

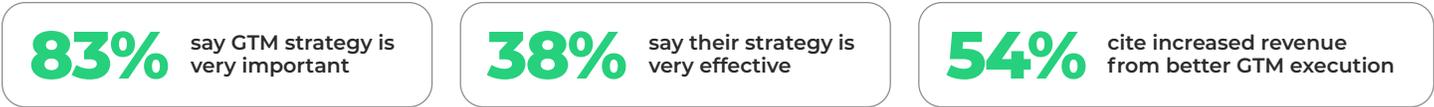
ALIGNING GO-TO-MARKET EXECUTION WITH STRATEGY TO BETTER ADDRESS COMPLEX BUYER JOURNEYS

Harvard Business Review Analytic Services
 Survey of 522 B2B GTM Professionals
 Published March 2026
 Sponsored by LeanData

As B2B buying grows more complex, the ability to execute a strategy has become a defining advantage. Yet new research from Harvard Business Review Analytic Services reveals a striking disconnect: while the vast majority of organizations recognize how important their GTM strategy is, far fewer are executing it effectively. This executive summary distills the key findings from a survey of 522 GTM professionals, exploring what separates leading organizations from the rest, and what it takes to close the gap.

The Execution Gap

An overwhelming 83% of respondents say their GTM strategy is very important for selling to B2B buyers. But only 38% describe their strategy as very effective. That 45-point gap signals a major opportunity: most organizations know what they need to do, but struggle to translate strategy into execution. Organizations that close this gap are reaping the rewards, most notably, increased revenue, which 54% of respondents cite as the top benefit of improving GTM execution.



Why Execution Falls Short

The challenges are both external and internal. On the buyer side, journeys have become more complex and harder to interpret, with 55% of respondents citing a more complex buyer journey as a top challenge. Internally, organizations struggle with fragmented systems, misaligned teams, and siloed data. The most-cited challenge for designing GTM strategies is that systems or data sources aren't well integrated (48%), while siloed data that fails to provide a holistic view of buyer engagement (43%) is the top execution challenge.



LEADER VS. LAGGARD INSIGHT

Leaders are significantly less likely to report misaligned goals and ineffective coordination, suggesting that strategic clarity and tight team alignment are defining traits of top-performing GTM organizations.

How Leaders Close the Gap

1. USE THE BUYER JOURNEY AS THE ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE

Alignment with the buyer journey is widely seen as essential, with 92% of respondents agreeing, yet only 29% say they understand today's journey very well. Leaders have a much firmer grip: 53% of leaders report strong buyer journey understanding, compared to just 18% of followers and 11% of laggards. That understanding pays off. Organizations that improve their buyer journey knowledge report revenue growth, improved buyer targeting, and better sales and marketing alignment as top benefits. Leaders are especially likely to see revenue growth, at 64%, compared to 37% of laggards.

53% of Leaders understand today's buyer journey well

18% of Followers understand today's buyer journey well

11% of Laggards understand today's buyer journey well

2. ALIGN TEAMS AROUND SHARED METRICS AND GOALS

There is broad recognition that GTM systems require tighter coordination: 78% agree. Yet only 32% say their teams are very aligned. The contrast between leaders and laggards is stark: 63% of leaders report strong alignment versus just 11% of laggards. Leading organizations are prioritizing clarifying roles and expectations, defining common metrics and KPIs, and aligning on a shared GTM strategy. Shared metrics help break down the silos that hold teams back, replacing internal competition with coordinated execution focused on revenue outcomes.

● THE ALIGNMENT ADVANTAGE

Strong GTM alignment is reported by 63% of leaders, compared with only 11% of laggards. A similar gap appears in collaboration priorities, with 81% of leaders emphasizing it versus 48% of laggards.

3. INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY AND AI TO SCALE EXECUTION

Technology is foundational to GTM execution at scale. Further, 68% of respondents agree that AI is important to their organization's GTM strategy. Leaders are ahead in exploring new technologies: 76% of leaders and followers are exploring new tools to improve execution, compared to just 51% of laggards. AI use cases already in play include analyzing data for insights, optimizing marketing campaigns, coaching sales reps, and personalizing content at scale. From capturing buyer signals to intelligent lead routing, the right technology stack helps teams act faster, collaborate better, and personalize every interaction.

● THE FORMULA FOR GTM SUCCESS

Leaders stand apart by building execution models that align teams, metrics, and systems around the buyer. For organizations looking to close the gap, several priorities emerge:

- Focus on process, with the buyer journey as your guide.
- Treat GTM improvement as a continuous effort, not a one-time project.
- Align teams to collaborate around shared goals, leveraging technology and AI to move faster and personalize at scale.

LeanData: Your Partner in GTM Execution

LeanData helps B2B enterprises fuel efficient growth by aligning marketing, sales, and customer service execution with the buyer journey. Our Intelligent GTM Orchestration platform acts as the connective tissue across the revenue lifecycle, integrating and normalizing buyer data, automating signal-driven workflows, and delivering AI-powered insights. The result is faster, cleaner execution and the ability to scale complex GTM motions without coding.

We'd love the opportunity to partner with you on improving your go-to-market execution.

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