Dunlap Marketing

APPOINTMENT SETTING
LEAD GENERATION
SURVEY SERVICES

6 STEPS TO IMPLEMENT A TELEMARKETING CAMPAIGN

PRESENTED TO YOU BY DUNLAP MARKETING

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"We could not be more pleased with the outcome of the study and the work that Dunlap Marketing did. Thank you so much. You did absolutely everything we asked and completed the work on schedule!"

OVERVIEW

6 Steps to Implement a Telemarketing Campaign

Lead generation — there's no easy way to do it right, but there is a way to do it right! Telemarketing, still a superior method of lead generation, can be a daunting task. It can take long hours to prepare and implement campaigns. However, in a time where emails are going unread and the online market is saturated, telemarketing is still the best way to get in contact with your prospects and customers. What makes telemarketing unique is its one-on-one, personal interaction – two people having a conversation about a need and interest in your services. Additionally, the leads telemarketing produces are statistically hotter and more likely to generate business than other techniques.

That said, it is vitally important to properly prepare, set up, and implement your telemarketing campaign. Throughout this eBook, we will examine the six essential steps to implement your own telemarketing campaign, diving deeper into each step individually.

1. Identify a database – Your database will include existing customers, former customers, new prospects, or a combination of all three. You should have a list of existing and former customers, but you might need to develop a prospect list. In building a prospect list, you will have the opportunity to define the target market you want to reach. Common search criteria include:

Industry Type
Geographic Locations
Annualized Revenue
Number of Employees
Single Location, Headquarter, Branch Type Facilities

Managing the database inside a CRM application offers quite a few benefits and is worth the time required to set up. Electronic database management systems effectively manage your information and allow you to respond to follow up requirements after speaking with prospects. Both systems are also efficient mechanisms to keep all contact information and call notes organized and in one place.

2. Write a telemarketing script – It is important to document the message that outlines the purpose for calling customers or prospects. Know who you should be speaking with – commonly, a decision maker or influencer. With customers, you might already have the correct name to ask for; with prospects, identify the common job titles for your target contacts.

Don't be afraid to talk to influencers, as they are a great asset to gain insight on what your prospects' future plans are. Influencers are important and can be helpful as you advance through the development process. If you wait for the decision maker, you may never have the opportunity to connect with them.

In most industries, it is not realistic to think you will sell products or services during the first phase of your calling campaign. A suggested goal to keep in mind while writing your script is to ask key questions that allow you to begin the sales process.

Specific questions will allow you to start the sales process. Examples include:

Who is their current vendor?
Are they under contract?
When does the contract end?
What is their current satisfaction level?
Do they have needs that are not being met by the vendor or product/service?

Consider including a question that asks for permission to include prospects in your monthly newsletter or periodic communications. Typically, email is the method; attempt to capture their email address.

As with any kind of marketing, it's important to know your audience before beginning your campaign. In the case of telemarketing, you get to choose your audience. In building a new prospect database for a telemarketing project, it is critical to think through and identify key demographics. Initially, consider how you would classify your "A-List" prospects. In most cases, you will be able to identify these companies. If you are not able to define an "A-List," consider analyzing your existing customer base; one idea might be to mirror similar types of companies.

The following are common criteria used when building a telemarketing database:
1. Geography – can range from zip code, radius, city, county, state, and beyond
2. Industry type – can be done by using SIC or NAICS codes, which allow you to specifically or generally select the type of businesses you want to reach
3. Annualized revenue – allows you to select revenue ranges of the size of businesses that are the best fit for your company
4. Employee count – as with #3, this allows you to select ranges of employee numbers that are the best fit for your company (it is common to incorporate revenue and employee count to work in unison with each other)
5. Facility type – allows you to select corporate headquarters, single location, subsidiary, and/or branch location

There are a variety of other selection options; however, these are the five most commonly used for successful telemarketing efforts.

When using most web-based data tools, you can also gain access to the top executive name and title. Some tools allow you to select other contact names; but it is common to find these options incomplete and not updated. Having these names can help make a cold call feel more like a warm call and will expedite the time it takes to reach your end goal, whether it is appointment setting, lead generation, or general business development.

If this is your first prospect database list, you might not be concerned about duplicate records. However, if you are building a list and you also have existing prospect lists, it is important to suppress your newly defined list against your current list; therefore, minimizing duplicate records. This is an important step if your existing list has been maintained and updated. Suppression steps are common when you are trying to expand your prospect database.

Depending upon your business, record count can vary. If there is a high record count, be more specific on criteria that defines your "A-List." This will allow you to purchase fewer records initially. You can always obtain the additional records later on. There is no need to purchase records today that you will not get around to calling for a period of time.

After you've identified your database and become familiar with your audience, it's time to write a script. Scripts are another critical aspect of an effective telemarketing campaign. Flip the page for information detailing the process of script writing.

"Thanks very much Mike. I sang your company's praises last week at our meeting in Houston. I think your people do a great job."

CHAPTER 1

Identifying a Database for a Telemarketing Campaign

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CHAPTER 2

Writing a Telemarketing Script (to a prospect you're reaching out to for the first time)

Now that you have identified your database, the next step in implementing a telemarketing campaign is to write your script.

- **Think of a script as documentation of how you would speak naturally**
- **Do not get caught up in using fancy words**
- **Write your message with the mindset of "what is in it for the prospect?"**
- **Get to the point quickly**

Begin your script with an introduction. The introduction should briefly introduce you and your company — the first goal is to identify or confirm who you need to speak with. If you do not have a contact name, help the gatekeeper out by offering typical titles of people who are involved in the decision-making process. For example, "May I please speak with the person who makes the banking decisions?" This is a commonly used practice in many telemarketing campaigns. If title descriptions are not helping, ask to be transferred to the appropriate department and start your information gathering at that point. With certain businesses, initial intelligence gathering can be accomplished at the gatekeeper level, which will help prepare you for a call back at a future date to speak with the right person.

Once you connect with the right person (could be a decision influencer or decision maker), introduce yourself again and offer a brief statement of what you do — as always in telemarketing, at the beginning stage of a cold call conversation, the fewer words, the better. Next, as quickly as possible, ask a question that helps determine early stage need or interest. For example, if you are doing appointment setting calls for a bank, you might ask, "Are you satisfied with your current banking situation?" This first question is important as it gauges the prospect's willingness to give you a few quality moments. If you are catching them at a bad time, do not be afraid to call them back at a more convenient time. If they are willing to continue a conversation, present a brief value statement that should be meaningful to them. This statement should communicate what the prospect will find helpful about the service.

1) Introduction

2) Determination of early stage interest

3) Value statement

If the timing is right, at this point, you should be able to ask questions concerning:
- Current situation
- Future plans to change (timing)
- The current situation and if it satisfies immediate and future needs
- Satisfaction

If the timing is not right, you should still gather basic information as listed above. Ask for permission to stay in touch and utilize your CRM system to help you track and time your follow up calls.

In closing out your call, attempt to gather the person's email address. This is helpful for staying in touch, incorporating in newsletters, and inviting them to upcoming events. Email drip marketing, the term used for this type of strategic follow up emailing, could mean the difference between generating a lead and not generating a lead.

Remember to set proper expectations when making phone calls. It is uncommon to sell business the first time you call someone. Typically, early stage phone calls are the beginnings of building a relationship that leads you to earning the right to sell in the future.

Many times, the patience and tenacity of staying in touch become key attributes in lead generation and/or earning the right to sell. Timing and persistence are more important than fancy words.

Now that you have your script, it's time to get to work. You should practice with the script and role-play before going live with calls. The following chapter discusses the importance of becoming familiar with your script.

"You guys are on fire in my area! two proposals went out this week from your leads. Thank You."

CHAPTER 3

The Importance of Practicing a Telemarketing Script: Lead Generation or Appointment Setting

As with any skill, practice is the only way to hone your telemarketing techniques. You don't want to be reading your script for the first time while on the phone with a potential customer. It's imperative you review your script over and over before picking up the phone to ensure what you have written on paper sounds natural in your voice.

As discussed in Chapter 3, having a script is a necessity in any telemarketing campaign. Once you have your script, it's time to rehearse. There are two different components of practice when it comes to telemarketing: practicing the script and practicing with your staff, commonly known as role-playing. These two go hand-in-hand and are equally important.

There are two different components of practice when it comes to telemarketing.

Practicing the Script
It is amazing how differently a freshly written script sounds when you hear it spoken out loud, as opposed to when you write it and read it silently to yourself. Practice allows you to identify the weaknesses of your message and subsequently, correct those weaknesses prior to going live with calls.

In some businesses, prospect database records are very valuable. There are not enough records to waste during early stage phone calls where the process has yet to be refined. Testing a script in a role-play environment helps preserve the value of prospect records. Almost always, you are going to find the opportunity to refine, improve, and provide more clarity to a message during a testing phase. Testing the message will also help develop a more complete list of common objectives and FAQs, as well as prepare appropriate responses to commonly asked questions.

Practicing with Your Staff
Role-playing is one of the more nerve-wracking elements of a telemarketer's job. However, the good news is that role-playing is the best training for when the calls go live. It offers benefits such as feeling comfortable navigating the script, becoming familiar with common industry terms, and an all-around feeling of preparedness.

Because it is impossible to predict how the people on your call lists are going to react to a cold call, it's vital your staff is as prepared as possible with the script and any answers to potential questions you can predict.

It is difficult to find shortcuts when it comes to the act of preparation. Your employees should be able to competently represent your company if they have spent 30-60 minutes speaking the message and addressing common questions and challenges during a role-playing session.

Note: The 30-60 minutes of practice makes the assumption the staff is already experienced at making prospecting calls or is knowledgeable in the area of your products and/or services. If the caller does not have either area of experience, role-play will take longer, but it will be time well spent.

Once your staff is prepared, the next step is to go live with calls. Keep reading and learn key points of live telemarketing calls.

CHAPTER 4

Kicking Off a Telemarketing Campaign

When you sign up for a marathon, or any athletic event, there is a lot of planning that goes into preparing for the event. While the planning is necessary and will help your marathon go smoothly, there is one fact: the only way to cross the finish line is by taking one step at a time. In appointment setting and lead generation campaigns, the same approach holds true.

This "one step at a time" principle can be used in many different aspects of work. Similar to running a marathon, looking at a prospect list that needs to be called can seem like a difficult task to complete. However, if you make one call at a time you will eventually get through your list and cross the finish line with a great sense of accomplishment.

Making cold calls is not what someone puts first on their "to do" list. Human nature drives people to do everything else on their list before making telemarketing calls. Often, they hope that time runs out before they have to make the calls. Or, they hope their boss assigns them other work before they have to get on the phone. This type of behavior is exactly why many call projects are never completed.

When assigned the task of telemarketing, try to designate specific times of day to make these calls. Treat the assignment like it's an appointment. Everyone is willing to stop what they are doing to honor an appointment. Schedule specific blocks of time in your calendar each day, over an extended period of time. Each block of time should be approximately two hours long. Additionally, set reasonable and measurable expectations, such as:

- **Number of calls made**
- **Number of actionable events identified**
- **Number of appointments set**

Two-hour segments each day is enough to settle into a rhythm, but not so much time to get burned out. Two hours per day over four or five days per week results in 32-40 calling hours per month, which is enough to yield positive results and selling opportunities.

Do not let yourself get stuck on trying to make the telemarketing campaign perfect before going live with your calls, as this is rarely possible. If you seek perfection, there is a good chance the calls will never get started. Accept the shortcomings, as they are inevitable (ie: possible unexpected questions, questions you don't have answers to, missing contact names). If you have followed the first three steps, you are prepared to start calling. Telemarketing is a fluid process – you can refine and optimize as you go. Keep in mind these calls simply get the sales process started; this should be your primary goal. There will be future steps as you advance through the sales process to address questions you are unable to answer during your first calls.

Telemarketing is a fluid process – you can refine and optimize as you go.

When someone asks, "how do you run a marathon?" the answer is "one step at a time." Now it's time to pick up your phone and get your appointment setting and lead generation campaign started, "one call at a time!"

CHAPTER 5

Best Practices for Following Up

Now that you've gone live with calling, there is a good chance you have found there are many different results from the call. Next steps with clear actions or an appointment are the best results. However, not all calls are as easy as that! Other results could be:

1. Request for more information
2. Request for a call back
3. A question is asked that requires research on your end, then a call back

More Information
Often, there is a fine line between a prospect who is genuinely interested in receiving more information and someone who is trying to get you off the phone. As you spend more time teleprospecting, you will learn how to discern possible interest. Do not be afraid to "test the waters" in an effort to qualify interest. Your time is important — spend it wisely. If a prospect asks for information to be sent, they are usually willing to share why they are asking. If you still feel unsure, and you have tried to validate the reason, err on the side of caution and send the information – you never know when they might need your product or service even if it isn't right this second.

It is very important to accurately capture the prospect's email address and/or physical address. The more specific the information is to the prospect, the better. It will take a little more time to send a tailored message as opposed to a generic one, but it is worth the extra effort.

And of course, after you have sent the additional information, don't forget to call the prospect back in a few days! Your follow up at this stage becomes very important.

Call Back
Keeping in mind your prospect was not waiting by the phone for your call, you will frequently find that you have caught them at a busy time. In this instance, ask what day and time is best for you to call back. It is important to make it a priority to call your prospect back at their requested day and time – this will show you are respectful of their time and will start building trust and respect.

When you make the follow up call, remind the prospect you recently spoke with them and are calling back per their request. Refresh their memory of your previous conversation by restating something they told you. Be prepared to have a productive conversation with them about your product or service!

Often, voicemail will get in your way. Use it as a tool on occasion. A message that is brief and informative is a successful tool, when used sparingly.

Research and Call Back
On occasion, a prospect will ask you a question you do not know how to answer. This is generally a sign proving the prospect has a level of interest in your product or service. When it happens, never feel like you need to make up an answer, as this can lead to confusion and make the prospect feel you are not creditable.

Instead, let them know they asked a great question! Tell them you do not know the exact answer and do not want to lead them astray. Ask if you can call back with the correct answer – let them know approximately how long it will take you to get back with them. If you are unable to get them back on the phone, send an email or leave a voicemail with the answer.

Complete the necessary research and follow up with your prospect. This is another example of building trust and credibility.

Speaking with prospects and following up as promised is how the sales process gets started. It is important to show your prospects you are credible and reliable as these first phases of the sales cycles are the foundation of your relationship with future clients. Do not get discouraged if you are asked to call back at a later time – it is a natural request and allows you the opportunity to show you respect their time and requests.

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Follow up is all about timing, good planning, and being prepared. If you are diligent and committed to the process, positive results will happen.

CHAPTER 6

Measurement and Analysis

Congratulations! You're at the point in your telemarketing campaign where it's time to look at results. It's taken a lot of work to get here – you have identified your database, written your script, role played with the script, started calls, and followed up as necessary with your prospects.

Now, it's time to take a step back and revisit the goals of your campaign. What were you trying to accomplish? Most likely, you were trying to uncover actionable events that can help you grow your business.

At the end of a calling campaign, it's recommended to analyze your progress throughout the campaign.

Note: You don't have to wait until the end of a campaign to analyze – it's helpful to look at results and productivity at other points as well. For example, a few checkpoints are:

1. After the first few hours
2. The halfway point
3. As you're nearing the end
4. Once you've completed the campaign

Keep in mind, if something needs to be adjusted, it's better to know sooner versus later. This is why we suggest multiple checkpoints throughout the duration of a campaign.

To begin measuring and analyzing, first, compare your results with your goals. Did you achieve, exceed, or fall short of what you were hoping to accomplish? Why? What will you tweak for the next time?

If you have technology, you can pull reports that show exact numbers – the hours called, calls connected, the number of actionable events, etc. Analyzing and understanding these data points will help you with the success of future campaigns. However, while it's important to look at these numbers, do not undervalue the callers' thoughts and opinions. Reports show you numbers, while the callers can tell you more about how the calls were received and what they heard from the prospects.

The most effective analysis will include the data and feedback, painting the clearest picture of the campaign as a whole and giving insight into the meaning behind the numbers.

In summary, most prospects make buying decisions when their timing is right and they have a need or pain with their current solution. The best way to capitalize on good timing is to establish the discipline to be calling on a consistent basis. Remember, a day you do not prospect will create a day in the future when you won't have something to sell.

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For questions and more information on telemarketing campaigns, contact Dunlap Marketing.

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"We're very pleased with the start of our partnership with Dunlap. The results, communication and willingness to talk through the initial hurdles have been good. I look forward to seeing the results of the remaining 50 hours. My hope is that this is the start to longer term partnership."

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