Tactics to Quickly Locate B2B Software & Service Leads,

Section 2: The Objective of the Call – what kind of lead do I want?

Overview

Different companies and sales reps want different kinds of sales opportunities. Some like opportunities where the prospect has an active evaluation for their kind of solution and others like an opportunity where the suspect simply has identifiable need that the sales rep's solution can address. From a Lead Generation perspective, how a telemarketing department sets up a sales rep up for success can vary depending on the sales organization's strategy. Below are three tactics that can be effective, with input on how we have seen these tactics successfully executed.

Side Note: The below processes assume the telemarketer isn't using a verbatim script and can hold a good conversation.

Group Webinar Leads. This is where a telemarketing department gets suspects to review your software/ service solution via a mass webinar. This can be very effective for sales, especially if the marketplace does not yet understand your type of solution. Not only does it allow for mass education, but if you open up the conference-call as an open forum where any participant can ask questions, it can generate a lot of good conversation between suspects that your sales force can utilize. For extra value to your suspects, wrap the presentation around a business issue your suspect-base will care about and make that the central focus.

THE KEY for telemarketing is follow-up. Generally, 1 out of 25 people who say they will attend a webinar, actually attend. This doesn't mean the 24 who did not attend are not good prospects; it means they have other things going on in their job. To get better attendance, telemarketers simply need to follow-up with the suspect. This means (1) emailing a meeting-request to the suspect to get on their calendar, (2) sending them a quick personalized agenda with the webinar date, (3) using both reminder emails and voicemails and (4) calling absentees DURING the webcast to get them to log-on. I have found some hot prospects who simply thought they missed the webinar and were more happy to be able to jump on while it was in progress.

The Meeting Lead. Today a "meeting" can be a phone call, 1-on-1 web meeting or a traditional face-to-face meeting. A good sales rep generally wants a mix of these in order to get in front of a suspect's senior management.

THE KEY for the telemarketer is coordination and identifying an opportunity. To ensure the meeting goes down, the telemarketer must also take on the role of personal-assistant, as well as cold caller. The telemarketer needs to coordinate the setting of an agenda and ensure the prospect views it/ approves it. This ensures the prospect is on-board with the topics and the meeting. If the suspect has multiple attendees, it is the telemarketer's job to ensure they are in the loop as well. Once that is in place the telemarketer must coordinate meeting times between all the participants (including the sales rep) and get detailed directions - either driving-directions for the sales rep or webinar-access directions for the suspect. The telemarketer must really own the process and leave nothing to chance. I have seen telemarketers go so far as to tell their sales rep what outfit the prospect will be wearing when they meet in the lobby.

There should be a reason for your sales rep to meet with the prospect, especially if the meeting is in person. While I know there are always exceptions; getting a face-to-face meeting, simply to meet will generally end up wasting thousands of dollars in hotel, airfare and time if the prospect has not intention of ever buying from the sales rep. Even if it is just a phone call or web meeting, many suspects will feel their time is being wasted if a telemarketer pushes them into a virtual meeting with a sales rep. I have heard of prospects taking a conference call just to tell the sales to get the telemarketer off their back. Before the meeting occurs ask your telemarketer: "Where do you see us making money here?"

The Follow-Up Lead. Many times a sales rep simply wants information on a company that he/ she would consider a lead so they can follow-up from there. This allows the sales rep to control the entire process and relationship. There is no difference whether this is a lead where the prospect has an established project to evaluate the sales rep's type of system or where the prospect has latent pain that the solution can address.

THE KEY is qualification. Ask your callers – "*if you say they are a lead, then why aren't they buying from us…TODAY?…what is in between this point and them cutting a PO?*" Point being – the telemarketers need ask as many questions as possible to disposition the lead and then, if possible, call back in an hour (acting apologetic) saying they forgot something and ask some more questions. There are three basic questions telemarketers need to be able to answer:

1. ***Who to Buy*** – Can the telemarketer determine what functional/ tactical issues the prospect cares about which will allow one solution to be differentiated over another? Does the prospect even know? Who is the actual or potential competition here?
2. ***Why to Buy*** – What Business Issue is driving this functional issue? Is it coming from (or being felt by) a Director, VP or C-level executive?
3. ***When to Buy*** – Has the prospect defined a timeframe to execute certain steps, gone through any kind of budget allocation process; and does the prospect understand how their own company buys?

Up-Coming Sections:

Section 3: ***The Message*** *– refining your message & making it meaningful*
Section 4: ***Calling Metrics*** *– managing callers to what you want to achieve*
Section 5: ***Closing the Loop*** *- ensuing leads don't fall through the cracks*
Section 6: ***Prospect Development*** *– beyond the lead, to the sale*