

Following up on a lead

Whether you generate a lead yourself or work with a third party to help you, the key to success is following up. Here are some quick tips to help maximize your close rate on leads.

Speed is of the essence

There is no such thing as an exclusive lead. Sure, leads you generate through your website or through PPC ads seem exclusive – but you should be of the mindset that you’re always in competition. If you work with lead generation companies, you know from the start you’re competing with a set number of other companies.

So how do you overcome this? It’s quite simple actually: **speed is of the essence**. It should go without saying, but it’s often neglected. You should be ready and able to follow-up on a lead within minutes of receiving it. The rules of business have changed. No longer is it acceptable to follow-up on a lead a few hours or even a few days later. Your competitors certainly aren’t waiting – and neither should you. According to a Leads360 study, calling a lead five minutes within receipt of a new lead versus ten minutes can yield up to a 500% increase in contact rate.

Use multiple channels to follow-up with the lead – phone, email or both, where appropriate. Be mindful and considerate of your potential customer, however. They’ll appreciate your quick response, but don’t overwhelm them at the start of a relationship as you don’t want to sour their perception of your company. If you can’t make contact right away – even when following up quickly – don’t fret. Speed doesn’t always win you a deal – but it can make you lose one.



Phone and voicemail tips

Keep your message upbeat, polite and to the point – **speak slowly and repeat your number** at close of message

Make your message compelling: mention a special offer, promotion, or that a **custom proposal** is ready

Aim for **one voicemail a day** and no more than 3 to 5 voicemails over a two-week period

You may be able to connect with more buyers if you **test contacting them at different times of day**

Be prepared

In the rush to follow-up with a lead, some companies make the critical mistake of not being prepared for the discussion. Most leads generated these days include specific details about the prospective purchase or inquiry and contact information so there is no excuse for not being prepared. Buyers regularly express to us how much they appreciate when potential companies respond to their specific request.

Email tips

Email provides a valuable method of contact alongside phone calls and voicemails and is an easy, quick way to introduce yourself and/or your company

Try some different approaches: you could send a full, written proposal, or simply schedule a time to talk

Use Outlook to try scheduling a follow-up call with a buyer

Remember: to avoid spam filters, try not to attach documents to your emails, especially a first sales email

Preparation doesn't mean hours of research, it can be as simple as reading through the details of the lead so you can provide a customized response to your potential customer. If the lead you receive had specific written comments from the buyer – read them. Focus your response to show that you understand the unique needs of your prospective customer.

Even if you can't provide all the details, most buyers are looking for pricing information. Consider offering a base-price quote on the first call based on the information you have available – and then tailor it as necessary based on the arc of your discussions.

Set the stage

Prospective buyers today are often armed with a treasure trove of information, especially when doing online research. They're also likely to have contacted multiple companies regarding a purchase which can often lead to confusion when companies call on them. Take the confusion out of the picture immediately by referencing how you received their information and how you can help them. Prospects might not remember where they submitted their information so putting it into context for them is essential.

Don't give up hope

While the steps outlined above should help you maximize your return on leads, they don't guarantee success. If a buyer chooses not to work with your company, don't end the relationship there. Plan to follow-up at a later date (six months later) to see if they're satisfied with the company they did decide to work with. You may even come to find out that they didn't ultimately make a decision – and you could be back in the running. The bottom line is there are always opportunities down the road even if they don't manifest themselves right away. Stay on top of your new leads, but don't forget to go back to old ones too.

About BuyerZone

Since 1992, BuyerZone has helped thousands of sellers win more customers by connecting them quickly and easily to their target buyers online. Our suite of online lead generation programs provide sellers with cost-effective, easy to implement, and results-focused solutions that deliver prospective buyers at the right time. We generate leads for more than 8,500 clients, ranging from Fortune 500 companies to local businesses.

Helping sellers connect with more than 4.5 million buyers in 150+ equipment, product and service categories, we have facilitated over \$13 billion in purchases.

BuyerZone is a division of *Reed Business Information*.

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