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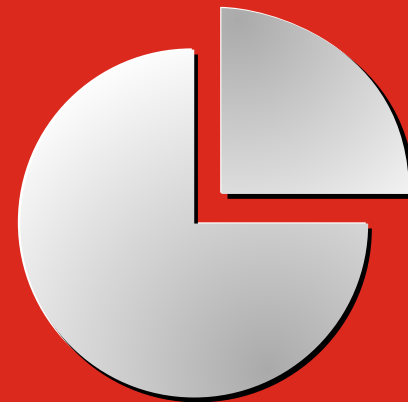
Tracking Phone Leads:
The Missing Piece
of Marketing Automation

Executive Summary

Marketing organizations today – including direct response and lead generation companies – are gaining tremendous value from marketing automation. When implemented and used correctly, conventional marketing automation tools like Marketo, Eloqua, and Silverpop enable marketing teams to:

- Hand off more qualified leads to sales reps at a lower cost

- Better understand which campaigns are working, so you can optimize spending

- Get credit for the impact your campaigns have on pipeline and revenue

But while conventional marketing automation tools can track leads from web forms, they simply don't work if a lead picks up the phone and calls you. Your web site, emails, Google ads, landing pages, TV and radio spots, and billboard advertisements could be driving high-quality sales calls, but how would you know? They won't show up in conventional marketing automation reports.

That's where voice-based marketing automation comes in. Using a voice-based marketing automation solution, you can create closed-loop marketing where every phone lead is captured, responded to properly, scored, nurtured, and tracked through the sales process. You get a complete understanding of which campaigns are working and how they are impacting pipeline and revenue.

This white paper introduces you to voice-based marketing automation and explains its value to marketers and lead generation teams.

Why Is Marketing Automation So Popular?

The benefits of marketing automation are well established. According to research conducted by the Aberdeen Group,[1] when done correctly marketing automation can:

• Increase your sales conversion rate by driving more qualified leads to your sales team

• Decrease your cost per lead by as much as 85%

• Increase revenue earned per sales representative

• Increase the value of the leads already in your database up to 23%

Conventional marketing automation tools like Marketo, Eloqua, and Silverpop can do an excellent job generating online leads using email campaigns, web registration forms, and web site usage monitoring. They can automatically score leads based on your specific criteria and the prospect's activity on your web site.

Once a lead is deemed ready, the marketing automation tool can pass it to your sales team via automated email or CRM integration. Lower-scoring leads can be entered into customizable nurturing campaigns until they are ready for sales to follow up.

Marketing can then use built-in reporting tools to learn which online campaigns are working and how they are impacting the sales pipeline. You can now base your marketing messages and campaign decisions on real data, not hunches. And you are able to have more valuable conversations with your executive team or corporate clients around how you are impacting their revenue.

The Missing Piece: Phone Leads

What's missing with conventional marketing automation tools is voice. Inbound phone leads are often the most valuable to sales (see Figure 1), but most marketing teams aren't able to track how these leads are generated. They can't attribute them to a specific campaign, advertisement, or marketing vehicle – and can't take credit for the revenue they generate.
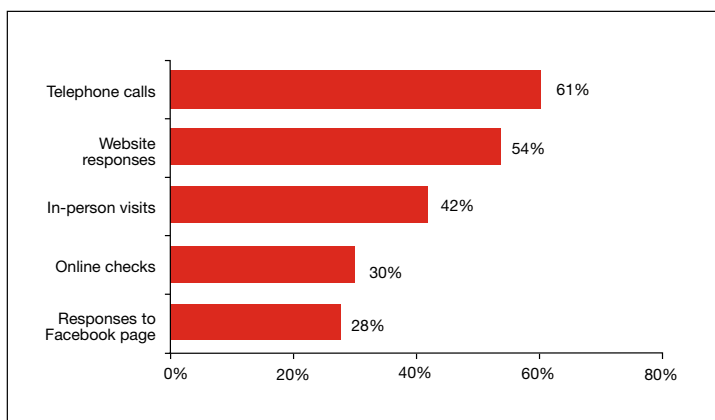
This can be a serious problem for direct response and lead generation companies with pipeline and revenue targets. But it's also an issue for any marketing team trying to decide how best to allocate marketing funds. How do you know what's really working?

Why phone leads matter

Not all leads are created equal. Just ask any sales manager which types of leads are most successful at driving revenue.

While white paper downloads and webinar registrations are excellent vehicles for generating leads, those prospects are often just beginning their research. More than likely they are only kicking the tires and aren't ready for a sales manager to engage with them.

Inbound phone leads are different. Someone who calls you is often further along the buying process. They have specific questions they need answered in order to make their decision and need to engage with a sales rep right away. They usually won't purchase without that conversation.

Figure 1: Larger percentage of SMBs rate telephone leads as "excellent" or "good" – more than any other lead type [2]

If you market a complex product, phone leads are golden and often have the shortest sales cycles. But even if your product is sold primarily online and has an extremely brief sales cycle, phone leads are still highly prized. Research shows nearly 80% of online shoppers are interested in help from a real person.[3]

Being able to identify who those prospects are and connect them over the phone with a sales manager is often the difference between winning and losing a sale.

Why Are Phone Calls so Important in Sales?

77% of online adults say they would be interested in getting help from a real person before making certain online purchases.

82% say there have been times when they have not been able to get help from a real person.

58% have a question that cannot be answered by information on the web site.

52% of those who have not always been able to get the help they needed from a real person say it has affected their decision to not purchase the product.

Source: IMShopping and Harris Interactive Survey, August 2009

Track Every Phone Lead to Its Source with Voice-Based Marketing Automation

That's where voice-based marketing automation comes in. Voice-based marketing automation solutions enable you to accurately attribute your phone leads (and the pipeline and revenue they generate) to specific ads and marketing campaigns.

Truly understand which ads and campaigns are working

Despite the higher value of phone leads, many marketers are reluctant to include a prominent "call me now" call to action in online campaigns like emails, Google PPC landing pages, and web site pages. They can't track – and get credit for – the calls, pipeline, and revenue that such a CTA would generate. Conventional marketing automation and PPC tracking tools simply do not have the right technology.

The same holds true for tracking calls from offline advertising like TV and radio spots, billboards, newspaper ads, and direct mail pieces. If you can't tie phone leads to specific promotional assets, how do you know which ones are working and which ones are wasting your budget?

To properly track phone leads, successful marketing teams use voice-based marketing automation. It enables you to track the source of every call that your campaigns and promotional vehicles generate. You can see exactly which web sites, ads, collateral, mailers, and PPC keywords are bringing in phone leads, and which aren't.

Voice-based marketing automation solutions will give you the confidence to include "call me now" calls to action on everything you do. You will drive more phone leads, and every one of them will be tracked back to your work.

How phone lead tracking works

Voice-based marketing automation solutions assign a unique local, toll-free, or vanity phone number to each of your campaign assets, depending on your needs. When a lead calls one of those numbers, the solution knows exactly which keyword, ad, email, or web page they are coming from.

Sotheby's Uses Call Tracking to Reinvest 30% of Budget on Ads that Work

Sotheby's International Realty specializes in selling luxury properties. They were spending millions of dollars on print advertising without having a clear understanding of its effectiveness.

Using Ifbyphone's tracking, Sotheby's International Realty reduced their newspaper advertising spend by 30% without affecting lead flow. They were able to use Ifbyphone data to renegotiate advertising rates. Plus, some offices reported sales increases of 25% year over year.

"We used Ifbyphone to get print ads in line with where they should be," said Brad Nelson, VP or Marketing at Sotheby's. "We reinvested these dollars into other advertising mediums that increased our listing's total exposure."

Each call, along with all the tracking data, can be routed on to your sales reps, who can see exactly where they came from, their caller ID, and any relevant information and history on the lead (if they already exist in your CRM system). Alternatively, you can choose to route calls using a number of other options depending on the nature of your campaign. Some options include routing calls:

- To an IVR (interactive voice response) menu to ask them qualifying questions, with the high-scoring leads automatically transferred to a sales agent

- To a virtual call center that can send calls to agents wherever they are and on whatever device they use (cell phone, landline, Skype, etc.)

- To agents based on their performance or skillset

- To specific agents based on the call's time of day, location, product interest, and more

- To several agents simultaneously on a first-answer basis

- To agents in a specific order so calls go to the best available option

Access real-time phone lead data on every campaign

Voice-based marketing automation solutions have web-based reporting tools that let you see phone lead data in real time. You can configure the data any way you want to create meaningful reports on which campaigns are driving phone leads. Plus you can integrate the data with your other reporting and lead management tools, like Google Analytics and Salesforce.com.

Make smarter marketing decisions

The end result is a complete understanding of how your campaigns are generating pipeline and revenue. And that not only enables you to reinvest budget in the best performing campaigns, but also demonstrate to your executives or corporate clients how marketing is helping their bottom line.

Beacon Technologies Sees Over 400% Higher ROI with Call Tracking

Beacon Technologies is a web technology and marketing agency. Beacon uses Ifbyphone as the critical link between online marketing spend and offline phone call conversions.

For one client, Beacon used unique phone numbers from Ifbyphone to track call activity from sites like Lawyers.com, FindLaw.com, Google Local, and social media outlets. They now understood which channels were working and adjusted spending accordingly. The end result was a significant increase in ROI.

"A lot of companies don't just get leads that take place on the web. Consumers often pick up the phone and call," said Brad Henry, Director of Web Marketing at Beacon. "It's important to know where that lead originated, particularly if the web is involved, in order to optimize marketing initiatives moving forward."

Voice-Based Marketing Automation Is More than Phone Lead Tracking

Just as conventional marketing automation tools like Marketo, Eloqua, and Silverpop do more than track online leads, voice-based marketing automation solutions do more than track sales calls. They enable you to generate, score, nurture, and route high-quality phone leads to the right sales person at the right moment.

Convert more web site visitors into phone leads

Prospects are browsing your company's site – or your clients' sites – all the time. They may have specific questions that, if answered right away, could be the difference between a sale and the visitor leaving for a competitor's site. To get answers, they often fill out a web form to have someone in sales contact them, with that lead being emailed to a rep or logged in a CRM system.

But how long will it take for a sales rep to respond? That email could be just one of many and get lost in a sea of white paper or webinar download alert messages. Or if the rep isn't logged into CRM, they may take hours, even days, to give the lead a call.

According to Leads360, a sale is 22 times more likely to happen when you make contact within the first five minutes.[4] Waiting even ten minutes dramatically decreases your chances of converting that lead to a sale. What's more, research shows that leads that fill out forms with multiple vendors are far more likely to purchase from the first one that calls them (see Figure 2).[5] Speed really matters.

Voice-based marketing automation has tools that make it easy for prospects on your site to talk to the right sales rep right away. Using voice-based marketing automation, you can generate immediate connections from any online form, including "contact us" and content download forms.
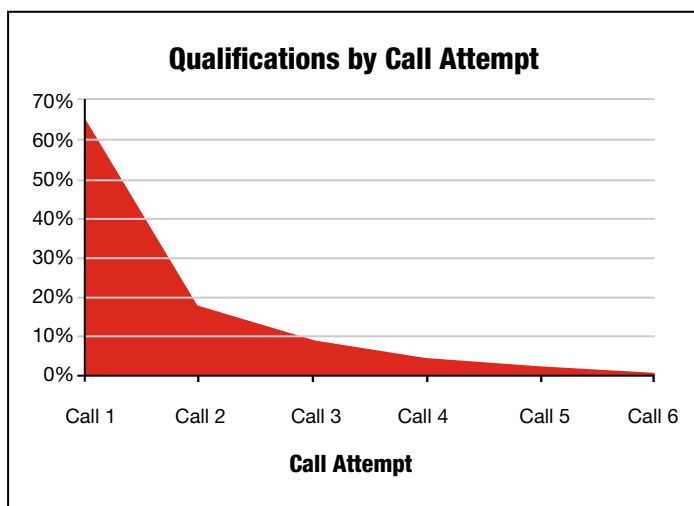
Qualifications by Call Attempt

Figure 2. 65% of leads that convert purchase from the first vendor that calls them

Here's how it works: Whenever a prospect completes your form and clicks submit, the system will immediately call your sales rep (as well as send them an email) and "whisper" the lead information in their ear (see Figure 3). If the rep decides to accept the call, the system will call the lead and connect both parties over the phone. It can be a very effective strategy for reducing web site abandonment, decreasing lead contact time, and increasing lead conversion.

You can also configure the system to call a sales rep on their work phone first, then their cell phone, then their home phone, and so on until they are reached. So even when a rep is away from their desk or out of the office, the system can still connect them with a hot lead.

Plus, you can set up rules for which rep gets called first when leads come in. If that first rep isn't available, the call can be routed down a predefined list until one is found.

Figure 3. Voice-based marketing automation can call (and email) sales reps when a lead downloads a form.

Generate leads and drive revenue with IVR

Chances are you are doing regular email blasts to generate leads and communicate with customers. Email is still the most popular vehicle for outbound marketing.

But email's popularity is also its biggest drawback. Your email is just one of hundreds your prospects receive each day. It's very easy for your messages to get lost and ignored. That's why marketing organizations also use voice-based marketing automation in the form of IVR as part of their outbound strategy.

An outbound IVR is an automated and interactive voice broadcast. It asks the recipient a series of questions you customize that can be answered via speech or phone keypad. The system can then take a specific action based on each recipient's responses.

It's an efficient way to cut through the clutter of email inboxes and reach your target audience. Of course, all outbound IVRs must comply with voice-broadcasting regulations. It's no different than email blasts having to comply with CAN-SPAM laws. You can learn more about

DPS Uses Voice-Based Marketing Automation to Drive Revenue and Cut Costs

Dealer Product Services, Inc. is a provider of marketing solutions to over 1,600 automotive retail clients. DPS wanted to integrate voice broadcasting into its clients' CRM systems to automate phone calls to advertise warranty renewals, oil changes, and other services.

"We chose Ifbyphone due to their flexibility and their programming expertise," said Tim O'Neal, President and CEO of DPS. "They have helped us integrate our systems, streamline processes, and automate all of our call delivery."

Using Ifbyphone, DPS was able to generate more revenue to their clients while realizing a cost savings of 20%.

those IVR regulations on the Ifbyphone web site at
http://public.ifbyphone.com/more/ftc-fcc-regulations/.

Some examples of how marketers are using IVR today include:

- Registering customers for local events and workshops

- Raising awareness of political causes and campaigns

- Reminding customers to reorder products and processing their payments over the phone

- Generating revenue by collecting outstanding balances

- Screening leads and connecting qualified prospects directly with sales

- Reducing customer "no-shows" by confirming appointments

- Ensuring customers are at home before delivering goods

- Surveying customers on their satisfaction with products and services

And just as conventional marketing automation tools enable you to manage, automate, and report on email blasts, voice-based marketing automation solutions do the same for IVR campaigns. You can configure, schedule, broadcast, and report on the success of your IVRs in real time using a web-based portal. You can even integrate the data with your CRM system.

Automatically score phone leads before passing to sales

Driving high-quality leads is the goal of any lead generation campaign. But not every lead is ready to go to a sales rep for follow up. And forcing sales to waste time contacting unqualified leads only frustrates reps and negatively impacts their views on marketing.

You can use conventional marketing automation tools to score online leads in a variety of ways, such as asking qualifying questions on a registration form or tracking web visitor behavior. But these techniques don't work for inbound phone leads.

With voice-based marketing automation, leads that call a number on your ad or web page can go to an IVR menu where they are asked the necessary qualifying questions. If a caller scores high enough, the system can transfer them immediately to a sales rep. If not, they can be routed to a voicemail box to hear a custom recording and be given the option of leaving their own message.

Conclusion

When a high-scoring lead is transferred to sales, the reps can see important data on each caller, including the ad they responded to and how they answered the qualifying questions. The system can also "whisper" information about the caller to the rep before connecting them. Arming sales with this information enables them to have better conversations with the right leads at the right time.

Marketing teams and lead generation companies are using voice-based marketing automation to see which ads and activities generate phone leads. It enables them to better understand how every campaign is impacting pipeline and revenue, so they can accurately allocate spending and get credit for every phone lead.

Also, when paired with your other reporting systems (i.e., conventional marketing automation tools, CRM systems, and Google Adwords/Analytics), voice-based marketing automation enables truly closed-loop marketing. Now every online and offline lead is captured, scored, nurtured, routed properly, and tracked through the sales process. Nothing is missed.

Sources:

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2. BIA/Kelsey report on Call-Based Ads, May 29, 2012

3. IMShopping and Harris Interactive Survey, August 2009

4. http://www.leads360.com/products/lead-distribution-routing

5. LeadQual, "Rapid Response to Internet Leads Drives Conversions"

Next Steps

Call Ifbyphone today at (855) 882-5441 to learn how to track phone leads from your campaigns. You can also learn how successful marketers are using voice-based marketing automation to generate revenue and cut costs at **www.ifbyphone.com.**

>ifbyphone®

About Ifbyphone

Ifbyphone manages, measures, and automates voice conversations with your customers and prospects. These conversations cannot be managed using marketing automation or CRM software alone. Without Ifbyphone's voice-based marketing automation platform, catching these interactions is like fishing with a hole in the bottom of your net – leads and information fall out.

The Ifbyphone suite is a set of software-as-a-service applications including ad tracking, lead distribution, hosted IVR, and voice broadcasting. Companies of all sizes and across all industries use Ifbyphone, including direct response, health care, real estate, home services, and lead generation. Learn more at **www.ifbyphone.com**.

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