



What Are Solar Leads? Types, Costs, And How Installers Use Them

Description

By James Schulze

This article helps solar installers understand the types and costs of solar leads. It also discusses how solar installers can best use solar sales leads to grow their pipeline.

Last month we discussed some of the promising trends and opportunities that have recently emerged in the U.S. solar industry (read our previous [solar blog](#)). With so much to look forward to, solar installers are seeking actionable ways to tap into these opportunities. And, while many have developed their own leads, they would also like to learn more about sales leads available in the marketplace. It's helpful to start with the most basic question, what is a solar lead?

What is a solar lead?

A solar lead is a homeowner who has already shown interest in solar energy solutions for their home. They may have expressed interest by:

- Filling out a form online
- Calling a phone number
- Clicking on an ad
- Requesting a quote

These homeowners have all **opted in** to learn more about solar. They have provided their contact information and some details about their utility bills, utility provider, and estimated roof shade. The intent is there. That's what makes them so valuable. But are all types of solar leads equally valuable?

What are the different types of solar leads?

There are a few different types of solar sales leads and each can be highly valuable if used correctly. The types of leads include:

- **Real-time leads** Real-time solar leads are homeowners who have asked to speak with a solar installer immediately. They signal their intent through solar-related Google Ads, Facebook Ads, or landing pages.
Strengths: These homeowners have high intent and are relatively easy to contact. Solar installers should call these homeowners within 8 seconds of receiving the lead. What are the chances that this homeowner will still be on their phone or computer 8 seconds after filling out a form? Nearly 100%. What are the chances one hour later? Less so.
Weaknesses: Real-time solar leads can be expensive, and they are often shared with multiple installers, creating competition.
- **Inbound call leads** These leads are homeowners who have viewed a solar-related creative and have placed a call to speak directly with a solar installer.
Strengths: These homeowners have very high intent and initiate immediate conversations with installers.
Weaknesses: On the downside, inbound solar calls are costly and highly competitive. There is also significantly lower volume.
- **Aged solar leads** Aged solar leads are similar to real-time leads, just older. They are homeowners who in the past have opted in to learn more about solar installations. Many have not yet contracted for a solar project.
Strengths: Aged solar leads are the least expensive type of solar lead. Substantial volume is available. There tends to be less competition with aged leads, as many installer sales teams stop pursuing leads after two outreaches. Aged solar leads also offer additional chances to close, as our research shows that 30% to 40% of consumers opt in a second time for more information.
Weaknesses: The intent of these homeowners is less clear, as they take longer to decide. Installers must be fully committed to conducting strong follow-up to close deals.

The lead type that is right for your organization will depend on several factors, including price. So, how much do each of these lead types typically cost?

How much do solar leads cost?

Several factors may affect the cost of each lead, including lead age, quality, competition, and source data. These are some typical costs that installers can expect to pay per lead:

- **Real-time solar leads:** These leads typically cost between **\$40 and \$120** per lead, depending on the selected geography. The pricing is typically lower when larger geographies are targeted, as it is relatively easier to find a lead in a larger market area.
- **Inbound solar call leads:** The cost of an inbound solar call typically ranges from **\$100 to \$300** or more.
- **Aged solar leads:** Aged solar leads typically cost between **\$0.15 to \$7.50** per lead, depending on the age of the lead. Older leads are priced lower.

Solar installers can also expect to pay more for **exclusive** leads (available only to them) than for **shared** leads (sold to multiple installers). Shared solar leads are often priced between \$20 and \$80, while exclusive solar leads cost between \$80 to \$200 or more per lead.

As tempting as it might be to go with the lowest priced lead, forward-thinking installers will also consider the cost per acquisition (CPA) in making decisions about which lead type to purchase. CPA is the total lead spend divided by the number of closed deals. In some cases, moderately priced leads (with higher intent) might have higher conversion rates than lower priced leads, leading to lower total cost to acquire customers.

How the best installers use solar leads

Buying leads only makes sense if your sales team can use them effectively and convert them into customers. Our most successful solar clients follow these proven tactics:

1. **Use a mix of leads** High performing installers do not rely on one lead type. In addition to their own lead generation, they will buy real-time leads to get immediate conversations and quickly set appointments. They will also consistently buy aged leads to gain more low-cost volume and more chances to close deals. The mix of leads works, because it allows installers to reach homeowners at various stages of decision making. The close rate for real-time solar leads is 3% to 10%, so installers are able to pick up these click-and-buy customers. Buying aged leads allows them to capture another segment of customers. Our solar clients have shared with us that it takes an average of nine to ten months from the time a lead is developed until a homeowner signs an agreement to get solar. Aged leads allow installers to build their pipeline and interact early and consistently with homeowners who have lengthier decision-making cycles.
2. **Call leads quickly** Call leads as soon as you receive them. For real-time leads, we've seen a significant drop in connection rates when sales teams do not call a lead within 8 seconds of receiving it. But even for aged leads, faster is better.
3. **Increase your follow-up** Most sales reps quit on a lead too early. Case in point, last week we sold several homeowner leads to an installer. A couple days later, he called to tell us the leads weren't working. He explained, "They're not converting. We called 10% once already." He called 10% of the list only once. After encouraging him to keep working the leads, he called us a few days later ecstatically reporting he had made four appointments already. This is all too common, a conversation with a different client every week. The best solar sales teams will call a lead multiple times. Our data shows 80% of deals close between touch 5 and 12 (Ask for [The Leads Warehouse's](#) matrix of the number of calls vs. connections vs. contacts to closes). It is also important to vary your outreaches, including texts and emails.
4. **Focus on value** Most homeowners do not possess deep knowledge of solar installations, but they do care about lower utility bills, energy savings, and incentives. The best installer sales teams are knowledgeable about rules, regulations, and incentives (e.g., net metering) in their geographic area and present this information in a simple, understandable way.
5. **Use a clear process** Successful installer sales teams have a system with the right scripting, cadence, and tech that effectively moves a lead through contact, qualification, and closing. And they follow it consistently.

Conclusion

Solar leads, when used correctly, are one of the most powerful tools for growing solar sales. By using the right mix of lead types, responding quickly, and committing to disciplined follow-up, solar installers can develop a strong, scalable pipeline. Are you ready to talk about how you can grow your solar sales

pipeline?

If you would like more information on how you can grow your solar sales, give The Leads Warehouse a call at **1-800-884-8371** or visit our website at <http://theleadswarehouse.com>.

Date Created

2026/04/26

Author

jimtlw-media

The Leads Ware House