Driving Marketing ROI

Part 2

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This eBook is part two of a three part series that will share our experience and knowledge running a sales and marketing services firm. It is targeted at helping B2B companies achieve a better Marketing Return on Investment (ROI) for their current quarterly demand generation campaigns. Before I ask you to read my advice I think I should first give the courtesy of discussing our philosophy on building and managing any demand generation campaign. AG Salesworks asks itself 3 very important questions prior to launching any marketing campaign (for our clients or our own). They are as follows:

1. Who are we going to target/call and why?
2. What are we going to say to them and what do we want them to say to us?
3. When our campaign succeeds in generating a qualified opportunity, how will sales follow up on it?

It is our goal that by reading this, you either reinforce your existing process through the understanding that others feel the same way, or you gain some valuable pointers to enhance\improve your own Q4 Demand Generation planning.

So, let's address part 2… What are we going to say to them and what do you want them to say to us?

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Introduction

In Part 1 of our eBook series we focused on the foundation of our Quarterly Demand Generation Campaign. Why would people buy from you? Who are those people (title, company, etc)? Do you have a list of contacts that match your profile to begin campaigning to? To me, building the foundation of the campaign is always the hardest part. It's the science of the campaign. Now it's time to focus on the art, the art of communication to be more specific.

You can execute part one with unmatched precision and effectiveness, but it will be ineffective unless you devote the same level of attention to step two in this process. What good is a well defined and validated list if you don't take ample time to answer the following - "what am I actually going to say to these people about my company, and what do I want them to say to me?" In your company, you may refer to this as your qualification strategy.

We mentioned previously that all B2B demand generation campaigns should have a teleprospecting component. This is not a self serving opinion, but one based on having executed hundreds of campaigns that both included and excluded live calling. The fact of the matter is, in order to truly gather the best nuggets of gold from your list and to better maximize your campaign investment...you MUST eventually call these folks to discuss things live. It's a dirty job, but somebody's got to do it.

Section 2 of our eBook will be devoted exclusively to educating you as to how we go about answering two main questions as part of our pre campaign planning. What do we want to say to these folks, and, most importantly, what do we want them to say to us?

What do we want to say to them?

Indulge me for a moment and imagine that you are the proud parent of a dedicated Girl Scout (this hasn't happened to me yet). Imagine that your little girl scout was so proud to sell cookies that year and talked nothing more of raising the most money in her troop. Imagine then that during the week of the big sales push, your ambitious worker had gotten sick and missed out almost entirely on her opportunity to sell. Imagine then that she cried endlessly about having missed so many days and asked you through tear filled eyes to help her sell the most cookies. If you are as easily manipulated by your children as I am, you would immediately begin crafting a plan to help your daughter set sales records for her troop....hell, for her town!! The planning process you would go through may not be much different than the demand generation campaign planning we are discussing on these pages. You could get out a pen and paper and crank through section 1. Why would people buy from you? Most likely, guilt at your daughter's plight and\or a sweet tooth would be the two main characteristics I would guess. Who are these people? Family and friends mostly. Do you have a list? Of course you do. Unfortunately, given the emotion of the situation and your desire to impress your child, perhaps you just hit the phones to start taking orders. You never stopped to think about what you were actually going to say to each one of these people.

You were winging it in every sense of the word. Yes, you closed a lot of business that day, but your daughter didn't sell the most cookies in her troop. Now, because she is far more mature than you, she isn't sad, she is simply happy for the girl that did. You, on the other hand, couldn't shake the thought that had you simply taken more time to determine what you were going to say before you called she may have been number one. For example, if this had happened to me, my list of suspects would have had a category of "Family". The "Family" category would be full of individuals that would experience both guilt at my daughters plight and sweet tooth issues. They would be my ideal prospects. If I wanted to maximize my performance I would need to take a minute and design a strategy for exactly what I wanted to say to these people based on their unique characteristics. Specifically, you would want to design a message for this category that covered three main areas.

The three things you must say when you catch someone live:

1. Who you are?
2. Why you are calling?
3. Why they should talk to you?

For the family category this could be an effective example of an opening message that would put you in the best position to qualify and then close on some cookies.

"Hi Dad, it's Pete"
"I'm good how are you"?
"Good. Listen, don't take offense if I'm brief, but I'm trying to help (daughter's Name) out with her cookie sales for girl scouts. Not sure if Mom told you, but (daughter's name) was sick all last week so missed her chance to sell any cookies. I'm hoping I can drum up some business for her today by calling friends and family so that she can sell as many as possible. I know she'd be psyched if you bought some cookies, and I think they have some new kind of thin mint this year, I remember you eating those a box at a time when we were younger."

Please don't be offended by the simplicity of my example as I've often found that the simpler you make this stuff the easier it is to internalize. So let's take a look at my proposed intro to my dad and see if I hit our three "What do you want to say to them" criteria.

Who you are?: *"Hi Dad, it's Pete"*
Why you are calling?: *"I'm trying to help (daughter's Name) out with her cookie sales for girl scouts. Not sure if Mom told you, but (daughter's name) was sick all last week so missed her chance to sell any cookies. I'm hoping I can drum up some business for her today by calling friends and family so that she can sell as many as possible.*
Why they should talk to you?: *"I know she'd be psyched if you bought some cookies, and I think they have some new kind of thin mint this year, I remember you eating those a box at a time when we were younger"*

My Dad would know exactly who I was, why I was calling, and the fact that he could buy some cookies that he loves to eat and make his beloved granddaughter happy at the same time if he just tolerated a couple more minutes on the phone with me (my father isn't a phone guy). After that intro I have positioned myself very well to ask him the questions I need answered with very little push back at this point.

This segues nicely into section #2 of this chapter.

What do we want them to say to us?

Once you've figured out what you are going to say to live prospects, the next logical step is to figure out what you want to learn about them as it pertains to your hopes of closing business.

I did a good job of getting my dad in position to answer some questions. He knows who I am, why I'm calling, and how what I have to say can benefit him. He is ready to answer some questions because my opening made him feel comfortable that his conversation with me was going to add value to his life. He is therefore, an active participant in my qualification process. In order to prepare yourself and\or your teleprospecting reps for this stage in the conversation (the qualification stage) you must fully understand the outline of what a fully qualified sales leads is.

At AG Salesworks we define a fully qualified sales lead as follows:

1. **Business Profile:** This is the scope of the opportunity. The overall picture of the person\organization your sales people are going to be selling to. More specifically, the pains and needs of said person\organization as it pertains to your service or technology.
2. **Timeframe:** How soon does your contact\organization want those pains alleviated and needs met?
3. **Budget:** If they know how soon they want pain alleviated and needs met, have they assigned a dollar amount in order to make that happen? If not, could they reallocate from somewhere else to pay for our products\services?
4. **Decision Maker:** If they have approved budget, or can re-allocate, how does the decision making process work? Who introduces concepts and who is the final decision maker? Who actually signs the check?
5. **Net Step:** Where do we go from here? Let's book a formal next step in the sales process (ideally a con-call where your sales rep can begin his/her deeper qualification).

Once you've adopted this (or something similar) as your template for a qualified lead, you can then generate questions in each category designed to gather as much pertinent information as possible, in that specific area.

Here is the list of questions, by category, that we use at AG Salesworks to fully qualify a sales opportunity for our sales reps.

Business Profile Questions for Marketing Services

For Marketing Contacts:

How are you currently generating MQLs?
What campaigns are you running?
How many MQLs are these campaigns yielding?
Is this resulting in enough SQLs?
How are you determining the effectiveness of your campaigns?
Are you happy with the quality of leads your programs are generating?
What does your sales team view as the biggest impediment to their success?
Do you have someone helping you with the execution of your demand gen campaigns?

For Sales Contacts:

What are your quarterly/annual sales objectives?
Are you getting enough leads from marketing that then result in fully qualified sales leads?
Are you happy with the quality of leads coming from marketing?
What do you view as your sales team's biggest impediment to their success?

For C-Level Contacts:

Does your marketing team have a cohesive lead generation strategy delivering quality leads to your sales team?
Is your marketing team in reactive mode, or are they proactively planning innovative lower cost programs to deliver leads to your sales team?
Are all the leads generated by Marketing being followed up on by Sales?
Are all outward facing people in your organization delivering a consistent message about your solutions?

Business Profile Questions for Sales Opportunity Development

What is the size & structure of your Sales Team? (inside, field, channel, direct, 3rd party)

If they have an inside team:

What are the responsibilities of those reps?

What % of time is spent cold calling vs. following up on marketing qualified leads

What is your company's sales model? (direct, channel, distribution, telesales, combination)

Have you used outsourced vendors in the past?

Would you be open to it again – why/why not?

What verticals are you selling into? What titles?

What is the average selling price of your solution?

What is your average sales cycle?

Timeframe:

When would you like to see a project with AG Salesworks begin?

Is this an active initiative?

What does it mean to your organization if you don't do anything to address this problem?

Budget:

What type of investment are you looking to make in lead generation & prospecting?

Have you set aside budget for this?

When would you foresee this budget being available?

Does that budget come from sales or marketing?

Decision Maker:

Who would be involved in deciding on an outsourced vendor?

In order to make the best use of everyone's time, would it make sense to involve this individual(s) in the next call?

Conclusion

At this point, we have established two extremely important determinations.

- We have painstakingly determined who we are going to prospect and why.
- We have also determined exactly how we are going to talk about ourselves and what we are going to ask them about.

Both steps have put us in the position of generating a very well qualified sales opportunity. Now it's time to focus on our sales team. Specifically, how exactly are they planning on following up on all the incredibly qualified sales opportunities that our demand generation campaign has created?

About the Author

Peter Gracey is the co-founder and President of AG Salesworks and is responsible for daily operations and Client management.

Having founded AG Salesworks in 2002, Peter strives to constantly improve on both the Client and employee experience. Peter employs the newest technologies, best practices and strategic leadership to drive measurably, superior results.

Prior to AG Salesworks, Peter worked in senior management in the services and software industries.