
The Cyberspace call center for Email Processing

Replace Telesales with Bidirectional, Personalized, Sequenced email

A White Paper by E-Contacts.com

Contents

- Smart Email 3**
 - Customer Relationship Management through Email..... 3
 - Why E-Contacts Will Increase Your Revenue 3
 - How Will It Benefit Your Customers 4
 - What's It Used For 4
 - Why Is It Better 4
 - How Does It Work..... 4
 - What If We Don't Have Our Prospects Email Addresses 5
 - How Well Tested Is The Solution 5
 - Empowering your sales staff 6
 - Up-sell existing customers 6
 - Measuring your Channel Performance 7
 - E-Contacts shifts power from your channels back to you. 7
 - International Support 7

- How it works & why its better 8**
 - Why it's better than an Email Newsletter 9
 - Smart outbound support..... 9
 - Smart Inbound Support..... 10
 - Smart personalized emails..... 10
 - Unique B-to-B Challenges 11

- But I don't have all my Customers Email Addresses 13**
 - Get your customer's email addresses with E-Contacts-Find. 13
 - The cost..... 13
 - It's not Spam..... 14
 - The result 14

- Inhouse or outsource solution 15**
 - Do it yourself 15
 - Outsource it 16
 - Who we are..... 16
 - The Next Step 16

Smart Email

Customer Relationship Management through Email

Using E-Contacts, one clerical person can maintain a detailed personal relationship with 30-40,000 prospects and customers

E-Contacts is a unique bi-directional Email Management program. Each lead in your database receives a personalized sequence of emails (e.g. 6 emails in a 4 month period) that explains the benefits of your product and encourages them to reply.

In our experience:

- 1) More than 33% of your prospects will over a period of months respond to these emails.
- 2) 80% of these responses are standard and can be answered by trained clerical operators – how much does it cost, does it do X, does it work with Y, how does it compete against Z. The remaining 20% can be assigned to technical staff or sales staff for closing.
- 3) Trained operators can log responses against the prospects record, update their profile and respond to 40 emails per hour.
- 4) This allows one clerical operator to maintain a detailed personal relationship with 20,000- 40,000 contacts.

Smart Email – content & frequency optimized to meet the unique needs of each prospect

Why E-Contacts Will Increase Your Revenue

- Sales Staff will be able to concentrate on closing deals. E-Contacts will automatically weed out “tire kickers” and clerical staff will answer all standard questions.
- Managers can define complex email marketing campaigns to follow up on prospects and customers. E-Contacts will accurately implement these campaigns and measure their effectiveness.
- Email communication with prospects can be predefined and standardized. You do not have to worry about sales people under pressure generating a sloppy reply to a customer’s question.
- No lead will be lost. Once you have a prospects email address, they will receive all the emails in the marketing campaign. Each email will encourage them to reply explaining their needs or complaints.



How Will It Benefit Your Customers

- Your customers want an email relationship with you. They will read your email before they accept your call.
- All inquiries are personally followed up.
- Professionally answering prospect questions will generate tremendous trust and future goodwill.
- Customers will see that you are listening and responding to their individual needs.

What's It Used For

- Following up on leads from Web Sites, Trade shows or Direct Mail campaigns.
- Following up with customers to measure their satisfaction with your service, complete surveys, up sell new services and encourage reference selling.
- Integrating independent sales channels – measuring their efficiency and your customer's satisfaction with them.
- E-Contacts can use a similar email solution for structured communications with suppliers, resellers, investors, PR companies, employees, lobbyists or any other group that you have an ongoing need to communicate with.

Why Is It Better

The email-sequencing engine for E-Contacts is the most powerful one in the industry. There are over [26 features](#) that allow E-Contacts to handle real world problems. Frankly a dumb sequencing engine that cannot react to customers feedback will be rejected by your sales and marketing staff.

How Does It Work

E-Contacts is a flexible email generator combined with a sophisticated database. Each prospect has a detailed log that classifies and records every significant event related to that prospect. E-Contacts seamlessly integrates with Microsoft Outlook sending emails and reading replies through a familiar interface. As a multi user system, work can be efficiently divided amongst your staff. Sales staff can instantly import their emails into E-Contacts for analysis by clerical assistants.

What If We Don't Have Our Prospects Email Addresses

If you don't have email addresses for your current customers, E-Contacts can even help locate these. By researching the Internet, E-Contacts will find 20% to 30% of your missing email addresses. Hence if you have a mailing list of 100,000 corporate prospects and customers, E-Contacts can locate the email and web addresses of 20-30,000 at a fraction of the cost that it would take to phone them.

How Well Tested Is The Solution

We developed E-Contacts to proactively follow up on each of the thousands of leads that we received each week. It has been used every day for the last three years. In 1999 we released E-Contacts as a product and several important organizations have already licensed it. License fees start at \$7,500. Alternatively you can outsource Email Management to E-Contacts Corporation for a fee of \$2,000 plus usage.

Email vs. Phone follow-up

"I'm very impressed with E-Contacts' ability to handle large volumes of e-mail transactions in such a customized, personal way," Steve Wexler, President of WexTech Systems New York, developers of Doc-To-Help and AnswerWorks.

The current view of email in the industry is as an alternative to direct mail. This is leading to the profusion of Spam or "near Spam" emails.

E-Contacts view Email as an alternative to the phone. Customers can respond to or ignore emails when they want.

E-Contacts provides a systematic way to manage more detailed purchasing decisions. This is where the decision to purchase cannot be made by selecting options in a checklist. Customers will have questions and will want to review different alternatives or may not need the product for several months. For example look at the information people need to compare different cellular phone services or different home insurance policies.

Even for basic office supplies, most decisions are made on service levels. Potential customers want to ask questions about service times, references, options etc. Suppliers should constantly communicate with their customers to see if they were happy with the last order, are there other opportunities, etc.

With E-Contacts, it becomes cost-effective to provide detailed prospect relationship building and traditional customer support. Basically, a trained clerical person combined with E-Contacts can provide these services cheaper, quicker and more professionally than expensive and scarce sales personnel.

Empowering your sales staff

E-Contacts releases sales people from the drudgery of filtering through "tire kickers" and wasted telephone calls.

With E-Contacts, Email is used to automate relationship building and get prospects to closing. Sales people can "cherry pick" leads or wait until they ripen themselves.

Up-sell existing customers

E-Contacts allows you to integrate your user database and your technical support database.

It costs five times as much to sell to a new customer as it does to make the same sale to an existing customer.

We can send your users a series of emails over time, to sell and re-sell the benefits of your offering. This will also give you vital feedback on what features your customers liked and disliked.

Measuring your Channel Performance

*“Information Is Power” -
Alvin Toffler*

E-Contacts shifts power from your channels back to you.

With E-Contacts you can use the Extranet to keep the channels informed on the status of all the leads that they have been assigned.

E-Contacts maintains the direct contact with end users and gives you regular feedback on the channel performance. *This will change your attitude to channels totally.* There is no reason why the continued receipt of leads cannot be made conditional upon:

- All leads being followed up within 24 hours
- 20% closing of leads within a month
- Free full-page advertising in their catalogue or a local magazine

With E-Contacts you will be able to identify which resellers are truly proactive. One email will give the prospect contact information, the next will ask if the channel contacted the prospect and provided professional service.

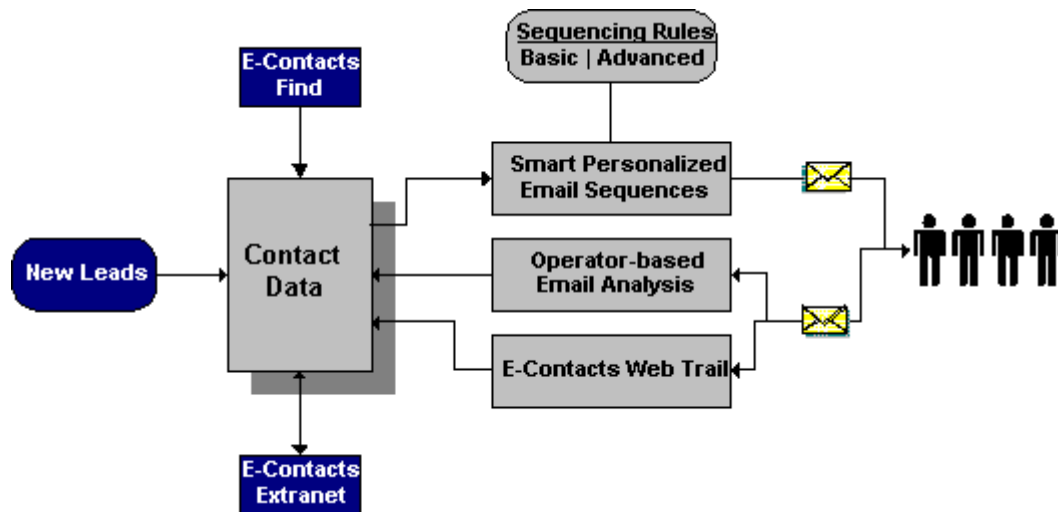
International Support

Thirty percent of the leads that a company receives are typically from outside North America. E-Contacts has excellent support for the complex issues, including support, for multiple channels, multiple currencies, multiple price lists and multiple languages based upon the leads country.

How it works & why its better

E-Contacts is a semi-automatic solution that uniquely provides:

- 1) Email Response
- 2) Lead Qualification
- 3) Continuous Prospect & Customer relationship building



An overview of the E-Contacts process

- 1) New leads and customer emails are forwarded to the E-Contacts Internet server, where they are cleaned, classified and added to the database.
- 2) E-Contacts trained operators analyze the content of each email and select a flexible sequence of emails for each lead. For example, each qualified lead receives six pre-approved emails within a period of three months of their request for information. Experience shows that most qualified leads actually prefer this to one big email.
- 3) The emails look like a personalized letter 'from your account representative.' The key is to encourage prospects to respond to emails – "Tell us in your own words what you are looking for." This generates an average reply rate of 10%.
- 4) Email replies are automatically added to the prospect's record in the database. Operators, following predefined rules, quickly review past correspondence and respond to about 80% of the replies. Most emails are quite predictable, "Where can I buy it", "does it do Y", "how does it compete against X", "can you send me more literature". Using E-Contacts a trained operator can analyze and respond to typically 40 emails per hour. This is cheaper, quicker and more professional than expensive and scarce sales personnel.

- 5) The 20% of emails that cannot be answered are either assigned to a sales person for closing or passed to a technical person. The prospect will not receive further correspondence until their questions are fully answered.
- 6) Sales people can use the Extranet to review the status of their leads as well as modify the sequence of emails. Thus E-Contacts can be used as a simple Web based SFA tool.
- 7) E-Contacts Web trail allows us to track when someone visits a web site from a hypertext jump on our emails. This powerful feature can be used to further classify prospects as well as send them additional information. We are planning to add several other related tracking features that will tighten the integration between web sites and email and make web pages much more personal.
- 8) The core technology of E-Contacts is the Sequencer. This drives the Email generator, allowing the right email to be sent, on time, to tens of thousands of prospects in a database. A simple analogy would be an air traffic controller controlling the flights of thousands of airplanes. E-Contacts comes with basic sequencing rules, which allow a marketing manager to set up sophisticated email marketing campaigns. Programmers can add advanced rules that give you the opportunity to further customize sequences and integrate data from other software packages (e.g. historic sales data)

Why it's better than an Email Newsletter

"E-Contacts helps build relationships through intelligent e-mail transactions, which allows customer service representatives to focus on selling and not just contacting." Steve Wexler, President of WexTech Systems New York,

Many companies believe that their current bulk email system adequately follows up their email leads. They are not sure if they really need the extra features of E-Contacts. Bulk email systems will typically send a personalized email to all contacts in a database that match pre-set criteria. You can modify the criteria and remove contacts but beyond this there the functionality is limited. This is ideal if your goal is to replace traditional direct mail with bulk email.

E-Contacts' goal is to replace most of an organization's telesales function by forming personal one-to-one relationships with each prospect in your database. To achieve this requires more flexibility and power than a bulk email system.

Here is a checklist to compare your current email follow up system with E-Contacts:

Smart outbound support

- 1) Do all your prospects receive emails based upon when they registered on your web site rather than when you release your monthly newsletter? Clearly someone who registers on your web site two weeks ago should get a totally different email to someone who registered six months ago. However most "newsletter" approaches can't accommodate this requirement.
- 2) Can you guarantee that every lead will receive a certain sequence of predefined personalized emails within a certain time period?
- 3) Can your system automatically detect and avoid sending the same email twice?
- 4) Can your system support sending the same prospect emails from multiple sequences? For example, a product email and a literature mailing follow up email. Can you guarantee that there will be at least two days between any sequenced emails?

- 5) Can your system automatically adjust the time between a sequence of emails so for example a hot prospect (one who replies positively to a prior email) receives the next email a week later whereas a cold prospect receives the next email a month later
- 6) Can the operator send emails out of sequence? For example if the next sequenced email is email #3, can the operator send email #6? Will the system record that and then send e-mail #4, #5 and #7 under the original sequence?
- 7) Can your system match bounce back emails to the original record in the database? Are bounced back emails resubmitted in case there was a communication problem with the recipient's mail server? Does your system store bounce backs in a separate table? Does it check new leads to see if they were a prior remove request on this email address?

Smart Inbound Support

- 8) What happens when someone responds to one of your bulk emails? Is your email system fully integrated into the sales force automation system? Will the prospect continue to get sequenced emails or will the management of this lead fall entirely under the control of a sales associate?
- 9) What happens if someone responds to an email using a different email address? In our experience, 10% of prospects have separate corporate accounts and personal accounts.
- 10) If the prospect asks a question that your operator cannot handle, can the operator flag this account as open? Will the system stop sending further sequenced emails until prospect's questions are fully answered?
- 11) Do you record all of the email that you receive from a prospect, or do you just record their reply?
- 12) If the prospect requests not to receive any more emails for another two months can your system support this and automatically start up the sequence after that time?

Smart personalized emails

- 13) Can your sequenced emails reference prior correspondence with the prospect?
For example:
"Hi Bob,

Following up your phone conversation with John Brown of earlier this month, here is some more information about our product "

Or alternatively:
"Hi Bob

Following up my email to Joe Smith, that answered his technical questions, are you now in a position to approve the purchase of our product?"
- 14) Does it handle real world problems in personalizing an email – for example:
If the name of a prospect is R. Smith, will the system automatically replace "Hi R"?"
With the more formal

“Dear R. Smith”

If the email address is info@domain.com or sales@domain.com will your system recognize this as a shared email address and automatically put in -

"For the attention of

Bob Smith

President

HiTec Systems Incorporated

Hi Bob,"

- 15) Does it supports informal company names so that "HiTec Systems Incorporated" is automatically assigned the common name "HiTec." Thus, merge sentences such as "Why HiTec should use our product" are clearer and concise.
- 16) Does your system support natural references to date periods? For example, "Following up my email of November 12th," is replaced by "Following up my email of last week,"
- 17) Do emails become more familiar as the relationship develops? For example is the salutation, “Yours Sincerely” replaced with “Hope to hear from you soon”

Unique B-to-B Challenges

- 18) Does your system handle multiple contacts per account? What happens if there are several contacts within an account involved in making the purchasing decision? Do you record exactly which account within an organization receives the email? What happens if the contact is an external consultant and not at the same address as the organization? What happens if the prime contact in an organization is changed? Can you assign different contracts to different departments and then send sequenced emails to departments instead of a specific contact? For example, can you send a monthly statement to the accounting department, and new leads to the marketing department?
- 19) Does your system keep an audit trail of every significant event related to this prospect? Can salespeople and management use this? Does it automatically update future sequenced emails?
- 20) Will your system support independent sales channels? Can you automatically forward leads to different channels at will, and measure the performance of those channels through closures and also through prospect feedback?
- 21) Does your system integrate data from other relational databases? For example, can you support multiple price lists for different territories and different classes of end-users? Can your system integrate sales data from your accounting system and use this data intelligently for sending sequenced emails to existing customers? For example, "We notice you haven't ordered Widget for three months. Can you advise why?"
- 22) Does your system check for duplicate email addresses? Can your system check whether a new record is really a new prospect or just another contact within an existing account? This is particularly important if you are using channels. New contacts from Channel A must not be classified as perspective customers for Channel B.

- 23) Can you define exceptions to standard sequences easily? For example, all leads in North America get price list "A" except if State = Florida then they get price list "B".
- 24) Can you set up sequences for other types of companies such as channels, suppliers, press contacts, or investors?
- 25) The most common follow up to a sequenced email is a hypertext jump back to a web site. Will your system record who visited the web site and send a follow-up email two days later thanking them for their visit?
- 26) Finally, is there any quality control in the system? Are operator responses checked before the email is sent?

But I don't have all my Customers Email Addresses

Get your customer's email addresses with E-Contacts-Find.

E-Contacts-Find can locate the missing email addresses of between 20% and 30% of your database. Most companies have large legacy databases with tens of thousands of good mailing addresses but only a small percentage of email addresses.

Imagine the impact to your bottom line if you could immediately get 10-20,000 email addresses of your best customers and prospects. This is a unique service that will dramatically improve your sales and ability to communicate with your customers.

E-Contacts-Find works by using proprietary web crawler technology that taps into public host name listings and public directory services. It then uses various logical combinations for testing different probable email combinations and tracking bounce backs emails.

The cost

We charge \$1 for every email address that we believe is correct and that does not request to be "removed" from future emails. There is a minimum fee of \$3,000 and the typical completion time is 2-3 weeks.

As part of the service, you will also receive the Web address of your contacts. Most records will include additional company background information, which will allow customized email marketing.

Calculating your return on investment is easy. Once you have the email address of a contact, you remove most of the need to send direct mail pieces. The \$1 per email is less than the cost of one mail piece. Even identifying which leads are no longer interested in your products is valuable. 10,000 "Remove" requests are 10,000 less direct mail pieces wasted.

It's not Spam

The moral and legal definition of Spam or unsolicited email is that the receiver has no prior commercial relationship with the sender. In this case we will be stating up front that "You are receiving this email because you used or inquired about using our product / service in the last X months." The tone of the email would be in the context of an informal questionnaire / needs survey.

Your customers would rather have a direct email relationship rather than a 1-800-telephone relationship. As you know, the big advantage of email is that the customer controls the timing and content of the correspondence. This of course assumes the customer believes that if he replies to your email he will receive an intelligent answer-which is why you need E-Contacts.

The result

Within a period of 2-3 weeks you can develop an active "One-to-One" online relationship with your most important accounts.

If you believe you can delay the decision to use E-Contacts-Find, just think what will happen if your main competitor gets these emails addressees before you do?

Inhouse or outsource solution

Do it yourself

"E-Contacts allows our prospects to benefit from one-to-one email marketing.

This is the future of Direct Marketing. The time has come for the cyberspace call center.

Communications by e-mail with embedded web links is a more modern media choice than direct mail followed by telemarketing. This is part of the future of Direct Marketing and it's here now." Julia Hartman VP, Marketing

TPC Burlington MA

E-Contacts can be directly licensed to allow you to run this service in-house. The fees start from \$7,500 which includes the costs of:

- 1) Integrating your historic data
- 2) Setting up all your initials schedules (per your instructions)
- 3) Installing the software at your premises
- 4) Training on importing new leads, modifying schedules, changing emails and analyzing results.

Once we properly set up the system, maintenance is easy. The program files and database files are separate. We will have a sample of your database file in our office. If you have any problems with the program, you can upload it to us via the Internet and we can support it and send it back in most cases within a few hours.

E-Contacts Licensing fees includes the costs of:

- 1) Integrating your historic data
- 2) Setting up all your initials schedules (per your instructions)
- 3) Installation assistance
- 4) Training your staff on importing new leads, modifying schedules, changing emails and analyzing results.

E-Contacts pricing

Maximum number of accounts	Pricing per server	
2,000	\$ 7,500	
10,000	\$ 15,000	
30,000	\$ 25,000	includes Extranet & Advanced Sequencing rules
unlimited	\$ 40,000	includes Extranet & Advanced Sequencing rules

The E-Contacts "front end" (presentation, business logic, set up files and sequencing rules) is relatively small and kept separate from the "back end" - main database. We will maintain a sample database file in our office. If you have any problems with E-Contacts, you can upload the front end it to us via the Internet and we can repair it and send it back in most cases within a few hours.

The above price includes 30 days free maintenance. Annual maintenance is available at 20% of the original purchase price

Outsource it

You can see if E-Contacts is right for you with a minimal investment in cost or manpower. In other words the "ready, fire, aim" approach.

For a one-time fee of \$2,000, we will set up your outbound email scheduling and automated response system. Your data will be stored on our secure servers and our operators will be trained to follow up with all your email leads. The ongoing usage charges are 10 cents per outbound email and \$2.50 per response.

Who we are

E-Contacts.com is a new division of Soft/Export, Inc. www.softexport.com. Soft/Export has been publishing and reselling software throughout the world for close to ten years. With offices in Boston and Dublin, we can support our clients' needs world-wide

Soft/Export initially developed E-Contacts for its own use. We needed to support hundreds of new leads coming from our different clients every day and allocating them to resellers and end users throughout the world. We quickly realized that this was not a trivial task and set about developing a solution that was robust enough for our own and our clients' use.

First and foremost, Soft/Export is a sales and marketing company and our technology is designed to deliver solutions – and not necessarily keep up with the latest technical standard of the day.

The Next Step

We firmly believe that E-Contacts is the most advanced Customer Relationship Management program in the market today. If you are interested in exploring this further, then please register at www.econtacts.com or email info@econtacts.com. We would be happy to arrange the installation of a non-obligation evaluation version of E-Contacts