# Unlocking the *Power of Marketing* using *AI/ML*

# Table of Contents

# Another White Paper About Maximizing ROI?

Let's face it: There are only so many ways marketing and sales teams can maximize their ROI. You can move leads through the buyers funnel faster, attract a higher quality of leads, or attract a greater quantity of leads.

And that's pretty much it. Anything you do to increase your ROI will be tied to one or all of these goals. And yet, maximizing ROI is still a major problem for sales and marketing teams.

> Somehow, something so simple in concept—we need to increase the number and quality of our leads and move them through our funnel faster—is incredibly difficult to implement.

If you're a marketer, you've probably experienced an executive or two asking, "What levers can we pull to improve revenue this quarter?" Usually, these requests come with some urgency. Your company is behind on projections and trying to close the gap before the quarter ends. Rarely do you receive a request to increase revenue because everything is going so well.

That's a stressful situation. There are very few tactics that you can implement on their own that will suddenly generate a massive upswing in leads and revenue, especially if you have a longer sales cycle.

> Why is something so simple in theory—maximizing ROI—so difficult in practice?

# Traditional Ways to Maximize ROI Fall Short

Why? Because teams don't actually know how their marketing tactics work in tandem to contribute toward closed won deals.

Too often, when tasked with increasing ROI, teams are left throwing together a webinar or dumping money into paid ads only to wait and see what happens. There are a lot of tactics you can adjust when trying to maximize ROI, but those won't necessarily translate to more leads, faster leads, or better leads. Too many marketers are left making best guesses when tasked with maximizing ROI.

The reason so many marketers are in the dark? Because the traditional ways marketers approach ROI are outdated and misaligned with our current marketing needs.

# "Built-In" Lead Scoring

What most teams think of as lead scoring automation is really only automated at the final and least impactful part of the process. In order to implement effective automatic lead scoring, your team must first analyze data and interpret what pieces of the puzzle matter most, so that the lead scores are indicative of pipeline and revenue potential.

For example, to create "automatic" lead scoring, you must:

- Gather all the data from your past interactions, including won and lost
- Determine which marketing touchpoints were involved in each individual lead journey
- Recognize all patterns related to lead engagement
- Determine a weight for every interaction, depending on the tactic, the timing of the engagement, and the frequency for the engagement
- Based on the above, assign weights to each interaction that's possible within your marketing journey
- Add all of these figures to your lead scoring platform

Only after your team has done all this work will your lead scoring platform start automatically calculating your lead scores. Lead scores can help you understand your funnel and how well you pull in leads, but it leaves a lot of important data out of the full picture.

**43%**
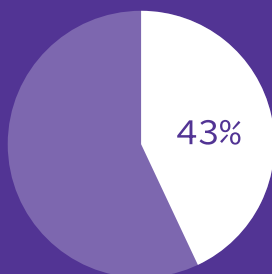
**In fact, 43% of marketers list improving lead quality and nurturing as a top priority for the year to improve conversion rates.**

Source: The 2023 State of Pipeline Generation Report by RevSure in partnership with Ascend2

# In-House Data Science

It takes a lot of experience and specialized knowledge for someone to correctly analyze your data, interpret it, and weigh each touchpoint in your funnel. Very few teams, especially these days, have the overhead to pay for an employee with that level of experience.

For example, one way to create a system that can accurately predict behavior is through a complex Markov chain model. It isn't impossible and there are plenty of highly talented data-scientists out there who can create one for their team. However, if your team decides to go this route, this employee will need to focus solely on this one project for several months in order to finish the complex model.

Once you have the model in place, you'll have a better understanding of what touchpoints lead to greater ROI. But when 42% of companies have cut their marketing budgets, most teams don't have the budget to hire such a skilled marketer/marketing data scientist, let alone a whole squad of them.

# Data-Based Assumptions

Even if you feel confident in your lead scoring and know you can pull levers to bring in more leads, that doesn't mean you'll be able to move them through the funnel any faster. You have to know which marketing tactics belong in what part of your funnel for maximum efficacy.

If you host an event and don't see that you've generated quality net-new leads or correlated opportunities, you might assume that event was a waste of resources. However, an event might be instrumental when it comes to closing deals.

**One such company found the leads that attended an event closed faster and with a higher annual contract value than the leads that did not. They needed that extra bit of granular data to hone in on a more efficient and lucrative marketing strategy.**

This insight requires a deeper analysis of the marketing and sales journey than most teams are capable of.

# ROI in Hindsight

Your marketing tactics might be unintentionally influencing the size of your deals. Some leads are smaller and will always have a smaller deal size and consequently smaller ROI for the same spend no matter what you do.

For one thing, you could be targeting smaller accounts disproportionately with your marketing mix and not even realize it. Or you could be missing the pain points and hesitations of enterprise buyers and omitting them from your messaging. Especially in an environment with multiple customer segments.

**Too many marketers assume that deal size is out of their control or the responsibility of the sales team. To understand how you better align your marketing with the desired deal sizes, you need an unbiased, in-depth analysis of your sales and marketing journey that most teams can't afford or can't perform.**

# The Dark Funnel

Another issue marketing teams face but don't like to talk about is how often the data they possess doesn't tell the full story. This is due to the dark funnel – aka all the touchpoints on a buyer's journey that marketing teams can't track.

>70%

Some estimates say that B2B buyers complete 70% (or more) of their sales journey before ever engaging with a vendor. That means your buyers are doing crucial research and you don't know when, where, or how your current efforts affect them.

Consider this real-life example:

A marketing team doesn't see a direct return associated with 3rd party directories and decides to cut it. A couple months pass and they experience a mysterious drop in revenue. After a couple more months, they connect the lost revenue with the lack of spending with 3rd party directories. They invest in that channel again and, after several more months, revenue returns to expected levels.

Multiple quarters passed before they noticed a drop in revenue, diagnosed the problem, and then restored the funnel to its former state. That's a lot of missed goals in the meantime.

**Too many teams break their funnel because they disregard channels that don't have an associated direct return. The dark funnel is only going to become a bigger issue as more and more individuals opt out of marketing cookies.**

# Partial Data Analysis

The most prevalent methodology currently being used to measure marketing mix and attribution only look at partial information. One of the biggest problems with traditional ways to measure ROI is how difficult it is to measure beyond the top of the funnel. Ask any marketer and they'll tell you that achieving multi-touch attribution is a big priority for their team.

**However, gaining full visibility into the entire customer journey is a pipe dream for many marketers. Full visibility requires either a large team of analytics professionals fully dedicated to the task or a huge data warehouse – or both. Very few teams have the budget or that kind of manpower available to them. As such, teams continue to struggle to gain the visibility they need to make better decisions on their spend.**

Teams lack visibility beyond their top of the funnel campaigns and channels. Top of the funnel is helpful but it doesn't tell you how often leads are interacting with your marketing materials or your website beyond that first touch. Since so few people are willing to buy immediately following that first touch, teams don't understand crucial aspects of their buyer journey.
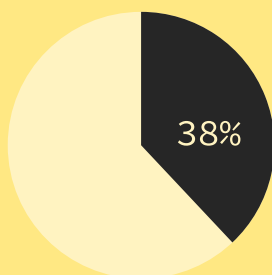


**According to a recent study, 38% of marketers cite lack of adequate data as the most significant challenge to successfully generating pipeline.**

Source: The 2023 State of Pipeline Generation Report by RevSure in partnership with Ascend2

# Measurement in Hindsight

Most ROI measurement is calculated by looking backwards, since it analyzes past data to estimate how current leads and opportunities will perform. But that past data doesn't help you make decisions for the leads that are currently in your funnel. There is no forward guidance on how the marketing activities will impact pipeline generation quantity and quality. Further, there's no connection to your operational funnel or your current pipeline management.

**These backward looking measurements can't tell you how to efficiently target the leads and opportunities in your current funnel and they can't tell you if any changes to your strategy have had an effect on how the pipeline generation will land by the end of the quarter or next. You have to wait until the quarter is over before you know whether you'll hit or miss your goals and by then, it's obviously too late.**



# Over-reliance on Marketing Agencies resulting in Conflict-of-Interest

For all these reasons, some companies choose to outsource their ROI measurement to marketing agencies in order to save themselves the time and money. However, that's a big conflict of interest since agencies want you to keep paying them. An outside agency won't want you to gain full visibility since then you won't need them anymore. Plus, when you outsource your ROI measurement, you add a gatekeeper between you and the data you need to transform your funnel.

# The New Way to Maximize ROI

Traditional ways marketers attempt to measure ROI can no longer keep up with modern marketing challenges. The problem marketers face over and over again is that we lack the right data. We can interpret the data we have to the best of our abilities, but under traditional methods of measuring our funnel, we simply do not know enough.

Cutting edge technology can change that. Machine-learning does the heavy lifting for you by interpreting all historical data and aggregate touchpoints to calculate what every interaction means to your sales funnel. And best of all, this machine learning can find useful insights much faster and much more effectively than humans.

AI can show you the true value of individual touchpoints in every step of your funnel so you can build a marketing strategy accordingly, one that knits together your most effective tactics to convert leads into high paying customers.

# 💡 The Benefits of Better Technology

Imagine having concrete proof about which touchpoints contribute to closed deals: You'd structure your entire marketing strategy based on data, not guesses. You'd no longer put massive resources behind a campaign that goes nowhere, disappointing marketers and executives alike. You'd target the best opportunities and convert your dream customers.

**The great news is the technology already exists and, for most teams, it's cheaper than hiring a team of analytics professionals.**



Photo by Google DeepMind on Unsplash

# 🔽 Active Funnel Management

Marketers need analytics so they can make strategic decisions to bring in more revenue with the same marketing spend. When you use technology to measure your funnel, you can use your Marketing Mix and Attribution data for active funnel management. You'll have insights you can act on at an operational level to affect leads currently in your funnel instead of having to wait until the quarter is over.

**You'll achieve visibility into your marketing mix and attribution that you've always wanted and be able to use that data right away to maximize your ROI.**

# Replace Lead Scoring with Lead Propensity to Pipeline

Lead Propensity to Pipeline predicts the likely behavior of a lead far beyond what lead scoring can do. Lead scoring is an estimate based on what interactions you think will positively or negatively affect a lead's journey through your funnel. There's a lot of room for error and the model you use must continuously be tested and corrected. Even then, lead scoring doesn't tell you what touchpoint will help move a specific lead through the funnel or help your sales team close a bigger deal.

**Lead Propensity to Pipeline, on the other hand, is based on granular data that looks ahead to how a lead will behave. This measurement provides actionable insight, shaping how you target leads and thus increasing their likelihood to convert down the line.**
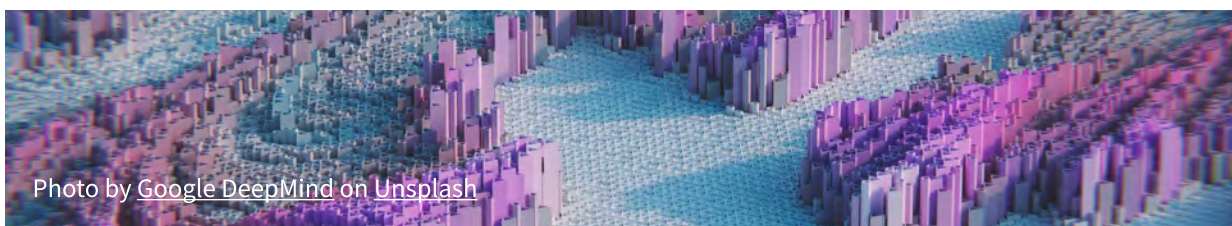


Photo by Google DeepMind on Unsplash

# Analyze Connected Data Across Touchpoints

When it comes to marketing, the whole is often greater than the sum of its parts. A customer decides to purchase from you not because they've engaged with you X amount of times—or else, maximizing revenue would be a simple matter of getting in front of your audience X times. Rather, a customer buys from you because of the way multiple touchpoints fit together.

**Machine-powered lead prioritization provides a value based on the full customer journey, which is more accurate and also more insightful than traditional lead scoring. When you know how the touchpoints fit together, you can create campaigns that are more effective bringing in and converting leads.**

# Speed Up Your Insights Cycle with Machine Learning

Machine-learning can also analyze deals which closed the fastest and find any patterns in that journey. You'll learn how to repeat these results so you move leads through the funnel faster, thus closing more of them in the same amount of time.

Traditionally, moving leads through the funnel faster has been one of the most difficult ways to maximize ROI. Most people assume that the sales funnel will last however long it will last and there's little marketing teams can do about it. But not anymore.

**With machine-learning, you're able to understand your buyer's journey more intricately. You'll understand what tactics help leads feel confident in your team and products so they speed towards a closed deal.**
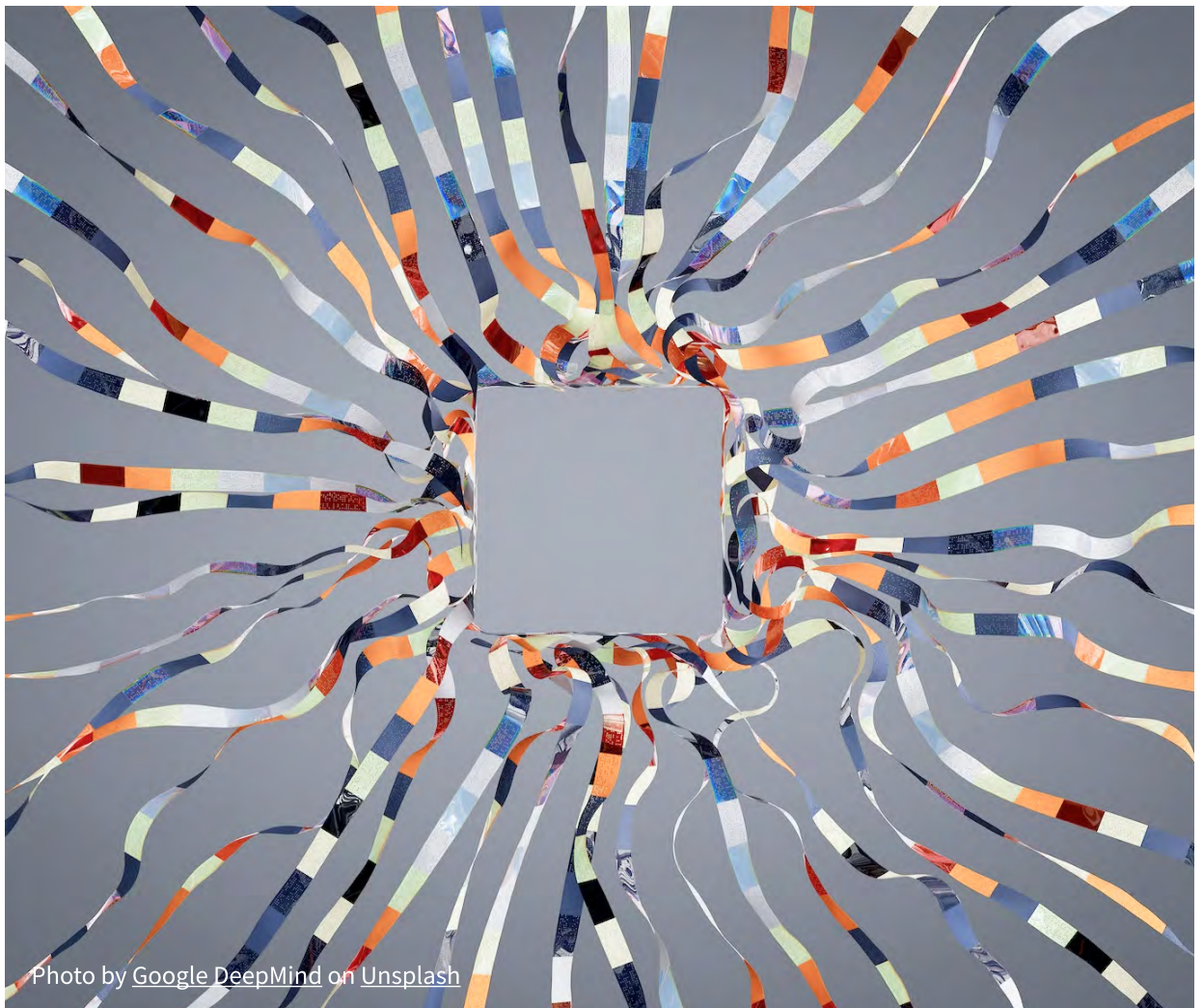


Photo by Google DeepMind on Unsplash

# Maximize Your Time and Resources at Each Stage

One of the worst feelings as a marketer is putting your blood, sweat, and tears into a campaign and then having nothing to show for it. No matter how good a campaign is, if you can't target the right audience or time it correctly, you won't be able to convert any leads into opportunities for sales. It's frustrating for everyone.

Instead, with the knowledge of what touchpoints will convert and at what point in the journey, you'll be able to transform various marketing touchpoints into a seamless campaign. **In fact, companies that use AI in their sales process experience <u>a 50% increase in leads and appointments</u>. Your teams can focus their talents on priorities that will meet and even exceed marketing goals. Everyone will feel more connected to the work they do when they know they're contributing to the team's success.**

And because your demand generation campaigns will be more effective and powerful, you'll have more time and resources to dedicate to the dark funnel by building out brand awareness campaigns.

# Real-Time ROI Predictions

One of the biggest problems facing marketing teams today is time. Like in the example provided earlier, traditional methods of determining ROI take time. You adjust your spend and wait to see how it affects your return. It can take at least six months—and sometimes even longer—to determine how a shift in your marketing spend affects your goals.

That's way too long. By that time, you could've already lost tens of thousands of dollars or more. You need real-time projections on how your team's work affects results. If you have to wait a quarter or two for results, it will be too late.

**If you rely on standard conversion rates to measure your upcoming ROI, you have no choice but to wait it out. Adopting a technology-driven approach to determining your ROI, however, gives you real-time figures you can trust.**

# Analyze The Entire Customer Journey

When you're using cutting edge technology, you have another benefit that traditional lead scoring doesn't: Technology, such as AI, can look at your entire funnel holistically instead of optimizing for one point in the process.

As we've discussed before, too many companies separate their marketing and sales funnels into two separate and distinct journeys. Because of complications with technology and, let's face it, personnel, this leads to disruptions and missed opportunities. What if you're basing your ROI calculations on the estimated return of MQLs? Plenty of marketing teams do. But there's a possibility that none of those MQLs convert down the line.

**Instead of having a marketing funnel optimized for the MQL to SAL conversion, AI studies the full funnel so your marketing team focuses on creating the MQLs that result in more closed won deals and those with a higher deal size. It's win-win-win: Marketing wins more MQLs, sales closes more deals, and the entire company nets more new-business-revenue.**



Photo by Google DeepMind on Unsplash
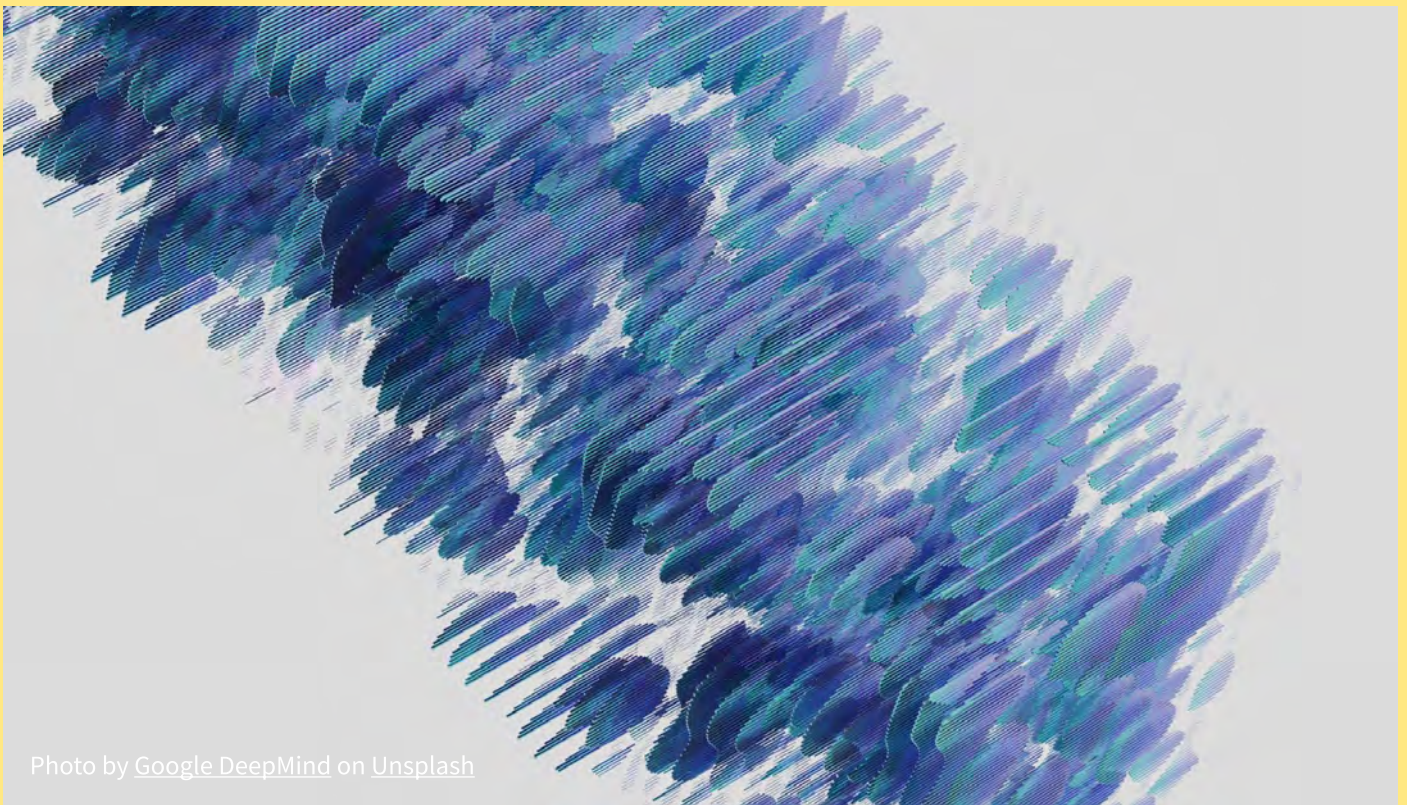
# Conclusion

Marketers know better than most people how quickly technology evolves. So why aren't we updating the way we approach ROI? Maybe it's because it's new or maybe it's because marketing is often under a ton of pressure from executives. Either way, the way we approach ROI is in dire need of an update.

**Instead of the traditional ways to maximize ROI, use machine-learning to provide data-backed insights into the specific touchpoints that influence revenue. This allows you to build a strategy proven to convert your ideal customers. With better technology, you get quick insights that would take even the most experienced marketers months to calculate –- and these insights don't have the high risk of errors.**

Next time that executive asks you what levers you can pull to increase revenue, you'll have a clear, data-backed answer for them ready to go.

You don't have to do it on your own. RevSure uses this cutting edge technology to provide you with the data you need, without the hassle.

# About RevSure

### 💲 Drive confident and profitable growth with RevSure

RevSure fills a gap left wide open between accurate predictions, your CRM and your MAP: pipeline acceleration. It's the missing piece between you and a unified sales and marketing funnel. We call it Pipeline Acceleration. And it could revolutionize how you plan, manage and analyze marketing activity.

### 📈 Improved performance, predictable outcomes

Through Pipeline Acceleration, RevSure shines a light on those murky mid-pipe stages, offering you:

- **Confident pipeline generation**
- **Improved conversion rates**
- **Optimized campaign performance**

And it's all powered by advanced AI predictions that help you capitalize on what converts and adjust what doesn't.

### ☆ B2B Marketing made whole

We know what's been holding marketing teams back. And we're confident that our platform could help you and your business scale the trickiest obstacles you face in 2023.

From planning to analysis, Pipeline Acceleration creates dependability and predictability when you need it most.
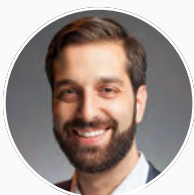
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"An unpredictable pipeline leads to unpredictable revenue generation. Pipeline Acceleration is the missing link in driving predictable & profitable revenue growth, and Pipeline health needs to be on every revenue leader, CEO, and Board's agenda."

**Deepinder Singh Dhingra** — Founder & CEO, RevSure.AI

# What customers say about RevSure

"Finally having stage-by-stage conversion, in one comprehensive view, is super powerful and actionable — it's a level of insight I never thought we could achieve."

**Tom Murtaugh**—VP GTM Operations, BigID

**BigID**

"RevSure.AI allows marketers to confidently commit to a pipeline target. Sales has countless tools to help with this but marketing does not. What is driving growth from the lead to opportunity stages. This product finally provides marketers with the opportunity to predict pipeline generation."

**Tom Wentworth**—CMO, Recorded Future

**Recorded Future®**

**See for yourself —** Book a free demo today to witness how Pipeline Acceleration could set your team up for success this year.

**BOOK A DEMO**

**REVSURE**