Telemarketing Success Tips from GBS

The affinity between radio advertising and the telephone goes all the way back to the beginnings of commercial radio. In fact, the very first radio commercial was aired on August 28, 1922 on WEAS in New York, owned by AT&T, which adapted their successful model of monetizing long-distance telephone service (a fixed amount of talk time for a certain amount of money) to their new radio broadcasting service. (You can read more on that story at https://www.npr.org/2012/08/29/160265990/first-radio-commercial-hit-airwaves-90-years-ago)

Here's the #1 reason to make the telephone an essential part of your sales toolkit:

You'll cover a lot more ground in much less time, and make more sales per hour.

If you want to maximize your billing, learn to wield the power of telephone selling for greater efficiency and productivity.

As radio advertising professionals, we are supposed to be the *experts* in speech communication. Here are some tips, based on decades of successful experience, for maximizing your effectiveness on the phone and making the most of your telephone sales time.

***Preparation* is the key to success.**

- **Prospects** – identify everyone you'll be calling for this campaign: your own accounts, "open" list, phone book, web search, etc. List all the businesses you'll be calling, with names of decision-makers and their telephone numbers. Keep it by your phone. This will help you to stay organized and cover more ground in less time.

- **Sample sponsor scripts** – think about how you can tailor the tags or adjacencies to each prospect's business and have these scripts written out ahead of time, so you can read them after playing the demo.

- **Demo(s)** – have one or two sample features ready to play for prospects. You'll need a separate audio player for this purpose.

- **Legal pad** – keep one handy for jotting notes, copy ideas, special instructions.

Telephone presentations are best when kept brief, concise, and to-the-point! Avoid the pitfall of making small talk; it usually comes across as unnecessary at best, insincere at worst. Your prospects value their time; show them that you understand and respect this by keeping your presentation brief and businesslike.

1) Get decision-maker on phone. Introduce yourself.

Identify the event and briefly describe the messages that will be airing. E.g., "We're planning to run a special series of features for _________, and I thought you'd want to know about it and maybe be a part of it. Let me play a sample for you…

2) Play sample feature.

3) Immediately following the feature, read the merchant's ad copy

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Remember, it's not just *what* you say . . . it's also *how* you say it: *Read the ad with conviction!*

4) Give the client your package options:

We recommend you offer three (3) financially-sized* choices—no more, no less; plug-in your own numbers:

"We'll be running these features starting on ______ and running through ______. We can run that for you: ten times for $150, fifteen times for $225, or twenty-five times for $375."

5) Observe the "golden silence": be quiet & let your client decide!

After your prospect has told you what they want to do, *thank them* – for their order and/or their time – and move on to your next call! Good selling!

***Financial sizing** is based on a proven psychological formula that corresponds to the way we think and have learned to make comparisons, even remember important things. It's sometimes called *The Rule of Three.* Applied to our advertising presentations, we offer the prospect exactly three choices, labeled: Small/Medium/Large; or Good/Better/Best; or Bronze/Silver/Gold; or (my favorite), Conservative/Moderate/Aggressive.

Whichever triad you choose, it suggests a difference in relative value. When we plug in numbers, the differences are as follows: 100% - 150% - 200%. 100% is the minimum sale we want to make; 200% is double the commitment; 150% splits the difference between Small and Large.

In the example used in our presentation above, the unit rate stays the same for all three packages. However, many stations offer frequency discounts as an incentive to prospects to buy a larger package. For example: *"We can run that for you ten times for $150, fifteen times for $210, or twenty-five times for $325."* Reducing the unit rate by $1.00 for each of the larger packages alters the formula slightly, may encourage a larger purchase. The financial sizing *principle* still remains.

Using this financial spread avoids the trap of a Yes-No decision and minimizes the change that you'll leave money on the table. Some prospects will always buy the minimum. Others always buy the middle. Those who really embrace what you're offering will want to have a greater share of voice than the other participants.

Financial sizing and *The Rule of Three* will improve your success in selling, whether on the phone, by email, or face-to-face.