A large, thick yellow arrow curves from the top left towards the bottom right. To its left, three concentric yellow curved lines follow a similar path, creating a sense of motion and direction.

Generating Leads
In a Down Economy



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COST EFFECTIVELY OPTIMIZING LEAD GENERATION AND PIPELINE MANAGEMENT
UTILIZING A CLOSED LOOP PROCESS
A CASE STUDY

This case study illustrates the effectiveness of linking together sales and marketing activities through a closed loop process. In an economy where companies need high sales production with decreased costs, this enterprise solution provider actually cut costs while increasing the overall impact they had in the market.

Their goal was to continue to create awareness and presence in the market in a time when most of their competitors had pulled back and were maintaining a very low profile based on reduced budgets and manpower. The objective was to create an environment where they could coordinate and link all interest generating activities to produce greater return at a lower cost.

Client Profile:

- Services and solutions provider
- Direct selling model
- Utilizes a wide variety of marketing and selling programs which include:
 - Trade shows
 - Industry events
 - Direct marketing
 - Lead generation
 - Prospect generation
 - User meetings
 - Advertising

The elements utilized to optimize the return:

- Database cleansing and maintenance
- Event optimization
- Lead generation – inbound and outbound
- Prospecting and pipeline building
- Appointment setting
- Direct marketing

The marketing and sales model used by the client focused on covering all bases and reaching a broad audience. Based on the slowness in their market they worked with IntelliTarget to reduce high cost activities – optimizing the ones that were of strategic importance. Collaboratively we built a high touch program focused on creating a pipeline and generating leads. This situation is a good



example of building a “best practices” model to tightly integrate marketing activities.

The program optimizes touch with the prospect by integrating all selling and marketing activities. The result is a cohesive prospecting program, which incorporates other initiatives to form well-planned, frequent, and consistent prospect/customer touch.

The relationship began with an initiative to clean the client’s prospect database goaled with improving the contact content. The cleanup was executed in a prioritized manner, based on account assignments and target titles. IntelliTarget performed primary research and cleaned the database. During the initial cleansing of the database, the client asked IntelliTarget to assist in driving attendees to their large users’ meeting -- one of the strategic events that was being maintained during this time. The meeting included users and targeted prospects. After the completion of the users’ conference, IntelliTarget made all database changes found during the program.

With the first two projects launched and the users’ meeting completed, the client made a strategic cost cutting decision to outsource their entire inside selling function, which was goaled with prospecting - finding and qualifying opportunities. IntelliTarget was engaged to build and sustain pipelines through prospecting and appointment setting. Some existing accounts targeted for growth were assigned to IntelliTarget by the client’s sales management team. In addition, IntelliTarget was tasked with finding new business within the client’s general target database.

Lead generation was an important part of the client’s overall strategy. They continually conducted high-level lead generation campaigns focused on identifying those companies in specific industries and individuals that could have interest but were not yet qualified suspects. These suspects had always come from a variety of sources, including regular outbound telephone campaigns, direct mail, trade show follow-up, events, and web inquiries. Each project focused on a single product area with key messages. As part of the effort, the client chose the accounts for each program and provided them to IntelliTarget. IntelliTarget focused on extending the activity and began qualifying suspects to better integrate the lead generation efforts with inside sales prospecting efforts. IntelliTarget and the client designed the program so that the lead generation programs would provide a base of trained prospectors for future prospecting program expansion.

IntelliTarget assumed responsibility for performing each function – database cleansing, event optimization, lead generation, and prospecting – and marrying them into a unified approach. Putting them under one roof and working within the client’s CRM facilitated close collaboration and coordination.

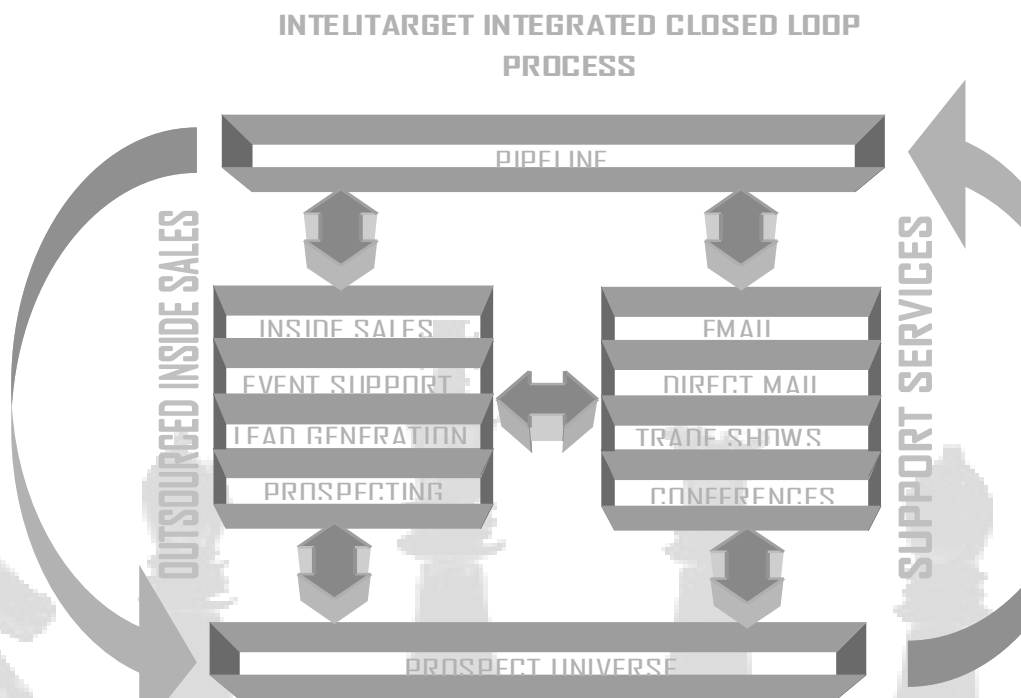


The current initiative

The objectives of this closely-aligned approach are as follows:

- ❑ Generate a continuous stream of qualified prospects to create revenue for the short and long term.
- ❑ Make up for some of the decreased efforts in other marketing areas – optimize the remaining programs while increasing outbound prospect development.
- ❑ Unify the message and the voice to the prospect.
- ❑ Utilize the most cost effective methodology for qualifying and developing the prospect.
- ❑ Focus client selling efforts on those opportunities that have been well qualified.
- ❑ Capture all prospecting information in a single database, which is continuously updated.
- ❑ Gain an understanding of the market through readily available analytics developed jointly by the client and IntelliTarget.

The IntelliTarget Closed Loop methodology employed for all projects links all the individual initiatives together so that each benefits from the other. Each of the associated activities is optimized by the other functions/initiatives. The following diagram illustrates at a high level how the process is structured.

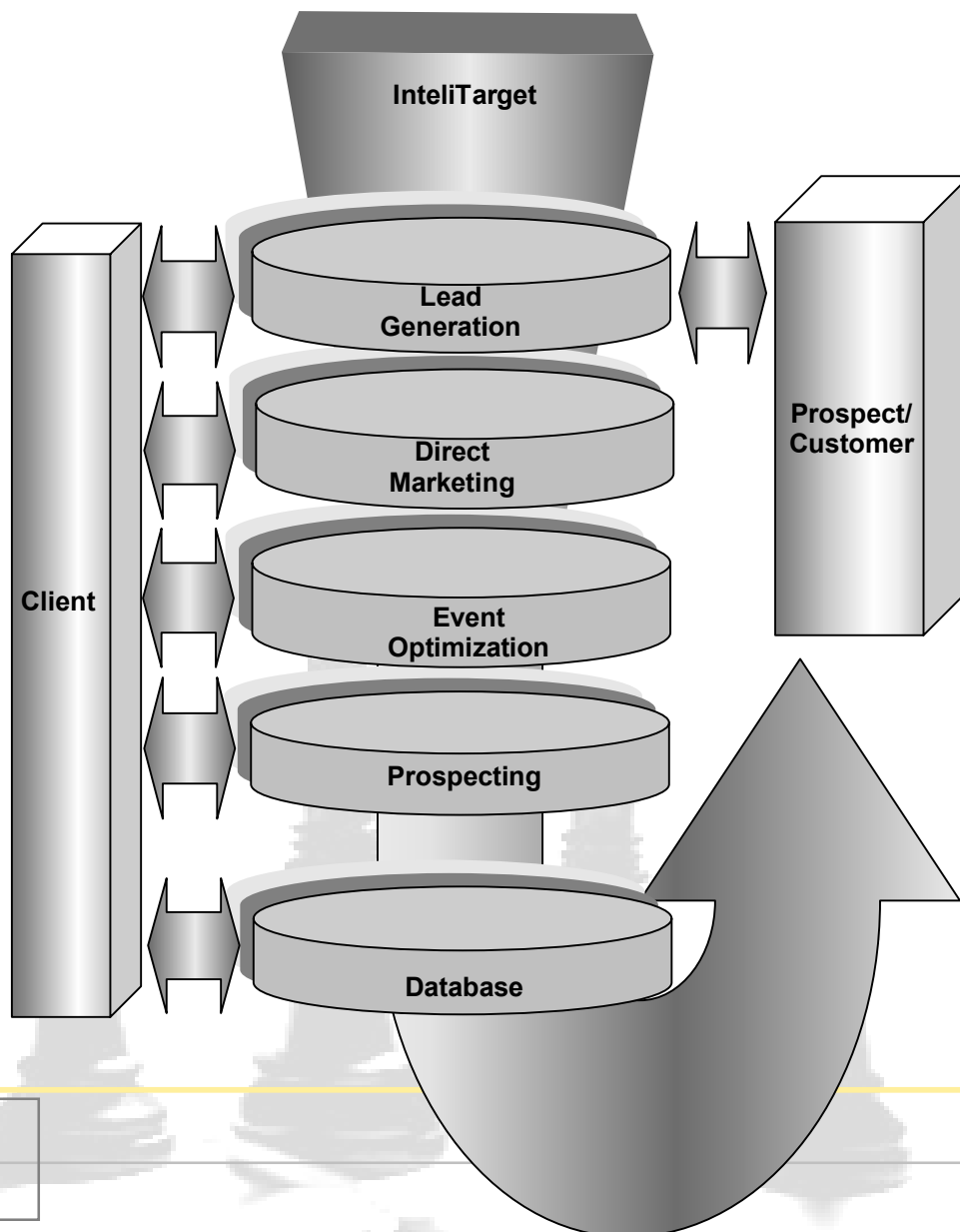


The closed loop nature of this methodology produces very clear benefits:

- ❑ Expertise and insight are developed as the initiative proceeds
- ❑ Database and pipeline analysis provide the ability to hone, focus, and prioritize
- ❑ Event-based programs capitalize on growing pipelines
- ❑ Ultimately, the sales cycle is compressed
- ❑ A database is kept current to further enhance all programs and cut marketing costs

The following diagram illustrates the functional interrelationships all managed by IntelliTarget and the touch points with the client. Every one of the functions ultimately drives data collection and refinement for touching the prospect.

The marrying of all these activities assures a cost effective frequent and consistent touch with the prospect base and a constant flow of new leads and prospects.



Technology:

The software platform for the initiative is web-based and is utilized by the IntelliTarget database staff, lead generation staff, prospecting staff (CAMs), and the client's field sale people. This allows for close tracking of the opportunities as well as affording management the opportunity to view all activity associated with finding, qualifying, and bringing the prospect through the pipeline to the point of closure. There is complete visibility to the CAMs' activity, and that of the sales representative.

An inherent problem with CRM tools is the pushback from sales people. By utilizing the tool to house the developing pipeline and as a daily activity management tool for the CAMs, the sale people are naturally drawn to it. In addition, the CAM is focused on feedback and therefore works with the sales organization to keep the information updated.

An added benefit is the reporting and analytics that are available to management. They can track activity as well as understand the progress that has been made in the selling cycle, demographics, etc. The client worked with IntelliTarget to define key metrics. They then built this into their CRM tool for use by IntelliTarget's staff. All analytics are generated on a live basis, and available continuously to all users with customizable access rights. IntelliTarget's staff participates in this process by populating the key data fields and reviewing key statistics periodically with the client. Mutual discussions about these metrics lead to strategic discussions on direction, then to tactical plans that the client and IntelliTarget deploy.

Database:

The database is the foundation of the initiative and it is contained within the web-based CRM technology. As a result of all activities, the database is constantly developed, updated, and augmented:

- ❑ **Lead generation activities** are comprised of inbound inquiries and outbound follow-up. Following high-level qualification, new suspects are added to the database where they can refresh and augment the suspect base being developed in the prospecting and pipeline development initiative.
- ❑ **Event optimization activities** draw on the database in order to establish appointments and meetings at events. After the event, the information "Leads" are qualified through the lead generation activity and added to the database when appropriate.
- ❑ All **direct marketing campaigns** draw from the database for their contact, address, and email information. Database updates are made when changes are discovered as a result of these campaigns.
- ❑ The **prospecting activity** is centered in the database and focused on refining and qualifying/disqualifying contacts and companies. Ultimately, the task is to develop the database into a qualified pipeline for the client.



With every activity, the database becomes more robust. It also provides the basis for the reporting and analytics in the web-based CRM tool.

Lead Generation:

The lead generation effort is a cost effective way to separate/qualify/disqualify potential opportunity. This function handles all inbound inquiries including:

- Web Inquiries
- Bingo Cards
- Trade Show Follow-Up
- Direct Marketing Follow-Up

In some cases, the lead generation function sets appointments and meetings for events as well.

As each of these tasks are performed, the lead generation function takes the appropriate action with the information, which could include entering it into the database, sending information for further follow-up, passing the prospect to the prospecting function, or disqualifying the prospect.

The function is extremely important to the overall initiative and assists the client in optimizing and more accurately tracking which qualified “leads” are produced from activities like trade shows, events, and direct marketing programs.

Event Optimization:

This activity can be executed either as part of the prospecting initiative, or sometimes within the lead generation portion of the program. Either way, it is purposed with proactively optimizing the opportunity to secure business at events and efficiently following up and qualifying inquiries that are the result of new inbound contact at the event.

It is difficult to understand and quantify the relationship between expense and return associated with events and shows. In addition, it is difficult to know if cold inquiries at shows are indeed cold or the result of some other connection made by the client.

The event optimization activity increases productivity of the client’s representatives attending the event by filling their calendars with appointments and meetings while they are at the event. The information acquired as a result of event optimization is captured in the database for further follow-up and other types of campaigns.

Post-show follow up takes all inquiries that come to the event and quickly (within two weeks of the event) follows-up on each and qualifies, disqualifies, and records other activities that have touched that particular show-based lead.

Ultimately, the activity feeds the prospecting activity and creates pipeline opportunities when appropriate, and also tracks attendance and inquiry and the correlation to the contact. It creates a very realistic method for understanding the positive impact event attendance has had and the correlation between pipeline development and revenue generation.



Prospecting:

The prospecting portion of this program is an outbound pipeline generation program that is primarily focused on geographic accounts and some vertical focus. The prospecting engine is focused on cold calling, mapping accounts, looking for new opportunities in the database, building relationships in target accounts, cultivating opportunities, and positioning the client as a solid solutions provider.

The primary targets are identified accounts and/or territories, and the primary goal is to drive opportunity. Other targets can be developed by the CAMs based on key profiles of likely prospects. Prospecting was designed to be a stand-alone activity, which cultivated the pipeline and developed the database iteratively as the activity was performed.

The prospecting effort is enhanced by the marriage with the lead generation, direct marketing, and event optimization. This close association has created a much warmer database and, therefore, has compressed the prospect generation timeframe.

The prospecting engine is the recipient of all qualified opportunities resulting from all the other activities. Their assigned prospect/suspect bases are enriched with new "leads" that have been pre-qualified at a high level by the lead generators.

The client's sales staff supports existing clients and follows up on all opportunities found by IntelliTarget through all of these processes.

Direct Marketing:

This component of the program has benefited from a more robust database, resulting in better-focused direct mail and email. The numbers of bounces and undeliverable mail have decreased dramatically as a result of the constant work that is being done in the database by the prospectors and the lead generators.

Email has become an excellent tool to assist the prospecting and lead generation effort. By monitoring email, we are able to prioritize prospecting and lead generation activity by looking at opens, click-thrus, downloads etc. When a suspect/prospect is found to have taken actions that indicate interest, the contacts are cued so that they can be touched immediately.

Summary:

The combination of all the prospect generation activities has increased the efficiency of each individual component. In addition, the overall power of customer touch is enhanced because of the tight coordination. Few companies so closely link all of these activities; and because of this, cross-activity awareness creates a cost effective, smarter, highly coordinated, more effective, and consistent interface with the prospect.

