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Before you even make a sale, obviously, you need someone to sell your products or services to. So how are you going to look for prospective customers?

Well, it's somewhat easy to make a sale if a potential customer calls or walks into your shop. It is even more difficult to look for those who have not called but then they still have the potential to become your customers later, or in short, your sales leads.

For every entrepreneur, lead generation is in fact, one essential skill. Okay, that said, where else could you look for more quality business sales leads for your firm?

1. Entrepreneur's Groups. Joining those local entrepreneur's organizations is the best source of new clients. There are in fact several types of local business groups: women's or ethnic group's business clubs, sales lead's clubs, Chambers of Commerce, etc. In general, these kinds of groups schedule a time at each session for the members to network. Most entrepreneur's groups print or show online the members' directories, and you're permitted to make use of that list for sales leads or business list purposes. Most groups even have those notable top mini trade shows. How to leverage these entrepreneur's organizations? Why not join more than one and attend their regular meetings? Be more visible and network with like-minded individuals.

2. List brokers. Private firms sell both business lists as well as consumers, plus, they're practically sorted in every imaginable way. You could purchase targeted lists of leads by industry, universities attended, products bought, magazines subscribed to, etc. Be certain that you have targeted your prospects, and the list is recent and regularly updated.

3. Public records. Most for-profit establishments gather and then sell lists of public records which can be utilized for b2b leads. These consist of new business licenses, building permits, birth certificates and wedding licenses.

4. Newspapers. Still one of the very reliable sources for information about your neighborhood and community, and ultimately, your prospective customers' is your local newspaper. I know of a real estate agent who depends on the obituary section of a newspaper for leads; he solicits the surviving family members of people who have died those without spouses to see if they plan to sell the house of the deceased. It may sound morbid, but yes, it works. Aside from the obituary section, you can also try to check on other sections of the paper like:

* Help wanted ads

* Business pages for employee promotions announcements

* Classified listings, etc

5. Trade shows. Trade shows offer many benefits not just for the attendees but also for the exhibitors as well. These events achieve a sizeable number of targeted prospects in just a short amount of time, and take note that these attendees are also looking for dealers and suppliers. Exhibiting at these trade shows is a good opportunity for a follow up, given that of the shows' organizers generate lists of the attendees for the exhibitors later on after the show.

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