

# Leads, Leads, Leads In These Economic Times

### Industry

Home Services

### Business Challenge

My fellow professionals take heed, we are in tough times and we need leads. Qualified leads. Credit worthy leads. Install buyers. I'd take 10 today please. If we could just order them up and get all that we need, like a deli counter.

It's just not that easy now is it!

However, spending a little more attention to the use of best practice in your marketing, specifically direct marketing, will pay LEAD DIVIDEND.

Here are the basics: Building a stronger and more successful business stems from a philosophy of building successful relationships. The relationships are primarily customer relationships, but certainly vendor and employee as well. Building relationships in today's economy is managed using some art and some science. This is where I come in. I'm a little bit of both. Furthermore, I've been delivering successful leads for companies over 15 years and am working with some of the largest users of direct marketing in the US. So, relationship marketing with a prospect or customer in today's society requires stealth execution and knowledge. First, know that these relationships are changing every day. Hence, consumer's economics, home values, incomes, job market, mortgage data, Loan to Value information on the household are all changing constantly. Or other demographics like: people having babies, having senior parents move in, teenager move out, or simply the movement of time throughout a household and its relationship with the owner—OUR LEAD.

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Knowing how to communicate with our lead and what he or she would like us to say is the ART. The SCIENCE is managing the results of each artistic attempt, statistically to know if it makes money and how to best leverage the economic information.

Let me break it down like this: The use of your direct marketing budget has many options. Right now, many home service businesses use standard shot gun style broadcasting, hitting zip codes or even age of home as a list selection criteria. Then this information is married with a corporate endorsed letter and we hope we get our leads. (Hope, however, is not on any of our management teams, so let's take an analytical approach).

Consider this- we know the exact age of home, based on public record. Public record is available giving the marketer access to other pertinent data such as credit worthy household based on credit based data. Smart marketers also review household trigger information, specifically, new mover, new homeowner, new mortgage, new credit line and more. All of these elements contribute to statistical probability models, giving us an insight into the science of forecast and expected rates of returns. No Hope, but Science.

Next step is to talk to this premium prospect in what is known as cycle mail. Cycle mail is talking TO our premium prospective client NOT AT them. Think about it, personally, when I receive concentric or ongoing communication from a prospective vendor, at my home address, I appreciate it when they realize they are not getting my attention and then do something very different for me to pay attention. This communication process gets attention because it does not undermine the intelligence of your prospective client it's but affirms them that if/when they choose to call you, you will be competent. That's really all we want as consumers.

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Building a cycle mail plan for each of your businesses requires information, diligence and knowledge. The information is being able to properly qualify your prospective clients. Diligence is the ongoing system of execution using best practice. Knowledge is the historical information that you are using the right message at the right time to the right prospective client. It might seem like a lot to take in, but consider this: Most of the information that is used to manage cycle mail is done by information technology. Building business rules combined with competent information technology- PRODUCES LEADS!

You might be using direct marketing to generate leads. If so, check in on your information. Consider the information above to be a reason to be smarter in these economic times. Ask yourself if you have a single household communication strategy. Using the cycles of the year to change and manage the details to who has received which offer, such as: Jan-March- frustrated contractor, April – June – Test Drive July- Sept Rebate is the simplified approach. But consider an alternative- “Dear Mr. Homeowner (using actual name), we have sent you 10 pieces of mail with offers and you have not responded” Now you’re paying attention to the message. “We would like make this final offer, before we respect your privacy and the hopefulness of our relationship” And here’s the delivery-“FREE, Complementary, for you only... (Insert here)”. Now, some won’t respond (of course most). But more will statistically than the regular solicitation. Take it from my 15 years of experience, it works!

These, non responding folks, are now put into a temporary holding bin (information technology)for use later. We decide that in 3, 6, 9, 12 months from now when we haven’t talked to this specific household, we now attempt to get their attention again and we say “welcome back”.

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### About LMS, INC.

As a leading provider of direct marketing services, LMS offers many valuable tools to assist in accomplishing goals and objectives. Based on the simple belief of providing unparalleled service, LMS has proven that a combination of accuracy and results are invaluable to any marketing campaign.

Over the past 15 years, we have refined our business methodologies and broadened our product offerings to meet the dynamic requirements of the DM industry. At the same time, we adhere to our original philosophy of providing great customer service with a commitment to quality and timely delivery.

The LMS philosophy is to ***“Treat people with respect and courtesy – have their goals in mind and provide them the finest service available; not forsaking a single detail. Use knowledgeable, resourceful, specialists to produce an overall more efficient and effective campaign.”***

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As consumers we have a cognitive recognition that the message and brand is back. Information across direct marketers (the science) tells us that our ROI on this type of strategy is consistently almost 100% greater than using traditional broadcast direct marketing.

These strategies and tactics are commonly used within the scope of direct marketing. These business practices, when well integrated with postage and address quality awareness drive QUALIFIED LEADS. As many as possible.

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