



Michael A. Brown's

Business To Business By Phone[®]

Third Quarter 1998 Edition

WE'VE MOVED!!!!

Yes, the new address for *The Business Marketing Consultancy* and *Redwood Training Associates* is:

**4520 Dusik Lane
Austin, TX 78746-7368**

**USA and Canada (800) 373-3966
Local in Austin (512) 330-0444
e-Mail: michael@michaelabrown.net**

After 32 wonderful years in the San Francisco Bay Area, it was time for a change. And Austin is terrific!! My family and I are enjoying living in the "heart of Texas."

Esteemed clients throughout the USA and Canada, especially those of you in Northern California, please know that I'm still as accessible and responsive as ever. May the friendly phones and the friendly skies always keep us close!

KNOW WHAT YOU SELL BEFORE YOU START A-SELLIN'

On a recent project, the phone-based reps and their managers had a very tough time selling the value of their calls, especially during the crucial first 20 seconds. Certainly, they could say their own name and that of their company. But they stumbled on the "reason for my call" because *no one had ever told them the real reason!*

The "reason for the call" depends more on the marketing intent and contact sequence than on the specific product or promotion. So to remedy the situation, we went first to the marketing campaign "sponsors" and got them to reveal the full stories behind their campaigns. What preceded the phone effort? Direct mail? A web banner? A seminar? What did they promise the contact? What did they *really* want the reps to do on the phone? Contact discovery, i.e.; "lead

generation?" Contact validation? Lead qualification? Business development? What would happen after the calls? How did all this fit together?

The answers provided the context and continuity missing from the earlier phone efforts and enabled the phone reps to understand what they were really "selling," campaign by campaign.

Then, collaborating with the marketeers, we threw out the old bad "scripts" (one single-call script had 22 closed-ended questions!) and replaced them with 2-call, segmented call guides. The objective: to provoke and enable conversations while avoiding interrogations.

Next, we practiced and rehearsed with audio taping and critique. Finally, we went "live" with in-the-cube calls monitoring, coaching, and counseling. The result: fewer but better leads, almost no "bogus" leads, field reps who believe and act on the leads, and best of all, *more sales!*

Best Advice: Make sure your reps know your marketing intent and process as well as your products and services. Write and say a compelling "reason for my call." And don't ask your reps to conduct any call you, yourself, would not accept.

QUOTABLE

Robert Sullivan in *Sales & Marketing Management* magazine: "Asking the Internet for help is like asking for help from a really smart person who happens to be drunk."

LITTLE LEAGUES, BIG LEAGUES OF AUTOMATION

Contact management software and systems are the "little leagues" of marketing and



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sales automation. Enterprise packages, usually called Sales Force Automation (SFA), or Customer Relationship Management (CRM) are the "major leagues." In between, you'll find a few "minor league" programs which try to be both.

There is no one answer to the question I'm often asked: "Which is best for me and my company?" It depends. A few basic guidelines:

- Don't do it just because someone else is.
- Analyze, delete, simplify before automating.
- Do not underpower or overpower.
- Regardless of league, if it's not Internet-enabled, don't even consider it.
- Regardless of league, automation is a bigger deal than you imagine.

Best Advice: Before you go shopping, know what you need and want, and what's possible. If you *don't know*, call me and we'll fashion a project so you can find out before blowing a ton of money. **800 373-3966.**

PHONE PHUNNY

There's a protest group in California that vehemently opposes any and all telephone solicitation. But recently, a representative of the group left me an anonymous phone mail message soliciting me to visit their web site.

HOW COMPANIES MAKE IT HARD FOR PROSPECTS TO BECOME CUSTOMERS

Only one way to request information.
Dumb, confusing web sites.
Multi-tiered lead qualification processes.
Forcing prospects to tell their story more than once.
Phone reps who can't execute an order because of systems limitations and/or "company policy."

Your company? Call today and let's start fixing things. (800) 373-3966.

CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATION

Business Direct Marketing runs Nov. 2-4 at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare near Chicago. Because you're reading this newsletter, you need to be there! Check out the web site: **bdmc.com** and enroll today!

WHAT I DO

- Advise and train your marketing and sales groups to use the phone effectively to find, land, and keep customers, and grow your business.
- Favorably differentiate your calls from consumer "telemarketing" and from your competitors.
- Help you build and ramp-up your in-house phone team, or recommend the best outsourced call centers to conduct telemarketing and telesales for you
- "Fine-Tune" your phone operations, steering you away from the money-pits and toward profitable best practices

www.michaelabrown.net 800 373-3966