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# The Disqualifier.

*Who Sales-Led Marketing is not for, by service, written out before the call.*

Most agencies bury this part. We'd rather give you a clean reason to not talk to us than spend a quarter discovering we never should have started. This edition is rebuilt around the three services we ship today, because the disqualifier for one is sometimes the qualifier for another.

**→ If you see yourself on any of these pages, save us both a 30-minute call.**

## WHY THIS EXISTS

# If we're not the right call, you deserve to know it before you book one.

Sales-Led Marketing is the lead engine your reps used to build by hand, now shipped three ways: a 12-week Build that produces the asset library, a monthly Video engine that posts 30 clips, and a Training program with Matt 1-on-1. Each service works for a specific shape of company, and the failure modes are different for each one. The disqualifier that kills a Build sometimes leaves Training intact, and the company that has no business with Training might be exactly the right buyer for Video. We separated them out so you can sort yourself in five minutes.

Every line in this document is here because at some point in the last two years a founder reached out, we did the diagnostic, and one of these turned out to be the reason it wouldn't have worked. This is the post-mortem, written as a pre-mortem.

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*"We'd rather lose a wrong-fit deal than win one."*

## THE THREE SERVICES (FOR THE TAGS BELOW)

**BUILD**

12-week engagement. \$30K to \$60K one-time. Category 5 (POV, name, manifesto, lightning strike, language), Selling 7, Big 5, readiness scorecard.

**VIDEO**

Monthly clip engine. \$10K/month. Thirty 30-second videos, scripts, voiceover, posting. Optional \$3K AI avatar.

**TRAINING**

1-on-1 with Matt. \$6,000 total. Eight to twelve weeks, weekly sessions, async between.

## HARD DISQUALIFIERS

# The conditions that make a service stop working.

Not “might be hard.” Can't work. Each disqualifier below is tagged with which service it kills. If a tag is missing, that service is still on the table for you. If all three tags are missing, you're past the hard list entirely and the soft disqualifiers on page five are next.

- The founder will not, under any circumstances, go on camera.

KILLS: BUILD

WEAKENS: VIDEO

The Build is named “sales-led” because the founder on camera is the load-bearing element of the first 30 days. Video without the founder still ships (with the \$3K AI avatar add-on or a senior rep stand-in), but the trust signal is softer and reply rates run 30 to 40 percent lower in the data we have. Training is the exception: that's 1-on-1 work with Matt, no camera required, and it's often the right starting point for camera-shy founders.

- Your reps have a contractual or compliance reason they can't be publicly identified.

KILLS: BUILD

KILLS: VIDEO

Both the asset library and the clip engine depend on named sellers publishing under their own name. Comes up most often in regulated financial services, certain healthcare sales motions, and anonymous-by-design defense or intelligence sales. Training still applies (it's about how your reps sell, not what gets published under their face), so don't write us off entirely. But Build and Video are off the table.

- You measure marketing in MQLs and impressions, and you'd like to keep doing that.

KILLS: BUILD

KILLS: VIDEO

KILLS: TRAINING

We measure in pipeline coverage, cost-per-qualified-meeting, and rep-hours-saved-on-prospecting. Across all three services, our milestones won't land as “working” inside an MQL/impression frame, even when they are. Change the measurement first, or hire someone whose work fits the measurement you already have. This one we won't try to talk you out of.

- You want a six-month strategy phase before anything ships.

**KILLS: BUILD****KILLS: VIDEO**

The Build produces a one-page diagnosis in week 1 and ships the first video in week 4. Video posts inside two weeks of kickoff. If the cultural rhythm of your organization requires a long deck-driven planning phase before anything goes public, we'll get killed by the antibodies. Training is the workaround: that's where the strategy thinking actually lives, and it doesn't ship public output during the engagement.

- The founder cannot allocate weekly time to the engagement.

**KILLS: BUILD****KILLS: VIDEO****KILLS: TRAINING**

All three services run on founder time. Build: 90 minutes a week of working sessions for 12 weeks, then sit-in for the 90-day stabilization. Video: a 4-hour shoot day in week 2, then 1 hour a week of recording. Training: a weekly 90-minute call with Matt for 8 to 12 weeks. We've tested asynchronous versions of each. None of them produced output we'd put our name on. If the founder's calendar is the bottleneck, fix that first.

- You want us to ghostwrite the founder's voice while the founder stays out of the room.

**KILLS: BUILD****KILLS: VIDEO****KILLS: TRAINING**

Sales-Led Marketing only works when the company's actual point of view is in the work. We can sharpen, structure, and produce, but we can't invent a worldview the founder won't show up to defend. Ghostwriting agencies exist and some of them are excellent. We're not one of them.

## SOFT DISQUALIFIERS

# The conditions that change which service is right.

None of these are deal-breakers across the board. They are conditions that shift the right product, the timeline, the milestones, or the price. If any describe you, the tag tells you which service still fits and which one to skip. When in doubt, talk to us before either of us assumes the standard engagement applies.

## ○ You're under \$5M ARR and looking for your first marketing hire.

**WRONG: BUILD****MAYBE: VIDEO****FIT: TRAINING**

The Build assumes you already have a sales team to build the engine around. Below \$5M, you usually don't. Training at \$6K total was built for exactly this founder: you walk out with the messaging framework, the asset list, and the publishing rhythm you'd otherwise give a first hire to figure out. Video is borderline; only take it if you can name the 25 questions your buyer is already typing into a search bar, and you're prepared to be the one on camera answering them.

## ○ Your buyers are exclusively procurement-driven enterprise (RFP-only).

**WRONG: BUILD****WRONG: VIDEO****MAYBE: TRAINING**

If RFP is the only way into your accounts, the asset library and the clip engine do less work for you than they would for a buyer-led motion. A category analyst (Forrester, IDC, Gartner) at \$30 to \$120K is the higher-leverage spend, then layer with ABM on the 50 to 200 named accounts that matter. Training still applies if you want to sharpen the messaging for the moments procurement is open to influence, but it's a smaller bet here than usual.

## ○ Your sales cycle is over 18 months.

**STRETCHED: BUILD****STRETCHED: VIDEO****FIT: TRAINING**

Leading indicators show up at the usual cadence (reply rates by week 6, show rate by week 10), but pipeline impact lags by a full sales cycle, which is for you long enough that Build or Video may feel like they didn't "work" before they have. Training is unaffected: that ROI shows up in rep behavior change inside 8 weeks. Worth talking through expectations before either of us commits to the bigger engagement.

- You just closed a financing round and the board wants results in 30 days.

**WRONG: BUILD****MAYBE: VIDEO****WRONG: TRAINING**

The Build's pipeline impact lands at week 16 at the earliest. Wrong tool for a 30-day clock. The Video engine ships 30 clips a month starting week 2, so if your board's definition of "results" is reach, watch-time, and reply rate, Video is a plausible buy. If "results" means closed-won inside 30 days, an SDR firm is the more honest fit. We can recommend two.

- You already have a CMO who'd be threatened by an outside engagement.

**RISK: BUILD****RISK: VIDEO****FIT: TRAINING**

Build and Video both create work the CMO will eventually want credit (or blame) for. We've watched too many of those engagements get knee-capped in month 2 by a CMO who agreed to it under pressure and then quietly campaigned against it. Training is the move that doesn't touch the CMO's territory: it's the founder and Matt, behind closed doors. Use it to align internally, then revisit Build when the political cost has dropped.

- Your existing agency relationship is unbreakable for political reasons.

**AWKWARD: BUILD****AWKWARD: VIDEO****FIT: TRAINING**

We can coexist with an existing agency, but the first 60 days get awkward and the work we ship will sometimes contradict theirs. If the political cost of that awkwardness is higher than the potential pipeline upside, picking us for Build or Video is the wrong trade. Training again is the move that doesn't touch the agency's territory.

## IF THIS IS YOU

# Where we'd send you instead.

A disqualifier without an alternative is a brush-off. Below, the move we'd actually recommend for each profile above. Often the alternative is one of our other services. Sometimes it's a vendor we have no relationship with. We'll say which.

## If the founder won't go on camera

Take Training (\$6K). 1-on-1 with Matt, no camera required, and it's often the work that makes the founder comfortable going on camera 6 months later. If Training is also off the table, hire a senior digital agency with strong in-house production. Expect \$5 to \$15K/month and a longer runway. We can recommend two by email.

## If you're under \$5M / first marketing hire

Take Training. It was built for this stage. You walk out with the messaging framework and the asset list you'd otherwise give a first hire to figure out. If even \$6K is too much right now, read *Marketing Made Simple* (Miller) and *Endless Customers* (Sheridan), then hire a writer-marketer (not a senior specialist) and set the messaging yourself.

## If you need pipeline this quarter

Take Video (\$10K/month). Thirty clips/month starting week 2 won't compound the way the Build does, but they'll move show-rate and reply-rate numbers inside the quarter. If "pipeline this quarter" means closed-won inside 30 days, an SDR firm is more honest. Expect \$6 to \$12K/month for a vendor or \$120 to \$180K all-in for two BDRs. We can recommend two.

## If your buyers are procurement-only enterprise

Engage a category analyst (Gartner, Forrester, IDC) for \$30 to \$120K. Their report is the trust signal procurement actually weights. Layer with ABM on the 50 to 200 named accounts. Add Training if you want the messaging tightened for the moments procurement opens to influence.

## If the CMO is threatened or the agency is unbreakable

Take Training. It doesn't touch their territory. Use it to align internally over 8 to 12 weeks, then revisit Build when the political cost has dropped.

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Every recommendation above is a vendor or category we've genuinely sent business to in the last 18 months. Email [matt@salesledmarketing.com](mailto:matt@salesledmarketing.com) with the line that describes you, and we'll send back two or three specific names within 48 hours. No fee, no kickback, no tracking pixel.

THE COMMITMENT

# This document gets updated as we learn more.

Sales-Led Marketing is a young methodology applied to a category we just named, now shipped as three distinct services. Every engagement teaches us a new way an engagement can fail, and every new failure mode that's durable enough to be predictable shows up here, in the next edition.

Edition 01 assumed a single 12-week engagement. Edition 02 reflects the three services we actually sell today: Build, Video, and Training. The disqualifiers are tagged so you can sort yourself into the right one, or out of all three, without booking a call.

If you're reading edition 02, it's May 2026. Look at the cover for the version number on any later edition. If a line surprised you, or you think we're wrong about one, email us. We change our minds in public when we should.

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**If, after reading this, none of the pages describe you,**

**The 30-minute diagnostic is at  
salesledmarketing.com.**

No pitch deck. We bring the math. You bring the honest answers about your rep rotation.

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