



ReminderMedia's
Success Guide Series

How to Effectively Follow Up with Your Clients Using American Lifestyle Magazine

 reminderMEDIA

**“IT IS NOT YOUR CUSTOMERS’ JOB
TO REMEMBER YOU. IT IS YOUR
OBLIGATION AND RESPONSIBILITY
TO MAKE SURE THEY DON’T HAVE
THE CHANCE TO FORGET YOU.”**

—PATRICIA FRIPP

Introduction

You've worked hard to get your clients. You don't want to lose them to someone else simply because they forgot about you.

That doesn't just hurt your feelings. It hurts your checkbook. Consider these facts:

6-7 TIMES MORE

Acquiring new customers can cost six to seven times more than retaining existing customers.

SOURCE: WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

60-70% VS. 5-20%

The probability of selling to an existing customer is 60-70% compared to just 5-20% to a new prospect.

SOURCE: MARKETING METRICS

2% SAME AS 10%

A 2% increase in customer retention has the same effect as decreasing costs by 10%.

SOURCE: LEADING ON THE EDGE OF CHAOS, EMMET MURPHY & MARK MURPHY

LEADS MAKE 47%

Nurtured leads make 47% larger purchases than non-nurtured leads.

SOURCE: ANNUITAS GROUP

Following up with clients is the best way to keep your business on their minds and put yourself in the presence of opportunity for referrals and repeat business. It sounds pretty simple, but actually doing it is another story.

While most customers appreciate an authentic attempt to build an ongoing relationship, they can sense when you're reluctant, insincere, or nervous. And they'll respond accordingly.

It's no surprise then that our Marketing Advisors often field questions from clients on the subject.

“When is the best time to follow up?”

“What should I say when I call?”

“How often should I stay in touch?”

The list goes on and on.

We created this success guide to help answer some of the common questions people have about how to properly follow up with clients. While there is no magic bullet that can guarantee success, the tools, tactics, and advice in this guide can help you hone your follow-up skills and techniques.

Developing Your Follow-Up Strategy

If you're like most ReminderMedia clients, your busy schedule leaves little time to think about and reach out to everyone you've done business with. Yet building relationships requires that you make each person feel valued. That's why having a strategy is so important.

The three main ingredients of a successful follow-up strategy are the audience, the timing, and the message. Let's explore each.

ESSENTIALS TO A SUCCESSFUL FOLLOW-UP:

AUDIENCE | Who to Follow Up With

TIMING | When to Follow Up

MESSAGE | How to Follow Up



Who to Follow Up With

After looking at the statistics at the beginning of this guide, you probably want to immediately get in touch with every client in your database. But that isn't realistic for most of us. There are only so many hours in a day, after all. And even if you could follow up with everyone in one day, it would not be the ideal approach.

The goal is to build one-to-one relationships that make each customer feel special. That's why your follow-up strategy should begin with identifying and prioritizing the best follow-up opportunities within your customer base. Here are a few strategies to help you do just that.

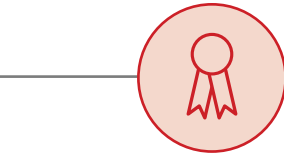


Keep notes for targeted opportunities.

There are times when an opportunity to contact a customer will present itself. Birthdays are an obvious example. The less apparent occasions are the ones that will really make an impression and help you stand out.

For instance, if you know that your customer is a vegetarian, sharing a meatless recipe provides a natural opening. Or perhaps one of the feature stories in American Lifestyle magazine fits with a particular interest you remember them mentioning.

The only way to identify and remember these personal details is to listen to your clients and make notes. Here's a handy resource to help you do just that. ➔



Start with your best clients.

So what if there are no obvious excuses to reach out? How should you prioritize your contact list? Our Marketing Advisors suggest starting with your best customers. They hold the greatest potential for referrals and repeat business. Next, move on to the rest of your customer base and then your sphere of influence.

The same strategies you use when planning American Lifestyle magazine mailings are appropriate for your follow-up call plan as well. In fact, coordinating these efforts is a great way to stay organized and maximize the potential impact of your efforts.



Immediately follow up with every new client.

There may not be a better time to reach out than after a business transaction. You're fresh on your client's mind, and he or she is likely feeling good. Following up gives you the opportunity to turn those feelings into referrals and shows that you value their relationship beyond the transaction.

Call to find out how he or she is doing. Make sure they are still satisfied with the service you provided. And don't forget to add their address to your American Lifestyle magazine database for mailing exclusivity.



DOWNLOAD THE PRINTABLE FOLLOW-UP BOOKLET.

When to Follow Up

Timing can be everything. If your clients are busy or distracted, you'll have a hard time getting your message across. You also don't want to spend all your time trying to get through to clients who are unavailable. So scheduling your activities is an important aspect of your follow-up strategy.

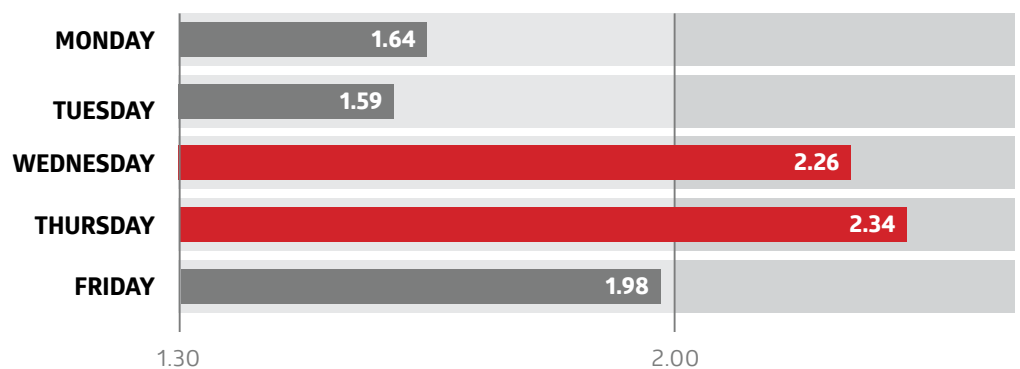
Insidesales.com studied three years of data across six companies in an effort to determine which time of the day and day of the week to follow up with web-generated leads for ideal contact and qualification rates.

NOTE:

While these results are a good place to start, they won't necessarily be your best times. Do a little experimenting for yourself to see what works with your clients. Be sure to document which times and days work best for each client so you can continually optimize your approach.

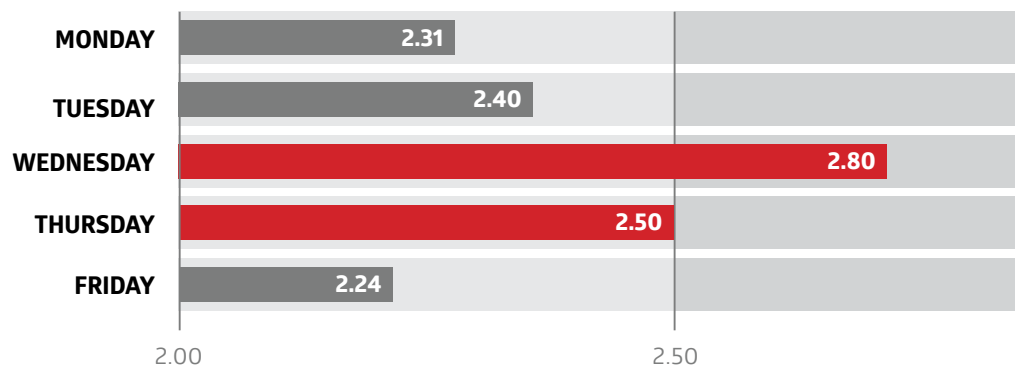
DAY OF THE WEEK: INITIAL DIALS TO LEADS THAT BECOME CONTACTED

Wednesdays and Thursdays were found to be the best days to call to make contact. In fact, sales representatives had **47.8% more success** contacting leads on Thursday than the worst day, Tuesday.



DAY OF THE WEEK: INITIAL DIALS TO LEADS THAT BECOME QUALIFIED

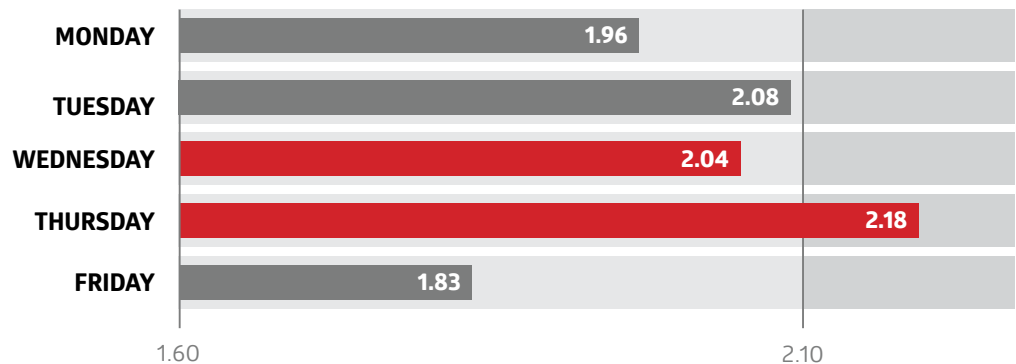
Wednesdays and Thursdays were also the best days to call to qualify leads, according to the statistics. There was a **24.9% difference** between the top day, Wednesday, and the worst day, Friday.



When to Follow Up

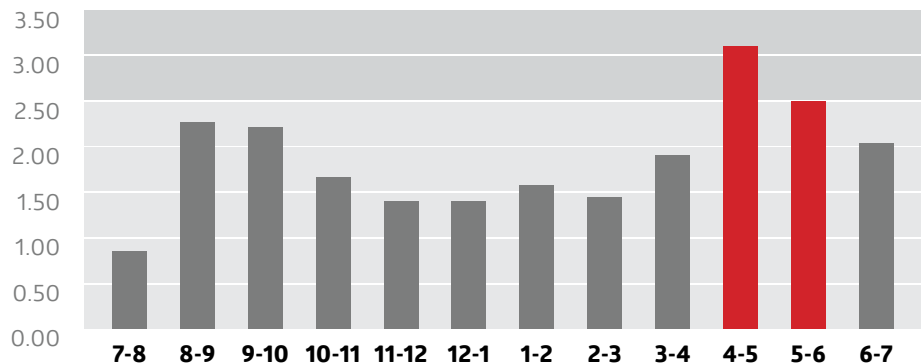
DAY OF THE WEEK: CONTACT LEADS THAT BECOME QUALIFIED

When looking at calls that successfully connected, Thursday was best in order to qualify that lead, producing **19.1% better results** than Friday, which is the worst day.



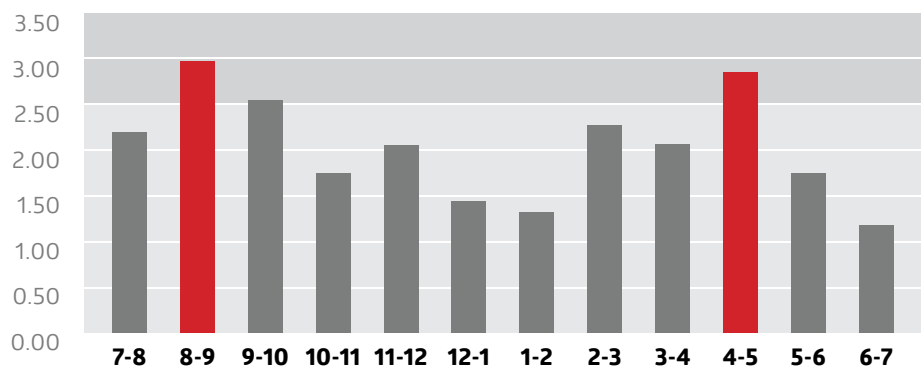
TIME OF THE DAY: INITIAL DIALS TO LEADS THAT BECOME CONTACTED

4 p.m. to 6 p.m. proved to be the ideal hours to call to make contact with a lead. They produced contact rates **114% better** than calls made from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., right before lunch.



TIME OF THE DAY: INITIAL DIALS TO LEADS THAT BECOME QUALIFIED

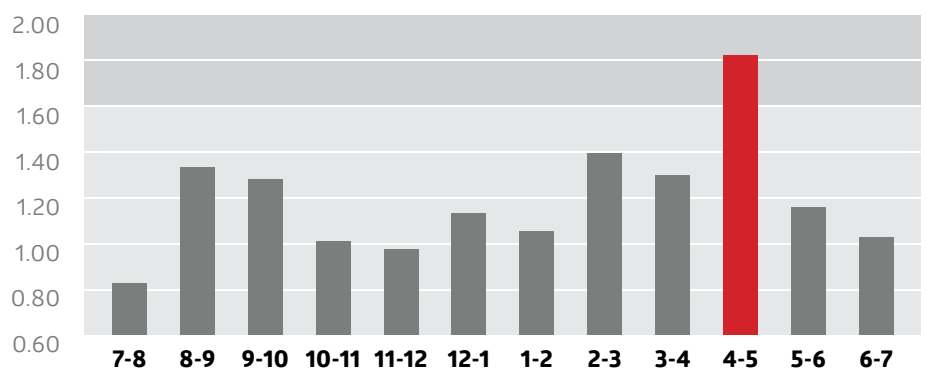
The best times to call to qualify a lead were 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. There was a **164% difference** in success rates between 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., right after lunch.



When to Follow Up

TIME OF THE DAY: CONTACTED LEADS THAT BECOME QUALIFIED

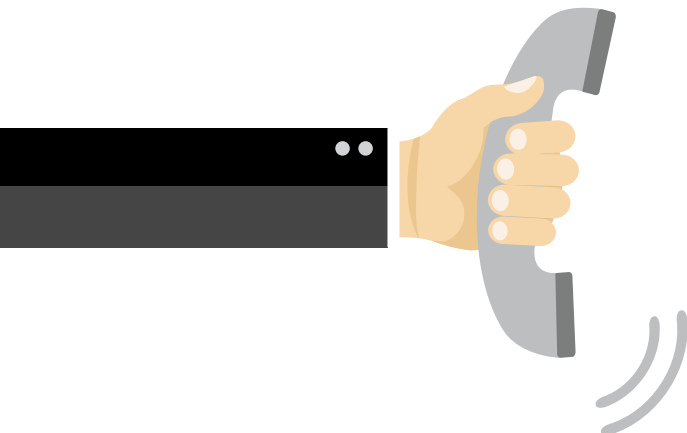
For calls that actually connected with leads, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. is the best time to qualify that lead. According to the results, it was **109% better** than 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., which was the worst time during normal working hours.



For e-mail follow-ups, you might want to test 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. According to research from GetResponse.com, sending e-mails during these peak engagement hours can increase average open and click through rates by 6%.

Scheduling follow-ups into your workflow will make the process easier. Set aside time dedicated to following up. It doesn't have to be overwhelming. Break it up into small chunks if you want.

The most important thing to do is make sure to stick with it. Relationships aren't built on a single contact, but on consistent engagement. Maintaining regular contact is key to building positive rapport.



80%
OF SALES
REQUIRE
5 TO 12
FOLLOW-UP CALLS.

SOURCE: THE MARKETING DONUT

How to Follow Up

In many ways, follow-ups can be a juggling act. Relationships are based on trust. That requires a fair degree of altruism. If you only call looking for new business or asking clients for something in return to your offering, they'll be skeptical of you.

On the other hand, you don't want to pass up opportunities to generate referrals or repeat business. Yet it happens more often than you'd think. Dale Carnegie said that 91% of customers say they'd give referrals, but only 11% of sales people ask for them.

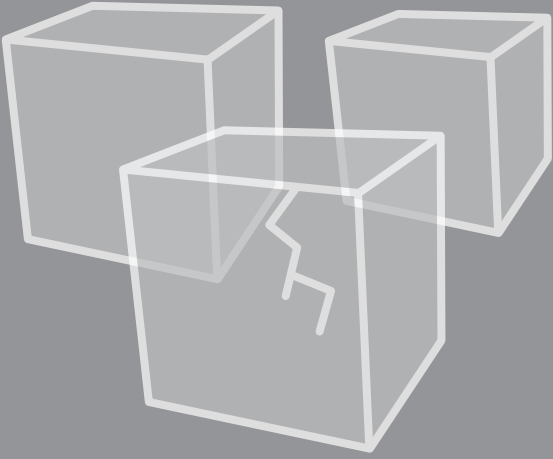
A good follow-up call walks the line by focusing first on strengthening the relationship and asking for referrals in a low-key manner, only when you and the client have an appropriate level of trust.



ANATOMY OF A GOOD FOLLOW-UP CALL:

While each follow-up is unique, and there is no single best way to approach it, this four-step formula is highly effective:

- 1 | **Break the Ice**
- 2 | **Make a Personal Connection**
- 3 | **Provide Value**
- 4 | **Use a Call to Action**



STEP 1: Break the Ice

Often, starting a conversation is the hardest part of the entire follow-up call. One way to keep your nerves in check is to plan what you want to say. American Lifestyle magazine can be a great icebreaker. Here are some examples submitted by our Marketing Advisors:

“Did you read the travel feature in my latest issue of American Lifestyle yet? It instantly took me down memory lane to my favorite vacation spot, where I will be going this summer. Do you have any trips planned?”

“Fred, my man! I saw the article about classic cars in the latest edition of American Lifestyle, and it reminded me of that house I sold you with the attached garage for your '67 Camaro. Do you still have that baby?”

“I love connecting with all of my supporters. How do you like this issue of American Lifestyle magazine?”

“Have you read that article about traveling cross-country on the Lincoln Highway? I know you were brainstorming your first postretirement trip, and I thought the article would be great for you.”

“I wanted to give you a quick call to let you know that every time I send you American Lifestyle magazine, I remember how fun it was working with you. Enjoy this issue, and remember that I'm grateful to be your Realtor®.”

“I've created a really great contest around this month's issue of American Lifestyle magazine. I'm calling to make sure you received the magazine, and saw the contest. If you flip over to the Back Cover, you'll see the contest details. I just wanted to follow up and make sure you don't miss it, since you are one of my most loyal clients.”

“I hope I'm not interrupting your brunch right now. I sent you that American Lifestyle magazine with all of those delicious brunch ideas, and I thought you might be busy enjoying them right now!”

“I know it's been a few years since we last connected, but you should have received my American Lifestyle magazine recently, and I wanted to see if you had a chance to read it. I ask because it has an article about the Marathon Man in it, which of course made me think of you! Do you still compete in triathlons?”

STEP 2: Make a Personal Connection

This step is essential for building rapport. You want to demonstrate that you value the client you're talking to as a person. This is another area where keeping notes can really help. Use personal information you glean from them to lower their guard, establish common ground, and set yourself apart.

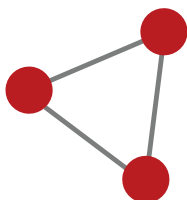
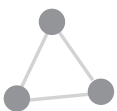
Connecting on a personal level is easier than you may think. Here's a short list of examples to get you started:

Ask about his or her family by name.

"How are Jane and the kids?"

"Is Johnny going into Kindergarten this year?"

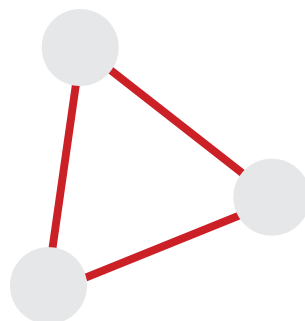
"What's new with the twins?"



Reference something from a previous conversation.

"How was your trip to California?"

"What color did you end up choosing for Ethan's bedroom makeover?"



Leverage their interests.

"I remember how much you like Indian food, so I wanted to make sure you saw the Indian slow cooker recipes in this edition of American Lifestyle magazine."

"I thought of you when I read about dancer Andrew Nemr in American Lifestyle magazine. You should check it out."

STEP 3: Provide Value

The best way to get someone to do something for you (such as give referrals) is to first give something to them. It doesn't have to be physical. Information and advice can be just as effective as long as it is relevant. American Lifestyle magazine provides opportunities for this as well. Here are some examples:

"There's some tailgating recipes in this issue of American Lifestyle you may want to try for the game this week."

"Hi Bill, I wanted to call to make sure you got my magazine. I'm sending it as a gift to my best clients as a thank you for your business."

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www.remindermedia.com/social-media





STEP 4: Use a Call to Action

After you've successfully completed the steps above, you likely have established enough of a rapport to ask for referrals. It can be as simple as asking the following question:

“By the way, do you know anyone who is in the market for _____?”

As you can see from the examples on the preceding pages, you can often combine more than one these steps in a single statement.

No matter what you decide to say during your calls, the action of following up with your clients will speak volumes, strengthening your relationships and resulting in more repeat business and referrals.



**DOWNLOAD A SAMPLE
FOLLOW-UP PHONE SCRIPT.**



Conclusion

As you've seen, following up with clients doesn't have to be complicated, time-consuming, or nerve-racking. All it takes is a little commitment and organization to be a follow-up rock star.

And the best part is that you should see a significant impact on your business. In fact, this is probably the number one thing you can do to immediately increase the return on your investment in American Lifestyle magazine.

Don't forget to follow up on content you share on social media and e-mail as well.



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Follow-Up Phone Script



The number one question we get from our agents is how to use American Lifestyle to get more referrals. Clients aren't conditioned to pick up the phone and say thank you or to just start giving you referrals, so you have to do the hard work yourself. Luckily, American Lifestyle is designed to make the task a lot easier, and effective. The quickest way to see a return on your investment in American Lifestyle magazine is to start calling your clients after they have received it, to see how they enjoyed the issue. Start by introducing yourself, and work your way to the referral ask at the end. You may need to remind your client where they know you from if it's been awhile. Here's what a follow-up call may sound like:

"Hi Barbara, how's it going? It's [your name] calling. We worked together on purchasing your new home, a little over a year ago now."

After your client responds, lead into the reason for your call. They should have received American Lifestyle magazine within the last week or two, at a maximum.

"That's great! Things are going great here as well. The reason for my call is that I haven't talked to you and Bob in a while, and I wanted to follow up and see how you two were doing. Actually, you popped into my mind just the other day because I received my latest issue of American Lifestyle magazine. It's something that I send to you as well and I just wanted to see if you had been receiving it."

At this point you have to be prepared if they haven't received it yet or if they say that they haven't received it. Just let them know that they should be getting it in the mail in a few days and to keep an eye out for it. Let them know that you

would love to hear their thoughts on it after they received it. If they *have* receive it, respond with:

“Great! Well, I just wanted to touch base with you because I was reading it the other night, and it reminded me of you and Bob. I wanted to get you two on the phone to see how things were going since you moved in. I know it has been about a year now—have you had any problems with the house? I know you were going to renovate the kitchen—has that gone smoothly for you?”

Make sure to write down what questions you’re going to ask before you call. You want to pull from an experience that you remember from their transaction, or from an interest you remember them having. New school districts, new jobs, or even questions about the new neighborhood work well here too. Then respond with:

“Perfect. Well, you know I am always here if you need anything and I wanted to send you American Lifestyle just to let you know that I really appreciate your business and ultimately the relationship that we have together. I just wanted to say thank you again and to let you know that I am available if you ever need anything—and I am proud to be your agent.”

If they are engaged and say they really appreciate the job you did, this is where you ask

for the referral—and we’re going to tell you how to do it. If they *weren’t* engaged, just let them know that you’re glad you were able to catch up, and then try calling again in two months—after the next issue arrives. But, if they *are* engaged, say exactly this:

“I have set a substantial goal for myself this year as a real estate agent, and my goal is to help [X number] of families to buy or sell their homes. I love helping people, so I was wondering if you could think of anyone in your [neighborhood, work, church, or friends and family] with whom I might be able to connect?”

If they offer you any referrals, find out the best way to reach them, and then thank them for putting their trust in you as a professional. If they are unable to think of anyone, or are unwilling to refer, let them know that you always have your clients’ best interests in mind, which is why you work primarily on referrals. Then, ask them if it’s okay for you to call back after the next issue arrives, to see what they thought about the [recipe/design/travel] article. For more icebreakers or ways to ask for the referral, contact your ReminderMedia Marketing Advisor.



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