

**BUILD
YOUR
BUSINESS**



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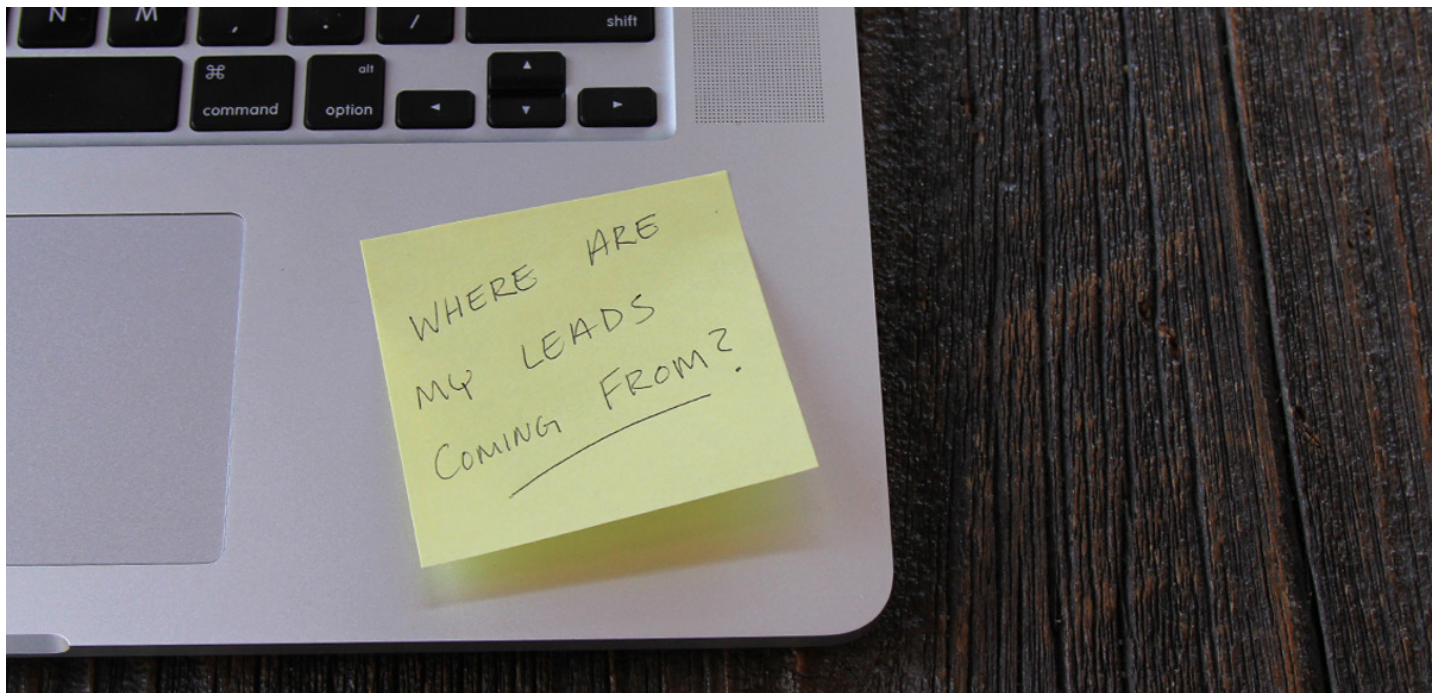
An overview of how to find the correct lead provider, and the steps to assure your success.

WHERE ARE YOUR LEADS COMING FROM?

Seems like a simple question that should have a simple answer, right? Unfortunately, this is not always the case. The short answer that most agents receive or infer is: "my leads come from the company I buy them from..." However, have you ever asked your lead provider(s) where the leads they are selling you come from? Give it shot next time you talk with them and pay close attention to what they tell you. The sad truth, ladies and gents, is that in a lot of cases, the lead provider doesn't even know themselves. Their insight into the lead generation process is not much different from yours. They buy from an affiliate or third party, who promises to generate leads in a clean and viable way, but there is no oversight committee in this business, therefore no guarantees can be made.

Now, before we get into that, I need to make very clear that I do not condemn lead aggregation. I have seen first-hand that particular business models work very well for end users, and have been at the highest level of one of the largest lead aggregation firms in the insurance space. What I am telling you is that there is a better way. Lead aggregation works, and there are millions of very good leads produced and sold through that channel; heck, I even feed leads into that market, but it is not the BEST way to drive sales for insurance businesses.

Ok, now that we have that out of the way, back to the topic at hand. Internet lead aggregators do not have control over the lead creation process. If they tell you that they do, ask them very directly, "How are you controlling this process?" The answer will most likely be something like: "We police our affiliate network very aggressively, and regularly fire affiliates who under perform." Again, a very true statement, but where does the case get built to fire an affiliate? Think about that. Is there a system that tracks lead quality in real time? No. Affiliates are policed when you, the agent, receive a bogus lead and return or complain about it. Is that a good use of your time? Personally, as marketers, we should be held to a higher standard than that. Quality should be assumed, not questioned after issues arise.



“The bottom line is that if you source your traffic internally, you have more control over the lead creation process, you are more in tune to what drives consumer intent, and you are doing business in a way that holds you to the highest level of accountability from your clients.”

So, how do we make that happen? Simply put, lead generation companies should generate their own leads. This holds the lead provider responsible for everything they send you. No more “I am sorry you received an incentivized/recycled/bogus lead, one of our affiliates generated that, we will give you a refund and look into it.” What are you being refunded for there? The money you spent on the lead, right? What about the time you spent, or your producer spent, working the lead? What about the time you had to spend fighting to get a refund because you were over your cap that month? Why would you continue to put your business through that? My advice: stop, find something better. After all, the definition of insanity is doing the same thing but expecting a different result. These are some of the factors hurting the internet lead business right now, and more importantly, hurting agents’ bottom lines.

Back to the solution - find a lead provider that generates their own leads. This is not a new idea, it’s just one that has been ignored, or dismissed as if impossible. Let me be clear: generating 100% of your own leads is not impossible! We do it everyday at ZipQuote, and deliver higher quality, consistently performing leads to agents and carriers across the country. Our quote, contact, close, and retention rates are higher than those of our competitors across the board. Is that a coincidence? Luck? I guess it depends who you ask. If you ask someone utilizing ZipQuote, they will confirm what I say; if you ask one of my competitors, you might hear something different. The bottom line is that if you source your traffic internally, you have more control over the lead creation process, you are more in tune to what drives consumer intent, and you are doing business in a way that holds you to the highest level of accountability from your clients. We like that, no, we LOVE that. ZipQuote is a customer-centric organization, and that is proven by the fact that no corners are cut while generating our product. Our biggest responsibility is to our customers, period. Not stockholders, nor investors; only customers, both internal and external. Our view is that if we take care of our customers, the profits will come. That is just one of the reasons we do things the way that we do.

So, to close this section out, the first step to being successful with internet leads is finding leads that will give you a chance to be successful. Many people tell you it is a “numbers” game, and it is to a certain extent, but how many numbers are you willing/able to go through without any results? Start off on the right foot, and buy direct from the source.





WHO ARE YOU COMPETING WITH?

Another issue that we see in the insurance lead generation space is the over-distribution of leads. From our perspective, a lead generator can do everything right in generating the lead, but if they sell that lead eight to ten times, it won't really matter because the consumer ends up having a terrible experience, giving seven out of the eight agents who bought that lead a poor experience as well. You hear people say all the time that "you have to be the first person to call an internet lead," and they are 100% correct. If you are the first person to talk with a lead, then statistically, you are in the optimal position. However, just because you are not first it should not exclude you from having a chance to write that shopper a policy. My point being that when a lead is over-distributed, if you do not contact that lead first, you lose the chance to win that business as the potential client's phone is ringing so much that the last thing they want to do is talk to another insurance professional.

So, what can you do to make sure the leads you are buying are not over-distributed? The answer: ask the right questions. All of you ask your lead providers how many times they sell their leads, or how many agents with whom they compete. However, there is a loophole in the traditional response to that question. Most providers respond with: "We sell our leads anywhere between three and five with a max of eight times sold." The loophole is figuring out how many times that lead was sold before they bought it (nearly impossible to track), and if they sold it to you and another lead aggregator, how many times did they sell it?

Questions to Ask (Lead Distribution):

- Do you buy leads from other lead aggregators?
- How can you guarantee that your leads won't be sold more than eight times?
- If you sell a lead to me, will you also sell it to another lead generator/aggregator?

Our solution to the above problem is similar to my solution to sourcing high-quality leads: buy direct from the source! When you cut out the re-selling aspect of insurance leads, leads are sold fewer times. Example: At ZipQuote, we price our leads a little bit higher than other providers, and sell them a maximum of two times. Additionally, if I sell a lead to an end user (agent/carrier), we will not sell that lead in the aggregator marketplace. This allows us to control our distribution. Finally, since we source all of our traffic internally, we know that the lead was not sold prior to us sending it to you.

QUESTIONS TO ASK (LEAD PROVIDER):



Do you buy leads from other lead aggregators?



How can you guarantee that your leads won't be sold more than eight times?



If you sell a lead to me, will you also sell it to another lead generator/aggregator?

GET TO WORK!

Now that you know where your leads are coming from and who you are competing with for these leads, we need to take the final action: get to work! I have provided several basics for working internet leads into successful sales.

Call immediately. Insurance agents are 78% more likely to make a sale if they are the first person to talk with an internet lead (Source: MIT Study).

Call consistently. Some leads will not be immediately reachable. In these cases, the consistent, dedicated agent wins out. Contact ratios go up by 60% after the fifth phone call on a particular lead (Source: MIT Study). That does not mean to call five times in the first five minutes and call it a day. Try to be equitable with your calling, and consistently remind the consumer what you have to offer.

Be creative. Use all forms of communication afforded to you. All internet leads come with name, phone number, address, and email address. Use all of that information. Calls, emails, and physical mail are all proven forms of communication.

Stay organized. In today's fast-moving environment, too many agents still print their leads and work them on paper. At the very least, you should be using Excel to keep organized. Ideally, all agents would use lead management systems. Overall, in order to make lead quality the assumed standard, you need to source your own traffic. Leads generated through internal efforts, using clean forms of internet marketing, produce higher yielding results than aggregated data. Additionally, if you generate your own lead, then you have a responsibility to your customers to distribute it in a way that gives them a chance to be successful with it. After all, if you pay for something, you need to have a chance to make that money back. Finally, be consistent and confident when following up on your leads. The goal is to make a lead a sale.

“Overall, in order to make lead quality the assumed standard, you need to source your own traffic.”



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