

Business to Business Lead Generation

Generating, developing and making the
most of your leads

SUPERCHARGED FRACTIONAL MARKETERS

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Why more leads is often the wrong goal

Most businesses believe more leads mean more business, so they are forever hunting new ones. It is a natural impulse, and a lot of the time it is wrong.

No matter how much you pour in, a leaky bucket still ends up empty. You can generate hundreds of leads a day, but if they are never quoted, followed up or developed towards a sale, that effort is wasted.

The businesses that win at lead generation understand two things.

First, sales, marketing and leadership have to be fully aligned. **Second**, generating a lead is only the start of a process that runs through qualifying, developing and converting.

Get that process right and you may find you do not need more leads at all, because you have become far better at converting the ones you have.

Should you choose inbound or outbound?

There are two broad routes to a lead, and most businesses need both.

Outbound marketing goes out to the customer and interrupts: email and direct mail, adverts, cold calls.

Think sniper rifle rather than blunderbuss, because well-targeted outbound can be very effective, and badly targeted outbound just teaches people to ignore you.

Inbound marketing is more like angling. You put the right bait on a hook, cast it out, and let the right people come to you through social media, search and content. It asks for more patience, but once it is working it tends to keep giving.

Whichever you lean on, permission and relevance matter. South African buyers can opt out through the Direct Marketing Association of South Africa's Do Not Contact register and exercise their rights under POPIA, so the days of blasting a bought list are gone.

Content sits underneath both routes, and the rules have changed.

It is no longer enough to publish something because everyone else does. Good content has something to say and a schedule to say it on, knows exactly who it is talking to, and helps a reader move from learning about a problem to choosing a supplier. **If it does not stand out, it will not work.**



Keeping leads warm until they are ready

Once you have a lead in the pot, you have to keep it simmering. Push too hard on someone who has not converted and you race past the sale before you reach it.

The businesses that convert well deliver value first, earn engagement, and only then lead the person towards a decision.

A simple email sequence shows how it works. It opens with a welcome that thanks the reader and shows what you do without pushing. Then a problem-and-solution message that gets them clicking through to your site for the answer. Then a short case study proving you have helped people like them. And finally a clear call to action inviting them to talk to your team. By that point they know what you can do and often sell to themselves.

The thread running through all of it is consistency: the same sender, clear subject lines, and a promise about what you will send and when.

Do that across whichever channels suit your audience and your leads stay warm instead of going cold.



Businesses that consistently measure marketing ROI are far more likely to rate their own strategy as effective. Measurement and confidence go hand in hand. (HubSpot, 2026)

Scoring your leads so you focus on the right ones

As lead volumes grow, you cannot give every contact equal attention, so you score them. It does not matter whether you score from one to five or one to a hundred.

What matters is where each lead sits in the funnel and how likely they are to move on.

Points go up for genuine engagement and down for contacts going quiet or who were never a fit.

Most businesses combine two signals: **who the lead is**, and **what they do**.

A **prospect** is someone whose needs you understand. A **qualified lead** has shown clear interest, and a **trialist** is sales-ready.

Activity tells you a lot here, so weigh how much someone has consumed, how recently, and which pages they visited.

A pricing page says far more about intent than a home page.

Scoring is simply how you decide who to develop, in what way, and how fast. It keeps your team's energy on the leads most likely to become customers.



Only 47% of marketers have a clear framework for measuring the ROI of newer channels like AI-driven marketing. (HubSpot, 2026)

Do you need a CRM?

If you cannot see your sales pipeline, how prospects move through it and what signals a coming sale, you are losing business.

A customer relationship management system is the beating heart of your sales and marketing, holding every contact, insight and interaction in one place and surfacing what to do next.

The data you already hold is a genuine competitive asset, as long as it is current and complete.

A good CRM organises that data along the same demographic and activity lines your lead scoring uses, and can track why you lose business as well as how you win it. Choosing one is more art than science.

The questions that matter are who will use it, what budget you have, whether it can grow with you, and what it needs to connect to, whether that is your website, your phones or accounting.

Plenty of solid, affordable options such as Pipedrive and Zoho Bigin suit smaller businesses, whereas the likes of Hubspot is better for larger businesses, and most integrate happily with Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace.



Where fractional marketing comes in

Lead generation done well is a whole system: aligning sales and marketing on what a good lead is, blending inbound and outbound, building the content, running the follow-up, scoring leads and keeping the CRM honest.

Let us be honest, that is not a core strength of every marketer, and it rarely gets done well off the side of a busy owner's desk.

This is where fractional marketing earns its place. In South Africa, The Marketing Centre gives businesses access to senior marketing expertise, fractional marketing directors, managers and digital experts, on a part-time basis.

Many of them have spent years building and improving lead-generation systems, and they turn lead generation from a scramble into something steady, measurable and repeatable, for a fraction of the cost of a full-time hire.



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