
Avoid the common pitfalls in choosing the right call center for your outsourcing needs.

Definitions: Not everyone has the same definition of a qualified lead or a potential customer. Make sure your call center understands and agrees that the only qualified leads and appointments are ones that increase sales. In other words, they are people who are in the market right now to purchase and use your products/services.

Location Matters: Certain projects such as inside sales, appointment setting, research and lead generation are your company's first impression with potential customers. These are the times when U.S.-based callers are the professionals to turn to. Do your homework and ask questions. A "bargain" call center could be outsourcing the majority of your work overseas.

Process: Did you know that many call centers make their money by blowing through your list of contacts as quickly as possible and by keeping people on the phone until they agree to accept information and then send these to you as leads? Make sure you have confidence that the call center will handle all calls professionally and find you leads that are people in the market to purchase your products now. And, that they have a follow-up process that increases your potential business while minimizing any complaints.

Turnover: You are in business for the long haul. Make sure the call center you choose is too. Check their turnover rates for their employees. The last thing you need is to have multiple people affecting your campaign because they have to keep hiring new people for it.

Service: No call center campaign will go exactly as planned because you can't predict what humans will do with 100% accuracy. Make sure your call center is not on autopilot. A professional call center should have an account services representative available to you and providing you with constant feedback – you are not just paying for callers, but for their professional expertise in call center campaigns. You should be hearing from an account rep daily to start and weekly for updates. They should be available for your inquiries as well.

Expertise: The call center you choose should be experts at providing your information in a clear and simple matter. They should be able to reach the people who are interested in your product/service now and get you the customers you need to increase your business.

Product Presentation Script: One of the most important parts of the call center campaign is the script or "pitch" that will be presented to your target audience. Make sure the call center you choose has the expertise needed to deliver a script that reaches decision makers.

Professionalism: Treat the call center as an extension of your company and make sure the call center treats your future customers the same way. If you require that your sales personnel or other executives are capable of speaking to C-level executives or professionals such as doctors and attorneys, then you should require that the call center you choose also hires professionals with those skills.

Accountability: It's your money that is funding this campaign. Make sure you can check for real-time reports that will show you not only hours per call but also contact rates, leads generated, cost per lead and anything else you may need.

References: There are many call centers out there with different approaches and different price points. This is one time to really check their references and make sure you are considering a call center that provides the service you need.