

The Missing Piece of Marketing Automation: **Your Phone**



What matters most is the strategy and skill with which you use it.

> **ifbyphone**[®]

It's an ambition for businesses all over

the globe: discover a way to market your company more effectively and efficiently. While there may not be a perfect solution to the marketing challenges faced by businesses, there are concrete steps you can take right now to help you reach more prospects and to convert those leads into sales. The most important tool for this effort is one you already own: your phone. Like any tool, what matters most is the strategy and skill with which you use it.

The Challenge

Marketing has become increasingly complex, with a variety of approaches and techniques all promising results. The successful marketer is now expected to produce great email campaigns, build a comprehensive SEO strategy, develop a strong social media presence, and construct a fantastic website. But, with the focus on

all these projects, customers and prospects get lost in day-to-day execution. For example, can you identify which prospects on your website might actually lead to a sale? Is there a way to learn which visitors have been on the

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site before or also read your newsletter? Can you ascertain which keywords a customer typed into Google before landing on your page?



The Solution

The answer to all these questions is yes, but it takes a management system to track and make sense of all the different interactions a customer might have with your company. For this reason, the latest trend in marketing is automation. At its most basic level, marketing automation organizes your marketing efforts ensuring meaningful communication with leads. Marketing automation also provides the personalized and customizable initiatives needed to nurture and convert those leads into sales.

The benefits of marketing automation are clear. According to research conducted by the Aberdeen Group,¹ marketing automation can:

- Increase your sales conversion rate by driving a higher percentage of qualified leads to your sales team
- Decrease your cost per lead as much as 85 percent by nurturing your existing leads

- Increase revenue earned per sales representative, thereby freeing up resources for other projects
- Increase the value of the leads already in your database up to 23 percent

Despite these advantages, only 22 percent of Ifbyphone customers surveyed use marketing automation. There are many reasons why companies have yet to adopt marketing automation, including fears regarding cost and time, perceived difficulties in learning a new set of processes, and a simple lack of knowledge of what marketing automation can do.

The Missing Piece: Your Phone

The first step toward strengthening your marketing is making better use of a tool that is already on your desk: the phone. If your business already uses a marketing automation system, the phone is often an underappreciated part of the automation equation. And if your company doesn't yet use marketing automation, there is no better and simpler place to start with marketing automation than by using the tool you already use every day. In part because of all the marketing advances outlined above, businesses often take the

phone for granted. We forget that simply *talking* with your customers can effectively market and grow your business. In fact, says Tony Hsieh, CEO of Zappos, a company celebrated for its savvy branding and customer service expertise, “We believe the telephone is one of the best branding devices out there. We have the customer’s undivided attention for 5-10 minutes – compare that with a 30-second Super Bowl ad when the viewers are probably not paying full attention. If we get the interaction right, what we’ve found is that customers remember that for a very long time and tell their friends and family about us.”²



Standard marketing automation enables you to send email directly to your leads or record an interaction in your CRM. These methods are good, but they're not great. Emails pile up quickly and aren't always dealt with immediately. And, your sales team isn't always plugged into the CRM tool. If you can't respond quickly – in a matter of minutes – your leads won't turn into sales. Speed is the name of the game when it comes to converting leads into sales. And, nothing is faster than your phone.

Why the Phone Matters

There is a set of very compelling research that points to the importance of interacting over the phone. Let's start with a number that emphasizes the importance of speed in responding to customer interactions. According to Leads360, a sale is 22 times more likely to happen when you make contact within the first five minutes. It is crucial to respond to a customer the moment when her interest is at its peak.³ As Figure 1 demonstrates, waiting even ten minutes after a lead interacts with your business can dramatically decrease your chances of converting that lead to a sale. Sure, you might contact a lead through an automated email or by posting a note on your CRM, but why take the chance that these communications take a bit too long? The safe move to talk to your leads at the right time is to use the phone in your marketing.

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But, customers don't just care about speed. A large percentage of customers still trust the phone more than the Internet for their purchases. This is clearly established by AdInsight

research: more than 43 percent of all Internet search sales conversions happen over the phone.⁴ This means that even as consumers are taking their research online, nearly half still prefer to buy over the phone. Going back to Tony Hsieh's idea of the phone as branding tool, the National Association of Realtors has found that one lost call can result in three potential missed transactions – you not only miss one lead but also the chance to make an impression good enough to lead to referrals.

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Tony Hsieh, CEO of Zappos

A Simple Example of the Phone at Work

Let's say you run a senior care center providing non-medical services to seniors. These services include overnight assistance, bill payment, and cleaning services. More often than not, your customer is the child of a senior and not the senior himself. Your marketing strategy centers on Web advertising, commuter train station signage, and a corporate Web site. You know it isn't easy for the child of a senior to insist on providing assistance, but you're also aware that once the agreement between senior and child is reached, the child tends to decide on a

Initial Action to Phone Call Response Time

25,000

Figure 1

Research conducted by Inside Sales shows how important it is to make contact with a qualified lead as fast as you can. Contacting a lead in the five minutes after they come to your website, open up an email, or download your whitepaper leads to a dramatic increase in conversion. Waiting just 10 minutes after your lead takes an action drastically decreases your chances of converting that lead to a sale.

5,000



care provider quickly. Other than advertising, how can you communicate with these potential customers when they're ready?

Stop the Research Train at Your Station

Let's say your advertising worked. A prospect saw your sign in the train station, jotted down your company name, and – once she arrived in the office – searched on Google for your business. Once she finds your site, she decides to complete and submit a contact

form. Now, what's the next step? Since today's prospect are accustomed to online research, unless you reach her quickly, she'll simply move on to the next Google listing.

Stop the research train by turning these clickers into callers. Simply ask for her phone number on the form. When she submits the form, Ifbyphone analyzes the form, automatically calls your sales rep, "whispers" the form content, and then Ifbyphone can automatically call the prospect.

Instead of letting her move to the next station, you connect her with a live sales rep literally seconds after submitting the form. Not only will you reach prospects within the "magic" five-minute mark, but you'll also have an educated representative on the phone – this is how you boost sales.

Manage, Measure, and Automate Phone Calls

This example is just one way to integrate your phone deeper into your marketing process. Your phone is now key to reaching customers at the very moment when their interest is highest. What do you need to move forward? You need to manage, measure, and automate your phone calls and voice interactions. Here's how.

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Manage

To effectively manage hot leads you need to forward incoming calls to the right person at the right time. In one case, you need the caller to connect with you immediately. Using advanced call

forwarding you have the flexibility for your phone to ring in succession or simultaneously in your office, on your cell phone, or at your home number – literally anywhere.

In another case, the caller doesn't need to reach you, but needs to reach the best person for their issue.



From Theory To Practice: Case Study Automated Calls Save Time and Money for Go Configure

Go Configure, Inc. is a product delivery and installation company. They saw an opportunity to increase efficiency while reducing expenses by automating the five phone calls their in-house staff was making for each delivery. Using Ifbyphone's outbound IVR technology, Go Configure automated calls to suppliers, drivers, and customers regarding each delivery.

As a result of automating the notification-and-confirmation process, Go Configure has "had the opportunity to grow our business without increasing our staffing expense," said Dawn Rivera, Director of Operations for Go Configure. Overall, Ifbyphone provided an easy and reliable outbound IVR service which saved them over \$70,000 per year.

Call routing manages incoming calls according to your business needs. You can set up a virtual call center to distribute leads to remote agents, direct toll-free callers to the nearest store, or prequalify leads before routing the call to your sales team. It's easy to forward incoming calls to anyone in your business.

Measure

Marketers are accustomed to measuring online activity like clicks, visits, and online conversion. But if that's all you're measuring, you're missing a good portion of your interactions. Online marketing efforts, sophisticated and innovative as they are, leave a series of

From Theory To Practice: Case Study DPS Provides Value-Added Service, Reduces Costs by 20 Percent

Dealer Product Services (DPS), Inc. is a provider of marketing solutions to over 1,600 automotive retail clients across North America. DPS wanted to integrate voice broadcasting into its clients' CRM systems to automate phone calls to prospects, customers, and vendors, advertising warranty renewals, oil changes, and other services.

DPS quickly and cost-effectively integrated its clients' CRM systems with Ifbyphone's interactive automated calling technology. The overall goals were to save money, increase efficiency, and improve customer service. And, it worked. DPS realized a cost savings of 20 percent.

"We chose Ifbyphone due to their flexibility and their programming expertise," said Tim O'Neal, President and CEO of DPS. "They have helped us integrate our systems, streamline processes, and automate all of our call delivery."

essential questions unanswered. Which particular advertisement led to the incoming call from a customer this morning? Which keyword did she type into Google before making the call? Which Web page was a customer browsing when he called for additional information?

There's now a simple way to answer these questions. Instead of using one telephone number for all your advertising, use unique numbers in each individual advertisement or with each campaign. This makes it simple to track and measure the effectiveness of each advertisement, because you'll receive concrete information on the quantity and quality of calls generated by a particular ad. You can also associate phone numbers with specific search engine keywords. This gives you a more complete picture of keyword effectiveness by measuring the offline conversions (calls) prompted by search ads. With real-time reporting and the option to display results inside your Google Analytics reports, you can focus your efforts and budget on your most effective marketing.

***More than 43 percent
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over the phone.***

AdInsight study

Automate

Consider this: what projects would you have your employees tackle if they were available for an extra five hours per week? What about ten hours per week? This dream can become reality. By automating appointment reminders, delivery confirmations, or accounts receivable calls, you eliminate the need for these labor-intensive activities. Free your staff's time so they undertake more essential projects.

You can even send an automated phone survey to your customers. Ask your customers five quick questions on how well the job was handled or how their interactions with your staff-person went. Gather and analyze results in real-time. These open lines of communications show customers you are truly interested in improving their experiences while demonstrating the professionalism of your entire operation.

From Theory To Practice: Case Study FundNET Systems Reduces Costs, Saves Time, and Enhances Client Interaction

FundNET systems provides web-based communication software for independent financial services professionals. President Jonathan Hunt wanted an automated way to increase support for FundNET's clients. They also needed to ensure that all support requests received via phone were automatically entered and tracked in Zendesk, the company's help desk software.

Ifbyphone's solution was ideal because it easily integrated with best-in-class solutions like Zendesk. When an advisor calls FundNET, Ifbyphone and FundNET integrate for a great customer experience:

- When financial advisors call FundNet, they are asked to enter their FundNET ID number and leave a detailed voice message. Ifbyphone transcribes the voice mail which then ends up logged as a Zendesk support ticket.
 - The advisor then receives an email confirming the support request that includes the transcription and a link to the audio recording. This notifies the advisor that FundNET has begun working on the question.
 - In addition, when prospective clients call FundNET, Ifbyphone routes calls to FundNET sales right away – wherever the representative is located at the time on any phone, anywhere, even to Skype.
- By using Ifbyphone, FundNET reduced their phone support costs by almost 80 percent while adding substantial functionality. Now, all of FundNET's phone support requests are automatically logged in Zendesk. Because Zendesk is also integrated with FundNET's CRM system, FundNET now has end-to-end visibility of client requests throughout all key systems.

Conclusion

By managing, measuring, and automating voice interactions with your customers, you can measure the effectiveness of your marketing, provide your customers with a greater level of service, and save the time of your employees – the real goals of marketing automation.

All these benefits can be achieved starting with your organization's existing phones, staff and expertise. You'll gain valuable insight to not only sharpen your marketing but make more educated decisions about how to move forward with other marketing automation tools to ultimately convert leads to sales.

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Improve Customer Satisfaction

You can quickly measure customer satisfaction with short phone surveys. These cost-effective surveys are more likely to give you a useful response because they occur soon after the service was provided. As you plan your customer satisfaction survey, it's important to keep the questions simple yet informative.

Try these out:

- How satisfied are you with the service you received?
- How satisfied are you with your interactions with our staff-person?
- How satisfied are you with our company overall?
- How likely are you to use our service again?
- How likely are you to recommend our company to others?



About Ifbyphone

Ifbyphone is a voice based marketing automation platform that helps companies drive sales, reduce collection cycles, measure marketing effectiveness and improve customer experience.

Ifbyphone provides a suite of software-as-a-service voice applications for ad tracking, call notifications, call forwarding, call automation and interactive voice response (IVR). These technologies help you manage, measure and automate voice communications. It's easy to implement the entire platform of voice applications through the online portal.

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