

Why Aging Data Corrodes Your Sales Pipeline

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The Three Downsides of Poor Data

1. Depressed ROI

Inaccurate data takes a toll on the entire sales operation. That's because there's an opportunity cost when your team wastes time following up on incorrect names, wrong telephone numbers, duplicate leads, and incomplete data. They not only fail to produce results with these leads, they also lose the opportunity to work on quality leads that could yield a higher ROI.

Also, a recent study by CSO Insights revealed that sales people are spending 20% of their time doing their own research rather than selling. If marketing provided good, clean leads with all the right information, companies could boost their sales simply by having their sales people spend more of their time doing what they do best--selling.

2. **Discouraged Sales People**

Sales people are achievers—they want results. Therefore, plowing through bad data can be disastrous to their morale, and a driver for them to keep their own personal databases that are not integrated with your company's CRM.

3. **Loss of Credibility**

Worse yet, if your conversation with a prospect is based on incorrect or incomplete information you can lose credibility. After all, how can a client trust you with their business when you don't have all their information at your fingertips? It can also waste a prospect's time as a sales person struggles to get up to speed. Since an essential goal in business to business sales is to build trust and foster relationships, a call based on bad information is counterproductive.

It's a Pervasive Problem

Considering that the stakes are so high, it is puzzling that such a large percentage of companies struggle with the problem of aged data. According to CSO Insight's survey, more than 40% of sales representatives feel they are not given the information they need for their sales calls. That's why so many are forced to spend precious time verifying information before reaching out to prospects.

Treat Your Data Like Gold

It's essential to profile and clean data before getting started on sales campaigns. This upfront work yields dividends in your sales campaign results. Here are three steps you can take.

1. **Profile Your Data**

Data profiling uses algorithms and statistics to look at a database and assess

the accuracy and completeness of the data. Once you know this, you can develop a plan to get your data up to your standards.

2. **Clean it Up**

Data cleansing helps to detect, correct, and delete inaccurate and corrupt records in your database and assures that all records are consistent. You can update information by merging it with purchased data that's of higher quality. Also, you can put tele-services agents on the phone whose sole goal is to verify data and gather contact information that's missing.

3. **Gather Intelligence**

This step is for companies that want to go beyond the basics and learn about usage of competitive products, strategies and any other information that can boost the effectiveness of sales campaigns.

Business to business lead generation is difficult enough as it is—there's no reason to make it even harder by handicapping your team with aged data. Take a few steps to make their lives easier and achieve better results.

Learn how one enterprise software company improved marketing with robust, accurate data.

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