Align sales and marketing in healthcare: Conquer siloes with shared insights

A healthcare leader’s guide to getting teams in lockstep with a single source of truth

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Sales and marketing are often coupled, but they play distinct and equally critical roles in an organization's revenue engine. Sales teams convert leads into customers by closing deals. Marketing teams accelerate existing opportunities and create new ones, building market awareness, generating demand, and nurturing prospects until they are ready to buy.

These differences are acutely apparent in healthcare, where regulatory uncertainty, financial strains, payor nuances, and hypercompetitive markets collide. But distinct though they are, sales and marketing are inherently aligned. If they aren't complementing each other in this complex environment, the definitions of leads and success can blur. Efforts become redundant and inefficient, leading to missed opportunities and friction between teams.

And most importantly, these oversights can lead to poorer care quality for patients.

Regardless of which corner of the healthcare landscape you serve —medical devices, pharma, health tech, payors, or care delivery — growth stalls when teams operate from different views of the same ecosystem. Alignment between sales and marketing starts with a shared, trusted understanding of the healthcare market. **It starts with the data.**

In this playbook, we'll discuss how healthcare teams can drive more precise, productive, and confident campaigns by sharing and democratizing healthcare intelligence between departments. You'll learn:

- Why a shared data strategy supports sales and marketing alignment
- What to look for in a shared data product
- Best practices when institutionalizing alignment organizationally

The cost of misalignment

When sales and marketing have different perspectives of the healthcare industry, work from different data sources, and measure success with different metrics, it creates a divergence that welcomes unnecessary risks and costs.

In healthcare, acting in siloes can create blind spots. And blind spots can lead to misalignment, bad targeting, and missed opportunities.

One risk is that split efforts can create a mismatch in expectations and perceptions in how a quality lead is defined. For example, say a device manufacturer has its sales teams operating from a list of physicians treating patients with a certain diagnosis. But marketing is operating from a different list of physicians who have a certain specialty, but no specific diagnostic codes in their caseloads. The different audiences can yield inefficient targeting and overlook key prospects.

Examples of sales-marketing misalignment

Medical device manufacturer:

Sales targets physicians treating patients with specific CPT codes. Marketing targets specialists with no parameters on patient population. **Divergent audiences yield diffused targeting.**

Health app:

Sales pivots to HR buyers. Marketing is still targeting health practices and consumers. **Efforts stall as tensions rise.**

Downstream, those inefficiencies can further drive a wedge between teams and weaken lead turnover in a time when the sector can't afford additional operational strain.

"If sales and marketing don't share similar goals, that often means they're misusing the finite resources that the business has," says Lauren Winner, Senior Director of Growth, New Business Sales at Definitive Healthcare. "They may be unknowingly targeting divergent parts of the healthcare market and creating a lot of inefficiency and waste in return."

When sales and marketing diverge too far apart, they're not just targeting different sections of the funnel. They're targeting different funnels entirely.

Consider another example emphasizing the cost of misalignment: A health app that supports healthy lifestyle choices. Sales notices that its most successful deals are with an emerging market of HR buyers who purchase the app as part of their employee benefits package. But if marketing has instead built its programs around health practices and direct-to-consumer buyers, then they're misaligned and targeting different audiences. The tension this misalignment creates between sales and marketing may worsen as a consequence, and lucrative markets might be missed.

Ultimately, when sales and marketing target different audiences, messaging tends to diverge too, driving more waste. "If your marketing team goes after messaging that focuses on cost savings, but the sales team is trying to speak to the product's value across patient outcomes, for example, that's a big gap that can stall your outreach," Winner says. "Just imagine what teams could accomplish if they worked together instead."

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>
> **Lauren Winner**
>
> Senior Director of Growth,
> New Business Sales at
> Definitive Healthcare

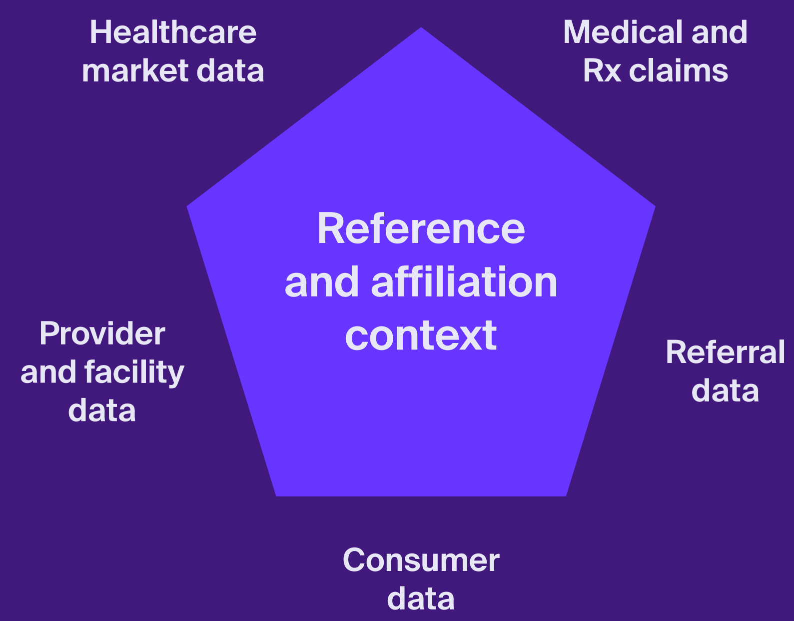
Working with shared healthcare insights

When sales and marketing teams align around shared objectives, both teams can take the guesswork out of strategic planning. But that requires everyone sitting at the same table and working from the same set of insights. If they do so, the upsides are significant: Better audience clarity, consistent messaging, and the potential to win more business.

As for what those shared insights should include, one key factor is reference and affiliations data, Winner notes. Adding new perspectives and layering multiple sets of data provides a fuller, more comprehensive picture of the market and gives existing data, like medical claims, the necessary context to make it more actionable.

“The healthcare ecosystem is wide and diverse, and claims are important, but they don’t always tell teams everything they need to know,” she says. “For instance, you might need to know where physicians are delivering care. A surgery center? A hospital? Or maybe it’s important to know where referral traffic is coming from, or the consumer demographics. Understanding not just the claims, but the context helps fill out the details for more precise targeting and messaging.”

What to look for in a shared data solution



Contextualized and interconnected data is a foundational and strategic asset that can unite sales and marketing teams around a single source of truth. This can result in more marketing and account context, more productive sales conversations, and a clearer measurement of impact.

And this model is effective across multiple healthcare segments and settings. For example, technology solutions company ABOUT™ engaged Definitive Healthcare's data and analytics across its clinical, sales, and marketing teams. With a shared understanding of health system prospects' needs, ABOUT's leaders could better map their product's differentiators to real-world market challenges.

In all, the organization saw 16 times faster access to data using Definitive Healthcare, cutting lead research time from weeks to hours and enabling more productive conversations from the outset.

> **We use Definitive Healthcare daily. It helps us get out of the gate in a much better position and sets us up for more informed, tailored conversations with each account.**

Tim Dols

Marketing Manager at ABOUT

Institutionalizing alignment across the enterprise

Establish a shared decision-making model to find synergies.

Having a single source of contextualized data for sales and marketing is critical, but it won't just automatically solve years of systemic siloes. For most organizations, change only happens with intention and effort, guided by a comprehensive change management strategy. Here's how to do it, according to Winner:

Sales-marketing alignment checklist

- Routine alignment meetings
- Shared budget structures
- Collective measurement models
- Consolidation that enables collaboration

Routine alignment meetings and feedback loops

Markets evolve quickly, and without regular check-ins between sales and marketing, some early signals can get missed. (Consider, for example, the shift in procedural volume from hospitals to ambulatory surgical centers and how that has impacted targeting.) That's why Winner recommends regular alignment meetings between leaders and contributors from both sales and marketing to review data as it changes and to detect emerging trends.

Implementing continuous feedback loops from the field to marketing and vice versa is similarly critical, she added. Sales leaders can inform marketers about what they're hearing on the ground, and marketers can share what they're seeing high-level from segment to segment.

Shared budget structures

Many sales and marketing siloes persist because that's how some organizations are built. Each department has its own budget, and purchasing decisions are allocated based on independent objectives.

While that's important in many contexts, Winner also advises having a shared budget that sits between. In this model, teams can collaborate more closely and pool resources for bigger investments, enabling enterprise solutions like shared data platforms that dually benefit both sales and marketing.

Collective measurement models

Much like how budgets are siloed between sales and marketing, metrics often are too. Each department needs its own KPIs to measure success, but that doesn't mean teams can't also align around a shared measurement model.

"When marketing has its own set of goals that aren't the same as sales, that creates a massive divide between the two," Winner says. "Goals can be individualized between departments, and honestly, they should be in some cases. But having a third, shared, measurement model that includes a dashboard everyone can see is critical to find those common incentives and encourage common behaviors, address siloes, and chase after specific markets with more clarity."

Consolidation that enables collaboration

As with most business functions, sales and marketing teams are under pressure to consolidate their vendor sprawl. This can yield stronger vendor relationships and streamlined operations. But if teams decide to pare down their data vendor list, Winner advises doing so through the lens of sales-marketing alignment.

During consolidation, it's not just about which vendors are best for which departments. It's about which vendors best support cross-functional needs.

"Vendor consolidation has absolutely been a key priority for many organizations," she says. "If you can find a vendor that supports the shared needs of multiple stakeholders rather than just having individual vendors support individual needs, that's an obvious way to consolidate those contracts more efficiently and effectively."

With fewer vendors, sales and marketing leaders can also be more intentional about ensuring each relationship delivers the right shared value. When leaders collaborate to assess the usefulness of the shared insights they're getting, they can better scrutinize their current contracts and evaluate new vendors, if needed.

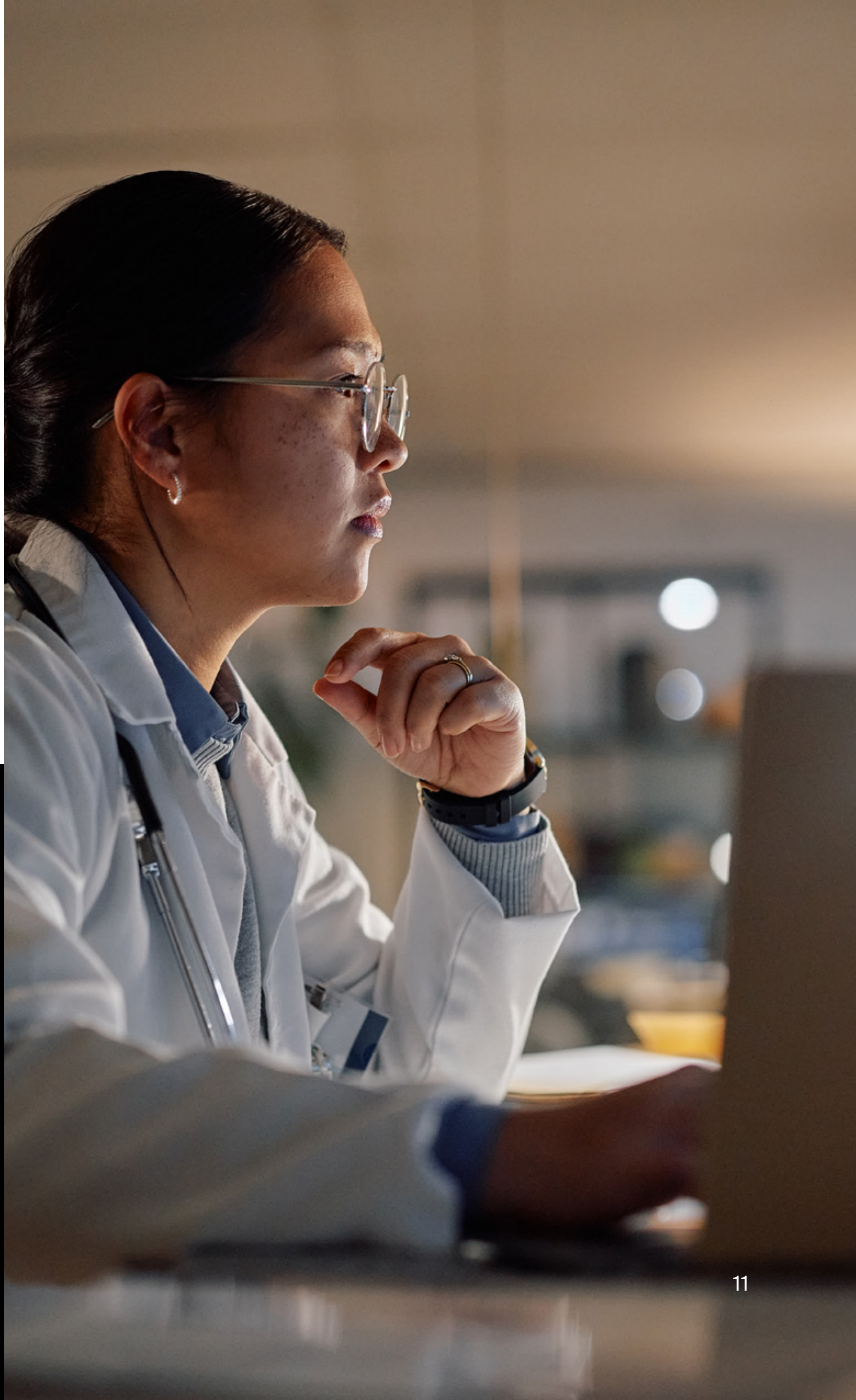
Some friction can be good

Siloes are never helpful, but some differences are necessary. Friction can be productive when it holds teams accountable and leads stakeholders to a newer, more effective way of working together. Embrace that tension and learn from it as you chart a new shared path.

Real data.
Real people.
Real impact.

When sales and marketing diverge, organizations might find that their efforts get stalled and success is held back. But by rallying your business around a united vision with shared market data, teams have more insight into what leads are now and what they'll become in the future. This clarity not only supports better business outcomes, but it also affects patients, members, and consumers writ large.

Visit definitivehc.com/use-case/go-to-market to learn more about getting the data-driven clarity you need to align your sales and marketing teams. →



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Healthcare is complex. We make it make sense.

Founded in 2011, Definitive Healthcare is a global organization with offices in the U.S., Sweden, and India. We work with every industry that touches healthcare, from life sciences and providers to software & IT, consulting, financial services, medical supply, construction, staffing, and more. Our data delivers trusted intelligence on healthcare organizations, clinicians, claims, consumers, and experts—giving you the context you need to make smarter decisions and drive real impact in healthcare.

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