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Coalition for Innovative
Media Measurement



The Measurement is the Message

Effective Practices for B2B Marketing Measurement

November 2025



About CIMM

The Coalition for Innovative Media Measurement (CIMM) is a nonpartisan, pan-industry coalition of companies focused on cultivating and supporting improvements, best practices, and innovations in measurement and currency; data collaboration and enablement; and the use of new metrics and approaches to understanding the value of media. CIMM embraces the entire media and advertising ecosystem and prioritizes effective collaboration to deliver meaningful change.

As part of our program, CIMM commissions research studies from industry analysts, experts, and thought leaders to provide insights on issues of critical interest to our members. B2B media, advertising and measurement are fascinating, huge areas of the marketing landscape that we are excited to explore in this study, which examines B2B marketing's scope, unique challenges, and emerging best practices.

About the Author

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About our Sponsors

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LinkedIn

LinkedIn drives measurable pipeline progress with the right decision makers

LinkedIn Ads have emerged as one of the most powerful platforms for B2B marketers seeking to influence decision-makers and drive measurable business outcomes. With unmatched access to verified professionals—including 98% of Fortune 500 CEOs—LinkedIn enables advertisers to engage audiences in a business-first mindset, where time is invested rather than wasted. This professional context allows marketers to reach the right people at the right moment, using precision targeting based on B2B relevant attributes like job title, company size, industry, and seniority.

LinkedIn uniquely connects marketing efforts to real business impact. Through tools like the Company Intelligence API, Companies Hub, and Revenue Attribution Report, advertisers gain actionable insights at the pipeline level. These capabilities enable marketers to more accurately improve on and articulate the value of their team's holistic efforts in driving business outcomes - beyond just clicks and impressions. Additionally, LinkedIn's robust ecosystem of strategic partnerships helps to streamline campaign creation, enhance measurement capabilities in a cross-platform environment, and unlock new channels for audience engagement.

In an era where precision, accountability, and influence are paramount, LinkedIn Ads offer a full-funnel solution—from awareness to conversion—designed for the complexity of B2B buying journeys. Whether through professional targeting, engaging ad formats, or fit-for-purpose B2B measurement capabilities, LinkedIn empowers marketers to drive demand, prove ROI, and scale impact across the B2B customer lifecycle. Businesses can learn more at [LinkedIn Ads](#).

LiveRamp

LiveRamp unlocks excellence with more targeted, effective, and measurable B2B campaigns

LiveRamp empowers B2B marketers to connect disparate customer data, deliver personalized experiences, and measure and optimize outcomes with the world's most powerful data collaboration network. Built on a foundation of strict neutrality, unmatched interoperability, and global scale, LiveRamp is shaping the future of responsible data collaboration for an AI-driven, outcomes-focused world.

LiveRamp helps advertising teams overcome key challenges, such as fragmented data and inaccurate audience targeting. At its core, LiveRamp offers an advanced identity resolution capability that unifies disparate data points to create a single, comprehensive view of companies and key decision-makers. Clients can enrich their first-party data with valuable professional attributes using a combination of second-party data via collaboration in a clean room and third-party data from a partner marketplace, allowing for precise audience segmentation.

LiveRamp's platform streamlines data onboarding and activation across a vast network of media partners to lay a powerful foundation for executing sophisticated, large-scale account-based marketing (ABM) campaigns. LiveRamp delivers clear insights into campaign performance, connecting advertising efforts directly to pipeline growth and revenue. Discover how to run more effective and measurable campaigns at <https://liveramp.com/>.

Research Objectives and Approach

The B2B advertising market is diverse and complex, encompassing a wide range of businesses with widely differing marketing objectives, from small suppliers targeting SMBs with office supplies to major enterprise software vendors targeting global multinationals. Many of these B2B marketers face significant measurement challenges, as they try to determine who was exposed to the campaigns, what action(s) they took, which impressions delivered the most value, and the overall effectiveness of the campaign.

This study explores this complicated landscape, investigating the unique characteristics of B2B measurement, defining the ongoing challenges in the space, and identifying the effective practices that B2B marketers are taking to manage the analytical and political challenges of developing and measuring B2B ad campaigns.

The project team has undertaken nearly 20 in-depth interviews with senior executives directly involved in planning, buying, executing and measuring campaigns in B2B marketing. Research and interviews for this guide took place throughout Q2 and Q3 of 2025. Quotations used in this report have been lightly edited for style and brevity.

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Executive Summary

The B2B marketing measurement landscape

B2B marketing measurement operates in a fundamentally different landscape than B2C. Fragmented channels without centralized measurement authority force many marketers to piece together insights from multiple tools and touchpoints, often synthesizing diverse metrics to tell a story about the path to purchase. The characteristics of the B2B purchase cycle vary widely depending on the sector, ranging from long sales process to short, from complex procurement processes to impulse purchases, and from digital touchpoints to unmeasurable face-to-face meetings.

Measurement solutions across different segments vary widely, but accurate measurement is often difficult. In many cases, marketers are forced to rely on approximations and proxy measures, resulting in inconclusive data. In turn, measurement challenges can create internal communications challenges: marketers must educate stakeholders about what can and cannot be measured, set realistic expectations, and build trust in their methods through deliberate, repeated communication.

B2B marketing organizations vary widely. Effective teams focus on those operational metrics that can be connected to business outcomes, and they communicate them strategically to all stakeholder groups. Measurement strategies also are very diverse, with some B2B teams tracking upwards of 40 discrete metrics spanning the entire funnel. Scale is clearly a significant factor—the most sophisticated marketing organizations tend to have well-resourced data-led marketing functions interacting with other stakeholders, leveraging baskets of metrics and sophisticated predictive models and tools.

Persistent challenges and solutions

A few challenges surface consistently across organizations. Data silos impair cross-functional collaboration. Companies addressing this challenge are implementing customer data platforms to establish a common view of the customer and deploying data hygiene teams to ensure consistency and completeness across complex, global organizations.

The “dark funnel”—the untrackable part of the buyer’s journey—remains a persistent fact of B2B marketing. Marketers are mitigating this challenge by shifting content distribution to trackable channels, systematically soliciting qualitative feedback from sales teams about customer objections and campaign reception, and incorporating that intelligence into campaign refinement.

For companies relying on arms-length sales channels or franchisees, capturing full-funnel sales data is often impossible. Some are solving this through co-marketing arrangements that trade marketing assets for anonymized, attributed transaction data from channel partners.

Adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) beyond experimentation remains slow due to company policies, privacy compliance concerns, and the nascent state of many use cases. Some applications showing early promise include campaign optimization, content creation, and analysis and insights generation. Looking forward, B2B marketers envision AI supporting automation and orchestration—from routing customer inquiries to identifying buying committee members to recommending next best actions.

Effective measurement practices

Effective B2B marketing measurement begins with alignment to business strategy. Creating alignment requires structured conversations with stakeholders across different functions, including sales, finance, and the C-suite, to determine which measures matter the most to each group. Marketing leaders should work backward from these priorities—whether expanding into new markets, accelerating pipeline velocity, or improving profitability—and define strategies and metrics that directly influence those outcomes. The most effective marketing leaders customize their metric reporting to align with each audience’s priorities and level of marketing sophistication. A collaborative approach to measurement positions marketing as a business driver rather than a cost center and sharpens the organization’s ability to make strategic decisions and secure investment.

Marketing metrics serve as actionable intelligence for tactical and strategic decision making. Examples include:

Campaign Optimization: Companies dynamically adjust media spend, creative elements, and web layouts based on real-time performance data. B2B marketers employ multi-touch attribution models tailored to different funnel stages, ensuring intermediate goals align with revenue outcomes.

Lead Prioritization: Engagement metrics—including website visits, downloads, and event participation—enable effective lead scoring and qualification. This approach can reduce sales costs, with companies requiring fewer calls to close deals with highly engaged prospects.

Strategic Spending Allocation: Advanced analytical approaches guide investment decisions, including sales activity analysis for resource timing, attribution modeling for cross-channel budget allocation, and media mix modeling for comprehensive spend optimization. Media mix models enable sophisticated scenario planning and historical performance analysis.

Effective practices in communication and collaboration—keys to success

Strategic communication of metrics beyond the marketing organization is essential to building stakeholder trust and alignment. This requires six key practices:

1. Educate senior stakeholders about B2B marketing realities—extended sales cycles, numerous touchpoints, and inherent measurement imperfection—to manage expectations.
2. Emphasize business impact and value rather than marketing activity metrics, connecting marketing activities to impacts such as revenue growth and pipeline generation.
3. Use attribution modeling with care. While powerful for internal optimization, non-marketing stakeholders may find customer journey narratives more useful than model-generated metrics.
4. Combine continuous communication forums like quarterly business reviews with self-serve dashboards and tools that allow stakeholders to access metrics relevant to their roles while reducing manual reporting burden on marketing teams.
5. Customize metric reporting to each audience’s needs and sophistication level: CEOs focus on revenue and market position; boards emphasize sustainable growth and shareholder value; CFOs prioritize ROI and forecast accuracy; sales leadership tracks pipeline health and sales enablement.
6. Cultivate a strong relationship with sales. Misalignment between marketing and sales can erode measurement credibility, so the two functions should jointly define metrics, use shared language tied to sales incentives, and emphasize business outcomes over marketing activity.

A consistent theme is that measurement succeeds when it functions not only as a management tool but also as a communication tool: translating data into insights in a way that builds alignment between marketing, sales, finance, and leadership.

Chapter 1: The B2B Measurement Landscape

B2B marketing metrics are different

Depending on the sector, B2B marketing metrics often differ fundamentally from B2C metrics, driven in many cases by longer and more complex sales cycles associated with larger contract values, buying committees, and account-based relationships that create unique measurement challenges and opportunities. Unlike B2C’s focus on individual or household-level customer behavior, B2B often requires account-level metrics like account engagement scores and multi-stakeholder attribution across 6-18 month (or longer) sales cycles.

Industry-specific metrics vary significantly as well. For instance, SaaS companies track monthly recurring revenue (MRR) and net revenue retention, while manufacturing focuses on quote-to-order conversion rates and channel partner performance, and professional services may measure pipeline influence/sourced by marketing and MQLs.

Strategy-specific measurements are tied to go-to-market approach: Account-based marketing may call for account penetration and opportunity progression metrics, product-led growth requires product-qualified leads (PQLs), product trials, and feature adoption tracking, while channel-focused businesses need partner-influenced revenue and co-marketing ROI calculations. (See Figure 1.)

Due to these complexities, many of the most important B2B metrics remain frustratingly difficult to measure accurately. These include marketing’s influence on end-to-end deal velocity and win rates, long-term brand building ROI, and the pervasive challenge of—and occasionally controversy over—multi-touch attribution across fragmented data sources and “dark funnel” activities, the untrackable, anonymous part of a buyer’s journey. This means that the data B2B marketers depend on is often inconclusive. Marketers therefore need to use approximations or proxy measures, finding other ways of determining campaign effectiveness and determining ROI. (See Figure 2.)

This is not only a management challenge; it’s a communications challenge. Many marketers recognize the importance of educating senior stakeholders on the nature of B2B marketing measurement, to set expectations about uses and limitations of the data that can be collected, and to build trust in their measurements and methods. The task of communicating *about* metrics is as important and sharing the metrics themselves. And this requires patience and persistence. As Jen Whelan, VP of Growth Marketing at LiveRamp, a data collaboration platform, put it, “*Slow down, give context, and repeat, repeat, repeat.*”

Figure 1: B2C vs B2B Measurement Characteristics

B2C	B2B
Individual/household focus	Account-level focus
Shorter sales cycles	6-18+ month cycles
Few touch points	Many touch points
Individual buyer	Buying committees
Common measurement approach	Measurement strategy varies with GTM strategy

Figure 2: B2B Measurement Challenges (illustrative)



B2B marketers are awash in metrics

B2B marketing organizations typically track a wide array of metrics, from top-of-funnel indicators like impressions, clicks, and video views, to middle-funnel engagements such as event registrations and content downloads, to bottom-of-funnel metrics like marketing qualified leads (MQLs) and sales accepted leads (SALs). Marketers interviewed for this study reported almost 40 discrete metrics used in B2B marketing, listed in [Appendix A](#), which illustrates the number and diversity of metrics marketers are working with.

Figure 3 shows the main five categories B2B metrics fall into.

Figure 3: B2B Marketing Metric Categories



Effective marketers seek to connect operational marketing metrics to critical business goals like pipeline generation, revenue acceleration, upsell, and customer retention, and sales conversion. And they strive to effectively communicate metrics to key stakeholders like sales, customer success, and finance leadership.

Measurement and marketing culture are intertwined

Organizational culture plays an important role in how effectively B2B marketers use measurement. A culture that prizes data literacy is more likely to make decisions that are informed by data. For example, the head of growth marketing at Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), a provider of enterprise IT products and services, motivated channel managers to engage with measurement data by herself becoming a power user of their metrics dashboard. As a result, the channel managers have become increasingly comfortable doing their own analysis using self-service dashboards and sharing their insights with the broader marketing team.

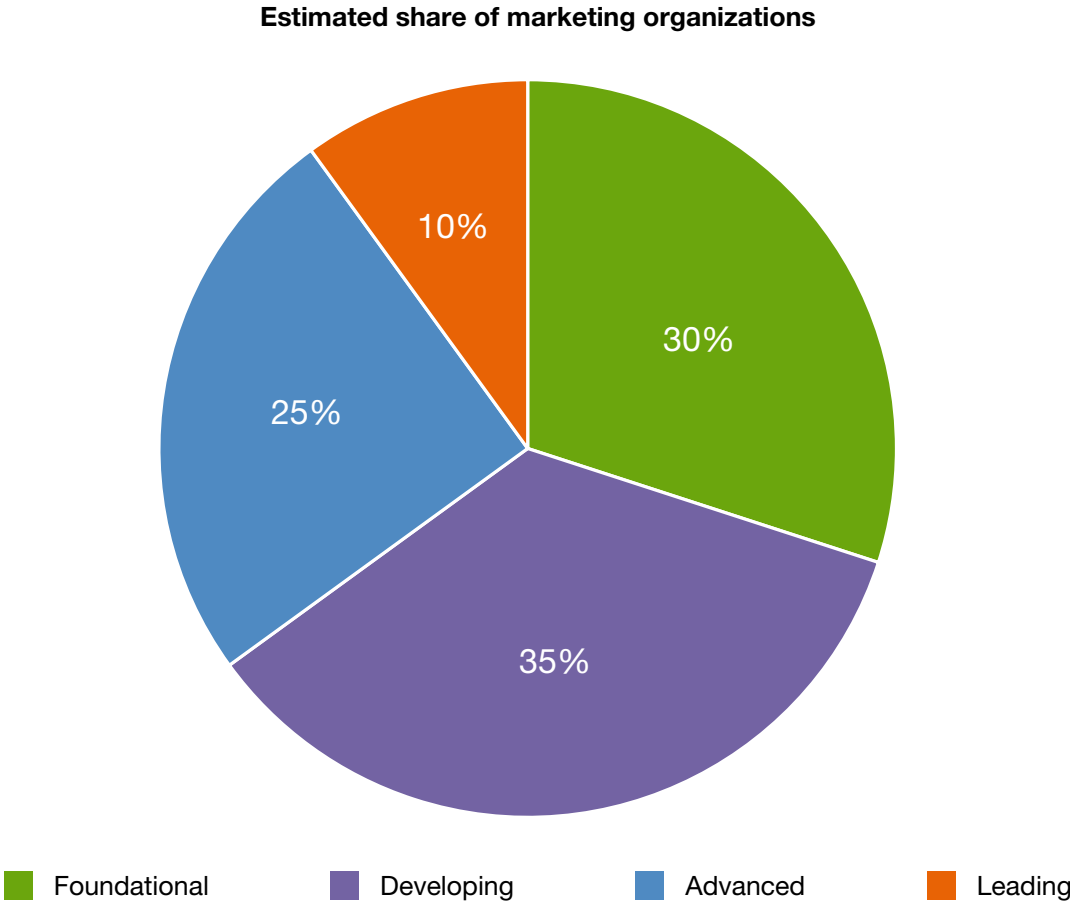
High-performing B2B marketing teams embrace a test-and-learn culture, continuously exploring new methods and refining how they measure and how they communicate metrics across the organization. Mya James at LiveRamp believes that it's important to tolerate failure in the service of learning and growth: *"You have to give yourself permission to grow and learn, and you're not going to do that if you are so focused on getting the A-plus every time."*

The measurement practices adopted by a marketing team can be an indicator of the maturity of its culture. Some observers find that B2B marketers tend to lag their B2C counterparts. As Sam Fox, Global Group Director Analytics at WPP, an advertising firm, observes, *"the complexities of B2B have everyone probably a couple of blips behind their consumer counterparts,"* often leading B2B organizations to *"fall back on metrics you might think about from ten or fifteen years ago, like-am I delivering my media?"*

However, progressive B2B organizations are moving beyond these foundational metrics. They are fostering cultures that embrace data literacy, continuous experimentation, and strong relationships between marketing and sales teams. This progression is evident in their measurement practices, which become increasingly sophisticated and strategically aligned with overarching business goals. Fox elaborated on this idea by defining a maturity model where this journey spans from basic activity metrics like click-through rates at the foundational stage, all the way to advanced econometric and incrementality modelling employed by leading organizations. Figure 4 depicts his B2B marketing measurement maturity model.



Figure 4: Estimated Distribution of B2B Marketing Organizations by Maturity



Source: Sam Fox, WPP

Foundational

Primarily focus on basic metrics (CTR, engagement rate) for upper funnel activities. While lower funnel (leads, MQLs) are more established and demonstrate ROI, connecting measurement across the funnel to demonstrate the ROI on brand activities is more limited. Messy and siloed data are common themes, with minimal AI usage. Marketing and sales collaboration is not fully established.

Developing

Improved data harmony, which aids in adoption of basic AI automation (e.g., segmentation, personalisation). More established connection between marketing and sales, though full alignment is not yet achieved.

Advanced

Marketing effectiveness is measured and optimised across every stage of the funnel. AI is being extensively tested, or already adopted, to aid optimization, analysis and lead scoring. Connection of effectiveness measures to business outcomes supports strong relationships with sales.

Leading

AI is fully established within the measurement framework; influence of marketing touchpoints across the funnel is measured through advanced attribution (including econometric modelling and incrementality testing). Alignment between marketing and sales ensures success metrics are trusted and directly connect to business outcomes such as revenue and pipeline growth.

Marketing culture, including attitudes, measurement practices, and relationships with key groups outside of marketing, is one of the key predictors of success in marketing organization. Rudy Grahn, a data strategy consultant at Prohaska Consulting, a digital media consultancy, put it this way: *“Prediction-first, data-integrity driven, anchored on outcomes, and investing in strong relationships with other disciplines across the enterprise—these are the teams who are succeeding.”*

Measurement complexity constrains B2B ad spending

The complexity of B2B buying behavior, plus the relatively small target audience sizes in B2B marketing, act as a constraint on B2B ad spending, which is only about a tenth as much as B2C advertising spending in the U.S.¹ Whereas a consumer’s path to purchasing a product is often relatively short and straightforward, B2B products and services often entail long sales cycles, committees of buyers, and innumerable touch points, including face-to-face meetings, lunches, and golf games that elude quantification. These multi-faceted and multi-touch sales channels make B2B measurement approaches more heterogeneous than B2C measurement.

The difference in audience size targeted by B2B vs B2C also limits overall B2B ad expenditure. B2C companies target large, broad consumer populations, necessitating extensive and often costly mass media campaigns across television, radio, and digital platforms to build brand awareness and drive sales. Meanwhile, B2B audiences are smaller, highly specialized, and spread across trade publications, niche websites, industry-specific conferences, and other targeted channels, often with no single platform commanding mass reach and no centralized measurement authority. As a result, B2B marketers must rely on a mix of tools and methods—including firmographics (characteristics that describe a business such as annual revenue, number of employees, industry, geographic location, etc.), intent data, account-based marketing platforms, identity resolution solutions, and CRM systems—to piece together insights and evaluate performance.

¹ Total B2B advertising spend in the US in 2024 was \$37.7 billion, compared to an overall market of \$369 billion. [Digiday, Why Several US Ad Forecasts Predict a Better 2024](#) (March 28, 2024); Statista, [B2B Advertising Spending in the United States from 2020 to 2024](#) (July 1, 2025)



Chapter 2: Ongoing Challenges

All B2B marketers face measurement challenges of one sort or another. These challenges may impair campaign planning, execution, and optimization. And they can hinder marketers' efforts to collaborate with sales and finance: incomplete data, esoteric metrics, or models that seem more theoretical than practical can undermine trust in marketers.

There are four key challenges facing B2B marketers:

1. Data silos and poor data quality
2. Measuring dark funnel activity
3. Little or no visibility into sales data
4. Harnessing AI productively

Data silos and poor data quality. It's common to find sales using one customer database and marketing using another. Or for different business units to have their own definition of ideal customer profile. This works against effective collaboration across teams. Several marketers we spoke to had implemented or were in the process of implementing customer data platforms that were intended to offer a common view of the customer across the enterprise. For example, with senior leadership support, SAP developed over the course of several months an enterprise-wide common customer taxonomy and shared view of the ideal customer profile. Some had data hygiene teams that labored to ensure the consistency and completeness of customer data across a complex, global organization.

"If your data underneath is not clean, you're going to have a problem with attribution ... A lot of things fail because they can't attribute a person to the right role or the right account. And that's a system failure."

- Mya James, LiveRamp

Measuring dark funnel activity. Being unable to track all interactions with customers is a fact of life in many B2B markets. Marketers are chipping away at this challenge in various ways. At Vanguard, salespeople were in the habit of emailing customers market analyses or other thought leadership content in PDF format. The marketing team shifted that content to website landing pages that were easier to track. Medtronic solicits feedback from the sales team about how campaigns are landing with their customers and what objections they hear, and use that information to refine their content.

Little or no visibility into sales data. Particularly for B2B companies that rely on arms-length sales channels or franchisees, capturing full-funnel sales data can often be impossible. The Mosaic Company, a supplier of fertilizer to growers worldwide, tested the impact of a customer giveaway on a customer subset, found it led to a higher sales contact rate, and then rolled out the program more broadly. The Mosaic Company sells through retail partners who are generally reluctant to share customer data. The company has co-marketing arrangements with some of them, providing marketing assets and collateral retailers can send to their grower databases. In return the retailers provide Mosaic with anonymized, attributed transaction data. Data clean rooms can be helpful in this scenario. They provide a secure environment for collaboration, while ensuring each party's privacy and governance controls are enforced. When the proper controls are in place, clean rooms can strictly limit data use to what has been explicitly approved between collaborating parties. And they can allow collaboration and analysis without exposing any party's underlying data.

Harnessing AI productively. Despite today's relentless hype surrounding artificial intelligence, especially generative AI, take-up beyond experimentation is currently slow. Some marketers remain cautious about the use of AI due to their company's AI policies and concerns about compliance with privacy related regulations. But many marketers have pilots underway and plans or vision for broader use of AI in the near future. Common applications of AI today in B2B marketing include the following:

- **Campaign optimization.** Platforms like Google Performance Max and Meta's Advantage+ use AI to optimize content and manage placements and bidding to achieve conversion KPIs. Marketers using those platforms are benefiting from AI already.
- **Content & personalization.** Marketers use generative models to write blogs, landing pages, email drafts, ad copy, and to create outlines and scripts that humans edit for voice and strategy. Some marketers are using AI to personalize content based on certain account attributes. For instance, Mosaic launched a campaign that used AI to personalize content taking account of location, crop, and growth stage of their specific crop, and recent weather alerts.
- **Analysis & insights.** AI is used to analyze data, prioritize accounts, score leads, and synthesize intent signals from web and engagement data. Publicis Pro, an advertising firm, uses AI platforms to quickly process research data (interviews, surveys) to inform creative messaging (tone, directness) and channel strategies (identifying where target audiences consume media). LiveRamp is exploring the use of AI to flag data anomalies. At the intersection of analysis and personalization, HPE aims to use AI to create tailored reports for different stakeholders or enable self-service querying of data to generate nuanced insights.
- **Experimentation & automation.** Teams use AI inside martech stacks (content recommendation, creative testing, programmatic bidding) rather than building everything custom. Platform vendors are shipping more pre-built AI agents. SAP is exploring AI for routing customer inquiries to the right people, orchestrating "next best actions," and identifying members of buying committees.

Chapter 3: Effective Use of Measurement

Link metrics to business goals

Effective B2B marketing measurement requires alignment with the business. This means focusing on the metrics that are most relevant to its goals. These measures are the ones that matter most to key stakeholders, from sales to finance; they should be selected, defined, and named in coordination with those stakeholders. Marketers should hold themselves accountable using these metrics, as the business will.

Alignment with the business begins with a clear understanding of the company's top priorities—whether expanding into new markets, accelerating pipeline velocity, increasing customer lifetime value, or improving profitability. Marketing teams sometimes focus on activity metrics such as clicks, impressions, or social engagement, which may be useful for tactical optimization, but fail to demonstrate impact at the business level. Instead, leaders should identify which business outcomes they need to influence and work backward to define the marketing metrics that will make the most significant contribution toward achieving those outcomes. Marketers should be able to explain to executive stakeholders in sales, finance, and the C-suite the chain that links those metrics to the outcomes being targeted.

For example, at SAP, the enterprise software company, marketing strategy begins with business strategy, according to Teresa Joy, the company's VP of Marketing Data & Audience Strategy. SAP's corporate planning process identifies a set of strategic priorities. Based on those priorities, the marketing organization designs its programs. And once its programs are defined, they work on the measurement framework for them. Shagufta Gupta at WPP has the same point of departure. *"For the organizations that I work with, the business strategy comes first and then the marketing strategy. So there would always be this alignment with what the business is looking to do and achieve this year."*

Alignment doesn't happen in a vacuum. It requires structured conversations with partners across departments to determine which measures matter most. For example, sales leaders may care most about the number of qualified opportunities entering the pipeline and the conversion rate of those opportunities. Finance leaders may be focused on customer acquisition cost, return on marketing investment, or the contribution of marketing to overall revenue growth. By bringing these voices into the process, marketing leaders can ensure that the metrics they adopt are not only meaningful internally but also credible and relevant to the business at large.

When Anthony Toguchi took on his role as Head of Institutional Digital Marketing at Vanguard, the investment management company, he and his leadership team met with the head of sales to understand the sales process in depth. They learned that sales was compensated for getting meetings with decision-makers about prioritized products that lead to a next step within a reasonable timeframe. Marketing then explicitly defined its levers to influence these metrics, aligning on terminology with sales and then secured sign off from the entire sales leadership team.

Once these shared metrics are established, marketing leaders should formalize them with clear definitions, consistent naming conventions, and agreed-upon calculation methods. This step is critical: ambiguous or inconsistent reporting can erode trust, while shared definitions build confidence and comparability over time. Leaders should also commit to reporting against these metrics regularly and transparently—whether the results are positive or negative. Doing so demonstrates accountability, positions marketing as a business driver rather than a cost center, and fosters stronger collaboration with stakeholders across the organization.

Ultimately, this disciplined approach to measurement allows B2B marketers to move beyond proving activity to demonstrating impact. By aligning on metrics that mirror the way the business measures success, marketing leaders not only elevate the credibility of their function but also sharpen their ability to make strategic decisions, secure investment, and drive growth. Mya James, the marketing operations leader at LiveRamp, gave a simple example of how marketing aligns its measurement with business goals. Annual sales goals are divided into a quarterly sales goal. The sales goal is translated into a pipeline goal. Marketing's key goal is then "influenced pipeline", generally defined as the total potential revenue from all sales opportunities that had some meaningful marketing touchpoint during the buying process, regardless of where the lead originated.

While most B2B marketers recognize the importance of alignment with the business, some struggle with a fundamental disconnection between marketing activities and business outcomes. As one marketer candidly observed, *“The feeling is that we have marketing decisions and we have business decisions, but they’re not tied together very well.”* To avoid this situation, marketers must build strong relationships with their sales colleagues.

Use metrics to guide decisions

Marketing metrics are not meant to be admired; they are meant to be acted on. The marketers we spoke to offered many examples of how they use metrics to guide decisions, from the tactical to the strategic.

Optimize campaigns. Some metrics provide immediate feedback that can be used for continuous campaign improvement such as dynamically shifting media spend, optimizing creative, and tuning web page layout. For instance, LiveRamp continuously optimizes paid media by running multiple variations of ad spots and quickly shifting budget away from the lowest performers to the more engaging ones based on click-through and conversion rates.

Some B2B marketers use attribution models to optimize campaigns for intermediate goals. They may adopt a “full-funnel” multi-touch attribution approach, applying different attribution models to different stages. For example, they might use first-touch attribution for lead generation analysis but switch to multi-touch for opportunity creation or pipeline influence. It’s crucial to ensure that the intermediate goals being optimized for are genuinely predictive of eventual revenue.

To optimize campaigns, most marketers look at tiers of metrics that are useful over different time horizons. The following table illustrates how tiered metrics can be used in this way.



Figure 5: B2B Funnel Metrics

Tier	Time Horizon	Purpose / Diagnostic Value	Key Metrics	Optimization Use
Tier 1: Immediate Signals	Hours-Days	Check if ads and landing pages are functioning and resonating	Impressions, reach, frequency, CTR, CPC, video view rate, scroll depth, bounce rate, time on page, form fill rate	Daily checks to spot broken campaigns, wasted spend, or creative mismatch
Tier 2: Early Conversion Signals	Days-Weeks	Assess if campaigns attract the right people and generate sales-usable leads	Cost per lead (CPL), % ICP fit, MQLs created, engagement depth (webinar attendance, asset downloads)	Weekly optimization—shift budget to audiences/offers producing qualified leads
Tier 3: Sales Engagement signals	Weeks-1 -2 Months	Evaluate whether leads are converting into real sales conversations	Sales Accepted Leads (SALs), connect rate, meetings booked/demos scheduled	Validate that early signals (CTR, MQL volume) translate into sales traction
Tier 4: Pipeline Signals	Months+	Measure ultimate campaign impact on business outcomes	Opportunities created (SQLs), pipeline value (\$), win rate, revenue	Quarterly+ evaluation for ROI, budget justification, long-term channel mix decisions

Score and prioritize leads. Marketers commonly use measures of engagement to qualify and prioritize leads. Engagement is measured in many ways, with popular metrics including ad views, website visits, clicks, downloads, video views, and event participation. Effective lead scoring can lower the cost of sales. Medtronic found that sales people needed fewer sales calls to close deals with high-engagement site visitors than other visitors. Vanguard provided the sales team with detailed data about the intensity of their accounts’ activities on the website and the topics they are interested in. This empowered sales teams to engage proactively and effectively with their book of business based on “hot topics” and recent client interest. LiveRamp’s analysis of customer churn found that clients who had been featured in LiveRamp events were more likely to renew. This insight has been useful to the company’s client success team, which seeks to keep clients happy and reduce churn.

Allocate spending strategically. For marketers with big media budgets, or those who aspire to them, metrics are obviously crucial for guiding and justifying investment decisions. B2B marketers are using a range of common metrics-based analytical approaches to guide spending, including:

- **Sales activity metrics.** Based on insights from lead metrics, The Mosaic Company looked at sales development representative (SDR) “connect rates” (their success in getting a prospect on the phone) over time and found they could spend those SDR resources more effectively at a different time of year.

- **Attribution modeling.** While attribution modeling can be challenging to communicate outside of marketing, many marketers find it a valuable decision-making tool for their own use. HPE uses multi-touch attribution models to quantify both the direct and indirect value that each marketing channel contributes to key performance indicators (KPIs) like engagement and sales opportunities. The marketing team uses multi-touch attribution strategically for cross channel budget allocation or, within a channel, across media partners. LiveRamp uses a combination of first-touch attribution for most marketing channels and multi-touch attribution specifically for events. Events are given multi-touch credit because they often serve as a “catalyst” later in the customer journey.
- **Media mix modeling.** B2B marketers use media mix modeling (MMMs) to make smarter decisions about budget allocation (how to allocate spend across media channels), to support strategic planning (to understand how their marketing has worked in the past), and to run what-if scenarios (to test ideas without actually spending any money). LinkedIn, the professional networking site and B2B marketing platform, is in transition from last-click attribution to a media mix model. Media mix models can help companies optimize media spend, but they are not cheap and can take months to develop. They are most appropriate for marketers with media budgets in excess of \$5-10 million.

“Now we’re optimizing for the best return for LinkedIn versus all of our different business lines ... and so that is also why finance is really excited about this, because we can drive the best return for that dollar that they give us across the entire business versus just guessing where I’m going to put it next.”

- Jake Bailey, Global Head of Paid Media, LinkedIn

Chapter 4: Effective Communication and Collaboration

Metrics are a language marketers use to communicate with senior executives, sales leadership, and other stakeholders. Successful marketing leaders know they must educate their counterparts on uses and limitations of measurement in a B2B context, tailor reporting to each audience, and use nomenclature understood outside the marketing organization.

“It’s not only the approach, but it’s how you communicate it and how you keep credibility, because the second that there’s any kind of chink in that armor, it’s very difficult to get the credibility back.”

- Jen Whelan, VP Growth Marketing, LiveRamp

Marketers have found it very useful to meet stakeholders on their terms rather than forcing marketing perspectives on them. As Shagufta Gupta, Group Director at WPP Media explained, *“It is on us as measurement folks to be able to explain what we are doing based on the audience you are talking to.”* A sales team might not understand or trust complex attribution models. But they will understand accounts of customer journeys.

Educate leadership and manage expectations

One of marketing’s most critical responsibilities is educating leadership—including CEOs and boards, not just marketing and sales teams—about the realities of B2B marketing. This educational effort helps stakeholders understand that B2B marketing takes time, involves numerous complex mechanics, and that measurement is inherently imperfect. Without this foundation of understanding, marketing teams face unrealistic expectations and misaligned priorities.

Senior stakeholders often harbor unrealistic expectations due to a fundamental lack of understanding about the implications of B2B’s extended sales cycles and numerous touchpoints. The reality that a typical B2B buyer journey might involve hundreds of touchpoints over months, not weeks, can be a revelation for executives accustomed to more straightforward business models. Managing these expectations upfront prevents frustration and builds credibility when results inevitably take time to materialize.

“So there’s always this tension between our sales team or the business itself needing immediate numbers versus investing in media for the long term, which we know would in theory pay off with time.”

- Jake Bailey, Global Head of Paid Media, LinkedIn

Emphasize business impact over activity

Successful marketing communicators have learned to emphasize business impact and value rather than marketing activity metrics. While marketers might be naturally inclined to report on campaign performance, content downloads, or event attendance, stakeholders outside marketing care primarily about business outcomes. This shift in focus requires marketing teams to consistently connect their activities to revenue impact, pipeline generation, and market penetration—metrics that resonate with business leaders’ fundamental concerns.

Report attribution with care

Attribution modeling can be very useful for helping marketers optimize campaigns in flight and in shaping media budget allocations. But marketing teams face a significant challenge when it comes to attribution reporting outside their organization. Complex attribution models that make sense to marketing analysts often appear as “hocus pocus” or seem “too difficult” to sales teams and senior leadership. But attribution can play a role in communicating to stakeholders outside of marketing, if done well.

Customer journey mapping translates complex multi-touch attribution into narratives that non-marketers can understand and trust. Attribution models can identify which touchpoints actually matter in the buyer's journey, how different channels work together, and where prospects typically get stuck or accelerate. A complex multi-touch attribution report can be translated into stories like: "Here's what we typically see with enterprise accounts like yours—they usually engage with our content 3-4 times over 6 months, attend a webinar, then have their technical team download our ROI calculator before requesting a demo." This approach serves dual purposes: it provides helpful, actionable insights while building credibility for marketing's measurement capabilities.

"I think we just have to tell the story differently. So we would say we generated X amount of pipeline because we did these four activities, which resulted in these real stories that we can tell you."

- Mya James, Leader Marketing Operations, LiveRamp

Combine continuous and self-service communication

Effective communication requires the right forums and tools to scale marketing operations and foster broader organizational investment in understanding and using metrics. Quarterly business reviews (QBRs) and similar collaborative forums serve as crucial communication channels where marketing can regularly educate stakeholders and demonstrate progress against business objectives.

Self-serve dashboards and similar tools play an increasingly important role in scaling marketing operations while encouraging stakeholders to engage more deeply with measurement data. These tools allow different audiences to access metrics most relevant to their roles while reducing the manual burden on marketing teams to produce custom reports for every stakeholder group.

Tailor metrics to specific audiences

The most effective marketing leaders customize their metric reporting to align with each audience's priorities and level of marketing sophistication. This audience-specific approach recognizes that different stakeholders have varying needs, time constraints, and areas of expertise. While individual leaders' preferences vary, here are some useful reporting rules of thumb.

CEOs typically view marketing through the lens of strategic impact and business growth. They will want to understand how marketing drives revenue, market position, and brand strength. And they appreciate seeing trend lines and key narratives (e.g., "pipeline up 25%"). Recommended metrics:

- Influenced pipeline (new vs. existing business)
- Marketing-sourced revenue (as % of total revenue)
- Customer acquisition cost (CAC) and marketing efficiency ratio (revenue / marketing spend)
- Brand health or share of voice (vs. key competitors)
- Pipeline coverage ratio (1-2 quarters ahead)
- Marketing's contribution to customer lifetime value (CLV)

Boards of directors are concerned with enterprise value creation and risk. They are apt to focus on marketing's contribution to sustainable growth and brand equity. Reporting should be high-level and framed in terms of long-term competitiveness and shareholder value. Recommended metrics:

- Marketing ROI (attributed revenue vs. spend)
- Share of voice / brand consideration in key markets
- Customer acquisition cost trends

- Contribution to total pipeline and bookings
- Customer retention or expansion rate influenced by marketing

With their hand on the funding tap, **CFOs** are a critical stakeholder. They care deeply about efficiency, ROI, and forecast accuracy, and in making funding decisions will tend to focus on return on marketing investment and predictability of outcomes. Recommended metrics:

- ROI by marketing channel and program type
- CAC and payback period
- MQL → opportunity → closed-won conversion rates
- Pipeline coverage and forecasted yield
- Budget utilization vs. performance

The chief revenue officer and **head of sales** are preliminary concerned with pipeline health and sales enablement. They want to track how marketing is fueling and improving sales performance. Recommended metrics:

- Marketing-influenced pipeline (by segment, region, and stage)
- MQL to opportunity conversion rate
- Deal velocity and sales cycle length (marketing-generated vs. other leads)
- Win rate for marketing-influenced deals
- Content or campaign performance in key accounts

CMOs are accountable for ensuring that marketing drives measurable business impact and stays aligned with company strategy. Their primary focus is on translating corporate goals into effective go-to-market execution—deciding where to invest, which audiences to prioritize, and how to balance short-term demand generation with long-term brand building. Week to week, CMOs make trade-offs among channels, campaigns, and resources to maximize impact within budget. They monitor whether marketing activities are advancing strategic initiatives such as entering new markets, supporting product launches, or increasing customer retention.

CMOs have their choice of metrics to monitor. Rather than list them here, we simply suggest they should favor those that best empower them to evaluate performance, allocate resources intelligently, and demonstrate clear contribution to the organization’s overall growth objectives.

“We have seen success with MMMs because we brought the finance organization along early and often. And when we decided to move away from a last-click and attribution system to MMM, we needed to make sure that the people giving us the checks for media knew how it was going to be measured and knew the methodologies going in.”

- Jake Bailey, Director Global Head of Paid Media, LinkedIn

The most important audience for marketers is sales. Successful marketers view sales as more than an audience, though. Instead, they recognize that sales and marketing are partners in driving business results. Effective practices for communicating and collaborating with sales are described below.

Cultivate a strong relationship with sales

Within B2B companies, it is not uncommon to find a complex and often challenging relationship between marketing and sales, especially when it comes to measurements used to score lead quality or attribute the influence of marketing on sales results. Sales teams, often compensated on commission, can be skeptical of marketing's approach to measurement. This skepticism might be justified due to how challenging it can be to generate comprehensive and accurate B2B metrics. Or due to sales and marketing having separate databases and disjointed views of their customers. But it is often the case that sales lacks a clear understanding of marketing's activities and how marketers cope with imperfect data.

"I really see marketing walking side by side with sales. So if we choose the right campaign and we know what our target audience cares about and we know what we're trying to sell, then the magic is if marketing is walking next to sales and making it better."

- Jen Whelan, VP Growth Marketing, LiveRamp

Being thoughtful about how metrics are defined and communicated can help B2B marketers address these challenges. It is incumbent on marketers to help sales understand what they do, how they measure, and how they cope with imperfect data.

Industry participants identify key practices that help foster productive relationships with sales:

Plan together. Starting with an integrated planning motion, where sales and marketing align on go-to-market priorities and execution strategies, is critical. Not only can this build rapport, it also ensures that both teams are working towards common goals from the outset. *"If you start from an integrated motion of planning,"* SAP's Teresa Joy summarizes, *"you tend to communicate a lot more clearly and you tend to drive more collaboration than just working in silos."*

Co-create. Involving sales in the process of designing metrics helps marketing develop metrics that align with how the sales reps work. It fosters a sense of shared ownership. And it can make for metrics that are more relatable and useful to the sales team. Vanguard's methodology for developing measurement frameworks is a good example: working with sales leadership, they systematically mapped sales funnel progression, identified marketing's influence points, aligned on terminology and metrics, and secured leadership sign-off before launching.

Speak their language. Marketing teams should communicate their metrics and insights in language that resonates with their sales colleagues. This builds rapport and shows that marketing understands how sales thinks about the customer journey. Vanguard took this tack by using names for marketing-influenced milestones that aligned with sales' funnel stages and compensation structure. "Attribution" is a term that is useful to marketers but may be alien to sales leaders. When marketers use it with sales people, they risk being misunderstood as referencing "sales credit," a term that often bears directly on sales compensation and that can be a subject of contention. Marketers might just be better off not talking about attribution models with their sales colleagues.

Focus on business outcomes. Ultimately, sales and executive leadership care about marketing's contribution to business goals. Marketing should articulate how their efforts influence desired outcomes, even indirectly. For this reason, marketers should avoid communicating vanity metrics like page views to sales teams. As noted above, a number of marketers we spoke with have found that attribution modeling can be confusing or even off-putting to sales. Instead, consider how to help sales better understand how clients move through the purchase funnel.

Provide actionable insights. Instead of just reporting raw numbers or theoretical attribution models, marketers should provide specific, account-level intelligence that sales can use such as:

- **Lead qualification & prioritization:** high-propensity or sales-ready leads and time-sensitive lead prioritization.
- **Account & buying group insights:** buying group identification; account-level engagement, including which content a client has engaged with; customer journey mapping.
- **Sales playbooks/toolkits:** creating ready-to-use sales assets, such as pre-written emails and relevant content, aligned with marketing campaigns to ensure consistency of messaging and drive efficiency and ROI (and make sales' job easier).

Communicate continuously. For communicating with sales, marketing dashboards are necessary but insufficient. Practices that B2B marketers have found effective include the following:

- **Regular touchpoints.** Weekly huddles and quarterly business reviews are opportunities for marketing and sales to discuss performance, debug issues, and align on optimizations.
- **Bidirectional insights.** Marketers obviously have lots of quantitative data to share. But salespeople also often have rich qualitative information of value to marketers; marketers should solicit that type of information from their sales colleagues. For example, Medtronic, the medical device maker, has a strong sales culture. The marketing team recently began soliciting information from field sales reps to understand the objections they were hearing from clients, and uses that information to refine A/B testing of creative ad campaigns.
- **Establish a common view of the customer.** This is still a work in progress at many organizations. Sales and marketing may use different databases, or even define the ideal customer profile differently. A shared view of the customer ensures both sales and marketing teams are operating from the same source of truth, which reduces confusion and enables more holistic analysis of all touchpoints.
- **Cultivate sales champions.** Find supporters in sales and use marketing metrics and insights to help them engage promising leads, advance prospects on their purchase journey, or close deals. And then celebrate those successes with the broader sales team to win more supporters.

A close working relationship between marketing and sales is essential for the success of both teams. The practices described above are all fundamentally about communication and rooted in metrics.

Figure 6: Best Practices for Working with Sales



Conclusion: The Measurement is the Message

B2B marketing measurement is inherently complex. Long sales cycles, fragmented media landscapes, and the challenge of tracking the “dark funnel” mean that the data marketers rely on is often incomplete and inconclusive. This report suggests, however, that the quality of the data collected is only one element of marketing success. The B2B marketers that report the greatest success use measurement as a communications medium. To design marketing programs and their measurement frameworks, they work closely with business, finance, and sales leaders to align on priorities and to define metrics that are recognizable and directly relevant to the business. And they regularly report and discuss these metrics with their counterparts.

B2B marketers’ success in their roles is often built on a foundation of strong internal relationships. The most critical relationship to cultivate is with the sales organization. By planning together, co-creating metrics, speaking the language of sales, and delivering actionable, account-level insights, marketers can break down silos, build trust, and forge a truly integrated go-to-market motion.

This communicative approach to metrics extends to all stakeholders, including the C-suite and the board. Success depends on educating leadership about the nuances of B2B marketing, tailoring reports to the audience, and focusing on the business outcomes that matter most.

Ultimately, the metrics themselves are only as valuable as the decisions they inform. But measurement is also a medium of communication with the stakeholders whose support marketing leaders need to execute those decisions. B2B marketers striving to demonstrate their value and drive growth should recognize that measurement is not just a tool for managing marketing; it is a language for communicating with leaders across their organizations.

Appendix: B2B Metrics

B2B marketers are using numerous different metrics to support their marketing activities. The breadth and length of the list below highlight the diversity of needs and company types in the B2B marketing space.

The metrics are organized in five main categories:



Brand and Awareness



Engagement



Lead Generation



Pipeline and Revenue



Efficiency and ROI

1. Brand and Awareness

These metrics focus on how well the brand is recognized and perceived by the target audience.

Metric Name	Metric Description
Brand Awareness / Recognition	How familiar the target audience is with the brand or product
Brand Perception / Favorability / Familiarity	Qualitative or survey-based measures of how a brand is viewed
Impressions	The number of times content or advertisements are displayed to users
Reach	The total number of unique individuals or accounts exposed to a message
Share of Voice	Measures the brand's presence in public conversations or media compared to competitors

2. Engagement

These metrics gauge how actively target audiences interact with marketing content and channels.

Metric Name	Metric Description
Buying Group Engagement	Measures interactions within a defined group of decision-makers
Content Engagement	Interactions with specific pieces of content
Email Engagement	How recipients interact with email communications
General Engagement	A broad measure of interaction across various channels
Score-based Engagement	Assigning numerical values to interactions to quantify engagement levels
Social Media Engagement	Interactions on social media platforms
Website Engagement	Specific interactions on a company's website

3. Lead Generation

These metrics track the creation and progression of potential customers through the initial stages of the buying funnel.

Metric Name	Metric Description
Event Registrations / Attendance	Records the number of people signing up for and attending events
Form Fills / Conversions	Measures the completion of forms on websites, indicating interest
Leads Generated (Overall)	The total number of prospective customers identified and captured
Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs)	Leads identified by marketing as having a higher potential to become a customer based on engagement and profile
Number of Meetings / New Opportunities Opened	Tracks actual scheduled interactions with prospects or the creation of new sales opportunities
Sales Accepted Leads (SALs)	MQLs that sales has reviewed and accepted as valid for follow-up
Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs)	Leads that have been further qualified by sales and are considered strong prospects

4. Pipeline and Revenue Metrics

These metrics directly measure financial outcomes or the immediate potential for financial gain.

Metric Name	Metric Description
Churn / Contraction Reduction	Measures efforts to retain existing customers and prevent reduction in deal size or scope
Close-Won Pipeline Dollars / Sales Contracts	Measures the monetary value of deals successfully closed
Influenced Pipeline / Revenue	This measures the pipeline or revenue that marketing activities contributed to, even if sales ultimately closed the deal
Marketing-Sourced Pipeline / Bookings	Metrics indicating pipeline or actual bookings directly generated by marketing efforts
Opportunities / Deals	The number of potential sales engagements created
Pipeline Coverage	Reports on whether there is enough pipeline to meet future sales targets
Renewal of Annual Subscriptions	Specific to subscription-based services, tracking the renewal rate
Revenue Growth / Sales Volume	Tracks increases in overall revenue or sales quantities

5. Efficiency and ROI Metrics

These metrics evaluate the cost-effectiveness of marketing campaigns and the return on investment.

Metric Name	Metric Description
Close-Won Rates	The percentage of opportunities that result in a closed-won deal
Conversion Rates	The percentage of users who complete a desired action, such as converting from a lead to an opportunity
Cost Per Acquisition	The average cost to acquire a customer or a specific piece of data
Cost Per Click (CPC)	The average cost for each click on an advertisement
Cost Per Lead (CPL)	The average cost incurred to generate one lead
Cost Per Opportunity	The average cost to generate one sales opportunity
CPM (Cost Per Mille/Thousand Impressions)	The cost of 1,000 impressions
Pipeline Velocity	The speed at which deals move through the sales pipeline
Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)	Measures the revenue generated for every dollar spent on advertising
Return on Investment (ROI)	Measures the financial return relative to the investment made in marketing activities



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