



What Questions Should Be On My Lead Form?

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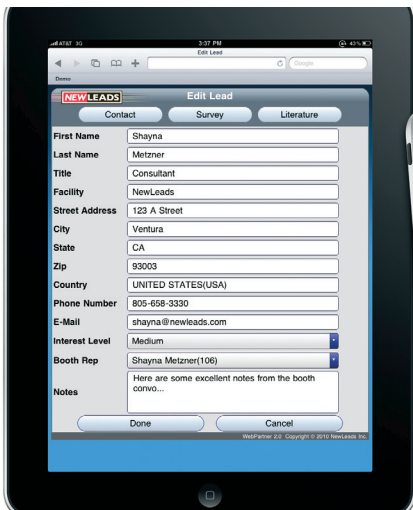
Have you ever thought about the difference between a sales lead and a booth visitor? While every sales lead is a booth visitor, not every booth visitor is a sales lead. Even though polling data shows that more than 70% of trade show attendees are there to make a purchase decision or find products, it doesn't mean that your products and services are even in the category of what they are seeking. The good news is that when they are seeking your products, about 80% of them have buying influence.

Assuming you do a great job at drawing the right people to your booth, only about 10% of your visitors will be buyers who must still be engaged and moved through conversations into the status of being sales-ready leads. Once they are identified, many exhibitors drop the ball at this point by scribbling valuable sales-ready information business cards or on the lead retrieval box printout. To overcome this lost opportunity cost, you'll need a standard yet simple lead form to ensure that the sales-ready lead is properly detailed and therefore has the best chance of converting to a successful sale; this form should not be on paper, but electronic, using a PC or tablet-type device (iPad, Kindle, etc.)

What Is A Sales-Ready Lead?

The first step in creating a lead form is to consider the word "lead". If you have never been in sales, you might think that the sales team is eager to get every lead you scan in the booth. After all, your iPad giveaway might bring in hundreds of leads. However, sales people don't consider all attendee badge scans

as leads. They have simple criteria for determining which scans are "leads" that they will follow-up and which are left uncalled and best suited to your email follow-up campaigns. The iPad giveaway crowd is not what sales people consider to be valuable leads (unless the sales team is selling iPads); these are merely contacts who might actually threaten their productivity ("I don't have time to call a bunch of cold calls; I need to make quota this month! I need qualified sales-ready leads!") The sales team is looking for the interested buyers. Since only 10% of the attendees who visit your booth will be identified as sales-ready, these need to be "detailed" on an electronic (iPad or PC) lead form so that the sales team can easily identify who they are, what they need and how soon they need it.



The criteria for a sales-ready lead is straight-forward and mission critical to your success. What must a lead record contain to be considered "sales-ready" by your sales team? There are three things you must have:

1. Accurate Contact Information

First, no sales lead is sales-ready unless the contact information is accurate. Did you know that at least 20% of all trade show badge information is inaccurate or incomplete? If you have ever been an attendee, you know there are many reasons, such as a reluctance to put your direct phone line or email on the registration form. Many times, an administrative person will sign up multiple people from their company to attend, and the on-line form that allows them to "add another" will copy over all of the fields except for first and last name. An admin in a hurry might not change phone numbers, email addresses or even job titles. Step one is to train your reps to mistrust phone and email once a badge is scanned. "Is this your direct phone line?" is a good way to ask the question. **If an attendee is requesting more information, they will gladly give**

you their email and phone number since they are requesting the information.

2. Sales Qualifying Questions

There are three things that every rep must know in order to consider a lead more than a cold call:

- a defined product interest
- a short time frame for purchase consideration
- the size of the opportunity (e.g. how many units or monthly volume)

Many companies will add one or two others, such as current customer status and follow-up requests

Start with customer status: "Are you a current customer?" Answers: Yes, No, Inactive/Former, Unsure. Then go straight to product interest and list your main products and services. Most people have one main product or service interest and that is the logical question to ask them in conversation. Create a simple list of your products and services so they can be easily checked off; avoid using fill-in-the-blank.

The next item on your lead form should be the quantity or size of opportunity question. If you are selling services that relate to PC workstations, the question would be: How many workstations are in your company? Answers: 1 – 5 workstations, 6 – 10, etc. But if you are trying to know how many surgical pins are needed by a doctor, the question might be, "How many surgeries do you perform a month?" Answers, "5 to 10", "11 to 20", "More than 20". For every company, there is a way to determine the "Size of Opportunity". Ask your sales manager, "What defines a large opportunity?" Finally, ask the time frame question, "What is your implementation (or purchase) time frame?" This question is the one that every sales rep will read to determine who gets called first.

Accurate Notes

A notes section is where reps should write things like: "On vacation in Hawaii until March 23; call the 25th"; "Just took over two new divisions"; "Just started working at ACME two months ago"; "His daughter played in the soccer state championships". Notes are tidbits that help the sales rep to gain rapport and engage in conversation not restricted to the buyer questionnaire. People buy from people; relationships are started in face-to-face conversations at trade shows.



Here is a sample of questions and answers that your lead form might include:

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
Are you a current customer?	Yes, No, Unsure, Former or Inactive
Product/Service interest	Widgets, Apples, Golf Clubs, Gadgets
Need to be filled	1-5 units, 6-10 units, more than 10
Time frame to purchase (implement)	Immediate, 30 – 60 days, 60 – 90 days
Follow-up request	Demo, quotation, sales rep visit

Perhaps you've heard of a qualifying acronym called BANT (Budget, Authority, Needs, Timeframe) that was invented many years ago for sales people. Based on information about the high percentage of buyers going to tradeshow to make product selections, Budget and Authority are not needed as they are already identified in the simplified NewLeads PST method (Product Interest, Size of Opportunity and Timeframe). Therefore, these are questions that are not needed and best left unspoken:

1. Which of our competitor' products are you using?" To many, this is invasive, abrasive, intrusive and premature. This is information that your sales rep can ascertain while building rapport with the prospect after the show.
2. Do you have purchase authority?" (See paragraph one; 80% have some authority). If they define a product interest and timeframe then somebody in the company has directed this initiative to seek a product to buy. Don't belittle the person or turn them off by asking this question.
3. What brought you to our booth today?" This may be an important marketing question for you but not for the attendee, whose primary interest lies in what you can do for them. Keep the questions focused on their interests.
4. What are the most important factors in considering your purchase?" Again, this is best left to the sales rep as they gain rapport and move the sale along after the show. If the attendee has expressed interest in your product or service and

has defined a short time frame, then why must they answer more prying questions like this one?

- Lead Rating (Hot, Warm, Cold; A, B, C). Never allow your reps to rate the leads as this is subjective and vulnerable to poor judgment because of the personality type of your rep and the attendee. Is a poker faced engineer a cold lead or just a deep thinker who shows little emotion? Is your rep a fast judging optimist or are they having a bad day where everything looks gloomy? The lead form responses will determine the quality of the lead.
- What is the size of your budget?" The attendee will wonder if the price of your product just happens to match; leave it for a sales rep after the show.
- Would you like literature only (no sales call)?" Why leave this as an option? It can only hurt you. Follow-up according to the survey answers.

Key Pointers For Every Lead Form

- Never start a conversation with an attendee with a lead form; use it at the very end to detail what was just requested.
- Keep it as short as possible; attendees don't have a lot of time.
- Never ask more questions than a rep can remember in natural conversation.
- Keep questions and answers abbreviated and short: "Product Interest" is easier to read than "In which ACME products and services are you most interested in learning about today?"
- Keep fonts large and vary question colors from answer colors, thereby increasing readability and user adoption.
- If you wonder if a question is needed, it most likely isn't. Leave something for the sales rep to ask on the follow-up call.
- Keep the lead form to a few pages (taps or clicks) so that anyone can use it without training.

For more information or to speak with a consultant about your needs, please call 805-604-4444 ext. 106 or email sales@newleads.com.