



How to generate better leads that your sales team can close

Written By: Victoria Dyke

Introduction

It isn't uncommon for companies to rely on their sales teams to call for leads, however the days of making 10 or 20 calls to prospects a day are gone – it's unproductive and can be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Today's buyers can be anywhere between 65% - 90% of the way through their buying process before even accepting a call, let alone speaking to a supplier (Forrester Research). As if that isn't bad enough, only 3% of your market is buying at any one time.

"Today's buyers can be anywhere between 65% - 90% of the way through their buying process before even accepting a call."

When sales are told to call for their leads they are inevitably wasting 97% of their time on companies that just aren't going to buy, and probably just insist that they'll call when they're ready. Sound familiar?

The commercial opportunity is how to increase the amount of time your sales teams spend on revenue generating activities whilst letting marketing sharpen the quality of leads for sales.

Keep reading and discover the one simple rule many of us forget when it comes to eMail Marketing.



Why does eMail Marketing fail?

The inner workings of a small to medium sized enterprise, and in particular it's marketing department, is dependent on good, clean, integrated and qualified data as well as the complementary working of the sales and marketing teams. Yet 50% of businesses admit to having incomplete, missing or outdated information, stored in multiple systems and across multiple departments. In addition 86% of companies say that the data they do store correctly is still inaccurate.

Data in this state, on any scale, causes inefficiencies in processes and it's not just your eMail Marketing that's losing out.

"75% of companies are wasting an average of 14% in revenue each year"

In fact bad data stored inefficiently means UK businesses alone are losing around £197,000,000 each year (Experian, 2014).

Hopefully you're starting to see the basis of why your eMail Marketing has failed in the past. Poor quality data means it is almost impossible to pull together a marketing list for targeted campaigns

(targeted being the key word). But even when you do manage to get a list together, more often than not it ends up being a time consuming task; still leaving you with an inaccurate or just completely wrong list at the end. You're still unable to target your customers effectively.

So, the 'golden rule' is to get your business information integrated and customers profiled first. Then, eMail Marketing becomes much simpler and more effective, if well executed.

“Having a single source of valuable data is the first step to successful eMail Marketing.”

Imagine this...

You receive a great looking and well written email, it might even have managed to grab your attention, but you soon realise that it's of absolutely no relevance to you. What do you do? At best, probably ignore it. If you're having a bit of a bad day, maybe delete it. But at worst unsubscribe. At that point the company in question has lost all chance of emailing you again, even if they do have a product or service that is relevant to you. Building and maintaining an email permission base is an essential asset for businesses today.

This is a common outcome of badly profiled or segmented data – sending a great message, but to the wrong people and therefore causing a negative impact on results. The most annoying thing is, these people may have been a perfect fit for a different product/service of yours.

Take a moment to think about where you store the majority of your customer information. Your accounts system? Your CRM system? This information is the starting point to segmenting

your customers correctly and identifying priority groups. You then have the ability to profile these groups in order to send the right message to the right people – keep this data up to date and it will be like gold dust in your eMail Marketing campaigns.

Since we're talking about where you store your data, answer this question before you move any further:

“Do you have a single source of customer data?”

No? – Stop reading here and check out our whitepaper on [‘Integration vs integration – business process efficiency or a pop-up link?’](#)

Having a single source of valuable data is the first step in successful eMail Marketing. Keeping this up to date becomes far more efficient and gives your eMail Marketing campaigns the basis for maximum impact.

Yes? – Brilliant. Since you already have really valuable customer information to hand (such as purchase history), tailoring your eMail Marketing campaigns so you're sending the right message or offer to the right people should be easy.



eMail Marketing starts with segmenting your customer data

Sending the same message to all customer or prospect groups will get little response from anyone, giving the impression that your eMail Marketing is failing. A perfectly good product or service will have limited demand. But by profiling your customers you can address each major customer group separately, with a tailored message.

The first rule: Do not segment 'virtual' customers.

By this I mean, do not start segmenting who you 'think' your customers are. Use the data you already have at your fingertips to find out who they actually are, their buying patterns and what they're really interested in.

1. Analyse your customers

Begin identifying your different customer groups. Criteria such as past purchases is a good starting point and can help identify trends and prioritise groups for profiling; for example, the highest spending group

- Location
- The size of the company
- Who the main decision makers are (and their job titles)
- The frequency of their orders

2. Segment your customers

Many companies begin by focussing on their most profitable customers. Profiling these groups will help you create a relevant message and introduce personalisation. Here are a few profiles to get you started:

- The industry they operate in

3. Tailoring your message

Now that you know who your customers really are, have made use of your data and been able to segment them you can send tailored messages. There is no point in spending time segmenting your audience if they can't see the relevance of the final message they receive.



eMail Marketing – easier than you might think

With the foundations of good customer data in place, try thinking about the following:

Personalisation, this is a key way to enter someone's priority inbox. Do your customers deal with an account manager? Customers are more likely to open an eMail from someone they recognise, like an account manager, rather than a generic sender alias or eMail address.

David Hunter <david.hunter@

ProspectSoft <sales@

Content should be short and simple and link to your website or blog.

'Reason to read', such as actionable and valuable advice complemented by relevant product messages and offers, will encourage customers to linger on your content.

Design elements such as brief paragraphs, bullet points and simple diagrams or pictures can help break up the text.

Provided all your key information is readily available to you, this shouldn't be too difficult:

1. Choose two of your products that complement each other
2. Name them X and Y
3. List everyone who purchased product X but not product Y in the last 12 months
4. List 3 things that product X will help your customer achieve in their business when using product Y

“Good eMail Marketing is simply effective use of your customer data.”

There you have it; a tailored message to a targeted audience. Simple right? If this wasn't simple at all, and you actually found your list of customers that bought X but not Y difficult to generate, go back to our whitepaper on [‘Integration vs Integration – business efficiency or a pop-up link’](#).

By this point you're probably either thinking 'I have no idea how we're going to achieve this' or, hopefully, 'great, but am I actually going to sell anything off the back of this'.

The good news is, now that you can use eMail Marketing to successfully target your audience with the right message, you don't have to leave your sales teams calling cold leads.

Doing marketing and in particular eMail Marketing in the right way could build trust and interest in a buyer; ultimately warming up leads

for sales prior to them reaching that 3% – making you the first supplier to be in contact. If you can do this, by managing and maintaining your data, segmenting this information properly and tailoring your messages your sales team will have more time to sell and you will see more leads convert into sales revenue.

eMail Marketing is not as hard as you might think. With your data stored efficiently, you can use valuable customer information to determine the right lead generation messages. Used in this way you can produce more leads, using less time and money than a calling team.

Good eMail Marketing is simply effective use of your customer data.

Want more?

If you want more information about making your data go further with ProspectSoft eMarketing call us on **01494 486 301** or visit www.prospectsoft.com

ProspectSoft

CRM & eCommerce solutions helping your business run more efficiently...

by integrating with Access Dimensions, Exchequer,
Pegasus Opera & Sage 50



Integrate customer and business information in a single view for a more efficient business



Provide individual account details online making it easy for customers to place orders 24/7



Generate higher quality leads for your sales team with CRM-driven targeted marketing

Why ProspectSoft?



We take the time to understand how your business runs, so we are able to advise you on how to get the best from ProspectSoft solutions.

ProspectSoft understands real businesses and their needs. Each solution is built upon a standard platform then tailored to suit specific business requirements and aims to provide ROI for the customer.

Our customers benefit from the strategic and technical knowledge and experience of our customer support team, account managers and expert consultants.

ProspectSoft has gained industry wide recognition as the only solution developed with integration at its core from inception.

