

MAGROFY

The Lead Specification Handbook

How to write a lead specification that survives reconciliation. Field by field, with the errors that cost the most and a template you can fill in.

WRITTEN FOR THE PERSON WHO WILL BE HELD TO THE NUMBER

Magrofy Inc · September 2026

Why this document exists

Almost every dispute between a demand supplier and a buyer is the same dispute. The records match what was written and they do not match what was meant. Both sides are telling the truth, which is why the argument cannot be won and why it damages the relationship whoever concedes.

The specification is the only thing that prevents it. It is the contract, the test for acceptance, and the brief the form is built from. Written properly it takes a morning. Left implicit it costs a quarter.

THE ONE RULE UNDERNEATH ALL OF THIS

A specification describes a record, not an intention. Every line has to be answerable from a form, from firmographic data, or from a question the reader will actually answer. A line that requires judgement is a line that will be argued about.

So the test for every field below is the same: if two reasonable people read this, could they disagree about whether a given record passes? If yes, it is not finished.

The anatomy of a specification

Twelve field groups. Not all apply to every programme, but every one that is left out should be left out deliberately.

THE TWELVE FIELD GROUPS

Not all apply to every programme. Every one you leave out should be left out deliberately.

01 Qualified lead definition

In your words, with the threshold

02 Geography

Contact country or headquarters

03 Company size floor

In your pricing unit

04 Industry

Included and excluded

05 Function

And the sub function

06 Seniority

Floor, plus the responsibility exception

07 Job title

Controlled list, never free text

08 Responsibility

Budget, timing, estate, systems

09 Disqualifiers

What you exclude, you exclude

10 Suppression

A file, not a description

11 Record fields

What must arrive populated

12 Acceptance

Who, grounds, turnaround, format

The test for every line: could two reasonable people disagree about whether a given record passes? If yes, it is not finished.

The three that cost the most when they are left out

- **The qualified lead definition.** Written as an acronym rather than as a rule a form can test. Two teams then use the same word for different things and discover it at invoice.
- **Job title as free text.** The single largest source of records that pass a form and fail a specification, because an unqualified person can type themselves into scope.
- **The disqualifier list.** Left blank, which means everything you did not exclude you have included: agencies, resellers, competitors and your own customers.

Writing the qualified lead definition

This is the field that decides whether the programme is a success or an argument, and it is the one most often left at the acronym.

What a usable definition contains

WHAT A USABLE QUALIFIED LEAD DEFINITION CONTAINS

This is the field that decides whether the programme is a success or an argument, and it is the one most often left at the acronym.

01

The population

Function, seniority or responsibility, company size, geography. Expressed as fields, not as a description.

02

The action

What they did that makes them a lead. Requested a named asset, answered a set of questions.

03

The threshold

The line that separates qualified from not, stated as a rule a form can test.

04

The near miss rule

What happens to a record that meets every criterion but one. Deciding this in advance removes most of the friction.

05

The evidence

What must arrive to prove each of the above. A criterion that cannot be evidenced is a hope.

WORKED EXAMPLE, AN HQL DEFINITION THAT WORKS

Population. IT or security function, at a company of 500 employees or more, in the UK, Germany or the Netherlands.

Responsibility. Answers yes to holding or influencing budget for the category, from a controlled two option question.

Action. Requested the named asset on a Magrofy publication and answered all four qualifying questions.

Threshold. Timing answer is within twelve months. A timing answer of no plan is out of specification.

Near miss. A record matching everything except company size, between 250 and 499 employees, is delivered flagged and does not count against the volume commitment unless we accept it in writing.

Evidence. Publication, asset, timestamp, consent sentence, and all four answers on every record.

Where it goes wrong	How Magrofy handles it
The definition exists in a slide rather than in the brief, so the form is built to the slide's summary and the criteria are lost.	We take the specification as a written document, hold it, and build the form to it. The document, not a conversation, is what acceptance is measured against.
The definition includes a criterion nobody can evidence, such as an intent to purchase or a budget already approved.	We say so at scoping rather than delivering our own reading of it. If a line cannot be filled we would rather quote a lower volume than fill it from somewhere we cannot vouch for.

Qualifying questions: controlled lists, never free text

This is where most of the value in a specification sits, and it is the single cheapest improvement available to almost every programme.

WHERE REJECTION HAPPENS

The same programme, two form designs. The question is not whether unqualified people are filtered out. It is who pays for filtering them.

Free text form

Form completed

anyone who can type

Delivered to you

still looks fine

Your team reviews

your cost, your time

Accepted

the gap is the argument

Controlled lists

Form attempted

same traffic

Form completed

unqualified cannot pass

Rejected by us

before delivery, our cost

Accepted

against your specification

Rejection moves from your desk to ours, and it happens before delivery rather than after it.

Free text asks	A controlled list asks	What changes
What is your job title?	Select your role from this list of 212 titles	An unqualified person cannot type themselves into specification. Rejection moves from your desk to ours, before delivery.
Which company do you work for?	Select your employer from this list of 72 named companies	On a target account programme this turns the account list into a gate rather than a filter applied afterwards.
How much do you purchase annually?	Select a band	Bands are answerable and comparable. Open numeric fields are abandoned or guessed.
What are your plans?	Select a timing window	A timing window can be tested against a threshold. A sentence cannot.

How many questions

Enough to qualify and no more. Every question costs completion, so put the questions on the asset strong enough to earn them, and take fewer on a lighter asset. Four well chosen questions on a benchmark report will outperform eight on a brochure, in both volume and acceptance.

Where it goes wrong	How Magrofy handles it
Questions are added as free text because it is quicker to brief, and the form then accepts anyone who can type.	We build controlled lists as standard, including named employer lists and long controlled title lists where the programme needs them. We have built to a United States federal Privacy Act statement reproduced verbatim, so commercial requirements are straightforward.
The same question set is used on every asset in the flight, so the light assets abandon and the heavy assets under qualify.	Question depth is set per asset at scoping, and per asset performance is reported at close so the next brief can move them.

The disqualifier list nobody writes

Everything you do not exclude, you have included. This list takes ten minutes and prevents more rejected records than any other part of the specification.

THE DISQUALIFIER LIST NOBODY WRITES

Everything you do not exclude, you have included. Ten minutes here prevents more rejected records than any other part of the specification.

 **Agencies and consultancies**
match every function and seniority filter

 **Accountancy practices**
match every finance filter

 **Your competitors**
exclude on account name, not just domain

 **Resellers and channel partners**
route to market, not a customer

 **Third party logistics**
customer or competitor, decide first

 **Your customers and open deals**
a suppression file, not a description

 **Staffing and recruitment firms**
match an HR filter precisely

 **Individual contributors**
the largest population on sales audiences

 **Students and jobseekers**
where the category attracts them

Where it goes wrong	How Magrofy handles it
The disqualifier list is written as a sentence in an email and never makes it into the form logic.	Exclusions become form logic and deduplication rules, not guidance. What is written is what is enforced.
Competitor exclusion is handled by domain only, so a competitor employee using a different domain passes.	We exclude on account name as well as on domain, because a different address at the same company is the same company.

Acceptance, rejection and change control

A specification without a rejection process is only half written. Agree these four things before launch and almost nothing can go seriously wrong.

Decide	Why it matters
Who reviews, by name or role	A record reviewed by nobody is accepted by default, and a record reviewed by everybody is reviewed by nobody.
On what grounds, referencing the specification line	A rejection reason of not a fit cannot be acted on. A rejection reason of failed the seniority floor can be, immediately.
Inside what turnaround	Rejections raised while the flight is running can be corrected in the flight. Rejections raised afterwards can only be credited.
In what format	A file with the record identifier and the failing criterion. One line per record is enough.

Changing the specification mid flight

Criteria change. Markets move, a segment converts better than expected, sales asks for a tighter title list. This is normal and it is not a problem, as long as one rule holds: **the new rule arrives in writing when it changes**. A criteria change found in week one is a briefing note. The same change found at invoice is a dispute.

Where it goes wrong	How Magrofy handles it
Rejections are collected silently and presented as a block at the end, when nothing can be corrected and the only remedy left is commercial.	One for one replacement at our cost, no cap and no claim window, running as rejections arise rather than at the end. In return we ask only for reasons in writing at the time.
A verbal criteria change is made on a call and delivery continues against the old rule, so both sides are right and neither is happy.	We take the revision in writing and rebuild the remainder of the flight to it, and we confirm back what we have changed so the record of the specification stays single.

The specification template

Copy this, fill it in, and send it. Anything you cannot answer is worth a conversation before launch rather than after it.

Line	Your answer
Programme name and flight dates	
The decision this programme is aimed at, in one sentence	
Targeting route: target account list, or persona and ICP	
Volume commitment, and weekly pacing	
Qualified lead definition, in full	
Near miss rule	
Geography, and whether contact country or company headquarters	
Company size floor, in the unit that governs your pricing	
Industry included	
Industry excluded	
Function, and sub function	
Seniority floor, and the exception for held responsibility	
Acceptable job titles (controlled list attached)	
Qualifying question 1, with its answer options	
Qualifying question 2, with its answer options	
Qualifying question 3, with its answer options	
Qualifying question 4, with its answer options	
Disqualifiers	
Suppression file attached	
Required record fields	
Destination and integration route	
Record owner on your side, by name	
Rejection reviewer, grounds, turnaround, format	
Consent wording: ours, or yours supplied	
The measure that will be judged, and when	

Send this with the asset and we come back inside 24 hours with feasible volume and a price against it.

What Magrofy actually does here

We run content syndication. Your content sits gated on our own publication sites. A reader requests the whitepaper, ebook or infographic, and we capture the consent at that point, in our wording, on our page. You receive MQLs and HQLs against the profile you set, priced per accepted lead.

Targeting comes in one of two forms and you choose: a **target account list** you provide, or a **buyer persona and ICP**. Either way the specification you write is the contract, we hold it, and we build the form to it.

We own and operate six B2B publications, which is the whole of the difference. The audience exists because people subscribe to those titles and come back to them, not because we bought a file. That is why every lead can carry the publication, the asset, the timestamp and the consent sentence as it was displayed.

The six titles and who reads them

Publication	Audience
Business Infomatics	IT and security. The specialist core, running since 2018.
Look At Business	Operations, logistics and transport, and the wider business.
Marketing Hub Media	Marketing and demand generation.
Sales Hub Media	Sales, revenue operations and enablement.
HR Hubs Media	HR, talent, rewards and people operations.
Financy Hub	The office of the CFO.

The terms, and what we do not do

The four terms, in the contract rather than in a deck

IN THE CONTRACT, NOT IN A DECK

90%

acceptance

against the specification your team wrote

1 : 1

replacement

at our cost, no cap, no claim window

6

months exclusivity

on every lead delivered to you

2%

maximum bounce

on delivered records, validated before hand-off

- **90% acceptance.** At least 90% of delivered leads match the specification your team wrote. The specification is the test, not our own quality statistics.
- **One for one replacement.** Anything rejected is replaced at our cost. No cap on the number and no claim window you have to hit.
- **Six months exclusivity.** A lead delivered to you is not delivered to another buyer for six months from the date of the opt-in event.
- **2% maximum bounce.** On delivered records. Every address is validated before hand-off, and a record that would fail is rejected by us rather than by you.

What we do not do

- **No purchased lists.** Nothing in the first-party file was bought, and we do not append third party data into it. Third party validation is used to reject records, never to source them.
- **No resellers and no outsourced delivery.** Fulfilment is direct.
- **No appointment setting.** We qualify and hand the conversation to your team.
- **No attendance guarantees on webinars.** We deliver registrations and expressed interest, because attendance is not something a supplier controls.
- **No claim to be strong everywhere.** If your programme sits somewhere we are thin we would rather say so before a contract than after one.

THE NEXT STEP

Send the completed template above, or the parts of it you have. We will tell you which lines cannot be filled as written and what we would change, before anything is contracted.

Email info@magrofy.com. We come back inside 24 hours with feasible volume and a price, and we tell you if a line in your specification cannot be filled.