

## Make Your Ads Work Harder

Not many Angus breeders expect their advertising to generate sales leads. Most simply place an ad and hope it attracts buyers. But advertising can and probably should do more.

Advertising can generate sales leads for businesses who sell to other business people. What's a sales lead? simply it's the name, address and hopefully the telephone number of a person with an interest in what a marketer has to sell. Collecting and following up on sales leads can boost sales and profits.

Advertising is the best sales lead source, according to a recent survey by Inquiry Handling Service of San Fernando, Calif. The organization's study showed that 31 percent of leads generated by marketing programs come from advertising. Second best with 23 percent was public relations. Trade shows generate nearly 12 percent of sales leads, and direct mail 5.7 percent. The remaining 27+ percent come from such sources as 800 calls, toll calls, post card decks and unattributed sources.

If you want your advertising to produce sales leads it needs to be designed to generate them. The proper ad must be single-minded. It should offer a benefit to potential customers that appeals strongly to their self interest. It should be interesting and compelling enough that they want to learn more about it.

The ad should encourage readers to learn more about your business and the offer you make. One way is to offer to provide something free. The word "FREE" attracts more reader interest than any other single word in an advertisement. The next most powerful word is "NEW".

Offer readers of your ad a "new" and "free" booklet or pamphlet that further explains the benefits of your herd and your program. A better offer might be a "new" booklet and a "free" premium, like a pen, or pocket notebook. Include a coupon in the ad, and your telephone number. In our national Angus advertising we are surprised at how many people prefer to clip and fill out a coupon rather than make a telephone call.

Response advertising has another benefit. It identifies advertising media that work the best. All you do is key the ad coupons

with numbers or letters in one corner that will identify the publication the ad ran in. If someone calls, ask where they got your number. Record the response generated by each publication and within a year or two you will be able to identify the most

Very and least effective publications to advertise in.

What do you do with sales leads? Follow up on them, and quickly. Send the promised material the same day you receive the request. Follow with a telephone call a few days after that. Ask if the person received the material you sent them, and if they have any questions. Invite the interested party to come by your place. Set up a firm date if the prospect shows any interest at all. If the person needs a bull, then explain briefly what you have available.

Above all, be pleasant and make it easy for the person to talk with you and discuss his or her needs. Be brief and end on a pleasant, positive note.

Be sure and add each person's name, address and telephone number to your customer mailing list. Continue to contact them, at least by direct mail, for a few years. Keep a record of purchases on the individuals card file or com-

years or so you haven't made a sale, then you might want to drop the name from your list. But don't be too hasty. It sometimes takes a lot of cultivation after the seed is sown, for the prospect to bear fruit.

An ad which is designed to provide you with sales leads doesn't lose its effectiveness in other respects. It can still inform readers

about your program, and build top-of-mind awareness. Trying for response simply makes your ad program work harder and produce more results.

So think about sales leads — about how to generate them and about how to turn them into new business. Although there are a number of ways to generate leads, research proves that advertising is the best.



*Keith E. Evans*