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TRAFFIC - BIG FISH

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Who is using Thomas Regional? Always a good question. During June, these are some of the many companies that looked up and/or called my advertisers on ThomasRegional.com! If you want a shot at doing business with these kinds of companies then let's talk!

TRAFFIC - WEBSITE CLICK THRU'S

With a properly set up program, Thomas Regional does indeed drive quality traffic to advertisers websites! On average last month, 40% of all views to my clients' information on ThomasRegional.com resulted in a click thru to their website! The lowest click thru ratio was 24% while two clients exceeded a 50% click thru rate!

How does this compare? Banner advertising on the big search engines gets about a 1% click thru rate. Paid positioning on the big non-industrial search engines does exceptionally well if it achieves a 3-4% click thru! Now considering that web surfers on ThomasRegional.com are already pre-filtered industrial users, they're showing pretty strong interest if they proceed to click thru to your website!

Now that they're getting to your site, you have to think about your content and the quality of your site!

CONTENT IS KING!

TRAFFIC + CONTENT = CONTACT = OPPORTUNITY!

You need good content and traffic! You can't have one without the other if you want to be successful!

Now, erase your memory. Put yourself in the shoes of your potential buyers. Go to your website. Is it attractive? Is it cluttered? Is it informative? Is it easy to find the most important things? Can they be found fast? Even if they can be found, what next? How easy is it for a customer to contact you? How easy is it for them to buy? Do they have to cut and paste product numbers or can they click on a "buy" button? Do potential buyers have to calculate their own subtotals, shipping, totals? Is your phone number easy to find? Your fax? Your email? Will potential buyers want to bookmark your site? Would other website owners in related businesses want to link to your site? Does your website facilitate the buying process? Does it provide the information necessary to answer their buying questions so that they might actually contact you?

Today's web savvy buyers look for potential suppliers online. If they don't find what they're looking for on your site, they won't call you, they'll just move on to the next company. Adios! You just lost them and you didn't even know they were there! So you have to have in-depth, well organized, informative, relevant and easy to navigate information on your website!

THE ART OF THE PHONE

DON'T LET THEM OFF THE HOOK!

(by Brian Baer – BaerMarketingNetwork.com)

It's hard enough to get people on the phone these days. Over 70% of calls terminate in voicemail (see last newsletter - June 2003). So when you actually get your target on the phone, don't let them off the hook! Probe, delve, and be persistent! Know what you want and have a plan to get there!

Most importantly, once you have the target on the phone, get a commitment! Don't let them say "call me back in a few months." You and the target both know that 98% of the time that there is nothing magical about "a few months"; it's a load of garbage! They're either not willing to say "no" or they don't have enough good reasons yet to take a chance to say yes to the next step.

If they say "I'm really busy for a few weeks, call me back", then you respond confidently with "Let's set a tentative appointment right now and I'll confirm it with you when it gets closer. Is the 26th or 27th better for you?" If they're interested, they'll commit. If they still ask for a callback, you're still in the ballgame.

But at that point you have to get very frank with them. "I understand you're busy so you can probably appreciate that I'm booked pretty solid as well. That is why we need to set a time right now, okay?" Hopefully they'll say okay! If they still hem and haw, then you have to be even more frank by saying something such as..."I'll be happy to call you back and I'll be very persistent about it. But if you're not interested, just tell me so...I don't want to be a pest. Otherwise, let's set a time, okay?" This statement works very well.

You're inviting them to tell you "no" and making it easier for them! If they're not interested they'll usually tell you no at this

point. That's okay! At least it's a resolved situation rather than in limbo forever and you'll know its time to move on to other targets!

If you're a jobber and you're trying to get in on the bidding for a prospect's next custom manufacturing job, then you have to do something similar. Don't simply accept "yeah, we'll include you on the next project we bid out." Get details! "When do you anticipate that happening? Is there something already in the pipeline? Are you the best person to contact about that particular project? Is there anything you need from me right now to make sure that I'm on your next bidder's list? And by all means, write down all of the person's contact information and details!

Your plan must have well thought out questions that get a prospect talking about their business and their challenges. Then you need to repeat their challenges back to them and interject that maybe you can do something to help them!

That step might include sending you their next RFQ. Perhaps that step will be a face-to-face appointment. Know what you want before the call! In summary:

1. Prepare good, pertinent, delving questions that get a prospect to speak about their challenges. Only ask about challenges that you can fix!
2. Know what you want as your next step! An appointment? An RFQ? Send a sample? An order?
3. If you have them on the phone, get a commitment one way or another! It's too hard to get them back on the phone!

Good luck! Go call and don't let them off the hook!

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www.baermarketingnetwork.com/logos.html.

POLL RESULTS JUNE 2003

Thank you for participating in our June poll about cold calling habits! There were a few interesting results which I'll share.

Eighty percent of respondents said that their main obstacle to more phone prospecting was that they can't ever reach their intended target due to voice mail and phone-tag. Twenty percent said they simply don't have enough time to phone prospect.

Eighty percent of you also said that although you leave voice mails, you seldom get a response. For the 20% of you who said you get a lot of return calls from your voicemail, please share your tricks and I'll give you some free press!

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