Client Profile

This software company provides human capital management applications hosted in the Cloud. It was founded 20 years ago to automate HCM workflows.

Business Objective

The mature software company was experiencing flat growth and was concerned about profitability as customer attrition occurred. Marketing was passive and the sales process was ad-hoc. It was critical that lead generation improved and the sales process delivered greater revenue.

Solutions Provided

Transformation to digital marketing and sales required an evolutionary plan. Laying a foundation and then executing and improving over time enabled a smooth transformation from ad-hoc to digital and optimized.

The conceptual target state below involved a number of transitions to achieve.
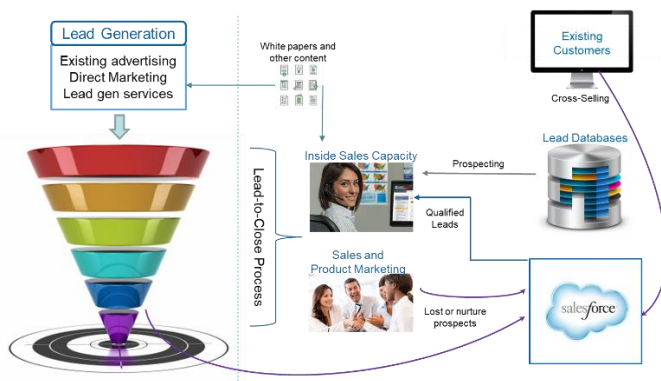
Sales and Marketing Process

A defined inside lead generation process was created and initiated immediately. This function flowed qualified leads to senior sales professionals to develop and close. A raw implementation of Salesforce.com was used to capture leads while the enterprise migrated from two other CRM systems, one of which was homegrown.

Salesforce Implementation

Salesforce.com was implemented in stages starting with inside lead generation. After definition of the full sales funnel that encompasses all of the products, the existing CRM data was loaded into a customized Salesforce implementation that supported the minor process variations across products. Everything sold was now tracked in Salesforce including implementation and customization services.

Existing and new lead generation sources, described below, flowed suspects and prospects into the top of the Salesforce funnel. The next step was to migrate all marketing into Pardot using defined customer journeys that reflected the different products and potential paths in the lead-close process.

Integration

While data loading during CRM consolidation captured most of the data. However, linkage of end-to-end processes required integration. This included connection to the customer management system used to support existing customers. This was an in-house system used to manage operations and was not targeted for replacement.

Metrics

Metrics were defined at various stages of the funnel and for strategic purposes. At the top level, historical data was mined to determine:

- Customer acquisition cost
- Average customer tenure
- Customer lifetime value

Operationally, process metrics were applied to manage the business. Most importantly, visibility was gained into the depth and shape of the sales funnel.

- Sales cycle and time in each stage of the funnel
- Close rate and loss rate in each stage of the funnel

Outbound Marketing

Outbound marketing did not previously exist but was embraced by the company. Despite being a greenfield sub-project, it remained challenging to develop the required capabilities.

Process

The first step was to document the to-be marketing processes. This included interim phases used until Salesforce and Pardot were fully implemented. Phased transformation enabled the client to ramp up marketing knowing that it would eventually be automated and integrated.

Drip Marketing

One key element added to the marketing outreach was drip e-mail campaigns. While this portion of the customer journey involved a number of manual steps, documentation and error-proofing limited the cost to implement. Once the process stabilized, interns were hired to reduce the labor cost until full automation was available.

Content

There was a dearth of marketing content which required an initial effort to establish a foundation. Some of the key elements included:

- Style guide and templates
- Marketing messages
- Marketing plan and editorial calendar
- Marketing budget

Once the plan was established, content was created across channels. In addition to e-mail campaigns, other value added content was created.

- White papers
- Product collateral including videos
- Webinars
- Social media posts of relevant, target content

Marketing Partners

As a small Cloud software firm, the client could not afford to staff a full marketing department with in-house sales operations support. To successfully transform marketing and sales, we engaged marketing partners to fulfill these functions. (Actionable Strategies does not benefit from the recommendation or use of partners.)

These partners supported a number of critical functions:

- Content development
- List acquisition
- Webinar placement
- Lead generation in select target markets
- Search engine optimization

Business Results

The client now has an end-to-end digital marketing and integrated sales process on the leading CRM and digital marketing platform. Marketing and sales use a single platform providing visibility of the sales funnel across the organization.

Revenue is now forecast with greater accuracy. Metrics such as CAC and CLV facilitate better investment decisions. This transformation will enable the client to grow and scale up both marketing and sales activities without constraints.