

## How to move the right people from marketing qualified lead to sales ready



Once you've captured leads, nurtured them and scored their behaviour, the final step is deciding who should be passed to sales. This step is crucial. Hand over too early and your sales team wastes time. Hand over too late and a hot lead goes cold. The goal is to find the point where someone has shown enough interest, enough intent and enough engagement to be genuinely ready for a conversation.

At WebStudio Marketing, we treat this as a smooth, collaborative transition - marketing identifies interest, nurturing builds confidence and scoring confirms intent. Then sales take over at exactly the right moment.

### What a marketing qualified lead actually is

An MQL (marketing qualified lead) is someone who has shown strong signs of interest, but who hasn't yet asked to speak to sales. They're past the early curiosity stage. They've engaged with your content. They've shown intent. But they're not quite ready to enquire.

A typical MQL might be someone who:

- downloads multiple guides or case studies
- visits key service pages repeatedly
- opens most nurturing emails
- returns to the website after several days
- views pricing or testimonial pages

These are the people your sales team will want to speak to - but only once they're ready.

## Recognising when someone is truly sales ready

A lead becomes sales ready - an SQL, or sales qualified lead - when two factors align:

- **they've reached the scoring threshold** (based on meaningful behaviour), and
- **they take a clear action** that shows intent.

These actions might include:

- requesting a quote
- booking a call
- asking about availability or pricing
- replying to a nurturing email with a question
- submitting a high-intent form

These signals indicate they're ready to talk - not just browsing.

## Why lead scoring protects your sales team's time

Without scoring, every lead looks the same. In reality, some leads are warm and ready, while others are just passing by. Scoring allows you to filter out low-intent interactions such as:

- spam submissions
- competitor checks
- people asking about jobs
- low-value questions that won't lead anywhere

Only when a lead meets your criteria do they progress to sales. This makes the sales pipeline cleaner, faster and far more productive.

## **Marketing and sales need to work together**

The handover only works properly when marketing and sales are aligned. Marketing identifies MQLs based on data. Sales provide feedback on which leads were good and which ones weren't. That feedback then improves the lead scoring model.

Good collaboration sounds like:

- “This lead was ready - increase points for anyone visiting the pricing page.”
- “This lead wasn't a fit - reduce points for that behaviour.”
- “People who download this guide are always strong - raise its value.”

This cycle makes the system smarter every month.

## **How automation smooths the handover**

With tools like HubSpot, the handover from marketing to sales can happen automatically when a lead hits your MQL threshold. This means:

- the right leads reach sales faster
- no warm lead gets stuck in the marketing stage
- no one falls through the gaps

HubSpot can also notify the sales team instantly, assign leads to the right people and track follow-up actions so nothing is missed.

## **When a lead needs more nurturing instead**

Not every engaged lead is ready for sales. Some need more time. If someone hasn't reached your scoring threshold - or if they haven't taken a clear action - they stay in the nurturing system.

These leads may:

- read your emails but not take action
- download one guide but not return
- visit a key page once but not again

These people aren't lost opportunities - they're future opportunities. They just need more time and more value before making a decision.

## **How to help leads progress naturally**

Your goal isn't to push people into sales. It's to help them reach the point where they *want* to speak to you. The best way to do this is to give them content that builds trust and answers their questions.

Useful steps include:

- sending relevant blog posts inside your drips
- linking to helpful FAQs when they show interest in a topic
- offering case studies that match their situation
- sending invitations to webinars or workshops (if relevant)

These small nudges move people forward without pressure.

## **A simple plan to move leads from MQL to sales ready**

To get this part of your funnel working well, follow this structure:

- define your scoring threshold for MQL status
- identify the actions that mean someone is genuinely interested
- set up automation to pass MQLs to sales
- create a feedback loop between marketing and sales
- continue nurturing leads that aren't ready yet

When this system runs smoothly, your sales team only receives high-quality enquiries, and your marketing becomes far more efficient. This is how you move people from light curiosity to serious conversations - without wasting time on the wrong leads.

This completes the lead capture and nurturing section. If you'd like, we can now move on to the next chapter in your playbook.