate countless MQLs that look promising on paper but fail to convert because sales sees them as irrelevant. Even when the GTM team goes after the same account, marketing often lacks visibility into the specific contacts they're reaching. This results in marketing wasting budget on irrelevant people, even from relevant accounts.

The gap becomes especially noticeable when it's time to attribute credit for deals. Should sales take the win because they closed the deal after a personal follow-up? Or does marketing deserve the credit because they originally brought that lead in through an ad?

ON THE OTHER HAND, ALIGNED GTM TEAMS FOCUS ON SHARED GOALS AND TARGET THE SAME CONTACTS WITHIN THE SAME ACCOUNTS.

Both teams stay actively involved throughout the entire buyer's journey. Marketing helps sales drive conversions and upsells, while sales uses intent signals generated by marketing to close deals. **Together, they create a cohesive buyer's journey.**

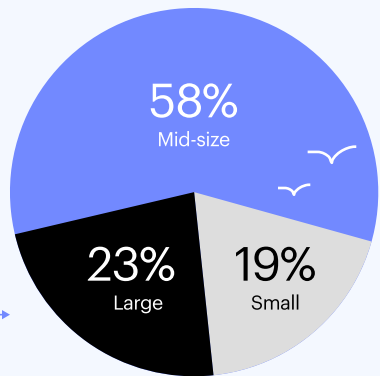
But how often is true alignment achieved? To understand the current state of alignment between sales and marketing, we decided to examine our customers' data.

HERE'S WHAT WE DISCOVERED:

Methodology

We gathered data from **105 companies** using Influ2 for contact-level advertising. These companies represent a wide range of industries and sizes, with the majority belonging to the Software & Technology sector.

Breakdown of business sizes



The analysis relies on two key metrics to measure sales and marketing alignment:

● **Hand-off.** This refers to the percentage of prospects who clicked on ads (demonstrating high intent) that were also contacted by sales. Essentially, it measures how effectively high-intent prospects are being picked up and acted on by sales teams. An effective hand-off is defined as 35% or higher.

Engaged prospects reached by sales

$$\frac{\text{Engaged prospects reached by sales}}{\text{Engaged prospects reached by sales} + \text{Engaged prospects not reached by sales}}$$

● **% of sales audience outside of marketing targeting.** This metric measures the percentage of the audience actively pursued by sales that is not targeted by marketing. It answers a critical question: are both teams focusing on the same contacts?

Cold sales audience

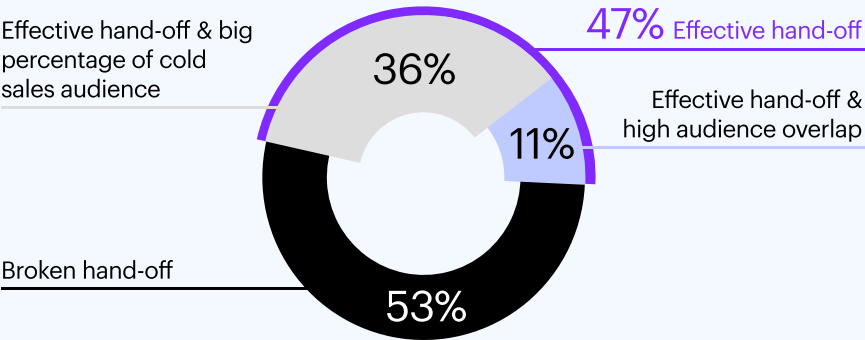
$$\frac{\text{Cold sales audience}}{\text{Cold sales audience} + \text{Shared marketing and sales audience}}$$

For the research, companies provided us with data directly from their CRM systems. We then combined these insights with their Influ2 program data to uncover alignment (or misalignment) patterns.

Key insights

Based on the hand-off and audience overlap factors, the companies were grouped into three buckets:

- **Effective hand-off and high audience overlap — 11% of companies.** Companies in this category have achieved significant alignment between their teams. Marketing and sales are targeting the same audiences, and there is a seamless hand-off process in place.
- **Effective hand-off but big percentage of cold sales audience — 36% of companies.** While the hand-off functions well, there's a gap in audience alignment where sales teams are reaching out to contacts that marketing is not targeting. This audience gap may stem from various factors, which we'll explore in detail later.
- **Broken hand-off — 53% of companies.** In this group, prospects engaging with ads are often not followed up on by sales. Similar to the audience gap, the hand-off gap may arise for a variety of reasons unrelated to misalignment, which we'll explore in a later section.



As shown in the graph above, **53%** of companies experience a broken hand-off, where sales follows up with less than **35%** of marketing-engaged prospects.

At the same time, the remaining **47%** of companies (the first and second groups combined) have established an effective hand-off process, where sales teams are using engagement signals from marketing ads to inform and time their outreach.

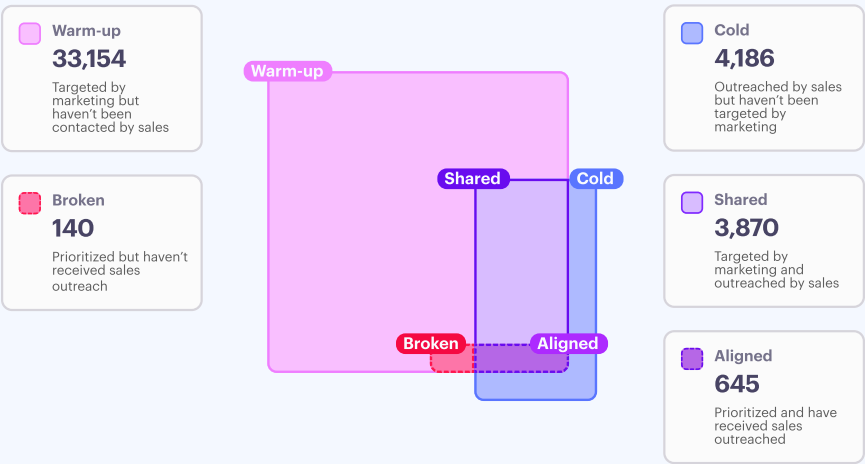
Now, let's take a closer look at each of these categories and their alignment characteristics.

Effective hand-off and audience alignment are prioritized by 11% of companies

11% of companies have successfully aligned their marketing and sales audiences and created an effective hand-off process. These companies show strong audience overlap, **with 35% to 80%** of engaged leads also pursued by sales.

Marketing also ensures that at least one-third of the sales audience is included in their targeting. So sales efforts are complemented with relevant messaging delivered through marketing channels.

Example of effective hand-off and high audience overlap:



In our survey, companies highlighted several factors that have contributed to their success, and we'll be sharing some practical insights from their experiences later in the report.



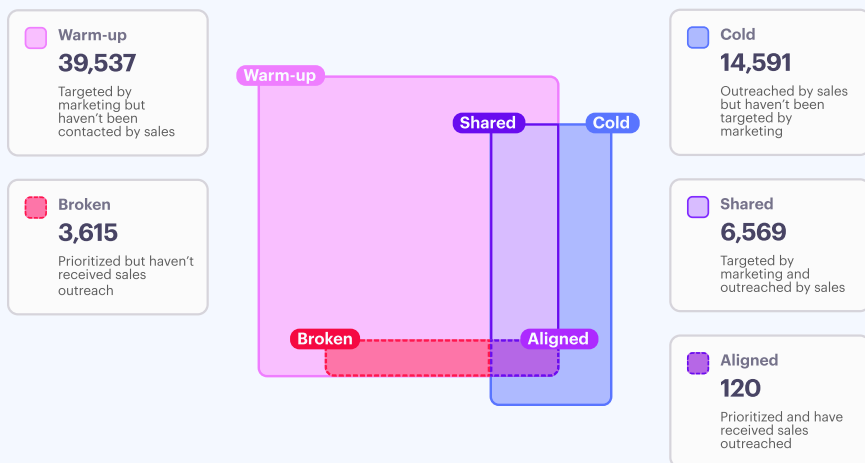
Broken hand-offs often stem from specific GTM strategies, not actual misalignment

Our data shows that **53%** of organizations experience hand-off misalignment between marketing and sales.

In these companies, **less than 35%** of engaged contacts are being outreached by sales. If sales does not address leads that actively engage with marketing campaigns, it's likely that marketing and sales are siloed.

Moreover, a large portion of the audience pursued by sales — **over 80%** in most cases — falls outside marketing's targeting.

Example of broken hand-off:



Upon closer examination of each company's program, it becomes clear that broken hand-offs do not always result from genuine misalignment.

While technical challenges — such as inconsistent tracking of sales outreach signals — can occasionally be the reason, the root cause often lies in the company's specific GTM strategy. For example, when marketing programs emphasize brand awareness, immediate sales follow-up might not be a priority.

Here are some of the reasons for hand-off misalignment:

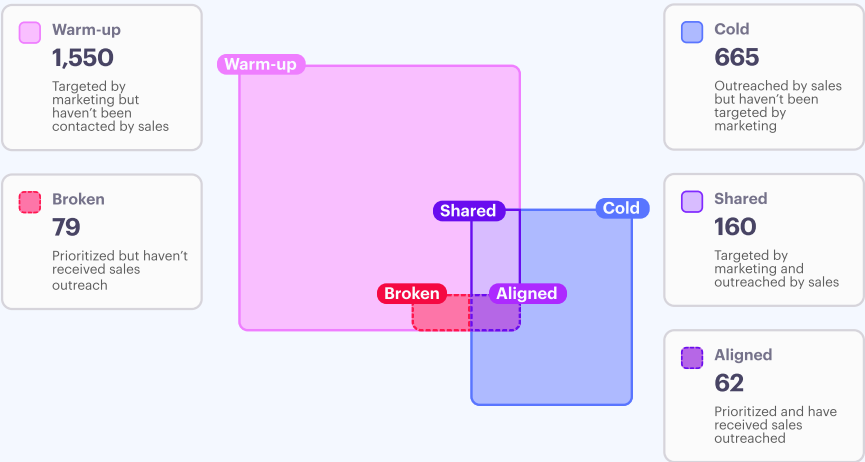
- **Marketing is running brand awareness campaigns.** Marketing efforts are focused on brand awareness or top-of-funnel and may not directly align with immediate sales priorities.
- **Higher thresholds for outreach.** Outreach signals might go beyond standard engagement metrics. Sales may require prospects to meet multiple criteria before initiating follow-up.

Audience misalignment often occurs when marketing focuses on [broader audiences] or other [geos and verticals]

36% of companies showed an effective handoff process but had a gap in audience alignment

While marketing and sales teams are successfully collaborating on high-intent prospects, a large portion of the sales audience isn't being targeted by marketing ads.

Example of effective hand-off with high percentage of cold sales audience:



The main reasons for why sales and marketing may go after different audiences include:

- **Marketing and sales are responsible for different verticals or geos.** In some organizations, sales teams focus on specific verticals or geos which are not an area of focus for marketing and vice versa.
- **Marketing is targeting a broader audience and sales is focusing on decision-makers.** Sales might engage a core group of decision-makers within an account, while marketing works to engage additional advocates who don't require direct sales outreach.

This gap is less of a problem and more of an opportunity to expand the marketing program. Potential areas for improvement could involve providing more extensive sales aircover, targeting new geographies, or including additional verticals.



Sales and marketing alignment directly impacts revenue

It might seem like common sense: aligned sales and marketing teams should perform better. But if effective alignment doesn't result in pipeline, why even care about it?

To understand how alignment impacts pipeline, we wanted to answer two questions:

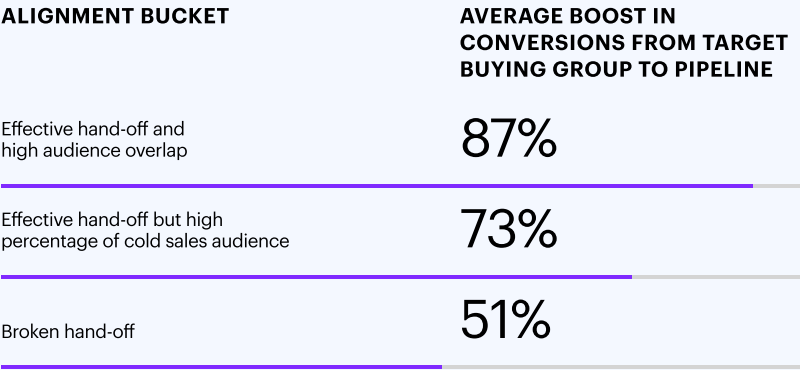
- 1 **Does marketing help boost conversions from target buying group to pipeline?**
- 2 **What percentage of the total pipeline is created with marketing's help in each alignment bucket?**

Pipeline conversions are consistently boosted by marketing support, even when alignment is not fully optimized

Our data shows that conversions from target buying groups to pipeline are consistently better when marketing supports the sales process.

Across all companies in the research, the **average pipeline conversion** boost with marketing's involvement is **65%** (compared to cold outreach). This means sales teams can convert **65% more** prospects into pipeline when marketing is actively contributing.

This boost is also consistent across all levels of alignment. Whether the hand-off process is seamless or misaligned, marketing's involvement always makes a difference in pipeline conversions.



BUT THERE'S MORE.

Better alignment correlates with a higher percentage of marketing-influenced pipeline in the overall pipeline

The share of marketing-influenced pipeline is directly tied to alignment. We can back this up by looking at the ratio of cold pipeline vs. influenced pipeline for all three alignment buckets.

In companies where marketing and sales are aligned on the audience with effective hand-offs, marketing influences **up to 29%** of the pipeline. In contrast, companies with broken hand-offs generate **10%** of influenced pipeline.

ALIGNMENT BUCKET	AVERAGE % OF PIPELINE INFLUENCED BY MARKETING
Effective hand-off and high audience overlap	29%
Effective hand-off but high percentage of cold sales audience	13%
Broken hand-off	10%

The takeaway is simple:

The more marketing supports the pipeline, the better the conversion rates, and the more pipeline you help generate.



Companies with strong alignment cite collaboration on target audience and prioritizing first-party intent signals as key to their success

We spoke with companies that have successfully aligned their sales and marketing teams, and here's what they identified as the key practices:

1 Collaborate on the ICP and target accounts from the get-go

Alignment starts with [a shared understanding of who to target](#). Sales and marketing should work together to define the ICP and compile a target account list. This ensures everyone is aligned on priorities and focuses on relevant accounts.

The best way to secure buy-in from all stakeholders and focus on key business objectives is to base your ICP [on retention](#). Look at historical data — previously closed deals and high-retention accounts — to build a profile based on strategic goals rather than vanity metrics.

2 Map key contacts within target accounts together

[Identify key titles and seniority levels that correlate strongly with retention](#). This insight allows both teams to focus on decision-makers who are not only likely to convert but also to stick with your company long term.

It is also a great opportunity to work with the customer success team and secure their buy-in, strengthening the alignment further.

3 Prioritize high-intent contacts

Are prospects interacting with your ads? Consuming content on your website? Attending events? These actions are some of the strongest intent signals you can get. Sales outreach becomes most impactful when it focuses on contacts with a high engagement level.

Marketing should [track these first-party intent signals to identify prospects most likely to convert](#) and share them with sales in the convenient environment (e.g. Slack channel or CRM dashboard). Sales can then act on these insights, tailoring outreach to what prospects actually care about.

4 Provide ongoing air cover for sales

In this report, the term “hand-off” refers to marketing identifying and prioritizing engaged contacts for sales.

However, a traditional hand-off doesn’t exist in a truly aligned GTM strategy. Marketing can’t simply stop engaging with prospects after a certain action and leave it to sales. Instead, they need to [continue targeting key decision-makers with relevant messaging throughout their entire journey.](#)

By doing so, marketing helps sales multithread and engage buyers across multiple channels, ultimately shortening sales cycles, closing more deals, and promoting upsell opportunities.



Conclusions

Our research shows that companies with an effective hand-off and high audience overlap achieve higher conversion rates and see marketing influencing **up to 29%** of their pipeline.

However, the impact of marketing isn't confined to well-aligned organizations. Across all alignment levels, marketing consistently boosts conversions. In fact, when marketing is actively involved in the sales process, it can help convert **65% more** prospects to pipeline.

Alignment isn't just about smoother hand-offs — it's about working toward shared goals, staying transparent, and using the right intent signals. When both teams collaborate effectively, they don't just improve efficiency. They drive substantial, real business growth. Focus on alignment and unlock your GTM team's full potential.
