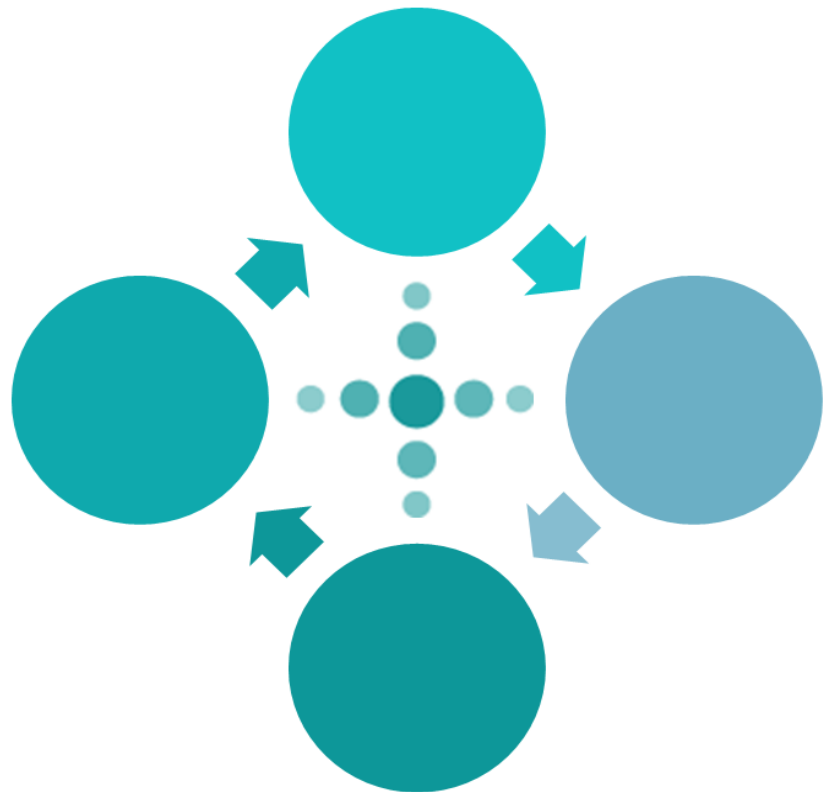




Opportunity Lifecycle Management

A white paper
for Marketing,
Sales and
business
professionals
working in
the technology
industry



OLM (Opportunity Lifecycle Management) from BasePlus, converts the investment made by Technology businesses in demand generation activities into sales pipeline, forecast sales and closed business. This document summarises the unique benefits of OLM and contrasts OLM with traditional lead generation activities. We examine the pitfalls and short-comings of demand generation services which OLM has been designed and is proven to avoid.

Understand the real value of a sales lead.

Why, on average, only 11% of sales leads are pursued.

How OLM solves this problem and overcomes the challenges of converting opportunities into closed business.



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1. OLM - an introduction

First conceived by BasePlus in 2007, Opportunity Lifecycle Management is a unique combination of services which delivers unprecedented visibility of the generation, qualification and progress of sales opportunities for businesses in the Technology sector. In 2007, there was a very common problem to solve. There still is:

Industry statistics show that only 11% of sales leads are ever pursued by salespeople....

....which may explain why over 80% of sales leads generated, are never closed...

SOURCE

ORACLE®

2011

yet 45% of all Prospects buy a Technology solution within 12 months of first expressing an interest.

These statistics are alarming enough, but further research only produces evidence to further compound the issue.:

- Technology businesses are unable to directly attribute closed business to their demand generation activities and investments.
- The majority of Marketing and Sales professionals in the industry freely admit that their expectations of returns when running demand generation campaigns are very low.
- Technology vendors and distributors are increasingly frustrated with the low or often invisible returns on investment on channel focused demand generation activities.

Prior to the business launch in 2007, BasePlus researched the demand generation industry, especially those organizations operating predominantly in the Technology space. This was an extensive exercise which produced several key findings:

1. Telesales or Telemarketing services are still achieving good contact rates with the end-user community.
2. These organizations see their function as:
 - (i) Market coverage
 - (ii) Identifying established requirements
 - (iii) Taking their clients' messages to market
 - (iv) Supplying their clients with quantities of sales leads.

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3. These organizations (“agencies”) have no engagement with the salespeople receiving their leads.
4. Beyond the initial telephone conversation, agencies have no further dialogue with the end-user prospect.
5. “Lead Tracking”, where offered, is an IT system or portal based solution requiring voluntary feedback from client sales and marketing personnel.
6. Agencies are not interested in the progress and development of sales opportunities beyond the duration of their campaign for the client.

Now set these findings against our research into client satisfaction feedback:

1. Salespeople have neither the time nor the inclination to sift through unqualified sales leads searching for a needle in a haystack.
2. The vast majority of so called sales leads are in truth, no more than call-backs.
3. On many occasions, leads pursued by salespeople have proved to be dead-ends—thus destroying the confidence of those salespeople in the quality or validity of subsequent sales leads.
4. Many of the end-user contacts pursued by salespeople have no recollection of the initial conversation with the agency.
5. Lead-tracking systems and portals are wide open to abuse, and salespeople will openly admit to entering inaccurate or invented feedback into these systems simply in order to satisfy the need to comply with the requirements of their marketing, distribution and vendor colleagues.
6. In the ICT/Technology industry, the faith of salespeople in the quality of leads they receive is extremely low. A simple survey of 48 salespeople working for Technology vendors or channel partners revealed the following results:

A) Do the sales leads you receive contribute towards your achievement of sales targets?

Yes: 10.4%



Don't Know: 8.3%



No: 81.3%



B) How realistic and accurate are the sales leads that you receive?

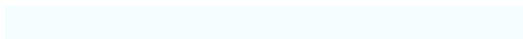
Always realistic & accurate: 0%



More than 50% realistic & accurate: 16.7%



Less than 50% realistic & accurate: 64.6%



Never realistic & accurate: 18.7%



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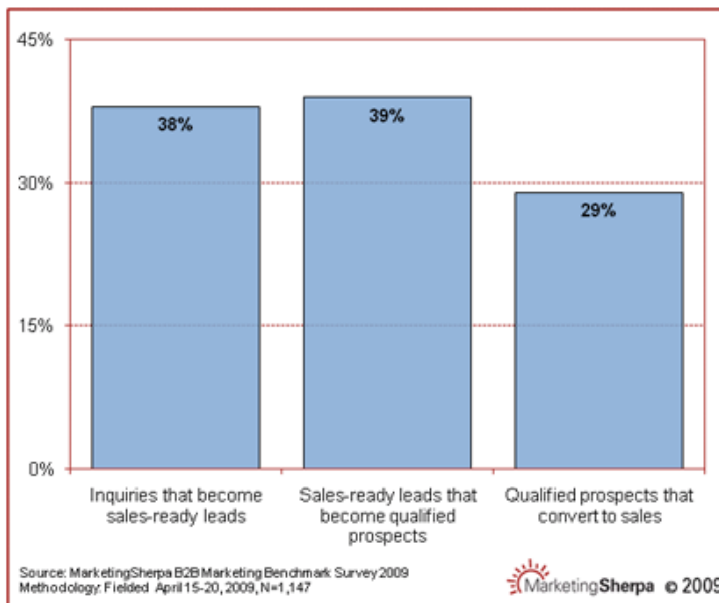
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2. The true value of sales leads

What is the true value of a sales lead? The following chart from Sherpa sheds some light on to that question. This chart and statistics represent “Average Conversion Rates in the Marketing-to-Sales Process.”



At face value, these statistics don't appear too worrying. Almost 30% of enquiries (initial leads) appear to convert to sales....
.....wrong.....this chart shows results as percentages of percentages.
Thus, starting with 100% of enquiries, only 38%, on average, convert to sales-ready leads. If we assume a starting point of 100 initial sales leads, 38 of them therefore convert to sales-ready leads.
Of these 38 sales-ready leads, using Sherpa terminology, 39% become qualified prospects. In real terms, this leaves less than 15 leads from the original 100. On average, only 29% of these remaining qualified prospects will convert to sales..... A real return of 4 sales from 100 initial sales leads. In other words a conversion rate of 4%.

2.1 Sales Leads in the Technology Sector

The average conversion rates from Sherpa (above) are representative of a cross section of industries and market sectors.

It is important to note that sales lead conversion rates vary greatly from industry to industry. This is because some industries have a very short “transaction chain” from initial lead through to a closed sale, whereas other industries have a far longer transaction chain due to the complex nature of the solution required and the levels of purchasing authority needed to complete a transaction.

One example of a simple case is the selling of a weekend getaway tour package, whereby there is a single step of conversion. You sell the package in your telemarketing, take the persons credit card number and send the tour confirmation papers. By contrast, an example of a complex case is the selling of IT services to a company. The conversion process will go through sending brochures & profile of the IT service provider, followed by introductory meeting, demonstration, reference checks, price negotiations, service contracts, purchase order etc..

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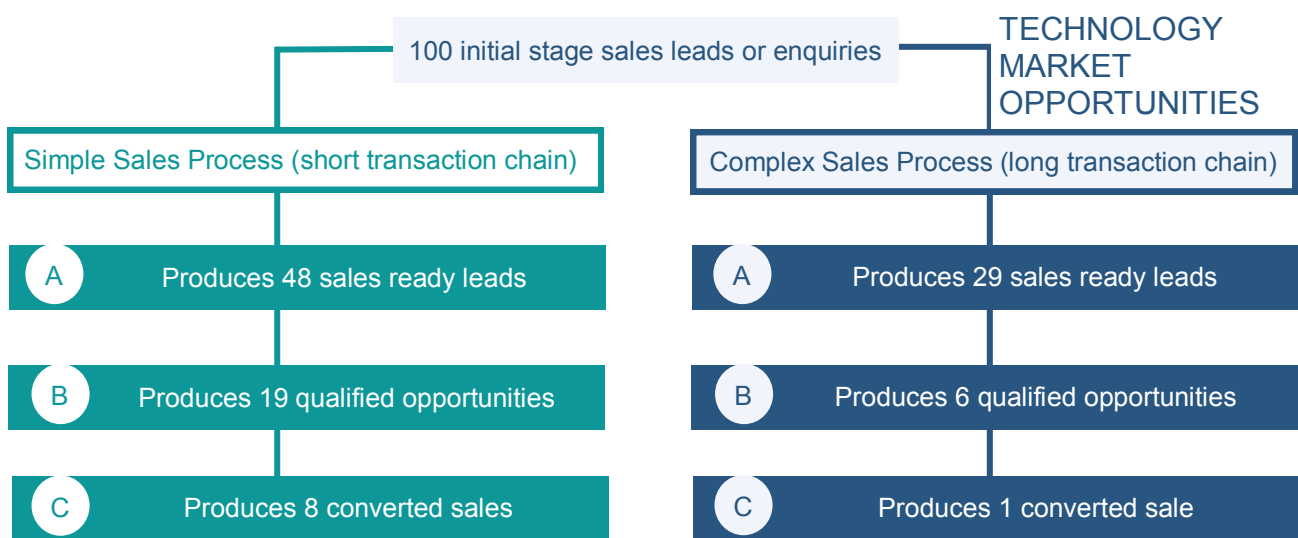
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It is clear that the Technology industry belongs to this latter category.

The reason that conversion rates are significantly higher in markets where short transaction chains are more common is simply a result of the linkage between the prospect and the conversion point. Put simply, an enquiry (or generated prospect) can be converted in one stage where the decision maker is also the purchaser, and the complexity of the requirement and proposition is very low. This is clearly not the case in the Technology or ICT market sectors.

So, in separating short transaction chains from long transaction chains, we can also separate lead conversion averages according to these two categories of sales complexity.



From these average conversion statistics (above right), we can draw a number of possible conclusions:

1. A phenomenal number of telemarketing leads will be required to deliver a return on investment in terms of closed business.
2. Telemarketing may be effective in delivering returns on investment where simple sales processes are standard, but is an inappropriate solution where complex sales processes are involved.
3. An obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that the quality of leads entering the sales funnel must be improved to increase the quantities of sales ready leads and qualified opportunities.
4. In addition to this, it is clearly important to improve the conversion percentages from stage (A) to stage (B) and from stage (B) to stage (C)

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Before we can begin to see the true value of a sales lead, we need to understand the average productivity and deliverables of telemarketing agencies — the fundamental source of these sales leads.

Telemarketing agencies can not and do not make any promises regarding either the quantity or quality of leads that they may produce from a campaign. The only promises they can make are the promises of time, resource and effort.

Time is traditionally sold by the hour or by the day. The resource is a guarantee of a trained, targeted individual or individuals engaged to carry out the activity. The effort is a promise or guarantee of a minimum amount of work being performed by the resource within the time purchased.

Here are some industry averages (as of June 2011):

Telemarketing Agency Day Rate:	\$500
Number of Dials Made (30 secs+ in duration) per day:	100
Number of Decision Maker Conversations (DMC) per day:	7
Number of DMC conversions to lead status per day:	2

Now, remember: 100 initial stage sales leads or enquiries produce 1 converted sale

Telemarketing agencies can only deliver these initial stage sales leads. They have no involvement with either the end-user organization or their client beyond the initial “lead” conversation and the “lead report” submission. The service is high in volume and low in touch-points.

Simple mathematics can now be applied to show the potential return on investment metrics:

100 initial stage sales leads or enquiries

produce 1 converted sale

1 Telemarketing Day achieving 7 DMC's

produces 2 initial stage sales leads

Therefore,

50 Telemarketing Days are required

To produce 100 initial stage sales leads

To deliver 1 converted sale

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Now consider that the average price of a telemarketing day (average standard day-rate) is \$500, and it can be estimated that the cost of delivering one closed sale using this method is:

$$50 \quad \times \quad \text{Telemarketing Days @ \$500 per day} \quad = \quad \$25,000$$

Therefore, before embarking on a campaign of this nature, the average profit margin (not revenue value) of your sales must be in excess of \$25,000 to simply pay for the cost of the campaign.

The true value of a sales lead is the rate at which it can deliver a return on investment. If we assume a generous net profit margin of 25%, and an average sales revenue value of \$100,000, what we can see here, is that a client of a traditional telemarketing service would need to invest \$25,000 to simply break even.

Add to this the fact that the average sales-cycle of a Technology industry opportunity from initial identification through to close is 9 months, and it also becomes apparent that this questionable return on investment will not be realized for some considerable time.

The true value of sales leads – a summary:

- ⇒ Without OLM, any sales lead can only be an initial expression of interest or enquiry.
- ⇒ Conversion rates from this initial, embryonic stage through to closed business are especially low where complex solutions, sales processes and purchasing hierarchies are involved. This is almost invariably true of the Technology marketplace.
- ⇒ Technology Industry clients traditionally measure the success of telemarketing campaigns by the volume or quantity of leads generated; but most are unaware of the unrealistic quantities required for their campaigns to deliver bottom line returns on investment.



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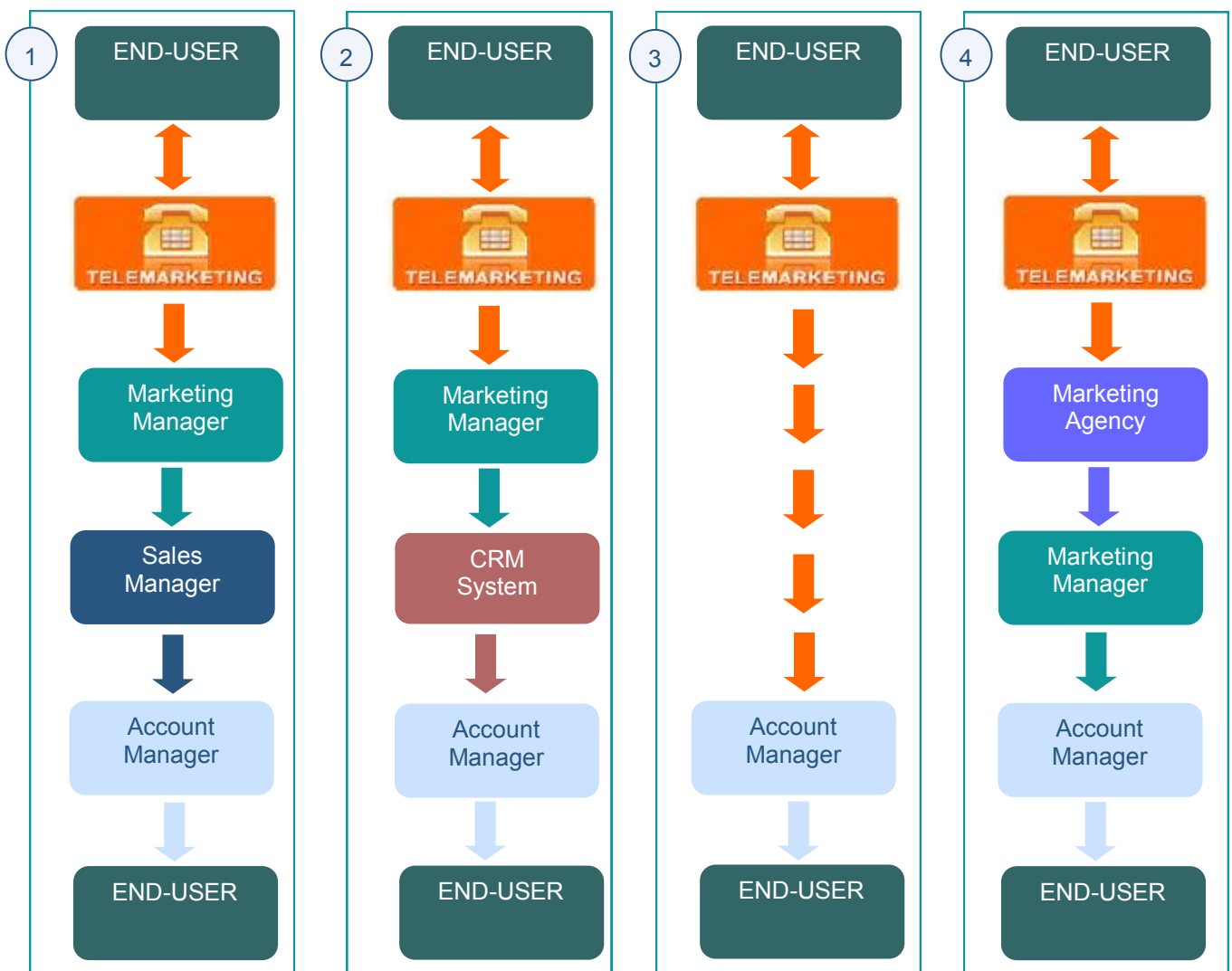
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3. Systemic failures in the sales process

In the previous section we established that traditional telemarketing services will not deliver sufficient closed business which, after all, is the ultimate objective of any demand generation campaign. In this section we demonstrate the reasons why such services are doomed to fail and why the Telemarketing Agencies themselves are either only partly to blame or often, completely blameless for this failure.

Firstly, we need to understand what happens to sales leads once they have been issued to the client by the Telemarketing Agency. Here are some typical scenarios:



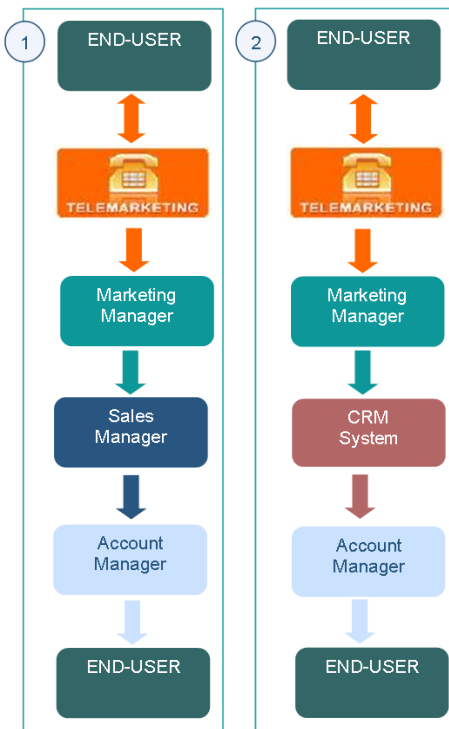
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These are the most common processes adopted for the communication and transfer of sales leads. The first thing to note here is the long chain of communication between End-User engagements. Secondly, it should be noted that the transfer of communication is written only. Verbal communication is 50% more effective than written communication. Used together, verbal and written communication further increase this effectiveness.

Now consider the roles played by each component in this communication chain. The Telemarketing Agency has completed its task when it has reported an opportunity in writing to its client. It has no further involvement in the process. The Marketing Manager is tasked with and targeted on producing leads to feed the sales process. Having transferred the lead to sales either via Sales Management or a CRM system of allocation, their role becomes passive. They can check for and request feedback but they are now two steps removed from the actual opportunity and must therefore trust that feedback obtained from Sales (if any is obtained) is genuine. The Sales Manager is even further removed from the opportunity. His/Her role in the process is to allocate

the lead and monitor its progress—but the monitoring process is again entirely dependent on the accuracy of feedback from the salesperson or Account Manager. Finally, the Account Manager whose responsibility it is to pursue the sales lead, is placed in the ultimate position of trust. Has he or she contacted the end-user? Has he or she taken time to read the report and made full reference to its content when speaking with the end-user? Is the feedback he or she reports back to Marketing via Sales Management or the CRM system, accurate? Invented? Convenient?

Our assumption may be that a salesperson will always welcome sales leads, but this is not always true. “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush” is an old adage that applies perfectly when a salesperson is already pursuing closeable business opportunities and has little time or inclination to pursue new enquiries or leads.

Of these two communication processes, (1) is the more effective. Our research proves categorically that a reliance on systems (including CRM and lead-tracking systems) is wide-open to abuse from salespeople who quickly understand that completing a few fields of feedback, regardless of truth or accuracy, will absolve them from further action or involvement.

Thus we can see that a sales lead that may be perfectly genuine business opportunity can be so easily wasted because of ineffective chains of communication and management.

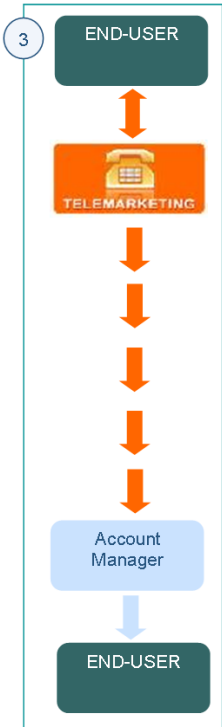
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This process is rare but can be effective. In most cases, this communication chain is only used when a TM agency has been engaged purely to “feed” a specific salesperson or small group of salespeople. Where this is the case, there is a stronger likelihood of the salespeople pursuing the sales leads. However, although the additional management layers shown previously, have now been removed, reducing complexity and the numbers of steps removed from the opportunity, the ability to monitor, check and test feedback is also removed.

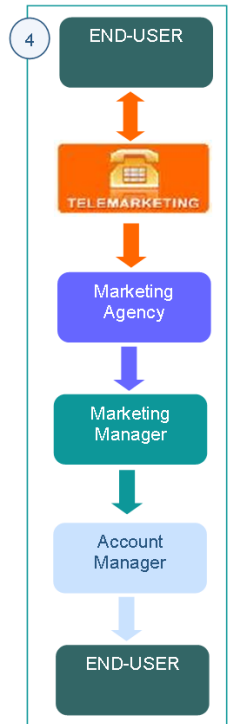
Whether opportunities progress through the sales pipeline as a result of the original leads, or no opportunity results, tracing progress (or lack of it) and linking this to the original campaign and funding mechanism are almost impossible.

And finally, often the least effective communication chain: A Marketing Agency has been employed by the client to scope, setup and manage the demand generation campaign. In order to maintain control, this Agency acts as a conduit for information passing from the TM Agency and the client. We have already seen that by adding links into the chain of communication, we are removing the connection between the salesperson and the end-user opportunity – thus creating a form of “Chinese Whispers”¹

With the intervention of the Marketing Agency, the potential for breakdowns in communication is greatly increased. In some cases, an even longer and less effective chain of communication is employed, with Sales Management and or CRM/Lead Tracking systems added to this scenario.

In all of these examples, focus on the most important element in the chain – **the end-user opportunity** – is lost.

(1. Chinese Whispers: A game in which a message is distorted by being passed around in a whisper. Source: Oxford English Dictionary)



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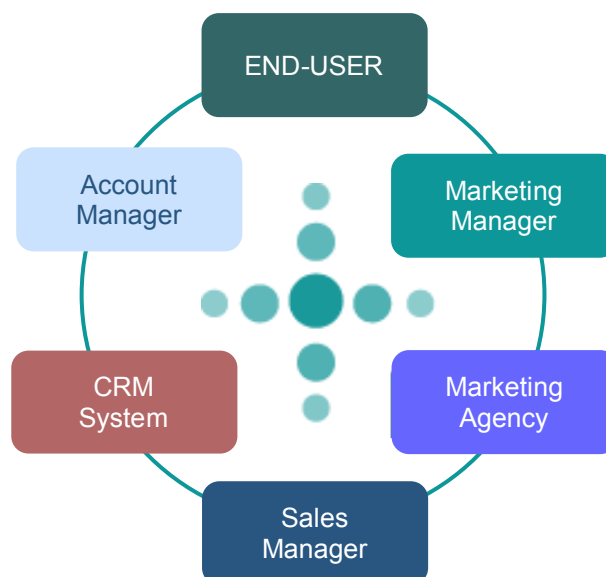


Of course, there can be many other potential failings in the sales process—most of which rest with Sales Management professionals, Coaches and Sales Trainers to address. However, it is the systemic failings in the earliest stages of the sales process highlighted here that lead to the dreadful waste of investment in demand generation activities so prevalent in the Technology industry.

Systemic failures in the sales process — a summary:

- ⇒ The more links there are in the chain of communication between the original end-user opportunity and the salesperson engaging it, the less likely it is to be engaged either correctly, or at all.
- ⇒ Placing checkpoints or monitors in place to both police the progress of the opportunity and obtain feedback from the salesperson, will not guarantee progress or feedback unless end-user engagement has been maintained by the individuals monitoring the process from the outset (see section 4: Bridging the gaps & mapping the process).
- ⇒ System based tracking is prone to abuse. Often, a simple comparison between system produced updates, a company's sales forecast and its order book over a 12 month period, will highlight the glaring discrepancies between “leads” and reality.

However, the answer to the problem is certainly not to disband the communication chain - far from it. As we will see in the next section, OLM reinforces the links in the chain and ensures that the most important link of all - that between the client's salesperson and the end-user opportunity - is forged and maintained effectively.





4. Bridging the gaps & mapping the process

What and where are “the gaps”?

To recap on section 3, we can see potential breaks (or gaps) in the early, initial stages of the sales process.



Each of these breaks is a gap through which the opportunity can easily fall and, as we have already shown, the more gaps there are, the more likely it is that the opportunity will be lost.

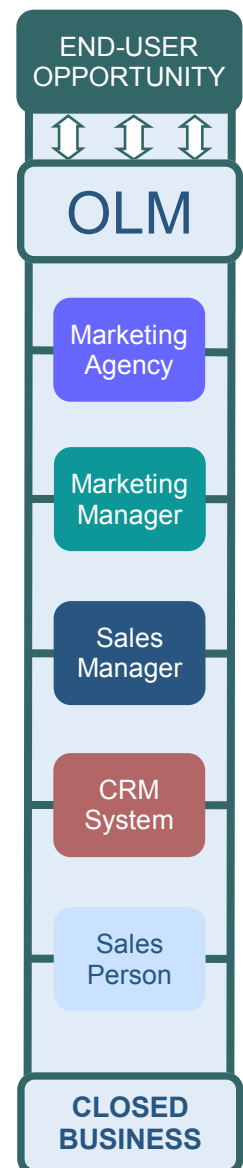
If we answer a very simple question, we are provided with the key to bridging the gaps and forming the solution. This question is: “When is sales lead-generation most effective?”

There is only one answer:

“when the lead is generated by the salesperson who will pursue the opportunity.”

If this was a practicable solution to lead/demand generation, telemarketing, email marketing and other demand generation methods would not exist in the first place, but the principal implicit in this can be implemented - and indeed is - implemented in OLM.

By mapping the process (right), OLM can cater for and bridge the communication gaps. Most important of all in this process, is retaining the ability to hand-hold the end-user opportunity through the sales process, thus prioritizing progress of the opportunity above organisational, communication and personnel based issues. In achieving this retention of control over the end-user opportunity, OLM ensures that focus on the primary objective of demand generation - creating closed business - is maintained regardless of breakdowns or shortcomings in the sales process.



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5. Meaningful numbers

Here are some typical statistics reported by lead generation organisations:



Number of telemarketing days delivered	20
Number of dials	2,350
Average number of dials per day	117.5
Number of Decision Makers contacted	149
Average number of DMC's per day	7.45
Number of leads	53
Average number of leads per day	2.65
Outside Scope	37
Average "outside scope" per day	1.85
Not Interested	59
Average "not interested" per day	2.95



Number of emails sent	2,500
Number of bounces	682
Number of opens	322
Number of replies	11
Number of unique opens	239
Number of hyperlink opens	51
Number of unique hyperlink opens	47
Number of "forwards"	6
Number of unsubscribes	28

A simple analysis of these statistics reveals two very significant facts:

1. The majority of the statistics provided relate to activity and "outcomes"
2. There is a limited and unclear emphasis on next actions for Sales.

In the Telemarketing example, the only statistic that could be of any value to sales is the number of leads (circled). From the perspective of a Marketing Manager who may be targeted on delivering a certain number of leads to his or her business, the ability to report, "53 leads in 20 days" may appear significant, but these numbers are only meaningful if the leads are genuine sales opportunities which are managed into and engaged by salespeople whose development of the opportunities is tracked and managed. Telemarketing Agencies cannot do this—so who will?

The Email Marketing statistics may again satisfy the Marketing Manager, but Email Marketing is reactive and the only statistics that will interest Sales here are the small numbers circled.

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With OLM, the emphasis changes from “Activity Outcomes” to “Business Outcomes”. Although the Marketing Manager still has full visibility of the number of opportunities being created, an OLM report focuses on the nature of the opportunities, the value of the opportunities, the sales engagement of the opportunities, the current sales stage of the opportunities and the next actions scheduled to develop the opportunities.

These figures are meaningful numbers.

Meaningful, because they enable businesses to make informed decisions and help them to forecast, budget and plan. Meaningful, because they enable businesses to evaluate the direct return on investment in creating the opportunities which have delivered the returns. Meaningful, because their value can be measured in hard currency, where a fully realized “outcome” will deliver value to the bottom-line.

The following example shows headline statistics from a recent OLM program. It is important to note that a full report also delivers granular, detailed information for each individual sales opportunity, plus a detailed breakdown of opportunities in progress with each salesperson or partner organization, together with next action and feedback dates.

OLM Master Pipeline Headlines	Current	Previous	% Change
Program Investment	\$58,000	\$46,000	+26.1%
Current Pipeline Value	\$18,162,598	\$14,327,995	+26.8%
Pipeline to Investment Return Ratio (\$)	313 : 1	311 : 1	+1.0%
Value of Opportunities Vendor Registered	\$3,596,195	\$2,406,315	+49.4%
Registered Deal Return Ratio (\$)	62 : 1	52 : 1	+19.2%
Opportunities in Progress	253	198	+27.8%
Value of Opportunities in Progress	\$16,286,575	\$12,192,445	+33.6%
Opportunities Closed Won	7	5	+28.6%
Value of Opportunities Closed Won	\$1,876,023	\$1,269,468	+32.3%
Closed Business to Investment Return Ratio (\$)	32 : 1	28 : 1	+12.5%
Opportunities Closed Abandoned	5	4	+20%
Value of Opportunities Closed Abandoned	\$987,808	\$905,808	+9%
Opportunities Closed Lost	8	6	+33.3%
Value of Opportunities Closed Lost	\$1,351,384	\$1,198,359	+12.8%

Every number in this report is meaningful to a business. Furthermore, the detailed analysis of these numbers delivered by a full OLM report can be used to implement successful sales and marketing campaigns based on empirical evidence.

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a white paper



6. OLM from BasePlus delivers ROI +

ROI (Return on Investment) can be simply measured by the revenue and/or profit margin return delivered on the investment made. In section 5, we showed how OLM delivers this ROI measurement. However, this is not the only Return on Investment achieved by OLM.

- ⇒ Sales Effectiveness: The ability of salespeople to engage well qualified opportunities and to develop them effectively can be measured by OLM both on an individual and sales team basis.
- ⇒ Partner Effectiveness: Vendors and Distributors can easily see which of their partners are proactively engaging new business opportunities and which are merely paying lip service to the process. With this evidence, the future allocation of opportunities, funds and resources to the Partner Network can be made effectively, and on merit.
- ⇒ Proposition Effectiveness by Market Sector: OLM captures the vertical market sector for every end-user opportunity and in doing so, also provides a breakdown analysis of proposition uptake across the market sectors targeted. This enables targeting according to market sector uptake, thus increasing future ROI through pin-pointed marketing and sales efforts.
- ⇒ Opportunity or Deal Registration: Mentioned previously in section 5 of this document, Deal Registration is an increasingly common form of opportunity acceptance and safeguarding for multiple channel partners working with key technology vendors. However, there are mixed perceptions of this process. To the Vendor, this provides visibility of forecast business being managed by partners and protects the partner from competition. To many of the partners however, the process is seen as providing unnecessary visibility of opportunities to the vendor. OLM can incorporate opportunity registration - and in doing so - adds a layer of opportunity an partner tracking for Vendors and Distributors struggling to achieve visibility of business flowing through their partner networks' sales pipelines.

OLM = PIPELINE +	SALES EFFECTIVENESS	= CLOSED BUSINESS = ROI+
	PROPOSITION EFFECTIVENESS	
	MARKET EFFECTIVENESS	

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7. Is OLM right for my business?

Opportunity Lifecycle Management is unlikely to be appropriate if:



- ⇒ Your business is a very small reseller with a small sales team.
- ⇒ Your salespeople can be relied upon (and have been proven to) pursue sales leads and close them.
- ⇒ None of the situations presented in this document are familiar to you and you therefore don't appear to have a problem to solve.
- ⇒ You can only occasionally fund demand generation activities and your funding is both infrequent and unpredictable.

OLM is not only right for your business, it is a business essential if:



- ⇒ Your business is a Technology Vendor, Distributor, VAR, Software House or Service Provider with multiple salespeople, channel partners and propositions.
- ⇒ Your business regularly invests in demand generation activities.
- ⇒ The scenarios described in this document, which ultimately prevent you from recognising a return on your investments, are familiar to you and your business.
- ⇒ You have become disillusioned with Telemarketing and/or Email Marketing as methods of generating new business.
- ⇒ You recognise the clear difference between generating sales leads, and delivering incremental closed business but the conversion from one to the other appears to be out of your reach.
- ⇒ You want to work within a program delivered not by an "Agency", but by a business partner that deals only in facts and genuine business value.

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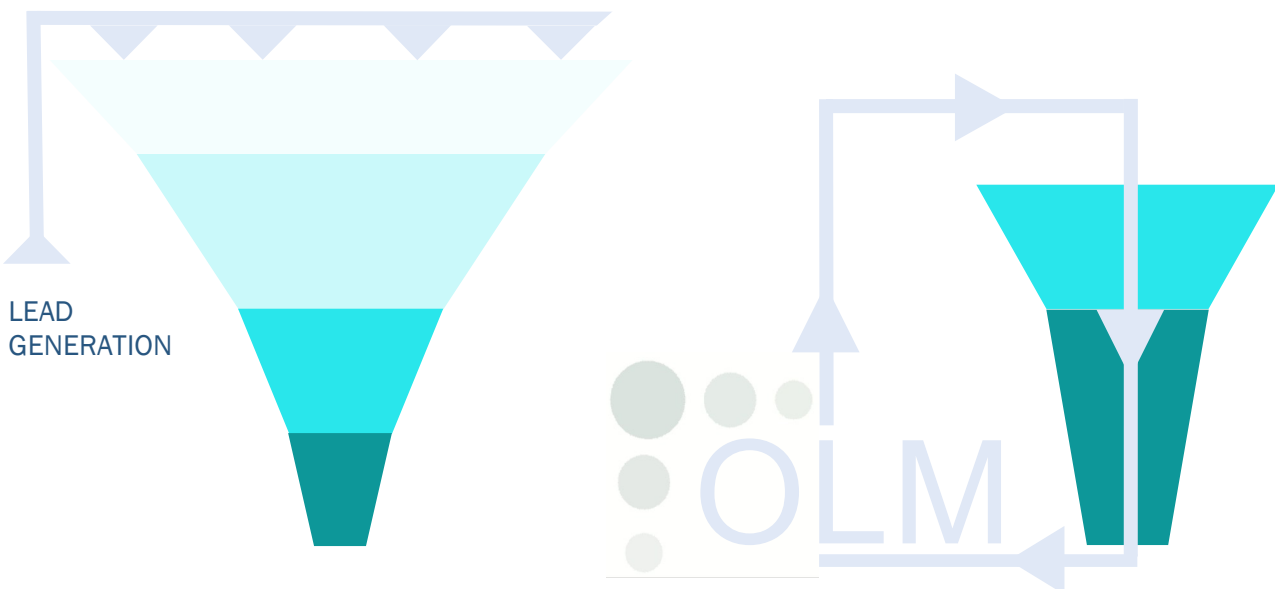


8. Putting OLM into practice

Some cultural change is required for the successful implementation of OLM. It is true that OLM can alter sales attitudes towards new business - and these changes in attitude should be welcome. As we have highlighted, salespeople have traditionally found it too easy to hide from new business pursuit - and this has only become easier with the advent of lead-tracking systems and “management by CRM”.

Marketing Managers who have become used to dealing in the currency convertor of “leads per day”, must also approach OLM with a different mind-set. Formerly, Marketing Managers have been tasked with cramming the top of a very wide sales funnel with volumes of leads. With OLM, the is funnel is both shorter (due to the qualification and quality control elements) and much more narrow (as less volume is required to produce more closed business). Thus, the pressure to deliver leads in volume, of all shapes, sizes, flavours and of mixed quality, is removed.

This change in mind-set is characterised by comparing the two sales funnel diagrams below. The first of these is the familiar model for a Marketing Manager, in which their role is to fill the top of the funnel with leads. Compare this to the second funnel which shows the control and management of quality sales opportunities as they flow through the sales stages to completion.



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The second most significant changes in mindset and process is the direct sales engagement that OLM requires in order to achieve effective opportunity and pipeline management. As we have already highlighted in this whitepaper, the traditional transfer of sales leads from Telemarketing Agencies to Sales via Marketing, creates a communication gap that both penalizes eager salespeople and protects the lazy and/or inefficient.

Direct sales to sales engagement between OLM Business Developers and the salespeople tasked with pursuing the opportunities is essential. It is important to note that this direct engagement does not preclude the flow of reporting, feedback, information and pipeline development required by the client's Marketing and Business Management personnel.

Expectations & Perceptions - Results

Traditionally, Telemarketing Agencies are placed under pressure to deliver "results" from the very outset of a campaign. Compare this expectation to the expectation placed on new Salespeople tasked with building a sales pipeline, territory or vertical market from scratch:

Expectation of Results

	Telemarketing	Sales
Day 1		
Week 1		
Month 1		
Quarter 1		

What does this tell us?

It speaks volumes for the differences in perception of the nature and meaning of "results". It would be ridiculous to expect a new salesperson to build a meaningful pipeline in a day, or a week, and even after one month, limited progress would be expected. Yet, the expectation placed on Telemarketing Agencies to deliver results is both high and immediate. The difference between the results expected from each party therefore, has to be - and is - significant. With this in mind, we perhaps should not be surprised that Telemarketing Agencies are keen to deliver "leads" which so often amount to no more than passing interest or over-polite rejection.

Telemarketing deals in satisfying a perceived need for perceived" results".

OLM deals in actual results - the results that have a direct effect on a business's bottom-line.

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Requirements for putting OLM into practice

Training

Apply the sales and proposition training that you would provide for your own salespeople. OLM is a sales-based program and training should be treated and provided accordingly.

Market Focus

Be clear about the market sectors you wish to target and, more importantly, the reasons why you wish to target them and the reasons why you believe your business and your proposition is well placed to win business in the sectors you are targeting.

Stakeholder Involvement

Make sure that all stakeholders are not just aware of the OLM program, but are fully engaged in it. Salespeople will be fully involved in the handover of opportunities and will be contacted regularly for opportunity updates. Those who are not fully involved may not be prepared to volunteer genuine feedback when requested. Within OLM, this behavior will cause the OLM Business Development Team to re-engage the end-user directly, and if necessary, reallocate the opportunity. Remember that in OLM, the opportunity is the prime asset and its fruitful development must be protected above all else.

Preparation

Above all else, allow sufficient time to prepare thoroughly for the program. Defining, refining and sourcing your target market data takes time. Translating proposition briefing or training into a workable sales proposition requires thought - and again, time.



The setup and management of an OLM program is far from onerous and is no more time intensive than any other well prepared marketing or sales exercise. Importantly, once in place, an OLM program pays back the preparation time many times over by completely negating the time normally spent attempting to track sales leads and attempting to report meaningful outcomes to the original source of the funding.

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OLM in summary

MarketSherpa reports that 35% of businesses in the Technology sector are increasing their investment in telemarketing, with a further 54% maintaining their current levels of investment; so it is clear that the sector has yet to find a more effective alternative of reaching its markets. The same report also measured the effectiveness of alternative marketing methods. Of the Business Executives surveyed,

⇒ The effectiveness of Telemarketing was rated at	35%
⇒ The effectiveness of Public Relations was	31%
⇒ Tradeshows:	25%
⇒ Paid Search:	23%
⇒ Direct Mail:	22%
⇒ Social Media:	16%
⇒ Print Advertising:	10%

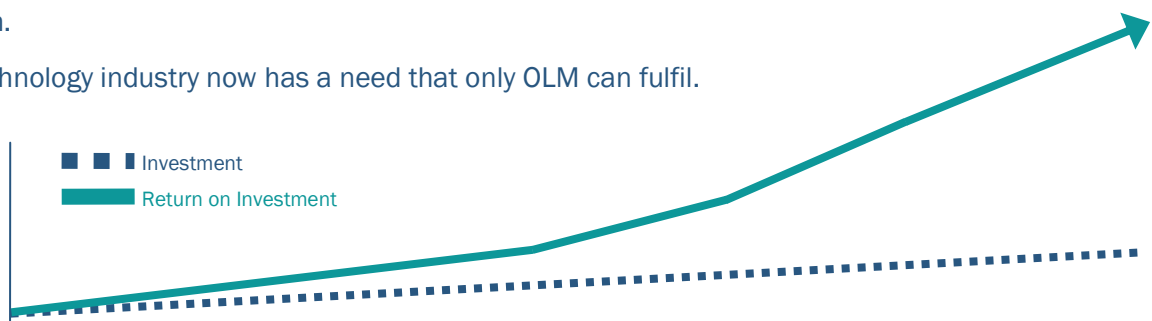
There is no doubt that contacting your potential market directly by telephone, is still the most effective and measurable method of reaching the market, but, as we have seen, the problems start when businesses are challenged to show a return on investment in this method.

By acknowledging and compensating for the shortcomings in the sales and marketing processes which make ROI measurement near impossible, OLM enables Technology businesses to track their investments from the outset of an OLM program through to actual revenue returns.

Telemarketing may not be dead, but, with increasing pressure in the industry to deliver a return on investment on every dollar spent, it must evolve if it is to avoid extinction.

Opportunity Lifecycle Management is a next generation business solution to an old and very common problem.

The Technology industry now has a need that only OLM can fulfil.



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