

4 Ways to Effectively Create a Referral Funnel

with Dallas Travers, founder of The HiveWriter



- Create specific KPI's for your referral funnel.
 - Like with any good marketing initiative, you have to decide what your goal(s) are going to be in order to set up your marketing initiatives for success. It is no different with a referral funnel. You don't want to just sit around waiting for people to refer business to you; if this is going to be one of the ways you intentionally build your client pool you have to decide how many referrals you need in the funnel in order to get to the right number of meaningful business sales/conversions.
 - You can have a set of referral ambassadors as part of your team that can then go out and "find" these leads for you, but they have to know how many they are looking for. Your goals and objectives need to translate into what they can go and do to achieve.
 - It is also important to note that you have to build out the profiles of the client target you are looking for, but this should be done WELL In advance of any kind of funnel, and if you need more help in that area you can check out our previous podcast episode, 4 Techniques for Defining and Engaging Your Target Consumer that can help on a more strategic level.
- Create a sense of urgency around the KPI's.
 - An open-ended ask makes people feel as though they have "as much time as they want" to be able to come back to an ask. And as with all marketing, the chances of them ever coming back and completing the ask diminishes and slowly disappears the minute they move onto something else. We talk all of the time about being bombarded with a million asks; if you want your referral ambassadors to follow up and do as asked, you have to create a sense of urgency.
 - This is inclusive of time constraints, yes, but also, can you create competition within. Whoever gets to "X" referrals first gets "X" additional benefit. Sweeten the deal. And not everyone is competitive, but anyone in a sales position generally is, and is motivated by competition and reward. Know their currency and build the 'urgency' around that.
- Provide tools for making the referral easy.
 - The best sales person in the world has to have "items" in their arsenal to close the sale. This is inclusive of things like: email templates, handouts, social media posts, etc. The things they can have with them when they make the pitch, what they "leave behind" (whether physically or digitally) and then how they go about following up.
 - This is also a good way for you to be able to control the message and build a consistently authentic experience. While the ambassadors should communicate in their own words, the brand experience relies on consistency.
 - Make sure there are enough assets but not too many. Again, this is to control the message and build consistency. Too many will overwhelm; too few will hurt more than help. Think about the customer journey you want to create and build the assets around that to get to the right number.
- Make all steps and connection points authentic to the target.
 - This goes to the previous point about the customer journey. A common mistake we see is that companies want to tell THEIR story/agenda vs. thinking about what the target wants or needs. This is especially true when the approach is referral-based. Your advocates have to feel like they can unique connect with prospects and give them the right info.
 - The target needs likely 5-7 touchpoints to really engage with you. This goes back to the point about how much info we are inundated with each day at the beginning. The world, not just your category, is HIGHLY competitive. You better make sure you take advantage of the chance to make authentic connections when you have them.
 - Also make sure each touchpoint is authentic is its place/cadence in the journey. Think about the approach to a funnel in general from awareness to conversion and sale.