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Carl Davidson

LEADS

SALESPEOPLE

# What Comes First, Leads Or Salespeople?



*One of the hardest things for water equipment dealers is to make the jump from one-man operations to companies with sales staff.*

*One error they often make in this transition is believing they must have many leads before they can hire salespeople. While some leads are needed, salespeople will generate leads if properly trained and supervised.*

My experience with many dealers shows that dealerships should provide 33% to 50% of the leads for their staff and the salespeople should generate the rest. This article will discuss some ways to get those leads, even with a very small budget.

fee. If you set up your booth to generate appointments and train your sales team on how to book appointments at the show, your staff will get good appointments for an affordable cost.

## Bottlers & Appointment Setters

Bottlers are an inexpensive and sure-fire way to create business. I am talking about training people to knock on doors and pick up water samples, not to hang bags on doors. I recommend hiring people and training them to knock on doors in specific neighborhoods with a simple script:

“Hello, I am Sam from Acme Water and as part of our celebration of Pure Water Month, we are offering homeowners in your subdivision a \$120 professional water test at absolutely no cost. When was the last time you had your water professionally tested? Since it is no charge, now would be a good time to have it done. Fill up this bottle and we will do the testing and let you know the results.”

Using that script, bottlers can get about seven bottles per hour. If you pay the bottler \$2 per bottle, they will make an average of \$14 per hour. You should be able to get one appointment per 10 bottles and that means that your cost to get into a home is only about \$20. You can hire bottlers and get them started while you are training new sales staff. Then you will have appointments ready for them.

## Neighbors & Referrals

If you use these simple and inexpensive ways to get appointments, you will easily be able to give your staff

33%. Also, train them to call on four neighbors at every appointment.

They could say, “Hi, I am Fred from Acme Water. I was just next door with your neighbors Alice and John checking the quality of the water in their home. I have a few minutes before my next appointment and when that happens, the company allows me to do a \$120 professional audit of the water in a neighbor’s home at no charge. When was the last time you had your water professionally tested?”

In addition, set a policy that sales staff must get a set number of referrals at every demo and every sale. This will get your new sales team in the habit of multiplying the leads you give them.

## Conclusion

Waiting to hire salespeople until you have leads is counterproductive. It keeps the company at a small level because one person is just too busy to generate leads, so it appears that there are not enough leads to hire salespeople. The truth is that salespeople must create leads as part of what they bring to the party. If you create all the leads and give them to sales staff, what are they contributing?

There is nothing more profitable you can do than add a good salesperson to your staff. If an average salesperson sells eight systems per month and if you make \$1,500 per system, each salesperson is adding \$12,000 per month to your profit.

The main difference between bigger dealers and smaller dealers is that bigger dealers have more salespeople on the street. Every day they look for leads and do demonstrations. Don’t wait until you think times are perfect or you have enough leads. If you add good salespeople, the leads and sales will follow. *wqp*

For more information on this subject write in 1007 on the reader service card or visit [www.wqpmag.com/lm.cfm/wq011107](http://www.wqpmag.com/lm.cfm/wq011107).

Don’t wait until you have leads to hire new salespeople

## The Challenges of No Leads

If you provide no leads, it makes it harder to recruit good salespeople and harder to keep the ones you get. Providing some leads makes everything go better, but can you afford it? There are many ways you can train salespeople to generate leads and enjoy doing it. Even with a small budget, you can also generate some leads through outsourced telemarketing, small shows and hiring canvassers and appointment setters.

## Outsourced Telemarketing

Many dealers are generating inexpensive leads through outsourced telemarketing. Websites like [www.odesk.com](http://www.odesk.com) or [www.guru.com](http://www.guru.com) offer people who have telemarketing experience who will do telemarketing for a small fee. The Internet also offers inexpensive programs that can get lists of consumers by street with phone numbers. Prospecting by street means your appointments are closer together and allows you to target neighborhoods with a high likelihood of successful financing.

## Small Shows & Events

In every market, there are small shows, events, flea markets and malls where you can get a booth for a small