SKILLS | TRAINING

Why buy leads?

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Why buy leads when they're already sitting on your desk or in your briefcase, if you know where to find them?

Ah, the late 90s. It was a great time to be in network marketing, especially in the wellness industry. With all of the Internet stocks making people rich, they actually felt like they could direct their attention and money to taking care of their health. It was also the early days of the Internet. It's hard to believe that the commercial Internet is only going to be turning 12 this coming year. It was in the early days of sites like Monster.com and Headhunter.net (now part of what became Careerbuilders). All of the people I could reach on a part time basis to build the business in my local area or any target community I chose were right at my finger tips in these free databases and other areas. That's how I went about building my team.

What I learned in the process turned out to be some very valuable lessons.

> ***First, job changers mostly are still looking for jobs, not business opportunities.***

So before you decide you want to tackle a bunch of resumes off the Internet, keep this in mind, though if you are targeting certain types of professionals that have a natural affinity to your market, they might still be good sources, as long as you quickly qualify them.

Second, having some background on a person makes it easier to call them, so it's not as fearful.

When you can start talking about common experiences or compliment someone for certain accomplishments, they are much more inclined to speak with you.

There are other areas to gather background information besides reading a resume, but this made it easy for me.

Third, these sources can disappear very quickly. You need to stay organized and on top of the data, often writing down the information you gather or copy and pasting it into word or excel files. The last thing you want to do is lose the golden goose.

Lastly, I actually started to see the potential of the information on people that was on the Internet to help me pick a group to approach and form a game plan where I had lots of people to follow up with. There is nothing that kills new people more than feeling like they don't have anyone they can call on with some degree of probability to getting that person involved, especially if they have exhausted their warm market, or are afraid to approach them in the first place.

Because I was so comfortable with using these online resume databases, I actually got a position as a corporate recruiter with a company I was with. The great thing there is they actually sent me to a couple courses that trained recruiters on how to find people for positions using Internet search engines and research techniques. What I saw from those classes was a strategy that could be applied to several fields of business development, especially network marketing.

The biggest challenge with some of these techniques is that you get so much data back, that there is no possible way for you to go through it all in a timely manner.

As with any form of marketing, the narrower you can define your

niche, the better. This helps you get fewer results so you can actually process the material, which is your goal.

The other challenge is that you need to think like a direct marketer, which can be learned.

I had many a six and seven figure industry earners tell me to *think globally but build locally*. I also was taught to go after business owners, because a lot of times, they already understand the inherent fundamentals to building a business, so you will have to teach them less. If your network marketing company happens to offer business-to-business products or services, then you are in an even better position, as business owners will normally spend gobs of money on things they believe will help their fledgling operation flourish. That's what you really want in a product line; rabid, hungry customers.

One of the best things to use the Internet for is finding local contacts.

There are a number of specific search terms and some more complex strings that I like to use when honing in on a local niche, but one of the more effective strings for local people is using the zip code in addition to the keyword for the search. Most people will have some kind of an address on their web site, so this will often be an effective way of finding some local business owners that you can approach.

One thing you should know about zip codes is that most geographic areas will share the first 3 digits in common. In the Atlanta area, for example, 303 is normally the downtown area (or inside the Perimeter for you locals), 301 is more on the west side, 300 is north central and east and 302 is down south. This is not hard and fast, but you can actually use search engines to find lists of all of the zip codes in your local area, or just go to your post office to review the zip code book they have.

Both Google and Yahoo offer local sections, which you will see in the results when you include a zip code in the search box. You can actually submit your phone number and business to it for a free listing (hint, hint). Since businesses can post here without having a commercial line, these sites are often more current and offer more records than the yellow pages books you get periodically from your local carrier. Yahoo also allows people to post reviews. This is one example of how to get more information on a company, almost like reading a resume. For example, if you are in the health industry and want to target massage therapists or personal trainers, this would be a great place to start looking.

Some of these techniques can take a little time, so you need to be careful of when you use them.

The last thing you want to be doing is too much research during prime time when customers are available for you to be calling. You need to keep track of how much time it takes you to get each name, so that you are not squandering your most precious resource. I had several late nights where I would extract enough names to call the next day while maximizing that all important call time to increase the possible number of calls and appointments.

One thing you have to remember about MLM, it will always cost you something in time, money or both to get a new team member, and getting them is just the start in many cases. You will still need to continue to invest time and money in them to help them move through the steps to becoming a stronger, productive networker. Is it worth the investment? That is a question only you can answer for your particular situation. I just want you to keep that in mind when it comes to building your business as one of the most important numbers that regular business owners often track.

I have met too many people that buy leads, only not to call them or to see that the quality was so low and the leads were already over called.

Learning Internet research skills can essentially help you build

new lists whenever you need to, without having to spend any up front capital, like you run into with buying new leads.

Most of the people I have talked with in MLM are in a situation where they have to take money from their business almost right away, and often have more time than money, making these techniques even more helpful to getting their business off the ground.

Hollner Promotions offers a couple different programs in this arena. One that teaches the fundamentals of Internet research along with another that offers some niche traditional business programs that could allow you to better posture yourself within specific industries before you start approaching them about your opportunity. This way, you can add more value to the conversations and build stronger relationships.

Network marketing is all about the relationships you already have, build and can build. The more you know going in, the easier it gets.

John Hollner owns and operations Hollner Promotions, where he helps business owners and career professionals ask better, smarter questions to maximize their investments of time, energy and money in their work. Around the direct sales industry for over 12 years, as both a team builder and working on staff with several generic MLM trainers, he has some unique insights into the problems in the field and how several successful people have navigated through them. He has recently completed a comprehensive Internet research course for MLM reps to help them grow their business without draining their bank account. For more details, visit www.HollnerPromos.com or call 770-912-8774 for a free consultation and access to a free group strategy session. Ask about his referral program to earn free coaching or products.

Call our offices at 770-912-8774 to get a complete schedule of trainings and product offerings for Internet research programs or send an email to john@hollnerpromos.com for more information on effective Internet research, including links to important research sites to see how this might be the key to unlocking your business success.