



TeleSales: A Vital Component of B2B Marketing

Are You Giving TeleSales What They Need?

With customer acquisition costs escalating, many companies are relying more on their inside TeleSales groups to solicit their customer base. In most cases, the inside sales group is responsible for maintaining a relationship with 80% of their customers without direct sales expense. With an adequate infrastructure, solid management and effective marketing, an outbound department can grow customer accounts. But in order for inside TeleSales to compliment B2B marketing, they need to be recognized as an integral component, and receive frequent demand generation programs to maintain momentum. This is to describe the symbiotic balance/respect and functional marketing needs of a vibrant inside TeleSales group.

TeleSales: Instant Market Feedback

TeleSales is the most resilient medium in the marketing mix. Similar to print, web and video, TeleSales must be recognized for its reach/shelf life, and receive customized messaging. But they're more dynamic than other mediums, capable of reaching farther, and gathering more accurate/timely feedback than any bingo card/URL. Accordingly, they require and deserve to be regarded as a competent, living component of B2B marketing.

While inside TeleSales can compliment and/or solely execute marketing/demand generation programs, they serve an even greater function within B2B marketing: they can pilot programs for execution. Within hours they can test various offers/scripts/messaging. And if you ask for their expertise/input, the inside TeleSales group will provide fundamental market feedback above and beyond the testing sphere. What other group has their finger on the pulse of your market?

The benefits of an inside TeleSales group who is familiar with marketing objectives, programs and directives can be measured in sales, customer satisfaction/loyalties and adoption rates. Without their support and collaboration, marketing operates under sub optimal conditions.

Required: Demand Generation Programs

No TeleSales person can effectively reach his/her assigned customer base on a regular basis. And you don't want them to try, either. Instead, have them focus on the top 20% of their accounts¹, and leave the rest to relationship marketing.

Inbound customer calls must be fueled by frequent marketing activities designed to illicit a response/demand. Demand generation can be accomplished in a number of mediums, but should always include the same fundamental elements²: For maximum effectiveness, demand generation objectives should change monthly. Here are some measurable objectives that have been successful:

- Upgrade 20% of certain customer installations within 60 days;
- Sell \$X revenue of add-on services to a certain customer segment; and
- Identify X# of new users or recommenders within an account.

Critical: Frequent Incentives

In addition to monthly demand generation programs, the inside TeleSales group will remain buoyant with highly visible monthly/quarterly incentives. Awards/recognition/premiums can be provided for sales achievements, best practices, creative solutions and/or overcoming barriers to success. For maximum effectiveness, all incentives should be tied to current marketing programs/objectives.

Conclusion

The secret to developing a successful inside TeleSales team with marketing acumen is to make them an integral component of your marketing mix, and have them actively participate in program development, piloting and demand generation activities. Inside TeleSales can be your most resourceful medium!

¹ Most companies get 80% of their business from 20% of their customers. The same is true with inside sales, who should communicate with their top 20% quarterly, and direct market to their remaining 80% just as frequently.

² See article entitled 'Emerging Companies. 3 Critical Components for Generating Leads' on www.ChrisHallMarketing.com