**Understanding the Lifecycle of a Lead**

When you talk about getting new customers to your website or business, you will often focus on bringing in ‘leads’. A lead is of course any potential customer who meets the right criteria and thereby can be considered the kind of person that you are going to be marketing too.

But not all leads are made equal and some leads are certainly better than others. The aim of your business then is not only to bring in leads but to bring in the right *kinds* of leads and also to convert leads from one kind to another. Let’s take a look at what the different types of lead are and what it means for your business.

**Cold Lead**

A cold lead is the most basic type of lead. This is someone who you have established contact with and who fits within your precise target demographic. In other words, they are the right age, sex, location and income and you have the means to reach out to them.

But they are still ‘cold’ leads because they’ve shown no interest in your brand or your products and they have had no willing contact with you prior to this first interaction.

**Warm Lead**

The next stage for your leads is to become ‘warm’ leads. A warm lead is a lead that you have now had an interaction with and that has shown some kind of interest in your brand. They aren’t paying customers yet but they have demonstrated interest in you and that makes them much more likely to become a customer in future.

To become a warm lead, someone might have liked your page on Facebook, they might have signed up to your mailing list or they might have emails you to ask about your business.

**Qualified Lead**

A qualified lead is the best type of lead. This is someone who has not only shown an interest in your business but has actually shown an interest in your products or a specific item. That means they are very likely to want to buy from you with the right push and they are probably ‘ready’ to buy as well. To become a qualified lead, your lead might have asked for information about a specific product, they might have pre-ordered or they might have lingered on your store page.

The key is to only try to sell to qualified leads. Find cold leads and then bring them up to the point where they are committed to your brand and ready to buy!