

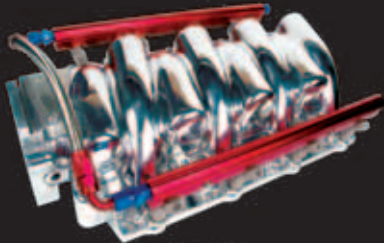
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## Lead Generation Redefined

by Tom Marx, The Marx Group

When it comes to lead generation campaigns, we've witnessed the good, the bad and the ugly. And, we've heard many, many excuses to justify why a campaign is not fulfilling its promise.

Lead generation is viewed differently from one company to another. For many companies the process is rather vague. Truth is, unless certain necessary elements of a lead generation campaign can successfully be implemented, it might not even be a lead generation campaign. It might be an "awareness campaign" something that generates completely different expectations.

So what is lead generation? Lead generation is a marketing activity with two fundamental purposes:

1. Funneling leads to the sales team (creating sales).
2. Simultaneously increasing brand awareness.

Sounds simple enough, but the devil is in the details.

How far into the future is planning needed? Are all the teams on board with the campaign, including marketing, sales, product management, manufacturing and customer support? Are leads being tracked? Are they converting to sales? Are true costs of the campaign being tracked?

What does it take to have an effective lead generation program? Certain key elements are required:

**Audience:** Know your audience and their hot buttons.

**Messages:** Determine the key message(s) that will attract the most interest.

**Benefits:** Know what will motivate your audience to buy.

**Method:** Test and understand the metrics for certain types of lead generation programs, whether direct mail, telesales, media ads, PR or a combination of these (and other) marketing activities.

**Diligence:** It rarely works to depend on a one-off touch point - a single contact with your audience - to generate the leads you want. Multiple touch points and thorough follow-through are essential for an effective program.

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## Poll Outlines Pressing Issues for Small Businesses

WHAT'S ON THE minds of America's small-business owners? According to a recent survey conducted by Public Opinion Strategies on behalf of the National Small Business Association (NSBA), the costs of health insurance, obtaining capital and the future of the economy top the list. Here's a look at the highlights.

- While the national economy is growing, America's small and midsize businesses are facing challenging times. Thirty-six percent believe the economy is getting better, 43 percent believe it's getting

worse and 21 percent believe it's about the same as it was five years ago.

- Economic uncertainty, the cost of health benefits and the lack of available capital are the three biggest concerns facing small businesses today.

- Fewer and fewer companies are offering health benefits. The figure is 41 percent today, down from 67 percent in 1995.

- Most companies can get the financing they need, but 39 percent

*Continued on page 8*