

SALES REBEL



CHANGE THE GAME WITH
PIPELINE SEGMENTATION

BUILD A PIPELINE THAT LASTS

How Segmentation Brings Your Pipeline To Life

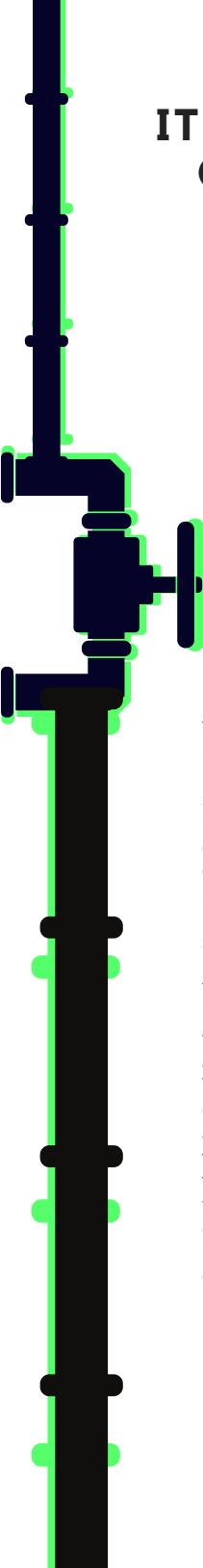
We've all been there... We put in tons of work to fill the pipeline as we are working deals that present themselves and working hard to crush our quarterly target. We run our sales process as best we can, and we close out the 90-day mark strong. We take a deep sigh of relief, and we rest well that night...

Then the reality sets in...

All the work. All the conversations. All the leads. It all starts over. Your pipeline is as empty as it was at the beginning of the last quarter and you've basically worked your way back to square one. It's a hideous feeling really; like a sales career is stuck in a loop of feast or famine.

The worst part is that we like to think no one notices. But the pressure is real. And when we feel the pressure, naturally, so do others. It comes across in our tone and vocal rhythms. It's evident in our body language and the words we choose to use. On top of all that, when we are forbidden to deviate from our script or the next step in our sales process, the pressure we are under is pretty much all being redirected right at the prospect.





IT'S TIME TO SHED THE SKIN OF OUR OLD PIPELINES. IT'S TIME FOR MEANINGFUL OUTCOMES WITH EVERY PERSON IN OUR COMMUNITY. AND, IT'S TIME TO STOP SACRIFICING OUR OWN PERSONAL SUCCESS TO THE UNDESERVING GODS OF BURNOUT AND CHURN



The time has come for the traditional pipeline to be seen for what it really is... Rusty, leaking, and in dire need of innovation. To transcend the shackles of a traditional sales pipeline we must not cling to the faulty promises of statistical outcomes. Nor should we allow ourselves to be governed by the urgency and pressure of perceived needs. Instead, we need to break the mold, connect with our prospects, and build a sustainable outlook.

The Living Pipeline, as presented by the Sales Rebellion, is a framework that utilizes a sales and marketing hybrid approach. That means we take the marketing concept of segmentation and apply that knowledge system to the pipeline practices that drive tangible sales results. Thus, the framework is designed to optimize growth over the long run, build relationships in the interim, and capitalize on opportunities in the immediate.

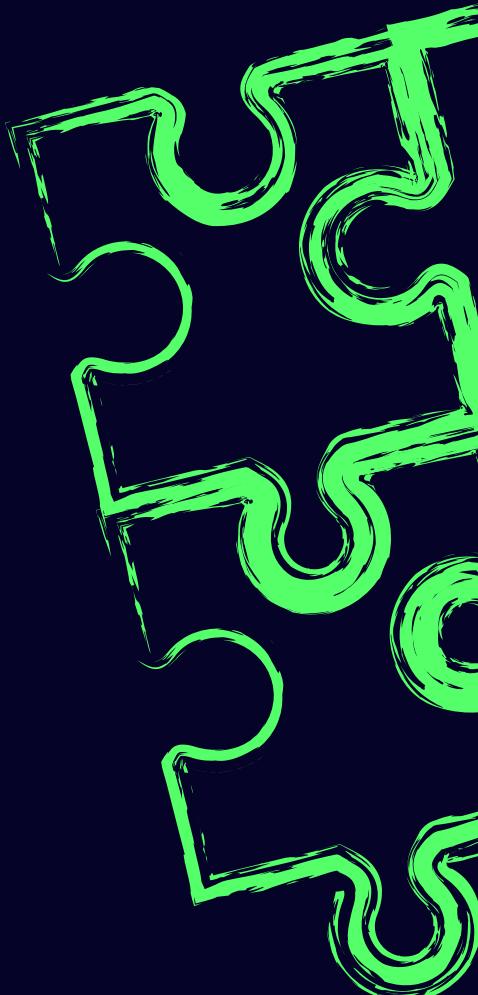
Let's start our adventure by looking at these ideas individually...

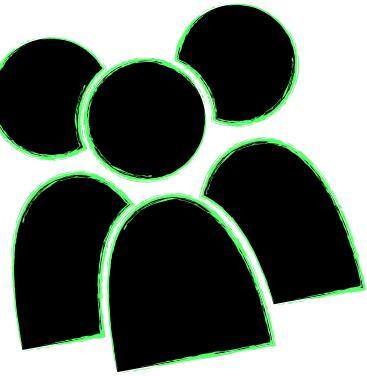
WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT SEGMENTATION

Segmentation goes much deeper than just understanding a demographic better or labeling a common behavior. As Sales Rebels, we believe the core of segmentation is actually about understanding identity. The surrounding layers go on to include both demographic labels as well as behavioral or psychographic attributes. However, segmentation of an audience or list is primarily connected to a group's identity.

The value of segmentation is that it allows marketers to optimize messaging efforts based on a number of custom variables. Once specific segments have been identified, they allow for messaging that is tailored to the specific needs of the audience within that segment. In other words, segmentation takes the large group of people and breaks them down into smaller groups with shared similarities.

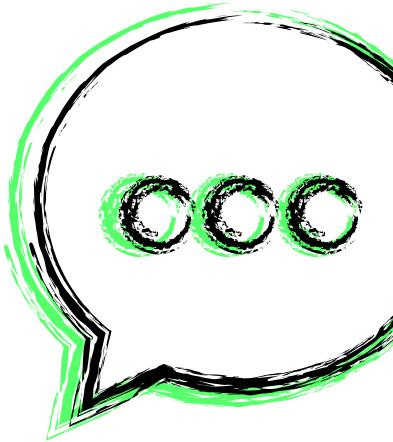
Now without going too deep, here are a few of the important takeaways from marketing segmentation that apply to our conversation about sales pipelines - Identifiable Groups and Tailored Messaging. Let's explore each briefly.





Identifiable Groups

Whether it's geo-specific, psychographic, behavioral, or any number of other unique identifiers, segmentation takes the macro and makes it into something much more manageable. But this is not just about chunking... It's about intentional and strategic separation based on data, and there's a big difference. You must have a clear understanding of the people on your list and that becomes much easier when you have smaller sub-categories. Being able to identify specific needs and desires that are commonly shared is a game-changer.



Tailored Messaging

Customizing your outreach to the specific needs or desires of the audience will immeasurably improve your engagement. That's because people are all different and they expect to be spoken to directly, not bombarded with irrelevant messages. Therefore, what we say to one prospect is probably not what we should say to all prospects. This is why tailoring your message to the specific needs of a small group of people will gain you much more traction.

Ultimately, segmentation is a method for both identifying ideal customer profiles and creating custom messaging based on the needs and desires of the audience. In a very big way, this is about positioning yourself in the marketplace - but only after you have taken the vastness of that marketplace and transformed it into small groups that have specific attributes and shared needs.

Now, the application of segmentation for sales professionals, while perhaps evident, is slightly more nuanced. Essentially, the segmentation of your sales pipeline allows opportunities that are not evident today to take root and begin to grow as time goes by. This is one of the major unlocks for long-term success in a sales career and is something every Sales Rebel should build awareness and understanding of.

Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, let's create some context around what we mean when we talk about a sales pipeline.

WHY ARE PIPELINES IMPORTANT

The answer you get will always depend on who you ask. Sometimes it's the sales process. Other times it's focused more on the broader sales cycle. Then again, there are always times when its sole purpose is to be micromanaged and leveraged against us by untrained leaders. However, these are not the true purposes of a pipeline. These are the uses that have been attributed to them because of lazy and ineffective leadership who suffer from an overtly damaging focus on activity-based metrics.

All in all, we believe the pipeline is a framework that enables sales professionals and organizations to do three specific things:

- To create accountability around the activities deemed necessary for success
- To organize and maintain the relationship-building process
- To accurately forecast revenue generation

In reality, a pipeline is a tool that should allow you to see your sales career from a different perspective. In the same way a business uses a profit and loss statement to see their firm from a specific point of view, the pipeline allows salespeople to make quick judgments about current performance and to make decisions about strategic actions that will lead to the growth they've set out to achieve. It's a lot to think about, but take a few minutes because it could change the course of your entire sales career.



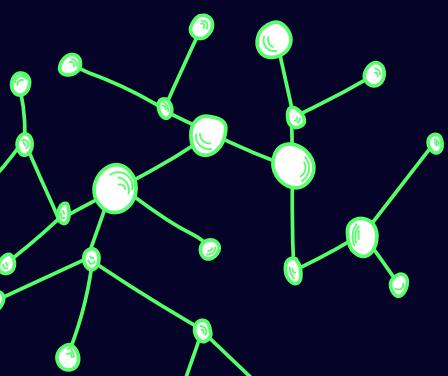
SYNTHESIS AND INNOVATION

Most of the greatest innovation, true innovation that forever impacts the world, is not due to new or unique ideas. Instead, true innovations tend to come from existing technologies applied to a new or unique purpose. They are the crossovers and the hybrids, and they fuel the spectacular world we live in today.

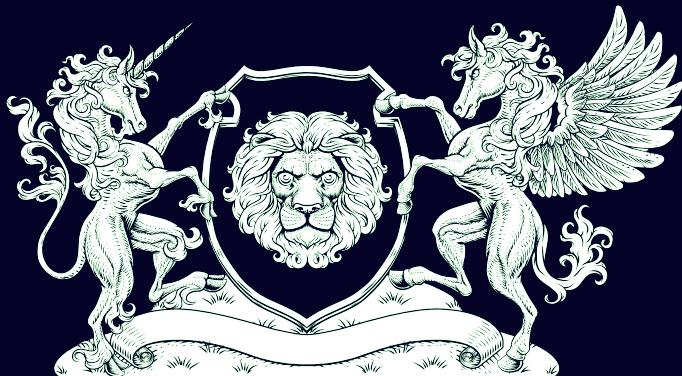
One of the greatest examples of this type of synthesis comes from the year 1450. Johannes Gutenberg, a German entrepreneur, using nothing but a tiny backward alphabet and half of a winepress, launched a media revolution that would change the world. That revolution was the printing press.

This is the essence of synthesis. It is a revolutionary force that we see time and time again, and it has empowered the world to become what it is today. It's not about a new and unique idea. It's about bringing existing ideas together for a new and unique purpose. In our case, for bringing our pipelines to life.

At the Sales Rebellion, we use a Living Pipeline. This approach teaches salespeople to broaden their perspective potential. It teaches them to recognize the value that each interaction can hold by segmenting prospects based on the first interaction. Just as marketers segment the larger market to build qualified lead-flow into the sales department, Sales Rebels apply a form of segmentation to the top of their list to create more opportunities for unique engagement. This creates a marketing framework within the pipeline itself and empowers the sales rep to create scalability around tailored messaging.



AS SALES PROFESSIONALS BECOME MORE EMPOWERED TO EXERCISE THEIR PERSONAL BRANDS AND BUILD COMMUNITY, THE NEED FOR A HYBRID APPROACH BECOMES MORE AND MORE EVIDENT.



Salespeople cannot go on simply being salespeople. The world is changing and the requirements for maintaining a worthwhile career in the sales industry are changing too. Rebels believe that the future of sales professionalism requires a multidisciplinary skillset incorporating sales, marketing, communication, business, and psychology. That's why Sales Rebels take the path less traveled. They look past the common assumptions and seek to more fully understand the identity of the person they are working with.

By taking your list of prospects and dividing it into segments based on data gathered during your initial interaction, you are able to tap into that identity and cultivate opportunities that would not have been there otherwise. It's all about using segmentation as a filter and developing a cadence around the tailored sales messages required to nurture your pipeline into maturity.

Now let's take a journey through the Living Pipeline...



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- ANONYMOUS REBEL



THE LIVING PIPELINE

The Living Pipeline is a framework that offers both a high-level perspective and an in-depth look at your sales activity and growth potential. It also enables sales professionals to exercise their personal brand while bringing authenticity and connection to the forefront of our outreach. Basically, it's the best thing that ever happened to your CRM... And yes... This framework does integrate with your CRM.

To keep it brief, we see the Living Pipeline as a tree. It has roots that go deep into the soil. It has branches both weathered and refined. It is the poster child of symbiotic relationships and stands apart in its ability to create results. When Rebels cultivate their Living Pipeline, each activity is another seed in the garden of success. Then it's just about watering them...

For our discussion today we will not explore the entire Living Pipeline concept. Instead, we will isolate the branches and discuss more about the specific role they play. Each branch symbolizes a different section of your pipeline and the workflow is designed to constantly produce more fruit. There are two segmentation filters you can apply to your list of branches - Identity and Time - Let's explore:

Identity Based Branches

Your prospect has an identity. Sometimes they are quick to share that identity with you, other times, they have no interest in you knowing anything about them. But that's the burden that all salespeople face... The burden of building relationships.

For identity-based branches, we are focused on identifying the prospect based on 3-4 key factors that are specific to your sales cycle and the product or service you provide. At the Sales Rebellion, we propose three separate identity branches:

- Whales and Walruses
- Wild Cards
- Not Interested

Whales and Walruses refer to enterprise-level accounts as well as those incredible, business savvy SMBs who will truly make you earn their business - These are sophisticated buyers who either have a group of people who make decisions or make it very difficult to secure time with them. Wild Cards are the prospects that have exhibited an inconsistent communication pattern and are hard to identify - They could call and want to buy tomorrow, or they might send you a six-figure referral three years from now... you just can't tell. Not Interested is all about the people who quickly reject you in a very automatic and/or vague way - These are leads that have yet to be identified but that could still contain immense value.

Identity-Based branches are about segmenting the very top of your funnel. Each branch has a specified communication strategy and cadence. By creating a cadence around this outreach, we are able to build relationships with our prospects over time and with very little pressure.

Time Related Branches

Time-related branches segment prospects according to the time remaining until taking bids or renewing their agreement. While Not Interested, Wild Cards, and Whales & Walruses all represent a different identity, time-related branches are focused on an actionable timeline. Each of these branches has a communication cadence designed to secure an opportunity to submit a proposal.

Let's briefly explore each of the time-related branches...

30/60/90/120 - These folks are all making decisions within one week to four months. These will have a different focus than most sales you find as the timeframe is short and they need to be worked with a specific attitude all the way to the finish line.

12 months - These folks have enough time remaining that you can explore a nurturing approach – you have time to break down barriers and earn credibility through your marketing efforts and different types/styles of interactions. But be ready, they could make changes at any point. Don't think that everyone will wait until the lease date expires on their contracts.

2 years - These are the people whom you are engaging from a whole other level – you are keeping them abreast of your latest content, building credibility through unique touches and next level encounters, watering your branch so that it will bear fruit, etc.

GrandDADs - These are the folks who are WAAAAAY out from making any kind of decision on your products and services. You are focused on keeping a more intimate relationship with them by staying in touch over holidays and through special occasions, romanticizing your future business relationship, as you graduate them into the lower branches. These people also feel like "Grandad." They welcome you in with open arms, they're easy going and love to share information, and your rapport with them usually feels instant or attainable. This is a good example of a "hybrid" branch where one and identity can both play a role.



THE CAVEAT

It must be known that this is not a shortcut to success. This is a framework that will carry you over the long run. Those are two very different things. In the end, most shortcuts will prove to be a waste of time. The others just become part of the process.

The Living Pipeline is not a "hit quota tomorrow" kind of framework. It's a "grow by 150 percent year over year over year" kind of framework... It takes time, hard work, focus, and determination. There is no short-term relief and no immediate reward. If you think differently, then, it's time to accept the truth.

Take a moment to ponder the long term. Think about what it means to build a sales career, not just a sales pipeline. Understand that your ability to impact people with your outreach, combined with a structured approach and tailored messaging, can move mountains for your sales career.

Be intentional with your prospects and they will reward you with their trust.

Here's the last learning point we want to bring into this conversation: most of the value in your pipeline is overlooked because of assumptions that you are making. They happen very subtly, and they are the result of your own value judgments. Most of the time you don't even know it's happening.

Here are a few questions to help you acknowledge any assumptions you might be making about the value of your prospects...

- Did you make assumptions about their vision of the future?
- Did you make assumptions about the likelihood of their success?
- Did you make assumptions about the value of their product/service?
- Did you make assumptions about the value of your service within their workflow?

Remember that not all things are as they seem. So many times we undercut the value of the people we talk with because of a perception that we build in a very short period of time. This is a huge mistake and salespeople suffer greatly from it. Not to mention when it's compounded by sales leaders who have magnified the next 90-days beyond its true importance.

Sale Rebels seek success that lasts far beyond the next 90-days. They seek adventure and they focus on unlocking the epic career that awaits them. No more "Just Checking-In" emails. No more stress of a consistently empty pipeline. It's time to bring your pipeline to life.

THE MEANING OF IT ALL

Let's face it... The last thing a prospect wants to hear is some over-generalized, broad-brush pitch. Most sales pitches like this are just covert attempts to stuff the prospect into a qualified box. Stop doing this immediately. Your prospect wants you to speak directly to their needs. Furthermore, buyers are increasingly expecting more out of the service they receive.

When we have a clear picture of where each deal lies, we are able to quickly determine what actions will bring the most value in the shortest amount of time. It's true that we will always have to spend more time with people who are the closest to signing the contract, but neglecting the others brings us right back to where we started...

So, whether it's the cyclical dread that comes around every time your manager puts you on a performance plan or the failure to balance the various time constraints associated with working 150 deals that are all at different stages, the Living Pipeline will revolutionize your sales career indefinitely.

Ultimately, the Living Pipeline allows you to build a cadence of relevant messages that are tailored to your prospect and whatever stage of the relationship-building process they're in. Segment your list. Begin engaging your prospects with experiences that are specific to them, and start building your Living Pipeline... it's as simple as that!

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