



Case Study: Resolving Sales- Marketing Misalignment

Cross-Border Fixes in a
High-Ticket Firm

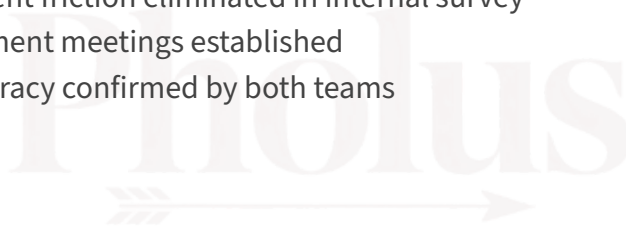
Case Study: Resolving Sales–Marketing Friction in a Cross-Border High-Ticket Firm

Executive Summary

Sales blamed marketing. Marketing blamed sales. Pholus rebuilt trust between departments in a cross-border firm by establishing new meeting rhythms, aligned messaging, and review protocols—leading to revenue gains and smoother internal workflows.

Key Results & Indicators

- Revenue grew by 17% within 60 days
- Lead conversion time reduced by 28%
- Cross-department friction eliminated in internal survey
- Biweekly alignment meetings established
- Messaging accuracy confirmed by both teams



Introduction

When companies operate across borders and deal in high-ticket sales, even minor misalignments between departments can quietly drain momentum. And when those departments are sales and marketing—two of the most interdependent functions in any organization—misalignment doesn't just waste time. It costs revenue, morale, and credibility.

Pholus was engaged on a retainer basis with a cross-border client that began reporting internal friction—but couldn't pinpoint the cause. What surfaced was a familiar story: sales blamed marketing, marketing blamed sales, and both teams felt misunderstood and unsupported. The business was growing, but inefficiently. Deals were being lost. And the teams were sliding into open hostility.

Rather than restructure or replace, we installed a new governance framework, bridged the communication gap, and helped both teams start seeing themselves as allies again.

Within months, friction dropped—and revenue rose.

The Problem

This particular client was a high-ticket firm operating across two countries. Their service model required significant client trust, careful lead nurturing, and deep internal coordination. But the closer we looked, the more evident it became that:

- The sales team believed marketing was flooding them with unqualified leads
- The marketing team felt exhausted and unappreciated—they were hitting their KPIs, but sales wasn't converting
- There was no structured feedback loop between the departments
- And there were no regular meetings where either side could review expectations or performance together

As a result, leads were entering with expectations shaped by top-of-funnel marketing—but encountering a sales pitch that didn't match. The disconnect was eroding trust, conversion rates, and morale on both sides.

The Plan of Action

Rather than play referee, Pholus chose to serve as a translator—and architect of a governance fix.

1. Diagnosing the Disconnection

We began with structured interviews across both teams. We asked:

- What do you think the other team does well?
- What frustrates you most in your current handoff process?
- What do your leads say they expect vs. what they're getting?

These interviews revealed a clear pattern: both teams were competent, but siloed. Neither had insight into the other's processes, and assumptions had hardened into mistrust.

2. Mapping the Lead Lifecycle

We visually mapped the full journey of a lead—from ad click to closed deal. What we discovered:

- Marketing was optimizing for CTR and lead volume—not lead *quality* or deal readiness
- Sales was reacting to volume surges with skepticism and resistance
- No one had agreed-upon criteria for what constituted a “qualified” lead
- Messaging in marketing assets was aspirational, while the sales team focused on deliverables and constraints

No wonder leads were confused—and conversions were stalling.

3. Designing a Governance Fix

Rather than overhaul personnel or launch another “alignment initiative,” we proposed a simple, enforceable governance framework:

- A biweekly alignment meeting attended by senior sales and marketing reps
- Every new marketing asset (ad, funnel, deck) would be previewed with the sales team before deployment
- Sales would log feedback on lead quality using a shared rubric
- KPIs would be shared—but interpreted together, not in isolation

We positioned these changes not as oversight, but as operational respect: each team was being asked to understand what the other was solving for.

4. Coaching Teams Through the Transition

Pholus facilitated the first three meetings to model tone, structure, and expectations. We:

- Helped surface miscommunications in real-time and reframe them
- Guided the teams toward shared language and objective analysis
- Encouraged feedback that was direct—but not adversarial

By month two, the meetings were running smoothly without us.

The Outcome

- Friction between sales and marketing dropped significantly
- New marketing materials were consistently aligned with sales conversations
- Lead quality improved, with clearer expectations and warmer transitions
- Internal morale stabilized, especially on the previously-burned-out marketing team
- Revenue rose by 17% over the following quarter—directly traceable to higher lead conversion rates

What started as complaints became collaboration. No layoffs. No crisis. Just structure, translation, and trust.

Final Thoughts

Sales–marketing disconnect isn’t a personality problem. It’s a governance failure. And if you don’t fix it early, it will cost you more than morale—it will cost you deals.

Pholus helps high-trust organizations install practical, enforceable systems that reduce internal friction and unlock better performance. Whether you’re a fast-scaling startup or an established operation across regions, we can help you translate chaos into collaboration—without creating new drama.

If your teams are clashing more than converting, bring us in.

About Pholus

Pholus is a discreet advisory firm that supports founders, boards, and stakeholders in fragile or complex environments. We specialize in quiet interventions, exit planning, and operational clarity when reputations, relationships, or resources are at risk.

Need to navigate something delicate or high-stakes? We work behind the scenes to help you stabilize, reset, or exit — without triggering avoidable fallout.

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