INFUSE media

HOW TO DRIVE ROI WITH LEAD INTELLIGENCE

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Synopsis:

- **How to start collecting and analyzing lead intelligence**
- **4 scenarios where lead intelligence improved outcomes for marketing and sales**
- **How to determine success and optimize future campaigns with lead intelligence**

WHAT IS LEAD INTELLIGENCE?

Lead intelligence is a combination of data points that marketing and sales teams collect and utilize to inform strategies. What is defined as "lead intelligence" varies per organization, but it is commonly a combination of buyer persona, **marketing segmentation**, buyer intent, lead scoring, and behavioral data points to form a detailed overview of each lead (or segment).

Lead intelligence is crucial to ensure teams focus their efforts and resources on the most qualified leads, as well as action appropriate lead nurturing strategies to drive brand interest and encourage future purchases.

Therefore, in the context of demand generation, **lead intelligence can be understood as data that supports campaigns to achieve growth and revenue goals**.

How to get started with lead intelligence

Establish a comprehensive database of lead intelligence, as well as implement a process to collect and analyze this data by following the **5 steps below**:

#1 Start with what you have and test hypotheses

Gather and collate insights from sales interactions with leads, your Client Relationship Management (CRM) system, surveys, and any other mediums where you are able to collect data on your clients and leads.

Rather than aiming for a perfect dataset, work with what you have to form hypotheses, which you can then test to authenticate and refine your lead intelligence.

For example, launch short campaigns targeting common interests and pain points, collect results, and then analyze this data to inform your future efforts.

#2 Share data from the hypotheses across teams for further insights

Ensure alignment across marketing and sales, as well as other departments by sharing updates on the development of your hypotheses you made and the results.

Promoting transparency and collaboration can help to collect feedback on additional hypotheses that can be tested, as well as identify other results from across the organization that can enrich your dataset.

To ensure alignment between all departments, develop a secure, shared dataset space (a CRM, for example) and establish routine meetings to refine data insights before moving on to the next step.

#3 Launch a test campaign to assess hypotheses and generate data

Having pooled feedback from other teams and formed substantial hypotheses, create a test campaign to provide further clarity on your assumptions, as well as build out your first definitive lead intelligence dataset.

At this stage, the idea is to launch a campaign that engages your target audience at a relatively low cost, but that is still comprehensive enough to test all the hypotheses you may have. That is why, for example, paid media campaigns running for a couple of months (or even a quarter) are a good option, as well as content syndication campaigns.

Once the campaign is finalized, you will have your first lead intelligence dataset to validate hypotheses and inform future efforts with more confidence.

#4 Optimize your dataset continuously with future campaigns

After your first lead intelligence campaign and dataset, it is imperative to establish processes that ensure that data from future campaigns feeds into analytics. This will enable you to continuously assess your information on leads. This is important to evaluate whether campaigns are correctly engaging your Ideal Client Profile (ICP) and buyer personas, and if updates are required.

Thus, make sure to compile and measure campaign reports through a lead intelligence lens, in order to glean insights that can enrich your dataset and inform future outreach efforts.

#5 Establish a Data-Driven Culture

Regardless of the value of your collected data, activating it across your organization is not possible without efficient data-sharing processes. Once your lead intelligence dataset has undergone several optimizations, enable teams across departments to analyze these readily available datasets to inform KPIs. This is a key element for RevOps, for instance, but it is also important for orchestrating effective demand generation as a whole at any B2B organization.

By implementing a data-driven culture, you allow for lead intelligence to positively impact all teams, leading to optimization and greater importance. Such collaboration can also help to continuously update lead intelligence to inform strategies across the entire organization.

How to analyze lead intelligence

Below are steps to start efficiently analyzing your lead intelligence data:

Lead intelligence KPIs per department

Focus on KPIs and metrics that will help the organization achieve its goals, rather than those that are nice to have. A RevOps-driven organization, for example, would most likely have overall revenue KPIs for both marketing and sales teams to strive for.

Here are some examples of lead intelligence KPIs for marketing, sales, and Client Success (CS) teams:

Marketing

- **Conversion rate:** This metric can be applied for both lead generation (leads who enter the top of the sales funnel), as well as to measure conversions from one stage of the sales funnel to the next.
- **Engagement, web traffic, and bounce rate:** These metrics analyze lead engagement and behavior on your brand website and social media channels. They are crucial to assess which topics leads are engaging with, and therefore, their evolving knowledge and pain points.
- **Funnel velocity and lead qualification:** By measuring the velocity of lead progression throughout the sales funnel (as well as from one funnel stage to the next), it is possible to benchmark quarterly if your strategies are effectively encouraging quicker lead progression toward a sale. This can be paired with lead qualification, such as counting the number of Marketing and Sales Qualified leads (MQL, SQL), as well as qualified accounts (MQA, SQA).
- **Cost per lead and client acquisition cost (CPL, CAC):** These metrics can establish the type of lead or account that is most profitable for the organization to prioritize marketing efforts, as well as optimize outreach methods (such as paid media) to minimize cost. Particularly with CAC, it can also inform what ICP delivers the highest return on investment (ROI) for the organization.
- **Marketing influenced revenue:** There are different ways to determine the influence of the marketing team on revenue, but adopting this KPI and developing a comprehensive attribution model (which tracks multiple lead touchpoints and interactions with marketing collateral) can help form an overview of the impact marketing efforts have on the organization's revenue and growth.

Sales

- **Close ratio:** By assessing the number of closed business from all sales opportunities, it is possible to evaluate the success of sales tactics and what to improve to encourage purchases.

- **Sales bookings:** By profiling the companies that are most likely to book meetings, you can reevaluate your ICP, qualification, and outreach efforts.

- **Sales growth:** By measuring the number of sales opportunities per quarter, in combination with direct feedback, you can track the performance of your outreach and pivot as needed.

- **Average deal size and average revenue:** Tracking the average deal size helps benchmark efforts and detect if the sales team is closing deals of higher value compared to previous quarters. This KPI, alongside average revenue from clients, helps inform an overview of the organization's growth.

Client Success

- **Client Lifetime Value (CLTV):** Client Success teams can identify the common criteria of leads that drive the most lifetime revenue. This KPI is also important to identify which types of leads are most likely to churn and strategize ways to reduce churn or realign targeting for leads that are more profitable.

- **Net Promoter Score and Client Satisfaction Score (NPS, CSAT):** Surveying clients to define their brand experience on a numerical scale helps organizations determine the success of their offerings in a tangible parameter. ICPs that are scoring lower in this regard should be prioritized to identify challenges and reduce churn. NPS asks clients to determine on a scale of 0 to 10 their likelihood of recommending your product to peers, while CSAT utilizes scales of 1-3, 1-5, or 1-10 to express in a percentage how many clients are satisfied with your product.

How to determine the success of a campaign

Tracking the metrics explored above can also help you assess the quality of your lead intelligence, and therefore, determine if your lead or demand generation campaign was successful.

When should I pivot a campaign?

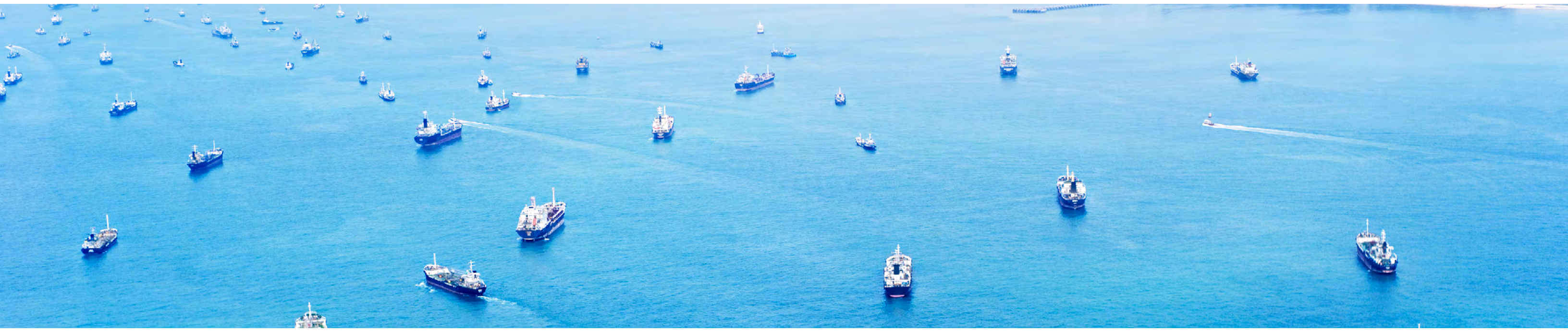
Pivoting campaigns is essential once you are sure a campaign is heading in the wrong direction, however, it should always be a decision informed by accurate data. This means the scope of the campaign (and its importance for overall brand growth) is crucial to determine if action needs to be taken, as well as the urgency (i.e. immediately or at the end of a quarter).

Waiting for the end of a cycle (as is the case with quarterly campaigns) has the added benefit of gaining more feedback and evaluating performance over a fixed period of time. Allowing for enough time to truly determine the success of campaigns is essential, particularly in the case of long-term efforts, such as those which are focused on driving brand interest and lead engagement with marketing.

Unless there is a serious issue regarding a campaign, a reliable method for identifying the need to pivot is to reference lead intelligence and evaluate the relevancy of campaigns for both target audiences and helping the organization meet its goals. Consider, for example, the question below:

> ***"Do I have enough lead intelligence to know this campaign is irrelevant for my audience, as well as my organization?"***

If yes, then it is time to pivot and launch a new campaign.



How to action post-campaign lead intelligence to drive results

Below are actionable ways to drive outcomes with lead intelligence once a campaign is finalized:

Generate campaign reports

Although a given, reporting in a way that favors collecting and sharing insights for lead intelligence is crucial. This means combining KPI and metrics data with feedback from sales and Client Success (CS) teams who were involved in the execution of the campaign and can share valuable insights into its performance.

When applicable, consider developing a report to track the progress of active campaigns, as well as one for when campaigns are finalized. This lead intelligence will assist your teams in strategizing future approaches to engaging leads and driving conversions.

3 areas of improvement to prioritize

When collecting lead intelligence, it is important to focus on areas that will improve the success of outreach, and therefore result in greater ROI from campaigns.

1) ICP, messaging, and pain points

Regularly assessing lead intelligence should be supported by evaluating the accuracy of your Ideal Client Profiles and buyer personas to determine if:

a) **You are targeting who you initially envisioned**
b) **The right fit for your solutions is not who you expected**

In both scenarios, the process of reevaluating your ICP can help identify if new pain points should be emphasized in your marketing and sales messaging.

2) Lead scoring, the sales funnel, and the buyer's journey

Lead intelligence determines how you motivate buyers to progress through their journey, as well as when to deploy touchpoints to encourage conversions and adequately build brand interest in your offerings.

This means, post-campaign, there is the opportunity to revisit your lead scoring and sales funnel in order to identify where leads drop interest, and where more nurturing is required to drive campaign objectives.

3) Content strategy and creation

The goal of content marketing is to inform audiences on topics of interest and address knowledge gaps and objections, while also driving brand awareness. This makes revisiting your content strategy to evaluate its relevance to your leads a priority.

Depending on performance and other data points, check content plans for necessary edits. This could include the need to cover new topics, themes, or pain points to drive the effectiveness of your content.

Examples of post-campaign lead intelligence strategies

The INFUSE team shares 4 scenarios where lead intelligence was leveraged to improve demand generation performance:

Scenario 1: Strategize future outreach based on historical lead behavior

By analyzing the touchpoints that drove the most engagement with leads (their theme, format, and channel), it is possible to determine the best topics for future outreach, and therefore optimize the cost of new campaigns with the same audience.

The key in this scenario is identifying which behavioral signals to prioritize, to then build out a proper nurturing strategy. **This can be broken down into 4 steps:**

- Analyze the engagement from top of funnel display ads to identify the most relevant pain points, themes, and assets
- Build out a middle of funnel (MOFU) nurture stream with touchpoints that focus on the previously identified topics of most interest
- Score leads, then prioritize those with the highest score for campaigns to move them down to the bottom of the funnel (BOFU)
- Focus on converting highly qualified BOFU leads, glean insights, and adjust nurturing streams accordingly based on the lead intelligence of the leads that converted the most.

INFUSE example

A SaaS (Software as a Service) platform in EMEA launched a nurturing campaign with the support of our demand strategists. The goal was to identify the most valuable ICP accounts for their proprietary manufacturing process system.

Through the nurture campaign, supported by display ads at the top of the funnel, our team identified three high-quality leads from a single account that met their ICP criteria for job titles (chairman, vice-president/chief operational officer, and innovation manager). These leads had also engaged with 4-5 touchpoints in the nurture stream, which signaled their brand interest.

Once these leads were identified, the SaaS platform prioritized these accounts with their nurturing efforts, earning a new deal that met ROI goals.

Scenario 2: Pivot when a new ICP is identified

Often, when a campaign is finalized, leads that were not considered as ICPs might have engaged better than expected with your demand generation assets, which can inform a possible pivot (as well as an update to your buyer personas).

Another common challenge encountered in this scenario is when leads across the board do not respond positively to the campaign, meaning that the approach and messaging must be reevaluated to properly engage your target audience.

Either way, the goal is to identify the themes, formats, and channels that drove the most engagement (preferably the top three content assets), and then utilize them to inform future demand generation efforts.

INFUSE example

A global information technology enterprise launched a multi-geo campaign in France, Germany, South Korea, and Canada, in order to identify which location generated the most ICP leads, as well as evaluate the pain points and offerings that resonated the most with decision makers in each location.

To achieve this goal, the company launched a global display ad campaign with INFUSE, with localized content for each of these countries. The campaign identified that out of a total of eight assets, one performed consistently across all locations. Therefore, all campaigns pivoted to promote this particular asset to decision makers to optimize ad costs.

Scenario 3: Utilize retargeting for cost-effective nurturing and A/B testing

Retargeting is a cost-effective solution for engaging current leads and promoting nurturing assets that can drive them toward the middle and bottom of the sales funnel. It is also the most sure-fire way to A/B test messaging and graphics, which means you can assess the performance of different pain points with a current audience to assess the best copy and imagery for future promotion with similar accounts.

INFUSE example

The same global information technology enterprise from the scenario above also leveraged this INFUSE retargeting approach. The idea was to A/B test copy and imagery across its geos (France, Germany, South Korea, and Canada) to identify which messaging and imagery resonated best in each location as well as worldwide.

With this geographic breakdown, our demand strategists identified that Canadian decision makers engaged more with green imagery, while Germans preferred orange graphics. This, combined with the content from above, then informed future display ads for both geos to ensure higher performance.

Scenario 4: Client retention through Account Based Experience (ABX)

Account Based Experience, an approach that drives Account Based Marketing (ABM) efforts through a client and user experience (CX and UX) lens, is a powerful strategy not only to nurture leads, but also retain clients after a purchase.

ABX helps support Client Success teams by delivering a streamlined and personalized buyer experience on an account level, which also collects continuous feedback to ensure the sold products are relevant and easy to use. Thus, by adopting an ABX approach with leads, the business can reduce churn and gain lead intelligence to inform future campaigns with accounts from the same industry.

INFUSE example

A cloud services provider was facing challenges defining their ICPs beyond demographic traits that were not actionable. INFUSE demand strategists decided to host a workshop with the marketing, sales, and Client Success (CS) teams of the organization to discuss methods of enriching this dataset with technographic and firmographic market segmentation factors.

Through this workshop, both demand strategists and teams at the cloud provider decided to adopt an ABX approach focusing on the ICP that drove the most CLTV; businesses with large, complex IT teams. This approach was then leveraged to retain clients of this ICP, as well as target prospects that met the same criteria.

How to ensure long-term results with lead intelligence

Collecting lead intelligence and enabling long-term results can be challenging. Here are some **best practices to follow to help your teams drive the best outcomes with this data:**

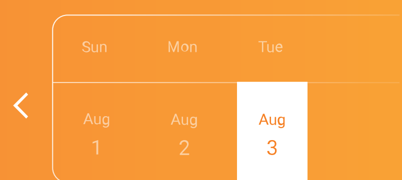
Always make a lead intelligence report after every campaign

Make it a standard for client success teams to develop a lead intelligence report after each campaign.

This report should include marketing segmentation data on the engaged leads, their touchpoints per funnel stage (which content assets they engaged with), conversion rates, and KPIs for measuring ROI.

Additionally, this report could also include intent data and searched queries by the leads, to evaluate their buyer intent and if the campaign effectively met the needs of leads.

Talk with a demand expert for support in building and analyzing lead intelligence reports →



Best practices for analyzing the lead intelligence report

- **#1 Ensure actionable takeaways:** Make sure analysis is focused on addressing pain points and bottlenecks in the buyer's journey which impact conversions.
- **#2 Identify the 3 top-performing content assets per funnel stage:** Discover the 9 top-performing assets (3 per funnel stage). This will help identify the best-suited content for ensuring lead progression toward a sale.
- **#3 List 3-4 recommendations for the next campaign/follow-up stage:** Whoever is responsible for the report should list their recommendations for a follow-up campaign (if existent) or a future campaign with the same ICP in the targeted audience.

Revisit UVP and USP messaging for future campaigns and ABM

Beyond revisiting your ICP (mentioned in the “3 areas of improvement to prioritize” section), you should consider updating the messaging of your Unique Value and Selling Propositions (UVP and USPs) after collecting lead intelligence data.

Since the goal of both a UVP and USP is to summarize the key benefits of your product to your ICP, then it makes sense to analyze the pain points that leads manifested during the campaign, as well as their language, to update messaging and how you position your solutions.

It is possible to A/B test assets with new messaging in future campaigns to ensure their relevance before “officially” updating your UVP and USPs across all branding efforts.

Final takeaways

Below are 4 takeaways to keep in mind when building your lead intelligence datasets and strategizing campaigns:

1. **Glean insights from every step of the buyer's journey:** Conduct full-funnel campaigns to gain lead intelligence data that accounts for the entire sales funnel. This will help inform future specific-stage campaigns since you will gain an understanding of the evolving pain points of your leads and the touchpoints required to address them.

2. **Align teams and develop a data-centric culture:** Ensure all teams are equipped to collect, analyze, and access lead intelligence as this will be crucial to inform all campaigns and achieve revenue goals.

3. **Update messaging to resonate with insights from lead intelligence data:** Make sure the UVP, USPs, and overall brand messaging touches upon the challenges leads manifest in the campaigns. Your lead intelligence dataset will provide valuable information for deciding how to address pain points in your marketing and sales outreach, as well as how to better engage leads.

4. **Continuously update your lead intelligence database:** To ensure lead intelligence reflects the current challenges and needs of your audience, it must be updated regularly (at least quarterly) to ensure that your organization is effectively engaging leads. Another best practice is to update your lead intelligence after a key campaign, or an important ABM initiative, to optimize spend for future endeavors.

ANALYZE LEAD INTELLIGENCE AND LAUNCH CAMPAIGNS THAT DELIVER ON YOUR PERFORMANCE GOALS

Our team of 1000+ demand experts worldwide have experience launching lead intelligence campaigns for businesses in 29 verticals and are available to discuss your strategies and inform best practices to improve outcomes.

GET IN TOUCH AT letstalk@infusemedia.com TO PLAN YOUR NEXT DATA-DRIVEN DEMAND CAMPAIGN →

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