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**Is Cold Calling Dead?**

**By Frank J. Rumbauskas, Jr.**

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Is cold calling dead? And if laws are being passed to put it to rest once and for all, how do we generate business from now on?

Opinions on the subject vary greatly depending on the background of the individual. For example, most of the old-timers are vigilant in preaching their belief that the only possible way to succeed in the world of selling is to make no less than fifty calls each and every day. On the other hand, younger salespeople tend to become frustrated with this rather quickly and begin looking for more innovative ways to generate business.

I was just reminded of how ingrained this cold calling belief is. I spoke with a friend who left a sales position with a major merchant processing bank only a few weeks after starting. The reason? He was required to make a minimum of 400 cold calls each and every week and to document his activity with business cards. He is highly experienced and knows how to generate business without knocking on 400 doors per week and decided to discuss the strategies that have worked for him in the past with his managers. Their response? This is how we've done it for forty years and we're not about to change.

That response, in my opinion, is the reason we're seeing record business bankruptcies today. The world and our economy have changed and are breaking into bold, uncharted territory. But the management of most business organizations insists on doing things the old way, even though the old way produces less and less results as time goes on.

The concept of "Permission Marketing" is slowly but surely gaining popularity as the old idea of "Interruption Marketing" becomes less efficient and more wasteful. There are several reasons why cold calling in particular has become less effective as we move further into the Information Age. It destroys your status as a business equal. It forces you to spend time with unqualified prospects while the qualified ones are buying from your competition. It annoys people and is increasingly considered to be rude and disrespectful. Moreover, it may now be illegal (and in several states it's been illegal for quite some time). But, most importantly, it destroys sales peoples attitudes.

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Where is the good news in all of this? Well, the great news is that if you begin using new, innovative, "Information Age" methods for prospecting, you'll be miles ahead of your competitors who are wasting their time annoying people with cold calls. In this age of the Internet and vast communication networks, why on earth would anyone knock on doors or make cold phone calls to look for business?

Think of the power at your fingertips: there are literally dozens of ways to use the Web and e-mail to let the idea of Permission Marketing do its magic. Allow customers to raise their hands and let you know they're interested. Begin finding, implementing and reaping the benefits of this bold, new Information Age we are in. Your competitors will be the ones standing in bankruptcy court and explaining their "do-not-call" violations to the government while you are happily taking orders.

Frank Rumbauskas is the author of *Cold Calling Is A Waste Of Time: Sales Success In The Information Age*. He is the founder of FJR Advisors, LLC, which publishes training materials that educate salespeople on how to generate business without cold calling. For more information, please visit <http://www.nevercoldcall.com>

### **Too Cold Call Or Not To Cold Call For Your Small Business**

**By Brandt Stohr**

I hate cold-calling. In fact, there are a lot of horrible pains I would suffer before cold-calling someone. And I think that many small business owners feel the way I do.

It's true that there are a number of means of small business marketing - direct mail, personal letters, advertising, networking, public relations, internet marketing - and alas, cold calling is one of them. When it comes to small business marketing - any business activity, really - at some point you just have to buckle down and do what you gotta' do if you want to succeed. But is cold-calling one of those small business marketing activities that small business owners simply have to suffer through in order to succeed in business?

Some experts say, loudly and with vigor: "Yes!" Others say, "Absolutely not."

The truth about the value of cold-calling as part of your small business marketing strategy is that it's somewhere in between, and it depends on your particular business. If, for example, you retail small-dollar items through a catalog and on the Internet, cold-calling your potential customers probably isn't cost-effective: if each customer might spend \$10 with you, spending 20 minutes or more on the phone with that prospect doesn't make sense. If, on the other hand, you're a manufacturer of small-dollar items that you sell to retailers who may spend \$1,000 or more buying your products in bulk, then picking up the phone and making a call may well be worth your while.

If you decide to make cold-calling a part of your small business marketing strategy, there are a few things you can do to maximize the chances that your cold call will turn into a new client:

Cold-calling small business marketing tip #1: Take initiative. When you ask the potential client at the

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other end of the line "When would be a good time to meet?" you open the door for them to say "Never!" Instead, ask "How would next Tuesday at 11:00 work for you to meet?"

Cold-calling small business marketing tip #2: Approach the call with the idea that your goal is to help your prospective customer. Resist the urge to make the call about you - what you do, what you want. Instead, make the call about the prospect at the other end of the line. Ask the prospect about his needs and wants. Then suggest that you can help - and if he meets you next Tuesday at 11:00 you'll tell him how.

Cold-calling small business marketing tip #3: Get to the point. The prospect at the other end of the line is going to feel, right off the bat, that you're wasting her time. So, by all means, be brief. Be clear and concise. Avoid saying "um."

Cold-calling small business marketing tip #4: Ask questions. This tip reflects back to small business marketing tip #2, making the call about the prospect, not about you. Asking questions also helps steer you to the right information and will help you tailor your sales pitch - for you to deliver at the appointment.

Cold-calling small business marketing tip #5: Save the sales pitch. Effective cold-calling isn't about selling your product or service. It's about getting an appointment so that you can sell your product or

service in person.

As with any small business marketing strategy, the best way to figure out if it works is to try it. Make enough cold calls so that you can accurately measure their effectiveness. Then compare that measurement to your other small business marketing tools.

Brandt Stohr, The Small Business Marketing Genius has brought startup one man operations to billion dollar corporations by using creative marketing techniques rather than investors and capital. Brandt Stohr has helped hundreds of entrepreneurs to get their small businesses exploding with sales without the use of expensive traditional marketing techniques. For more information and a free report on the ten deadly mistakes most small businesses are still making visit Brandt Stohr's site at

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