

"Hi, I'm Ian, Sales and Marketing Director of ABC Ltd"

How many times have you come across that statement in business? Most businesses put the sales and marketing functions together; which, in the vast majority of cases, is wrong. Sales and marketing are 2 completely different functions. If you are looking for a short definition, I would say that marketing activities feed sales efforts. When you break it down further into each role it becomes much clearer.

Marketing is a multi-stream promotion of your revenue streams within your business. At Grapevine Marketing Agency we tend to promote the revenue streams within the business rather than the overall businesses. Most businesses offer different activities to clients and sometimes the same activity to different market sectors. This often needs a completely different approach in terms of marketing activity.

An example of this is a client of ours who is an Insurance Broker based in the North of England. We promote insurance to car repair and MOT type facilities, whilst targeting a larger sector in the fleet market - so essentially logistics type companies and anyone with sales fleets. If you look at the profile of the former, they are often small business of up to 10 employees with the owner generally opening the mail and on the whole not very computer driven. From our research the vast majority of these businesses do not even have an email address. On the flip-side, large fleet types generally have a secretary or PA screening 'junk' mail and the decision maker is normally much further up the chain. An active approach to the car repair sector that is working well for us is direct mail and telemarketing. We are enjoying a 35% return rate from these activities. In contrast, an approach like this for the fleet market wouldn't work as well, we are enjoying far more success with decision maker targeted email campaign with a text email and telemarketing follow up alongside natural website searches bringing in the rest of the business.

The sales function is the art of attending the lead and closing the sale at the best possible deal. In most cases it is also creating extra revenue from the same client and the salesperson is generally tasked with this role. In my experience of many different sectors, most sales people actually have very little idea of what marketing is and what works in their sector. I am sure that some sales executives will read this and disagree, but to quantify this I have to ask the following questions:

- Do you have knowledge of how spam filters work for email marketing?
- Do you know how to get websites to the top of search engines naturally?
- Are you experienced in writing editorial and getting it printed on a regular basis?
- Are you aware of the legislation behind buying prospect data?
- Do you know the opt-out and opt-in rules for all forms of active marketing such as email, direct mail, fax and telemarketing?

There are many more of examples like this. The best kick-start advice I can give you is a) start to visualise your sales and marketing function as 2 different departments, b) look for experts in the marketing field to take you there and c) make sure that they have experience in all forms of marketing activity.

For more information on what activities may work for you visit [www.grapevine-group.co.uk](http://www.grapevine-group.co.uk) or if you want an example marketing plan or any advice please contact Dean Spencer at Grapevine on 0845 009 9089 or email [dean@grapevine-group.co.uk](mailto:dean@grapevine-group.co.uk)