

# LEAD GENERATION VS. APPOINTMENT SETTING

Which Business  
Growth Solution  
Is Best for Your  
Company?



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# Introduction

Wait – aren't lead generation and appointment setting services the same thing? While they may have similar principles, they do have significant differences. For instance, you can have lead generation without appointment setting; however, you cannot have appointment setting without lead generation. Confusing, right? Let's cut the confusion and get into it.

Keep reading to learn the difference between lead generation and appointment setting, and how to determine which business growth solution is best for your company.



# What Is Lead Generation?

Lead generation is a business growth strategy that aims to spark consumer interest in a company's product or service. While there are many ways to approach lead generation, sales and marketing teams can practice this business growth strategy by:

- Promoting targeted social media ads
- Posting targeted Google ads
- Distributing email marketing collateral
- Optimizing website content for search engines (SEO)

Lead generation is only the beginning of a lead's journey through the sales pipeline. Through lead generation, sales and marketing teams create customer-focused content that could pique the interest of a potential buyer. Suppose users are interested in learning more about a company's product or service offerings. In that case, they can submit their information to receive more sales and marketing materials that will guide them toward the end of the sales funnel.



# What Is Appointment Setting?

Appointment setting is a business growth strategy where sales development representatives (SDRs) routinely contact and nurture relationships with prospects in the sales pipeline. The end goal of an appointment setting program is to schedule a sales meeting between a qualified lead and a company's business owner, account executive (AE), or someone involved in submitting proposals and closing business deals.

Every appointment setting program begins with building a list of prospective businesses in a company's target market. Once a list is built, SDRs determine who the key decision-maker (KDM) is for a particular product or service and strive to get in contact with them by cold call or email. From here, they ask qualifying questions to ensure that the prospect meets a company's ideal customer criteria.

Qualifying questions could include (but are not limited to):

- Number of full-time employees
- Square footage of their commercial building (depending on the industry)
- Number of workstations (specifically for MSP and software companies)

After an SDR determines a prospective business's KDM and verifies the company's qualifiers, this prospect transitions into a lead. Until they're toward the end of the sales cycle, the SDR follows up with the lead and builds a relationship over time. This provides more value for the lead and brings them one step closer to setting a sales appointment with your company.



# Key Differences Between Lead Generation and Appointment Setting

While lead generation and appointment setting are commonly used interchangeably, there are notable differences between the business growth strategies. Here are three of the most significant differences between lead generation and appointment setting:

## DIFFERENCE #1: GOAL

### LEAD GENERATION

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Lead generation is designed to put your business in front of your target market and have users input their contact information for additional sales and marketing materials. From here, they're integrated into the sales pipeline to convert them from leads into customers. While your sales and marketing team may be unsure whether or not they meet your company's qualifications, at least they have expressed interest in learning more about your company and product and service offerings.

### APPOINTMENT SETTING

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On the other hand, appointment setting is structured to transition prospects into leads, a process known as sales prospecting. When prospects are put in the sales pipeline, they are more than likely unaware of your company and what you have to offer their business. Prospects are put into a sales pipeline because they meet your company's ideal customer criteria. However, it is unknown if they are interested in your company's product or service. SDRs use this business growth strategy to introduce the company and build value over time.

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## DIFFERENCE #2: STRATEGY

### LEAD GENERATION

A lead generation strategy prioritizes user engagement and finalizing a business deal. This business growth strategy focuses on reaching the target audience, gathering their information, and providing additional marketing materials so they can reach out whenever they're ready to make a purchase.

### APPOINTMENT SETTING

An appointment setting strategy focuses on an SDR scheduling sales meetings between qualified leads and your business. In an appointment setting program, sales teams cold call and email prospects in the sales pipeline to build value and persuade them that they need your company to improve their day-to-day operations.

# Key Differences Between Lead Generation and Appointment Setting

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## DIFFERENCE #3: PROCESS

### LEAD GENERATION

Lead generation involves developing creative sales and marketing materials that align with your target audience. These sales and marketing assets should encourage an intended user to give you their contact information so they can be integrated into the sales pipeline.

### APPOINTMENT SETTING

The appointment setting process is more straightforward than lead generation because either a lead in the sales pipeline agrees to a sales meeting or they don't. If they don't, SDRs routinely follow up with them until they're ready to make a purchasing decision. The appointment setting process involves an SDR setting the appointment, a business owner or account executive attending the meeting, and the lead deciding if they want to do business with your company.

# How To Know If Lead Generation Is Right for Your Business

So how do you know if lead generation is right for your B2B business? Here are some things to consider if you're looking into a lead generation business growth strategy:

## You're a Startup

Running a startup is hard work. Lead generation is a complex process that can't be done adequately by even the most successful business owner. It requires a team of sales and marketing experts—and the right tools and technologies—to do it effectively. Hiring high-performing marketing experts allows you to focus on your day-to-day operations while your sales and marketing team prioritizes finding new business opportunities.

## You're Struggling to Set Sales Meetings

Do you have too many available time slots on your sales calendar? If you're not setting the sales meetings you want, you may need to consider implementing lead generation into your business growth strategy.

Hiring lead generation specialists can help you:

- Reach desired key decision-makers online
- Create impactful sales enablement materials
- Run targeted social media and Google ads



## You're Expanding Your Market

Expanding your business's reach is a big deal and doesn't come easy. If you're looking to grow your business into another market, consider hiring lead generation specialists to help you spread brand awareness. These experts can help you customize a sales and marketing strategy that aligns with the wants and needs of the new market's buyer persona.

## Your Emails Have Low Open Rates

Do you have a strategy behind your email marketing efforts, or do you just distribute emails when they feel necessary? If your email marketing assets have low open rates, it may be because you have little to no strategy behind your campaign and what you're sending has no value to the receiver. By investing in lead generation, you have a team of email marketing specialists who understand how to build an email list, craft the perfect email, and guide leads to the end of the sales funnel.

## Your Website Has a High Bounce Rate

A user-friendly, functioning website is crucial for generating new business opportunities. If you notice that your website has low traffic or a high bounce rate, there may be underlying issues to address, such as irrelevant content or failure to optimize your website for search engines. By integrating lead generation into your business strategy, you have a team of website design, development, and content creation experts to better understand what is wrong with your website and how to fix the problem. This will drive more users to check out your website and increase the opportunity of converting them from leads into customers.



# How To Know If Appointment Setting Is Right for Your Business

Honestly, an appointment setting program isn't the right move for every business. However, here are some things to consider if you're looking into appointment setting for your business:

## You're Not Closing Enough Deals

You may be getting sales appointments, but are you closing the business deals you want? While your SDRs are doing their job and getting meetings, there may be a problem with the leads they're chasing.

Contrary to popular belief, not every lead that comes your way is worth the significant amount of time and effort your SDRs put in. As your SDRs call prospects in the sales pipeline, it's essential that they ask qualifying questions to ensure they're toward the end of their purchasing funnel and meet your company's ideal customer criteria. Every company's qualifications are different, so your SDRs must have a firm grasp of the type of deals you want.

Introducing appointment setting into your sales operations allows SDRs to chase qualified leads that are genuinely interested in your company's product or service. An appointment setting program increases the opportunity for you and your internal team to attend high-quality appointments and close more deals. Additionally, it reduces the risk of no-shows because leads that attend the meeting are interested and considering a purchase.





## Your Internal Team Is Spread Thin

Internal sales teams have a lot on their plate already, so why add more to their task load? If your internal team is stretched too thin with responsibilities, consider assigning appointment setting tasks to SDRs who prioritize scheduling qualified sales appointments.

Hiring SDRs for appointment setting services gives your internal team more time to craft the perfect sales presentations for potential customers. In addition, your internal team has more time to continue building relationships with long-term customers, increasing client retention.

## Your Customer Database Is a Mess

Business development and sales success start with a streamlined customer relationship management strategy. If your customer database is a mess, you risk missing out on high-quality business opportunities.

An appointment setting program can help you streamline communication between potential and existing clients through a customer relationship management (CRM) platform. A CRM enables your appointment setters to follow up with hot leads and pitch them the right products and services when they're closer to the end of their sales cycle.

# Why Do B2B Companies Choose To Integrate Lead Generation and Appointment Setting Strategies?

Lead generation and appointment setting services aren't a one-size-fits-all solution. Every company has its own approach to generating new revenue opportunities—that's why it's crucial to choose a growth strategy that works best for your business and industry.

A common misconception about these business growth strategies is that companies believe they need to choose one program over another. However, that's not the case. Lead generation and appointment setting are most effective when they're used together.

Many B2B companies integrate lead generation and appointment setting strategies into their sales and marketing operations because they have the opportunity to enter new leads into the sales pipeline that they couldn't have gotten from referrals. These strategies reach new audiences that you wouldn't have found otherwise.



# When Should You Consider Outsourcing Lead Generation and Appointment Setting Efforts?

While many companies prefer to internalize their lead generation and appointment setting efforts, outsourcing these business growth strategies provides many benefits. You should consider outsourcing your company's lead generation efforts when:

## You Don't Have the Money

Internalizing lead generation and appointment setting efforts is costly and can negatively impact your company's bottom line. Many small to medium-sized businesses want to grow their clientele, but don't realize all the additional expenses that come with onboarding a high-performing sales team. Before you decide to internalize your business growth strategies, consider the amount of money you need to put into salaries, benefits, compensation packages, sales tools and technologies, and the list goes on. If you don't have the bandwidth to build and sustain an internal team for the long term, consider outsourcing your lead generation and appointment setting efforts.

## You Don't Have the Time

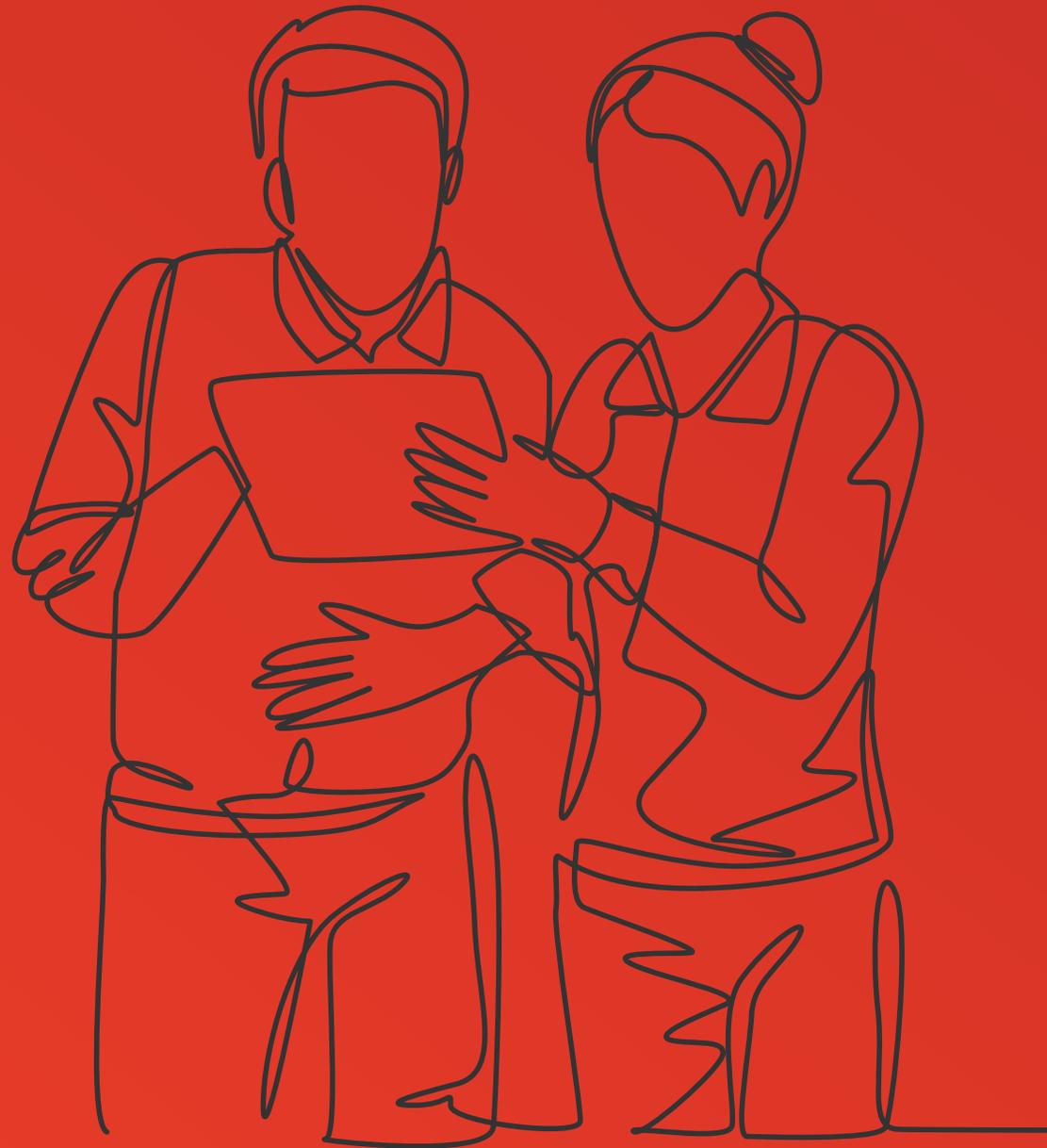
Building a successful lead generation and appointment setting strategy doesn't happen overnight. It requires a significant amount of time and dedication to craft your strategy, onboard employees, and teach them the ropes of your sales and marketing procedures. When you outsource your lead generation and appointment setting efforts, you have more time to focus on your day-to-day operations rather than the functions of the sales and marketing teams.

## You Don't Have the Right Sales Tools and Technologies

Advanced sales tools and technologies are essential to build a sustainable sales pipeline and stay ahead of competitors. But how do you know which ones are best for your sales and marketing operations? Will you need to take more time out of your day to learn how to use them to their full capabilities? By outsourcing your business growth strategies, you save a significant amount of money and time because you aren't required to purchase them or learn how to use them—your lead generation and appointment setting provider takes care of that for you.

## You Don't Have the Expertise

High-performing sales and marketing experts are hard to find these days. When you outsource your lead generation and appointment setting programs, you gain access to a team of sales and marketing experts who know what they're doing and always have your business's best interest at heart.



# Ready To Take Your Lead Generation and Appointment Setting Strategies to the Next Level?

Abstrakt Marketing Group is a lead generation and appointment setting company based in St. Louis, Missouri. We collaborate with growing B2B companies across the nation to help them find high-quality business opportunities.

B2B Appointment  
Setting

Website Design  
and Development

Marketing  
Collateral

SEO  
Services

Video  
Production

Salesforce  
Consulting

Contact us today to learn how our sales and marketing experts can maximize your lead generation and appointment setting strategies.