

Construction Data Company Case Study

Reaching Lead Generation Nirvana: Quantity and Quality

BACKGROUND

Construction Data Company (CDC) is the leading regional provider of both public and private commercial construction leads, with three brands (CDCNews, BidTool, and DataFax) each servicing different regions in the Eastern and Midwestern United States. CDC has been a trusted lead source for general contractors, sub-contractors, construction equipment suppliers and manufacturer representatives for more than 30 years.

THE CHALLENGE

The CDC marketing team maintains a culture of testing and data-driven decision making, and as long-time ion platform customers, they already had a multifaceted landing page program in place. Their first goal using ion was to maximize lead generation efficiency, bringing as many leads to their sales force as possible. As lead quantity increased, CDC shifted focus towards evolving their online marketing strategy to also improve the quality of the leads handed over to sales. They knew that in order to find the perfect balance between lead quantity and quality, they were going to need bring together their PPC, landing pages, and email efforts into one holistic strategy.

THE SOLUTION

The first step in improving lead quality was for the CDC marketing team to determine what was important to their visitors and which pages engaged their highest quality leads the most. Since CDC had been using the ion platform for several years, they already had a plethora of data and analytics at their disposal, which revealed not only what converted well, but also which combination(s) of body copy, imagery, and ad text attracted their most qualified prospects. Thus, CDC was able to leverage existing Platform data to perform a self-audit and optimize their landing experiences for higher quality prospects.

Once the CDC team had perfected their messaging strategy, it was time to integrate the message with their post-click marketing portfolio. The CDC team was familiar with ion interactive's services team from their initial adoption of ion, and knew ion's landing page optimization experts could help figure out the best way to implement their new strategy using the ion platform.

CDC's marketing team shared their goals with ion, and received an updated framework that included a new feature called Ready Made Widgets to help them improve lead quality. Ready Made Widgets help platform users add and customize interactive layered content like accordions, image rotators, and tabbed content to pages without code or development resources. These widgets made it possible to add more content to a page without the page feeling overcrowded, giving the CDC team the creative flexibility to display highly-targeted content that their most valuable prospect segments could interact and identify with.

THE RESULTS

The CDC marketing team had originally hypothesized that dividing their registration form into two steps would increase the number of marketing (step one) leads, but decrease overall sales-ready (step two) lead generation. To their pleasant surprise, CDC discovered that while the number of marketing leads did indeed increase, the total number of overall sales-ready leads remained equal to that of their control. This meant that CDC's marketing team was able to glean a new list of marketing leads from pay-per-click campaigns without sacrificing sales-ready lead quantity, quality, or adding to cost. Many of these marketing leads are also converted daily into full, sales-ready leads, lowering CDC's overall cost per lead and improving not only lead gen efficiency, but also lead quality. Recent testing has also resulted in dramatically improved lead quality without diminishing conversion rates, which average over 16%.

"ion interactive's services team helped us strategize how to best implement a holistic optimization – really a redesign of our lead generation program – with the ion platform as opposed to an optimization of only a certain part of the process."

– Guy Colangelo, Marketing Director, Construction Data Company

The CDC team also created a series of new microsites that used both the tabbed content and image rotator Ready Made Widgets to communicate the unique value that CDC offered to each of their prospect segments. Similar to the new landing pages, diverse visitors could self-identify and self-segment by clicking on a particular tab or image and then view a value proposition that spoke directly to their needs. These value propositions were discovered using the existing platform data that CDC had originally cultivated and analyzed, and were shown to consist of highly-targeted, convincing, and effective messaging and imagery.

Next, CDC wanted to test both the length and manner in which forms were displayed, and the effect of using two-step forms on both conversion rates and lead quality. Two-step forms are shorter, and thus recommended in certain cases to remove user fatigue and boost conversion rates. However, CDC was concerned that a boost in conversion rates may be related to diminished lead quantity and a low-quality conversion overload.

Previously, CDC used a one-step form and considered any visitor who converted on that form to be a "sales-ready lead". Now, the first three fields on that form (name, email address, and state) are presented separately in a step one form, and any visitor who converted on that first step became a marketing lead. Marketing leads could be added to a nurture or drip campaign, and given the opportunity to view valuable content and complete their profile. Those visitors who converted on the first step and then followed-through to convert on the second step were considered "sales leads" and were sent straight to the sales department.

WHAT'S NEXT

CDC is focusing on optimizing and improving the lead funnel. They've begun testing a 3- step form, complete with an enticing call-to-action to 'skip the line' and speak immediately with a sales representative. The content of these forms and associated pages has successfully shifted the mindset of CDC's prospects from an offer to a value orientation, which results in a pre-qualified call. With approximately 57% of CDC's sales leads completing the third step, CDC's marketing team is driving more and more high quality leads every day.