



GET A-LEVEL CLIENTS

A QUICK START GUIDE TO HELP
BUILD A BOOK OF BUSINESS FULL
OF "A-LEVEL" CLIENTS

There's a reason all the leads you get aren't turning into repeat clients who provide you ongoing referrals...

That reason is you've been told that leads are like currency, all you need are more leads and your business will skyrocket.

So, you focus all your efforts on lead generation.

But here's the thing...

Regardless of how well you're doing at generating leads, there's rarely one single solution you can point to that solves every problem in business.

"More Leads" Isn't the Answer to Everything

In fact, getting more leads is the easy part. At Partners Advantage, we consistently generate 2,000 leads a year. So, lead generation is where we'll start this discussion, but we won't stay on that topic long.

Yes, leads are the lifeblood of your business, no doubt about that. This is why you should have a lead generating website.

What do we mean by that?

A lead generating website allows you to collect email addresses from your prospects so you can build an email list (an asset you own - unlike Facebook or LinkedIn followers). Having an email list means that you can continue to interact with prospective clients even if they don't choose to work with you the first time they hear your name.

Because it's highly unlikely, especially with high ticket sales like purchasing a life insurance policy, annuity, or investment advice, that a prospect will immediately want to write a check for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In fact, according to Marketo, 96% of visitors who come to your website aren't ready to buy (yet).

And if you to expect them to be ... it's like asking someone to marry you on the first date. People just don't do that, they need time to warm up to you, learn who you are and what you're about. They need to know they can trust you and that you share similar beliefs.



Here's What to Do with the Leads You Have...

There are TONS of resources out there to help with lead generation. In fact, here's one we offer – [30 Lead Generation Tips, Tricks and Techniques for Financial Professionals](#). But if you aren't where you'd like to be in your business...

Nurturing prospects and increasing prospect to client conversion rates is what can ACTUALLY move the needle in your business.

Although you may have leads flowing in, there's a good chance you don't have the number of clients you'd like (yet).

The Kind of Clients That Help You Build Your Business

Michael Kitces says you can build a profitable financial services business with just [50 "A-level" clients](#) – which to us means they're your ideal clients who do repeat business with you and refer others to you.

Tell me, would you rather have fewer clients who place ALL their business with you, who are huge fans and tell their closest friends about you, want anything you have to offer OR would you want to be surrounded by hundreds of people who "may" want your services and will "keep you in mind," people who never quite understand what you do or who question the benefits of working with you.

I'll take a wild guess and say you'd rather work with select ideal clients who see how valuable the services are that you provide. But keep this in mind – ideal clients don't start doing business with you off pure lead generation.

Their business may come out of multiple interactions with you over a period of time, which will vary from prospect to prospect. But this gives you the opportunity to qualify prospects and allow them to decide if you're the financial professional for them.

Not everyone is going to be a fit for your financial practice. And that's okay. That's actually great news because then you don't have to run yourself ragged trying to appeal to everyone and feeling let down when someone chooses not to work with you.

Now, if you've got leads to work with, but you never connect with them beyond that – your business will start hemorrhaging leads. Meaning those you DO get, won't be around for long. And this is WHY financial professionals often think that all they need is to get more leads.



But here's the truth (I think you can handle it):

If you aren't turning the leads you have into clients... why would you waste money on more leads?

That being said, you can change that situation and by nurturing the leads you get, turning more of them into clients, and continually refilling your pipeline with more leads to convert. Sound good? Let's do this.

Increase Your Value in the Eyes of Potential Clients

If you haven't heard the phrase, nurturing leads, it's simply developing a relationship with your prospective clients. You provide value to them and listen to their needs before you pitch products and services.

Your goals during lead nurturing include education, building awareness around your business, demonstrating your expertise on specific topics, and developing mutual trust. This happens in the early stages of the buyer's journey before they officially become your client.

If you're not familiar with the term, "buyer's journey," it's what happens with your prospects all the way up to and including the purchase of a product or service – essentially, it's your sales funnel.

HubSpot lays out the buyer's journey in three stages:

1. **Awareness Stage** - The buyer realizes they have a problem.
2. **Consideration Stage** - The buyer defines their problem and researches options to solve it.
3. **Decision Stage** - The buyer chooses a solution.

As someone who has products and services for sale, you want to meet a prospect or lead in each of these stages and provide information and guidance that can help move them to the next stage. Because we know that with the type of business you have, people are going to take a little longer to make a decision to work with you.

So, the first step of getting leads in the funnel is to clearly identify the problem you help your clients solve. Display this on your website so that when they arrive on your site, they know they're in the right place. You can also write blog posts or offer an eBook that helps them understand that problem in greater depth. Content like this moves them through the awareness stage.



Once they've identified exactly what their problem is, they'll want to know more about how you help solve that problem. This could be the perfect opportunity to invite them to a webinar you're hosting (more on that later). This gives them a taste of what it would be like working with you and helps build your authority as well as make a more personal connection.

Once they've moved past the consideration stage, they are very close to making a decision to work with you. At this point, you can ask them to book a call for a no-obligation consultation, for example.

Ideally, after speaking with you one-on-one, they'll be ready to work together because they believe you're the person that can help them fully solve their problem and get them the results they were after when they visited your site initially.

Through nurturing, you led them to this conclusion.

Proof that lead nurturing works is in the numbers – "Nurtured leads make 47% larger purchases than non-nurtured leads." (Online Marketing Institute, APSIS)

But HOW Do You Nurture a Lead?

We'll talk about three ways you can nurture leads, but if you've built a lead generating website that collects email addresses like we mention above, that was a great move on your part. With [99%](#) of consumers checking their email every day, it's our top suggestion for nurturing your leads.

Email:

To clarify, there are a few different types of emails you could send to your list. One of those is the standalone email. This would be a promotional email to attend your seminar, for example. You might even be sending these standalone emails manually to a few people you think would be interested. But that gets time-consuming. And it's nearly impossible and not advisable to do once you have a decent list of email addresses.

Rather than a standalone email that can scream "sales message" and turn people off, we encourage you to use lead nurturing emails. Lead nurturing emails are a series of emails that are triggered when someone signs up for your list or takes some other action, such as downloading a whitepaper off your website. [Lead nurturing emails](#) get 4-10 times the



response rate compared to standalone email blasts. And that's because they aren't salesy, they're helpful and they emulate a conversation with your prospects. You want many of the emails you send to your list to add value first instead of constantly pushing your product or service.

This series of emails is sometimes called an autoresponder. Through your email service provider, you can write this series once and schedule the emails to go out to our entire list or a segment of it. The beauty is that there's no additional work on your part. They go out like clockwork when someone enters your sales funnel.

Obviously, this frees up more time for you to do other tasks, but it also provides a consistent experience to your prospective clients. Not only that, if you've tested this email series and it works (meaning it eventually leads to prospects setting appointments), then you are continually sending out a message that is proven to get results. That's a win in our book!

As we mentioned, you want to create a way to capture email addresses on your website. The best way to do that, is to offer something in exchange for that prospect's email address. This opt-in lead magnet could be an eBook, for example, that addresses a specific problem your target audience has. In the eBook, you would provide a quick win or a solution to some aspect of the problem.

You may think that email is old school and it's all about social media today, but the truth is, email can be a much more personal way to connect with prospective clients. This is especially true when you write emails in a way that seems like you're having a one-on-one conversation with a prospect. Whereas, social media is one to many.

People crave personal connection, which is why using email nurturing in your business works in your favor.

With median ROI for email at 122% and social media at just 28%, [there's a clear winner.](#)

That's not to say you shouldn't have a social media strategy as well but having an email list can be a better investment of time and money in the long run.

Content Marketing:

One of the best ways to engage with your audience, demonstrate your expertise, and encourage prospects to keep coming back to your website, is through content marketing. Content marketing is simply producing some type of content that provides valuable information to the reader.



You make the content you create available on your website. In some instances, to access the content, you may have visitors enter their email address and other times, it may be available without providing their email. Even if they do have to provide it, it's generally viewed as a smaller ask than say, booking a call.

Types of content you could develop include:

- videos
- eBooks
- guides
- checklists
- thought leadership articles or white papers

As someone moves through the sales funnel, offer different types of content to them. [Targeting users with content](#) relevant to their position along the buying process yields 72% higher conversion rates.

In addition to establishing authority, another benefit to using content marketing is the scalability factor – create one piece of content and reach many. You can promote your content to your email list or on social media. And you can repurpose a piece of content into different formats.

The ability to use content marketing in this way is part of the reason why it has such a high ROI and so many more businesses are recognizing how powerful it is.

Per the [Content Marketing Institute Report for 2019](#) via The Keenfolks, 95% of B2Cs are committed to content marketing on some level, 96% of the most successful B2C content marketers say audiences view their company as a trusted resource, and the highest area for spending on content marketing in 2019 is content creation (56%).

Is it starting to sound like an investment you should make too?

Now for something you are probably very familiar with...

Live Events (Free trainings/workshops/seminars/webinars):

Conducting training is another option for demonstrating your authority on financial topics. This is typically free to the prospect, but there could definitely be a cost to you.

The difference between a seminar and a workshop may simply be whether or not you provide attendees a meal. But the content covered is the same. You'll want to make sure that the training or education you provide is not something they could get anywhere because this is an



opportunity for you to differentiate yourself from other financial professionals. Make sure the training you provide is relevant and focused. It may seem counterintuitive, but the narrower your focus, the more likely you are to attract interested prospects. If you want to make your workshop and seminar more effective at turning attendees to clients, [read this post](#).

These live events do add a personal touch and can be effective at generating appointments but in addition to the money spent on food, location, parking, etc., as you know, there's a pretty substantial time commitment as well.

That's why I want you to hear me out...

It might make more sense to do a webinar. Webinars give you leverage.

I know you've attended ones held by carriers. But have you tried them for yourself yet?

Yes, there are a few steps involved in creating the presentation and choosing a webinar hosting program, but there are low and no-cost options. Once you have that set up, you'll create an email sequence that invites those on your list to the live webinar and follow up with reminder emails before the day of the online event. This helps improve your attendance rate, which is key to more conversions. In fact, the best webinars can generate [conversion rate averages of 19%](#).

That means if you had 100 register for your webinar and 50 attend (a pretty standard registration to attendance rate), at 19% conversion, that would be about 9 appointments set.

If you record the live webinar, you can turn it into an OnDemand webinar later to send out via your email list or make it accessible on your website to visitors so that the webinar content can continue to work for you and encourage additional appointments. This cuts down on your time (for your prospects, you, and your staff) and money spent compared to seminars and workshops.

Webinars can be just as helpful in showing prospects why they would want to work with you. And the beauty of the webinar, is you have the potential to set more appointments and get more clients without the hassle of conducting a full-blown seminar.

Phone and in-person meetings:

After joining your email list and consuming content, this is the next step. You want your prospect to get on a call or consultation with you. At this point, they're already pretty invested in you as their solution so when you get on the phone, you've got a highly interested and partially qualified prospect. And if they're willing to book that call or consultation, they're interested working with you. The call or in-person meeting is all you need to seal the deal.



At this point, following a script is probably a good idea, if you can do it naturally. An outline of the discovery call will ensure you ask the right questions and lead the conversation appropriately. It's easy to get off on a tangent or forget to employ persuasive sales techniques when you're on a call or meeting with prospects. Planning out what you're going to say, but not being too rigid in following it, can help you direct the conversation with confidence.

Even if they don't make a decision to work with you right then and there, you want to create a positive experience and make it so they don't want to say no, if it is in fact a good fit to work with you. What it will come down to is demonstrating your value in this meeting. If your clients see the value, you're golden. If they don't, they won't move forward and this means you still have work to do. Getting clear on your value proposition, and how that's different than what every other financial professional has to offer, will help you on this call.

OK, so you've nurtured your list... now what?

Time to ramp up the conversions.

Turn Names on a List to Valued Clients More Quickly

You're nurturing your leads with the sole goal of turning them into clients, however, there are a few big levers you can pull to do that more effectively:

1. **Improve your follow up.** You've probably heard the phrase, "The money's in the follow-up." But what's even more important is how quickly you follow up. Did you know... [30-50% of sales](#) go to the vendor that responds first. I guess you could say, in the words of Ricky Bobby, that *if you aren't first, you're last*.

Hubspot found that following up on a lead within five minutes results in greater odds, 21 times greater odds to be more precise, of that lead entering the sales process compared to contacting leads within half an hour.

Yet, [lead nurturing statistics](#) from Harvard Business Review revealed that the average response time is 42 hours. This leads us to the question: is email marketing automation the answer?

2. **Use email automation.** As soon as someone becomes a lead on your site by completing a form to get your piece of content (lead magnet), you can send an automated email welcoming them to your list. That welcome sequence can then lead them down the sales funnel, even if you can't reach out to them personally right away.



Once you have this automated sequence set up, it's constantly running in the background without you having to do anything. It's like a salesperson that works 24/7, helping nurture your leads.

In fact, 80% of marketers using automation software generate more leads; 77% convert more of those leads. (VB Insight, [AP SIS](#))

- 3. Make sure your leads are your ideal client.** The best way to do that is to ask questions to qualify them. Also, make sure you're targeting the right audience with your marketing in the first place by speaking to their specific pain points and goals. This is one of the biggest levers you can pull. If you're doing all the right things from a marketing perspective but are putting your message in front of the wrong people, you have a serious uphill battle ahead of you. It can look like your business isn't doing well or that you're doing something wrong. But often, that's not the case. It's just a matter of getting clear on the client you want to serve and speaking directly to them and only them.

If you get the right people in the funnel from the beginning, it should be much easier to make them your clients. Because those people will already be interested in what you do. You just need to get them over the finish line with your nurturing efforts. When the right people join your email list or get an invite to your event, they are much more likely to attend, engage, and respond. If you know your ideal client like the back of your hand, then you should know what their objections typically are and handle those before you ever get to a conversation about what you have to offer, which means **Your Conversions Go Up.**

A Call to ction...

If you're like the 74% of companies who say converting leads into customers is their top priority (Hubspot), you'll want to make sure your marketing strategy includes everything we discussed above.

Get your client acquisition machine in place, nurture those leads with proven methods, and you'll be converting more and more qualified leads into ideal clients. Done right, fifty ideal clients could be all you need for a thriving, prosperous financial practice. The key is to have each of the parts of the process working in tandem. Spend less time thinking – *I need more leads, ahhh! More leads, more leads...* and more time focused on nurturing and converting the right people.

If you need help with this, our sales team looks forward to having a conversation to see if you might be a good fit for Elevate. This comprehensive practice management process is designed to help you turn more of the leads you get into life-long clients who have an increased potential of providing higher-quality referrals, enabling you to scale your business more efficiently.

[To schedule a 15-min call, click here.](#)





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