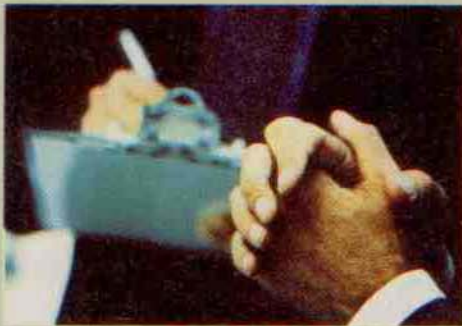


THE EDGE

How are you doing in Q2?

BY COLLEEN EDWARDS

Regardless of first-quarter results, the second quarter brings a fresh new opportunity. There are many tactics that can be executed quickly and affordably to close deals this quarter and create new opportunities for subsequent quarters.



- **Conduct a customer satisfaction survey:** Every sales expert knows the best source of new business is your existing customers. Regular customer satisfaction surveys ensure you're tuned in to the lifeblood of your business. Surveys can be constructed and executed in two weeks or less and on-line tools like surveymonkey.com can help make it affordable for any size company to conduct surveys.
- **Host a peer exchange event:** User groups became popular among technology company customers in the 1980s as a means of bringing people with similar challenges and goals together. Aside from education, one of the biggest benefits to user group attendees has always been networking with their peers. Nobody has more power to sell your prospects than your existing clients.
- **Establish an informational newsletter:** You've called your prospects so many times you jokingly

refer to yourself as "the stalker." And yet, most still aren't ready to buy. There's a better way to stay top of mind than leaving a string of voice-mail messages for these busy executives. By publishing a monthly e-newsletter with expert perspective on topics of interest, you'll develop credibility with your prospect.

- **Execute a targeted three-dimensional direct marketing campaign:** Email marketing, once the darling of marketing for its ease of execution and low cost, has lost its luster due to spam laws and corporate filters. Three-dimensional mail properly targeted, on the other hand, has never lost its dramatic appeal. To keep your campaign affordable, narrow your list to your top-tier prospects only and be sure your gift, offer and call to action are compelling. Often, a single new customer from this type of tactic delivers a significant ROI.
- **Broadcast your customers' success stories:** Your customers help define your brand. Take the time to document the successes from within your customer base for the challenge, the solution, and the benefits and share them with other prospects who may be facing similar challenges. You can showcase a customer success in a two-page document that can be emailed to target customers or posted on your website. You can also package the success in a news release and share it with the trade magazines in your industry.

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