

HOW TO PLAY NICE



FRICION BETWEEN SALES AND MARKETING CAN BE THE KISS OF DEATH FOR A HOME BUILDER, BUT YOU CAN AVOID IT

By Mike Lyon, Contributing Editor

I'm sure this is no shocker: It's our observation that many builders' sales and marketing teams don't always get along. The friction between the two departments is often obvious. For example, marketing points the finger at sales and says, "Why don't you follow up with these leads? You sit in the model home with nobody walking in for 80 percent of the week. What are you doing all day?" Sales fires back, "You just hang out in your office with your headphones on doing arts and crafts, listening to John Mayer. Why don't you spend a day in my shoes? It's not as easy as it looks. P.S. Your leads are horrible."

Sound familiar?

While the level of friction may vary, one thing is clear: The strained relationship between sales and marketing is the kiss of death in a consumer-driven economy. The companies that will win in 2018 and beyond work side-by-side with the shared goal of creating a customer experience that exceeds expectations. In such organizations, blame, accusations, and apathy created by lack of a common goal are history.

FIVE PRINCIPLES

Here are five ways to help you develop a more cohesive sales and marketing team.

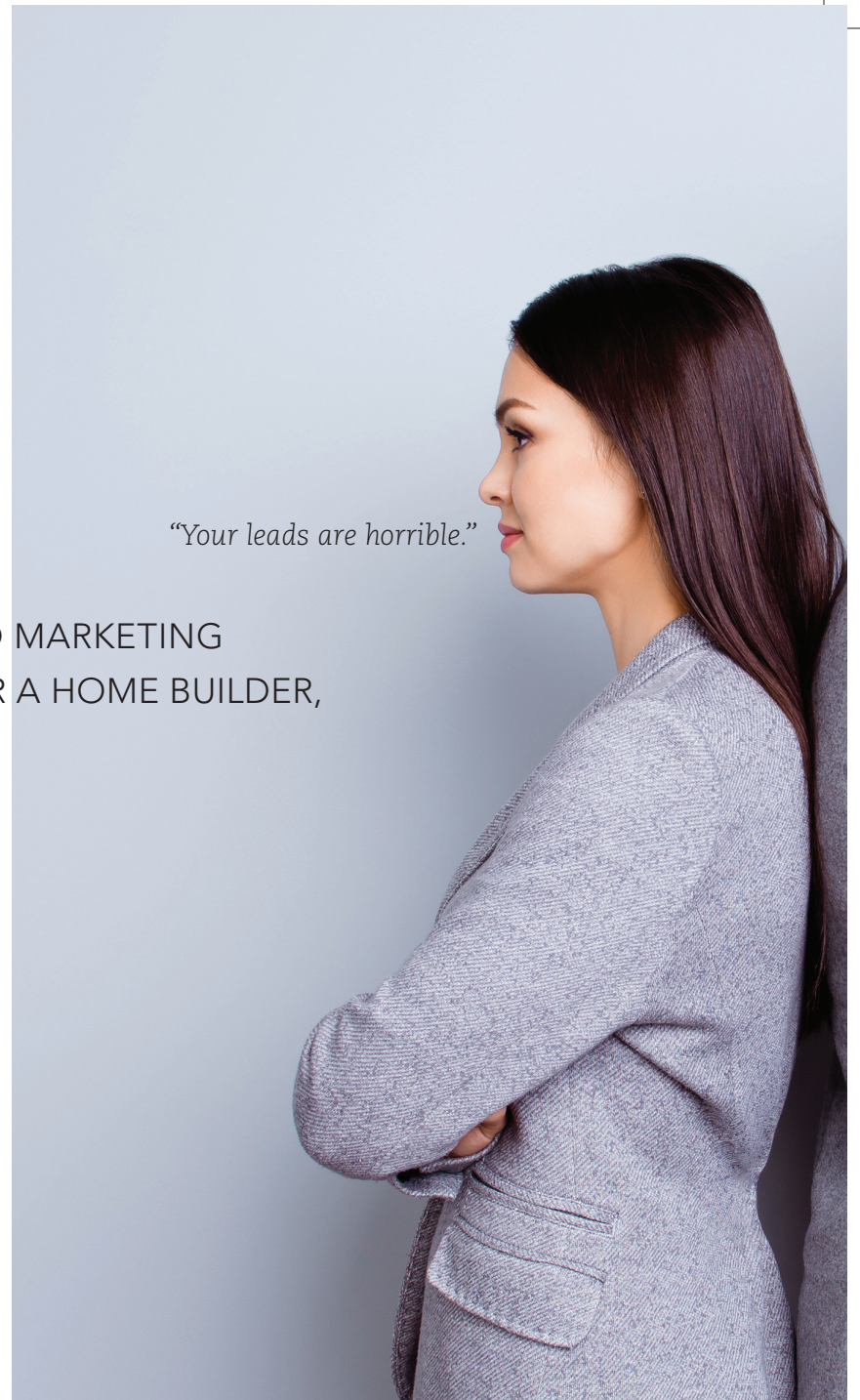
1 Create two distinct roles to support two distinct activities.

I find it odd that any builder selling more than 50 homes per year tries to combine sales and marketing into one role. There's no such thing as a sales and marketing director.

Each role requires accessing completely different sides of the brain. Maybe you could do both back in the good old days, when all you had to do was approve some artwork and place an ad on a billboard or in a magazine or newspaper. Not any more.

Marketing and advertising have grown increasingly complex, and the rules change just about every other day. The

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hierarchy or org chart doesn't matter as much as the actual time spent executing.

2 Have sales step into marketing's role and vice versa.

In other words, cross-train. Break down silos. Does marketing understand the role of the sales rep? Does a sales rep see everything the marketing team is doing? Without exposure to both sides of the customer experience, people can become myopic. The focus will be too narrow and you won't see the whole picture.

Have on-site sales staff shadow the online sales position. Have marketing staff sit at a model home on the weekend and try to get prospects to fill out a registration card. Amazing