

## Use cold calling for lead generation

*Utilizing the phone for cold calling, lead generation and lead qualification is a quick and cost effective way*  
by Ceri Ruenbeck

Cold calling is one of the best techniques you can use for lead generation marketing. Unlike other advertising strategies, this option puts you into direct contact with consumers. Stephan Schiffman, author of “Cold Calling Techniques: That Really Work,” believes that cold calling is especially important given how frugal most consumers have become over the last few years. “The economy has everyone at a four-way stop sign. No one is moving. So your No. 1 competition right now is the status quo. Forget ROI [return on investment] or cost or color or anything else. Every buyer will ask: ‘Does buying this product make sense for me?’ You’ve got to give him that reason.” Schiffman said, according to Microsoft Business Hub.

Telemarketing does have a negative reputation, but that shouldn’t dissuade you from pursuing this strategy. You may be missing out on great leads if you don’t start cold-calling leads sooner rather than later. Here are a few tips to get your new marketing campaign off the ground.

### Write a script

While you and your employees should treat every consumer like an individual, you need a general framework to use during the calls. With such a high volumes of calls to make, you must ensure that the right statements are being made to convince prospects that they should buy your products or subscribe to your services.

Microsoft Business Hub recommends writing a script and sticking with it for your phone calls. The documents are basic guidelines employees should follow when someone answers the call, but Wendy Weiss, author of “Cold Calling for Women: Opening Doors and Closing Sales,” points out that workers shouldn’t use their scripts for specific conversations.

“The script shouldn’t be word for word. It’s a way to prepare yourself for the conversation. You decide ahead of time how you want to present yourself, what reaction you want to get and how to ask for what you want,” Weiss said.

Listen to a few cold calls to learn what is usually said during successful ones. Use these statements in your script so employees understand what they should say and how they can steer the conversations in positive directions.

### Prospect and blitz

The Harvard Business Review recommends dividing your cold-calling efforts into two separate tasks: prospecting leads and then blitzing the best prospects. The former should be completed before the latter so you know who your best leads are and have more time to call them multiple times. The news source notes that prospecting should be done early, but blitzing requires careful timing. Consider waiting until late in the day or early the next day to catch consumers before they become busy.



Rejection is a common aspect of the blitzing phase, so tell your employees not to give up after one or two unsuccessful calls. Consumers aren't always receptive to cold calls, but persistence pays. Eventually, a prospect may be willing to listen if you call frequently enough and show that you won't give up.

### **Don't make small talk**

Personal phone calls usually start with pleasantries, but cold calls should only be about business. All business note that common greetings from strangers are off-putting to consumers. The call should begin with a direct statement. For instance, you can instruct employees to start by introducing themselves and saying where they work.

The news source also explains that you should never ask if consumers are available to talk. This question gives leads the perfect escape route from the call – they can simply say no and hang up the phone. Only use direct statements and don't ask questions until the conversation is flowing naturally and you're confident that the prospect is interested in hearing additional information.

### **Research leads**

You should be prepared for every call before picking up the phone. Be proactive and learn everything you can about a consumer before cold-calling him or her. Research is a crucial part of every marketing strategy and will allow you to tailor your sales pitch to specific individuals. Entrepreneur Magazine notes you can just use a basic Google search to find some background information. In most cases, you'll be able to find social media profiles and blogs so you can learn personal details that will help your sales representatives make successful calls.

### **Practice makes perfect**

Experience is the key to success for cold calling. You need to practice your sales pitch and hone your script to generate leads. If you're going in blind, you'll likely lose more opportunities than you gain. Start slow by listening in on a few calls and then start conducting your own.

Cold calling is one of the most effective lead generation strategies you can use to bolster sales and find new customers. The above tips are a great start, but do you have any additional hints for telemarketing campaigns?

