

Tracking Your Marketing Efforts[®]

By Kathy Ellis, The Business Lab Marketing Coach

Tracking your marketing efforts can be challenging because it is virtually impossible to know exactly which marketing effort resulted in your prospect taking action. More likely, it will be a combination of efforts that will do the trick – from your sales staff calling, networking, and in-person sales presentations – to the newsletters, postcards, and trade shows you work. Each effort will take its own part in getting the prospect to take the next step.

Tracking your marketing efforts is still important though. It is all part of the “inspect what you expect” strategy that can only lead to more informed decisions in the long run. The most important element is to be sure everyone in your company knows what marketing efforts are being made. This does a few things for you. First, it lets everyone know you feel they are part of the team. It can also give them a sense of pride and sense of security knowing that you believe in the company enough to “tell” others all about it. Secondly, you never know the potential clients with whom your team members may have the opportunity to speak about your company. Marketing is a great internal teacher because when done correctly, it is a concise and memorable way to share with others what you do. Thirdly, team members may answer the phone or have an opportunity to visit directly with the prospect taking the next step as a result of your marketing effort. Being informed will certainly help your company look/feel/be more organized, and your team can also ask how the prospect learned about the company. The more they know about the specifics of your marketing efforts, the better equipped they’ll be to identify a particular effort.

Set up a system: There are many resources available that can help you track your marketing efforts (discussed below) or you can easily set up your own internal system today:

1. Create a marketing calendar and place all the marketing activities your company is doing on the date or dates of the activity. Update the calendar each month and/or each time a new activity is added.
2. Determine how the calls/E-mail/contacts will be handled when they are received. If you have more than one sales person, determine how the leads will be divided.
3. Create a tracking spreadsheet that lists all your marketing activities across the top and the date and space for client/prospect name to the left. Also leave a space to indicate the person in your firm to receive the lead. If you are using a master spreadsheet, make one person responsible for maintaining the master, but give any team members who may answer the telephone a sheet to track any calls they may take. Have them turn in the sheets at the end of the day so all updates can be included and provide updated sheets each morning. If you are using a spreadsheet or database that can be accessed by all, train everyone on how to enter the information so you can capture it.
4. Provide everyone in your company with a marketing calendar, sample of the marketing collateral, and a tracking sheet (if using one) or access to the on-line sheet/database. Update this information on a regular basis.

5. Use the information you gather to learn more and test different marketing programs.

Outside tracking services: If you do a lot of advertising or direct mail or participate in trade shows, consider using outside sources to help you track your efforts and focus on obtaining more results from these marketing efforts. Companies such as CallSource (www.callsource.com / Colleen Benecke 888-251-6165) and W5 Technologies (www.w5.com / Eric Moore 800-745-9799) are excellent resources to help you fine tune your marketing. CallSource helps you track your telephone traffic, and W5 helps you track web traffic.

CallSource Scenario: You advertise in the HBJ and the Chronicle and also do some direct mail. For each ad and the direct mail pieces, CallSource assigns a toll free number. The number rings to your office, but everything about the call is captured by CallSource: the source of the call, how long the call lasted, the date and time, who called, cost per lead/call, caller demographics. You can even record each call for training purposes. Reports about all your telephone calls are easily accessed over the Internet, and you can instantly see which sources are bringing you the most leads.

W5 Scenario: You go to a major trade show. You come back with sore feet and about 300 business cards of people with whom you spoke. You hand these “leads” over to W5 who then sends out a personal E-mail to all contacts thanking them for visiting your booth and inviting them to view your presentation. You are instantly notified when someone views your presentation (you will know who they are, when they accessed the presentation, which pages they viewed, how long they stayed). Once they have accessed your presentation, another E-mail is automatically sent to them thanking them for taking the time to visit your site and letting them know you will be in touch. Armed with the knowledge of what specific portions of your presentation in which they are interested, you call them and immediately connect with their needs.

Tip from The Business Lab: Setting up a tracking system (any system) will help you improve your marketing plan. Tracking allows you to learn about your marketing and make adjustments when necessary.

More Information? If you would like to learn more about this important topic or would like to receive our FREE Service Ideas Booklet, please send an E-mail to kathy@thebusinesslab.com, visit our website at www.thebusinesslab.com, or fax a note on your letterhead to 281-374-0569.

Author’s Note: Kathy Ellis is a Marketing Coach and the owner of The Business Lab, a full service marketing and graphic design company. We specialize in creativity and helping you think outside the box. We then help you implement those creative ideas through programs including database marketing, websites, interactive CD brochures, company brochures, client newsletters and promotional marketing materials. We share our FREE newsletter with you to showcase powerful marketing tips, techniques, and ideas to help you improve your business. The Business Lab is based in Houston, TX, at 281-374-0170 or by E-mail at kathy@thebusinesslab.com