Customer Engagement

B2B LeadsCon NY held its conference the last week of August. This conference specifically focused on the unique challenges of the B2B lead generation marketer. It typically targets specialized industries, job functions or accounts that must be qualified, nurtured and turned over to a sales team. This event attracted 1,700+ marketing professionals. What caught my eye was a panel that shared “Top Customer Engagement Tips”. Here are a few of those ideas on ways you can connect with your B2B customer base as summarized by Beth Negus Viveiros.

Cyndi Greenglass, senior vice president, strategic solutions, Diamond Marketing Solutions:

1. **Pick up the phone:** B2B telemarketing is really working well. Not just for lead generation, but as part of the overall cultivation strategy. We have seen success with international cultivation and nurturing through a highly personalized outreach. The phone call is a surprisingly low tech, high value touch. This outreach builds engagement and can allow you to identify obstacles and barriers to sale.

2. **Gamification is not just for your teenager:** Gamification is not just a buzz word, it is working for—and in some cases replacing—loyalty programs. B2B marketers are increasingly using gamification techniques to decrease abandon rates on surveys and forms, and to keep executives on their websites. They are also replacing traditional points based transaction loyalty by motivating and rewarding engagement activity.

3. **Become a video gamer—or hire one:** Follow the money! Product placement in games has been working for a while, but has not been embraced by B2B marketers. Remember that your Millennial B2B customers, buyers and prospects are active gamers and view eSports as entertainment. Think about how you can use product placement in-game to build recognition among key target audiences in manufacturing, technology and even operations. In fact, health care, insurance, and group benefits providers are even looking at how to use it as a way to build awareness among their broker channels.

4. **Progressive profiling:** Do it, period. Today we are seeing less and less data capture upfront, and more and more unfiltered inquiries entering the pipeline. Without progressive profiling, you run the risk of harvesting coal along with the diamonds and passing unqualified leads to the sales team. You also need a way to capture over time valuable contact information so that you can execute multi-channel, integrated communications.
5. **Get out of analysis hell**: Pick three things you want to know, and stick with the basics. You will be surprised how much you can learn. I would start with the goals for a campaign and did the effort meet them. This should be a financial, measurable metric. Then ask yourself, what worked best and why, and what failed or didn’t meet expectations? And lastly, what will you do differently next time? Make sure your answers are insights from your data reporting and analysis and not opinions.

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