Securing new business during difficult times – the value of phone follow up



In a climate of uncertainty, the leads you receive need to be nurtured and cared for. In this competitive environment, they also need a prompt response; recent research shows conversion rate increases by 391% when companies make a call attempt within a minute of receiving a lead. Promptness alone, however, isn't enough; your response needs to connect with your prospect and initiate a meaningful dialogue that leads them further along the buying journey. Or, establishes quickly that you are not the right fit.

Other factors that need to be considered:

- Does your response create a positive impression of your brand?
- Is your response relevant and tailored to your prospect's needs?
- Is your response complete, does it add value?

A new enquiry contains a limited amount of prospect insight and, based on low-level qualification, may receive an automated email or enter a marketing nurture programme until its score reaches the required threshold. A proportion of these early stage enquiries, however, represent highly valuable prospective customers that receive minimal attention until an automated process brings them to the surface, if at all. At a time when we are swamped by digital communications, an email response can easily sit at the bottom of a busy Inbox whilst your competitor steps in and steals the opportunity.

So, how do you grab the attention of those valuable prospects and provide an impactful response that guides them effectively along the pipeline?

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The value of a phone response

Reach

Once you have sent an email, you have no way of knowing what impact it had. If you receive no reply, there could be any number of reasons why. Perhaps you weren't the right fit, your prospect might have been hi-jacked by another supplier, or perhaps your email wasn't received by the recipient - sources suggest one in six emails fails to even reach an Inbox. By contrast, a disruptive channel such as the phone used in a targeted, systematic way can drive through digital noise and extend your reach so that valuable opportunities aren't left on the table.

Early insight

Once you connect, a single phone conversation delivers substantial value in terms of understanding your prospect's needs, motivations, and buying stage – giving you a significant competitive advantage. Those deep, fresh insights then inform how you handle that lead and guide its journey with you, either qualifying out poor fit, nurturing warm leads through tailored marketing programmes or connecting hot opportunities immediately to your sales team to close.

Personal touch

A phone call is a much warmer and more personal form of response. In the early stage of an engagement it can create a really positive impression and make your brand stand out amongst the mass of digital and virtual interactions. A conversation with a real human who listens and shows empathy will make your prospect feel valued from the very start, creating the perfect platform from which to deepen any relationship.

Accelerated sales process

A detailed email response can provide your prospect with a wealth of information but as a first contact it is impersonal and, unless tailored to specific needs, puts the onus on them to do all the work in understanding fit. A live, dynamic conversation over the phone allows your representative, having listened and fully understood requirements, to present a highly tailored proposition, immediately shining a light on features and benefits that meet needs, thereby accelerating the path to purchase.

A value-led, cross-channel dialogue

A phone conversation that establishes an understanding of requirements in the early stages of engagement ensures every other interaction is informed and relevant, creating a gentle, value-led cadence that is consistent across channels.

Each channel used appropriately and according to your prospect's communications preferences can then present a consistent and relevant message. Once initial interest is qualified, an email can provide more detailed and personalised information in the right

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context for your prospect to digest in their own time. Instant messaging may be preferred by busy individuals whose attention you can grab with a pertinent response at the right moment. Voicemails enable you to maintain a presence and build the relationship, without being invasive if your contact doesn't have time for a conversation.

Expert, resilient and systematic support

Phone follow up, however, needs to be systematic and persistent – research shows it takes potentially 18 or more dials to connect. It isn't cost-effective to assign your expensive sales team to follow up every lead and you may not have an alternative resource with the skills for the task. If you don't have in-house sales development specialists, an outsourced team can provide a dedicated resource with skills and resilience honed across hundreds of campaigns, supported by bespoke systems that provide calling efficiencies that can't be achieved in-house. Calling can be integrated with other channels and targeted strategically to bring the highest return and, as it is data-led, closely tracked to give full assurance on how your investment is performing.

At The Telemarketing Company, our dedicated sales development specialists apply their expert skills to get past gatekeepers, engage senior decision-makers, qualify interest and deliver a continuous feed of high value, sales-ready leads to our clients. We offer full transparency through our online portal where clients can access real-time reports and performance analytics.

If you would like to discuss how our phone-based skills can help accelerate your sales process and ensure valuable opportunities don't fall through the cracks, get in touch today.

Get in touch ▸

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Hopefully this article will have inspired you to think a bit more about telemarketing and the value it can bring to your business. For more information on our services visit our website, or give us a call to discuss your requirements and how The Telemarketing Company can help support your sales and marketing strategy.

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