YOURBOARD

BUILDING THE BRIDGE TO OUR TARGET MARKET CUSTOMERS

Executive Overview for:

The Personal and Automated Stay-in-Touch Strategies

"There was a time when sales productivity was the direct result of the number of sales visits made to the right people. Today's world is different. The economic cycles, reduction of staff, automation, technology and the Internet now dictate that those influencing buying do not have much time for anyone unless they know them or need them. Most of the research they perform and information they retrieve comes from websites. By the time you may be called in, or your request for a personal visit is scheduled, those buying influencers probably know all about your product offering and that of your competitions. As the result of that "up front" internet research that is now conducted by 60% of all buyers, our tactics for creating market awareness for our products and services is changing.

Not only is it important to have an excellent and extremely intuitive customer focused website but success in sales growth is highly dependent on internet Stay-in-Touch strategies with meaningful non-sales oriented information of interest to further the market awareness of your company and its differentiated solutions. The buying influencers that will make the ultimate decision must be gently (not-obnoxiously—no harassment allowed), surrounded by your product category expertise in the form of meaningful messages that are of personal and professional interest to them. Each buying and specifying influence within the decision-making process for the purchase of your product or service solution is motivated by many unique and different advantages that your solution might provide.

Surrounding your targeted buying and specifying influencers with "meaningful" personal contact and also "meaningful" email messaging is critical in raising the awareness of your company's competitive advantages.

The best rule to follow is to personally stay-in-touch on an organized and consistent basis with every meaningful contact you have already personally met in order to keep the acquaintance (if not yet a relationship) alive and positive until the (buying influence) will either accept your offer for an in-person visit and presentation, or will reach out to you as a subject matter expert within your category of product when they have a need.

The Personal- Stay-In Touch Strategy *is designed to start with an appreciation or thank you note at the time of your first meeting (even if it is a casual meeting at a social event or in the hallway of the business) and continue with periodic follow-up by call, VM or e-mail to provide follow up for requested information, reveal a new "success story", an industry event, new technology or even just a follow-up on something that was discussed about the family. These personal stay-in-touch contacts should be very sincere in tone and substance. You will never make a sale during a "personal" stay-in-touch call but often, you will remind the person that you are reaching out to them, reminding them of your capabilities and interest in supporting them which, in many cases over time results in a call back or a tip off that there is a "need" within the organization. Allotting time for consistent personal stay-in-touch calls and e-mails to key (buying influencers) is a proven method to achieve new business. By the way, it is important to distinguish a pro-active "reach out" customer contact with the normal day to day conversations you might have with Active Customers. Personal-Stay-in-touch contacts are designed for customer contacts you have met but do not as yet have a strong relationship. This is a relationship building process.*

The Automated – Stay-in-Touch Strategy *is designed to create a "buzz" around your targeted industries and their purchasing influencers that points to your history and level of specific expertise. The unique messaging sent out to each of the categories of buying and specifying influences that make up the decision-making process for your category of products must drive compelling personal or professional interest to be effective in creating a "value" around your company and your product solutions. The database of contacts go far beyond those people who are "key" influencers that you or your team have personally met. These messages of interest might take the form of blogs, industry or technology articles of interest, etc. and are sent to every current contact or prospect name you have accumulated over time from trade shows, industry meetings, website hits, etc. Try to weed out competitors. When at all possible it is best to segment the buying and specifying influences and design customized messaging to be of interest to "each" of the buying and specifying influencers that are involved with the purchasing of your product or service.*

The point is that the "user" of your product or service may have a different interest or "pain point" then the engineer specifying the product or the financial person looking for the payback on the investment.

Automated-Stay-In-Touch messaging is to be like a "gift" of information (Blog, case study, Technology breakthrough, Industry news) that is of interest to each specific buying influence. Stay-In-Tough messaging is not designed to sell your product but to enhance your company's image as a subject matter expert who could be a valuable supplier.

In today's world, personal and automated stay-in-touch programs, webinars, social media and a great website surround your customers "world of input" with interesting and complementary messaging about your company that significantly increase your opportunities to be invited to make a live presentation." - YourBoard.US

1. The Personal "Stay-in-Touch" Strategy
2. The Automated "Stay-in-Touch" Strategy
3. Segmenting and tagging all Buying Influences by Position Category and Industry.

Personal Stay-In-Touch Plan

One key characteristic of a very successful Business Development person is their ability to build and cultivate a continually growing list of business contacts.

Will Rogers was known to have said: "I never met a man I didn't like." I would offer the thought that you should never meet a man (or woman) in business that you don't put onto your "stay-in-touch" list, like them or not. Your Personal Stay-In-Touch process should be ideally managed in your CRM system.

This story makes a simple point. If you don't need tires on your car, you really don't pay much attention to newspaper or radio ads promoting a sale on tires. However, if you just took your car in to have a slow leak fixed and the tire guy told you that your treads were splitting and you didn't have much time left before you need new tires, you would begin immediately to start to look and listen for the best tire deal available.

The point of this story is that every key business contact that you personally stay-in-touch with has a car. Someday those cars are going to need tires. Why not be the first tire guy they think of when that need occurs?

The personal-stay-in-touch process, done properly, allows you to maintain contact and build a relationship over time with so many buying, specifying and user influences that someday are going to have a need for your product or service solution that you will be the person they call to satisfy that need. The whole point of having a strong Personal-Stay-In-Touch system is to "gently and lovingly" stay in front of hundreds of buying influences so that you are the first person that comes to mind when there is a need for your category of product or service solution.

The Personal-Stay-In-Touch process and list of new contacts starts by sending each new contact you meet (no matter what the situation or circumstance) a nice e-mail note thanking them for their time and indicating how much you enjoyed meeting them and learning about their company. You would also give them whatever information they may have requested during the meeting or a plan to do so.

From that point on it becomes a "discipline issue." You should set aside so many hours a week (or minutes a day) just to go through your stay-in-touch list and make telephone, VM or email contact with a specific number of people.

The message in the Personal-Stay-In-Touch email is usually short and sweet. It may revolve around something good you heard about them or their company. It may just be a short refresher on what you or your company have been doing and a reminder that you would enjoy someday providing your solution to them. It may mention a newer technology or product. It could be a personal follow-up regarding their family. Short, meaningful and sincere, there are no "hard sells" or frivolous comments allowed in stay-in-touch communications. It is best to devise your own electronic system for follow-up and tracking. The key is that you allot the quiet or down time (such as airplane flights or terminal waiting) each week to address your personal stay-in-touch list.

If you focus on it, a person can generally generate 25-30 meaningful stay-in-touch e-mails every week. Don't mix up pro-active Personal Stay-In-Touch contacts with the normal day to day reactive calls to take care of a customer need. We want to focus on connecting with customer contacts that you don't talk to regularly. For example, Active Maintenance Customers, to "Just see how everything is going" on an unsolicited basis. It is great to follow-up on a very positive, non-solicitation bases with Active Target, Target and Prospect Customers, just to get an update of where things are and also to just say "hello" as a friend would do. It is also great to personally Stay-In-Touch with customer contacts that have a proposal or quote active in the Red Zone just to be sure they have all of the information they need for their upcoming decision. A creative sales person can always find a good positive reason to "Stay-In-Touch" with every meaningful customer contact they have ever met.

I knew a great business development person who had over 1000 business contacts on his list. He would brag that he communicated with every one of them at least twice a year and generally the important ones once per month.

When you have 1000 active contacts, each with two cars, someone needs tires all of the time. This particular friend of mine always had a backlog and pipeline of business no matter what the economic cycle.

This person, as senior as he may have been, told me that he built a Stay-In-Touch contact list that produced 100% of his planned sales for each year.

It is the combination of an organized customer sales visit and webinar plan, following the 10-10-10 customer Identification and Prioritization model, with the addition of a disciplined and sincere Stay-In-Touch strategy that will allow you to meet and exceed sales objectives each period.

Automated Stay-in-Touch (A Marketing Process)

- In addition to each sales person's personal "business contact" stay-in-touch list, and process for periodically following up with many key customer contacts, there should also be a companywide "automated" stay-in-touch program operated by either an inside marketing person or an outside marketing communications firm. In the last several years Automated Stay-In-Touch has reached such a high level of sophistication with more and more regulation that I would strongly suggest considering an outside Marketing Firm. Yourboard's Portals to Expert can council you on the selection of an outside marketing firm.

- "Automated Contact" programs are reasonable and very effective. It does require that someone has had experience and knows how to do it.

- You begin by simply going to your CRM or database of customers and developing an e-mail contact list to start your Automated Stay-In-Touch program. It is very important to go back through all of the contacts and categorize them by the "Buying, Specifying or User Influence" that their position represents. It is critical that your marketing team be able to customize the email messaging by the categories of buying influencers that make up the purchasing decision making process for your product category. For example: Purchasing Agent, Operations Manager, Machine Operator and Controller.

In addition to the customer contacts in your current CRM and/or data base, your marketing team or outside firm should make a concerted effort to assemble appropriate contacts from within your targeted Industries from trade group data bases etc. Expanding from your existing customer data base to new customers in new data bases is critical to spreading market awareness of your competitively differentiated solutions, driving interest and qualified leads and ultimately to achieving sales growth.

- The key is to make your e-mailed content brief, compelling, appropriate, interesting and pertinent to the target market Industry and, more importantly, specific to each buying, specifying, referencing and user influence that makes up the "buying" decision making process for your product or service solution.

- During the process of developing or customizing your CRM (example: Sales Force, Dynamics, Nut Shell or Pipeline) it is very important to tag each contact with their role in the buying decision process.

- For example:

  List and tag each contacts discipline, i.e.:

  - Purchasing
  - Engineering
  - Finance
  - Facility Management
  - Product Development
  - Operations
  - Project Management
  - Marketing

- **Also tag each customer with the Target Market in which you have placed him, i.e.:**

  - Healthcare
  - Manufacturing
  - Food Distribution
  - Construction etc.

- Your marketing person or outside marketing firm can then find specific and pertinent information of interest regarding each buying influencer's role, their industry, new technologies, new or alternative solutions, etc. that you have identified for each specific influence in the decision-making process. Then send out different articles, blogs, items of interest to each industry and each type of buying influence on a consistent basis.

- If you are providing professionally produced, "non-sales oriented" industry information or news that represents position pertinent information to your targeted prospect list of customer contacts, you begin to create a buzz of awareness with a large number of people within your target market. The goal with outbound emails is to provide a "Gift" of compelling information that is of true interest to the person within the decision-making position it was intended. It is not a "sales tool" as such but instead a means to enhance your company's image as an Industry expert of authority on your product or service category. By design, in order to satisfy a further large number of these intended readers of your messaging, they have an option to click to a Landing Page that allows them to gain even more in-depth information on a particular topic of interest and also allows for the option to click through to your company website or call a representative.

- If done tactfully, professionally and with articles that have true value, in the items of information they provide, the Automated Stay-In-Touch plan is very effective at generating qualified leads and providing a target industry environment that is very conducive to selling your product solution.

Integration of 10-10-10 into a CRM System

(Examples: Sales Force Automation, Dynamics, Pipeline, Nut Shell etc.)

Integration of the 10-10-10 selling processes into a CRM Software

1. All customers, clients or accounts should be tagged to a Regional or National Sales Manager or direct sales person and the Independent Rep Firm or Distributor that they are assigned (owners of account).
2. Also, tag each customer with a 10-10-10 designation:
   A. Active Maintenance (accounts) **AM**
   B. Active Target (accounts) **AT**
   C. Target (leads) **T**
   D. Prospect (leads) **P**
   E. Significant Other **SO**
   F. Pre-Qualified **PQ** (hot or moderate)
      - Break these into "Hot" and Moderate" and assign to a Regional Manager to determine the ultimate priority for penetration.
   G. Un-Qualified **UN-Q** (you may just delete these)
3. Also, tag each customer by **INDUSTRY** (market) (Target Markets we have identified from the Business Model)
4. Also, tag each customer by – **Product Group(s)** they are purchasing. (From the Business Model)
5. Tag all **Buying Influences** or **Specifying Influences** by the names we assigned to them. (See example)

Buying Influencer Personae Matrix

Example Industry (Target Market)	Potential: Largest/ Quickest	Researche r	Financial Mgmt.	Sustainabili ty Influencer	Energy Mgmt.	Facilities Operations	Service/ Maint.	Architectur al Engineer	Electric Utility	Validation (GMP)	Strategic Purchasing	Purchasing
Academic Research	1/3			★	★	Key Entry Point				/		Negative Influencer
Commercial BioPharma/ BioTech Research	2/1		★	★	★	★				/		Negative Influencer
Commercial Biorepositories	3/2		★			★				/	★	Negative Influencer
Non-profit/ In-house Biorepositories	4/4					★				/		Negative Influencer
Commercial BioPharma			★		★	★			★	/		Negative Influencer
University Hospital Research					★	★	★			/		Negative Influencer
Commercial BioTech Production				★		★				★		Negative Influencer
Non-NIH Government Research				★	★					/		Negative Influencer

It is the combination of an organized and **planned sales visit and webinar effort**, following the 10-10-10 customer prioritization model, and a disciplined and sincere **Personal Stay-In-Touch strategy** and now an effective **Automated "Stay-In-Touch" process** that will allow you to meet and exceed sales objectives each period.

Summary of Automated Stay-in-Touch

Every contact from every current or prospective target market customer should be tagged by target market (industry) and by buying influence and then used as the basis for an effective consistent and customized Automated Stay-In-Touch process.

This is generally best performed by an outside marketing communications firm that has the time to make certain the "e-mail send-outs" are sincere and of interest and, most importantly, done consistently.

The recommendation is one per quarter per buying influence category per target market (industry). Remember in order for Automated Stay-In-Touch to be effective, the e-mail messaging must be of "extreme interest" and uniquely pertinent to each buying influence within each industry.