

You Can't Close a Sale if You Don't Have Any Leads

Take a moment to think about the average sales transaction. Think about each of the elements that lead up to the transaction. Think about how these elements interact with each other like links in a chain. Now, ask yourself a question. Which one of these elements is the most important?

It can be argued, with some validity, that all of the elements in the average sales transaction are equally important. Creative product solutions equal customers. Customers, in turn, equal sales. Sales, of course, equal profit. Profit means that another round of sales transactions is possible.

Yet, if we look at the matter closely, what would happen if there were no customers. Without customers the entire cycle of sales transactions would grind to a halt. Customers, it appears, are a key link in the chain of the transaction.

If we accept this as true, that customers are key, then the leads that generate new customers assume an even greater importance. Without leads there are no customers and, as a result, no sale and no profits. Leads, it would appear are the most important of all the elements in the average sales transaction. So, where do these all important leads come from?

Leads can be generated in a number of ways. Usually, they are generated through traditional marketing techniques, such as advertising. A business buys television, radio or print advertising that informs a segment of the general public about the business, as well as any specials or sales the business is currently offering. The segment of the public that is being solicited did not previously express any interest

in the business and did not ask for the information contained in the ad. These unsolicited offers are sometimes referred to as outbound marketing.

Leads can also be generated through the use of content. Content can be anything informational or helpful and can take the form of a blog post or an online video. Members of the public who are already interested in the information contained in this content find it online through a search. If they find the content helpful and desire further information, they can receive this additional content in exchange for contact information, usually an email address. This contact information becomes the basis for new leads to be used by the business in question. The members of the public who desired additional information obviously want to receive it. These solicited offers are sometimes referred to as inbound marketing.