

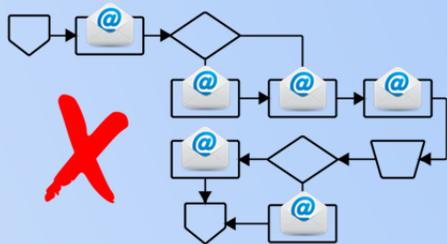
Conquering Deficiencies in the Sales Funnel with an Engaging Mix of Media



Why companies today are adding a mix of media to their contacting plans, rather than relying on email alone to generate sales-ready leads.

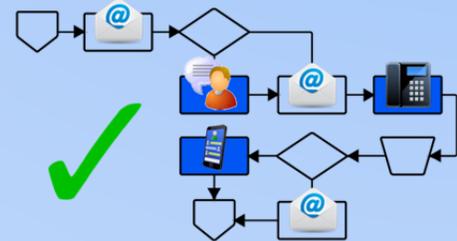
Executive Summary

The sales funnel is something everyone is familiar with. Marketing teams generate prospects at the top, move prospects through the middle by nurturing interest and qualifying, and sales teams focusing on closing sales at the bottom. Let's focus on the middle. The middle is all about increasing lead score and qualifying. In this stage, most companies use email as the primary method to offer content and qualify. But **over-reliance on email** along with recipient overload has created holes in the funnel whereby prospects can lose interest and fray to



competitors who do a better job of engaging them. In addition, reliance on email alone to qualify prospects often generates only partial data about a prospect's situation, which creates wasted sales rep effort. Ultimately, companies are losing up to 70% of their prospects to competitors who are doing a better job of engaging them.

How can companies stop this loss to competitors and instead get touches with higher levels of engagement than email alone? Results have shown that the answer lies in **utilizing a mix of media**: phone calls, voicemails, texts, notes, etc. alongside email. Why? There's an opportunity where clutter doesn't exist – where touches truly get noticed. Also, establishing a real human connection is not something to be left to the bottom of the funnel only – companies who do it in the middle of the funnel start engaging before competitors. More engagement generates 5x more recall. It also gives reason for prospects to provide better qualification data, moving them either up or down the funnel more efficiently.



At the end of the day, doing a **better job of engaging prospects** with a mix of thoughtfully integrated email, voice touches, texts and notes and so forth, rather than email alone, can result in 2.3x more customers by virtue of not losing prospects from your funnel to your competitors.

Traditionally, executing programs with a mix of media consumed more resources than with email alone. However, vendors such as Boxpilot have empowered clients to integrate a mix of media in a way that utilizes **new innovations** – making the process time and cost efficient while at the same time integrating fully into client's CRM and marketing automation systems.

The Sales Funnel: Three stages

To kick things off, let's look at something everyone is familiar with, the sales funnel. At the top, companies are generating leads using web-based content marketing, as well as cold lead gen programs that might include events or targeted reach-outs. At the bottom of course is where the sales team works with leads who have reached a level of interest and are qualified enough to warrant the sales rep's time.



So there are three stages in the flow that need to work together: 1) generating prospects at the top, 2) selling and closing at the bottom, and 3) moving prospects through the middle by qualifying and generating interest. Let's focus on the middle for a moment.

The Middle: All about lead scoring & qualifying

If you think about it, the middle is really all about increasing lead score and qualifying. Of course, it's where a prospect who entered the top becomes ready for the sales team at the bottom.

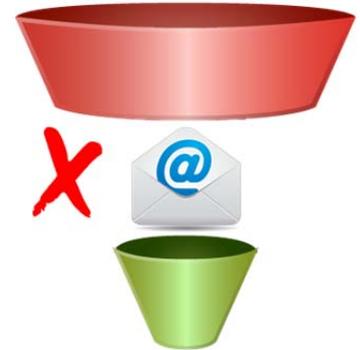


With lead scoring, teams work hard to plan events, write white papers, case studies and so forth, all with the intent to engage prospects with content that they “consume” that then increases their lead score to a certain level at which point they're considered “Sales-Ready.”

With qualifying, the objective is to distinguish those leads who could actually become customers today from those who could not, so that the sales teams are not wasting time on prospects who, say, don't have the budget or the situation needed to purchase the product for example.

Email Alone: The “go-to” tool

But what we’ve seen is that, especially with the adoption of many of the marketing automation platforms out there, email has really become the go-to method to offer content and attempt to qualify.

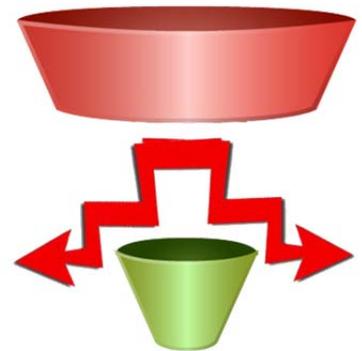


It's understandable, because companies have invested significant expense and time into setting up the CRM and marketing automation systems that essentially enable them to really only trigger emails right out of the platforms. So in essence, they're tied to email, in a way not even by choice.

But with everyone thinking and using email in this way, we’ve seen some significant challenges emerge as a result of this over-reliance on email.

Email Alone: Holes in the funnel

The main problem is that over-reliance on email creates holes in the funnel. The sheer quantity of emails that people are getting today, plus the fact that your competitors are also over-relying on email, has pushed email overload to an all-time high. Thousands of emails per day piling up on each other makes for clutter and receiver desensitization to the point that truly engaging prospects and making a genuine connection with email alone has become very difficult, even with good content.



But it is precisely this needed connection that keeps prospects from becoming bored, losing interest, going stale, and ultimately flowing out of the funnel to your competitors.

The Depth of the Email Overload Problem

Big picture, the majority of all email traffic in the globe comes from the business, not consumer, world. According to a recent study, more than 108.7 billion business emails are sent per day, growing to 139.4 billion per day in 2018 (*Radicati*). The average business person is sifting through approximately 121 *expected* work emails per day, growing to 140 per day by 2018 (*Radicati*). This is in addition to being bombarded with the mess of unsolicited or graymail emails each day that are not caught by filters.



There's been a 300% increase in newsletters year over year (*Riparian*) making more than 82% of the emails in our inbox simply a newsletter, social update or type of notification (*Mashable*). Today, only 14% of emails in inboxes are



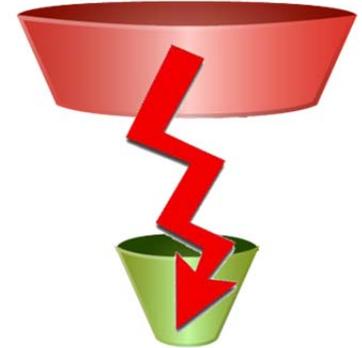
considered by recipients as genuinely important (*Mimecast*), with the rest being considered trivial, non-critical or insignificant. But most disturbingly, as a result of all this clutter, 18% of important work emails are lost in the inbox and never even read (*Riparian*).

The above stats help to explain why engaging with email alone has become increasingly difficult. The amount of clutter is overwhelming and to get through the day's workload efficiently, employees have become desensitized to this massive influx. Email efforts meant to capture a prospect's attention are flying out the window and are either never seen or quickly forgotten.

And although many companies *think* sending more and more emails is going to solve the problem of breaking through, with everyone thinking this way, it is just compounding the problem and increasing the difficulty in truly engaging prospects and customers with email alone.

Email Alone: Never truly qualified

Plus, even if someone consumes content and increases their lead score over time, it doesn't mean they necessarily have the budget or the situation needed to purchase your product. Too often sales reps are wasting time and money calling on someone who could never actually buy.



What we've seen is that the key to properly qualifying is to engage prospects to the point that they are motivated to *tell you* specifics about their situation. And relying solely on email and web forms often only gathers info that is partial or unreliable.

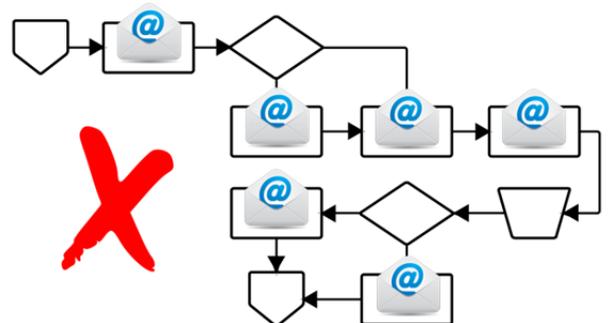
So in summary, while of course there is an important place for email in the overall mix, *over-reliance* on email doesn't optimally engage or qualify, and as a result hurts sales.



Email Alone: Loss to competitors

Using email alone hurts sales because it sends prospects to competitors. Let's look at this example workflow that only uses emails to move prospects down the funnel. As an illustration, maybe it is a white paper offer by email, and then if they click through, they get an invitation to an event by email, all by email, etc.

We studied buying preferences in the face competition in one of our internal research reports. With similar companies competing for a buyer's business, we found that when one of them used just email to communicate, while the other used email *alongside* other touches with higher levels of engagement, 70% of



buyers were more predisposed to choose the company who engaged them more. The reason is that they viewed it as an indicator that they cared more, and that customer service and support would be higher after the sale was made. This supports a McKinsey study which shows that 70% of buying experiences are based on how the customer feels they are being treated.



What this means is that companies are potentially losing up to 70% of their prospects to competitors who are doing a better job of engaging them.

Mix of Media: The better way

So this prompts the question – how can one stop this loss to competitors, and how can one get touches with higher levels of engagement than with email alone?

The answer that we have seen emerge lies in utilizing a mix of media. Alongside emails, we’re talking phone calls, voicemail, texts, notes, among other methods.



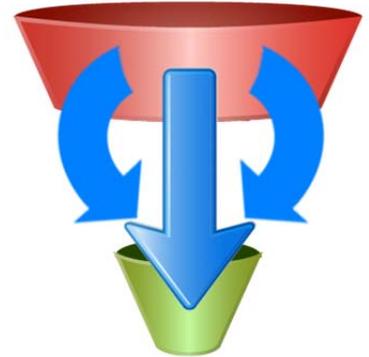
Everyone knows it takes more than popping out a few emails to really drive engagement, and that if your competitors are the ones who are really engaging prospects, they’re going to be the ones taking the sales.

Let’s look at some of reasons using a mix of media works.

Mix of Media: Keeps prospects in the funnel

For one, there's opportunity where clutter doesn't exist and where touches actually get noticed. A call, a voicemail, a text, a handwritten note – these are things that still stick out to us because we don't get nearly as many as with emails.

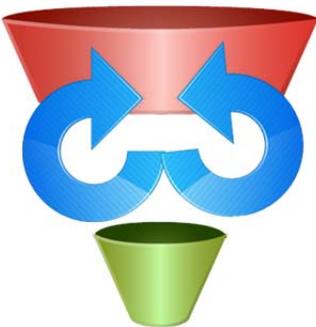
On top of that, engaging with a real human voice, even if it's just periodic, identifies you as a real person where a stronger relationship and trust can be built.



We've seen that it's a mistake to leave making a human connection to the bottom of the funnel only. And it is a mistake to let your competitors be the ones engaging prospects more than you.

Actually, in a study called Dale's Cone of Learning, we see that more engagement generates more recall – people remember 10% of what they read, but as we go up in engagement, 50% of what we *hear* and see, a 5x improvement.

Mix of Media: Better at qualifying prospects



Another benefit is that you can't truly qualify people without actually getting details about their situation. And to get this info you have to actually have dialog with them. And to talk in this way, they need to be engaged.

Armed with reliable info, when you know that they're not truly qualified, you can loop them back higher up in the funnel to let them simmer until their circumstances change.



And if they are in fact truly qualified, they can be pushed down the funnel faster to the sales team which in turn will grow more sales. Either way using a mix of media is going to help get the engagement to enable this process.

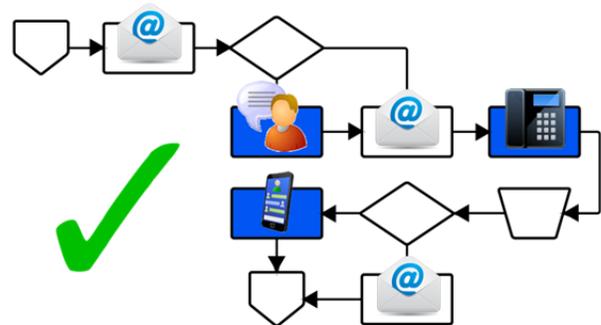
More Engaged Means More Sales

And so to bring it home, recall the McKinsey study earlier that echoed our results. If 70% of buyers are more predisposed to choose the company who engages them more with a mix of thoughtfully integrated email, voice touches, texts, notes and so forth, rather than the company that uses email alone, it really means companies are potentially closing only up to 30% of their prospects. This means that doing a *better* job of engaging prospects in this way can result in 2.3x more customers. (Note: increasing share of sales from 30% of all prospects, to 100% of all prospects, is 2.3x more sales.)



2.3x

Sales can be increased in this way by virtue of not losing prospects to competitors by having built stronger relationships with them, while at the same time keeping prospects more interested and engaged as a result of communicating with varied media. And by making prospects feel like they are being treated well, their expectations of post-sale service stay at a level that further supports their decision to buy from you rather than your competitors.



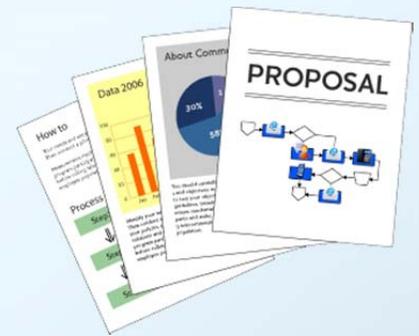
At the end of the day, companies today are adding a mix of media to their contacting plans, rather than relying on email alone, to generate sales-ready leads because it works, increases prospect conversion, prevents loss to competitors, and generates more sales.

Choosing the Right Vendor

Traditionally, executing programs with a mix of media consumed more resources to execute than programs with email alone. However, vendors such as Boxpilot, whose central vision is to enable this mix, have empowered clients to integrate a mix of media in a way that utilizes new innovations – making the process exceptionally time and cost efficient while at the same time integrating fully into clients' CRM and marketing automation systems.

Next Steps: Request Workflow

We encourage you to contact us to discuss how you can integrate a mix of media into your marketing plans. We can create a custom workflow proposal for you that outlines how we can help you accomplish your objectives. Please visit workflow.boxpilot.com to submit your request.



About Boxpilot

Boxpilot is a full service tactical B2B marketing firm that specializes in driving engagement with a mix of media. We design and execute fee-for-service or pay-per-result programs to move prospects through the funnel and generate sales-ready leads using our agency capabilities, integrating our automation platform with yours, and our in-house North American contact center.



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