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WHITEPAPER

Does it make sense to leave voicemail messages?

5 things you can do to get better at sales voicemail

5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO GET BETTER AT SALES VOICEMAIL

You hear it all the time.” Internet has changed the way people interact. The sales methods of earlier years will no longer work”. Is that true? May be, partially. There are many tools of the pre-internet years which are still effective. One of them is the underrated voicemail, that even today, can boost the success rate of your sales team.

Studies have shown that voicemails have retained their ability to outreach and help convert leads:

- Leads were 30 percent more likely to convert if they had received a pair of voicemails messages instead of, say, six missed calls.

Leaving a handful of messages was a distinct turnoff.

Here are five things that you can do to make sales voicemails work better for your team.

1

BE BRIEF, COVER ALL ESSENTIALS

Keep the following in mind, while crafting your message:

- A long message is a recipe for failure** - Prospects just don't have the patience or interest to listen to lengthy voice messages from unknown phone numbers. Many cell phones today, display both phone number and the length of voice messages
- Ultra-short messages do not work either** - A seven second offering from a phone number not on the contacts list will be mistaken for a pocket-call. It will have no chances of reaching its target audience
- The happy medium is somewhere in between** – The happy medium is a voice message that is long enough to communicate something valuable yet does not waste any of the prospect's time. **According to studies, that happy medium is 20-30 seconds.**

2

BEGIN WITH A BRIEF VALUE PROPOSITION

The best starting point is not your name or your company's name, but an extremely brief value proposition that gets the attention of your client. Something intriguing that clients won't be able to ignore or reject because of the value it brings to them. If you find that unusual, consider these:

- Voice messages are different from standard professional calls** - When you call someone, professionally, you start off by introducing yourself and the company you represent. This is probably a sound strategy as most people would feel uncomfortable talking to someone who hides his or her identity.

With voice messages the approach has to be different. Listening to a voice message is not nearly as intimate as having a real conversation. So, you can allow yourself to defer the introduction and focus instead on the value you can create.

- Why it helps to defer the introduction** - Voicemails that start off by stating the name of a company risk getting axed at the very beginning. The potential client will either know your company and act on his initial assumption that you have nothing to offer or the client won't know your company which makes it that much easier to just ignore the voicemail and move on.

3

BE SPECIFIC AND CUSTOMIZE FOR VALUE

Voicemails require investment of the receiver's time, with a purpose to get the receiver to respond. Brevity of time and the lack of intimacy put a premium on relevance of the message.

- (i) **Customize for value through a narrow categorization** - Voicemails require investment of Customer's time. It will not be worthwhile for the Customer to listen, unless you customize value propositions. An in depth understanding of the prospect may not be necessary for a voicemail but making a narrow categorization is really important. An insight into what problems the prospect is facing could be the starting point to trigger relevant questions and references.
- (ii) **Be specific to make the prospect respond** - Typically, the voice messages that fall flat haven't been able to make the client feel the slightest bit of responsibility to respond. Not a responsibility to you, as the seller, but a responsibility to investigate what sounds like a potentially attractive opportunity. If you can be specific with your voice message you can make your client experience that responsibility.

4

STAY AWAY FROM SELLING

You cannot close a sale in a voice message. All you have is 30 seconds or less, of one-way communication. So, you shouldn't even try. What should you do?

- (i) **Focus on value for Customer** - Use value statements. Without sounding smug, hint at the success that your solution achieved for clients in similar situations.
- (ii) **Earn your Customer's attention and time** - You are not aiming for a signed contract but a returned call or perhaps, a meeting. Essentially, you would want the voicemail to get the client to spend time on you.

5

KEEP YOUR VOICE NORMAL

Traditionally salespeople have been conditioned to take on an overly excited tone of voice when engaging potential clients on the telephone. The idea behind it must have been to communicate enthusiasm to the prospect. Unfortunately, it was never that simple and Customer studies have proven that 'enthusiastic salesperson' is actually not a very popular character among clients. A high-pitched or artificial tone of voice might suggest that the person making the call is quite uncomfortable with the situation, which reflects poorly on whatever he or she is about to say. The client might also think that the message is rehearsed, repetitive and impersonal right down to modulation. Just remember:

- (i) **Be your normal, natural self** – Stick with the normal, natural tone of voice. Focus on substance over form.
- (ii) **Turn mistakes into opportunities** - If you make a mistake while recording your voice message don't fret. It doesn't have to be perfect. In fact, you could use the mistake or mispronounced word to make a humorous comment about yourself. That can lighten up the message and make it stand out. It can also communicate to the client that you want to establish rapport for a longer-term relationship

