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## **11 B2B TELEMARKETING VOICE MAIL TIPS**

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Trade show organizers use telemarketing for both driving attendee registration and selling exhibitors – two quite different activities but with one thing in common – **high cost per touch compared to email and direct mail**. Therefore, it is imperative to use this high cost communications both effectively and efficiently. Unfortunately, most telemarketing does not achieve these difficult goals.

We know this as we're victims of poor telemarketing, and now with caller ID, don't even answer the phone when the number is not recognized. The result is a voice mail from the inside sales rep. or marketing telemarketer, and in my experience only 10-20% of those voice mails are engaging and/or give me a reason to call back. A big waste of money on the caller's part!

**So how do you increase the effectiveness and efficiency of telemarketing campaigns and sales activities with improved voice mail?** The following 11 tips will help improve the rate of call backs and thus cost effectiveness of your telemarketing efforts.

Telemarketing is a "live" direct marketing and sales environment, and by testing various approaches, do we learn which one works best. Some of the following tips should be tested to see what works best in your market.

### **General tips for leaving voice mails:**

1. **Relevancy trumps all** and depending on what is known about the individual called, that information should be used in structuring the voice mail. Such data elements as industry, job function, name of company and past behavior are all potentials to make the message relevant. Also allow for the data to be wrong and use a phrase such as "According to our records ....." This insures that if you are wrong, at least you have forecasted it.
2. **Be specific** in the voice message as to what you want the individual to do. As an example for trade shows, mentioning the dates of the show, location and even how many weeks remain are the kind of specifics that might drive registration. As the show draws closer, the availability and choice of hotel rooms also becomes a specific. Even mentioning the hotels still available is another relevant specific that may drive behavior.



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3. **Be short** as attention spans are also short. Voice mail messages should be no longer than 20 seconds. The optimum length is between 8 and 14 seconds.
  4. **Be professional and friendly** as in B2B you are leaving a message to a professional from another professional. Use the person's first name at least twice. All the touches an individual receives accumulate to a brand impression. Telemarketing is a very high impact touch and will be remembered more than email or mail.
  5. **Speak clearly and a little slowly** as rushing will not allow the individual to hear and digest what is being said.
  6. **Best times for leaving messages** are from 7 to 8 AM and from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. Obviously other times need to be used as all calling can't be done only at these times. Save the best times for the highest priority calls. Do not leave messages on Monday morning, Friday afternoon or odd hours of the night if the call is expected to be returned.
  7. **Repeat** your name and the phone number to be called twice – at the beginning and end of the message. Do not leave other contact information such as the website, as it will be too much for the individual to process. On the other hand, if the purpose of the call is to drive the individual to the website for registration, repeat the web address twice, and mention something specific they will find on the website that will incent them to visit it.
  8. **Asking questions** that are relevant to the individual will likely solicit a return phone call. They should be specific and of interest to the individual and not you.
  9. **Don't use a traditional close** such as "Please call me back" or "I'll call you back on X date" but close with a question to be answered, and then repeat your name and number.
  10. **Do not read** the script but rather phrase it in your own words. The worst voice message in B2B is one that comes across as canned or read. These messages will not be returned or acted upon.
  11. **Know the telemarketing regulations** as even though they mostly deal with B2C situations, calling a number on the Do Not Call (DNC) list can potentially incur an individual's wrath and even substantial fines. Your house list of attendees and exhibitors is fine as this represents a current relationship, but telemarketing lists from outside vendors should be scrubbed against the DNC list to insure compliance to current regulations. It is smart to keep up-to-date with the changing telemarketing regulations.
- By implementing some or all of these tips your telemarketing efforts will improve as more call-backs and/or other requested actions will increase.



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**One last parting shot** – telemarketing in combination with other direct marketing touches always outperforms the “only one touch and one media” campaigns. The rule of thumb is multi-touch/multi-media campaigns produce the highest response and conversion rates. Just be sure you can afford this approach by calculating the traditional direct marketing breakeven analysis. A subject of another upcoming blog.

### **John M. Coe**

John has partnered with Direct Hit Marketing and is responsible for adding new trade show clients and thought leadership. John is also Co-Founder and Partner of B2BMarketing.com. His background includes experience in both sales and marketing. On the sales side, John was a field salesman, national sales manager and executive in charge of both sales and marketing for three major B2B firms. On the marketing side, he was president of a B2B direct marketing agency for 10 years, was National Campaign Manager at IBM, Sr. VP of B2B at Rapp Collins Worldwide and President of Protocol B2B. John is also the author of *The Fundamentals of Business-to-Business Sales & Marketing*, published by McGraw-Hill. John’s next book co-authored with Steve Juedes, President of DHM is titled *Data-Driven Trade Show Marketing & Sales for Organizers and Exhibitors* is due for publication in late 2017. He can be reached at [johnc@directhitmarketing.com](mailto:johnc@directhitmarketing.com) or by phone at 602-402-6588.

### **Direct Hit Marketing**

Direct Hit Marketing (DHM) based in Longmont, CO has been providing data analytics to the trade show industry for 24 years with its **360 Registration Data Analytics Program™**. This data service starts with the show’s registration data and combines it with the targeted mail, email and phone communications that were used to drive registration, and returns to the organizer up to 33 reports of what worked and what did not. DHM offers other data services to organizers and for a full description of these go to [www.DirectHitMarketing.com](http://www.DirectHitMarketing.com)