

Small businesses and e-mail, closed-loop lead data and sponsoring conferences

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Small businesses and e-mail, closed-loop lead data and more

E-MAIL

How can a small business get the best possible response from its e-mail efforts?

“Lots of links,” responds Janine Popick, CEO and founder of VerticalResponse. “Give your reader more than one opportunity to respond within the same e-mail. Send tests to different readers to see how your content looks in Yahoo Mail, Gmail and Outlook.

“Subject lines matter,” she adds. “The focus of your e-mail should be on the offer or the content you think will be really exciting for your reader. If you've got two distinct audiences, segment your list and send separate targeted campaigns.” Subject lines get cut off at 30-40 characters, so Popick suggests not including your from label in the subject line.

“You always should have a call-to-action such as ‘Buy now,’ ‘Sign up now’ or ‘Register for this exciting event.’” Popick concludes. “You may even give an incentive for your readers to take action, such as a discount. And don't forget urgency — use a deadline.”

DATABASE

How can I better obtain closed-loop data on my leads in order to show ROI?

“Consider taking a hands-on approach to your lead management by employing a closed-loop lead administrator,” suggests Kathy Rizzo, VP of marketing at TeleNet Marketing Solutions. This administrator would be a person who can actively monitor the CRM system, ensuring leads are properly assigned to sales reps and reassigned when after staff turnover.

“The lead administrator can follow up directly with your sales representatives via phone and e-mail to ensure leads are actively pursued and to gather key information such as pipeline, forecast and closure data, as well as obtain qualitative feedback on the overall quality and type of leads

provided,” Rizzo adds. “Although this is a manual, hands-on process, it is highly effective in receiving and documenting ROI stats, as well as other valuable feedback and metrics.”

B-TO-B

When sponsoring conferences, how can I save money and engage with attendees to promote my products and services?

“The majority of communications professionals are unaware of the fact that they do not have to sponsor a conference in order to secure a speaking engagement,” says Lori Zetlin, managing partner at S3 — Strategic Speaker Services Inc. “An executive visibility program is a targeted, cost-effective way to get company executives and evangelists in front of key audiences, such as press, partners, prospects, customers and analysts.”

Perseverance and creativity are needed, Zetlin says. “A speaking opportunity provides visibility for the company, while the speaker is perceived as a thought leader,” she says. Zetlin recommends selecting speakers and speaker topics that are topical, compelling, and non-commercial; enlisting clients for joint case study presentations; and spending time building relationships with conference organizers.