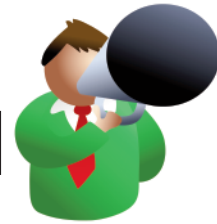




Don't get me started on...



Lead generation

"I've given up on telemarketing; it's a waste of money"

"I need leads to make my target but I just don't get enough"

"What are marketing doing, they run these events for themselves not prospects?"

Nobody has too many leads; everyone finds it difficult to get enough of the right quality, why do some do it so much better than others?...

First things first, let's be clear about the right tools for the job

"Sales own the targets so sales own prospect development" is often quoted but not the full story. Yes, sales has to lead the drive to close new opportunities but can't do it alone. It makes no sense to use expensive sales folk for cold calling when someone else could achieve the same for half the cost. Good marketing is needed to complement sales, it's a different skill set; but must take ownership of its part in achieving targets. Management must take responsibility for making sure sales and marketing work together, as a team to build a solid, sustainable pipeline of business as efficiently as possible. That means, no throwing stuff over the wall.

Let's just get on with it - NO!

Sales people are action oriented and marketing folk like to be seen to be producing lots of good stuff so the natural reaction is to just get on with it without doing the difficult bit first - thinking it through. Have you ever thought why so many initiatives yield disappointing results? Repeating an inappropriate US campaign, turning the handle of a tired theme don't get results. If you can't write down the key aspects of an initiative don't go any further, it's back to basics, Who are you targeting, What will you say, How will you say it?

If they don't respond they're probably not interested

Busy people in today's business environment will only respond to something that addresses a definite need generic messages don't cut the mustard any more and get passed over. This means you've just got to do your research, segment your market, understanding specific needs. There's no easy path, you've got to take time to think through what will really interest them, a compelling proposition, test it, test it and test it again.



Keep it simple, keep it at a business level

Telemarketing is not sales, so why do so many companies expect them to do what sales do? It ends up in failure! Telemarketing's job is to identify and build interest which is best done through success stories; what you've done for someone else is much more powerful than product claims. Keep the telemarketing role simple, it's about finding people with a need and sufficiently interested to have a conversation with a sales person.

The devil is in the detail, so keep an eye on the detail

The UK market is one of the most open, most competitive in the world so why do companies expect second grade campaigns to work? Relying on mail shots alone is about as smart as relying on the on the tooth fairy. Use every tool at your disposal, every bit of creativity you can muster and make sure you do it right and on time. Monitor how things are going and don't be afraid to make changes on the fly if things are not going as well as they should.

The art of conversation is not dead

Selling is about having a dialogue and lead generation is about identifying someone who wants to have that dialogue. Conversations that you need to have both you and the prospect can find out if it's worth talking further. Telephone conversations are a critical part of the initial stages of a sale that can build or destroy interest. They've got to be made to work well which takes thought, skill and practise.

Practising what we preach...

We like "Rifleshot" lead generation programs. They are tightly targeted, highly relevant and they get results. Typically they're part of a 90 day action plan so you can try something out, learn from it, then do it better in the next 90 day plan.

We stick to a few simple principles to make sure they stay on track and get results:

1. To start agree a very clear, written plan covering objectives, target markets, the proposition and the communications strategy
2. Start with good data. Often you can't buy the right list, so build it from generic lists, use telemarketers to capture data and build the quality
3. Develop a theme that cuts through the noise of the market place and differentiates you from the rest of the pack - dare to be different!
4. Communicate using all the channels you have available. Don't settle for "this is what we always do"
5. Manage it, manage it tightly on a daily basis., generating leads, for many businesses, is a numbers game, set targets, monitor performance, make it happen.