How To Close Solar Leads â?? In-Home vs. Phone Sales Conversion Strategy

Description

By James Schulze

This article discusses how solar installers can close leads under both in-home sales and phone conversion models. It also shares insights on what else installers can do to improve their close rates.

Closing solar leads is harder in 2026. Higher interest rates have made it tougher for homeowners to finance a solar solution. Homeowners are more cautious, asking more questions and taking longer to decide. Many get multiple quotes before moving forward, making for stiff competition among solar installers. Then there are all the regulatory changes, such as those in net metering and the â??One Big Beautiful Billâ?• Act (OBBA) solar tax incentives. This means a solar installerâ??s closing strategy is more important than ever.

The two main sales strategies for closing deals

There are two primary sales strategies that solar installers use to close deals: in-home sales and call-based sales (read our previous blog, â??Best Solar Lead Generation Strategies For Installers â?? In-Home vs. Call-Based Modelsâ?•). Each of these models has its advantages and limitations. Letâ??s start with in-home sales.

How an in-home sales strategy works

Solar installers who choose to implement an in-home sales strategy will field salespeople to walk through high potential neighborhoods looking to speak with homeowners who are interested in a solar installation. This face-to-face sales approach has traditionally been used by solar installers with great success. Why? In-person interaction with a homeowner builds trust quickly. It is easier for the salesperson to explain fairly complex solar solutions to homeowners who have little knowledge of the systems. And, the close rates tend to be higher under this model.

While all of this makes the case for using an in-home sales strategy, there are some weaknesses. This strategy is very time consuming. The cost per sale is much higher than with phone sales (read our blog, How Much Do Solar Leads Cost In 2026?â?•). And, the daily capacity for sales is limited. You can only conduct so many appointments per day, and at current gas prices, driving is more expensive than ever. But, structured well, this approach can still be very effective in closing deals. Hereâ??s how.

How to close solar leads with an in-home sales strategy

Seamless execution is critical to optimizing sales resources, especially when implementing a higher-cost approach. Key steps in closing solar deals through an in-home sales strategy include:

1. **Pre-qualifying the homeowner before the appointment** â?? Do not waste precious sales time on unqualified leads. Prior to the appointment, use a call to confirm the homeownerâ??s interest level, home ownership, and if the key decision makers will be available during the appointment.
2. **Setting a strong appointment** â?? Too often salespeople will settle for an appointment that is â??iffyâ?• with the hopes that they can still turn the appointment into a close. But the truth is, strong appointments lead to much higher close rates. A strong appointment is one where the salesperson has confirmed the date and time, who will be present, and specific expectations for the appointment. Successful closers will use technologies like calendar appointments and SMS reminders with proper consent.
3. **Building trust early** â?? Investment in a solar installation is a sizable purchase for homeowners, making this step particularly important. Homeowners will evaluate how trustworthy solar salespeople are based on verbal and non-verbal clues. Top-performing solar salespeople will focus on professionalism, message clarity, and listening. Do not rush into a sales pitch.
4. **Focusing on savings and value** â?? It is easy for homeowners to quickly be overwhelmed if a salesperson dives right into the technical complexities of solar installations. What homeowners really care about is lower utility bills, long-term savings, and incentives. Salespeople should start here and keep it simple and clear. There is a place for delving into the product details, but salespeople should simplify their explanations.
5. **Asking for the close** â?? Surprisingly, many salespeople fail in this step. They either forget to ask, or they ask too softly. Strong closers will just be direct and ask, â??Does this make sense for you to move forward?â?•

How a call-based sales strategy works

The other approach, a call-based sales strategy, involves closing solar deals remotely. Beyond phone calls, this approach can also include virtual consultations and screen-sharing presentations. This model has become more popular in recent years. It is a lower-cost approach. The sales process can be faster, given that most of these homeowners at some point in the past year or so have expressed an interest in solar. They have opted in to learning more. A call-based approach also makes it easier for solar installers to reach a larger volume of prospects and ultimately scale their business.

This approach does have some weaknesses. Salespeople must work harder to build trust over the phone where the homeowner cannot read non-verbal clues. Solar installers will need to develop strong scripting. They must also pay close attention to TCPA regulations that govern how they may contact homeowners with telemarketing calls and texting to avoid having their outreaches labeled â??spam likelyâ?• (read our blog, â??Why Is It So Hard To Connect With Prospects Today?â?•). And, close rates can be lower in some cases, with salespeople not having the advantage of being physically in front of a homeowner. But with a skilled sales team working a strong script, this model can be highly effective in closing deals.

How to close solar leads with a call-based sales strategy

When using a call-based sales approach, solar installers should have a defined sales process, including these key steps:

1. **Calling the lead quickly** â?? A solar installerâ??s speed in calling each lead improves the chances of connecting with the homeowner. Speed-to-lead is even important with aged solar leads. Although they may have expressed interest some time ago, being quick to reach out to them gives you a competitive advantage.
2. **Using a strong opening** â?? Too often salespeople get into the details of how a homeowner became a lead rather than opening with a strong statement of the value they could bring. Salespeople should not open with, â??You filled out a form months ago.â?• Instead they should say, â??Hi, weâ??re helping homeowners reduce their power bills. Are you still open to that?â?•
3. **Building rapport quickly** â?? Without the benefit of being physically in front of the consumer, remote salespeople must rely only on their script to build a connection with a homeowner. Ask simple questions to engage the homeowner, such as â??What is your current bill?â?• and â??Have you looked into solar before?â?• And then listen.
4. **Simplifying the offer** â?? Do homeowners want to know what they are buying? Yes. But do they need to know the full details of the solar solution? Not really. Do not overwhelm the homeowner. Instead focus on key points of value to them, like monthly savings, easy financing, and clear next steps.
5. **Creating urgency** â?? It can be a challenge to create a sense of urgency in homeowners. Telemarketing sales teams need to help homeowners take action. Most successful closers nudge homeowners into action by sharing key facts, such as incentives that may be available for a limited time, or how utility costs have been rising. High pressure sales tactics rarely work.
6. **Asking for the close** â?? Be direct and confident in asking, â??If everything looks good, are you ready to move forward?â?•

Which sales strategy should solar installers choose?

Both models work, but they perform differently. An in-home sales approach has a higher close rate, but it is higher cost and the process is slower. The call-based sales approach can handle a higher lead volume and close deals faster and at a lower cost. As shown above, each approach has their strengths and weaknesses.

Top-performing solar companies are not necessarily choosing one or the other. They are combining both approaches, creating a hybrid strategy to benefit from each modelâ??s strengths. With a hybrid strategy, a solar installer typically:

- Uses the phone to qualify and build interest with homeowners
- Closes simple deals remotely
- Sends salespeople into the field to capture stronger in-home opportunities

What else can solar installers do to close more deals?

Beyond selecting the right sales approach, there are a few more things installers can do to increase the number of solar deals they close:

1. **Know the regulatory changes impacting solar** â?? Homeowners are looking to align with a reputable solar installer who has deep expertise not only in the complexities of an installation but also the continuous regulatory changes. Solar installers will want to look for local incentives to offset the federal incentives that were affected by the OBBA. They will want to understand local net metering changes. And, they will want to sell battery back ups and be able to explain â??grid independenceâ?• to homeowners. This will go a long way in building credibility with buyers and convincing them to say â??yesâ?• to a solar installation.
2. **Buy aged solar leads** â?? Some homeowners make â??real-timeâ?• decisions on solar, but most of them think about it for a while. After all, it is a significant investment. That is why aged solar leads can be so valuable to solar installers. Homeowners who have been considering solar for some time may finally be ready to move forward. There is a substantial volume of solar aged leads available at a significantly lower price than real-time leads. It gives an installer more chances to close. For example, consider an installer with a leads budget of $1,000. They can buy 10 real-time leads at $100 per lead, or 667 aged leads at $1.50 per lead. Solar sales can be a numbers game. More conversations typically means more deals.
3. **Know what to look for in lead quality** â?? Closing begins with good data. Before installers invest in solar aged leads, they will want to make sure they are getting high-quality leads. What does that mean? It means that the leads come from *real* sources. The data are clean and accurate. And, delivery is fast. Better leads make closing easier.
4. **Increase your follow-up and strengthen your scripting** â?? Although solar installers understand the sales cycle for solar installations can be quite long, surprisingly many of them quit on a lead too early. The installers who close the most deals have a strong cadence built into their sales process, all supported by their CRM. They have effective scripting designed around each point in the cadence, often first tested on aged leads. They also recognize the value of using a mix of phone, text, and email messages, as homeowners respond differently to each of these communication channels.

Conclusion

Closing solar leads is more challenging today, but solar installers can dramatically improve their chances with the right closing strategy. Whether they chose to close in-home or over the phone, they will need to follow a structured process. Keeping up to date with regulatory changes, using high-quality aged leads, increasing follow-up, and strengthening scripting are essential to achieving higher close rates. Are you ready to talk about how you can close more solar deals?

About the author

James Schulze is the President and CEO of The Leads Warehouse, a marketing data company with over 20 years of experience in bringing lead generation solutions to companies selling into the home, automotive, financial, insurance, health and life, and legal sectors. He works directly with clients to optimize conversion strategies and ROI across multiple verticals.

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If you are serious about improving your solar leads strategy, a strong mix of leads is important. Our team works with solar installers to maximize their ROI on solar sales leads. Call **1-800-884-8371** or visit The Leads Warehouse to get started.

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