



*White Paper*

The shocking,  
*yet most effective way,*  
to market your products  
and services to farmers

## Farmers are not typical buyers.

If you're in the business of selling products or services to the farm community, the next sentence you read will not come as a surprise: **Farmers are not typical buyers.** They have their own way of doing things – from evaluating products and services to justifying purchase decisions.

Because farmers do have these idiosyncrasies, to achieve success in this sector, it's essential to utilize marketing tactics that have been proven over time to repeatedly generate a high ROI on marketing spending.

Yes, you could spend significant dollars creating elaborate websites, designating a portion of your campaign budget to Google AdWords, or placing numerous ads in farm-related trade publications (both digital and print), but the reality is your results are likely to be disappointing. *Why?*

***Because none of those marketing tactics are farmers' preferred method of learning about products or services.***

Here comes the shocking part – what works today is what has always worked to effectively convey your message to the farm community – *an actual conversation.* Not an email exchange, not a direct mail piece, not even expensive, slick television commercials.



## Farmers prefer speaking with real people.

Be truthful now, *does it surprise you that farmers, who are generally friendly, kind people, would rather talk to a live person than contend with technology?* I doubt you're surprised.

Knowing that farmers prefer live conversations is helpful, *but how do you monetize this data point?* Utilizing a call center to place outbound calls or process inbound ones has proven to be an extremely effective tool to communicate with farmers.

However, a word of caution when selecting a call center – *remember those idiosyncrasies that were referenced earlier?* You need to make sure you are working with a call center that has *experience* placing or receiving calls from farmers.

More than having agents with the ability to develop rapport with farmers (although rapport building is extremely important), an experienced call center that specializes in communicating with farmers will know **when not** to place outbound calls, and more importantly, **when calls should be placed.**

While the above points sound logical, some proof, via the results of a number of farmer-related campaigns using a call center, will make the point that this approach is worth a closer look.

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## A closer look.

An example of an organization successfully targeting the farm community with the support of a call center is the [Ohio Farm Bureau](#).

This well-respected group hired AnswerNet Agriculture to contact both current and lapsed members to renew annual memberships. The results of this program were very impressive. **The call center was able to achieve a contact conversion rate of nearly 9%.**

This is particularly notable when you compare the call center's results with that of the Ohio Farm Bureau's internal team. *The call center outperformed the Bureau's internal team by 4.5%.*

One measure of the success of this program is that the *Ohio Farm Bureau* continues to utilize AnswerNet Agriculture for its annual membership renewal efforts years after the initial campaign.



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*AnswerNet's detailed reports give me daily counts of renewals and member feedback. They really help my overall planning and provide great insight into what members want."*

ADAM CARNEY  
Director, Membership Sales

A campaign that required direct contact with farmers involved a magazine subscription renewal program for Farm Journal Media's [Farm Journal](#).

With subscriptions essential for both the publication's revenue stream and their ability to maintain circulation numbers to justify advertising costs, AnswerNet Agriculture was given the job of maintaining the periodical's subscription base.

Interestingly, while the outbound call campaign was a big success, Farm Journal Media saw additional value in finding a partner they could trust to manage such an important process for them – *without having to devote their own manhours and resources to make it happen.*

## Protecting your brand.



Finally, **Thompson Tractor** is an equipment dealer based in Birmingham, Alabama that specializes in the sales and service of Caterpillar products including diesel engines for electric power generation.

When Thompson Tractor wanted to create buzz for their products and services via live product demos, they asked AnswerNet Agriculture to contact and invite former and prospective clients who were in close proximity to the demonstration events.

As a result of the outbound effort to drive attendance to their events, Thompson was able to exceed their revenue goal and were particularly pleased that they were able to turn past clients into returning customers.

While the examples provided verify the practicality and ROI benefits of using a call center to contact farmers, one additional point deserves mention – **branding**. More specifically, **protecting and enhancing your corporate brand**.

Using a live agent to contact your prospects gives you a unique opportunity to position your brand in a way that no other marketing channel can. Only a human connection can create true empathy, provide context that is not available through other tactics, and allow the prospect to understand what your brand really represents. One other point to consider – previously it was suggested that caution is required when selecting the right call center.

With that in mind, you might be surprised to learn that **AnswerNet Agriculture is the only call center in the United States devoted exclusively to placing and receiving calls from farmers.**

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*To learn more about how AnswerNet Agriculture can help you exceed your sales goals, contact:*

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