optimised Academy
Profit, online

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS

Sales and Marketing Strategy

Introduction

The following information is to help you develop your own sales and marketing strategy in order to improve sales enquiries. These are tried and tested methods that will help you become more successful in your monthly sales.

There are three areas of sales and marketing to consider, which consist of contacting your existing customers and using push and pull techniques. We recommend that you take a phased approach by perfecting one technique before spending your time, resources and investment on the other. Here's our suggestion:

- **Phase 1:** Existing Customer approach
- **Phase 2:** Direct Marketing (PUSH)
- **Phase 3:** Internet Marketing (PULL)

However, if you do have enough resources to develop all strategies simultaneously, you will see a greater effect in a shorter time period.

PHASE 1:
Existing customers

Of all the approaches we focus on, this should be the easiest.

As an established business you will already have happy customers that know and trust you, so a recommended exercise is to go through your past and present clients and review their requirements. If you think they would benefit from your services simply pick up the phone and make an appointment to see them, then use quality marketing materials and provide them with a professional presentation.

As we're sure you'll know, it can sometimes be difficult to book an appointment or speak to a client straight away. If you have a problem, there are some techniques in the following section that will help you out.
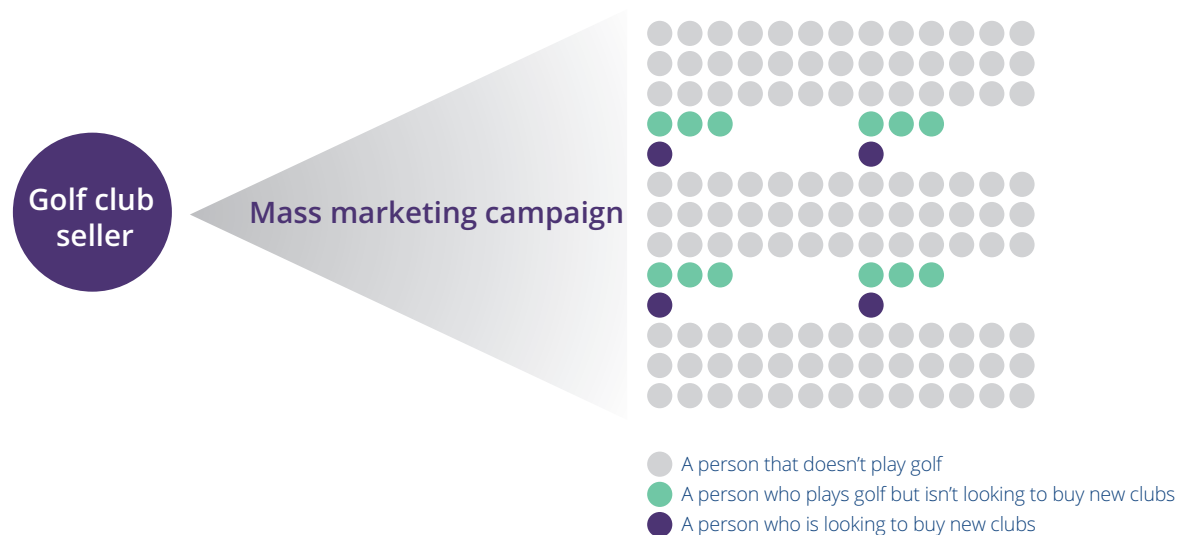
PHASE 2:
Direct marketing (PUSH)

We often see marketing companies taking shortcuts to raise awareness of their brand, product and or service. The most common example is when a company decides to advertise.

Advertising is often a knee-jerk reaction to a slow sales month, as it can prove a quick way to achieve a tangible marketing effort and reach a large audience. Unfortunately, advertising does have its cons as well as its pros. Yes, adverts can reach large audiences quickly, but it's essential that you consider the following:

• One advert will not bring in business; you will have to create a strategic campaign and advertise over a period of time in multiple advertising outlets.
• It is expensive.
• Advertising is not efficient. Described as a mass marketing approach, it usually misses its target more often than it hits it.

Here is an example of a mass marketing approach:

○ A person that doesn't play golf
● A person who plays golf but isn't looking to buy new clubs
● A person who is looking to buy new clubs

As you can see, all those in grey and green will not be persuaded by your advert as they either don't require what you sell or are not yet in the market to buy. To reach the orange targets when they are ready to buy, you will have to continue your advertising campaign over a prolonged period of time.

This approach is successful for brands that:
      a. sell fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) and
      b. have a strong brand and a large marketing budget.

If your service or product is not a FMCG you should therefore not consider a mass market advertising campaign. Instead it will be far more effective to adopt a highly researched and targeted approach.

You simply don't need to market to tens of thousands, hoping that something will stick; this approach will have a very low conversion rate. Your approach should be to build a database that is highly accurate and holds data on prospective clients that have a real need for the product.

Research contacts build database

When selling a business-to-business product or service, we recommend starting by building a powerful and organic database. By "organic" we mean that the database is built for your own specific purposes from the ground up. We do not recommend buying lists, as they are usually out of date, do not have all the information you need and often include incorrect information entirely.

Google Places / Google Plus Local

Google Maps is a great place to start researching potential targets.

The Google Maps system collects, stores and publishes details of businesses. In short, it's a business database that you can use to your advantage.

In the example below we have selected the Maps function in Google, zoomed in on a desired geographic area, and entered a business type that we wish to approach.
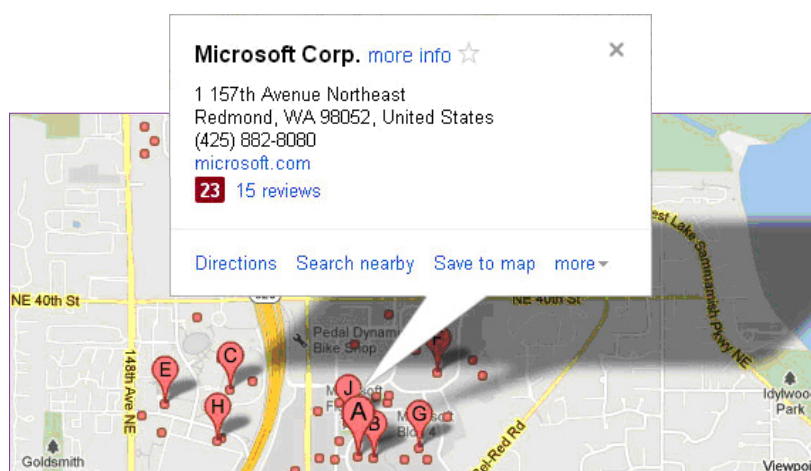
As you can see, Google has collects a lot of detail about businesses, so the building of the database can begin with very little effort.

Organisations websites

Once you have found targets through Google Maps, you will want to add further detail in order to make your database more powerful.

Click through to the organisation's website and browse until you find a "meet the team" page or something similar, then select a target that deals with your product or service and add this additional detail to your database. You will want to look for:

• Full name
• Job title
• Direct dial telephone number
• Email address
• Twitter username (optional)

LinkedIn

You may not gather all of the required information from Google or the company website. Another way of researching prospects is to use LinkedIn. LinkedIn is free to use, but you may consider paying for the upgraded professional account as this gives you increased targeting and improved sales tools. Use LinkedIn to research companies and individuals that you wish to do business with. See our article **"become linkedIn"** for more information on LinkedIn

Search for Companies

microsoft

Search

Company Name, Keywords, or Industry

Microsoft
Computer Software; 10,001+ employees

Telephone research

If you can't find all the detail you require, simply call the organisation and ask them. A polite call will go a long way.

"Hi, my name's Claire. I've been asked to send some information to your IT Manager, it's a document on IT cost savings. If I could please get their name and email address, I can send it straight away."

Use this opportunity to introduce yourself to the gatekeeper, and always be polite and professional.

Direct mail

Once you have built your powerful database you can start your approach. Direct Mail is a tried and tested method that can work wonders, and with an organically built database you know that all correspondence will be relevant and addressed to a named contact. This goes a long way to improving your conversion rates.

Physical posted printed material

What you send depends on your budget; as a minimum we suggest:

- A sales brochure
- A personalised cover letter

If you have the budget you may want to include a memorable item. This creates cut-through and recall.

"I remember… you're the company that sent me the nice pen."

It is important to understand that sending out a piece of direct mail is not the end of the line. Your target audience for many reasons will not automatically respond. This is why we continue the process.

Connect with prospects on LinkedIn

In addition to sending out the direct mail piece we recommend connecting with your prospect through LinkedIn. LinkedIn is yet another database, but also acts as place a where you can share information and build up a rapport.

We recommend that you provide your prospect with a reason to connect. Creating relevant and quality content for your audience is a great way to build a trust, authority and new connections.

The more you interact with your prospects, the more you build trust and market your message.

Follow on Twitter

Twitter is becoming increasingly popular. Consider creating an account and following firms and individuals who you would like to do business with. Be active and friendly, comment on tweets and retweet important and relevant posts, and mention accounts as part of Follow Friday (#FF). You will quickly be recognised for being an interesting account and supporting their own.

As with LinkedIn, share content and give people a reason to connect with you.

Email prospect

Follow up your activity and introduce yourself personally through email. Email is still the go-to business communication tool. Don't expect a response, you are just adding yet another layer of contact, helping to build awareness and trust with these multiple individuals.

Touching base campaign

Not everyone will want to buy from your initial campaign. This is normal. But a "no" now is not a "no" forever, there may be a time in the future when they are ready to buy from you.

This is why we need to have a touching base campaign. This campaign just reminds your prospects that you are still around and available to do business with if, and when, they are ready.

We would recommend:

- Monthly emailers
- Quarterly mail outs
- Quarterly telephone calls
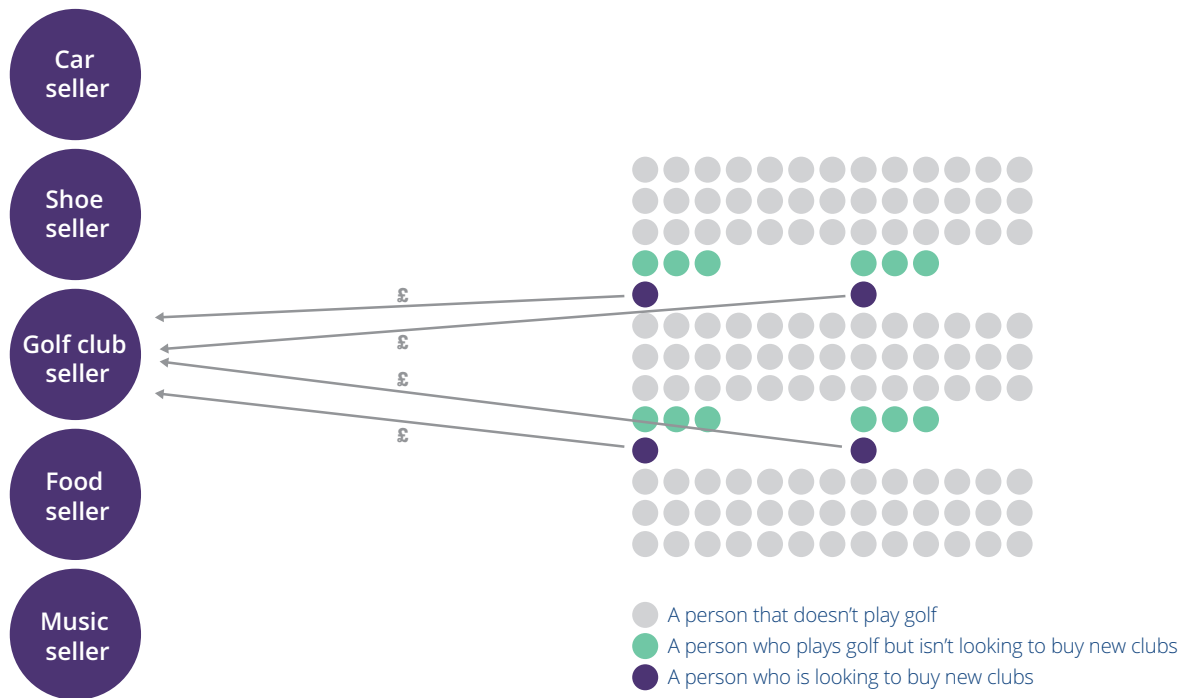- Regular updates through social media

Repeat

As you continue to add to your database, repeat the above process and remember to update your spreadsheet or sales system.

PHASE 3:
Online marketing (PULL)

If you get your online marketing right it should act as your automatic sale system that is constantly working to bring in warm leads. Consider it a salesperson that never sleeps or runs up a huge expenses bill.

Below is an example of a pull marketing system.

Car seller

Shoe seller

Golf club seller

Food seller

Music seller

£
£
£
£

⬤ A person that doesn't play golf
🟢 A person who plays golf but isn't looking to buy new clubs
🟣 A person who is looking to buy new clubs

Here you can see that only warm leads – those that are actually interested in your product – are finding you and requesting further information (converting).

Unlike the push mass marketing model you are not wasting time, effort or money on individuals that are not interested in what you sell.

Improve organic Google search results (SEO)

"I want to be at the top of Google" is a sentence which is often heard within Internet marketing circles.

It is actually quite easy to get some keyphrases to the top of Google; however, what you actually want is to achieve high rankings for keyphrases that convert to business.

Our experience shows that it is very achievable especially, for a niche business-to-business product or service.

Onsite optimisation

A website has to be built technically to a good standard. There is also a list of good practice requirements that, once completed to a high standard, will provide you with a solid platform for your Internet marketing campaign.

Onsite optimisation is where your website goes through a process of optimising for a group of keywords/keyphrases that will bring in sales leads.

The many items to review include:

HTML Code	Duplicate Content	Meta Data
Internal Links	Keyword Densities	URL Canonicalistion / Friendly URLs
Site Architecture	Content Writing	Site Maps

With the recent updates to the Google algorithms (Panda and Penguin), onsite optimisation is playing an ever more crucial part in the success of an SEO campaign. Google are penalising websites with poor content or content that has been written to 'cheat' the Google system.
To succeed, content has to be excellent, engaging and noteworthy of recommendation.

Websites now more than ever need to be optimised around user and usage metrics. This includes:

• Time on the site/page
• Bounce rate
• Browse rate
• CTR from search engines
• Diversity of branded search and direct traffic

Particular time and effort has to be paid to the content of the website, not only to please Google, but more importantly to provide quality content that will turn visitors into enquiries and subsequently into paying customers.

Content sharing

Certain content (both created and shared) can provide ample opportunity to achieve links back to your website. Examples include:

- Articles
- Videos
- Images
- Infographics

Although Google algorithms are constantly becoming more advanced, backlinks are still considered to be a factor with increasing organic search rankings for keywords and keyphrases.

Google loves good content and it will rank your website higher by having this content on your website. Google will also recognise your efforts in sharing content throughout the Internet.
The better the content, the more views, likes and links you will achieve.

Google Adwords campaign

An organic campaign can often take months to be effective, and because of budget and time constraints you will be limited to the amount of keywords and keyphrases to target. Because of this we would suggest running a Google Adwords campaign alongside your organic efforts.

A Google Adwords campaign can be set-up very quickly and you will soon see increased traffic to your website.

If budget allows, a professionally run campaign will keep your click charges low, increase visitors and convert visitors to enquiries.

Online PR

Online PR supports both your organic and paid Internet marketing campaigns. We suggest you research the web and begin collaborating with successful blogs within your industry and the industries you are targeting.

For example, if you are targeting the law industry, write an article on your product/service in law firms and share this with relevant blogs. Remember that you will also be creating links back to your website, which will positively affect your search engine optimisation campaign.

You may wish to take this a step further and guest write for a number of high profile and relevant blogs.

By being active online in the places where your target audience hangs out, you are building awareness and trust, thereby increasing persuasion.

With Thanks

This short guide should help with your marketing efforts, but please don't hesitate to get in touch if you require anything else.

Best wishes,