BETTER BUSINESS BY PHONE

Better Business by Phone

A guide to effective telebusiness management

Valerie O'Dea

MACMILLAN
Business

© Valerie O'Dea 1998

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE.

Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The author has asserted her right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 1998 by
MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-333-66909-9 ISBN 978-1-349-14195-1 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-14195-1

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library.

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
07	06	05	04	03	02	01	00	99	98

Copy-edited and typeset by Povey-Edmondson
Tavistock and Rochdale, England

This book is dedicated to the memory of
Pauline Malindine
an excellent telebusiness trainer and sadly missed friend

Contents

<i>List of Tables and Figures</i>	xi
<i>Preface</i>	xii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiv

PART I PRACTICAL TELEBUSINESS AND THE COMPANY PLAN

1 Telebusiness and the Company Plan	3
What is telebusiness?	3
Who should read this book?	3
Marketing strategy	4
Relationship, direct and database marketing	6
Planning	6
Telemarketing applications	8
Investment	15
Image	16
Telemarketing strategy and plans	17
What do we wish to monitor?	17
Telemarketing and business processes	18
2 Telebusiness and the Product or Service	20
Voice and data choices	20
Software functions and features	22
In-house or outsourced?	23
Telemarketing from a database	24
Telemarketing to the masses is 'old hat'	24
Customer-loyalty and retention through telemarketing	25
Brand building and telemarketing	26
3 Telebusiness, the Sales Team and the Customer	27
Integration	27
Relationship marketing	27
The partnership approach	28
Major account management	29
Problem analysis and prevention	30
Major account analysis	30

Partnership solutions	31
The customer's view	32
Our view of the partnership	33
Loyalty schemes	34
Data sources and management	34
Marketing database activities	36
Marketing database evaluation	38
Product life-cycle	39
Field sales needs	40
Information flow	43
 PART II PRACTICAL TELEBUSINESS AND THE MANAGEMENT PLAN	
4 Telemarketing or Telesales?	47
Where do I start?	47
Call centres	48
Sales office automation	49
How does automation work?	50
CASM and ISM systems	51
The importance of integration	52
Project management	54
Telebusiness personnel	56
5 Customer Service Policy and Internal Communication	58
Customer service strategy	58
Total team integration	60
Management attitudes	61
Communication	66
Internal auditing	67
Empowerment	69
A simple solution	70
Teamwork	71
Loyalty through customer service	73
Understanding change	74
Quality issues	76
6 Recruiting and Targeting Telebusiness Personnel	80
Person specification	80
Lack of maturity?	81
Analysing the job and the person	82
Interviewing	84
Easy steps to good interviewing	89

Psychological testing	90
Performance standards	90
Performance review	92
Targeting	96
Incentive schemes	98
7 Managing and Training Telebusiness Personnel	101
The role of the telebusiness manager	101
Motivation	101
Training and coaching	108
Short- and long-term training	114
Assessment criteria	115
Value-for-money training	118
How long should a call take?	119
Meetings	120
Time management	123
Understanding stress	126
Management information	128
Mentoring	129
Training schemes	129
Effective communication	130
 PART III PRACTICAL TELEBUSINESS AND THE TELEMARKEETER	
8 Reactive or Proactive?	135
Inbound or outbound?	135
Auditing	136
Procedures	145
A marketing plan	148
Follow through	150
9 Image Projection and Telephone Etiquette	152
Being an ambassador	152
Telephone service	153
A key to customer loyalty	156
Exhibitions	162
No thank you!	164
Not just a computer entry	164
10 Buying Behaviour	165
The Pareto principle	165
Intangible factors	166
Business to business	167

Conditions and influences	168
Competitor analysis	170
11 Scripts and other things	172
To script or not to script?	173
Homeworking	173
Written communication	173
Debt collection	176
12 Telesales	179
How to sell	179
Buying criteria	180
Needs identification	182
A good listener	185
Selling solutions	186
Handling objections	188
‘Closing’	193
Attitude	195
Negotiation	196
 <i>Annexes</i>	
<i>A A paper on stress management and depression, B. L. Corfield</i>	199
<i>B Standards and Regulations</i>	203
<i>The ISO 9000 standard</i>	203
<i>White Paper presentation for DMA telephone marketing</i>	205
<i>Regulations and regulatory bodies</i>	210
<i>C Example Forms</i>	211
<i>D Case Studies</i>	224
<i>Bibliography and Further Information</i>	229
<i>Index</i>	233

List of Tables and Figures

TABLES

5.1	A manager's feelings and staff response	70
6.1	Performance standards	92

FIGURES

7.1	The motivation–hygiene theory	106
9.1	Three stages of counselling	158

Preface

It is predicted that by the year 2000, the UK Telebusiness market alone will be worth £10 billion and 2 million people will be working in it. Telebusiness is such a vast and growing area that you will find most books written about it tend to *specialise* in various aspects. For example, recent publications tend to concentrate upon the technological innovations and developments which allow us through computer integration to improve business by telephone. Others will cover specific marketing techniques related to telebusiness. These books, by specialisation and possibly assumption, exclude a breadth of knowledge and understanding in other areas. This book does not.

Whilst not claiming to be a specialised work, this book sets out to cover the breadth (and where possible the depth) of most subjects required to successfully introduce, manage and perform telebusiness.

Many related aspects of marketing including strategy, planning, database and relationship marketing are explored. Information technology resources are discussed through explanation of automation, telemarketing and innovations such as CTI (Computer Telephony Integration). Activities associated with the telephone including major account management, product life cycles, information flow and project management comprise the business management section of the book. People management material such as customer service, teamwork, motivation and recruitment are included with a dedicated section on telephone selling techniques for practitioners. Example forms, mentoring, stress management, buying behaviour, debt collection and case studies contribute to the breadth of subjects required for Total Telebusiness Management.

* * *

As a management consultant and sales trainer, most of the companies with whom I work at my entry point, aren't getting it right. Assisting these organisations to achieve bench mark productivity increases, staff with enhanced skills, and improved service levels has given me the opportunity to view both ends of a spectrum. Thus this book has been

written from an experiential perspective and encompasses practical and realistic knowledge in all aspects of organisational and individual growth.

Much debate centres around Telecomms and IT convergence calling conventional management principles and techniques into question. Whilst I don't doubt the validity of progress, my work daily proves that **people** do not change. They hurt, aspire and excel in a variety of ways which as human emotions, remain unaffected by advances in technology. Voice processing techniques, number and line identification technologies, caller ID services, predictive dialling, fax processing, feature control and media conversion do save operator time, improve competitive advantage and enhance business processes. But they do not replace fundamental people management techniques which in turn are responsible for decreasing staff turnover, inspiring above average performance and creating loyal, motivated and customer orientated personnel.

You must decide for yourself whether improved systems and resources can replace people.

VALERIE O'DEA

Acknowledgments

My thanks go to Norman Hart who made the first approach, to Liz Robertson of Matrix Workstations and Phillipa Tozer of Market Solutions who were the only people to respond to my invitations, to Market Solutions again and Co Cam who provided the case studies, to B.L. Corfield for letting me print his paper, to John Strafford, Colin Grant, Fred Sheard, Neal McGuinness, Bill Woods and Ray Farmer who gave me confidence years ago, to all my clients and especially to the old pre-sales team at BT's Managed Network Services, Apsley, who let me view their projects.

Whilst writing this book, I developed a presently incurable and most distressing ear complaint called Tinnitus. I am grateful to Edward J.J. for his patience, sense of humour, knowledge, support and encouragement especially during the bad times.

VALERIE O'DEA