

Leads Are Hiding Everywhere

By Renee Houston Zemanski

"Every salesperson probably has more than 50 lead sources they're not using," says Jeff Hoffman, founder and CEO of Basho Strategies, a unique sales training program that focuses on specific sales techniques. Here are a few of Hoffman's lead tips.

Get more out of trade shows. "Get to know the speakers," says Hoffman. "They might be on the board or an executive at a company that is in your patch. Referencing the speaker will more likely get you a return call. Speakers also often can spin you off to other companies." He suggests becoming acquainted with the sponsors of the trade show and the people in charge of the seminars, happy hours and hospitality rooms.

Scan the want ads. "Every Sunday I scan the want ads in about 15 different newspapers looking for anyone hiring salespeople," explains Hoffman. "Why? Because companies that are hiring are probably growing their sales department so there's a pretty good chance they're going to need sales training – that's a great lead source for me. So, if you're selling to engineers, find out who's hiring engineers and so on."

Read local newspapers. Check out the People in the News section – the column that reports on people who have been hired, promoted, and so on. "Call someone who is a brand new hire – they don't know who you are and will probably return your call," says Hoffman. "When they do, say: I saw your promotion in the Daily Gazette last week, congratulations. I'm the account executive for your company and I'd like to find out what your role will be regarding.... It's a very comfortable introduction and one that has a terrific response rate."

Make a plan. Develop your strategy for getting leads as you map out your territory plan. Based on historical data, how many leads do you think you need to generate this quarter to reach your quota? What are your top three sources for generating those leads? In addition, what activities are you going to do this quarter to get those three lead sources really working for you? When you complete this plan, Hoffman suggests sharing it with your manager, your colleagues, the marketing department and your existing customers. These people will give you the feedback you need.

"The greatest reps I've ever worked with share a lot of traits, one of which is being creative," says Hoffman. "Look at your lead sources with a new set of eyes because there truly is an endless supply. The only question is: How do you want to grab onto them?" Hoffman has 50 lead sources to share; visit www.bashostrategies.com to find out more.

60 Seconds: Read the help-wanted sections of your target-area newspapers next Sunday. Circle all companies looking for your target customer. Make a plan to call those companies during the week.

About Basho Strategies, Inc.

Basho Strategies provides a revolutionary approach to sales training for those organizations that desire immediate and measurable results. Through our exclusive pipeline management program, "The Seven Basho Strategies," we address the entire sales pipeline by concentrating on a series of powerful sales and sales management techniques that focus on self-reliance and tactical execution. Once employed, our clients enjoy the lasting impact of a unique training program that dramatically empowers their sales teams to take control of the sales process and achieve extraordinary sales results.

The headquarters for Basho Strategies, Inc. is located in Burlington, Massachusetts, with regional offices in San Francisco and London. For more information about Basho Strategies, please call (781) 685-4959 or visit us on the Web at www.bashostrategies.com.