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Improving Your Sales Reps' Performance

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By John McGee, President of OptifiNow

According to VentureBeat, marketing automation software only has 3% adoption in non-tech companies. This is an incredible hurdle for sales professionals to overcome, but one that must be met and conquered head on for success. If a company is lacking the IT support it should have to boost marketing and sales results, the burden of filling the gaps falls on the shoulders of the individual sales rep. In order to increase conversion numbers and boost the bottom line, sales reps need to accomplish the following tasks in the first quarter: reduce response rate, increase lead follow up, learn how to sell themselves first, personalize.

Research conducted by InsideSales.com found that 35-50% of sales go to the vendor that responds first. Typically, a sales automation software solution would automatically assign an incoming lead to a sales rep. with certain solutions a customer profile would appear on the sales reps' computer screen. The rep would be prepped to answer any questions the lead may have and the rep's phone will begin dialing the lead within seconds of when the inquiry was made. To replicate this process, sales reps that cannot benefit from sales automation software must diligently monitor incoming leads and set a goal to respond to leads in less than one minute. As research shows, the rep that replies first is likely the one who will make the sale.

In addition to reducing the time it takes to respond to a lead, sales reps must also ensure they are consistently following up with leads, whether they have purchased or not. Data from MarketingSherpa shows that 79% of marketing leads never convert into sales. Lack of lead nurturing is the common cause of this poor performance.

Sales reps also need to keep in mind that they are not just selling a product. Before a customer makes a decision about a product or service they analyze the person selling it. A kind a helpful sales rep that is knowledgeable about the product he or she is selling will always appeal more to a potential customer. Someone who is off-putting, gives terse responses and cannot answer a lead's questions or make the effort to find out the answers is not someone a customer will feel comfortable making a purchase from. Sales reps must remember that they are selling themselves first, that they are the face of their company and customers must buy their personal brand before they will be ready to make a purchasing decision.

Finally, sales automation software simplifies the selling process by providing reps with pre-approved sales offer templates that can be customized to fit a particular customer's interests. Rather than skipping this step because the software solution is unavailable to them, sales people can adapt the same concepts into their regular work processes. A form text message or email can quickly be drafted and used as a template for outreach. By adding one or two sentences at the opening, sales reps can make the entirety of the message feel as though it were created solely for the one customer it is sent to. Making the extra effort to send "big" accounts or potential clients handwritten notes on holidays, during special promotions or other significant times of year.

As the President of OptifiNow, John McGee leads the company's vision, strategy and growth. John founded OptifiNow to solve a common problem of enterprise customers – the shared struggle of managing national and global sales teams with brand and legal compliant messaging.