

MARKETPULSE

Marketing Tips and Topical Issues for Insurance Agents

Number 3

Putting Down Put-offs

By PMA Team Leader Reg Brittain

“I just can’t talk right now. My doctor’s coming to lance a carbuncle.” Have you heard that one? How about, “I have to run my emu to the vet’s office,” or “It’s time to remove my facial peel, so can you call back next week”?

The above, of course, are exaggerations, but if you have ever used the telephone to prospect for new insurance clients, you have surely met with contacts’ “put-offs”. While some requests to push a call to another day are “legit”, many spring to life out of a contact’s desire to avoid the possible – and sometimes very real – discomfort of a teleprospecting call, without conflict from a “pushy telemarketer”.

How do callers at **PMA** deal with put-offs? We qualify the suspect further. Typical put-offs we hear include, “We just renewed,” and “I don’t deal with insurance until two months before the renewal date,” or “I’m in a meeting”.

No matter the reason for the contact’s request to save the call for another day, PMA callers dig a little deeper, asking contacts qualifying questions like, “Sorry to get you at a bad time. If I call back

next week will you be able to give me two minutes?” or “Are you open to comparing?” or “Are you willing to switch agents?” and “If our agency can deliver worthwhile improvements, is there any reason you could not change agencies?”

Soon enough, the wheat of a likely prospect with a propensity to buy separates from the chaff of contacts whose situations will not require future callbacks.

The contact’s reply might be, “Well actually, my brother is my agent,” or “I am absolutely interested and will schedule an appointment in six months.” From there, the **PMA** caller knows whether to mark the record for follow-up or not.

PMA callers work hard to make the most of their time and your agency’s Teleprospecting investment. We sort out the genuine prospects from the wild goose chases and bring you qualified leads – with or without carbuncles and emus.

Professional Marketing Associates, based in Amherst, Massachusetts, provides high-quality teleprospecting and other marketing support for insurance clients countrywide. To discuss ways telemarketing can benefit your agency call Nicole Sharpe at 800-783-2303

CLIENT PROFILE

A Midwest agency with about 40 employees has been a PMA teleprospecting client for two years. They began using **PMA**’s teleprospecting services when a new Sales Manager with a company background was hired to take the already productive agency to a new level.

“I think you guys are doing great,” he offers. “One of the producers wrote a very nice account not too long ago for well over \$300,000. While we’re of course happy about that, the thing I’m most pleased with is the feedback we get from the **PMA** prospects. Invariably they describe your callers as ‘courteous and friendly’. This is something we were concerned about at the start if you remember, since we’d never worked with an outside telemarketing firm before.”

“Since the producers were used to making their own prospecting calls and setting appointments up for themselves, we had some definite hesitancy about your people contacting our prospects. Obviously we no longer have that concern. The only complaint I hear from producers now is that someone else here in the office is getting more **PMA** appointments than they are.” ☎