A Guide to the B2B Inside Sales Process

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The Prelude to the Inside Sales Process

Zippy uses an inbound marketing approach, which means there are a couple of steps in their sales and marketing process before their inside salespeople get into gear. These are outlined below.

- **The Origins of an Inquiry**

  The director of marketing at B2B Ventures, Sally, knows she needs to invest in technology to increase marketing efficiency and success. So she does a search on Google for “marketing automation.”

There at the top of the organic results is a link to Zippy's e-book, "How to Get Started with Marketing Automation." She clicks through to the page, fills out a form and downloads the e-book. Sally has just moved to the first stage of Zippy's inside sales process. She is now classified as an "inquiry."

Note: see how Zippy has matched their sales process to Sally's buying process. She's searching online, and they are right there ready to be found.

- **Lead Nurturing that Educates**

What's important is that Sally's is not a lead yet. That's because she isn't qualified.

Zippy marketing and sales management have agreed that people need to demonstrate a higher level of interest before the inside sales team invests their time in an inquiry. Plus, there are other critical parameters for lead qualification that their inside salespeople will deal with in due course.

In this case, the inquiry needs to be warmed up with email nurturing. Sally receives several emails including one that offers a webinar that covers more in-depth information. She signs up for it. Also, over the past couple of weeks, she has clicked the links in several other emails and spent time on Zippy's website.

Now that Sally has invested time to educate herself and is showing a high level of interest, she has a lead-score that indicates she's worth calling.

The Story of the Inside Sales Process

- **Lead Qualification the Human Way**

At Zippy, just because a lead-score is high enough to contact an individual, it doesn't mean the lead is qualified. Digital footprints don't tell the full story.

Gerard, one of Zippy's inside salespeople, calls Sally to find out more about her. He confirms her interest in the product, ensures she has the authority and budget to make a purchase and finds out who else is involved in the decision.

He also discusses Sally's situation and the problem that she's trying to solve. While doing so, he assesses how Zippy's solution can help her.

At the end of the conversation, he moves her into the qualified lead category and sets an appointment for a personal product demonstration.

- **A Demo that's Truly Personalized**

  Gerard did his work in the previous call to prepare his demo, so he's not going to bore Sally with all the bells and whistles of Zippy's solution. Instead, he tailors his presentation to Sally's needs, focusing on what's most important to her — how this solution can solve her problems and make her company more successful.

  At the end of the demo, he asks open-ended questions to gauge her interest. He also confirms the next step in the buying process. Does she need to talk with someone else? Can he help her with that? When should he contact her next?

  If all goes well, Sally agrees that she'd like a quote. Gerard tells her when he will send it, and he sets up a follow-up telephone call to review it.

- **Quote and Negotiation**

  Gerard sends the quote and gives Sally time to review it with the VP of Marketing. He calls her at the pre-established time, and they negotiate a few changes.

- **Landing the Deal**

  After Sally negotiates the deal, she buys the solution.

Because your market and product are not the same as Zippy's, your inside sales process will likely be different.

If, for instance, you have just a few large customers you're targeting, it may be better for you to use account-based marketing rather than inbound marketing. In that case, you wouldn't wait for the leads to come to you. Your inside salespeople would blaze the trail, making calls, sending emails and engaging potential buyers on social media.

So use the above outline as a starting point. What's critical is to have a systematic

way of determining which accounts and people are worth your inside sales people's time and a logical way of moving those individuals through the buying process. Your job is to help the *right* people to find and buy your solution.

Call us at +1 718-709-0900 (US) or +39 06 978446 60 (EMEA), or contact us online to learn how you can outsource your inside sales and get rapid results.

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