

Telemarketing vs Advertising

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Marketing budgets are precious, so when looking to allocate your budget towards marketing activities it can be a difficult decision where to spend what. Two main tools often debated long and hard over, when marketing an accountancy practice, are telemarketing and advertising. If you don't have the budget for both, how do you decide which to use?

The key to deciding which marketing tool to use is to understand how these tools are implemented and how your target market will receive and act upon them. Telemarketing is a direct marketing method, whereby you contact people personally to ascertain their interest at that moment in time and act upon the information gathered. It generates instant interest and new customers. Advertising however relies on the customer seeing the advert and then acting upon it themselves. They have to play an active role in contacting you and have to have the time and inclination to action their interest.

Telemarketing can deliver results quicker and in greater quantities than advertising, due to the direct nature of the marketing medium. You can find a potential new customer and convert them within a relatively short timescale, compared to advertising, as you have more control over the quantity and frequency of clients acquired. Advertising gives you no control over the quantity or speed at which the clients convert. There can be a surge of interest when an advert is viewed, but this is not under your control, so there may in fact be no interest at all. There is no way certainty over the interest you will generate as you are waiting for customers to be proactive and contact you.

As telemarketing involves contacting x number of target clients and ascertaining their interest, it is much easier to track the results. Each call made will yield a result whether there is interest or not and this information can be tracked and results recorded to help future marketing. Generally with advertising the medium used can give you statistics on the estimated target audience, but as to how many actually get to see the advert and what their responses are you will not actually know. The only measure of success is the number of people that contact you, however there will be some that never get around to taking action and will not get in touch even though they might be interested. It is very hard to track the actual success of the advertisement as you have less control over the audience reached and their responses.

When looking at test marketing different marketing messages and/or promotions, telemarketing can give you the flexibility to try different promotions and approaches without incurring high costs and long timescales to redesign adverts and place them in a variety of media. Advertising can be very costly to try different promotions as you need to redesign the advert each time incurring costs. You can never be sure what the target audience think of the promotion as there is no two-way dialogue, except from those customers that are interested and get in touch. Telemarketing however, registers responses from everyone that is not interested as well as those that are. This gives constructive feedback and will assist planning future promotions and marketing messages.

Advertising is a great way to generate brand awareness and keep your practice name at the forefront of the minds of local businesses. If conducted over a long period or time, on a regular basis and through different channels it can help general awareness, which in time should lead to more clients contacting the practice. Telemarketing can also help generate brand awareness, as long as the company it is outsourced to ensures the practice name is mentioned on every phone call. You also need to ensure your telemarketing company is representing you in a positive manner as you do not want negative connotations to the awareness raised.

An advertisement can be restricted on the message delivered and is static in nature, whereas telemarketing conversations can be tailored to each call made and the needs of the target customer contacted. Finding the correct telemarketing firm is key to this, as you need one that is flexible in their approach and does not

use rigid scripts. The telemarketer making the call should know the variety of the Key Selling Points for your practice and be able to adapt the conversions as necessary.

Below is a summary of the advantages of telemarketing over advertising.

Summary of Advantages of Telemarketing over Advertising
1. Contact people directly thus ascertaining their interest immediately and offering them a solution to their accountancy problem straight away.
2. Takes very little effort from the customer as they do not need to take action themselves. The call simply alerts them to the opportunity which if of interest can be actioned easily.
3. Delivers quicker and greater results
4. Gives greater control over quantity and frequency of new customers acquired. Can create great volumes of clients during quite periods and less new clients during busy periods
5. Flexibility allows simple and easy test marketing of new promotions quickly and with no additional cost.
6. Generates two-way dialogue so feedback can be collected and analysed to assist future marketing activities.
7. The approach can be adapted to suit the individual customers needs on each phone call, whereas advertisements are static and will not always appeal to every potential customer.

Overall telemarketing can be seen to have many more benefits than advertising if looking to acquire more new customers. It offers a direct approach to contacting potential customers and converting them in a relatively short timescale. Advertising is more beneficial if your aim is to simply increase brand awareness over a long period of time and not necessarily increase new customer acquisition in the short term.

For more information on how telemarketing can help your practice grow email growmypractice@thejastpartnership.co.uk or visit www.thejastpartnership.co.uk