

Special Report: How to Get New Business From Your Best, and Easiest Sources

By Art Sobczak

Want new business? Need new business?

Dumb questions, I know. Kudos to the rare organization that has all it can handle (or claims they do), but for most everyone else, we need new customers and sales to grow. Or to just stay even by replacing the customers we lose.

As for getting that new business, I've always been amused by the arguments of the "cold calling is dead crowd" and those who jump on the bandwagon of the newest shiny, trendy sales enablement object or "social selling" (isn't talking to people "social"?), or "Sales 3.0" system. They tend to ignore what has worked since the beginning of commerce itself: common sense, understanding of basic human behavior, a sound sales and messaging process, a plan, and the desire and commitment to execute it.

You don't need to go outside of your computer (or file cabinet, if you still have one) to get new business.

The potential business that resides within the existing database of most organizations, and sales reps, is staggering. There are dollars just waiting to be skimmed from opportunities where the foundations and structures are already in place. In the real estate world they'd be known as "fixer uppers."



Let's look at where you can meet your quota for new business, why it's wise to drill into this untapped oil well, and the wrong and right ways to approach them.

Infrequent Customers

These are the companies and individuals buying just a time or two per year, or whatever your company deems your "lowest level" customers by volume. Keep in mind your lower-tier categorization of them is not a reflection of their potential, just their history with you. Read that again and let it sink in. Many of these could be spending huge amounts with your competitors. Or with you.

Why are they buying just infrequently? Why are they not buying more of what you sell? Why are they not buying everything you sell? Look in the mirror. It's not their responsibility to ask you about how else you can help them. They likely won't take the time to explore the layers of your product or service offerings to discover other things they can buy from you. That's a salesperson's job, and when they don't do it, buyers go elsewhere. Just like water flows downhill, money flows to ease of buying, and perceived value.

To simplify this point, you and I do the same thing with our personal and business purchases. We all do, or have done business with a variety of



companies that could have provided us with more, and more regularly—even becoming loyal die-hard fans—if they took the initiative to ask questions, make recommendations, let us know they wanted our business, and followed up.

Just over the past year I've done business with contractors for plumbing, air conditioning, my sprinkler system, landscaping,

outdoor lighting, electrical work, interior and exterior painting, major general outdoor contractor work, window cleaning, housekeeping, and two handyman jobs. (If you made the conclusion I'm not very handy, that's an understatement.) I know as a fact that many of these people and organizations offer services other than what I used them for, that I bought elsewhere. But because they didn't make an attempt to find out about what else they could help me with—and subsequently stay in touch with me—I didn't contact them. I usually go with who is convenient, referred, or who comes to mind as "the guy that I use for my ____."

Two strategies here for with this group:

First, don't let customers **become infrequent** unless they buy from you in just an isolated instance. But even those actually aren't that common if you think about it. I'm having a difficult time thinking of an example where someone would buy from an organization but never ever have the need to do so again.

I bought a specialty, high-end digital meat thermometer (a Thermapen... every serious cook needs one) years ago. I didn't buy from them again until I wanted to give a couple as gifts. I thought that's all they sold since they didn't stay in touch in any way. I realized when I dug into their site that they sell all kinds of cool specialty cooking gadgets that I buy often, and am a real sucker for. The point here is, a first purchase from you is your opportunity to begin a long-term relationship so that they become a frequent, great customers. But YOU have to get in motion after the initial purchase.

Second, back to the ones you have now who ARE infrequent for whatever reason. What you do not want to do is call and say,

"Yeah, just checking in with you. You bought a gazmoda from us last year and just wanted to see if there's anything else you need."

That's lazy, and ineffective. The answer to that is likely, "You're with who?" Or, "We're all set."

These need to be treated like a typical Smart Call. Do your research, determine what possible value you can hint at to engage them in discussion, and look for other ways you can help them.

To simplify, look at what they've purchased and the intervals. This should give hints to complementary things they likely are buying elsewhere. Then confirm that by doing some snooping, some Social Engineering by talking to others at the company. Then craft your introductory value opening:

“Hi Pat, Stan Seller with Edvantage Services. First, I’d like to thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the gazmodas you’ve gotten from us a couple of times over the past year. Also, I’d like to apologize. I see that you use those in your filtration processing and we work with over 100 companies helping them in all aspects of that process, maximizing their purification results and cutting costs, and we haven’t discussed your other requirements to see if you could take advantage of some other options that might enhance your outcomes...”

Notice how different that is from something like, “Hey, we also sell duraglams and contralias, and I’d like to tell you about those.”

Inactive Customers

These include buyers who at one time were decent, or even good-to-great customers, but stopped for whatever reason. If you don’t know these reasons, neglect might actually be one of the causes. In any case, if they are still in business they are likely still buying what you sell, just from someone else.



And if there was a problem that caused them to leave, that problem is not like a paper cut that heals itself and everything is all good in a few days; it’s like a contagious virus that spreads. Bad experiences travel through negative word-of-mouth. By recontacting this group you have a chance to right a wrong, and pick up new business.

Wrong Approach: “You used to get all of your gazmodas from us but you stopped buying. I was wondering why?”

You **do** want to find out why. But putting them on the witness stand and interrogating them, acting as if it’s their obligation to continue buying from you is not the way to do it.

Similar to the previous example, we want to take the humble approach. There's a pretty good chance you or your organization dropped the ball. You didn't stay in touch, or screwed up, whether you are aware of it or not. We need to find out so we can fix. And swallowing your pride, with hat in hand, admitting your fault for not staying in contact.

Again, do some Social Engineering. Find out from someone there if they still buy what you sell, from whom, and why. Yes, you can get this intel if you poke around and speak with the right people.

For example:

“Hi Pat, Stan Seller with Edvantage Services. First, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the gazmodas you've gotten from us in the past. We've realized that we haven't stayed in closer contact with you... we apologize for that and we want to begin fixing that today. I'd like to ask a few questions about how and if your requirements have changed, and let you know about some of our changes that could have a positive effect on your process there ...”

Side Note: Just think how much easier it is to actually get through to these previous two groups than someone you haven't spoken with before. When talking to a protective assistant, you can use the words,

“Oh, you're already customers with us.”

Lost Deals

Sure, there still might be a sour taste lingering because you were spurned for another suitor. What you DO know is that they are qualified, they obviously buy what you sell, you know a lot about them, they are familiar with you, and you have an investment in them.



Yes, your investment could range from a few minutes on a simple quote, all the way up to tens of thousands invested in calls, visits, demos, mock-ups, simulations, and more.

Here's the important variable to bring to the forefront: things change.

Constantly.

Their needs might change, they might shift into a new focus that would make you more desirable, or the vendor that beat you out might not perform as expected. The opposite of "out of sight, out of mind" is "regularly in touch, top of mind" and being the top choice when change inevitably occurs.

Again, the wrong approach is a reactive, non-value-added one:

"Hey, just following up on the gazmoda quote we gave you last Spring, where you went with Ulterior Services. Wondering if anything has changed or anything I can quote you on?"

Sure, some contact is better than no contact. Just slightly though. They can view a call with no value as the salesperson being a desperate, pesty, quoting-machine vendor. Instead, you want to position yourself as a value-added consultant who brings something to the table every time. Then, when things DO change, they will think of you first and then reach out. That's the goal, since your calls will not likely and luckily coincide with their changed need at the moment it occurs.

This impression of you as a value-added option is achieved with every communication you send. Email, mail, samples, reports, calls, voice mails... they all need to contain something that causes them to say, "That's good to know. That guy/gal has it going on."

Technology is your friend here, since you can have automated “nurturing” campaigns set up of various types that you can appropriately plug your prospects/customer into, so that you can have these value-added “touches” going out automatically while you sleep. And then you supplement and complement these pieces of communication with the personal call. Those calls would take the form of,

“Hi Pat, I thought about you the other day in our meeting where our QA team released their newest report on changes in gazmoda regulations and how it will affect time to market industry-wide. This is some cutting edge stuff and I thought you could benefit from the information and I’d like to send it to you.”

But, you might be asking, “Where’s the selling?”

The selling is when they are *buying*. Either on this call when you transition naturally into some casual—but planned—questions, or when they have that trigger event and call you.



Want new business? Look in your own back yard, follow these ideas, and you'll be a happy quota-buster.



Art Sobczak helps sales pros say the right things to get through, get in and sell. See free tips, and videos at SmartCalling.com. Get a free copy of Art's newly revised book, "How to Place the Successful Sales and Prospecting Call" at FreeSalesBook.com. Contact him about training options for yourself or team at 480-699-0958, or ArtS@BusinessByPhone.com