



# 2022 Inbound & Outbound Sales Pipeline Performance Benchmarking Report

**ATRILUM**



Clearbit

**MODERN SALES PROS**

**RevOps<sup>2</sup>**

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# Summary Findings

## **Sales pipeline data is fragmented.**

At best, data is not readily accessible and/or distributed with transparency. At worst, it's not being collected. Seventy-one percent of survey respondents are in Director or above positions, yet most are blind to data (see point two, below). When auditing your organization against peer benchmarks, ensure you're first collecting data from your customers' buying journeys. Be cautious of inaccessible data as it is frequently a symptom of a disconnected RevTech stack.

## **Revenue team leaders handicap themselves in making decisions.**

Within the trenches of a competitive, global marketplace, revenue team leaders tend to enter the fray without data to best inform and guide their budget investment decisions. They're tasked with revenue growth, and building a robust sales pipeline is their traditional biggest challenge. However, for most companies, data is missing as to the best tactical levers to push and pull upon to affect positive change and, ultimately, growth.

## **Pipeline performance measurements are lacking.**

Lead Forms Completed is the number one pipeline performance metric tracked at 34% of companies. However, only 26% of companies measure Win Rate by Channel or Source. It gets worse. Only 19% measure Cost Per Dollar of Revenue and just 13% measure Cost Per Dollar of Pipeline. Not only are revenue team leaders generally uninformed on the best channels and tactics for growth, they're uninformed on the cost of growth.

## **Isolated performance metrics potentially mislead revenue team leaders.**

Thirty-two percent of companies measure Cost Per Lead (CPL), but as mentioned above, only 19% measure Cost Per Dollar of Revenue and just 13% measure Cost Per Dollar of Pipeline. Out of a revenue-generating context, CPL threatens to become a vanity metric, and one that can mislead leaders from making metrics-informed decisions as to tactics that are most effective and efficient in meeting pipeline and revenue goals.



# Summary Findings

## **The vast *majority* of companies do not optimize sales pipeline performance from engagement to Closed/Won.**

As only 26% of companies reported measuring Win Rate by Lead Channel, and just 13% reported measuring Cost Per Lead (CPL) against revenue generated, it's apparent most companies don't track the metrics needed to optimize revenue performance.

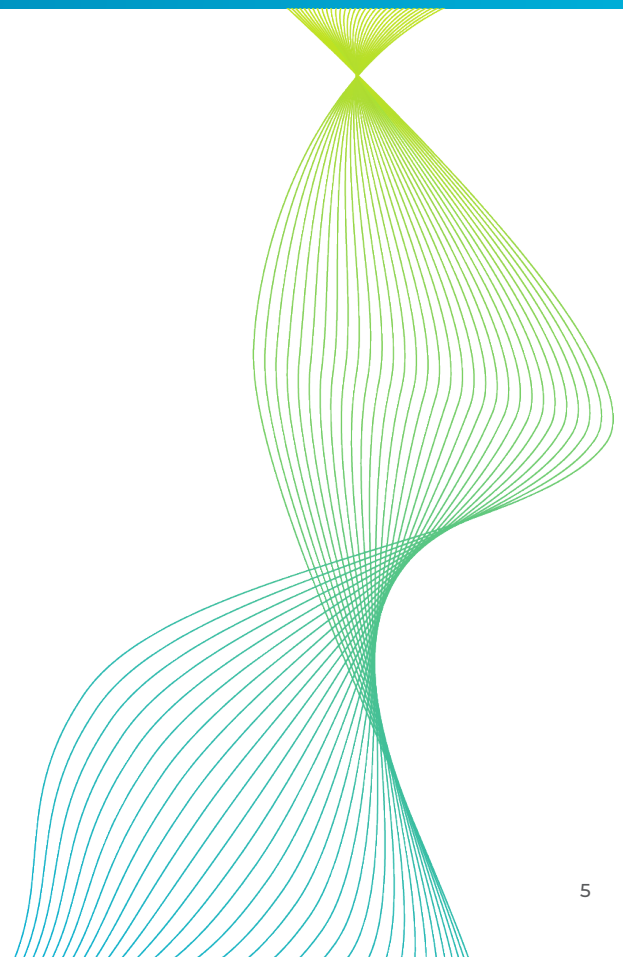
Orchestrating and aligning the pipeline lifecycle from the initial point of engagement through to Closed/Won has traditionally been viewed as a best practice for high-growth companies. Tracking conversion rates all the way to Closed/Won, and on a dollar cost to dollar revenue basis, is the ultimate way to highlight and prove pipeline development ROI on an organizational and channel level.



# Study Overview

LeanData, in collaboration with Atrium, Clearbit, Modern Sales Pros and RevOps Squared, conducted research throughout July and August, 2022 to benchmark inbound & outbound pipeline performance, as well as the associated metrics used to measure and report upon pipeline and its performance. In total, 311 respondents, representing a broad cross-section of company sizes, annual contract values and go-to-market (GTM) models, participated in the study.

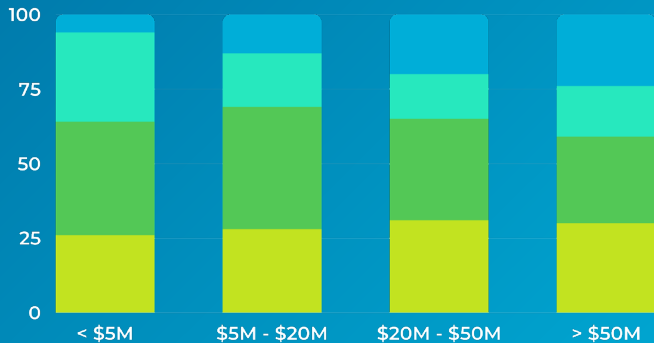
The findings and benchmarks cover a wide variety of topics, including pipeline performance metrics tracked, pipeline sources by organization, pipeline source by channel, lead conversion rates by source, and cost per lead. A unique aspect of the study's data collection and publishing methodology is that benchmarks are segmented by company attributes, including industry segment, company size, average contract value, and customer segment when the data allowed for statistical significance. This approach provides more granular and relevant insights into how pipelines are performing from a source, channel, and cost perspective.



# Pipeline Sources by Function

## Pipeline Source: By Company Size (Total Population)

Marketing Sales Development Direct Sales Channel



Marketing leads the way when it comes to creating sales pipeline. Except when it doesn't, that is.

Rather unsurprisingly, Marketing leads as the function responsible for developing sales pipeline development, with 79% of respondents identifying Marketing as at least partially accountable for creating pipe.

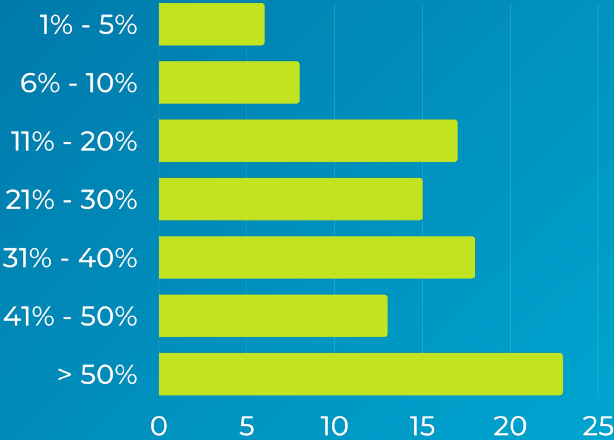
The surprise came in that 21% of respondents reported that the Marketing function in their organization had no responsibility for creating sales pipeline.

Sales Development closely follows Marketing in building pipeline, with Direct Sales still responsible for prospecting at 51% of respondent organizations.



# Pipeline from Marketing

Pipeline Source: Marketing  
(Total Population)



**30%**

of sales pipeline *at median* is delivered by Marketing across all organizations

**11-40%**

is the concentrated range of Marketing's contribution to sales pipeline

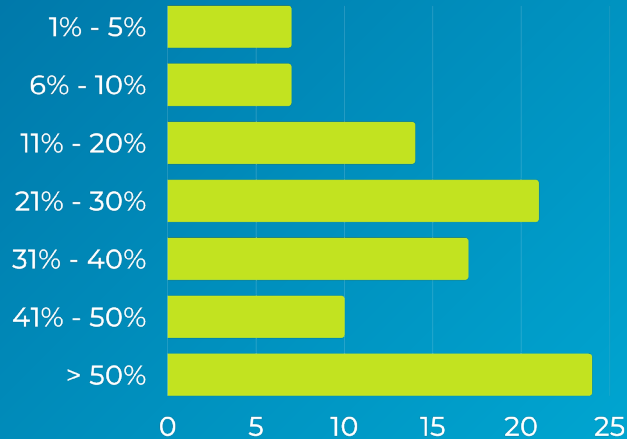
**54%**

of companies report Marketing delivers more than 30% of total sales pipeline



# Pipeline from Sales Development

Pipeline Source: Sales Development  
(Total Population)



**25%**

of sales pipeline *at median* is delivered by Sales Development across all organizations  
(30% in the B2B Technology sector)

**51%**

of companies report Sales Development delivers more than 30% of total sales pipeline, 3 points lower than Marketing

**72%**

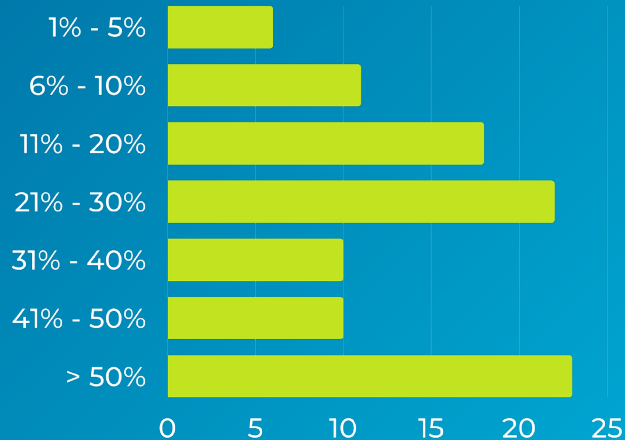
of companies report Sales Development delivers 21% or more of sales pipeline





# Pipeline from Direct Sales

Pipeline Source: Direct Sales  
(Total Population)



20%

of sales pipeline *at median* is delivered by Direct Sales across all organizations

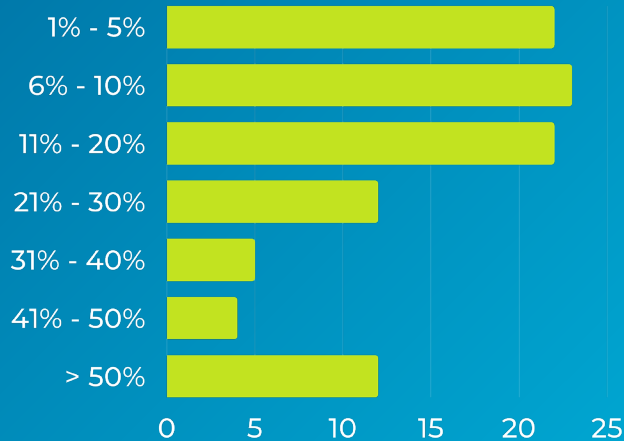
43%

of companies report Direct Sales delivers more than 30% of total sales pipeline, 11 points lower than Marketing



# Pipeline from Partners/Channel

Pipeline Source: Partners/Channel  
(Total Population)



5%

of sales pipeline *at median* is delivered by Partners/Channel across all organizations

21%

of companies report Partners/Channel delivers more than 30% of total sales pipeline, lowest by far among functional sources

**15%**

of companies don't track SEO-generated pipeline

**13%**

don't track SEM-generated pipeline

**19%**

don't track organic social-generated pipeline

**18%**

don't track paid social-generated pipeline



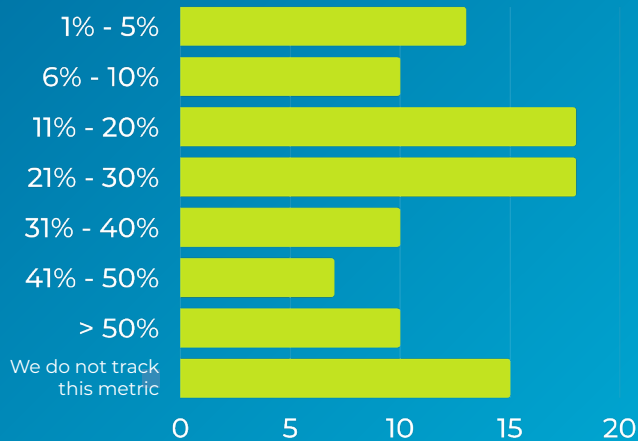
## Pipeline by Channel

In determining the source of sales pipeline by channel, an alarming data point emerged regarding the number of organizations that simply don't track metrics for pipeline generated by organic and paid search, as well as organic and paid social media.

# Pipeline from Organic Search

Organic search, or SEO, dominates over other inbound channels in building sales pipeline. Traditionally, SEO-based leads are typically more cost-effective in acquisition than leads developed through outbound prospecting by Sales Development and Direct Sales teams.

Pipeline Source: Organic Search  
(Total Population)



**27%**

of companies report SEO delivers more than 30% of total sales pipeline

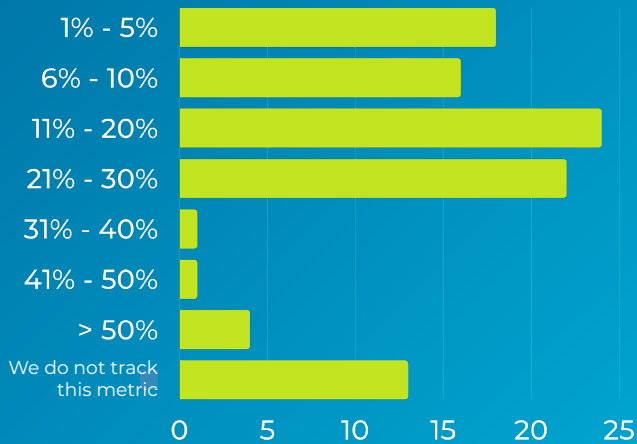
**36%**

report SEO delivers between 11-30% of total sales pipeline



# Pipeline from Paid Search

Pipeline Source: Paid Search  
(Total Population)



**6%**

of companies report paid search, or SEM, delivers more than 30% of total sales pipeline

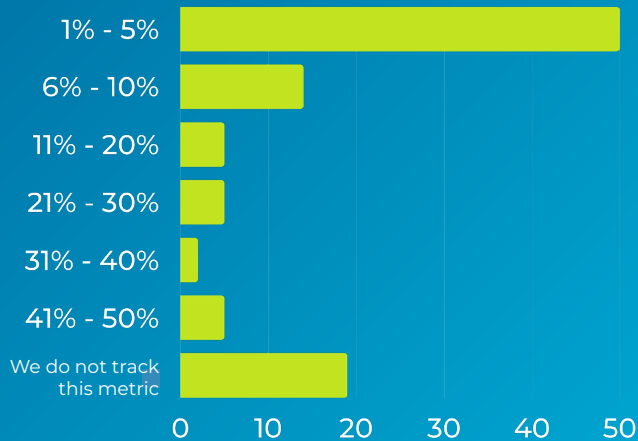
**46%**

report SEM delivers between 11-30% of total sales pipeline

# Pipeline from Organic Social

Generally, it is difficult establishing various attribution metrics to organic social, which tends to focus on broad brand awareness. As a result, “dark social” has entered into marketers’ vocabulary, indicating the amount of traffic to websites and other digital assets that lack referral sources and are difficult to track and, therefore, determine attribution.

Pipeline Source: Organic Social  
(Total Population)



**50%**

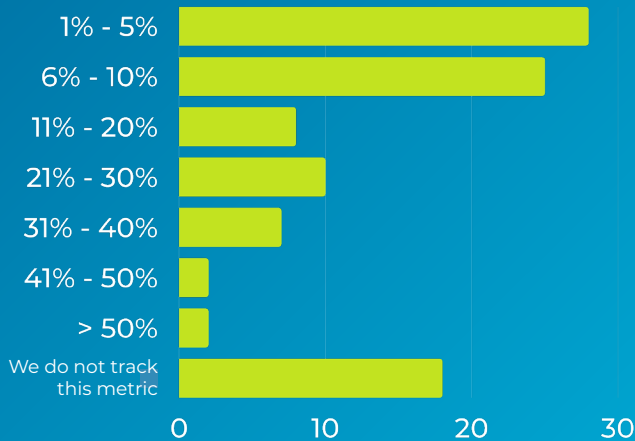
of companies report organic social delivers 5% or less of total sales pipeline

**5%**

report organic social delivers *between 41-50% of total sales pipeline*

# Pipeline from Paid Social

Pipeline Source: Paid Social  
(Total Population)



**53%**

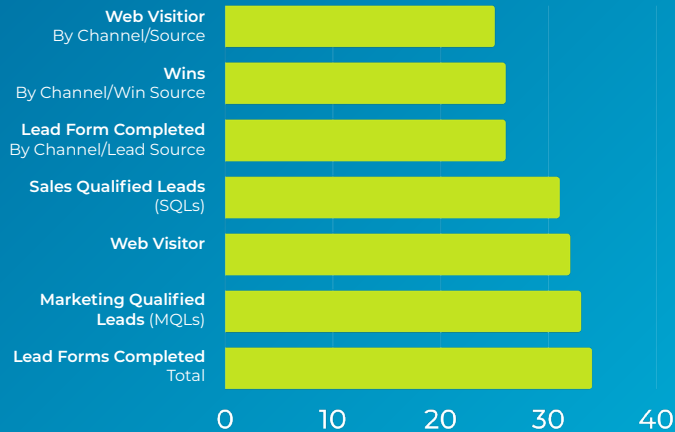
of companies report paid social delivers 10% or less of total sales pipeline

**17%**

report paid social delivers between 21-40% of total sales pipeline, 10 points higher than that of organic social

# Pipeline Performance Metrics

## Pipeline Performance Metrics Tracked (Total Population)



More than half of survey respondents reported their companies did **NOT** track the most common sales pipeline and lead management metrics.

Of the metrics, Lead Forms Completed is the most frequently tracked metric, as indicated by 34% of companies reporting. However, only 26% of companies track how leads convert all the way to Closed/Won status.

Effective revenue orchestration requires a smooth integration between all the internal functions of an organization's revenue team. The failure to monitor and report on the most basic of sales pipeline performance metrics is a potential major friction point between Sales and Marketing, among others.





# Inbound vs. Outbound Lead Metrics

Inbound leads often include buyers who are in an active buying journey, and historically, inbound leads convert to both qualified sales pipeline and Closed/Won revenue at a much higher rate than outbound-generated leads.

**64%**

of companies report tracking inbound versus outbound lead management performance.



# Lead Form Conversion

Note: Only 26% of companies reporting measure Lead Form Conversion rates, so the study's findings may be slightly misleading due to the lack of a robust sample size.

With only 26% of companies measuring Lead Form Conversion all the way to Closed/Won, it's impossible for the other 74% of companies participating in the study to understand how leads impact both the sales pipeline and, ultimately, revenue.

**5%**

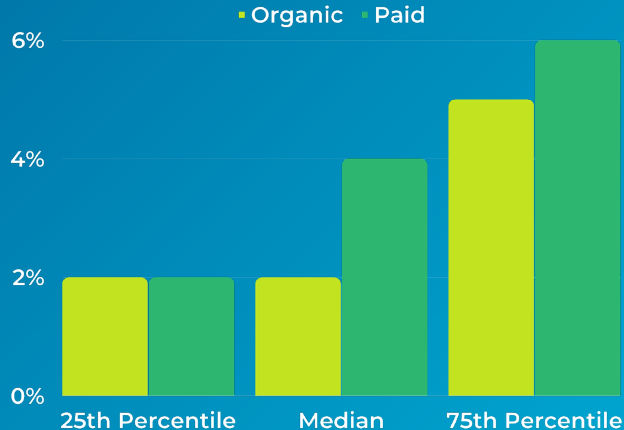
of Lead Forms convert at median; at the 75th percentile, that conversion rate is doubled at

**10%**

Best practice in top performing growth companies is to instrument and orchestrate the entire lead lifecycle, from initial engagement through to Closed/Won.

# Lead Form Conversion: Organic vs. Paid

Lead Form Conversion Rate:  
Organic vs. Paid  
(Total Population)



**At median, Paid Lead Form Conversion for is 4%, twice that of the 2% at median for Organic.**

**At the 75th percentile, Paid Lead Form Conversion is 6%, higher than the 5% at the 75th percentile of Organic.**

To maximize decision making, the lower conversion rate of organic traffic must be viewed within the context of 1) the cost to drive traffic and leads, 2) the quantity of organic traffic relative to other sources, and 3) the close rate of qualified opportunities from inbound, organic traffic.

# Lead Form Conversion Rate to MQL

**33%**

Lead Form Conversion to Marketing Qualified Lead (MQL) at median

**75%**

Lead Form Conversion to MQL at the 75th percentile

Understanding the criteria for MQL classification is critical to truly understand the end-to-end performance of a lead-generating source/channel, as “MQL” can vary significantly across companies.



# MQL to SQL Conversion Rate

**20%**

conversion rate from MQL to Sales Qualified Lead (SQL) at median

**33%**

conversion rate from MQL to SQL at the 75th percentile

Related to investment budgets allocated to pipeline development, it's important to ensure conversion rates are measured through to pipeline dollars and Closed/Won revenue dollars to fully understand ROI.



# MQL to Closed/Won Conversion Rate

Measuring MQL progression to Closed/Won is a best practice for high-growth companies with aligned Sales and Marketing functions.

Closely examining the source and associated discretionary costs of MQLs that close are required to inform optimal Marketing investments.

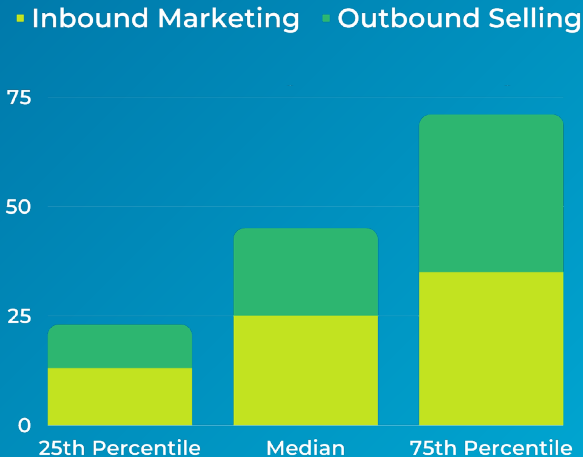
**8%**

of MQLs convert to Closed/Won at median

**20%**

of MQLs convert to Closed/Won at the 75th percentile

## Win Rate: Inbound Marketing vs. Outbound Selling (Total Population)



# Win Rates: Inbound Marketing Leads vs. Outbound Sales Leads

Measuring Win Rate by channel provides visibility and insight into an optimal channel mix — as well as data on Ideal Customer Profiles (ICPs).

Win Rate for Inbound Marketing Leads is 25% **at median**, 5 points higher than the 20% Win Rate for Outbound Sales Leads.

Previous research with companies that consistently measure Inbound Lead Conversion to Closed/Won showed Win Rates at 1.5x-2.5x higher levels than Outbound Sales Leads, ostensibly due to inbound leads being in active buying journeys

# Lead & Pipeline Cost Metrics

Building sales pipeline is typically viewed as the preeminent challenge to growing revenue and achieving the revenue plan.

Without understanding the cost of developing sales pipeline, along with the return on investment (ROI) of specific strategies and their tactics, it is near impossible to accurately model and plan the corresponding budget investment required to meet both pipeline and revenue goals. Yet ...



**54%**

of companies report they do not track the cost of pipeline development (although over half of them, 28% of the total) report planning to within 6 months)

**32%**

only track Cost per Lead

**19%**

only track Cost per Dollar of Revenue Won

# Cost Per Lead

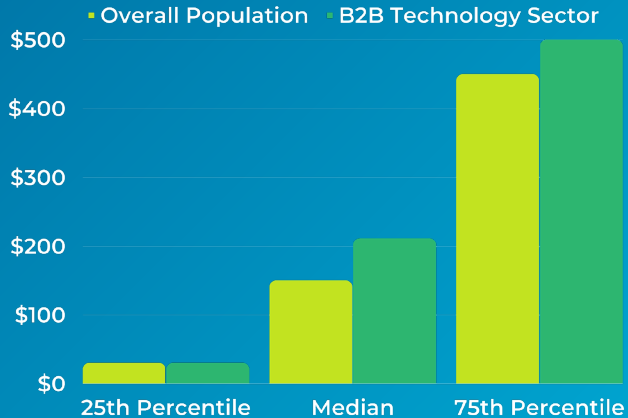
Cost Per Lead (CPL) is a metric that becomes more informative when compared to average contract value.

However, if a company does not track lead conversion through to Closed/Won revenue, the CPL metric, in isolation, becomes less informative and valuable, and threatens to become just a vanity metric.

Data shows the CPL in the B2B Technology sector is higher at both median and the 75th percentile than the overall survey population.

## Cost per Lead

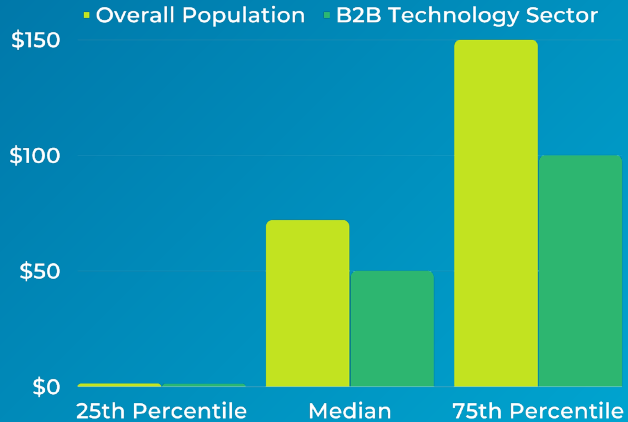
(Overall Population vs. B2B Technology Sector)





# Cost Per Lead by Organic Search

## Cost per Lead: Organic Search (Overall Population vs. B2B Technology Sector)

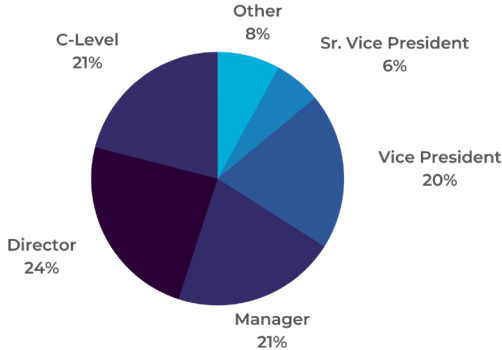


Interestingly, CPL for Organic Search as compared to overall CPL was reported as more than 50% less at median. However, in the B2B Technology sector, the discount was even more dramatic, with the CPL for Organic Search at just \$50 at median, less than 25% of the overall \$211 CPL.

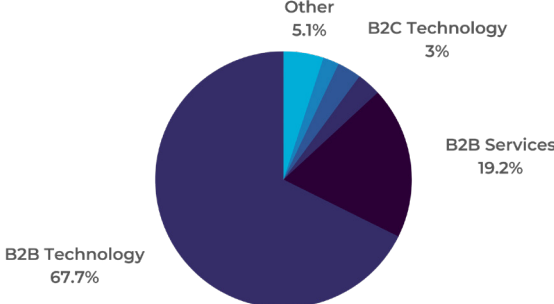
At first glance, the data suggests SEO is a superior channel for lead development efficiency. However, to make informed investment allocation decisions, it's important to fully understand conversion rates, both to qualified pipeline dollars and Closed/Won revenue dollars.

# 2022 Pipeline Performance Benchmarking Study Participants

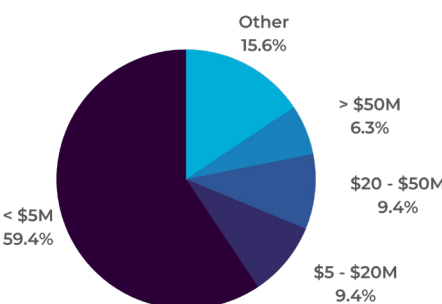
### By Job Title



### By Industry



### By Revenue



# Disclosures

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