

Start My Consulting Business

Stop whining. Take action. *Change your life.*

Client Pipeline Mastery

Reach Decision Makers

Homework

In this week's homework, you'll be creating your plan to target and reach out to your top 100 prospects. As you work through the homework, remember that marketing is not a single event, but a process, and the more consistent and persistent your efforts, the sooner you'll be rewarded.

In addition, though I talk about your top 100 prospects, you may only be able to identify 30, or 50, or 80 prospects. Don't worry if you can't find 100. The point is to identify those top prospects that represent dream clients to you, then persistently target them.

1. Create your list of criteria you'll use for identifying your top 100 prospects.

I mentioned that my main criteria for my own business with law firms is that the firms need to have roughly 30-60 attorneys (that's my sweet spot) and that the firm is tech savvy (e.g., they already spend money on enterprise software and the partners all use smartphones, laptops, etc.).

What are the criteria you could use to identify your ideal 100 prospects? What criteria would filter them into your ideal 100 list from your general prospect list?

If there's any initial quick qualifying you can do with each prospect, do it (e.g., quick call w/1 or 2 questions that the receptionist can answer). This will focus your efforts to identify only those prospects most likely to be high-value.

2. Create your list of ideal 100 prospects.

Using what you learned in last week's module, add prospects to your list to build your ideal 100. To help get additional market/niche data, you can peruse sources like the following to get details on your niche and benchmarks for businesses that are similar to your prospects:

- <http://www.census.gov/econ/esp> (you may need to dig deep to get useful data; it may depend on your industry)
- <http://www.bizbuysell.com>
- <http://www.bizben.com>

3. Identify your target person at each prospect company.

Who specifically will you target at each prospect company? What's their role in the organization? Their role will inform your marketing, since their role in the organization will guide you toward the kinds of topics, goals, and objectives they're most interested in.

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4. Choose the subject/topic for your education-based deliverable.

Based on what you now know about your prospects and your target decision maker, what topic(s) will you use for your education-based deliverable? Remember, your deliverable could be anything from an email series; a webinar; brief pdf report (for God's sake, no white papers...); or short video critique, case study, or demo.

What topic would be relevant, interesting, and compelling to your prospects, and would tie in with your services? This will be your core story, and it'll create a common thread throughout your campaign. Create a compelling headline for your email or direct mail outreach.

5. Create your education-based deliverable.

Remember, you're creating something that's valuable to your prospects--and is tied to your services. Whatever the topic you choose, back it up with sound research, data, and trends that inevitably lead to the conclusion you want prospects to make. Focus on market-related data, not data about the features of your services. Give people information they can use--regardless of whether you end up working with them.

Sources of info:

- Google search (of course)
- Financial periodicals, such as Inc. and Fortune
- Industry-specific sites and periodicals
- <http://www.hoovers.com> (much of the information on this site is paid, but is sometimes compiled from government data which you may be able to find for free)
- <http://www.statisticbrain.com/business>
- <http://www.bizstats.com>

6. Create your calendar for implementation.

Be as specific as possible as you calendar tasks that you'll need to accomplish to implement your campaign.

- When will you have your education thingy finished?
- When will you send out your email/direct mail pieces, and what will each be?
- When will you call to follow up on each email/direct mail piece?
- Aim to send something (email/direct mail) about 1-4x/month.

7. Write and practice your phone pitch.

Create your phone script before you set out to make your follow-up calls. Plan follow-up calls after each item you send, whether email or direct mail, since the mailings give you something specific to discuss with prospects.

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After you create your phone script, practice it. Make absolutely sure you sound authoritative and confident--that's arguably the most important piece in getting through gatekeepers and being able to talk with prospects.

Remember: the goal of your call is to schedule another call or in-person meeting. During those follow-up calls/meetings, you can go more in depth and/or deliver your education-based marketing, while building rapport, credibility, and trust, and always providing value.

8. Implement your campaign.

Put your plan into action, and start marking items off your list as you do them.

Along the way, as you're sending out email/direct mail and calling prospects, pay attention to feedback and the results & response you're getting. Use that information to iterate and improve your efforts.