

How Mind-Reading Can Help Improve Your Sales Results

By Jeff Josephson

For most companies, sales effectiveness is a productivity issue. The more sales you can generate in the least amount of time, with the least amount of effort, and at the lowest possible cost, the better.



The All-Seeing Eye

And, in fact, one popular theory of marketing holds that its primary purpose is to make the sales function more efficient. So, even in the marketing world, the more sales you can generate in the least amount of time, with the least amount of effort, and at the lowest possible cost, the better.

Lists Can Kill

Imagine, therefore, that you're tasked with generating sales (or sales leads, if you're in marketing,) in a particular market. If you're like most people, the first thing you do is acquire a list, and decide how you want to target it. If you go with direct marketing, you might choose from among direct mail, telemarketing, email marketing, Social Media marketing, or networking. If you go with advertising, you might choose from among broadcast, billboard, pay-per-click, banner, PR, Search Engine Optimization.

Regardless of the method you choose though, underlying each strategy is the assumption that there is list of prospects that each method is designed to reach. That list may be explicit, such as in the case of a call list or a direct mail list. Or it may be implicit, such as participants in a networking event, or users of a particular search engine. It is this list that also forms the denominator for your response rate ratio, and therefore it has a huge impact on productivity.

For example, if there are 10 people on a list with 1,000 names who actually need your product, you might make 990 cold calls before you find the first user. If you're using email marketing, you have to send to each in order to hit any. And if you're using content marketing, you have to insure that your content gets exposed to everyone in order to even hope that the "right" people see it. In fact, even if you're using pay-per-click marketing, you're ultimately paying to expose your ad to everyone in your cost-per-click; and making matters worse, your competitors are bidding up the price. So no matter what method you choose, there will always be some waste.

It is this waste, however, that dooms the productivity of most marketing and sales programs. For the highest cost is not direct expense associated with each sale, it's the indirect expense of marketing to people who have no need for your product.

Mind-Reading Can Help

Mind reading, or the ability to know what other people are thinking, is a long-practiced skill in many ancient and modern communities. As described in Wikipedia, many accounts of seers and oracles can be found in works by the ancient Greeks, and in the Old Testament of the Bible. In 1617, Horatio Galasso published an incredible mind reading book that is still used today. In the late 1940s, Sydney and Leslie Piddington awed post-War London with amazing feats of mental telepathy. Since 1973 DARPA has been studying mind reading with EEG hooked to computers, using scientists at the University of Illinois, UCLA, Stanford Research Institute, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of Rochester. And today practitioners talk of empathy and emotional intelligence to avoid sounding nonscientific, but nonetheless mean mindreading.

The question is, why haven't these techniques been applied to marketing? Assuming that people are aware, either consciously or subconsciously, of their needs – including their needs for your products or services – why wouldn't you use mind reading to figure out which people on your list actually had a need, and thus avoid the cost of marketing to people who *didn't* have a need?

Assuming the same prevalence of need as described earlier, such a technique could reduce the cost-per-lead by 90% or more!

Avoid "Death by a Thousand Lists"

When you buy a list, or select a medium for your promotional program, you're making an assumption that the list contains valid prospects – but that the cost of finding them among the "junk" is unavoidable. With mind reading, however, you can eliminate waste, and target just the gems.