

@mjkabir Notes



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Cold / Warm Lead Generation for Startup

Generating leads can be one of the toughest challenges for startups, but it's the lifeblood of growth. In this note, I'll dive into cold and warm lead generation strategies, sharing effective techniques and resources to help you build a consistent pipeline of potential customers.

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Here are concise definitions for cold and warm leads:

Cold Lead: A prospect without prior interaction with your company or product. They may not be familiar with your brand and haven't expressed any interest in your offerings. Cold leads require more effort to engage and convert, as they need to be educated about your value.

Warm Lead: A prospect who has shown interest or engagement with your business. This could be someone who has visited your website, downloaded content, or interacted with your brand through social media or email. Warm leads are typically easier to convert because they already have some awareness of and interest in your product or service. These distinctions can guide how you approach each type of lead in your startup's outreach efforts.



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Basics of Cold Email Outreach

Honestly, I never used this method to reach out, and I'm uncomfortable with the idea, so let's recap why this method exists and its benefits and risks.

A cold email is an unsolicited email sent to a potential client, customer, or contact with whom the sender has no prior relationship. It aims to introduce a product, service, or idea to the recipient to initiate a business relationship. A cold email has the following characteristics:

- Lack of prior interaction or relationship.
- Requires robust personalization to avoid appearing as spam.
- It needs to provide clear value to the recipient.
- Often used for lead generation, sales, or networking.

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Basics of Warm Email Outreach

A warm email is sent to a recipient with whom the sender has some prior interaction, relationship, or connection. It aims to build on existing interactions to further a business relationship or collaboration. It has the following characteristics:

- Based on a pre-existing relationship or some form of prior contact.
- It is easier to establish trust and relevance.
- Can reference past interactions, mutual connections, or shared interests.
- Often used for follow-ups, nurturing leads, or maintaining relationships.

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Key Differences between Warm vs Cold

Here are the essential differences between cold and warm leads, and how those differences can impact lead generation strategies for startups:

Cold leads are potential customers who have not yet interacted with your company. They might not know about your brand or what you offer. Because of this, it can be more challenging to convince them to become customers, and you will need to spend more time and effort teaching them about your company's value.

Warm leads are potential customers who have already shown interest in your company. Examples of how a warm lead might have interacted with you include visiting your website, downloading some of your content, or connecting with your brand on social media. Since warm leads are already familiar with your product or service, you will probably find it easier to convert them into customers.

294 days 5 hrs ago

Best Practices for Sending Cold Emails for Outreach

The following best practices are inspired by [@natiakourdadze](#) on X.

Cold email outreach can be an effective way to connect with potential clients or partners. Here are some best practices to ensure your emails are well-received and generate responses:

Step 1: Crafting the Subject Line

Avoid using numbers in the subject line, as it can look spammy. A personalized approach works best. Use a subject style that introduces your company and the recipient's company.

This creates a connection and shows that the email is tailored to the recipient. Example: ***How can ACME save EVOKNOW in SEO expenses***, where EVOKNOW is the recipient's company, and ACME is the sender's?

Step 2: Start a Conversation First and Avoid Selling

Don't sell in the first email. Instead, invite them to a conversation. The subject line should get them to open the email, the body should keep them engaged, and the CTA should prompt them to follow up. Building a relationship first can lead to better outcomes.

Step 3: Focus on Simple style, Tone, and Direct Approaches

Avoid cliché constructions like "Dear Sir/Madam" or "hope this email finds you well." These can feel impersonal and outdated. Instead, use a friendly and professional tone that resonates with the recipient.

Send simple texts rather than designed emails. Designed emails often scream "Promo" and can end up in the promotions tab or spam folder. Plain text emails feel more personal and are more likely to be read. Consider increasing the font size of the body text from ordinary to H1 (Header 1). This can help your email stand out, resulting in 20% more replies than usual.

Avoid complex words. Writing at a 5th-grade reading level gets 67% more replies. Simple language is easier to understand and more engaging, ensuring your message is conveyed effectively.

Step 4: Test for Spam Filters

Ensure your emails don't end up in spam. Warm up your email address and avoid using spam trigger words like "free trial" or "investment opportunity." Tools like Mail Tester can help check your spam score before sending.

Step 5: Punch Line as P.S.

Include a P.S. at the end of your email. This can achieve a 14% higher reply rate. A P.S. often catches the reader's eye and can highlight a crucial point or call to action.

Step 6: Follow KISS (Keep it Short Stupid) Principle

Avoid fluff and simplify your writing. In the email, ask only one question. This makes it easier for the recipient to respond and keeps the conversation focused. Also, ensure your writing is clear and concise, enhancing readability.

Limit the reading time to 15 seconds. People have limited time and attention spans, so make sure your email is concise and to the point.

Step 7: When is the Best Time to Send?

Send more emails on Wednesday. Mid-week emails tend to have higher reply rates than those sent on Monday, Friday, or weekend. Timing can significantly impact your email's open and response rates.

By following these best practices, you can improve your cold email outreach efforts, making them more effective and increasing your chances of receiving positive responses. Happy emailing!

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Where to Get Paid Leads for B2B Startups

ProspectLens.com

This is a B2B data provider offering access to over 500,000 social media prospects across five major platforms (Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, TikTok, and Facebook). It covers 200 niches in 10 countries, providing small businesses, freelancers, and agencies with advanced search capabilities and the ability to export data in .csv or .xlsx formats. The platform offers a range of pricing plans and emphasizes data freshness, transparency, and compliance with data protection laws.

Hunter.io

This company specializes in finding and verifying professional email addresses. It allows users to search for emails by domain or use its Chrome extension to find emails from websites.

Lusha

Provides B2B contact data, including direct email addresses and phone numbers. It is known for its Chrome extension, which makes finding contact information accessible. It is user-friendly, integrates with various platforms, and provides accurate data; however, it has limited data for certain niches.

UpLead

A B2B lead generation platform that offers verified email lists. Users can filter leads by various criteria and export them directly to their CRM.

Data accuracy guarantee, real-time email verification, and flexible pricing, but advanced features are only available in higher-tier plans.

ZoomInfo

Offers extensive contact and company data, including email addresses. They provide advanced filtering options to target specific industries, roles, or geographies. They have a comprehensive database, high-quality leads, and integration with CRMs but can be very expensive!

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