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DEMAND GENERATION ANTI-TRENDS

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Synopsis:

- The state of demand generation
- The importance of demand generation in supporting lead generation
- The top demand generation anti-trends and strategies to address them

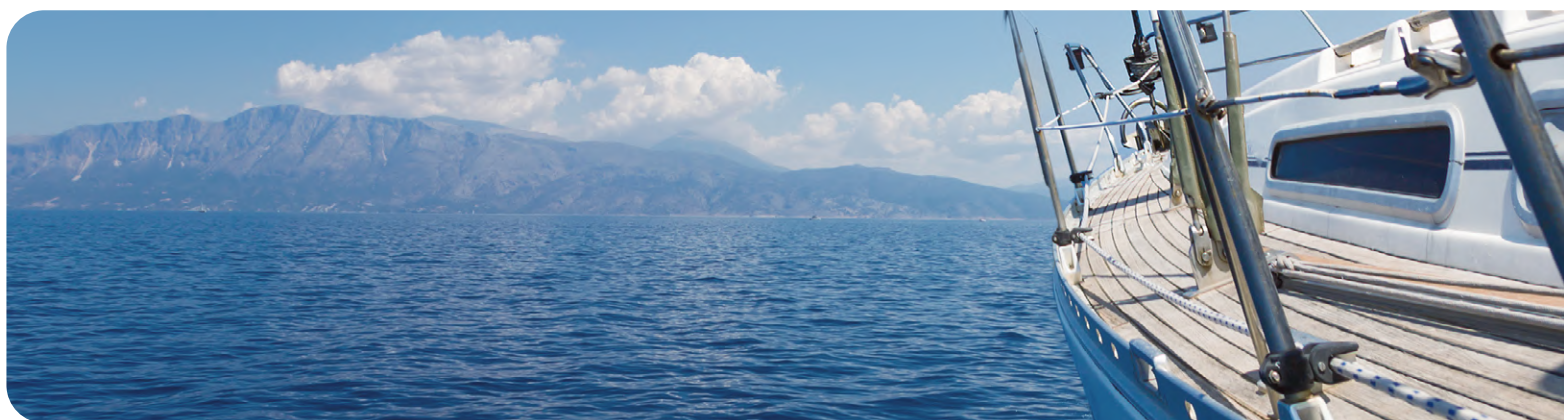


WHAT ARE ANTI-TRENDS?

Anti-trends refer to sales and marketing tactics that were once embraced but are now waning or declining in effectiveness. These anti-trends often signal shifts in buyer preferences, tech advancements, or changes in company UVP. Organizations must remain vigilant to recognize when their once-successful strategies or tactics begin to lose traction and adapt accordingly to stay relevant in the market.

WHAT IS B2B DEMAND GENERATION?

Demand generation (also known as demand gen) is the process of guiding prospective clients along the entirety of their buyer's journey with a brand and its offerings. This involves laser-focused audience targeting across multiple channels that gradually evolves in an ongoing nurturing relationship. Continuously sharing valuable resources and support on the platforms they frequent, including events, keeps prospects at target accounts engaged and generates quality demand generation.



The role of B2B demand generation in lead generation



Demand generation plays a pivotal role in engaging B2B buying groups by addressing demand-to-revenue opportunities across the entire buyer's journey. This ensures a steady influx of qualified leads and nurtured client relationships, thereby supporting both short-term revenue objectives and long-term business outcomes.

Therefore, lead generation is an outcome of successful demand strategies.

However, the current landscape for B2B buyers and marketers presents a stark contrast in priorities, as revealed by key data findings from the INFUSE Insights [Voice of the Buyer](#) and [Voice of the Marketer](#) reports.

"While the main focus of B2B buyers is seizing new business opportunities and ensuring seamless integration, marketers find themselves grappling with the challenge of supporting sales by generating sales-ready leads and maximizing pipeline opportunities.

This disjunction in focus between buyers and marketers highlights an imbalance that risks neglecting the performance of long-term demand generation programs."



— **Alexander Kesler**,
Founder and CEO of INFUSE

[Discover how to tackle buyer scrutiny with demand generation](#) →

The state of B2B lead generation



Navigating the B2B landscape has become increasingly more complex for marketers and buyers alike. With buyers becoming [more independent and risk-averse](#), extended buying cycles exceeding six months, and an average of [640 vendor interactions per journey](#) (6sense, 2023), the pressure on marketers to demonstrate performance is at an all-time high.

Many organizations are finding the effectiveness of strategies that used to drive performance beginning to decline—in response to this demand for tangible outcomes across the board. Indeed, [61% of marketers](#) rank lead generation as their top challenge (Hubspot, 2024).

Navigating B2B lead generation marketing in such an environment requires a strategic approach that goes beyond tactical results. While meeting sales targets is crucial, organizations must also prioritize long-term investments to both create and capture demand and adapt to the evolving market dynamics.

By focusing solely on immediate outcomes, organizations risk prioritizing lead quantity over quality, which can dilute the effectiveness of lead gen efforts.

Adopting this narrow focus not only undermines the sustainability of marketing strategies but also hampers an organization's ability to stay competitive in the long run. Therefore, striking a balance between short-term goals and long-term strategic investments with demand is essential.



Top 7 demand generation anti-trends



To help drive long-term growth, this article explores the top seven demand generation anti-trends, and most importantly, how to address them:



1. Prioritizing lead generation and lead lists over demand generation

The pursuit of immediate results in B2B lead generation overshadows the importance of investing in strategies that foster sustained demand over time. Only [10% of a business's total addressable market](#) (TAM) has intent to buy (6sense, 2023), underscoring the pivotal role of B2B demand generation in sparking buyer interest.

Striking a balance between short-term lead gen and long-term demand gen efforts is therefore imperative.

While securing immediate sales-ready leads is essential for meeting short-term targets, investing in strategies that cultivate buyers and drive client lifetime value (CLTV) is critical for sustained business growth. This is why relying solely on [purchased lead lists can negatively affect your ROI](#).



To empower your lead generation with high-performance demand generation, consider the following steps:

- **Strategic prioritization:** Allocate resources and efforts based on the potential impact on immediate sales as well as the cultivation of future opportunities.
- **Integrated campaign planning:** Ensure that each campaign includes components to capture immediate leads while also nurturing relationships for future conversions.
- **Lead scoring and qualification:** Implement a lead scoring system that not only identifies immediate sales-ready leads but also considers the potential lifetime value of prospects. Prioritize leads based on both their readiness to buy and their fit with the company's ideal client profile (ICP) for sustained growth.
- **Nurturing strategies:** Develop nurturing strategies that balance immediate lead follow up with sustained engagement. While some prospective clients may require immediate attention from sales, most will benefit from a more gradual nurturing process to build trust over time.

[Learn how to activate demand generation and lead generation for increased performance](#) →

2. Defining marketing success solely by sales

Our [INFUSE Insights Voice of the Buyer report](#) revealed that the top two drivers of buying decisions are new business opportunities and compatibility with current tech stacks. This demonstrates a desire for solutions provided as part of a long-term partnership that evolves with changing buyer needs.

Consequently, showcasing the immediate efficacy of offerings while also demonstrating the capacity to adapt to meet the shifting demands of the market, is essential for fostering trust with prospective buyers and clients alike.

“This current emphasis on short-term goals has led to an organizational imbalance in GTM strategies. Marketers are increasingly pressured to prioritize supporting sales and meeting immediate needs over focusing on long-term performance metrics.

This is exacerbated by global economic uncertainty, which is reshaping buyer behavior and reducing interaction time with sales teams. Addressing this challenge requires a significant reevaluation of marketing and sales tactics.”



— **Alexander Kesler**,
Founder and CEO of INFUSE

Organizations need to focus on crafting and implementing GTM and demand strategies that foster collaboration across key functions and enable adaptability to swiftly changing buyer demands. Building a robust framework is essential for accomplishing organizational and performance goals (including lead generation) in today's dynamic environment.

You can achieve this by implementing the following:

- **Emphasize value over features:** Rather than highlighting product features, focus messaging on how your offering contributes to long-term business value. This should include how your solution aligns with buyer goals for growth, stability, and future-proofing their investments.
- **Customize solutions to improve stickiness:** Work closely with clients to tailor your offerings to their long-term objectives and challenges. This customization demonstrates your commitment to client success and fosters deeper, more enduring relationships.
- **Offer performance guarantees and SLAs:** Provide performance assurances through service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees. This instills confidence in your ability to deliver results consistently over the long term.
- **Focus on client experience:** Delivering exceptional client experience and service at every touchpoint strengthens relationships and encourages repeat business (and potential referrals).

“Excellence in client experience should not be just a goal; it should be a guiding principle.

Every interaction is an opportunity to strengthen relationships and foster loyalty, paving the way for repeat business and enthusiastic referrals.”



— **Irina Surgaeva**,
Sr. Manager,
Client Operations and Strategy

- **Focus on client experience:** Position integration capabilities as a strategic advantage, emphasizing efficiency, streamlined processes, and future-proofing of client investments. Highlighting the ease and benefits of integrating your solution into existing platforms reinforces its unique value and supports competitive positioning.

[Discover a full breakdown of buyer priorities and challenges in our 2024 Voice of the Buyer research](#) →

3. Only using BDRs for sales outreach

Only 39% of marketers use BDR teams as part of their omnichannel/multichannel nurturing strategies ([INFUSE Insights Voice of the Marketer report, 2024](#)). Leveraging BDRs solely for lead generation and sales outreach wastes their potential to significantly enhance and support critical nurturing strategies during the first [70% of the buyer's journey](#), where buyers typically prefer to conduct their research independently (6sense, 2024).

This underutilization also reflects a misalignment between the strategies employed by B2B marketers and the evolving preferences of modern buyers.

Given the emphasis on the long-term impact of purchases, buyers are actively seeking comprehensive partnerships and solutions.

In fact, [85% of B2B buyers](#) believe that engagement has the same importance as product quality (Salesforce, 2022). By failing to position BDRs as a strategic asset during a critical evaluation phase, organizations neglect leveraging an additional (and potentially valuable) touchpoint, integral to cultivating trust and engagement with prospects throughout their buying journey.

[Discover how to anchor your GTM success with RevOps](#) →

How to activate lead nurturing with BDRs

Lead nurturing via BDRs extends beyond mere sales pitches; it necessitates a deep understanding of prospects' pain points, provision of relevant resources, and consistent engagement to foster trust. This approach not only enhances the likelihood of conversion but also lays the groundwork for enduring client partnerships.

This is particularly relevant as [87% of buyers](#) expect sales reps to act as trusted advisors (Salesforce, 2022). In addition, [66% of buyers](#) rely heavily on subject matter experts (SMEs) throughout the purchase process (INFUSE Insights Voice of the Buyer). Leveraging BDRs to engage with buyers during their critical evaluation process and function as a part of the organization's buyer enablement strategies is therefore critical.

Moreover, integrating BDRs into the nurturing process facilitates seamless alignment between marketing and sales teams. By leveraging insights gleaned during nurturing, BDRs can effectively prioritize leads and tailor their interactions to suit individual needs. This alignment not only streamlines the sales cycle but also minimizes friction between teams, increasing overall client satisfaction.

“Bringing BDRs into the nurturing process adds a personalized touch and ensures greater client satisfaction. Their role goes beyond just closing deals; they act as a bridge between the brand and its buyers, ensuring that every interaction feels tailored and meaningful.

By actively engaging with prospects and understanding their pain points, BDRs can address concerns before they even arise, leaving clients impressed with their attention to detail and commitment to their success.”



— **Irina Surgaeva**,
Sr. Manager,
Client Operations and Strategy

Discover how to leverage partnership and channel opportunities to meet evolving buyer needs →



4. Prioritizing the use of AI for content creation alone

Content marketing serves as a vital tool for lead nurturing given its potential to directly address the pain points, challenges, and needs of potential buyers. Research indicates that a staggering [84% of B2B buyers](#) consider easy access to technical content important (Deloitte, 2021), underscoring the pivotal role of demand-ready content in the buyer's journey.

In addition, buyers consume an average of [4-6 content pieces](#) during their buying process with 12% of buying groups consuming 15 or more content pieces (INFUSE Insights, Voice of the Buyer, 2024).

This, coupled with the considerable investment of time and effort necessary for quality content marketing, has led to many marketers being eager to leverage AI to streamline and expedite the process. Unsurprisingly, the [primary application of AI in 2024](#) is content creation and optimization (INFUSE Insights Voice of the Marketer, 2024).

“Our study also reports that blog posts are the number one preferred content format this year. This inclination may be attributed to the lack of time available to buyers to review vendors, their preference for readily accessible information to facilitate decision-making, or the sheer convenience of AI-generated content.

From a marketer's standpoint, AI has likely played a pivotal role in the growing popularity of blog formats and similar content types.”



— **Alexander Kesler**,
Founder and CEO of INFUSE

This, in turn, has also flooded the online space, highlighting the need for quality content highly relevant to its intended audience in order for brands to stand out among their competitors. In fact, an estimated [65% of the content marketing assets](#) produced go unused because they are irrelevant (Forrester, 2022).

Marketers should diversify their use of AI for other functions of their demand strategies including:

- **Targeting:** AI can be used for analyzing large datasets to pinpoint the most relevant audience segments. These are the foundation of detailed client profiles and tailoring programs for maximum impact and ROI.
- **Account Based Marketing (ABM) and Account Based Experiences (ABX):** AI can aid in identifying high-value target accounts, prioritizing them, and delivering personalized content to decision-makers across the buying groups. Predictive analytics anticipate the best channels and timing for engagement, enhancing success rates.
- **Automation:** AI can automate repetitive marketing tasks, freeing up time for strategic activities. Algorithms can also optimize ad targeting and content distribution, driving efficiency.
- **Data insights:** AI can extract valuable insights from large data volumes, revealing hidden patterns and trends. These insights inform strategic decisions like refining products, optimizing pricing, and identifying new opportunities.

[Explore how to effectively leverage AI for sustainable demand generation](#) →



5. Only utilizing intent data

While intent data is the primary driver (59%) for data utilization, a mere 15% of marketers are harnessing the power of advanced buyer and account intelligence models to inform their sales and marketing outreach. Furthermore, 24% are tapping into technographic data ([INFUSE Insights, Voice of the Marketer](#)).

This discrepancy highlights the strong bias toward intent data over other critical data sources such as advanced analytics models, technographics, etc.

“By neglecting valuable data sources, organizations jeopardize their ability to precisely target and engage prospective clients, resulting in diminished conversion rates and revenue growth.”



— **Irina Surgaeva**,
Sr. Manager,
Client Operations and Strategy

This is of particular concern given the rise of Millennial/Gen Z decision makers making up the majority of today’s buying committees, as they are [more likely to be deterred](#) by a poor buying experience and have less patience for extensive or frustrating interactions with brands (Forrester, 2023).

The importance of technographics and other market intelligence

Technographics can be invaluable for enhancing account qualification, particularly within the tech sector—a priority for many organizations given the projected spend of [\\$5.1 trillion](#) on tech investments in 2024 (Gartner, 2023). Technographics and other market intelligence (such as psychographics, firmographics, demographics etc.), serve as critical tools to fine-tune target audiences and tailor strategies to align more precisely with the needs and preferences of prospective buyers.

Buyers' increasing prioritization of streamlined buyer journeys underscores the pressing need for marketers to leverage available data resources more effectively to meet evolving client expectations and demands. Marketers whose brands give clients a personalized experience are [215% more likely](#) to state that their marketing strategy in 2023 was very effective compared to marketers at brands that do not offer a personalized experience (HubSpot, 2024).

Therefore it is important for organizations to invest in advanced analytics and leverage market intelligence to bridge the gap between recognizing intent data and effectively utilizing advanced analytics.

Drive qualified buyer engagement with high performance, data-driven demand programs →

Sat	Sun	Mon
Jan 6	Jan 7	Jan 8



6. Focusing on select decision makers at target accounts

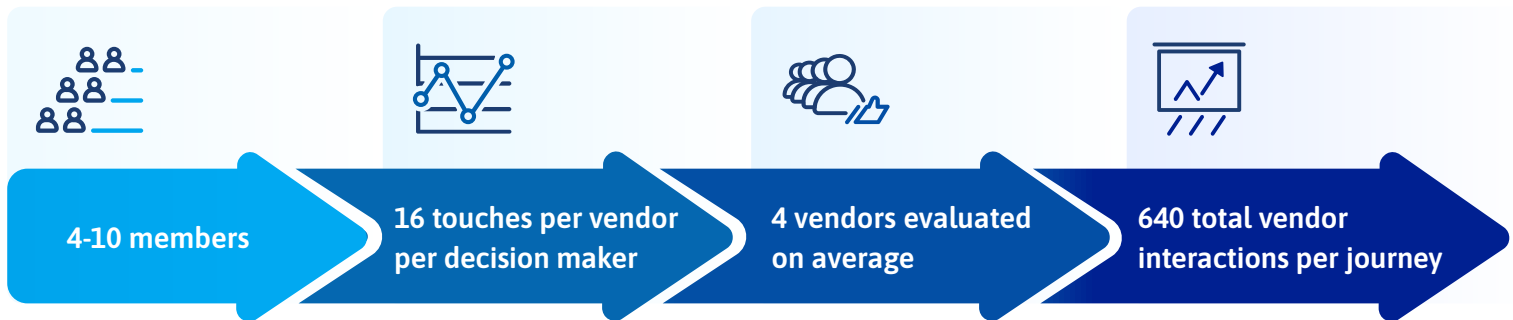
Buying group demand strategies are [still in their infancy](#), as many marketing teams prioritize leads from target accounts rather than engaging the entire buying committee (INFUSE Insights Voice of the Marketer, 2024).

This is a massive oversight, as focusing on select leads (rather than the entire buying group) can result in ignoring buying committees that have become [increasingly larger](#) and more complex (INFUSE Insights Voice of the Buyer, 2024).

“The current size of buying committees coupled with the complexity of the B2B buying process means committee members rely heavily on each other and 3rd-party experts for decision making. The current state of buying committees requires an approach that targets the entire buying committee at an account.”



— **Alexander Kesler**,
Founder and CEO of INFUSE



Source: 6sense Research, *The Buying Experience Study*, June 2023



Merely targeting a limited number of leads per account by prioritizing one or two job titles can result in overlooking up to 80% of the buying committee (considering an average group size of 8+).

Engaging with the right buyers at an account level is essential to increase consideration and improve win rates. This is where Account-Based Experience (ABX) strategies and leveraging extensive data insights become crucial for gaining a competitive edge.

Each member of the buying group plays a distinct role in advancing business initiatives. Therefore, it is imperative to align nurturing with the buyer's role and readiness. This targeted approach ensures that marketing efforts resonate with each buyer's specific needs and contribute to the overall success of B2B purchases.

[Discover the top five reasons demand generation campaigns underperform, and how to address them to drive your performance](#) →



7. Utilizing ABM as a campaign

ABM has gained popularity over the last few years with [71% of companies](#) having increased their spending in 2023—a 13.1% year-over-year increase (Momentum ITSMA, 2022).

However, despite its popularity, ABM adoption reveals a certain level of stagnation, with few programs reaching full maturity. In fact, [less than 20% of organizations](#) report that ABM programs are fully embedded in the business and less than 25% have solidified key elements of their approach (Momentum ITSMA, 2022).

This low maturity in many organizations indicates that ABM is often treated as a one-off campaign or a short-term tactic, rather than a holistic, organization-wide strategy crafted for enduring success.

[One-third of organizations](#) have reported that their campaigns are either not meeting expectations or significantly falling short (DemandGen, 2023). Notably, nearly half of the underperforming ABM campaigns are operational for less than a year, whereas an impressive 66% of successful ABM campaigns run for over a year (DemandGen, 2023).

These findings highlight a clear correlation between the duration of an ABM program and its performance. Successful outcomes in ABM demand a sustained, long-term commitment and investment.

Therefore, to reap the benefits of ABM or Account Based Experience (ABX), organizations need to implement a holistic strategy by:

- 🔸 **Cultural integration:** Foster a culture within the organization that values collaboration between sales and marketing teams. Encourage open communication and shared accountability for ABM success, aligning everyone towards common goals and objectives.impact and ROI.
- 🔸 **Cross-functional collaboration:** Encourage collaboration across different departments, including sales, marketing, client success, product development, and operations. Leverage insights and expertise from diverse teams to enhance ABM strategies and deliver value to target accounts throughout the client journey.

“Cross-functional collaboration goes beyond sharing tasks; it's about sharing perspectives, expertise, and passion. When we blend our skills and insights across teams, we not only unlock innovation but also foster a culture of mutual respect and collective success.

Our INFUSE 100 programs and Demand Accelerator platform are prime examples of the power of collaboration”



— **Irina Surgaeva,**
Sr. Manager,
Client Operations and Strategy

- 🔸 **Continuous learning and development:** Invest in ongoing training and development programs to equip team members with the skills and knowledge to execute ABM strategies effectively. Foster a culture of continuous learning to adapt to changing market dynamics and client preferences.

[Discover how to implement efficient ABM strategies with our INFUSE Academy ABM course](#) →



- 🔸 **Data-driven decision making:** Establish a data-driven approach to ABM by leveraging analytics and insights from various sources. Integrate data from sales, marketing, and client touchpoints to gain a holistic view of target accounts and personalize interactions based on their unique needs and preferences.
- 🔸 **Client-centric focus:** Place the client at the center of ABM strategies, prioritizing their needs and preferences. Develop deep insights into target account personas and tailor messaging and content to resonate with their specific pain points and challenges.

“Client satisfaction is the foundation of every client success strategy. Clearly understanding the world of your buyers is essential to driving the strategies that empower them to reach their aspirations. Prioritizing client needs at the center of your processes, allows your teams to forge partnerships that redefine client service excellence.”



— **Irina Surgaeva**,
Sr. Manager,
Client Operations and Strategy

[Explore how to drive demand performance with ABX](#) →



Key takeaways



- **Over-prioritizing sales over relationship building will limit demand and lead generation.** Marketers should prioritize building long-term partnerships that address buyers' needs for growth, performance outcomes, and platform compatibility with evolving technology, emphasizing trust and adaptability to drive sustainable growth.
- **Utilize BDRs for nurturing** to align better with buyer's preferences, build lasting relationships, and streamline interactions between marketing and sales teams for improved conversion rates.
- **Enhance and augment various aspects of your demand strategy with AI.** By harnessing the power of AI across multiple functions, businesses can enhance their decision-making processes, improve engagement, and drive greater revenue growth.
- **Utilize advanced analytics, technographic, and other data intelligence sources** to drive data-informed decision-making processes and optimize business strategies for enhanced performance and competitiveness in the market.
- **Engage with the entire buying committee** at your target accounts to ensure a seamless buyer's journey to boost conversions.
- **Implement ABM/ABX as an organization-wide, long-term and strategic framework** rather than a short-term initiative

GO BEYOND LEAD GENERATION.

Leverage high performance demand programs crafted to achieve qualified engagement from your target accounts and buying committees.

INFUSE demand experts are ready to work with you to develop the strategies you need to drive your growth, reach your goals, and boost revenue.

Let's work together →





2385 NW Executive Center Drive, Suite 100
Boca Raton, FL 33431
info@infuse.com

INFUSE.com