

The National Outbound Forum: are we fit for purpose?

The National Outbound Forum is in its seventh year and we ask three experts to share their top tips on how end-users should be delivering effective and compliant outbound performance that is also customer focussed.

Is outbound still a viable channel?

A lot of people are still struggling to convince internal compliance teams and senior managers/directors that outbound is still a viable channel. As a result, many companies are shying away from making outbound contact. Staying compliant is not that difficult, if you are worried then get the right assistance. There are many consultants, suppliers and industry bodies around to help.

Dave Ogden

Avoiding the dangers of cherry-picking the best data

When it comes to data and dialling strategies ensure you “share the plan” with the operational managers, team leaders and agents. Everyone always wants the best/easiest converting data but this is not possible. “Sharing the plan” so everyone understands the type of people they will be speaking to, how the data has been segmented and why, is a very powerful way of getting everyone onboard.

Dave Ogden

If you have a lot of data maybe cherry picking has occurred? In a world where data is so vital, deliberately reducing, or removing calls and cherry picking the data dialled, will deliver a detrimental service to the customer, as they are not being offered the chance of the best customer experience. This is also a loss to your company, as you will inevitably have to use more data to be able to achieve the level of sales you require.

Marianne Withers

Nurturing your people

Managers need on-going training from their seniors in operational and data management to appreciate and understand the different data

strategies, thus allowing them to manage the expectations of their advisors. It is all down to education, development and the expectation that for the majority of time advisors will be working through the tougher data. Honesty is very important.

Nurture your people – any organisation can “clone” people so it is all just about numbers of people on the phone all sounding and saying the same with a script and, if they are lucky, some soft skills. Give agents knowledge and understanding of why people make decisions to purchase. Teach them about social aspects, people’s habits and what can allow people to change their mind which all help to make outbound calling more compliant and definitely more successful.

Marianne Withers

Data and strategy gives you that consistent, compliant approach

Consistency through the month is what is needed. Fluctuating peaks and troughs in dialler and data performance come about from old dialler strategies where you keep

following a certain type of person, at a certain time of the day. The difficulty with this strategy is that you only have a certain amount of data and at some stage you are going to need to call it all.

Blending datasets can considerably help your conversion consistency. However, if you download all your data sets into one pot to try to achieve this, you will end up with one large file that will challenge you on penetration and fresher data throughout the latter stages. What you want is perfectly blended files and a number of data blocks to allow you to undertake your data blocking strategy, which will help give you good contact rates throughout.

Marianne Withers.

Marianne Withers is Founding Director of EMC2 (GB) Ltd. Dave Ogden is Outbound Subject Matter Expert at Aspect. They were talking at a webinar in January 2014 – view the recording and read Mike Havard’s white paper online at: ppf.bz/OutboundTopics.

Getting Outbound Right

Organisations searching for new ways to engage customers and prospects see the value of proactive communication – reaching out to consumers with valuable marketing and service messages. Most behave responsibly, respecting consumers’ privacy and seeking to add value. However, an unscrupulous minority persistently operates outside of the law. Thanks to them, every organisation now faces painful regulatory scrutiny. But, while regulators can punish organisations with large fines, consumers hold much greater power. In a socially connected world, they will castigate organisations that compromise their privacy or abuse their trust. Every organisation must meet the regulatory requirements as a minimum. The wise will do much more, understanding that customers will respond positively to proactive communications that are personalised, courteous, and timely.

Mike Havard is Director at Ember Services.