

THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

# The Lethal Call

So, you've got your website humming, your Facebook is growing every week, and you're No. 1 in searches on the Web. So what do 86 percent of the customers that find you on the Web do? Hit the dial button on their phone and give you a call. This is the point where all of your hard work on the Web either gets flushed down the toilet or gets you a new lesson student. Your online presentation may be awesome, but how is the staff member that answers the phone? They could be totally "offline" with their music lesson presentation.



**Fine-tune your staff's lesson program knowledge and score more lessons via phone**

The goal is simple: what's online should be the same as what's offline. What's online should be the training material for your staff. If a teacher video is on your Web presence, it should be up and running in your store. If you place something on Facebook, everyone on your staff should be aware of this update. Another issue is how your staff is trained to answer the initial question of "Do you have music lessons?" The customer calling shouldn't know more from your online information than your staff.

**GET SCRIPTED**

Having a pre-written script is the easiest and most duplicable approach to the initial phone inquiry. Yes, everyone says the same words to every call, but if it is poorly designed, it can sound really fake and not engage the caller. Also, if all your staff knows are the 10 bullet points, they will get stumped if a customer asks them a really basic question.

The flaw of most phone scripts is the employee "vomits" all of the points verbatim (usually non-stop) without ever asking the "who, what, where and when" of the customer. Your staff member isn't listening to what the customer is saying. They've read the script and now they've done their job. That customer then calls your competitor or decides not to pursue music lessons anywhere. (There's always YouTube.)

So what's the solution? Design a custom script. Your script should be designed for the caller. Is it a parent? A teen? A grandparent?

An adult student? What type of lesson, age, style or level are they interested in? Your phone discussions need to be adaptable to a variety of potential students.

Ask the caller how they discovered you. Was it an online search? Word-of-mouth from an existing customer? All these questions help you create the best presentation for your music lesson program. Tie your online presence into your phone call. Ask the customer over the phone, "Are you online now? If so, you can see on our website some of the teachers and events I'll be talking about." This will make your phone presentation come to life. Don't forget to include the part where you ask for the lesson sign-up in your script.

Now here's the twist: Have each staff member come up with their own phone script. Make sure their script hits the bullet points that you have in your design and it's their conversational style. Have your staff practice their presentation. Phone shop your store. If you don't stay diligent on this matter, staff will start to deviate. Also, this let's them know that are you on top of this and that it's important. **MI**

Pete Gamber is a 35-year veteran of music retailing and music lessons. He specializes in music lesson programs and music retail consulting. He can be reached at [petegambermusic@gmail.com](mailto:petegambermusic@gmail.com).