THE LONG & SHORT OF IT

Should you prioritise leads (the short of it) or brand strategy (the long of it) in marketing?

THE BRAND TO SALES™ AGENCY

You're a Marketing Director

And even if you're not, stick around.

You might learn something useful.

YOU'RE THE COMPANY'S

GREAT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

THE ONE WHO CAN GROW THE ORGANISATION'S PROFITS AND THE BRAND'S REPUTATION.

YOUR JOB IS TO ENTICE PROSPECTS, DELIGHT YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND OUTWIT YOUR COMPETITORS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

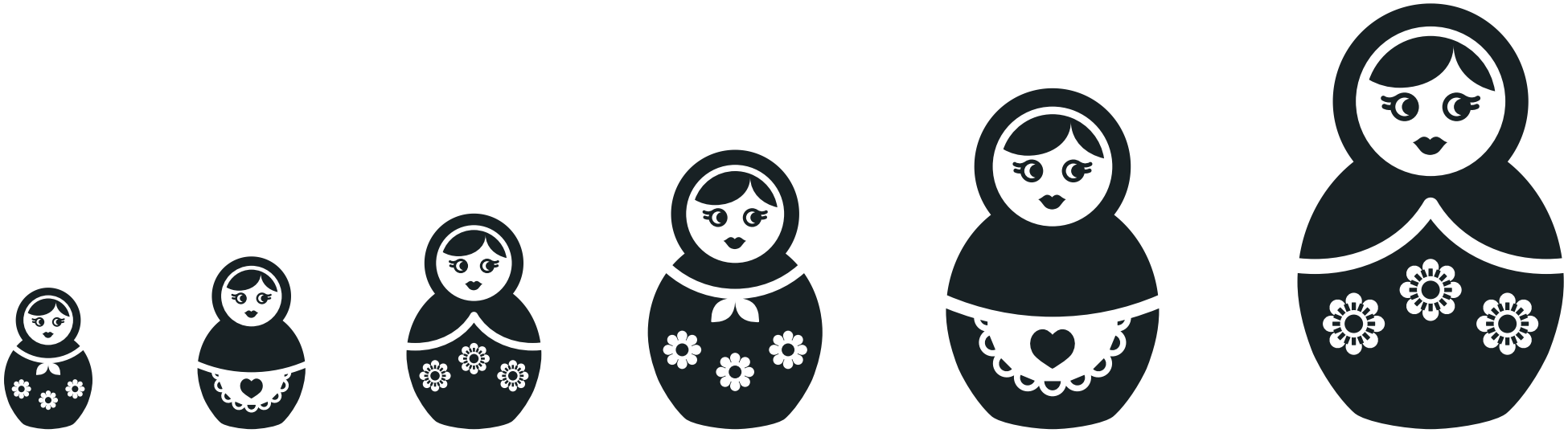
You know, the people who ask
(and occasionally tell) you to do stuff.

Sometimes you might even feel like you're the Sales Department's lapdog.

It's OK. We all get that every now and then.

In the short term, Sales want you to bring in quality leads that they can turn into customers.

This helps the business grow.



In the long term, they want you to maintain the reputation of the business and support key accounts.

This **stabilises the future of the business.**

Short-term growth & long-term stability.

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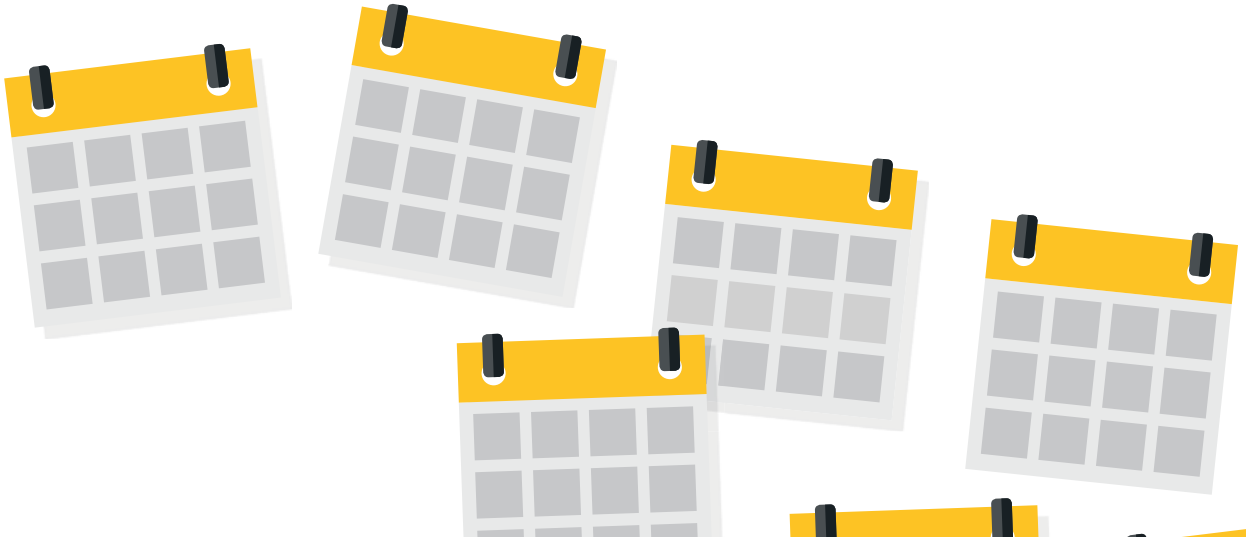
Those stakeholders we mentioned before, **they want both of those things** for the business.

The challenge for you is balancing those short-term and long-term priorities.

And that responsibility is something that you'll most probably feel every day.

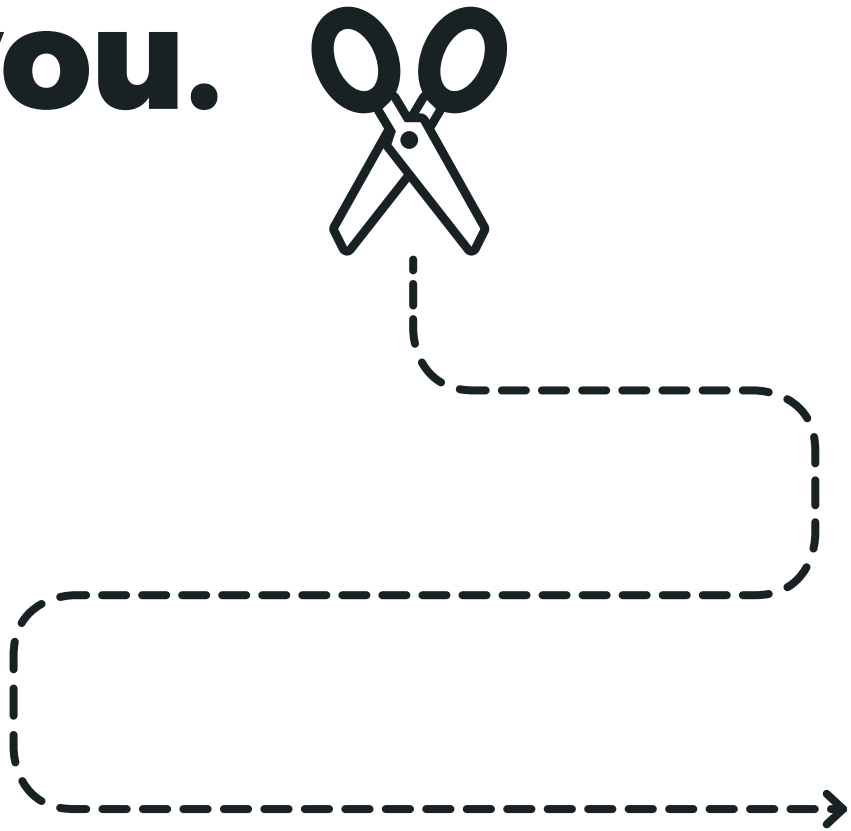


69% of tech marketers are feeling an increased pressure to deliver qualified leads to Sales.

So how do you balance your short-term & long -term objectives?

And keep not just the Sales Department happy, but **all your major strategic stakeholders?**

You’ve got your work cut out for you.



But it’s not impossible.

LET'S HAVE A
LITTLE THINK ABOUT
IT, SHALL WE?

Short-term lead generation is the stuff that gets the attention of your customers. It incentivises them to buy.

Think **time-sensitive, quick-wins.** Discounts, freebies, extended subscription periods and free trials. Stuff like that.

You can see results almost immediately. You know pretty quickly whether this stuff is working.

The Sales team love this.

It **brings leads in** (quickly!) and **builds the pipeline** so they can hit their monthly targets.

BUT

(why it's bad)

It’s really reactive

and can make you seem a little desperate to offload your product.

Plus, it's hard to maintain a consistent message across loads of short-term campaigns and that can damage your brand.

Long-term brand strategy is the stuff that supports the overall objectives of your business.

We're talking regular thought leadership pieces, valuable blogs, useful videos, compelling case studies.

This stuff is good because you can focus on one or two complementary messages across everything.

For example

"OUR PRODUCT WILL HELP YOUR BUSINESS GROW."

or

"IT'LL SAVE YOU MONEY."

It creates a strong, coherent brand.

This in turn creates loyal, high-value customers.

"If a B2B buyer has a high brand connection with your company they are five times more likely to consider buying from you, 13 times more likely to purchase and 30 times more likely to pay a premium"

– 'B2B GETS EMOJI-ONAL: Put the Feeling Back Into Your Marketing', *B2B Marketing*

High-quality, useful, consistent marketing is more useful to your customers.

It gives the buyer all the information they need to buy from you.

BUT

(why it's bad)

It takes bloody ages.

Which means it’s time-consuming (and expensive)
to create this kind of long-term marketing material.

And the patience of those board directors is wearing thin.

It also takes a long time to get a good sense of how well this activity is performing.

So before you know it you’ve sunk lots of your time and cash into something that you’re not sure is even working

Chances are, you're caught between short-term and long-term priorities.

You're aimlessly swinging between the two (and you don't even know it).

Does any of this sound familiar?

You keep getting asked how many MQLs or registrations you have.

You spend more time negotiating deadlines than actually doing work.

You don't know what you're doing beyond your current campaign

You have to do a SnapChat campaign because someone's boss just read an article about it.

Then short-term activity is taking priority.

You're being pulled towards reactive, quick-win stuff.
It seems urgent, but often isn't.
Your long-term brand strategy doesn't exist.

How about this...?

You're writing long campaign plans. You're having meetings about those plans. You're having meetings about meetings. No-one seems to know what your department does. Your customers are happy but you haven't delivered any new ones in a while.

Then long-term brand strategy is taking priority.

You're thinking more about where you're going to be in three years than how you're going to deliver leads over the next six months.

Most likely, you're being pulled in two directions at once

Both short-term leads and long-term strategy are given 'priority' status by senior stakeholders.

It’s unclear which is more of a priority.

Meaning you’re **trying to juggle both** and not doing either terribly well.

Why does this happen?

It’s not because people are trying to make your life more difficult.

They’ve just got **their own agendas and responsibilities** to stakeholders (just like you).

The uncomfortable truth?

JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE TELLS YOU SOMETHING IS IMPORTANT,

doesn’t necessarily mean it is.

And if the marketing department isn't delivering against the real business goals, then that's on you.

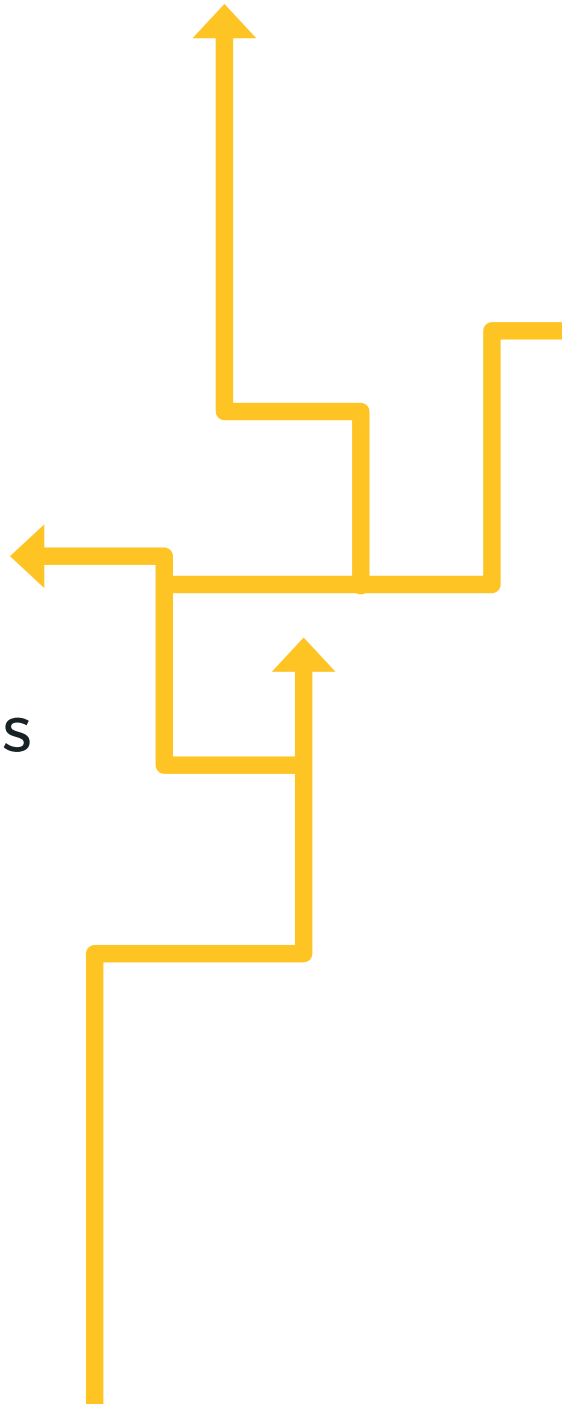
Even if it's not exactly clear what those business goals are.

It’s up to you to figure out what the real business priority is.

Is it **short-term** leads or **long-term** brand strategy?

You need to work it out.

And then see if your department's activities are helping.



So how do you do that?

1 **When you next meet the board, ask five questions to tease out what the business priorities are.***

*If you don't get the answers you need, repeat this step until you do.

2 Meet the head of each department

and find out what they want Marketing to do.

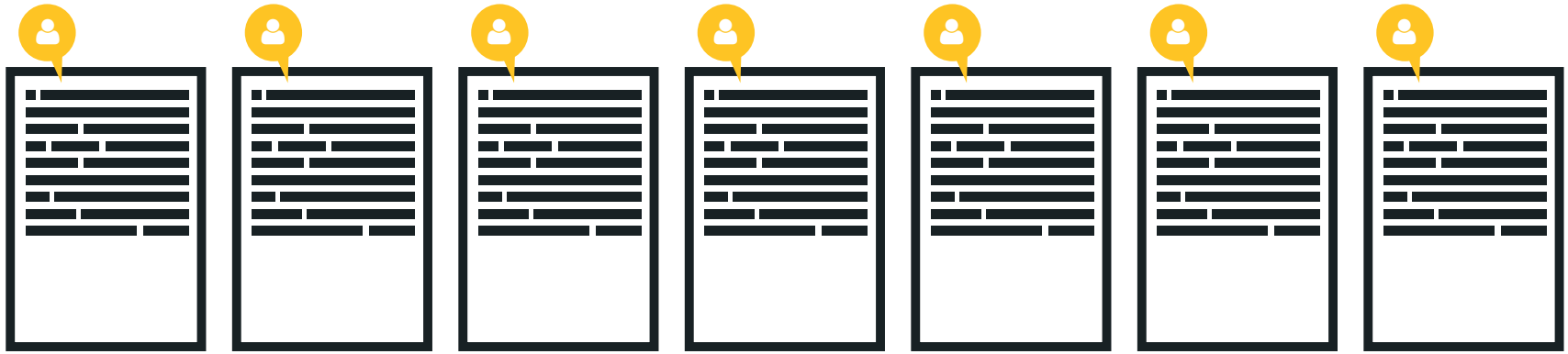
3 Audit your department

– staff, budgets, what people spend their time on –
and make those tough decisions on what needs to change.

4 Figure out what brilliant looks like:

where you want to be in three years, how you're going to serve the business needs and what you need to get there.

5 Redesign your marketing plan based on what you found out in the first four steps.



6 Get feedback on your plan from each director and board member.

Find out their concerns and modify the plan accordingly.

If you've done the first six steps correctly, you're not going to get many objections.

Because you've already identified what they're not going to like and made an effort to address it.

So your plan will not just make everyone happy, but deliver real business value too.

So your plan will not just make everyone happy, but deliver real business value too.

And that, is the **long** and the **short** of it.

Thank you for reading

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