

Corporate Profile Founded in 1996, Boston-based SimplyDIRECT is a marketing services firm that helps clients identify, engage and qualify prospects with maximum precision.



INFOR™

Company Profile Infor is a leading provider of business application software and services. Headquartered in Alpharetta, Georgia, Infor serves 70,000 customers in 125 countries. From apparel and footwear, financial services and high tech companies, to machinery manufacturers, retailers, and pharmaceutical companies Infor delivers solutions designed to give customers the ability to deploy faster with less disruption, and grow with better insight. The company continues to achieve solid growth, growing from \$110 million in FY2003 to \$1.8 Billion in FY2010.

The Marketing Challenge

It takes a lot more than a name and a title in a target company for Infor to call something a qualified sales lead. That "right" person has to be engaged and their needs discovered for it to be passed along for further development. That's a tall order, and Infor has experienced disappointing returns on several of its recent marketing efforts. "That's why Infor turned to SimplyDIRECT," explains Jennifer McMahon, Senior Marketing Programs Manager for Infor Distribution.

It's All About the Data

To find prospects for their "green" supply chain solution, positioned as a way to minimize a firm's carbon footprint, Infor was looking to engage a very select group of high-level executives working within a selected list of its manufacturing accounts. SimplyDIRECT was brought in to employ its database building methodology to identify these key decision makers. The process began with SimplyDIRECT both processing Infor's list of target accounts, and defining the executives they wanted to engage.

Contacts were defined by job level (Director, VP/SVP/EVP and C) and role (supply chain, operations, logistics, and 3PL). According to McMahon, "With SimplyDIRECT, when we ask for executive-level contacts in our target companies, SimplyDIRECT delivers them. And they are all virtually prequalified due to the precision of their list building method."

While the database of contacts was being developed, SimplyDIRECT worked closely with Infor's team to develop a custom survey to deploy to the target list. "Our business development team played a key role in developing the surveys, giving them the ability to approach the contact more intelligently for a better result." An e-mail invitation—no telemarketers involved—was sent to the contacts once developed, and an incentive was offered in exchange for participation in the survey. Since SimplyDIRECT's surveys always yield about a 4% response rate, the process was run until it yielded 100 responses—the amount guaranteed—and opened the door for the Infor sales team. "Where breakthrough was previously difficult, with a SimplyDIRECT lead, you know that the door is open because the executives have already expressed willingness to talk with you. It works."

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SimplyDIRECT offers three core services:

1. Custom contact database development
2. Opt-in, executive-level lead generation
3. Cleansing and updating of client databases

SimplyDIRECT's Dashboard and Pulse Report Help Infor Respond to Customer Needs

Because prompt lead follow-up is the most critical "swing factor" in what can make a survey program successful, SimplyDIRECT offers its clients a campaign portal. This secure website shows a client who, in real-time, has taken their survey, the answers to the questions, graphs how those answers are tracking, etc. "During the campaign, we had complete access to the results as they came in via this dashboard," McMahon says, "When someone fills out a survey, we get an e-mail alert. We can access the data instantly and be more responsive to our survey participants."

The Third Leg of the Stool

A valuable byproduct of a survey campaign is the research it produces. "Imagine, you're getting senior supply chain executives within your key target accounts to answer questions about logistics, partners, buying plans. You cannot get more targeted research!" explains McMahon. SimplyDIRECT offers these results in what they have branded as a "Pulse Report", a display of charts and graphs showing how the market answered Infor's survey. This report is then offered back to the survey participants. "The beauty of the Pulse Report is that it comes from a third party, so it immediately adds credibility because it's not just a company sales pitch. SimplyDIRECT's Pulse Report gives us more leverage in the marketplace."

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While the survey engaged these executives, the resulting research revealed that 75% of the market was planning to "go green" in their supply chain. Armed with such intelligence, McMahon further leveraged SimplyDIRECT's content and developed a webinar around it. McMahon reports that registration for the first webinar exceeded expectations, attracting 200 registrants.

More Than Just a "One & Done"

McMahon continues that she sees SimplyDIRECT as an integral player in helping Infor build marketing programs. "Besides getting a solid lead, the information SimplyDIRECT delivers lets us extract a lot of value from the campaign, giving us content we can use to generate additional opportunities."

Infor counts on SimplyDIRECT because... "The SimplyDIRECT campaign has legs. Infor can publish the Pulse Report on our website as valuable market intelligence and continue to use the content to generate more opportunities via blog posts, e-mails, and press releases. With SimplyDIRECT's targeted list, and the research content, we can keep the sales leads warm and the process alive."

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