# Is cold calling dead?

By Dave Nemeth

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I have been asked to give my feedback on whether or not cold calling is dead and my answer is quite simply, NO!

You cannot expect your business to grow if you are not actively going out and approaching new potential clients and business opportunities. The problem, however, is this has just got a lot harder than it has been in previous years and the digital/connected world we live in has a lot to do with this. We are bombarded on a daily basis by SMSes, emails and calls, some of which are completely automated and you answer to find a recoded voice trying to promote a product. There is a fine line between what people perceive as spam and what is a genuine attempt to make someone's life better by recommending your services or products.



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So, what are the right and wrong ways to go about cold calling, regardless of the method? The first answer to this is to research and understand the individuals and businesses that you will be approaching. It is senseless to randomly go through a database or list and try to persuade the people on it they they need your services, which in many cases may be completely irrelevant to them. Before you send an email or make that phone call, you need to understand who it is you are speaking to, what their role in the organisation is and how your product/services could genuinely save them money or make their processes better.

Once you have established this information, it's often a good idea to send an email introducing yourself and the company you represent, why you are sending the email and what you'd like to discuss. This can be ended off by stating that you will be phoning that person at a certain time and on a certain day. This method forces the recipient to either acknowledge that the time is good, completely reject your offering, set up a new time or completely ignore. Being completely ignored will probably happen in many cases but you now have a great way to intro your call.

**Example:**

- Good day (Name)
- This is (Name)
- Is this a convenient time to speak, as I know you have a busy schedule?
- I sent you a mail last Wednesday, did you receive it?
- We are aware that your company does… (You are now acknowledging that you have spent some time understanding the client's business).
- I would like to discuss…
- Can you spare me some time now or can I call you back at a more convenient time and when?

Now as simple as this sounds, I can guarantee you that 99% of cold calls I receive are not done is this manner and I quickly end the call.
The initial introduction can also be done via SMS if you know exactly who the person is, if this method is being used it may be a good idea to say who recommended them or how you got hold of their mobile number.

## Example:

Good day (Name) I got your mobile number from… I know how busy you are so thought I would send you this message to see when it would be suitable to phone you to discuss… Or alternatively, would you like me to send you an email with the

info on which I can follow up via a phone call at your convenience?

I am sure you will agree with me that although this process takes longer and requires more effort that just “shooting from the hip”, the chance of building a relationship and getting through the door so to speak will be a lot higher.

Sending out mass mails, SMSes or random phone calls is spam and can also have an adverse effect on your brand. Make sure that as a company you have all the other factors professionally in place such as websites, a great social media presence and professionally constructed company profiles etc. The chances are, even if you do not get a response from your email introduction that the person has seen it and actually checked you out on these platforms. If your social media is just full of advertising and pushing of product you may find yourself also not getting to the second round.

In conclusion, “cold calling” is absolutely necessary in any business in order to keep constant growth, “cold calling” should not be confused with spamming or a spray and pray approach. Empathy and research are key to the process.

## ABOUT DAVE NEMETH

A leading blue chip international company recently identified Dave as one of the top creative influencers in the country. Dave Nemeth is a qualified designer who has held a variety of senior as well as executive positions with some of the countries leading retail groups, spanning a career of twenty years. Email Dave at daven@worldonline.co.za, follow @davenemeth on Twitter and connect on Facebook.

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