# Cognism

5 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING LEAD GENERATION IN RECRUITMENT

Contents

Introduction: The state of lead generation in recruitment

Last year, **Agency Central** commissioned a report into how recruitment agencies find their clients. This is what their survey uncovered:

How recruitment agencies find clients

Content marketing **6%**

Networking **17%**

Cold calling **50%**

Social media **27%**
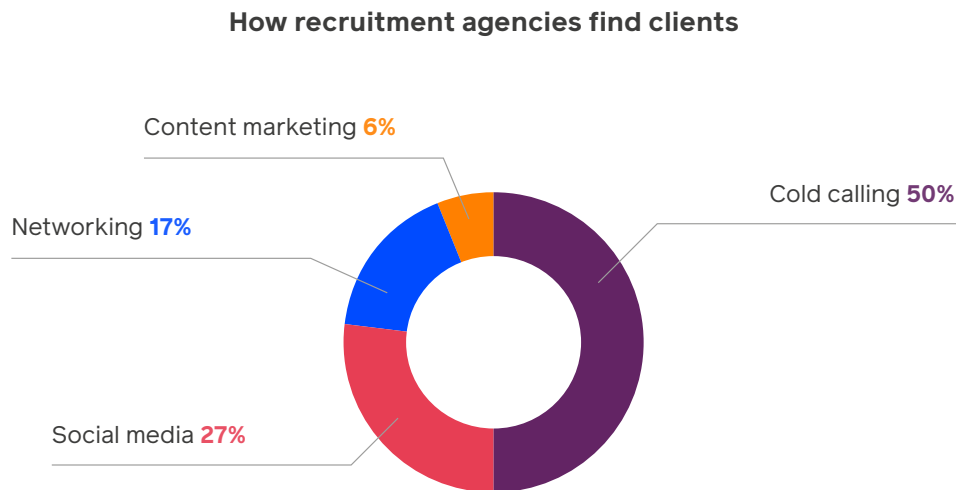
Exactly half of the recruitment agencies surveyed stated that cold calling was their preferred method for finding new business. In contrast, only 6% of the agencies championed content marketing as a lead generation strategy.

What's wrong with this picture?

Cold calling is a notoriously inefficient means of securing business; HubSpot estimates that only **1% of cold calls** actually result in a meeting and as an activity, costs at least 60% more per lead than other methods. Meanwhile, content marketing, which is a relatively recent branch of digital marketing, costs **62% less than traditional marketing** and generates three times as many leads.

Why are recruitment agencies shunning low-cost, high-value lead generation techniques in favour of their high-cost, low-value counterparts?

For many industries, lead generation has been transformed in recent years. Nowadays, businesses can source new customers through a combination of automation, personalisation and data-driven decision-making. Modern prospecting tools can empower sales and marketing teams to find whole markets of customers, their company and contact details, at the simple click of a button. Why aren't recruitment agencies taking advantage of these innovations?

Your guide to improving lead generation in recruitment

Does the scene we've painted above sound like lead generation at your agency? Are you struggling to bring in high-quality leads that convert quickly? Is your cold calling strategy not producing the ROI that you expect?

If so, you've come to the right place! We've identified 5 strategies that will help you improve your lead generation process and win new business in 2020. This is your roadmap to effective recruitment lead generation, presented by Cognism, the **B2B prospecting** experts who grew their ARR by 180% in 2019.

5 strategies for improving lead generation in recruitment

1. Ideal Customer Profile

If you don't know who your ideal customer is, how can you sell or market your recruitment services to them? Forming a complete portrait of your ideal customer is essential to making lead generation more targeted and ultimately, more successful.

What is an ideal customer?

An ideal customer isn't the dream customer that you think you want; it's the perfect customer that you have now. It's the customer who's deriving the greatest value from your recruitment services.

How do I discover who my ideal customer is?

What you need to do is build up your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP). Again, this isn't a wishlist of things that you want your perfect customer to adhere to; your ICP must be based on actual data that your company has captured. Facts, not suppositions!

How do I create my Ideal Customer Profile?

These are the steps you need to take to define your ICP:

1. Identify your super-users

10 customers who love your recruitment service and get more value from it than the average customer.

2. Interview your super-users

Find out about their experiences with your service. Ask them about their buying process, how they found you and why they bought from you.

3. Analyse the data
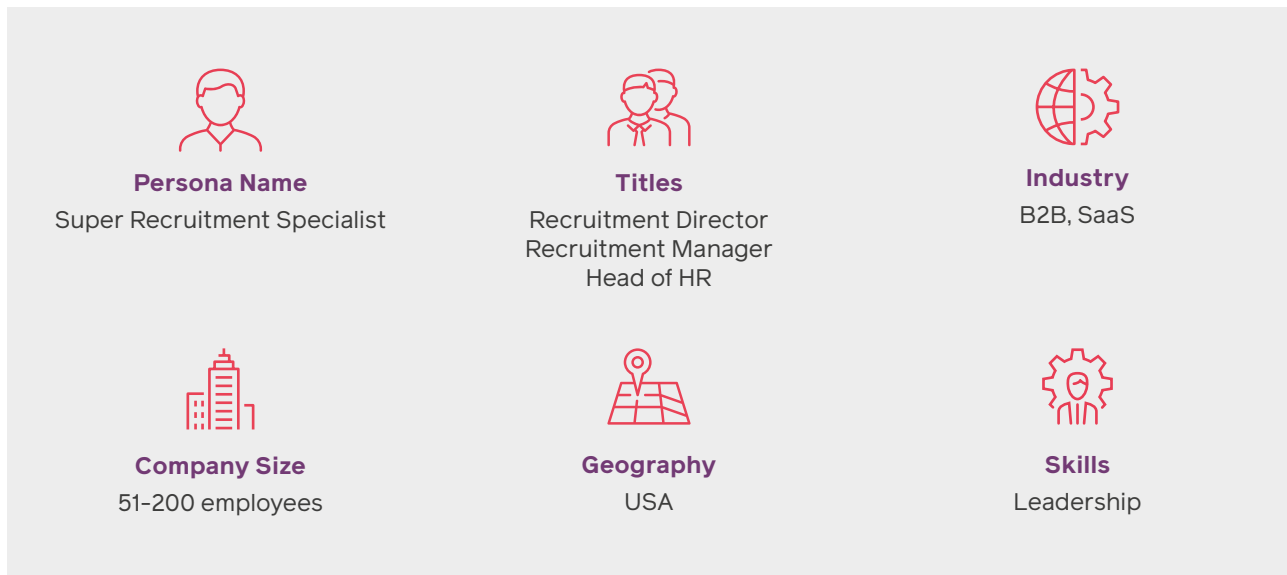
When the interviews are complete, gather all the data you've acquired. Study the profiles of your super-users. What connects them?

4. Create your ICP template

Take the insights from Step 3 and put them all together in a template.

Here is an example ICP template for recruitment:

Persona Name
Super Recruitment Specialist

Titles
Recruitment Director
Recruitment Manager
Head of HR

Industry
B2B, SaaS

Company Size
51-200 employees

Geography
USA

Skills
Leadership

Some things to consider when building your recruitment ICP:

- What are your super-users' pain points? How has your company helped to alleviate them?
- Who's posting the jobs that you specialise in?
- Do any of your super-users have a high turnover of staff?
- Do any of your super-users have a longer than usual job posting age?

What can I do with my recruitment ICP?

In short - everything! Having a well-defined ICP will make our other 4 strategies easier and more successful. It's the bedrock for hyper-targeted outbound sales and inbound marketing. When you know who your ideal customer is, where they work and what industry they're in, you'll be able to find others just like them.

2. Account-based marketing

Account-based marketing (ABM) is a concept that has taken the marketing world by storm. It's predominantly being deployed by B2B and software-as-a-service (SaaS) companies to drum up awareness of their products. It's also a great choice for recruitment agencies who want to market themselves more effectively.

We've put together a crash-course for ABM in recruitment. First up - some important questions!

What is ABM?

ABM is a marketing strategy that focuses on a defined set of key companies and personalises campaigns to decision-makers within those organisations.

Who is ABM for?

Account-based marketing will work for any organisation targeting key accounts. Contrary to popular belief, it doesn't require bottomless budgets or sophisticated tech stacks for it to be successful.
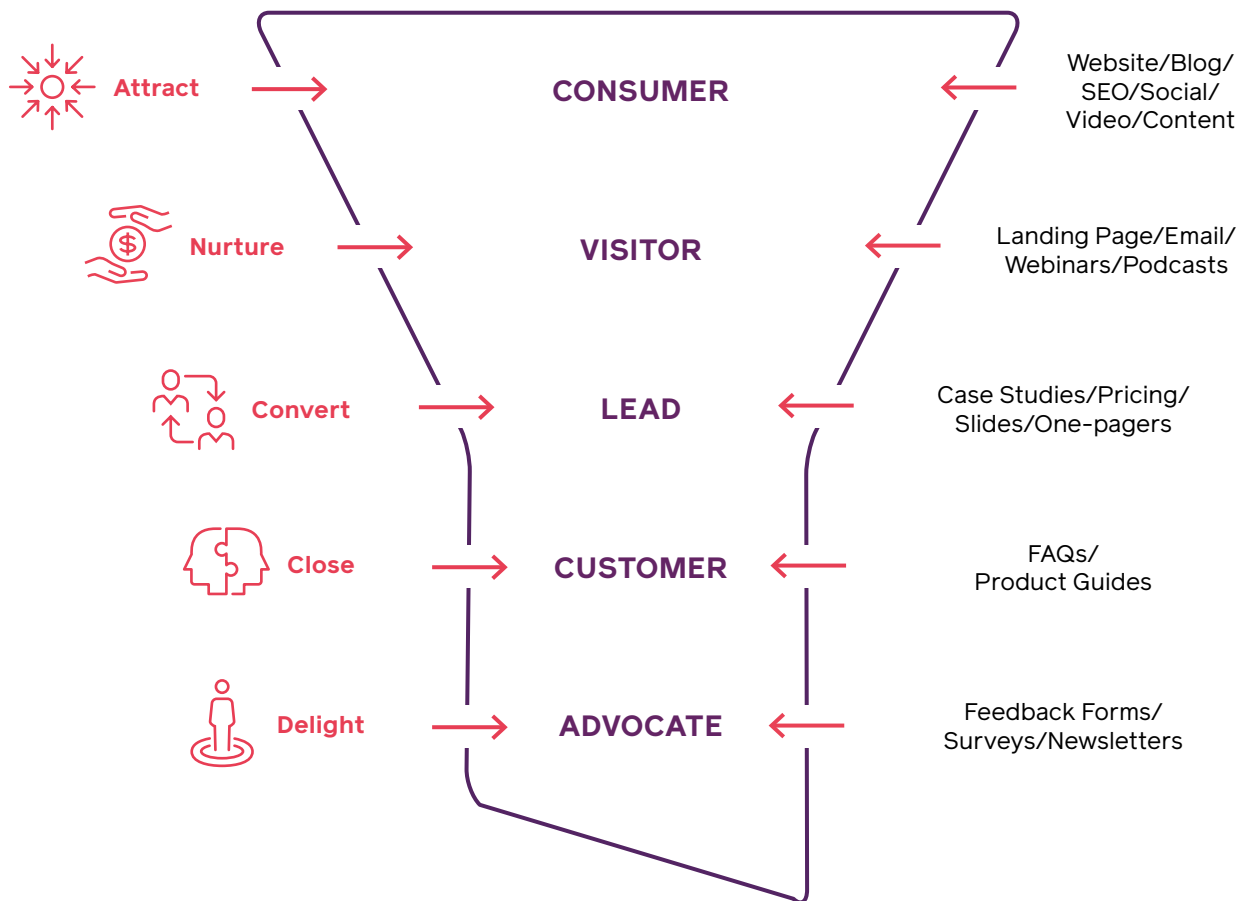
Does ABM really work?

Several recent studies have highlighted the advantages of ABM:

- A **study by Demandbase** found that 19% of companies using ABM for at least a year reported more than 30% growth in revenue.
- A **SiriusDecisions survey** found that 91% of marketers using ABM see a larger deal size, with 25% seeing their deal sizes grow by more than 50%.
- **ITSMA** found that companies using ABM saw an 84% rise in reputation score and a 74% improvement in customer relationships.

How do I get started with ABM?

This is what the traditional recruitment marketing funnel looks like:

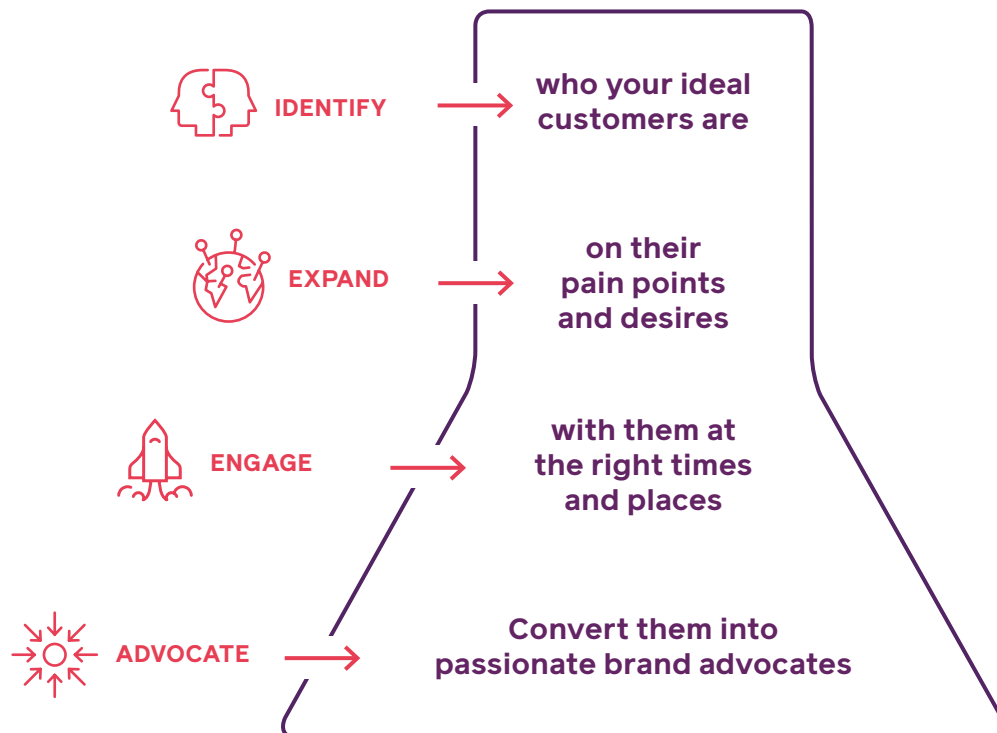| Attract	CONSUMER	Website/Blog/ SEO/Social/ Video/Content
Nurture	VISITOR	Landing Page/Email/ Webinars/Podcasts
Convert	LEAD	Case Studies/Pricing/ Slides/One-pagers
Close	CUSTOMER	FAQs/ Product Guides
Delight	ADVOCATE	Feedback Forms/ Surveys/Newsletters

The first stage is Attract, which is where anonymous consumers first engage with your recruitment firm. Then, if they continue to engage, they pass through the funnel until they become a marketing-qualified lead (MQL), a customer and finally an advocate for your business.

There are 4 reasons why this approach doesn't work:

- **It's wasteful** - it can take you a lot of time and resources to sort the potentially high-quality leads from prospects who aren't interested in your recruitment service.

- **It's arbitrary** - the traditional recruitment marketing funnel is like fishing with a net; it scoops up both the people who are interested in your business and the people who aren't. Why would you want to attract people who will never buy from you?

- **It's impersonal** - this approach treats people as leads, not as human beings. It doesn't make you think in a customer-centric way, leading to poor customer experiences with your brand.

- **It's unprofitable** - the cumulative effect of all this waste will be clear in lower returns and lower revenue.

ABM flips the recruitment marketing funnel on its head. Like so:

IDENTIFY → who your ideal customers are

EXPAND → on their pain points and desires

ENGAGE → with them at the right times and places

ADVOCATE → Convert them into passionate brand advocates

With this model, it starts with you identifying your best-fit customers based on your ICP (see Section 1). Then, you can tailor all of your content and communications to exactly their needs.

It also means that you can share that content in a planned way, reaching your ideal customers at the most optimal times in their buyer's journey. It keeps them engaged with your brand until they convert into a customer and then a passionate fan.

Here are 4 reasons why the ABM approach is best for recruitment marketing:

- **It's economical** - ABM focuses resources on your ideal customers, those target accounts who have a much higher chance of converting.

- **It's targeted** - unlike the traditional funnel, you're not "spraying and praying!" Instead of fishing with a net, you're fishing with a spear. ABM ensures you're not wasting time chasing the wrong accounts.

- **It's customer-centric** - ABM puts the customer at the top of the funnel, not the bottom. This means that all your recruitment marketing activity will be laser-focused on the customer and their needs, engaging and delighting them.

- **It's profitable** - ABM requires a change in thinking which has sales and marketing aligned and jointly owning revenue goals. The end result is a more efficient sales and marketing function - which in turn leads to better returns and higher revenue!

How can I make ABM work in my recruitment company?

These steps will help you get ABM up and running at your recruitment firm:

1. Run a pilot campaign	**2. Get buy-in from the C-suite**	**3. Align marketing and sales**	**4. Publish great content at every stage**
Select an account that matches your ICP. Target them with relevant content and track the results.	Take the results from the pilot campaign and show them to your leadership team. Emphasise the value that ABM can bring to your recruitment business.	Share revenue goals, incentives and rewards across sales and marketing. Get both teams thinking in terms of revenue, rather than leads.	Deliver original, high-quality content. Build an audience and establish your brand as an authority. Reach out to thought leaders in the recruiting space and ask them to contribute.

3. Warm calling

Let's go back to that survey by Agency Central. We know that recruitment agencies use cold calling as their main channel for finding new customers. But we also know that cold calling is an ineffective lead generation activity.

How can you improve cold calling at your agency? It's simple - by making it warm!

What is warm calling?

Warm calling is when you call a prospect who has had prior contact with your company. For example, connecting on social media, downloading a piece of content, opening a marketing email or meeting at a networking event.

Why is warm calling effective?

It's more effective than cold calling because it has that personalised element. The prospect is already aware of your company and what you do. Their previous engagement with your brand acts as an "icebreaker" for your follow-up warm call.

Do you have any warm calling tips?

Yes, we do! Here is Cognism's blueprint for warm calling success:

- **Target prospects that closely match your ICP** - doing this will increase the odds of the call going your way.
- **Research the prospect and their company before you call** - look at their LinkedIn profiles and company website. Is there any information or recent news there that you can use to build rapport?
- **Tweak your pitch for each prospect** - don't reel off the same pitch every time; keep your value proposition in mind but adapt it for each new prospect you call. They will all have slightly different pain points and business goals - their prior contact with your brand will give you a steer as to what they are.
- **Go multi-channel before and after the call** - connect with the prospect on LinkedIn and send them a connection note. Follow-up with them using email, social media and video. A/B test your messaging and see what resonates.

4. Personalised emails

Do you find that you're not getting the engagement you expected from your email marketing campaigns? Prospects aren't responding, clients aren't opening your emails? Perhaps you need to start considering personalisation!

What is email personalisation?

This is when contact data (e.g.: first name, company name) is used within email content to make the email feel tailor-made for the recipient.

What are the benefits of personalised emails?

Studies have shown that personalised emails can make a big difference to an email marketing campaign.

- Emails with personalised subject lines are **26% more likely to be opened** than non-personalised emails.
- Personalised emails have **25% higher open rates and 51% higher click rates**.
- Personalised email marketing generates a **median ROI of 122%**.

How do I personalise my emails?

You either do it yourself, which can be very time-consuming, or you can use technology to help you.
Many email automation tools now exist which can send personalised emails at scale to your ideal customers.
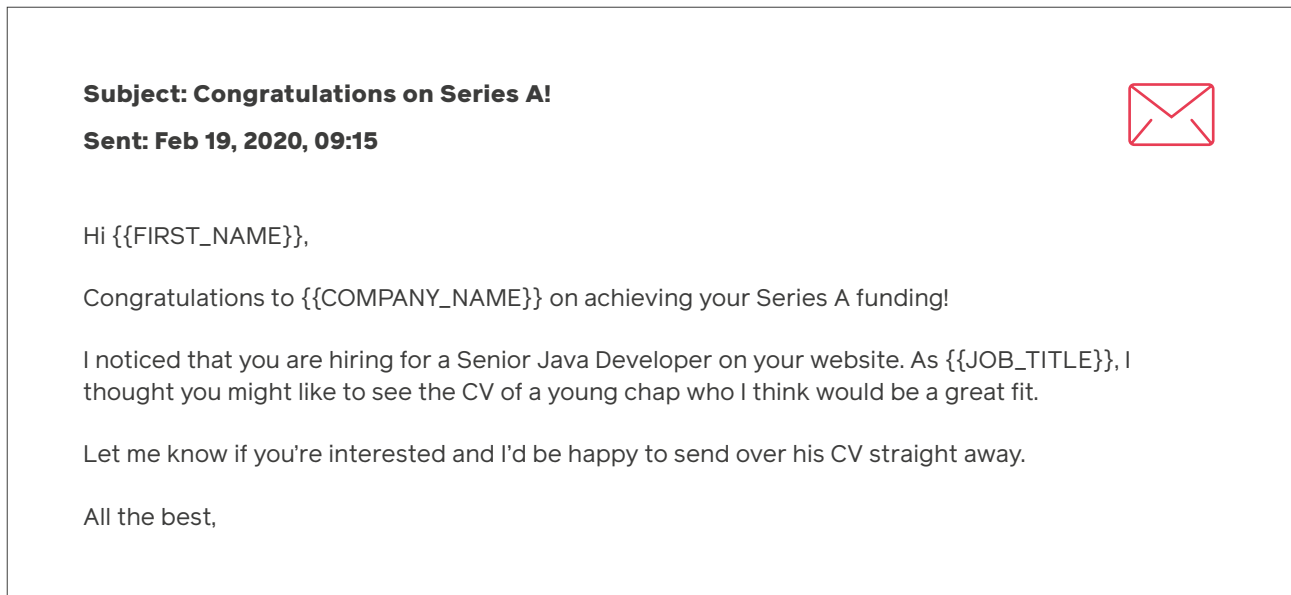**Cognism Prospector** is one such tool.

Do you have an example of a personalised email for recruitment?

Here is a real-life example from one of Cognism's recruitment agency customers. Their ICP were B2B startups that had...

- Recently listed job ads for Java (their specialism).
- Recently secured a Series A funding round.
- 50-100 employees.

This is the personalised email they sent to the relevant prospects:

Subject: Congratulations on Series A!

Sent: Feb 19, 2020, 09:15

Hi {{FIRST_NAME}},

Congratulations to {{COMPANY_NAME}} on achieving your Series A funding!

I noticed that you are hiring for a Senior Java Developer on your website. As {{JOB_TITLE}}, I thought you might like to see the CV of a young chap who I think would be a great fit.

Let me know if you're interested and I'd be happy to send over his CV straight away.

All the best,

Personalisation made an enormous impact to the success of this recruitment email. Our client's expectations were exceeded:

- **Read rate:** 35.36%
- **Response rate:** 5.54%
- **Click-through rate:** 3.29%

Our advice is to make personalisation central to your prospecting emails. Track engagement rates and test different messaging.

5. Event-based triggers

Just as important as warming up your cold calls and personalising your emails is knowing exactly when to pick up the phone or hit send. If you aren't engaging with your prospects at the most optimal times, then you'll be losing out on the best sales opportunities.

Unsure about what event-based triggers are and how you can use them in recruitment? Read on for our quick guide!

What are event-based triggers?

Event-based triggers (also known as sales triggers) are any event or occurrence that creates an opening for a sale.

How do event-based triggers work?

Some examples of event-based triggers in recruitment include:

- ☑ When a manager is promoted to a Head of Department role.
- ☑ When an employee leaves one company and joins another.
- ☑ When a business relocates to a new office in a new city.

☑ When an organisation receives funding from investors (as used by our recruitment agency client in Section 4).

☑ When a company has kickstarted a recruitment drive for new roles or functions.

As you can see, they're any event that prompts you into starting a conversation and pitching your services.

How can I take advantage of event-based triggers?

There are 2 routes to using event-based triggers.

The first is to track them manually. Follow your target accounts on LinkedIn, set up news or Google alerts and strike when something expedient happens. We don't recommend this tactic, as a rule - it's too imprecise and can take a lot of time out of your day.

The second route is to let technology do the hard work for you. Sales acceleration tools have event-based triggers built in; again, Cognism Prospector fits the bill here. When using Prospector, you can create your own ICP and find other businesspeople who match your chosen criteria. Our proprietary technology also scans for recent events, including job join, job leave, location move and company funding.

Having intelligence like this at your fingertips means that your outbound activities (including warm calling and email marketing) will be even more targeted. It increases the likelihood of your outreach cutting through the noise and bringing new prospects onboard.

A new era for recruitment

We hope that our guide has shown you how you can improve lead generation at your company. Use a combination of all 5 strategies to reach out to your ideal recruitment prospects at the right times, and with the right messages.

Our final piece of advice is to measure the results of everything you do. Select the metrics that matter to you and track them weekly, not monthly. That way, you can quickly make adjustments and experiment with different approaches. If something works well, do more of it! If something isn't working, don't be afraid to drop it. Let the data drive your business decision-making.

Recruitment is entering a new era. Don't get left behind.

Contact Cognism today

Cognism is the perfect choice for recruiters who want to work smarter and sell faster. Use our all-in-one prospecting solution to make your **B2B lead generation** efforts easier and more effective.

Explore a globally compliant database containing 400 million B2B profiles and 10 million companies. Find your ideal customers and reach out to them at the click of a button.

Many recruitment agencies around the world are seeing amazing results from working with Cognism. Here are two of our notable customer success stories:

- A leading **inside sales recruitment firm in the USA** reduced their prospecting time by 67% and signed their largest-ever 6-figure deal.

- The **UK's market-leading graduate recruiter** cut their prospecting time in half and doubled their number of meetings booked per week.

Would you like to see our pioneering prospecting technology in action? Simply click the link below to book in your free demo!

Request your demo now

Cognism