

# **Effective Short Term Follow-Up and Long Term Marketing Procedures**



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# FOLLOW - UP

## I. CUSTOMERS WHO ARE STILL UNDECIDED (UNSOLD)

### A. Send A Thank You Note

1. Fill it out before we talk to the next customer
  - a. or at least that same day
2. Make it personal
  - a. use the customer's name and the car they're considering
  - b. write two lines by hand if the card is preprinted
3. Use the same four or five lines for non-preprinted cards
  - a. don't waste time creating something new each time
  - b. make sure to insert the things to make it personal
4. Thank them for the opportunity to earn their business
5. Include one of our business cards



### B. 24 Hour Phone Contact

1. Smile
  - a. remember our customer can "hear" our smile
2. Salutation
  - a. "good morning", "hello", etc.
3. Verification
  - a. make sure we're talking to the person we want
    - 1a. "Is this Mr. Customer?" or just "Mr. Customer?"
  - b. verify the pronunciation if in doubt at all
    - 1a. "Did I pronounce your name correctly?"



4. Take the curse off the call

- a. *"Did I catch you at a good time?" or "Am I interrupting anything important?" or "Am I taking you away from a customer right now?"*
- b. if the customer says "yes", find out when to call back
- c. if the customer says "no", continue

5. Introduction

- a. *"This is John Salesrep from ABC Motors."*

6. Purpose of the call

- a. *"Mr. Customer, on the way home last night I was thinking of you and I realized there were a couple of things I forgot to mention."*

7. Answer any questions they may have

8. Set up a time to finalize the transaction

- a. have a reason to get back together
  - 1a. get trade appraised, special credit union sale, new inventory choices, etc.
- b. always give them two choices
  - 1a. *"I'm free this Tuesday at four or six-fifteen what's best for you?"*

9. Thank them and get off the phone

**C. 72 Hour Phone Contact**

1. Smile (same as 24 hour call)

2. Salutation (same as 24 hour call)

3. Verification (same as 24 hour call)

4. Take the curse off the call (same as 24 hour call)

5. Introduction (same as...you get the idea!)

6. Ask if they have received our thank you note yet

- a. remind them how important their business is to us

7. Set up a time to finalize the transaction

8. Thank them and get off the phone

**D. Subsequent Contacts**

1. "HOT" prospects should be contacted every other day

2. "COOL" prospects should be contacted at least once a week

3. "COLD" prospects should be contacted every other week  
a. even if they say they won't be ready for several months

4. ALL prospects should be followed up on until they buy or ask us to stop calling

5. Use the mail, e-mail, fax and the phone for long term follow up

6. Always use the same phone procedures  
a. always have a new reason to call  
b. keep all phone contacts brief and to the point

7. Verify all appointments the day before  
a. use the same phone procedures as always  
1a. smile, salutation, verification, take the curse off, introduction, verify the appointment, thank them and hang up

8. Don't give up, keep it light and HAVE FUN!!!



## II. CUSTOMERS WHO HAVE DONE BUSINESS WITH US (SOLD)

### A. The Delivery

#### 1. Make sure their car is ready for delivery

- a. we should check for any equipment that was to be added
- b. we can make sure there are two sets of keys
- c. we should make sure there is gas in the tank

#### 2. Walk them through service again

- a. reintroduce them to the Service Manager and Writers
- b. we can go over the Service and Parts Department hours

#### 3. Go over all the paperwork, schedules, owner's manual, etc.

- a. cover the maintenance schedule
- b. ask them to let us know when their car is going to be in for service
  - 1a. so we can make sure it's clean and gassed when they pick it up
- c. explain all delivery checklists/paperwork

#### 4. Re-Demo the car!

- a. we must demonstrate ALL the features to our customer
- b. we have to make sure they know how to operate all of them
- c. we can set the clock and the radio stations with them
- d. we can show them where the spare tire and jack are located
- e. we really ought to go on a demo ride with them one more time also

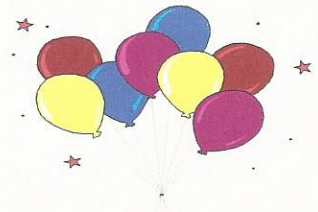
#### 5. DO NOT ASK FOR REFERRALS

- a. we'll have plenty of chances later to ask for them
- b. DO NOT give them a stack of our business cards
- c. this is their magic moment, not ours

#### 6. Make it special!!

- a. use flowers, champagne, theater ropes, balloons, etc.
- b. this is the foundation of a long term relationship

#### 7. Thank them



## **B. Thank You Note**

1. We should fill it out before we talk to the next customer
  - a. or at least that same day
2. Make it personal
  - a. use the customer's name and the car they purchased
  - b. write two lines by hand if the card is preprinted
3. Use the same four or five lines for non-preprinted cards
  - a. don't waste time creating something new each time
  - b. make sure to insert the things to make it personal
4. Thank them for giving us their business
5. Include four or five of our business cards



## **C. 24 Hour Phone Contact**

1. Smile
2. Salutation
3. Verification
4. Take the curse off the call
5. Introduction
6. Answer any questions they might have
  - a. *"Just wanted to see if there are any questions you may have that I can answer for you."*
7. Note any problems if any
  - a. check with the appropriate dealership personnel
  - b. schedule the time to remedy the problem
  - c. follow up with your customer immediately
8. Thank them again for doing business with us and hang up
9. DO NOT ask for referrals



## **D. 72 Hour Phone Contact**

1. Smile

2. Salutation

3. Verification

4. Take the curse off the call

5. Introduction

6. Ask if they received our thank you note

- a. tell them to expect it and how important their business is to us (past & future business)

7. Answer any questions

8. Note any other problems

- a. remember to handle problems immediately

9. Explain our business cards we included in the note

- a. *"Mr. Customer, I know that in the next week or so you'll be showing all your friends and family your new car. If anyone is looking for a new or used vehicle, any make or model, would you please give them one of my cards? I'll show them the same respect and work just as hard for them as I did for you."*
- b. we may also explain our referral program at this time

10. Thank them, thank them again for their business and get off the phone

## **E. 7 Day Phone Contact**

1. Smile

2. Salutation

3. Verification

4. Take the curse off the call

5. Introduction

6. Briefly inquire about the car

- a. remember this is primarily a referral call



7. Ask if they have handed out any of our cards
  - a. ask for the name and phone number of any new prospect
    - 1a. another way we can do this is to ask our customer if they would call their friend and get their permission to give us their phone number
    - 1b. the new prospect is now expecting our call
    - 1c. we've demonstrated respect and courtesy way beyond the call of duty
    - 1d. it may make our customer more comfortable too

8. Thank them, thank them for their business and hang up

## **F. 30 Day Phone Contact**

1. Smile
2. Salutation
3. Verification
4. Take the curse off the call
5. Introduction
6. Ask for referrals
7. Thank them, thank them again for being our customer and get off the phone

## **G. Subsequent Contacts**

1. Every 45 to 90 days we should make contact with each one of our customers
  - a. quarterly newsletters are a good way to market ourselves
    - 1a. do not make it "just more junk mail", include car sales stuff sparingly
    - 1b. the best include recipes, hints on how to winterize or summarize a car, things to check before a road trip, puzzles, motivational or humorous stories, quotes of wisdom, etc.
    - 1c. when a customer sends us a story or recipe, etc., give them credit and we'll get more
    - 1d. include the name and detailed description of our referral program each time
  - b. check service each day and our client tell us when they're coming into service
    - 1a. *"So I can: call when it's done, make sure it's washed, gassed up, etc."*
    - 1b. ask them for referrals
  - c. fax or e-mail them articles that they may have an interest in
    - 1a. include a brief P.S. or reminder of our referral program
  - d. send anniversary cards and small holiday post cards (July 4<sup>th</sup>, St. Patrick's Day, Columbus Day, Ground Hog's Day, etc.)

- 1a. send them a few days in advance
- 1b. include a brief P.S. or reminder of our referral program
- e. simply call them (remember using this method can be very time consuming)
  - 1a. use the same phone procedures
  - 1b. ask them for referrals
- f. invite them to the new car introduction
  - 1a. they don't *have* to be "in the market" to enjoy that
  - 1b. ask them for referrals
- g. invite them to any dealership special events

## 2. Birthday, Christmas, Ramadan, Chanukah, Kwanza etc. cards

- a. we must make sure we send the appropriate one
  - 1a. we can use "Season's Greetings" if in doubt for winter or year's end
- b. send them out early enough to arrive in time
- c. THESE ARE NOT MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES (do NOT include a business card or even mention our referral program!)

## 3. Referral Programs and follow up

- a. set up a referral program to market ourselves
  - 1a. NAME IT! (Larry Loot, Mike Money, Kerri Kash, Doug Dough, Ron's Referrals, etc.)
  - 1b. make the conditions clear: "To qualify, the prospect you refer must; 1) call first to set an appointment with me and 2) eventually buy something from me.
  - 1c. make the reward memorable
    - 2a. tickets to a play, hockey game, baseball game, etc.
    - 2b. treat them to a nice dinner for two somewhere
    - 2c. send them something for their car
    - 2d. if we choose to send cash, make it substantial (not the typical \$50 to \$100)
      - a good rule of thumb is to make it half of what our current average commission is
      - "I'll make your next car payment! (Up to \$250. C'mon, now, I'm industrious, not wealthy!)"
      - "I'll pool \$X per car I sell and disperse it at year's end via lottery. For every referral you send me, you get one ticket. For every referral you send me that buys, you get two more tickets. First place will get \$X,XXX, second will get \$XXX. My lottery will be audited by the accounting firm of John Smith & Associates, (800) 555-1212"
- b. if the referral does not buy from us, we owe the referring customer at least a phone call thanking them for the lead and telling them what happened
- c. send them something even if it's a "mini deal"
  - 1a. we should think of it as an investment in our business
  - 1b. don't be afraid to occasionally spend more than we earned
- d. ALWAYS remember to thank the referring customer

## 4. Notice that we've moved to a new dealership

- a. do it first by mail with our new business cards
- b. follow up with a phone call as soon as possible

## 5. Resist deleting customers from this process

- a. don't even consider it unless you've gone four years with no response from them
  - 1a. a response is another purchase, referral, or contact of any kind



### III. GETTING ORGANIZED AND STAYING THAT WAY

#### A. Invest In A System

##### 1. Index cards and file boxes

- a. have one alphabetized and one in chronological order
- b. create two identical cards for each customer
- c. have as much information on them as possible
  - 1a. last name, first name, customer type (customer - anyone we have a good relationship with, loyalty - 2 or more purchases, advocate - 1 or more referrals), home address, home phone, work phone, cell phone, fax phone, e-mail address, secondary e-mail address, web address, preferred method of contact, names of family members, hobbies/interests, number/type of cars in the family, car they bought from us, equipment preferences, purchase terms, date of purchase, trading habits, date of last contact, date of next contact, notes.
- d. we can leave room for keeping notes of follow up
- e. use the alphabetized box for quick reference
  - 1a. use alphabet tabs for this purpose
- f. use the chronological box for scheduling future contacts
  - 1a. use monthly tabs for this purpose
  - 1b. after each contact, file in month of next contact
- g. keep all unsold customers in a chronological stack in front of the chronological box until they are ready to file as sold customers or ask us to stop calling

##### 2. Prefabricated systems for the automobile business

- a. make sure it's one we understand and can use easily
- b. make sure it can be expanded later
- c. it must allow for chronological follow up and notation as well as alphabetical
- d. it must separate "sold" and "unsold" customers
- e. it should be durable

##### 3. Computerized systems

- a. update it daily
- b. we ought to backup the system at least once a week
- c. it must be able to print a daily work plan
  - 1a. complete with all info necessary for follow up
- d. we must be able to sort it by date of last contact
- e. we *should* be able to sort by make, model, year, city, interests, etc.

##### 4. Back up system

- a. it should mirror the primary system as much as possible
- b. keep it just in case our primary system is lost or stolen

## **B. Keep Good Notes**

### **1. Note every contact**

- a. we can develop and use our own abbreviations

### **2. Update both files daily**

- a. don't put it off or the job becomes too big

### **3. Develop the habits and discipline of a true professional**

## **C. Did I Mention To Have Fun?!!**

- 1. This is our career. We really ought to enjoy it.

**REMEMBER: We've already invested two hours or more in helping our customer buy a vehicle. Why not invest another twenty minutes or so each year to make sure that initial investment continues to pay us dividends!**

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