



**EBOOK**

# **How Business Development Representatives Can Drive High-Value Conversations and Conversions**



# Business Development Representatives: The Right Role for a Changing B2B World

The business development representative (BDR) role has existed in most organizations for decades. Whether your organization calls the role BDR, sales development representative (SDR), or lead development representative, their function remains the same; to enable your organization to support meaningful and personable connections with more prospects and buyers.

Regardless of the title and job scope, BDRs play a more strategic role in high-growth companies today.

They engage prospects in conversation through various channels: listening to prospects, reacting to their concerns, and interacting with them on a level that is impossible to achieve using scripts, battlecards, or other “canned content” tactics.

# 81%

of prospects say their interactions with vendor sales reps positively influenced their decision to ultimately select that vendor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2020 B2B Buyer Behavior Study, Demand Gen Report, accessed January 2022





# Traditional BDR vs. Strategic BDR

Traditionally, the job of a BDR involved cold-calling, appointment-setting, or lead qualification tasks that emphasized simplicity, consistency, and processing a high volume at a low cost. Though it was a low-cost source of leads, it was not always high-quality and was less likely to convert to sales.

Today, the BDR role is more strategic—the biggest difference being that they understand how to use what they know to engage prospects and conduct target account outreach. They are typically flexible, self-motivated workers who learn fast.

Other key differences include:



## Knowing the buyer

Knowing your buyer personas inside and out means thinking about how they like to be communicated with. Prospects do not respond well to messaging that does not deliver personalized value to them.



## Taking a consultative approach

BDRs look to solve their prospect's problems, not just sell them a solution. They act as a personal guide to help prospects navigate the buyer's journey since the prospect's best interest is their No. 1 priority.



## Having empathy

It pays to care about prospects' pain points. Researching and finding out where prospects are in their buyer's journey is critical to providing value for them.



## Having grit

Tactful persistence is what makes for the most successful BDRs. If their strategy is not working, they will keep reiterating until they get the results they are looking for.



## Continuously working toward sales and marketing alignment

The BDR needs to have a close relationship with both sales and marketing to see both ends of the spectrum. The key component of building relationships, internally and with prospects, is sales and marketing alignment.



# The Strategic BDR: Solving Mid-Funnel Challenges

The BDR role is essential when it comes to solving mid-funnel challenges, keeping your deals in motion, and your prospects and sales team in sync. **The following is a list of the top four challenges BDRs can solve:**

## 1 ABM support and enablement

Account-based marketing (ABM) is designed to concentrate sales and marketing resources on a clearly defined set of target accounts, identify decision-makers and other key roles within each account, and employ personalized campaigns designed to drive engagement.

ABM is quite effective: 97% of marketers who have explored ABM report higher ROI relative to traditional marketing activities.<sup>2</sup> However, all account-based programs depend on careful research, intelligence-gathering, and support and enablement activities. Fortunately, these tasks fit a BDR team perfectly to ensure a successful outcome.

<sup>2</sup> What Is ABM, and Is It Right for You? Brafton, accessed January 2022

## 2 Mid-funnel engagement

It isn't always clear-cut when it comes to the division of mid-funnel activities between the marketing and sales team. This often leads to problems defining and executing lead hand-offs, creates barriers to coordinated outreach and engagement efforts, and ultimately increases the risk that promising leads will get lost or mishandled.

A BDR can play a critical role in closing this mid-funnel "attention gap" and support mid-funnel engagement and relationship-building activities or take over tasks entirely by:

- Shepherding leads from MQL to SQL status
- Ensuring leads don't grow stale during the hand-off process
- Gathering useful data and insights for the sales team
- Ensuring a buyer is ready and appropriate for conversion

## 3 Data quality and governance

B2B sales reps are often pressed for time and forced to multitask, so it's understandable that CRM records and other resources may be outdated as they have no time to keep up with it.

However, a properly trained BDR can be tasked with prioritizing data quality, becoming familiar with working inside a firm's CRM system and other data-driven sales and marketing applications—resulting in better data quality.

## 4 Stronger prospect/buyer relationships

Previously, the BDR's position as a shepherd for mid-funnel leads received little or no follow-up during the handover process. However, B2B organizations where lead development reps and BDRs coordinate their efforts tend to take a more coherent approach to long-term nurturing and relationship-building activities.

This coordination can yield benefits related to conversion rates, deal velocity, and other performance indicators. Such interactions also reinforce the BDR's role as an essential source of human contact, even as technology plays a significant and growing role in B2B sales and marketing activities.

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# Boost Business Growth in a Changing B2B World

As the B2B environment continues to evolve, BDRs play a vital role in coping with the realities of longer and more complex B2B sales cycles, facing the challenges and opportunities of account-based strategies, and staying on top of rapid-fire technology innovation. And most importantly, keeping B2B organizations profitable and productive.

Want to learn more?

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