



eBook

# How to Build an Effective **B2B Sales Funnel**



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## Preface

Since its conception over a century ago by the pioneer of American advertising, St. Elmo Lewis, the traditional B2B sales funnel has gone through numerous iterations. So much so that there still is no consensus on what a conventional B2B sales funnel should or should not have. Depending upon the industry, the business, the organization, etc., the traditional B2B Sales Funnel changes its components, nature, and output. However, irrespective of all the parameters, the critical aspect of the B2B sales funnel that remains unchanged even after all these years is to take the customer from the awareness stage to the consideration stage and the decision stage while purchasing a service or a product.

With this guide, we intend to take you through some critical aspects of the traditional B2B Sales Funnel while taking a closer look at some of the popular sales funnel models, how to build a definitive B2B sales funnel for your business, and how to maximize the sales effectiveness of your sales model.

## Understanding the B2B Sales Funnel

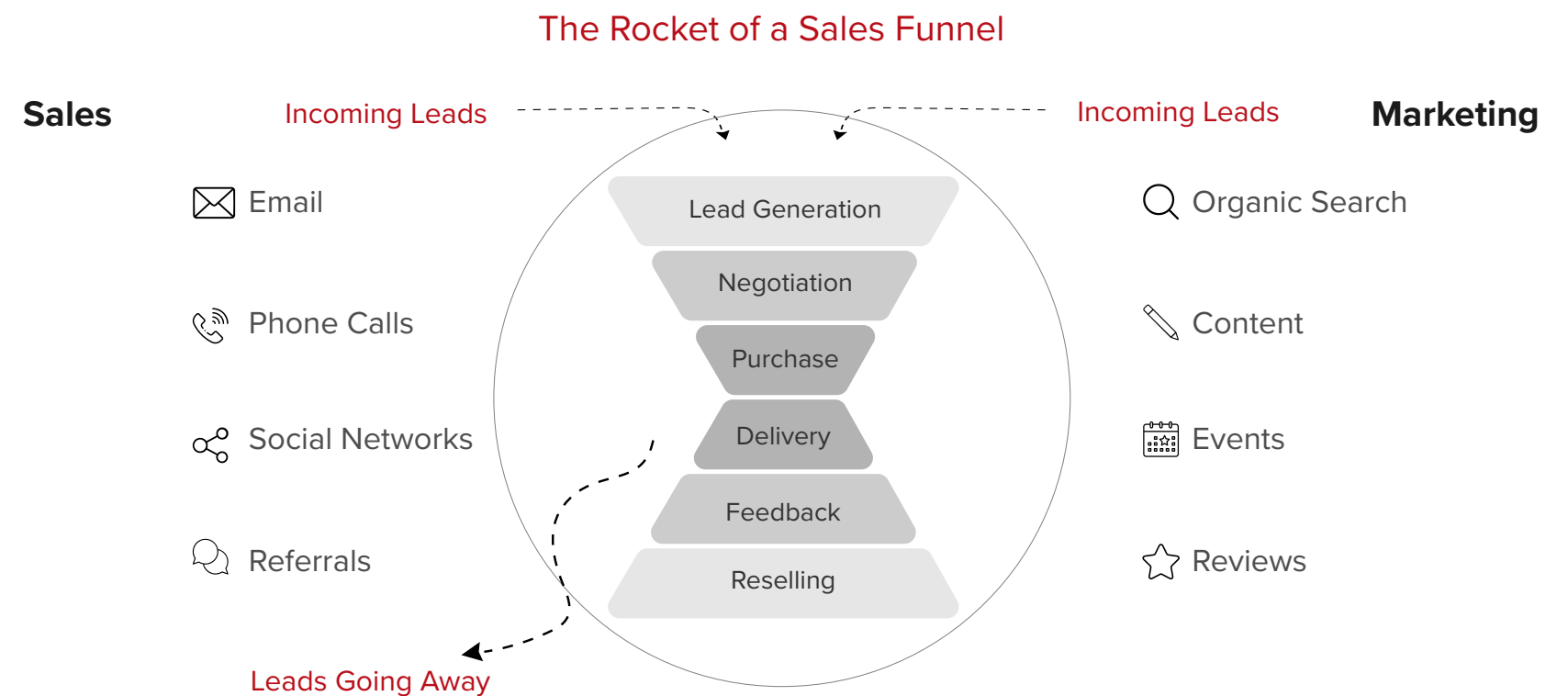
To understand what a B2B Sales Funnel is, you first must understand 3 key processes of any B2B Sales –

- **Buying** – The process of acquiring a solution to one of your business problems.
- **Selling** – Offering the solution to one of the business problems your product/service addresses.
- **Marketing** – Identifying the businesses who have the same problem, for which you have the solution, educating them, and enabling the sale of the solution.

Now, a B2B Sales Funnel is where all these three processes intersect and interact. Depending upon the industry or the nature of businesses, this interaction between the processes can be arranged differently for different needs.

It is well understood that no one can control the buying process. In its totality? Certainly not. However, as a business, you can have a significant influence on the buying decision through an efficient selling process and personalized marketing communications. And that subtle influence on the buying decision at every step of the buyer’s journey is what a B2B Sales Funnel is all about.

A B2B Sales Funnel is a highly integrated marketing plan that interacts with potential customers at every step of their buyer’s journey through personalized content.



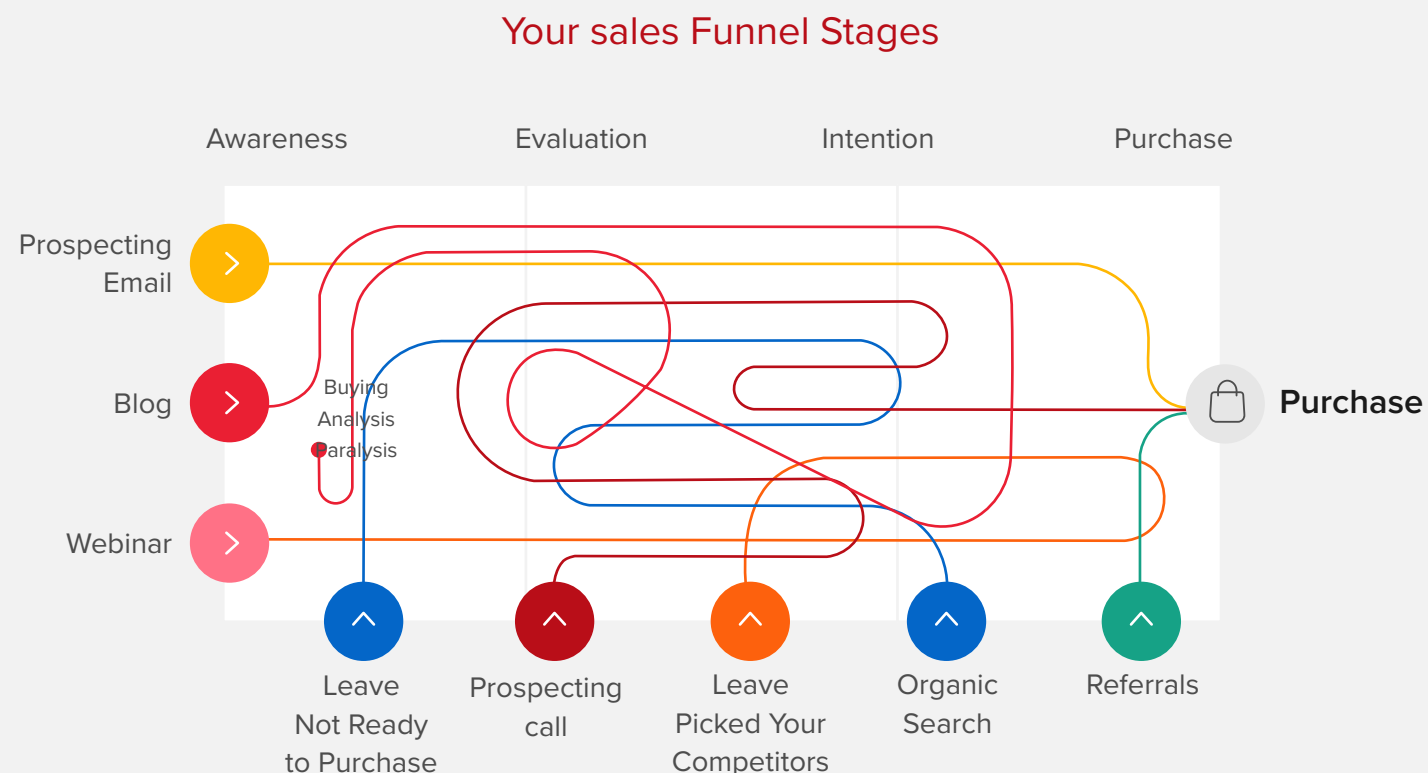
## The Three Stages of B2B Sales Funnel

In its purest form, any B2B Sales Funnel will have three key stages, followed by customer loyalty and retention, which generally comes into play once you have acquired a paying customer.

In a traditional B2B Sales Funnel, a customer moves seamlessly from one stage to another while learning about your product/service to becoming a paid customer and consequently a returning customer.

The three stages of the B2B sales funnel are -

- **Top of Funnel (TOFU)** – Prospecting
- **Middle of Funnel (MOFU)** – Lead Generation
- **Bottom of Funnel (BOFU)** – Conversions



## Types of B2B Sales Funnel

As we've mentioned, there is no one fixed model for a B2B Sales Funnel. Certain aspects of the funnel can be altered depending upon the nature of the business, the industry, and the organization. Here we take a closer look at some of the most prominent sales funnel models widely used across industries.

### The AIDA Model

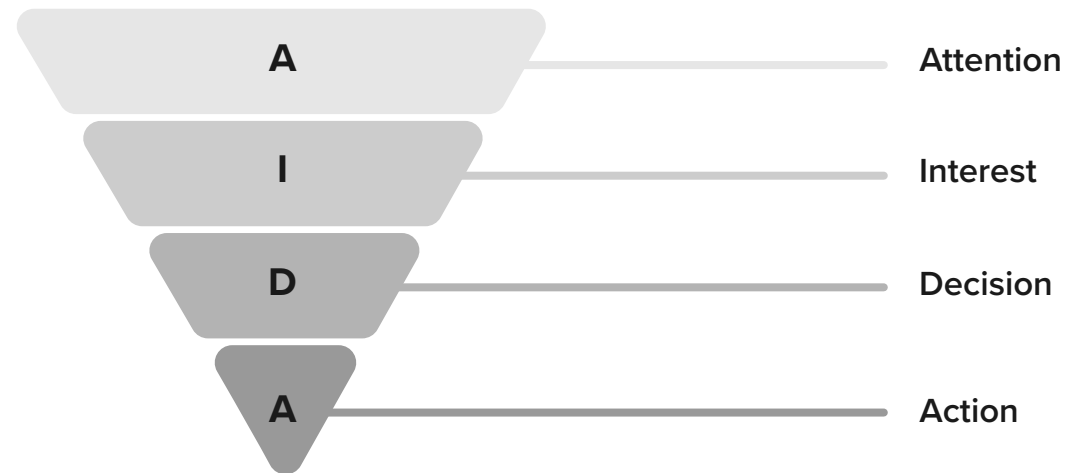
The AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) Model is the first model developed by St. Elmo Lewis in 1898. The AIDA model perfectly encapsulates the buyer's journey and thus has been the widely used model across industries.

The AIDA funnel across the B2B sales look like:

- **Awareness:** The decision-makers are made aware of a product or service, through paid ads, email campaigns, content marketing, social media posts, events and webinars, etc.
- **Interest:** The decision-makers or influencers gradually develop an interest in the product. They start analysis with comparison of the product or service against other available options.
- **Desire:** Once the decision-makers develop a desire for the product or service and they actively seek more details, especially pricing related information on the product/service.
- **Action:** The decision-makers arrive at their final step and decide to make purchase of the product / service.

The most significant advantage of the AIDA model is that it educates the sales and marketing teams on how the buyer makes their purchasing decision. However, it doesn't consider the buyer's sentiment, emotions, and behavior after purchasing. For this reason, Arthur Sheldon's AIDA model included Satisfaction and thus became the AIDAS model. Depending upon the nature of your business, you can decide to have Satisfaction in your sales funnel.

### AIDA Funnel

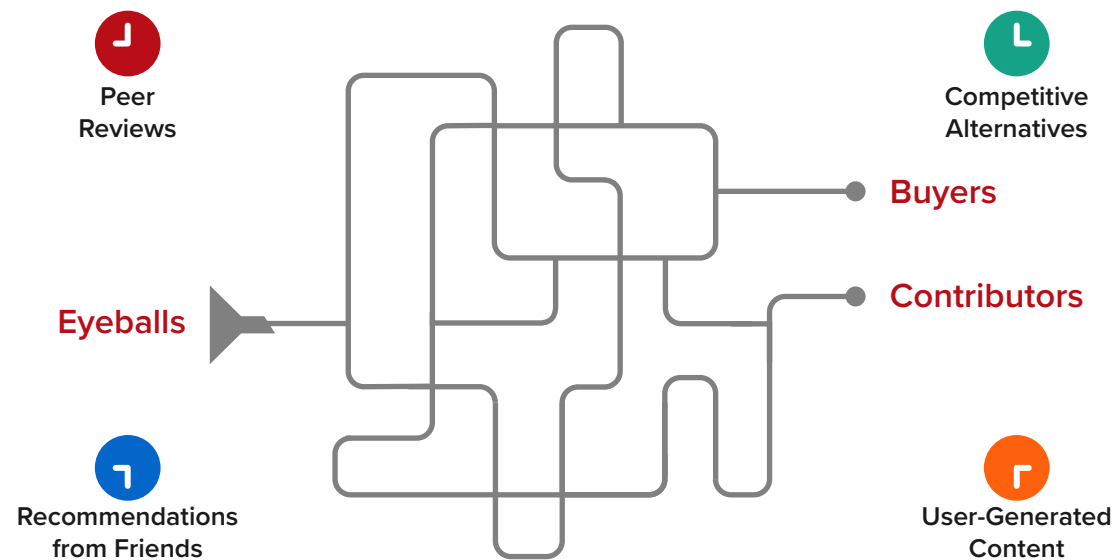


### The Forrester Model

Forrester has made numerous vital analyses and reports on the traditional sales funnel. In 2007, Brian Haven's Marketing's New Key Metric: Engagement defined that the buyer's journey involvement can be influenced by the information available online. The Forrester model adds "Loyalty" as a vital next stage to the traditional sales funnel.

This new model sheds some light on the factors that can easily influence the buyer's decision. This also encouraged the businesses to serve their customers better.

### Forrester Model



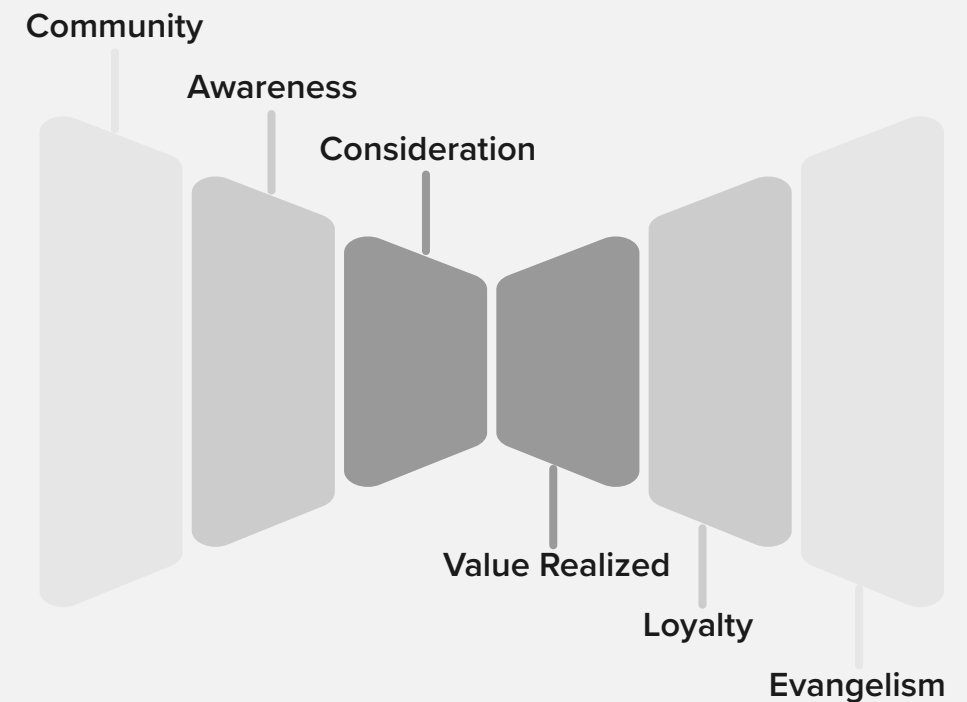
### Heinz Marketing's Bowtie

Back in 2020, Matt Heinz made two crucial statements regarding the classic B2B sales funnel –

- The traditional model didn't take into consideration the leads, that aren't ready to make the purchase at the time of contact, but certainly are not denying the possibility of it in the future.
- Ideally, the funnel should be in the shape of a bowtie, considering the fact that a customer engages in several ways with the seller in several ways.

The model was given its name due to its shape of a Bowtie.

### Heinz Model



## Creating An Effective B2B Sales Funnel

Creating an effective B2B Sales Funnel is an amalgamation of various successful conversion techniques blended with the AIDA model. While these steps can be interchanged based on the business requirements, they mainly apply to most business use cases. However, if your business case is unique, feel free to reach out to us, and we will be happy to curate a bespoke solution for you.

### Map Your Buyer Journey

The goal behind creating a B2B sales funnel is to increase conversion. So, it is very important to identify the starting point and end goal for your buyer's journey. You can do it simply by –

- Identifying your current buyer's journey
- Identifying your end goal
- Identifying the gaps in your buyer's journey that you can easily plug.

Once you've identified all these points, you can easily map them onto a funnel. And that becomes a great starting point for you.

### Create Goals for Each Stage

Once you've identified the stages of your sales funnel, you need to categorize them into three different parts: Top of Funnel (TOFU), Middle of Funnel (MOFU), and Bottom of Funnel (BOFU).

Once you've categorized the stages into different parts, you must create goals for each stage. These goals will help you measure the effectiveness of all your campaigns across each stage. Your goals could be like increasing awareness/educating the prospects at the top of the funnel, increasing the engagement rate in the middle of the funnel, and boosting conversion rates at the bottom of the funnel.

It is imperative to measure the progress at each stage. You can use different tools like Google Analytics or marketing automation tools like HubSpot to measure your progress.

### Create Content for Each Stage

Each stage of your sales funnel demands its own marketing plan to keep the prospects moving from one stage of the funnel to the other. So, it is very important that you create unique content for every stage of your sales funnel.

The nature of the content can be different for different stages.

- **TOFU** – Content that is visually engaging like videos, blog posts, social media posts Etc.
- **MOFU** – Content that creates value such as case studies, video tutorials, eBooks Etc.
- **BOFU** – Content that aids the buying decision such as client testimonials, free trials, demos Etc.

Each stage of your funnel should encourage your buyer to take some action. It could be as small as clicking the like button on the socials to as significant as picking up the phone and calling the Sales executive after receiving an email. But the content at each stage must incite some action from the buyer.

### Retain Customers

An effective B2B Sales funnel should help you discover new customers and also retain your old customers. It must be noted that the cost of acquiring a new customer will always be higher (almost 5X) than retaining your existing customers. So, you must create programs and campaigns that cater to your current customers and even reward them for their loyalty.

Some of the ways in which you can engage your existing customers include –

- Creating loyalty programs
- Hosting member-exclusive events
- Sending exclusive emails/goodies
- Starting a customer focused RSS feed



## Concluding B2B Sales Funnel

Creating a B2B Sales Funnel is a continuously evolving process. There is no silver bullet but a few tried and tested methods. Creating a highly effective sales funnel is the first step toward optimizing your sales processes to meet your customers' needs and yield higher ROI. As a marketer, you need a dedicated and streamlined B2B lead generation program across every touchpoint to accelerate audience reach, improve engagement, nurture prospects, and generate quality leads.

If you're starting your B2B marketing journey or are just not with you current lead conversions, we can help you get started. Our B2B demand generation solutions leverage years of industry expertise blended with advanced technologies to meet the need of modern businesses and deliver a B2B demand gen program that works. If you have doubts and queries on your mind, reach out to our B2B Lead Generation experts, and we'd be happy to help.



# THANK YOU

## About Datamatics Business Solutions

Datamatics Business Solutions is a technology-driven business process management partner for global enterprises. We serve global Fortune 1000 companies, growing enterprises, and start-ups with our bespoke research and consulting services to accelerate their demand generation initiatives. We have a proficient workforce of 600+ research professionals empowered by advanced AI-based data capabilities. With over 200K hours of research and consulting support delivered to a client base spread over 30+ countries, we address the B2B demand generation requirements of our client base with precision.

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