TOPO

RESEARCH NOTE

LEAD-TO-ACCOUNT MATCHING AND ROUTING MARKET GUIDE

An overview of the category, market drivers, and vendor landscape

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July 30, 2020

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Lead-to-account matching and routing has become one of the most critical applications in the sales tech and martech stacks of the most sophisticated sales and marketing organizations. This guide provides an overview of the market and offers guidance on how to evaluate and decide on future lead-to-account matching and routing investments.

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INTRODUCTION AND TAKEAWAYS

As marketing and sales operations have become more sophisticated and go-to-market (GTM) processes have become increasingly complex, the technology to enable GTM activity has flourished. Lead-to-account matching and routing solutions have become a critical piece of the infrastructure required to support these sophisticated GTM organizations.

Despite its importance in leading organizations, the lead-to-account matching and routing category is still nascent today. Category growth has been strong with early adopter organizations, but it still lacks recognition in the majority of the market that the category serves. As one of the only options for addressing common revenue process challenges, TOPO has followed this category for the past two years and watched it gain strength through word of mouth. TOPO analysts expect to see further growth in the coming years as the category and its benefits become more widely understood.

Key takeaways

More complicated GTM strategies require more robust technology. Increasing sales and marketing sophistication, including complex sales coverage models and adoption of account based strategies, requires more capable lead-to-account matching and routing solutions than CRM and marketing automation systems provide today.

Lead-to-account matching is critical for having a complete picture of the individual, activity, and engagement at a company. This enables more effective execution as well as more complete reporting of the impact and outcomes of marketing and sales activity.

Buyers need to select solutions that can support the full revenue process, not only initial use cases. As complexity and operational focus expands across the entire revenue process, selecting a solution that will support future complexity and use cases is critical.

MARKET OVERVIEW

Lead-to-account matching and routing is critical for modern go-to-market organizations

Lead-to-account matching and routing is the automated workflow solution that addresses two specific use cases in the revenue process—matching and routing.

- **Matching** is an automated workflow solution that maps the relationship between records in the revenue tech stack. The most common use case today, lead-to-account matching, matches new leads to the correct account record in the CRM.
- **Routing** is the solution that enables organizations to design, manage, and track the workflows used to assign records, such as sending leads to the correct individual according to an organization's territory mapping. Routing solutions enable organizations to automate complex routing rules, manage changes (e.g., attrition in the sales force), and optimize routing decisions.

The initial establishment and growth of lead-to-account matching and routing solutions was largely due to Salesforce's limited investment into its own native capabilities. As companies scaled and their operations became more sophisticated, it created the opportunity for third parties—most notably LeanData—to bring a more robust, flexible, and manageable lead-to-account matching and routing solution to market.

In the last few years, with the increased adoption of scaled account based strategies, lead-to-account matching has become critical for more companies. Without it, leads cannot be quickly routed to the correct account owner and sellers cannot easily get a complete picture of leads and engagement within their accounts.

As companies scale and look towards operations teams to improve efficiency and predictability in their GTM, automating repeatable manual tasks becomes significantly more valuable. Without automation, a sales development rep (SDR) or sales rep has to identify the correct account for every new lead. This often requires manually researching the contact, searching the CRM, and identifying the correct internal owner. The result of this type of manual process is often inconsistent matches, an incomplete view of engagement within the account, and missed opportunities for the account owner to engage new contacts in a timely manner.

Sophisticated organizations today are looking to automate a wider range of workflows in their revenue process, such as assigning accounts with high intent to SDRs for outbound prospecting and automatically assigning new customers to the correct customer success representative. We anticipate this trend to continue and lead-to-account matching and routing solutions will become a foundational part of the infrastructure that operations teams use to connect their tech stack across their end-to-end revenue processes.

Market benefits

As go-to-market strategies evolve and increase in complexity, more organizations are implementing lead-to-account matching and routing solutions. The category is delivering significant benefits, seen in very high impact and satisfaction ratings relative to the 24 TOPO-tracked sales and marketing technology categories (see Figure 1).

Impact and Satisfaction with Technology Solutions (Figure 1)

	IMPACT	SATISFACTION
Lead-to-Account Matching and Routing Positive	67%	78%
Average*	59%	64%
Rank in Tracked Categories	8th of 24	4th of 24

*Average is aggregated across all marketing and sales technology categories.

The primary benefits that an organization should expect to see include:

- **Higher productivity**: Automated processes replace manual lead triage and routing processes, freeing up SDR's and rep's time.
- **Enhanced account insights**: A complete picture of individuals, activity, and engagement within an account, including recent leads that normally would not have been converted to contacts in the CRM yet.
- **Faster follow-up**: With lead capture to routing measured in minutes, routing solutions enable companies to significantly reduce lead follow-up time.
- **Cleaner data**: Automated workflows identify duplicate contacts and reduce the creation of duplicate records.
- **Increased flexibility**: Ability to quickly modify and optimize go-to-market processes
- **Fewer lost leads**: Elimination of routing issues that result in leads never getting to the correct owner
- **Improved customer experience**: Immediately identify all inbound activity from customers and active prospects in order to deliver the most appropriate experience.

Organizations with high volumes of leads and complex routing see significant return on investment (ROI) from adopting a lead-to-account matching and routing solution. Closing operational gaps that resulted in leads that were never followed up on and significantly reducing lead follow-up times are both key contributors to ROI.

Lead-to-account matching and routing has become a critical part of the technology stack for today's high growth companies because it delivers on the benefits above, improves operational results (especially lifts in conversion rates), and allows quick responses to changing market dynamics (e.g., ensuring routing rules follow changes in territory design).

MARKET DRIVERS

Increasing go-to-market complexity is driving adoption

In today's high growth organizations, lead-to-account matching and routing is quickly becoming a foundational component for managing complex workflows across the revenue technology stack.

Now we expect broader category adoption as the greater B2B landscape adopts the best practices established by high growth market leaders.

- **The rise of specialization across the revenue process**. For world-class organizations, distinct functions handle various phases of the customer lifecycle. Sales development qualifies leads, sales closes deals, customer success onboards customers, and account mangers grow deals. This specialization creates more complex workflows that cannot be easily developed and maintained directly in the CRM.
- **Timely, quality lead follow-up is critical to marketing ROI** as well as customer experience. Without automated routing, it is extremely difficult to meet this requirement at scale. This has led to the adoption by organizations with significant inbound lead flow and a direct impact on marketing's contribution to opportunities and revenue.
- **The widespread adoption of account based strategies**. As organizations move to account based, they quickly realized that Salesforce could not provide a complete view of all leads, contacts, and engagement with an account. This CRM shortcoming accelerated adoption of category solutions.

MARKET LANDSCAPE

CRM and marketing automation capabilities are not enough

The proliferation of complex go-to-market strategies has created a market for workflow automation across the revenue process with a particularly acute need to invest in lead-to-account matching and routing solutions. The challenges of matching and routing may sound very specific, but are actually a key to driving efficiency and ROI.

CRM and marketing automation are the first solutions where automated matching and routing are typically implemented. For companies with simple sales coverage models and relatively low inbound lead flow, these implementations are often sufficient.

However, as the GTM becomes more complex, these solutions often require significant customization and upkeep, leading companies to adopt solutions designed for implementing and supporting complex workflows. By the time companies have a couple dozen sellers, adopt a named account or account based approach, or are generating more than a few thousand leads a month, most will move to a third-party solution.

According to TOPO's technology benchmark surveys, 48% of organizations have already moved to a lead-to-account matching and routing solution beyond their CRM and marketing automation solutions. These companies are choosing from the following three types of solutions.

1. **Specialized providers** have developed solutions specifically to address today's lead-to-account matching and routing requirements. Their focus enables them to optimize their solutions specifically to the requirements and integrations of these use cases.

   LeanData has emerged as a clear leader in this group and in the category overall, with 600+ customers and more than $40 million raised to date. Developed as a native Salesforce solution, LeanData has become the dominant provider for complex organizations using Salesforce.

2. **Workflow automation** solutions are designed to create pre-programmed processes across enterprise systems. This allows workflow automation solutions to work in more complex environments, including organizations needing to integrate across back-office and front-office systems or with multiple CRM and marketing automation instances. Many of these solutions have a commercial model that supports starting with a small set of use cases that enable companies to implement these solutions initially for only lead-to-account matching and routing use cases.

   Tray.io, a workflow automation solution with a $600 million plus valuation and an extensive customer list, is a prominent workflow automation solution for marketing and sales operations teams that have complex technology infrastructures and integration requirements, including multiple CRM instances from different providers.

3. **Data management solutions** include vendors from two different categories. Both are combined here because they both offer lead-to-account matching but are not typically purchased primarily for matching and routing.

   - **Customer data platforms (CDPs)** capture information about an individual from across multiple data sources and transactional systems and consolidate it into a unified customer profile. Solutions designed for B2B organizations, including Dun & Bradstreet and Leadspace, match leads to accounts as part of their data capture and consolidation process.
   - **Account based platforms** consolidate data and insights related to each account. Some providers now refer to this as an embedded CDP capability. Engagio, an account based platform recently acquired by Demandbase, is used by its customers for lead-to-account matching, a capability that is required for the view it provides of people and activity at each account.

Figure 2 below highlights examples of vendors in each of the categories discussed above.

Lead-to-Account Matching and Routing Vendors (Figure 2)

SEGMENT	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE VENDORS
MATCHING		
Specialized Providers	Solutions specifically designed to provide lead-to-account matching	Distribution Engine, LaneFour, LeanData, RingLead
Workflow Automation	General workflow automation solution implementing lead-to-account matching as a workflow	Tray.io, Workato
Data Management Solutions	Broader data management and account based solutions that provide lead-to-account matching	CaliberMind, Dun & Bradstreet, Engagio (Demandbase), Leadspace, Openprise
ROUTING		
Specialized Providers	Solutions specifically designed to provide lead routing	Distribution Engine, LaneFour, LeanData, RingLead
Workflow Automation	General workflow automation solution implementing lead routing as a workflow	Tray.io, Workato
Data Management Solutions	Broader data management solutions that have routing capabilities	CaliberMind, Openprise

In addition to these categories, there are a wide range of companies that provide some level of embedded lead matching capabilities, such as attribution and data enrichment solutions. However, the matching process that is reflected in the CRM and used to route records to the correct owner is the one with the broadest impact on revenue processes.

There are also a number of specialty routing solutions designed for specific channels, such as routing live chat requests, calendaring (e.g., Chili Piper), and inbound calls (e.g., XANT). While these specific use cases are not covered in this guide, they deliver against workflow requirements that are not widely supported by many providers to date.

MARKET OUTLOOK

TOPO expects to see significant market growth and an evolved category definition over the next three years.

- **Workflow automation will become a core infrastructure element of the revenue stack**, driving significant revenue growth for workflow solutions that serve revenue organizations.
- **The market will be split between two major groups of players**: specialized solutions purpose built for revenue organizations and general workflow automation solutions.
- **Specialized solution providers will initially lead the increase in overall market growth**. Lead matching and routing will continue to be the initial use case that companies implement.
- **Specialized providers will expand their offering** to support a broader set of workflow needs in the revenue organization.
- **Data management providers looking to compete in this market will invest in expanded workflow automation capabilities**. Dun & Bradstreet and ZoomInfo, with significant resources and a stake in making data more actionable, are expected to be factors in the market.

In addition, changing organizational practices will increase the adoption and application of workflow solutions by revenue teams.

- **Organizations will consolidate customer data** that is currently housed across various applications today.
- **Revenue teams will centralize workflows on top of unified data**, pulling them out of point solutions where they are more difficult to design and maintain for end-to-end processes.
- **Revenue operations will emerge as a standard discipline** for designing and managing the end-to-end revenue process. Workflow automation solutions are a key element of the core infrastructure for successful revenue operations functions.

BUYER GUIDANCE

Identify a solution that will evolve with changing business needs and complexity

The first step in the vendor selection process for a lead-to-account matching and routing solution is to identify the matching and routing rules that workflows will need to be developed for. Be prepared to articulate the desired workflows, including the rules that need to be implemented. For instance, routing rules for demo requests might be different than the rules for another source activity.

TOPO analysts recommend evaluating test data or running a proof-of-concept to ensure that the solution can meet the needs of proposed workflows.

The scorecard in Figure 3 below provides the key vendor evaluation criteria for matching, routing, and reporting capabilities. It can be used to evaluate an existing solution as well as potential new solutions.

Lead-to-Account Matching and Routing Scorecard (Figure 3)

FACTOR	KEY QUESTION	KEY CONSIDERATIONS
MATCHING		
Match Rate	What portion of leads will be matched?	• % of leads matched • Comparison to current solution
Accuracy	How accurate will matches be?	• Matched to correct account • Unmatched records that should have matched • Ability to modify rules to improve accuracy
Duplicate Identification	Will it reduce duplicate contact and lead records?	• Ability to identify and address duplicates
Speed	How quickly does the match process run?	• Time required for matching • Impact of volume on speed
User Experience	Is the system easy to use and maintain?	• Skill and training requirements • Difficulty of developing and maintaining rules
Match Result Recording	Where is the matched record information stored?	• Natively available in the CRM • Available for business intelligence/reporting • Available for routing and other workflows
ROUTING		
Routing Complexity	Will it support all of the routing requirements?	• All required data for routing rules is accessible • All objects to route are supported • Ability to support increased complexity in the future
Speed	How long does it take for each record to be routed?	• Time required to route a record based on the most complex rules • Impact of volume on routing speed
Use Case Support	What additional routing use cases are supported?	• Objects that can be routed (e.g., accounts, opportunities, cases) • Data available for routing rules (e.g., account status, account owner, account history, campaign ID, lead source)
User Experience	Is the system easy to use and maintain?	• Skill and training requirements • Ability to quickly modify and QA • End user accessible reporting
OPERATIONAL REPORTING		
Process Audit	Can the outcome of every matching and routing event be audited?	• Access an audit trail for every match and route event • View all errors and points of failure
Operational Visibility	Does the solution provide visibility into all processes?	• View number of workflows completed by source, criteria, and routing destination • Report on SLA achievement

CONCLUSION

Lead-to-account matching and routing has become a critical operational process for today's sophisticated organizations, delivering improved operational results and allowing them to respond quickly to changing market dynamics. TOPO expects to see the category become standard in enterprise technology segments and adoption and growth in a broader set of B2B industry segments.

ABOUT TOPO

TOPO works with high-growth companies to transform their sales, sales development, and marketing organizations into world-class functions. B2B organizations rely on TOPO research and consulting to make informed strategic decisions that drive pipeline and revenue growth.

We do this by offering:

1. **Data and benchmarks** collected from the world's fastest-growing companies across hundreds of key metrics.
2. **Research, best practices, and tools** that make faster revenue growth a reality by focusing on specific, actionable strategies, tactics and plays.
3. **Personalized advice and support** from sales and marketing's best and brightest—TOPO analysts and your peers from the world's fastest-growing companies.
4. **Consulting** helps clients address big sales and marketing issues in a manner that's deeply specific to you. Our consulting work focuses on areas such as go-to-market strategy, organizational design, and marketing/sales process
5. **Events and peer networking** with industry-leading practitioners to learn and share best practices associated with top-performing sales and marketing teams

About the analyst

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Craig Rosenberg combines 20+ years of sales and marketing experience with TOPO's high-growth dataset to provide specific, actionable recommendations that drive predictable, scalable growth. He and his team support over 200 companies, ranging from the largest technology companies in the world to early-stage startups.

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For more information

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