DUPLICATE LEADS: UNREALIZED VALUE

OR WASTE OF TIME?

Velocify™

SALES OPTIMIZATION STUDY

BACKGROUND

For a sales team, receiving the same lead multiple times (or receiving leads that at least appear to have been previously received) is inevitable. However, many sales organizations aren't even aware when this happens, and those that are aware often look at a duplicate with little value. This could lead to several problems, including different reps working the same lead unknowingly, or organizations ignoring leads that they believe to be dupes.

The first step toward effectively managing duplicate leads is obviously identifying incoming leads as potential duplicates. Usually, this requires a duplicate management capability that should be built in to a sales organization's sales automation or CRM system. Ideally, that duplicate management feature allows each organization to set the sensitivity level and the rules for what should be flagged as a potential duplicate. Different pieces of information about a lead can be used to identify it as a potential duplicate, such as phone number, email address, name, company name, etc. The goal should be to effectively catch all duplicate leads entering the system, while minimizing false matches.

Nonetheless, the accurate detection of duplicates is only the beginning. When duplicates are identified, organizations need to determine the best actions to take on those duplicate leads. If two leads are identified as duplicates, should their records be merged? If there is conflicting data, which lead record should overwrite the other? Perhaps more importantly, what special actions should be taken on those leads? Does the fact that they've been flagged as duplicates mean they should be ignored, re-prioritized or re-distributed? In order to answer these questions, it is helpful to understand some general characteristics about duplicate leads. This study aims to provide valuable insight about duplicate leads that will likely change the way most organizations view and manage them.

Study Methodology

This study includes the analysis of data collected from a variety of Velocify customers who use duplicate management capabilities. Consequently, this data spans multiple industries.

In this study, approximately 100,000 leads that were flagged as potential duplicates were analyzed in order to compare their performance to the performance of millions of other leads managed using Velocify LeadManager™.

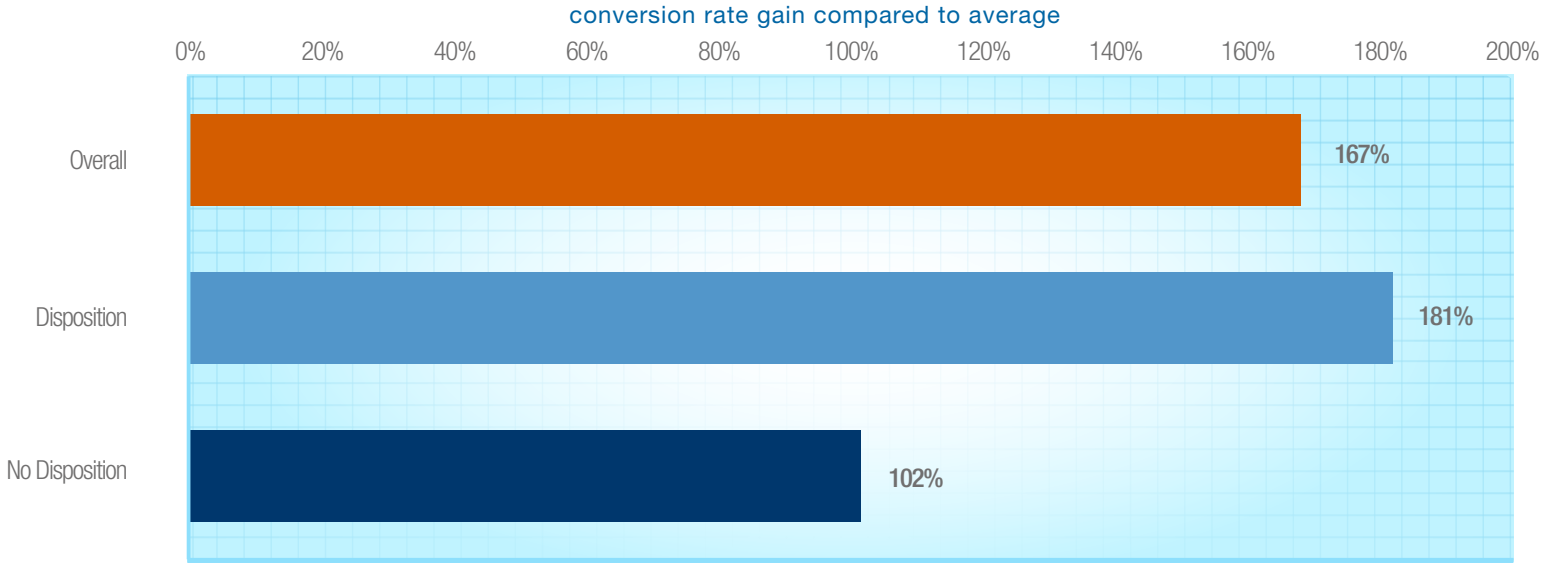
RESULTS

The Value of Duplicate Leads

One of the most important questions about duplicate leads is whether they should be ignored or de-prioritized, so that valuable resources aren't wasted on them, or whether they should be highly prioritized because of their higher value potential. The easiest and fastest way to answer that question is to compare the performance of leads flagged as duplicates to the performance of all leads. As you can see in Figure 1, our research found that **leads that are flagged as duplicates convert at a 167% higher than average rate,** regardless of how they are handled after they've been flagged.

Furthermore, our study found that dispositioned duplicate leads (acknowledged and somehow acted upon - re-distributed, re-prioritized, merged, etc.) convert at a significantly higher rate than those that are flagged by the system as duplicates but aren't dispositioned. This suggests there is an inherent value in duplicate leads because even when nothing is done with those that are identified as potential duplicates, they convert at twice the rate of all leads. Still, there is substantial value in investing the time to identify and evaluate potential duplicates and determining the way each duplicate lead should be dispositioned, resulting in a 181% conversion gain.

Figure 1: Relative Conversion Rate of Duplicate Leads

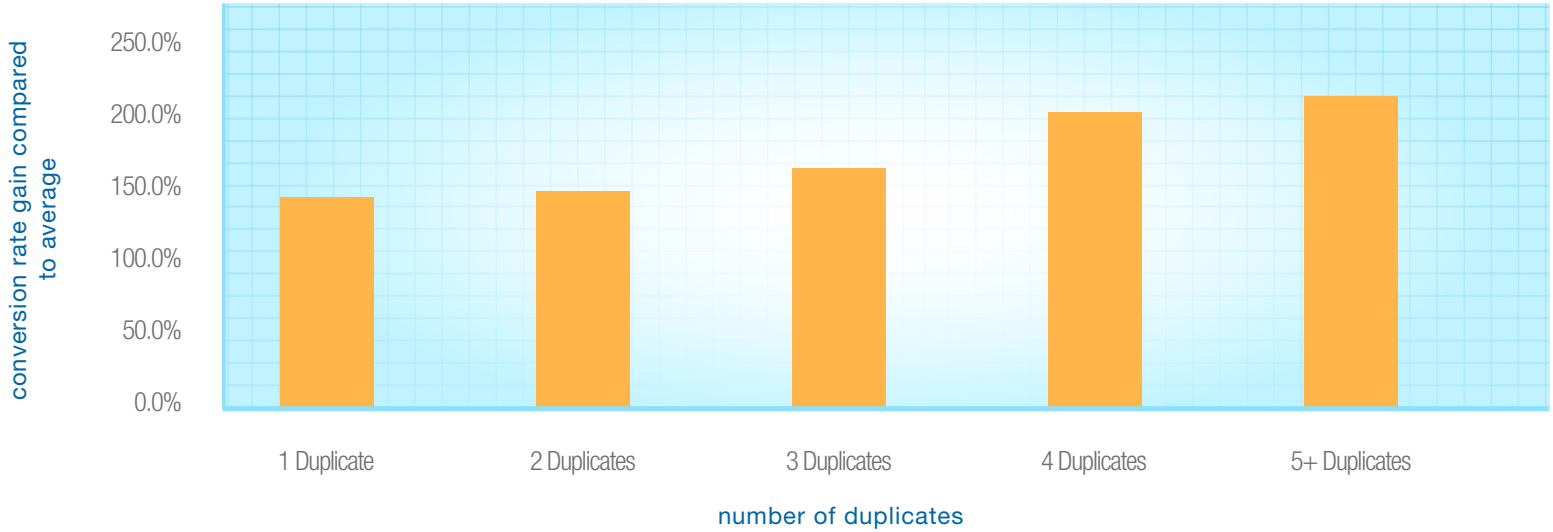


The Multiple Duplicate Effect

Our research also found that it isn't enough to just know whether a lead is a duplicate or not. It is also very helpful to know how many times a lead has been flagged as a duplicate. We wanted to see what kind of effect the number of times a lead was flagged as a duplicate had on that lead's likelihood to convert, and as Figure 2 shows, we found that there was a positive correlation between the number of times a lead is flagged as a duplicate and its likelihood to convert.

In other words, in general**, the more times a lead is flagged as a duplicate, the more likely it is to convert.** In fact, leads that are flagged as duplicates at least four times are more than 200% more likely to convert than the average lead. Although the majority of leads that had been flagged as potential duplicates had only been flagged once or twice during the time period of the study, a significant number, almost 10%, had been flagged as duplicates five or more times. There weren't any noteworthy differences in conversion rates between different leads with five or more duplicate instances.

Figure 2: Relative Conversion Rate of Multiple Duplicate Leads



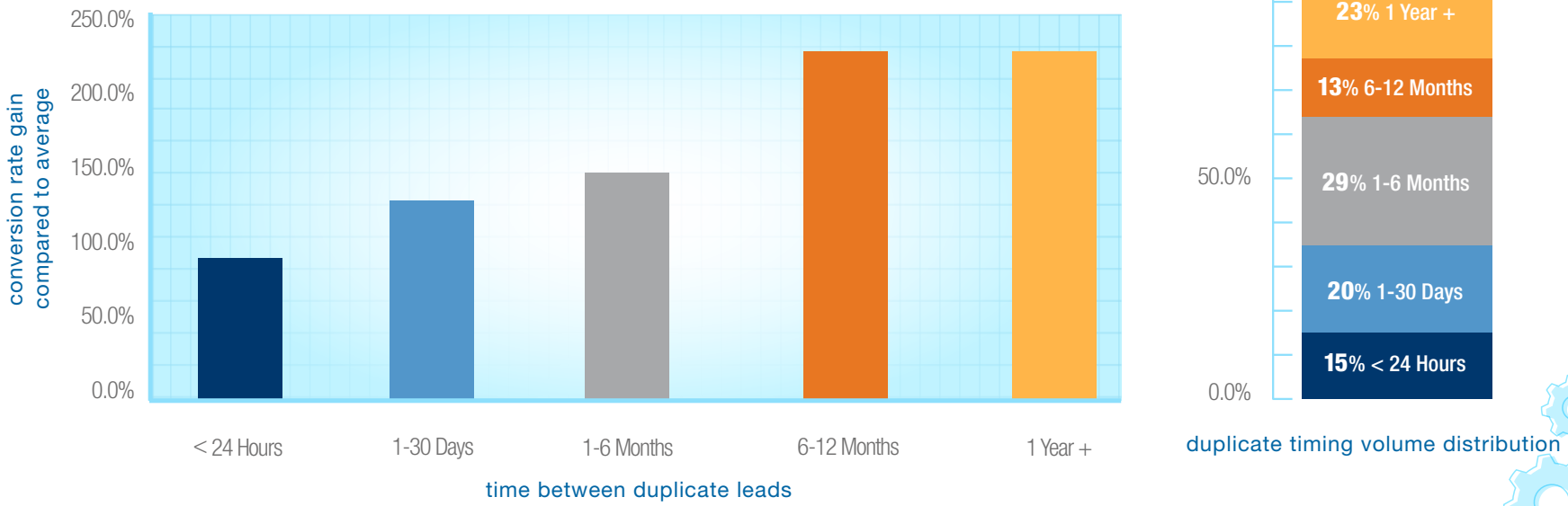
RESULTS

Timing between Duplicates

In addition to the number of times a lead is flagged as a potential duplicate, we found that the timing between duplicates was also a valuable indicator of a lead's potential performance. Figure 3 shows that **duplicates are most likely to convert when they are flagged six or more months after the original lead was created.**

Although duplicates that are generated within 24 hours of each other convert at almost twice the rate of typical leads, their conversion rate is not as high as that of duplicates that are generated more than six months apart. A duplicate lead's likelihood of conversion increases as the interval **between** duplicates increases, but the gain in conversion peaks and flattens out beyond a six month period. There are a number of reasons conversion rates increase as the interval between duplicates increases, but one might be that with time, prospects' financial or personal situations are more likely to change significantly enough to make them ready to purchase or enroll.

Figure 3: Relative Conversion Rate Based on Duplicate Timing



SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

Takeaways and Recommendations

- In the process of identifying possible duplicate leads, select and adjust duplicate flagging criteria to maximize the number of duplicate leads that are caught as soon as they enter the system, while minimizing false matches as much as possible.
- Leads that are flagged as duplicates convert at a 167% higher than average rate.
- In addition to identifying possible duplicate leads, acknowledging and taking some sort of action on them (dispositioning them) almost triples their likelihood of conversion.
- The more times a lead is flagged as a duplicate, the more likely it is to convert.
- Duplicates are most likely to convert when they are flagged six or more months after the original lead was created.
- Whenever possible, the number of times a lead is flagged as a duplicate and the time interval between duplicate creations should be tracked so that higher priorities and the most appropriate distribution options are given to leads with more favorable duplicate characteristics, as described in this study.

The easiest and best way to identify and manage your duplicates is to have robust and flexible duplicate management capabilities at your fingertips and fully integrated with your lead management and/or CRM system(s). LeadManager's Duplicate Management capabilities provide alerts when potential duplicates enter the system and automate the consolidation and disposition of duplicate lead records.

DO YOU HAVE THE TOOLS NEEDED TO ACCURATELY IDENTIFY DUPLICATE LEADS AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON THEM?

Get a Demo Today

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About Velocify

Velocify is a market leading provider of cloud-based intelligent sales automation solutions that drive more effective and efficient sales processes and improved conversion rates. With unmatched expertise, drawn from a dedication to helping more than 1,500 clients automate and improve their lead response and selling processes, Velocify has become the platform of choice for organizations focused on improving customer acquisition practices and business performance. Velocify is a privately held company, recently recognized as one of the fastest growing companies in North America on Deloitte's 2012 Technology Fast 500. Please visit www.Velocify.com for more information.

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