

BY LARRY WHITE, PRESIDENT, INTERLYNX SYSTEMS

## 4 Proven Strategies to Start Generating Free Sales Leads

EVERY BUSINESS KNOWS THAT A GOOD SALES LEAD WILL NOT ONLY OPEN DOORS FOR YOUR DISTRIBUTORS BUT WILL ALSO GENERATE NEW BUSINESS.

**I**n today's tough economy, traditional lead generation approaches are not only expensive but often ineffective. The cost to generate a good lead using traditional promotion, such as advertising and trade shows, can be cost prohibitive and most don't show a positive ROI.

We work with clients every day to identify sales leads from "free" sources that are often overlooked by even the best companies. Here are a few proven ways to drive better sales leads.

### Stop the Leaks

Sales lead leakage is a common problem for most companies. Prospective and existing customers are "touching" your business through a variety of mediums already. For example, there are calls to your tech support team for product recommendations or calls to customer service requesting the name and contact information for your distributors. Are you capturing those calls? Web leads from your "contact us" and "distributor locator" are growing in importance, but customers often report that their inquiries are either unanswered or bounced around within your organization without a follow up. Finally, studies show that up to 80% of sales leads from trade shows and other traditional media are not followed up by your local distributor or sales rep.

By simply "plugging the leaks" in these examples, you will discover you have been generating a large number of high impact leads all along.

### Track Joint Call Results

When your outside sales team makes joint calls on prospects with your distributors, many do not follow up with the distributor after they leave the territory. After days spent "blitzing" prospective customers with their local distributor, nothing becomes of all the interest and quotes they drummed up on behalf of the distributor. Most companies cannot realistically measure how much business those joint calls generated and their sale productivity.

Requiring a formal metric on quotes generated from each joint call is essential to determining the effectiveness of this very expensive use of your companies' sales resources.

### Measure Trial Product Results

We consistently see cases where trial product/equipment is used as a door opener to crack a new account, but the tracking of the equipment is informal and haphazard. Many times, test equipment never gets installed and the outcomes are often unknown even when it is installed.

By tracking the status of the trial equipment, you can begin to better accelerate new sales where the equipment is installed.



## Mine Your POS and Drop Ship Data

Point of Sale (POS) data is one of the most under-utilized resources for digging up quality sales leads. POS data can be used to drive sales opportunities through the following techniques (if you don't collect POS data, consider mining your drop ship data instead):

- **CROSS SELLING** – leverage all product lines to each customer
- **TARGET MARKETING** – focus on driving a value proposition based upon details mined from the database
- **CORPORATE SELLING** – focus selling resources on target companies across all division and locations
- **SERVICE REMINDERS** – develop a formal follow-up process to protect aftermarket service and spare parts
- **NEW PRODUCT LAUNCHES** – identify high potential accounts for new products and new product upgrades
- **MARKET RESEARCH** – enhance your understanding of customer segments and better meet their needs with products and services
- **DOWN CUSTOMERS** – identify accounts that have slowed their purchase from you

All of these are “free” ways to drive sales leads that can be tapped immediately.

Once these leads are developed, it is critical to have a good lead management process. A good lead system is simple to use for both the manufacturer and distributor, and will let you get high-quality leads to the right distributor or rep in your sales organization within 24 hours and track the feedback on each. This will help you to drive new sales,



better distributor “mindshare”, and measure ROI on each lead generation initiative.

Frank Lynn & Associates has formalized a strategic partnership with Interlynx Systems. Interlynx assists manufacturers using indirect sales channels to drive new sales leads and to measure their impact through their Lynx Trakker lead management system. Frank Lynn & Associates has arranged for a special six-month trial program that allows you try their system without any further commitment.

### SUMMARY

*To take advantage of the limited six-month trial program offered by Interlynx and learn more about their proven process for managing and tracking low cost leads, contact Karl Edmunds at [kedmunds@franklynn.com](mailto:kedmunds@franklynn.com) or call 312-558-4866.*

