

Cold Email Your Way Out of the Ice Ages:

How Sales Reps Can Perfect Their Prospecting
Techniques & Achieve Double Digit Reply Rates



Table of Contents

03 **Intro**

04 **Step One: Getting Noticed**

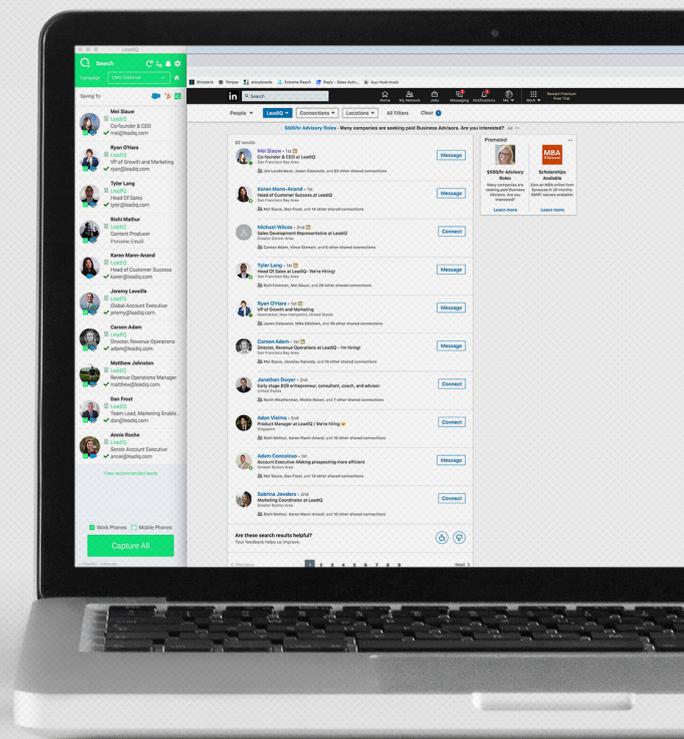
- ▲ Writing Catchy Subject Lines
- Reeling Them in with Preview Text Lines
- Owning a Friendly “From” Address
- ▲ Preserving Your Sender Reputation

08 **Step Two: Best Practices for Making Your Opened Email Stand Out**

- How to Make Sure Your Prospect Reads the Whole Email
- Finding Five Research Points Workshop

11 **Step Three: Bringing it All Together**

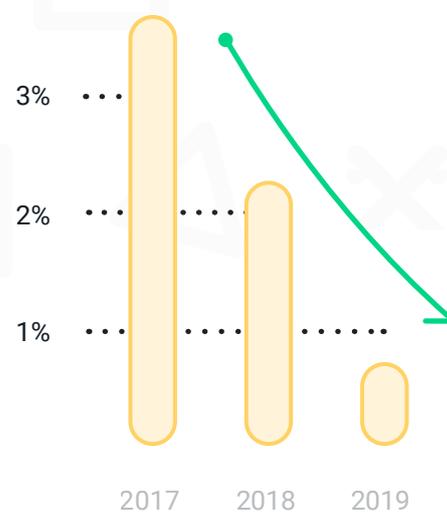
- ▲ Final Tip for Writing Cold Emails That End the Ice Ages



Intro

These days, cold emailing and the Ice Age have a lot in common. Imagine that a giant asteroid—let’s name it “Stan”—came and hit the sales world. Stan was made up of lots of parts: sales-stack technology that raised quotas, overused email templates, bad cold email practices, and a pandemic to tie a bow around it. Once Stan hit, sales reps found themselves needing to put out a lot more effort—let’s say “firepower”—into achieving pre-asteroid results. As a result, many sales reps today feel like they’re huddled around a dying flame, equipped with not-enough flint and no prospects.

Salesforce confirms this Ice Age paradigm. In 2019, they found that cold email replies dipped below 1% for the first time. That’s 2.5% lower than it was three years ago, and the numbers—like the thermometers in the Ice Age—continue to dwindle. Fortunately, there is still hope. Properly-used sales engagement software can boost sales reps’ prospecting efforts when implemented with the right strategy. **When using LeadIQ’s tried-and-true approach, companies can achieve at least a 10% response rate.**



○ % Cold email open rates



This eBook will show you how to write cold emails that end the Ice Ages through three steps:



Making a great first impression that ensures your email gets noticed.



Conducting the proper research for writing an email.



Presenting that research in a well-written email that follows prospecting best practices.

Step One: Getting Noticed

Just like the falling tree in a forest that no one hears, the greatest cold email in the world doesn't count if no one opens it. Based off research that analyzed 600 emails, we defined four key areas that impact your team's cold email open rates:

- 01 Subject Line
- 02 Preview Text
- 03 Friendly "From" Address
- 04 Company's Sender Reputation

1. Writing Catchy Subject Lines

The best subject lines strike a balance between being personalized to the reader and relating to the email's content. Don't use templates that contain "marketing speak," or have been widely shared on the Internet. Using a phrase like "Please Advise," "Just Checking In," or "Helping {{First Name}}?" is almost a sure-fire guarantee for getting your email into the Trash folder.

Instead, opt for a **hyper-customized subject line** that strikes a personal note while staying relevant to the email body. For example, take this email that resulted in a sales rep-prospect relationship. It was sent to a Quebec-based prospect from a seller who studied Quebec in college.



New message

 Recipients

Poutine and Ice Storms

Hi xxx,

I saw on LinkedIn you used to live in Montreal when you worked at Just for Laughs. Funny story for you. When I was in school, I took a culture elective class on surveying Quebec culture, cinema, and history.

At the end of the semester, we were supposed to go there, but Quebec got ice storms and the whole trip got canceled. I'll never know the pleasures of fresh poutine.

Anyways... I wanted to see if we could talk? We help make it easier for reps to create new. Prospects in Salesforce, research them, and sell without leaving LinkedIn. This will help reps get more responses without seeing a dip in activities. What are your thoughts?

Ryan

How to Ignite Your Prospect's Fires With a Great Subject Line

01

Personalize

Personalize it to the body of the email, but don't show all your cards. Stay vague enough to pique their curiosity and draw them in.

02

Don't be Gimmicky

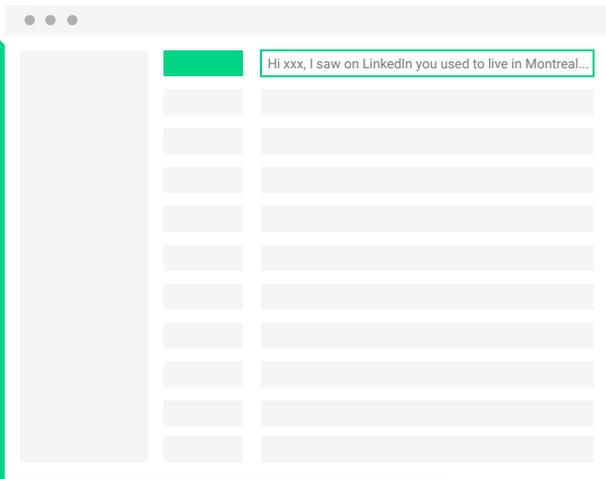
Stay away from too gimmicky subject lines, and don't be dishonest—a subject line is literally the subject of your email, after all.

03

Show Interest

Don't make it about your product or service. You never want to talk about yourself as an introduction. Instead, show an interest in the prospect by finding something they would want to talk about.

2. Reeling Them in with Preview Text Lines



The first two or three sentences of your cold emails could come up in the preview badge on your prospects' phones, meaning preview text can impact open rates as much as the subject line. So be sure to make the first sentence (or two) of your email about your prospect. This technique is the emotional equivalent of giving them a compliment: the acknowledgement makes them feel appreciated, and also inclined to engage further.

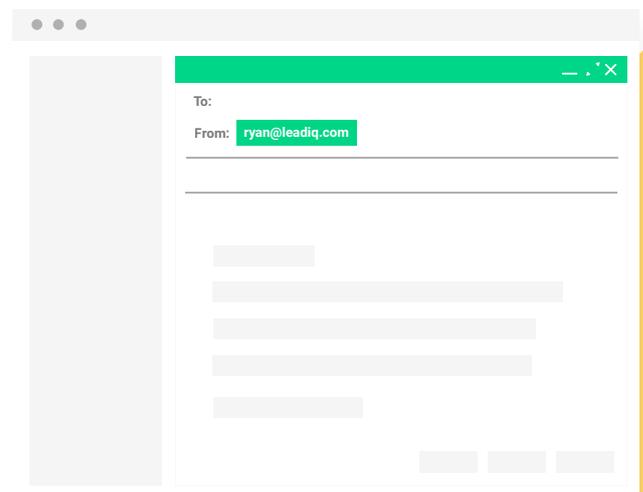
Pro Tip: Keep your first paragraph between 35-90 characters. It's okay if the preview text doesn't show all the copy.



You'll also want to make sure your name in the "From" address bar stands out. Reps can get their names noticed by producing content and building their brand online. This investment will increase the chances that a prospect has heard a rep's name prior to outreach, and increase the likelihood of an opened email.

Reps with a weaker online presence can also engage with a prospect's content online—by commenting on a LinkedIn post, for example—prior to outreach. This will increase the odds that the prospect will recall a sales rep's name when looking at the email. Just make sure your team isn't selling or pushing your product or service in that initial engagement.

3. Owning a Friendly "From" Address



4. Preserving Your Sender Reputation

35% of cold outreaches go unanswered. A possible reason why?

Because your sender's reputation is preventing them from getting through.

A sender's reputation is not how cool you are, but a real metric calculated from different variables such as your company's IP address, your email content, links inside your email, hard bounces you receive, and your sending domain.

A bad sender's reputation is formed by engaging in depersonalized and automated forms of communication. Bulk-emailing people who never subscribed, for instance, can quickly result in your emails being marked as spam and your company getting blacklisted. Only five to ten prospects need to mark your cold email as spam in order for this to happen. When it does, you'll be blocked from communicating not with just one prospect, but everyone using that server: Google, Outlook, or others. When your email gets blocked, they get reported as bounces, and when bounces happen, your sender's reputation takes a hit.

>> There are two kinds of bounces:



Soft Bounce

Occurs when your email contains questionable content such as a dead link, word that alerts spam filters, or sending too many emails to the same person in a short time period.



Hard Bounce

Occurs when you email a non-existent address.

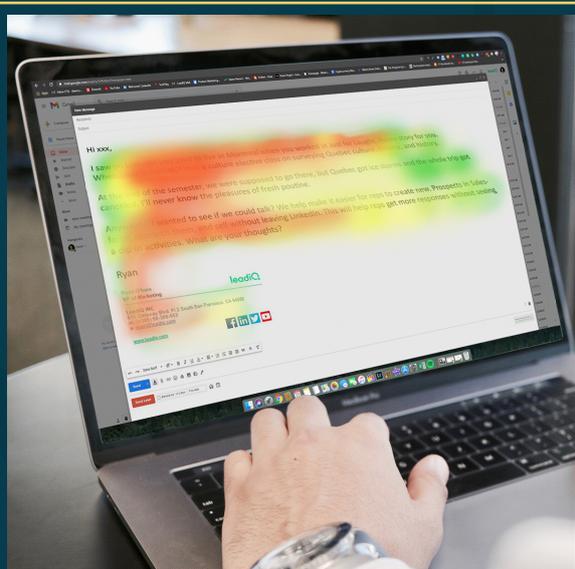


Pro Tip: Avoid the word "specialists," as some spam filters notice the word "cialists" and filter your email as prescription pill spam.

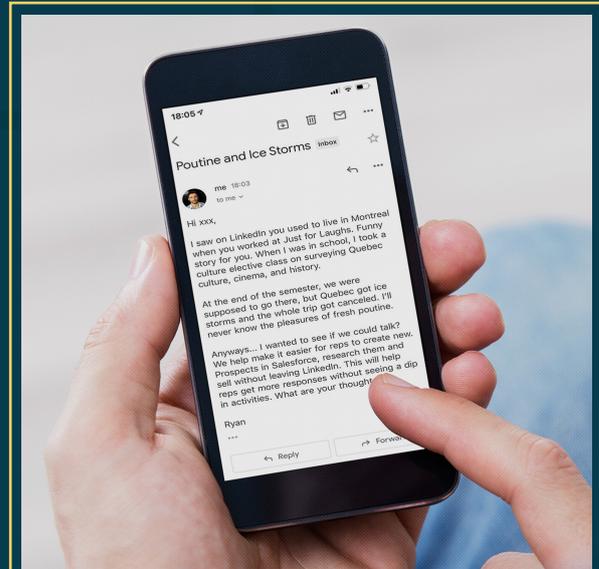
The best way to protect your sender's reputation is to send authentic emails. Don't do email blasts containing content that's identical to hundreds of other sellers. It may seem like a shortcut to getting meetings, but this action will eventually catch up with you, and could send your company to spam jail.

Step Two: Best Practices for Making Your Opened Email Stand Out

Congratulations! You've written a great subject line, preview text, avoided spam jail, and now a prospect has opened your email. This moment is similar to a first impression: it takes less than a second to form, but the effects last much longer. In order to stand out, your email should have the right length and formatting.



Formatting: Heat maps show that the eye likes to read text over a screen in the shape of the F. Formatting your email's content accordingly can drive better results. Try to keep the paragraphs of your email under 1-2 sentences max, and avoid bullet points: they can force your emails into spam folders.*



Length: The more concise and efficient the email, the higher the read and response rates. 46% of emails are read on mobile devices, meaning the entire body text should fit within the span of one smartphone screen—no scrolling necessary.

*Bullet points are okay when an email exchange has started—but not in the initial outreach.

How to Make Sure Your Prospect Reads the Whole Email

Here it is, our secret sauce to exiting the Ice Ages completely. LeadIQ has found that **researching a prospect and referencing something you learned about them makes you 11 times more likely to hear back from them.** Before your knees quiver at the thought of all that extra screen time, don't fear: SalesLoft and John Barrows discovered that personalizing about 20% of your cold emails is sufficient. Here's how and what to research about your prospect:



Update your talking points

Listing your prospect's name, company and title in an email is an obsolete, old hat trick. Instead, take your talking points to the next level by understanding the psychology behind your prospect's work position. VPs and other higher ups will care about company goals, while directors and below care more about themselves. Focus your personalization accordingly.



Treat meeting your prospect as making a friend

Think about your friends. How did you meet and bond? Maybe you were introduced at your high school's gym lockers, and shared a love of turkey sandwiches. Maybe you saw eye-to-eye on current events. Whatever the scenario, finding common ground is a fundamental first step.



Form a bond (the deeper the better)

The hierarchy listed below contains prospect-worthy topics in ascending order of value.

1. Current events, news stories, location, or social media trends
2. Common interests, similar experiences, opinions, or people
3. Internal feelings, personal dreams, vulnerabilities, and aspirations.

While each of these points will form an emotional connection, the more meaningful talking points will resonate on a deeper, and therefore more effective, level. Starting at point 2 is recommended. Getting to 3 is golden.

Following these guidelines, you'll want to conduct research that yields five points of interest between you and your prospect. Here's how to conduct that process.

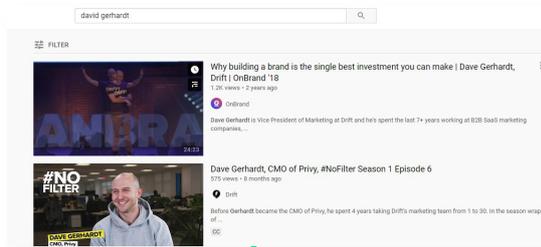
Finding Five Research Points Workshop

Let's say you're prospecting David Gerhardt, CMO at Privy. The first step is to see if you share any common interests or internal feelings by looking at his LinkedIn.



Dave Gerhardt · 2nd
CMO at Privy (#1 Sales App on Shopify) | B2B Brand Builder
Greater Burlington Area · 500+ connections · Contact info

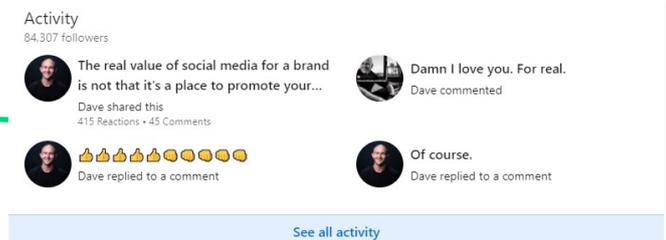
1



Dave's profile shows numerous speaking engagements. You can use Google or YouTube to find videos of him speaking. Choose a video that either resonates with you or provides some angle you can comment on, and make a note of it. That's research point number one.

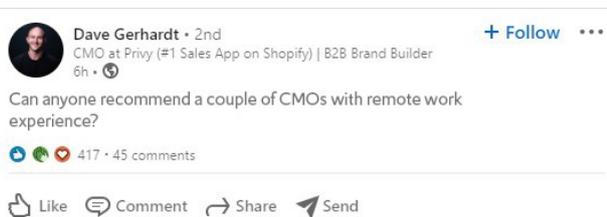
2

Next, go to Dave's social activity on LinkedIn. Fortunately, you're within three degrees of Dave and can see his activity. (If you're not allowed this access, use Google searches.)



4

Dave's most recent post is asking for recommendations on CMOs who work remotely. You leave a comment with the names of a few of your customers. Now Dave is not only more familiar with your name, but you also have a second point of interest. Cha-ching!



5

Continue researching in this manner until you've discovered five points. Try to do this entire exercise within ten minutes.

Step Three: Bringing it All Together

Beyond design and content, every cold email should answer the following four questions:

- >> How is the prospect special to you?
- >> Who are you?
(One sentence with a customized value prop for that specific prospect...not your name and title.)
- >> Why are you emailing the prospect?
- >> What do you want the prospect to do with the email?
Book a meeting? Answer a question, direct you to the right person? (Note: this is your call to action.)

Wrapping together all that research and intelligence, here's the email we'd compose to Dave:

New message _ ↻ ✕


Receipients

Your post about recommending CMOs

Hi Dave,

Big fan of yours. My company went to Hypergrowth, and we saw you speak there. I noticed on LinkedIn you posted you were looking for some remote CMOs. My personal favourite is one of our customers, Jaime Punishill, who is the CMO over at Lionbridge. He's got some really unique Perspective on marketing, while his team is all over the world.

So I actually wanted to see if your team is trying to get higher responses when they do cold emailing? We helped Lionbridge enable a workflow where reps can research a prospect first, without compromising daily sales activity. Are you involved in the outbound team over there? What are your thoughts?

Ryan

P.S. I also tagged a few on your post on LinkedIn. Hope this helps!

⌵ 📎 😊 🖼️

Send
Save
Cancel



And here's how we answered each of these four questions:

The prospect's special-ness

has been established by referencing Dave's speech at Hypergrowth and our keen interest in his performance (and we did it adhering to the F-shape rule). We also didn't feature dump, but saved our other four points for follow up emails in case this one goes unanswered.

Our identity is made clear

when we talk about helping Lionbridge enable a research-driven sales workflow. We did it in under two sentences, and we made sure the prospect couldn't give us a "so what" type of response by lining up the value proposition with the trigger that made us find the account. Notice we didn't make assumptions about Dave's role: a good rule of thumb to follow.

Our purpose in emailing Dave

is clearly illustrated when we ask about his team's goals around response rates. If you can work in a trigger—like noticing that they're hiring, or that the company's going through other changes—it's worth mentioning. Whatever route you take, make sure you're straightforward and honest.

The call to action is included

although you'll notice we didn't ask for a meeting right out of the gate. Reps who send emails ending in open-ended questions get a higher response rate (almost +6-7%) versus direct questions. Any sort of response to an open ended question can be followed up with an email requesting that the prospect jump on a phone call. Your chances of them saying "yes" to taking that meeting are high, because they just responded to your email.



Follow-up emails can use this same format listed above, but should also include a back reference to when you made your first touch. Here's a follow-up email we'd write to Dave a few days later if he didn't respond or answer that first outreach:

New message

Receipients

Follow-up

Hey Dave,

I remember at Hypergrowth you talked about how brands are making a comeback, and that we are all too sunk into data and spreadsheets in marketing. I couldn't agree with you more.

I shot you an email a few days ago and called. I know you are amazing at inbound marketing. I was curious how well your reps do with the outbound side? If you had a magic lamp and could get a genie to help the SDR team with one of your wishes, what would you wish for?

What are your thoughts on talking sometime soon?

Ryan

DISCLAIMER: I am not promising to wear a genie costume if we talk.

Send Save Cancel

Final Tip for Writing Cold Emails That End the Ice Ages

Be yourself. Extraordinary people want to talk to other extraordinary people. Put your personality into your cold emails, and you'll get results. Find ways to use humor, touch upon your personal life, and infuse feeling into your outreach, and you'll impress your prospect. Don't engage in fake personalization by commenting on something you don't understand, or making vague and undetailed contributions.

By being yourself, staying concise, and following the other guidelines outlined in this eBook, you'll easily achieve higher response rates.



Prospect while browsing LinkedIn or any other site. One button sends contact info to all your favorite sales tools.



LeadIQ, Inc

611 Gateway Blvd, Fl 2

South San Francisco, CA 94080

(1-888-653-2347)

support@leadIQ.com

www.leadIQ.com

leadIQ
Prospect Faster