How Much Do Solar Leads Cost In 2026?

Description

The Leads Ware House

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This article provides insights on the costs of different types of solar leads and what is driving up lead costs in todayâ??s market. It also shares how solar installers can lower their solar lead costs while still effectively growing their businesses

In the past year, the cost of solar sales leads has risen, particularly for real-time solar leads. Many installers are paying more but closing less, leaving some to question if they should keep buying leads or change up their strategies. Rest assured, solar leads still work. But installers must understand how costs differ by lead type to optimally spend their marketing dollars.

How much do solar leads cost?

Solar leads typically cost between $0.10 and $400 depending on the lead type, intent level, and age. Lower-cost aged leads offer volume for scaling, while higher-cost inbound calls and real-time leads tend to deliver stronger conversion rates.

There are many different types of solar leads (see our previous solar blog), with pricing that reflects their source, degree of homeowner intent, and competition among installers. Installers can expect to pay within these ranges for each lead type:

- **Door-to-door solar leads ($200-$400+) â??**Some installers use a team of field salespeople to canvas targeted neighborhoods, generating homeowner interest in solar solutions. This gives installers exclusive leads and full control over their sales pitch, but it comes with high labor costs and challenges in managing and scaling leads. The average cost is $200 to $400 or more per appointment. While initially a popular option with installers, many companies are moving away from this model due to cost and customer reticence to answer their doors.
- **Inbound solar calls ($100-$300+) â??** Installers may choose to buy inbound calls placed by interested homeowners. These calls immediately connect installers with the highest intent

consumers, but they can be very expensive and limited in volume. Competitive bidding among installers can also make these leads less desirable. At an average price of $100 to $300 or more, inbound calls can work well if an installer has strong closers and a massive target geography. The tough part is most solar installerâ??s target markets look like swiss cheese, as they attempt to target geographies with specific utility companies.

- **Real-time solar leads ($40-$120) â??**Many installers purchase real-time leads to gain immediate access to homeowners with an expressed interest in solar solutions. Real-time solar leads are fresh inquiries and, if contacted immediately, are easier to connect with. They can be expensive and are often shared among other installers, driving up competition. At an average price between $40 and $120 per lead, costs can quickly get out of control when you factor in close rates of 3% to 10% on real-time solar leads.
- **Aged sales leads ($0.10-$10+) â??**More installers are beginning to see the value of aged solar leads. These are real-time leads that have aged. And, given the lengthy decision-making cycle of most homeowners, there are a lot of closes left in the data. At an average price from pennies to $10 per lead, these are the lowest priced solar lead. They are highly scalable and experience less competition from other installers as many sales teams tend to give up on leads too early. While the intent of these homeowners is not as clear, aged leads are a cost-effective lead for installers who follow a strong cadence to closing solar deals.

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Why solar lead costs have increased

The price of solar leads did not rise by chance. Lead costs have increased due to changes in the marketplace, including:

- More advertisers are competing for the same homeowners.
- The cost of ads on Google and Facebook has risen.
- Financing conditions have become tighter with higher interest rates.
- Buyers have grown more cautious because solar incentives have gone away and some unscrupulous installers have put in bad installations.

All of these changes have pushed the price of real-time solar leads higher. To stay profitable, many solar installers are now buying aged solar leads to offset the rising costs.

Why more installers are buying aged leads

Strategic-minded installers do not rely on one lead source. They buy a mix of lead types, utilizing each for their unique benefits. While real-time solar leads will bring immediate discussions with high intent homeowners, the volume of these leads can sometimes fall short of an installerâ??s needs. The large volume of available aged solar leads can quickly fill in the gaps and with these advantages:

- **Lower cost per lead â??** If you buy aged leads at $1.50 per lead, you can work more volume. For example, with a $1,000 budget, an installer could purchase 10 real-time leads priced at $100 per lead. This same budget would cover 667 aged leads at $1.50 each. Even with lower conversion rates, volume often wins. Solar sales is a numbers game.
- **Better ROI potential â??**Aged solar leads give installers more opportunities to connect with homeowners. While the effectiveness of real-time solar leads is highly dependent on responding within an 8-second window, aged solar leads can and should be called multiple times. This allows

installers to test and improve their scripting. And with most homeowners being sold between touch 5 and 12 (request The Leads Warehouseâ??s matrix of the number of calls vs. connections vs. contacts to closes), aged leads are perfect for reaching homeowners at the right moment. This improves ROI over time.
- **Easier to scale â??** Scaling with real-time leads can quickly get expensive. Aged sales leads allow installers to increase lead volume without breaking their budget.

So, with all these advantages, should installers only focus on leads with the lowest cost per lead? Many installers do, but that is a mistake. Price per lead is only one aspect to consider. Even more important is the total cost per sale. Letâ??s dive a little deeper.

Lead cost vs. cost per acquisition

Cost per acquisition (CPA) considers sales conversions in addition to the cost of leads. It is the total lead spend divided by the number of closed deals. Even slightly more expensive leads can end up having a lower CPA at times. For example, consider an installer with a $2,000 budget and these options:

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- **Real-time leads â??** At $100 per lead, this installer could purchase 20 real-time leads. Assuming the installer converts one of these 20 leads to a customer, their CPA would be $2,000/1, or $2,000. Adding an additional deal from these leads, would bring the CPA down to $1,000 ($2,000/2).
- **Aged solar leads â??** The same math holds when buying 1,334 aged leads at $1.50 per lead with a $2,000 budget. Again, converting just one of the 1,334 leads would lead to a $2,000 CPA. Converting two leads would result in a $1,000 CPA. But the game changer in comparing CPAs is that aged solar leads can be worked extensively over time, leading to more and more conversions within the same 1,334 leads. Even converting an additional two leads brings the long-term CPA for these aged leads down to $500 ($2,000/4). For this to back out though, installers will need to commit to rigorously working the leads over time.

How installers can lower their solar lead costs

With lead prices unlikely to come down in 2026, most of our solar clients are using a mix of strategies to lower their solar lead costs, including:

1. **Combining lead types â??** Installers are realizing the benefits of using two or more types of solar leads. Many are buying real-time leads to bring timely discussions with interested homeowners, while using lower cost aged leads to give them volume to work over time.
2. **Improve follow-up â??** Most installers do not follow up on their leads to the extent needed. Our best practices research suggests installers should call leads six to ten times, as 90% of consumers can be reached with over six calls. They should follow up on the leads over several days, incorporating texts and emails. With a deeper cadence, installers can lower their CPA.
3. **Track your data â??** Successful installers know their numbers. They track costs per lead, contact rates, and close rates. This allows them to adjust their strategy to ensure the greatest effectiveness and cost efficiency.
4. **Work with better data sources and leads providers â??** Highly effective installers recognize the importance of lead quality, especially when buying aged solar leads. They look for first-party

data (shared directly from the source), clean records (void of duplicates, ability to suppress new leads from those previously purchased), and fast delivery (within 24-48 hours). The choice of a leads provider can make a big difference in your sales success. Make sure you ask some key questions before aligning with a leads provider. Where does the data come from? Is it filtered in any way? Do they understand solar? How transparent are they about lead pricing?

Conclusion

Solar lead costs are rising, but that does not mean they have stopped working. It simply means installers need to be more strategic. The most successful companies are not relying on a single lead source; they are blending real-time and aged leads to balance cost, volume, and intent. By focusing on cost per acquisition instead of just cost per lead, installers can make smarter decisions that drive long-term profitability. Ultimately, those who commit to strong follow-up, track their data, and adapt their strategy will continue to growâ??even in a more competitive market. Are you ready to talk about how you can grow your solar sales?

If you are serious about scaling your solar installation business, the right mix of lead types is critical. Our team works with installers to build profitable lead strategies using the above lead types. Call **1-800-884-8371** or visit The Leads Warehouse to get started.

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