

WHITEPAPER

IS IT JUST TELEMARKETING OR IS IT PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT?

brittain



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1.0 Introduction

Call it direct marketing or telemarketing, either way you are communicating one-to-one with real people. No matter what preconceptions you may have or past experiences, done well telemarketing is a very successful and proven form of direct marketing, and with a quality approach can result in positive, profitable and mutually beneficial outcomes.

Telemarketing provides invaluable opportunities to communicate with a highly relevant and personalised offer in a timely, sensitive manner. With a professional one-to-one approach, it's inevitable that you will build closer relationships that achieve instant interaction.

The key advantage of gaining marketing insights and intelligence, gained through telemarketing, also helps to gain unique and valuable information for positioning and competitive advantage by establishing an understanding of market segments, prospect buying motives, procurement policies and business requirements - essential for driving sales strategy and real time competitive advantage.

1.1 Telemarketing as a B2B asset

Outbound telemarketing is increasingly the most economical and effective form of direct engagement for generating and maintaining one-to-one business relationships.

The advantages of a telemarketing strategy are:



Direct human approach



Low cost communication



Tailored conversations



Effective relationship management

Done properly, telemarketing is a form of professional engagement that puts the customer first, resulting in the freedom to engage with customers and prospects time and time again.

1.2 Human interaction is key

While digital, social and content marketing remain the long-standing hot topics of B2B marketing, human interaction still lies at the heart of successful business development. The majority of B2B sales are closed after face-to-face meetings. This underscores the importance of human interaction and reflects why telemarketing is an important part of creating B2B sales opportunities.

Conversation has always been the key to relationship-building and talking to prospects on the phone is no different. Using the telephone for lead generation is a sound principle done in the right way, and in many cases is an essential component of the wider marketing strategy.

This whitepaper highlights the importance of professional telemarketing within B2B and outlines best practice, highlighting where damage can be caused by doing it wrong...

An essential component of the wider marketing strategy.

It's not what you think it is. In the right context telemarketing is a highly valuable marketing tool, employed with skill and diligence.

2.0 A starter for ten - what is B2B Telemarketing?

A common misconception. Telemarketing is related to marketing a product or service. Telesales is related to selling only. The strategies put in place for telemarketing are very different and have a long-term view on building beneficial relationships.

Telemarketing is simply marketing a product or service via a telephone and can be an effective tool for promoting your business. It can be used for inbound and outbound activities depending on the campaign which could be lead generation, appointment setting, market research, event promotion, customer service, customer satisfaction, retention and much more...

KEY BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- » A useful means of engaging with current and potential customers
- » Provides a more interactive and personal service
- » Generates rapport and provides explanation
- » Reaches key decision makers over a period of time
- » Keeps your pipeline going to generate leads and appointments
- » Increase your sales territory
- » Measurable results
- » Removes the constraints on in-house resource
- » Contributes to a significant increase in awareness
- » Gains real-time information on the target audience
- » Reduced telemarketing costs
- » Leverages experience

Productivity tends to be higher via an outsource as they are focused on activities unlike in-house resource with individuals juggling a variety of tasks.

2.1 The Human Factor – the art of engagement

Human interaction still lies at the heart of successful business development with B2B prospects. The majority of B2B sales are closed only after face to face meetings.

This underscores the importance of human interaction and reflects why telemarketing is an important part of creating B2B sales opportunities.

Telemarketing has real strength in its ability to be a dynamic, two-way communication channel. The buyer can connect with a human being quicker and it allows information to be obtained by the seller to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of future communication through a variety of marketing channels. Key insights gained from two-way communication can make all the difference when it comes to tenders and bidding opportunities, as it provides you with the opportunity to get closer to the prospective client using real-time information that could win opportunities in setting a business apart from competitors within the process.

The first human interaction a buyer has with a proactive seller will often be through telemarketing. It is therefore vital that this initial conversation goes well (regardless of whether they are in-house or external). The buyer's perception of your company is heavily influenced by this first human interaction as it will by subsequent interactions further along the sales process.

2.2 Getting telemarketing right for professional engagement

If you're looking for a telemarketing partner, look for one that has quality staff with industry expertise, low staff turnover, little or no commissions, and equipped with the latest technology. Any decent partner will assist with campaign planning, training, qualifying call lists, outline scripts. Finally, make sure your chosen partner has all the visibility you need - call reporting, call monitoring etc.

The sign of a great call is when the customer doesn't see it as telemarketing, instead they see it as an intellectual conversation with like-minded individuals for the benefit of professional engagement. Basically, it's a great service call!

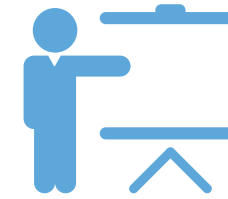


Aside from the obvious 'put the customer first' and 'at the heart of the call process' in all forms of communication, the key principles for professional engagement are as follows:



A long-term approach

Use an organisation with employees that are professionally committed and see their role as a career, rather than a commission-based stepping stone into a sales related role. This makes for a great starting point if you want to achieve quality, professional results rather than a quick fix.



Ensure ongoing training and personal development

If this is in place for all employees, it contributes towards best practice which in turn achieves quality results from telemarketing campaigns. A commitment to training produces immediate and higher business effectiveness for a high-performing professional culture. Nurturing of staff is a key indicator of a top performing organisation that sets them apart on standards of quality. Well-trained teams naturally tend to achieve better results, leading to greater efficiencies, higher quality standards and an uplift in financial returns.

A managed, measured approach based on a solid, thorough brief with a consistent message, continually monitored for quality and consistency safeguards brand reputation.



Brand development and reputation

A professional telemarketing campaign is a vital part of your whole brand development and reputation. It provides the opportunity to complement and advance your brand or campaign goals through a sound structure on communications for one-to-one interaction to achieve a positive customer experience that has impact.

A structured framework, which supports a consistent approach, allows you to control how your brand is presented. A thorough brief, close supervision and ongoing monitoring through call recordings and detailed reports, ensures the message conveyed reflects your brand values and guarantees

correct positioning of your propositions.

An in-house employee may already be familiar with your brand and could be perceived as being in a better position to answer technical or probing questions about products or services, but an agency with a strong brief can be very effective in presenting a client's proposition.

Ensure that the messaging, tone and specific details of your telemarketing campaign supports and enhances other channel communications and brand development by briefing telemarketing partners on other marketing activity so that they can deliver a more effective and informed offer.

Campaign planning

A carefully planned campaign that includes the following will maximise the chances of success:

- ✓ Know your goals! You must know exactly what you want from this campaign.
- ✓ Establish expected standards
- ✓ Identify your ideal customer
- ✓ Select a quality database matched against your ideal customer profile
- ✓ Select a professional telemarketing partner with proven experience within your industry
- ✓ Look to learn from your telemarketing partners
- ✓ Establish a clear call structure
- ✓ Aim for well-informed, meaningful conversations
- ✓ Scripted/Unscripted. Your callers should always sound unscripted with room to deviate and improvise from the basic outline
- ✓ Follow up on time. Do as you say



Data management is key

For any campaign to be successful the most important starting point is good, clean data. Having correct, up-to-date data is an important aspect of any marketing strategy. A professional telemarketing agency with industry expertise can help gather, manage and use data to increase conversions.

Having up-to-date contact data is a must for the success of the campaign as well as meeting legal and compliance obligations. Professional telemarketing agencies will screen all data against CTPS, they will follow guidance from the GDPR and will also update data to keep this actively maintained and up-to-date, including do-not-call (DNC) lists.

They will also track the data chain so that you can correctly provide the source of the data if asked.

Data will be fully protected and kept secure by a professional telemarketing partner, particularly with regards to the holding and transfer of personal data. All files should be password-protected with strict access controls in place for only those people that are directly involved in the process of preparation or use of the data.

Optimum targeting is a must for a successful and cost-effective campaign that focuses on detailed data, this will maximise targeting rather than focusing on low-quality volume. The data selected should always be tested to validate this against the campaign objectives prior to a full roll-out.

Quality is key for data regardless of whether it is cold or warm, selected intelligently and appropriately data has a direct impact on the ROI of a campaign.



Campaign debrief

A structured campaign debrief is paramount, not just for the specifics of the product or service being promoted, but to also provide the telemarketing team with a good understanding of:

- » The product/service with full details, terms, conditions, promotions etc
- » Client's current position within the market place
- » The role of the telemarketer and the part they are playing within the sales process
- » Best practice and examples of what a good call looks like together with an outline of the call structure
- » Training around hard skills as standard should be provided by the telemarketing partner on campaign/project objectives, target audience/personas, escalations, industry guidelines - data protection, GDPR, TPS, listening techniques, strategies for dealing with different customer types, handling complaints, updating customer records



2.3 B2B Telemarketers

Telemarketing in a B2B environment is a subtle skill. It is far removed from consumer call-centres working with scripted responses and automated high-volume calling. Appropriate skills and support are needed, particularly as for most B2B companies they will have a highly limited prospect pool. Attempting to push the buyer too hard, too early will simply lead to alienation and the buyer terminating the call.

B2B telemarketers must be able to demonstrate a good understanding of:

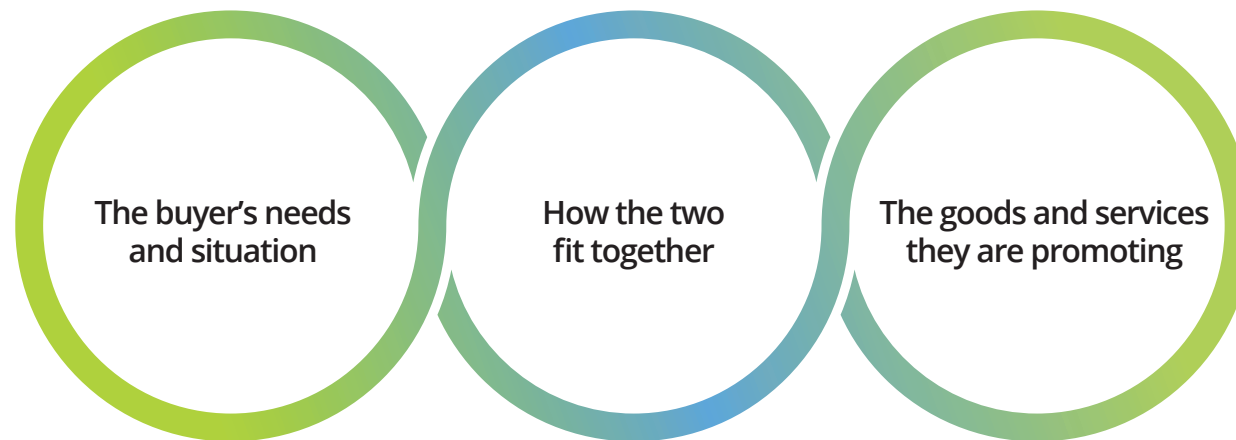
To maximise the value of the human factor of telemarketing, the campaign briefing, as mentioned previously, should incorporate the emotional and cultural factors likely to influence a buyer as well as their individual and organisational needs – this helps the telemarketer connect emotionally with the buyer.

Telemarketers need to quickly show human characteristics and empathy - essential in building relationships to obtain information needed that qualifies and understands the buyer's business and personal objectives. The ability to hold a conversation on the phone requires a particular

set of skills and natural aptitude to sustain high volume calling at the standard required to produce good quality outcomes. A good telemarketing agency puts a high amount of effort into recruiting the right people.

Some skills can be taught but others are inherent, including self-confidence and the tenacity to stay focused and maintain performance, despite repeated rejection.

There is nothing easy or attractive about cold calling and even hardened salespeople shy away from it, especially those accustomed to warm, sales qualified leads.



A key goal in B2B telemarketing is to create trust and interest with the prospect and to agree next steps to move the dialogue forward.

2.4 Your responsibilities for a successful telemarketing partnership

A 5-point checklist

1

Engagement (from everyone) is key

To get the best ROI it's crucial the leaders within the business see the benefit and truly engage in the process.

2

The telemarketing partner is made-up of experts

Experts in their field and while they expect to be held accountable for the results they undertake to deliver, you must be available to provide additional data, to engage in conversations and provide access to stakeholders as necessary. You must remain engaged and available to work alongside your telemarketing partner.

3

Sharing strategic goals

Allows telemarketing professionals to innovate on your behalf and can often uncover additional opportunities.

Check your value proposition. You can guarantee that your competitor along with a number of other businesses are targeting the same individual or company, so your proposition needs to be at its most compelling – give the prospect a reason to take the call about your product/service over and above the competition.

Each call represents an opportunity to validate existing or add new data, map the DMU in an organisation, find out about buying cycles and retendering processes and generally build a clearer picture of the target – truly insightful and beneficial information from which to build relationships.

4

Follow-up activity

Prospective B2B leads are highly demanding. Active, informed and timely follow-up by a focused and committed sales team will likely result in increased sales, especially since prospects are already highly qualified.

5

Manage expectations

Reaching senior decision makers, building rapport and nurturing the beginnings of a business relationship takes time and many, many interventions. It's vital that all stakeholders have realistic expectations.

Work to your prospect's timescales and priorities is everything, especially so when selling high value long term solutions.

Work together as a team and leave no stone unturned in planning and preparation.

2.5 Useful information when looking to engage with a telemarketing agency

Establish what you are looking to achieve with a brief and assess how your initial enquiry and brief is dealt with. You can also check:

- ✓ Track record
- ✓ Client testimonials
- ✓ Core values
- ✓ Systems in place for timely communication and reporting
- ✓ For professionalism, enthusiasm, honesty and integrity
- ✓ Call approach – script/not scripts
- ✓ Database – use your own or acquire?

What are the typical payment options for a Telemarketing campaign?

a) **A focus on getting paid for the volume of leads generated** doesn't tend to be beneficial for the client as payment is the motivator rather than achieving quality leads. With this you tend to get a certain type of telemarketing agency that has commission plans in place and high staff turnover, so training, quality standards, nurturing & developing the workforce isn't apparent which impacts the calls being made which in turn projects the wrong image for the business being represented, plus the final results tend to be poor with very little ROI.



A true telemarketing partner will represent your business transparently.

b) Paying for days of activity tends to be a more favourable option, especially when it comes to actively managing the pipeline, some of which can take 12-24 months to work through suitably for success. This tends to be contract driven to allow the client and the telemarketing partner to negotiate exactly how many days the campaign will take and how many leads/targets they are looking to receive each month. Once agreed, a fee is established, and both parties then work together to get the right result. This approach harbours commitment from the telemarketing partner and establishes quality standards that positively impact the calls, rapport and end result for high quality engagements and lead generation. Telemarketing partners with this approach tend to have salaried employees that are fully committed, loyal, dedicated and professional employees with industry specific experience. In a nutshell they are true professionals that are paid a salary rather than commission only- the way forward for professional engagement.

Overall, find a Telemarketing Partner that listens, understands your industry and the campaign, and is focussed on your objectives. Check the added value they can provide to their partners, ask about their overall approach to a campaign and how bespoke they will be, the reports that will be provided. The more transparent they can be around their offering the better - your partners need to be part of your sales/marketing team, an extension of the team.



3.0 A final word...

The overall goal of telemarketing is to expand a company's brand and reach. Successful B2B telemarketing builds an understanding of, and a relationship with the buyer using the human element from would to build the foundations of a relationship.

The journey towards identifying and securing new business opportunities is complex and multi-layered with data being validated, intelligence gathered – all of which builds a picture of buying cycles and decision-making units within your target organisations. This multi-layered and multi-faceted activity takes place over weeks and months and should always be dictated by the needs and buying cycles of the target audience rather than your own marketing targets or deadlines.

Some companies eager to get involved with telemarketing will try to establish their own in-house team. The hardware and software tend to pale in comparison with what a professional telemarketing partner has available. Furthermore, the scalability aspect is hampered with in-house teams due to the square footage, staffing limitations etc, plus in-house teams require significant management time - holiday, sickness, turnover, as well as training and development.

Many businesses have, over time, built very successful in-house telemarketing teams producing a steady flow of high-quality opportunities for their sales team, but this will have inevitably brought with it challenges and low points. What's more, it is rarely the easiest or most cost-effective option. Beyond the obvious financial investment, there are many important considerations including management overheads, time, hidden costs such as call charges, IT infrastructure, and of course higher personnel counts and costs.

Outsourcing may not make sense for every organisation, but it certainly has advantages, high up on that list must be the productivity levels that can be achieved by dedicated agency teams and tried and tested campaign management on purpose-built technology platforms. Outsourced telemarketing is a great solution for any organisation struggling to keep up with leads, seeking more leads, attempting to bring back lapsed customers, trying to cut costs, or simply wanting to ensure that their business is running smoothly.





Professional telemarketers not only have the call equipment to automatically connect them to the right people, they have the training to listen and communicate effectively. Also, telemarketing businesses tend to specialise in certain industries and are therefore more qualified to handle campaigns.

Despite how you might feel about telemarketing it is still one of the best ways to generate new interest and can be exactly the right mechanism for engaging with target audiences and gain valuable information. When it comes to setting sales appointments, populating a database with decision-maker names, or filling seats at an event, there's no contact method that's more direct or more effective than telemarketing. The results are measurable - a rare benefit for any campaign tactic.

Every call counts in B2B telemarketing. Professionalism, relevance, and understanding are paramount.

Effective B2B sales and lead generation is a skill. It is a communication and marketing tactic which requires a reactive approach, an attentive listener and a hunger for success.

It takes a special kind of person because in B2B the human factor is integral to gaining interaction at an early stage, helping sellers engage productively with buyers, understand their needs and communicate effectively. Adept telemarketers engage buyers at an emotional level, enabling them to obtain critical information that can influence further communication and build deeper relationships than would otherwise be possible.

Without doubt it is the human element that makes telemarketing so valuable, especially through a quality provider with salaried staff and contracts in place for work undertaken on a monthly basis. Yet it still needs to be supported by good management, efficient processes, high quality supportive marketing collateral and automated elements to maximise effectiveness.

When considering your next telemarketing campaign cover off those key requirements and insights provided within this whitepaper to construct a meaningful and effective campaign. You wouldn't approach any other part of your marketing or sales strategy without having clear goals, strong evaluation tools and excellent methods to work. Make no exceptions!

About Brittain Marketing – B2B Telemarketing Professionals

Brittain support partners with telemarketing through personally tailored engagement that is aimed at prospects and clients which you want to work with – we build and nurture relationships on your behalf using high standards, industry insights and a proven approach, established over 18 years.

We treat clients as individuals to gain a full understanding of their strategic objectives which allows us to develop tactical campaign activities. Plus, we only employ the best business professionals with industry experience.

The Brittain team is made-up of permanently employed, salaried employees (no commission) with the majority being long-serving. We also ensure personal development through annual training programmes and accredited

courses to keep up-to-date with industry trends and the latest techniques for professional engagement.

Our team are an extension of your team that are committed to meeting and exceeding expectations. Our proven approach is achieved using dedicated campaign specialists that understand the sales cycle and business environment. We always aim for high-quality engagement with key decision makers through free-flowing conversations.

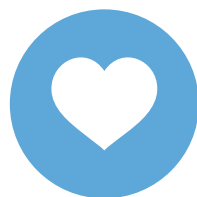
How we work. By using tried and tested processes our marketing activities guarantee valuable outcomes. We start by understanding your specific objectives to then implement tactical campaigns that focus on achieving growth.



MARKETING INSIGHTS



CLIENT ACQUISITION



CLIENT RETENTION





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To find out more about how we can deliver profitable sales growth contact
Brittain Marketing on: 0844 880 4584 or email: info@brittain.co.uk

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