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**Follow Up And Turn Prospects Into Clients**

**By Angela Booth**

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How long does it take to get a client? First, the client has to become aware that we exist, and then that we can solve his problems with our products or services. That growth of awareness is a slow process. It takes time.

Let's say you've just sent out a batch of 200 letters, introducing yourself to businesses in your state.

You wait, happily anticipating at least a few phone calls.

Nothing.

You must follow up on the 200 letters you sent out. They were simply an introduction.

If someone tells me they sent out 200 letters, I know they should have managed to collect from two to five new clients from the exercise. No excuses. Marketing is a numbers game, and worst case scenario, if you send out 200 letters, and follow up diligently, you will get at least two new clients.

Where most businesses let themselves down is in the following up process. They either don't follow up at all, or they follow up in a hit or miss fashion. They fail to even attempt to build a relationship with prospective clients. It's amazing that some of

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these businesses survive at all.

I'm as guilty of this as everyone else. I get busy too, and let follow-up activities slip. However, if I send out a new mailing, I make a real effort to follow the process through, because I know if I don't, I've just wasted the time and the postage it took to make that mailing.

=> How to follow up

Here's how to follow up:

1. Have a marketing goal for each month. For example, my marketing goal this month is to get five new clients, and follow up with clients I haven't heard from for a year. It's important to have this kind of over-arching marketing goal each month, because it helps you to gain perspective. Each mailing, each phone call and each e-mail message isn't as important as the overall picture, the amount of persistent marketing you do each day, week, and month.
2. The process begins. You send out your mailing of 200 letters.
3. A week later, follow up with phone calls. Making all the calls, including getting back to the people who didn't answer the phone because they were in a meeting, on vacation, or whatever will take you another week.
4. Send out material to those who requested it.
5. A week later, follow up with the people you sent material to.
6. A month after the initial mailing, send another mailing to everyone from the original 200 who expressed any interest at all, no matter how slight that interest was.
7. A month after that, send out another mailing, or make phone calls to ALL the prospects who were interested from the first mailing. This means that you've contacted the responsives from the 200 you sent the original mailing to at least THREE times.
8. Six months after the first mailing (it's now three months since they heard from you) follow up with another mailing.
9. Three months later, follow up again.

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How many clients will you get from that original mailing of 200? My guess, over 12 months, you'll get at least TEN. Twenty would be excellent. (Remember that from two to five is the very least you'll get.)

Now, let's imagine that over the next two years, each of those ten clients spends \$500 with you. Conservatively, that's \$5000 from one mailing to 200 prospects.

It's also \$5000 you won't earn unless you work on building relationships by following up with your prospects. So when you send a mailing, remember that you need to follow-up. That's where the money is.

\*\*\*Resource box: if using, please include\*\*\*

When your words sound good, you sound good. Author and copywriter Angela Booth crafts words for your business --- words to sell, educate or persuade. Free ezines: <http://www.digital-e.biz/>

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### **Organization Tips – How to Set Up Your Database**

**By Lorraine Pirih**

What's in a Name?

Everything.

What do you do with all the contacts you make in your organisation? Do you:

Collect business cards and throw them in the bottom of your desk drawer hoping one day one of these people will ring and do business with you? Have any system for keeping information on your clients and prospects? Do you enter all their details into your database so that you can communicate with them in the future?

Do you enter all your clients into the database with information about what they've bought from you and conversations you've had with them? I'm astounded that so many business people keep no comprehensive records of their clients, general contacts and prospects.

Your database is a goldmine. It is the most important item in your business.

A great system will be able to do the following:

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Generate a letter, fax or email directly from the program to the contact.

Record all contact details and any communication you have had with that person including phone conversations, meetings, emails, promotional information, and sales made.

Be able to select any particular group of people, ie. everyone in a specific area, all your "A" clients, prospects, strategic alliances. A reminder system for follow-ups.

Which Database Is Right For You?

Well, that depends on your organisation. Now there are various databases, eg Microsoft's Access and Lotus' Approach. However specific contact management software can offer far more features, including a "hotlist" to remind you when to follow up. These applications include:

ACT

Goldmine

Maximizer

I personally know very successful businesses that use ACT and Maximizer. At The Office Organiser we use Maximizer which we find very good.

Speak with successful people in your field and ask them what they use.

You may find that there are specific databases that have been designed

for your industry.

The key when choosing one of these systems is to have a look at their functions and get someone who knows all about the software to set it up and train you in its use.

You could also delegate/outsouce the task of the initial keying in of data to another team member in your organisation or even a secretarial service or temp.

A special note for Salespeople

If you are an employee and your organisation has no database, I suggest you invest in one. It will be the wisest business investment you can make.

Most salespeople promise everything and unfortunately do not deliver. They rush from one appointment to another and forget to follow through on their promises.

If they had some way of keeping in touch with clients and prospects via using their database as an effective marketing and follow up tool, they would increase their sales dramatically.

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Lorraine Pirihi

Lorraine Pirihi is Australia's Personal Productivity Specialist and Leading Life Coach. Her business The Office Organiser specialises in showing small business owners and managers, how to get organised at work so they can have a life! Lorraine is also a dynamic speaker and has produced many products including "How to Survive and Thrive at Work!"

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