How To Start Your Own Telephone Canvassing Service

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How To Start Your Own Telephone Canvassing Service

Telephone canvassing is the business of calling people on behalf of a client to obtain and/or disseminate information.

It is valuable service that can be difficult for business men in your area to obtain elsewhere. Large cities have their "boiler room" operations that employ commissioned based telephone solicitors and pollers.

They use a bank outgoing Wats (800) lines to call potential prospects all over the country and try to "qualify" them as leads. Their products include TV viewing polls, magazine subscriptions, office products, polls, real estate, investments and specialized sales of all description.

Canvassing by phone is a viable alternative to other forms, such as door to door or canvassing by mail. It is relatively inexpensive (compared to door to door) and has the advantage of immediate response.

Some companies use computers to call, present a short recorded message and ask if a salesman can call back later (these machines sell in the \$1,000 range and up).

However, some 70 percent of people who receive such calls dislike being called by a computer and will not corporate; many hang up the moment they realize WHAT they are "talking to."

Nevertheless, the business of selling, polling and developing leads by phone canvassing is here to stay!

Starting your own phone canvassing business to obtain leads requires a relatively small investment and is not difficult.

A telephone and some "leg work" is all it takes to begin.

Work out your plan, and have some brochures or flyers printed and start contacting businesses that sell.

Call them first and if they show any interest send them a brochure.

Explain to prospective clients that they don't pay for the calls -- only actual appointments or leads that you get for them.

This way, the canvassing costs the customer nothing. He won't mind paying for a qualified prospect (either a fee per appointment or percentage of the sale), because he will make a profit in the process.

Your fees can be a set fee per appointment or lead, the actual amount being governed by the size of the sale

A lead for a possible \$100 sale might be worth \$2, but one for \$1000 should be worth a good deal more.. The alternatives is to be paid a percentage of each sale that is made to names you have provided.

Consider this alternative only when you are confident your client will be honest with you.

Polls and questionnaires are usually priced by the number of successful records obtained and/or the amount of call made and amount of information recorded. Calculate your charges on the amount of time it will take you to accomplish the assignment.

Your profit margin, by the way, will increase as you become more proficient and make more successful calls.

When you reach an agreement with a client to do telephone canvassing, put it in writing -- a contract.

Write out what you consider to be a fair contract in general terms, then have a lawyer look it over (his fee will be half of what it would cost to have him write if from the beginning).

The contract should state that you agree to make a certain number of calls to people's homes (or businesses) located in a stated area, and that a list of those who meet certain qualifications will be provided daily (or?).

The client agrees to pay a fee for each name, each sale, or a percentage of each sale for all sales made to names on the list for a period of (one year) after the termination of the contract.

In your discussions with the client, he will state what he considers to be proper qualification -- things like, do they own their home; can they afford to make payments on a washing machine, and if they are currently employed.

Both you and the client should agree on what would be fair qualification for the type products involved.

For percentage sales, the contract should state that any additional sales for an agreed period in the future are also subject to the percentage.

This clause is your protection against seller fraud -- honest clients will not mind paying you your earned percentage. Spot

check phone calls can be used to detect any sales for which you are not paid.

Once your telephone canvassing business has been established, the same clients should be apprised of any additional capabilities you acquire. Place ads, send out brochures or CALL potential clients.

Contact opinion poll companies, mailing list companies and don't forget to contact both party headquarters about 6 weeks before election time!

The step from telephone can vassing to telephone sales is a short one that requires essentially the same equipment and know-how.

Sales can be more profitable than canvassing because each sale results in a profit for the client and a commission for the telephone sales person.

The actual profit depends on the price of the merchandise, sales volume, popularity, sales presentation and incentive (commission). Another lucrative variation is to sell your own items by phone.

A good way to start would be to find a product that does not compete with any of your present accounts but might appeal to those you call. In this situation, you would bring up your own product until you had satisfied your client's interest.

records keeping in this business is the same as other businesses, except that you should keep separate records of each client and copies of all names referred to that client, as well as all financial details. And, the major warning is to keep your word. If you say you will call 100 names a day, DO IT!

When you agree to do something for a client, you are OBLIGATED to fulfill that promise. If you are tempted to take short-cuts, remember that it is the success of your business that you may be placing in jeopardy.

BUSINESS SOURCES

DADCO DATA, Box 1719, Nevada City, CA 95959. rents a telemarketing computer that makes calls; 600 different messages available. Free cassette and brochure.

PRO LEADS, Box 182-A Boys Town, NE 68010. Sells a \$10 kit to start your own telemarketing business.

J & S Products, 14917 Index, Mission Hills, CA 91345,

818/361-4691. Offers model ETS automatic caller (up to 1500 daily), plus service and other brands.

SMC WORLDWIDE PUBLICATIONS, INC.., 310 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017. Supplies home magazine sellers.

G & B RECORDS, Box 10150, Terra Bella, CA 93270. Magazine subscription commissions. send SASE for details.

DOVER PUBLICATIONS, INC.,31 East 2nd St.,Mineola, NY 11051. Discount books, clip art, stencils, etc.

QUILL CORPORATION, 100 Schelter Rd., Lincolnshire, IL 60917-4700, 312/634-4800. Office supplies.

NEBS, 500 Main St., Groton, MA 04171, 800/225-6380. Office supplies.

IVEY PRINTING, Box 761, Meridan, TX 76665. Letterhead: 400 sheets plus 200 envelopes - \$18.

SWEDCO, Box 29, Mooresville, NC 28115. 3 line rubber stamps - \$3; Business cards - \$13 per thousand.

ZPS, Box 581, Libertyville, IL 60048-2556. Business cards (raised print - \$11.50 per K) and letterhead stationery. Will print your copy ready logo or design, even whole card.

WALTER DRAKE, 4119 Drake Bldg., Colorado Springs, CO 80940. Short run business cards, stationery, etc. Good quality, but no choice of style or color.