



# The smarter way to win new business

*Everything you need to know to consistently empower your teams to drive new business*



## For today's modern recruiter or salesperson,

standing out against the competition is not an option; it's a necessity. In a world faced with changing market conditions and rising talent expectations, the true measure of a recruitment professional's skill lies not only in matching top talent with the right roles but also in securing new clients and opportunities.

This guide is your compass for navigating the intricate art of winning new business in the fiercely competitive recruitment arena. We'll equip you with the strategies, tools, and insights needed to not only survive but thrive by consistently attracting and retaining valuable clients. Dedicating resources to upskilling existing team members and training new ones is crucial to overall business growth.

To give you the tools to succeed, we've included insights gathered from Bullhorn's 10,000 staffing and recruitment customers and combined those with tips from Bullhorn sales leaders who are navigating the business development process and engaging with recruitment agencies every day.

## Where should you start?

From laying the foundation to learning and adapting, there's a smarter way to approach the business development process so you can:

- ✓ Increase efficiency and scalability
- ✓ Leverage insights to identify the best opportunities
- ✓ Focus on building lasting client relationships



### A survey of 2,000 global recruitment agencies

found that winning new business is the highest priority for leaders this year, a shift from years of a candidate-first mindset.

*Bullhorn GRID 2023 Industry Trends Report*



## A smarter approach to business development

To successfully win new business, you need both a strong business development process and the technology to support it.

While the business development cycle may look different for every agency, one thing is clear: **creating a consistent process, leveraging the latest technology powered by AI, and tapping into your existing client pool are the smartest ways to win.** Gone are the days of a “spray-and-pray” approach and underutilising your database. Winning agencies are using strategy and technology, including AI and database insights, as their competitive advantage.

*Click any icon to jump to that step, or follow the guide to navigate each business development phase in order.*





# PHASE 1: Lay the foundation

This phase is about setting yourself and your team up for success through research, including planning how you will approach your new clients and uncover new opportunities with existing clients.

## Biggest challenge:

Knowing whom to initially target and understanding the needs of uncovered prospects can be overwhelming for many recruiters and salespeople, often leading to an untargeted, low-return outreach strategy.



### BULLHORN INSIGHT

Some clients are better to work with than others. **Bullhorn users spend 50% of submission effort on clients who provide 75% of successful job placements.** But this also means that the remaining half of submissions go to clients **who only yield 25% of placements.** The smarter way to win business is segmenting clients based on levels of effort to increase margins and adopting retainer models for clients whose placements take the most resources.

*Bullhorn data, 2023*

## INSIDER TIP:

*New logos aren't the low-hanging fruit; dormant companies you've previously placed a candidate with are. Map multiple people in each business; one might bite when another wouldn't.*

**Joe McGuire, Director,  
Sales & Strategy, Bullhorn**



Key steps in this phase	Top considerations
<b>Understanding the sector</b>	Research the sector to understand the market and key drivers for prospect accounts. Determine the key players and client profiles that you're going after to ensure your strategy is aligned.
<b>Market mapping</b>	Map out the market to identify prospects to target, generate segmented lists, and research each individual to find something to connect with them on.
<b>Needs analysis</b>	Understand the needs and requirements of your target prospects. Address the most significant pain points with clear examples of how other clients have overcome similar challenges.
<b>Competitive analysis</b>	Identify any competitors in the market that your prospects might be considering and determine how your offering compares. Standing out from the crowd is crucial, so leverage this insight to get ahead.
<b>Client segmentation</b>	Segment existing clients based on target markets. Prepare a multi-channel outreach cadence, including human touch and automation, tailored to the individual client so you meet them where they are.
<b>Developing value proposition</b>	Piece together the value propositions for the target prospects to showcase why your team is the best partner for their open roles and opportunities.

*What does success look like? Knowing your target market, your best-performing existing clients, and the right people in each business to connect with.*

## The smarter way to win with the Bullhorn platform:

- **Bullhorn ATS/CRM Leads:** Track data about leads and prospects, like competitive analysis, and easily segment clients you've worked with before.
- **SourceBreaker by Bullhorn:** Use AI-powered job order searching to uncover more opportunities that match your target clients.
- **Bullhorn Automation:** Send surveys to understand more about your clients, guide future target lists, and improve database quality.
- **Bullhorn Analytics:** Identify current business strengths, best-performing clients, and any gaps in opportunities.





## PHASE 2: Targeted outreach

Here, your focus shifts from planning to action, including developing and finalising your strategy and prospecting into your target accounts.

### Biggest challenge:

Not having the right data for prospecting makes it difficult to have a successful outreach strategy and can lead to spending time on low-value tasks like data management instead of relationship-building activities.



### BULLHORN INSIGHT

**Bullhorn customers using a combination of Automation, Analytics and SourceBreaker in their client outreach, close on average 40% more deals** than customers only using Bullhorn ATS/CRM.

By leveraging insights you're able to ensure all engagement is with targeted clients, whilst automation does the heavy lifting on engagement.

*Bullhorn data, 2023*

### INSIDER TIP:

*Without lead gen, there is no sale. Remember two main things in this phase: **be memorable and be different.** The more creative and impactful, the better."*

**Joe Wertz, National Account Executive, Bullhorn**



Key steps in this phase	Top considerations
<b>Strategy development</b>	Devise a set of actions to capitalise on opportunities and address challenges effectively. The primary objective of strategy development is to create a roadmap to guide your business development efforts.
<b>Data capture process</b>	Ensure you have the right information in your system, like contact details or previous outreach attempts, and record your findings. Use technology to streamline the data collection process and track information.
<b>Outreach and prospecting</b>	Pick up the phone. Regardless of which channel you use (phone, email, text), a good mix of lead generation tactics involves "making it your own," so the next time a firm wants to make a change, they'll think of you.
<b>Discovery and qualification</b>	Deliver your sales pitch and prepare to overcome objections. You have only a few seconds to get someone interested, so your pitch must be simple and to the point.
<b>Conversion to qualified opportunity</b>	Confirm the prospect is in a position to buy. Gather all crucial information like budget, timeline, or core business needs. Convert to a qualified lead and create a communication cadence to ensure the lead stays engaged via regular emails and phone calls.

*What does success look like? Drumming up new business through the white noise directed at your prospects. Use videos, handwritten notes, swag, and more to get people's attention.*

## The smarter way to win with the Bullhorn platform:

- **Bullhorn ATS/CRM Leads:** Pair your database with tools like LinkedIn Sales Navigator to streamline the process of reaching the right people.
- **SourceBreaker by Bullhorn:** Use AI sourcing to build target lists of job orders across all sources in a single search and uncover key contacts to reach out to.
- **Bullhorn Automation:** Run automated outreach campaigns via email and SMS to qualify interest. Send qualified candidates potential job orders to prove credibility and open doors.
- **Bullhorn Analytics:** Measure outreach success to understand the best sources of opportunities and outreach types.





## PHASE 3: Pipeline building

With plans in place, now is the time to start engaging existing clients, qualifying new prospects to opportunities, and leveraging technology to help you focus on building your pipeline.

### Biggest challenge:

Moving away from a spray-and-pray approach, which often requires a high level of effort for little or no return.



#### BULLHORN INSIGHT

Bullhorn customers **fill 39% more jobs** with clients they've previously worked with than with new clients. Engage frequently with clients already in your database to set your team up for success.

*Bullhorn data, 2023*

### INSIDER TIP:

*Top-performing agencies segment their database to ensure campaigns are targeted and tailored to the prospect. They will leverage A/B testing to understand what communications are having the most impact and use this feedback to adjust their current and future campaigns."*

**Aaron McIntosh, Managing Director, APAC, Bullhorn**



Key steps in this phase	Top considerations
<b>Defining sales stages</b>	Define the system configuration to match the business' sales process. Ensure your systems align with your sales strategy to make the entire business development process seamless.
<b>Engaging with existing database</b>	Engage with contacts and businesses who already exist in your ATS/CRM. These contacts are already familiar with you and your business, so engage with them early and often.
<b>Conducting outreach campaigns</b>	Generate outreach campaigns and structure your approach based on the target. Technology can help send personalised outreach at scale.
<b>Navigate bids and tenders</b>	Engage with prospective clients who require a bid or tender to be submitted before signing. Working with these targets early can help you get ahead of any roadblocks.

*What does success look like? Building a strong, accurate pipeline with actionable steps so you know whom to target with specific messaging at the right time.*

### The smarter way to win with the Bullhorn platform:

- **Bullhorn ATS/CRM Leads:** Capture the right information, like contact information, previous interactions with that prospect, and any data related to the potential opportunity.
- **SourceBreaker by Bullhorn:** Use sales intelligence, like funding rounds and salary information, to uncover a pipeline of new opportunities.
- **Bullhorn Automation:** Use A/B testing and engagement scoring to focus the right messaging at the right time, increasing response rates and the number of engaged hiring managers. Automate the data hygiene process to identify missing pieces of contact information and get your database into shape.
- **Bullhorn Analytics:** Keep track of the value of your pipeline to act ahead of the curve and ensure targets are met.





## PHASE 4: Nurture and close

This phase is crucial for business development because it focuses on turning leads and opportunities into revenue. It's where the value proposition established in phase 1 begins to materialise.

### Biggest challenge:

Missed opportunities, inconsistent communication causing prospect drop off, and limited visibility leading to missed buyer signals and inaccurate decision-making.



#### BULLHORN INSIGHT

Those that use automation to nurture opportunities through regular communication fill **22% more jobs and increase placements per head by 36%.**

*Bullhorn data, 2023*

### INSIDER TIP:

*Automation is a game-changer for this phase. It saves you time, reduces errors, and ensures a consistent and efficient nurturing process, allowing you to focus on building relationships and closing deals.*

**Erik Mateev, Sales & Strategy  
Manager, Bullhorn**



Key steps in this phase	Top considerations
<b>Opportunity tracking and data capture</b>	Update and track opportunities for pipeline management and forecasting. Leverage data analytics for predictive insights and to streamline processes for quicker conversion.
<b>Maintaining engagement, repeat business, and candidate redeployment opportunities</b>	Engage with prospects throughout the opportunity and connect with clients you want to work with again. Tailor communication and offers to individual client needs and consistently stay in touch.
<b>Conversion</b>	Convert the opportunity into a job to be filled and negotiate rates and contractual terms. Identify additional opportunities with existing clients.

**What does success look like?** Closing deals by effectively nurturing leads and opportunities through personalised and relevant communication. Maintaining engagement with potential clients, addressing their needs, and consistently moving them through the sales pipeline toward conversion. Efficient data capture and tracking of opportunities will enable better decision-making.

### The smarter way to win with the Bullhorn platform:

- **Bullhorn ATS/CRM Leads:** Maintain a single source of truth to manage leads and opportunities to ensure nothing falls through the cracks. Negotiate with confidence, knowing your margins are good with an efficient operation.
- **SourceBreaker by Bullhorn:** Be the first to new job orders with Sourcebots and create client watch lists to notify recruiters and salespeople when existing clients or target prospects post a new job.
- **Bullhorn Automation:** Nurture clients with omnichannel automated engagement to win more orders and reduce churn. Keep your team ahead of every deal with notifications that ensure they act at the right time and reduce administrative work, freeing time for more meaningful client interactions.
- **Bullhorn Analytics:** Use desk-level insights to understand where your focus and energy should be directed.





## PHASE 5: Learn and Adapt

There's no growth without learning and adaptation. The last phase is all about reporting on your successes, learning from failures, and adapting your strategy based on those learnings.

### Biggest challenge:

Refining and narrowing your focus, outreach, and content for your ideal client profile.



#### BULLHORN INSIGHT

Less than **20% of redeployment opportunities** are acted upon, resulting in a **less than 5%** average redeployment rate. Those that incorporate automation and AI **increase redeployment by more than 50%**.

*Bullhorn data, 2023*

### INSIDER TIP:

*Make sure you have a systematic approach to measure the outcomes you're expecting and then make adjustments. **Your team needs to live and breathe the process.***

**Keith Weightman, Regional Vice President,  
National Accounts, Bullhorn**



Key steps in this phase	Top considerations
<b>Review your best prospects and clients</b>	Use analytics to understand where the highest return on effort is. Continue measuring the process and adapting your strategy based on your findings.
<b>Refine your engagement strategy</b>	Analyse your engagement strategy to understand what works and what doesn't and identify the best channels to use in the future. Share these learnings with your team to uplevel everyone's skills.
<b>Update segmentation and target lists</b>	Create target lists based on previous phases and analytics data. Leverage technology to help segment, prioritise, and personalise outreach with generative AI and automation.
<b>Circle back to phase 2 or 3</b>	Circle back and reengage with a lead or open up new opportunities. To continue finding levers for growth and process gaps, you need to continuously monitor the outcomes and adapt accordingly.

*What does success look like? Establishing your best clients, channels, and processes and scaling them. Fine-tuning your approach through successful market segmentation, competitive intel, and a deep understanding of your target client.*

### The smarter way to win with the Bullhorn platform:

- **Use AI** to personalise your outreach, segment your lists, and identify areas of focus you might have missed.
- **Bullhorn Analytics:** Measure the success of the campaigns and refine your strategy.





## Ready to start winning?

Here's how to transform your business development process and unlock new opportunities.

- **Build your plan.**  
Create a foundation of success built on data, segmentation, and a deep understanding of your target market.
- **Know your value.**  
Showcase why your team is the best partner for their open roles and big opportunities.
- **Send personalised outreach**  
based on your market analysis and existing client segmentation.
- **Automate administrative tasks**  
so you can focus on building relationships and converting leads into opportunities.
- **Engage with contacts already in your database.**  
These leads have the highest ROI and should be your first target during prospecting.
- **Leverage data analytics**  
for actionable pipeline forecasts and predictive insights to help streamline processes for quicker conversion.
- **Reengage with leads to open up new opportunities.**  
Keep working to build relationships with new leads, existing clients, and target prospects so your pipeline is continuously building on itself.

*Our big focus this year will be on using automation to help our salespeople **identify and convert prospects to clients.** Using that tool in nurture campaigns to update our clients more continually on the process of a job order will help us **hold on to that client and improve the relationship.***

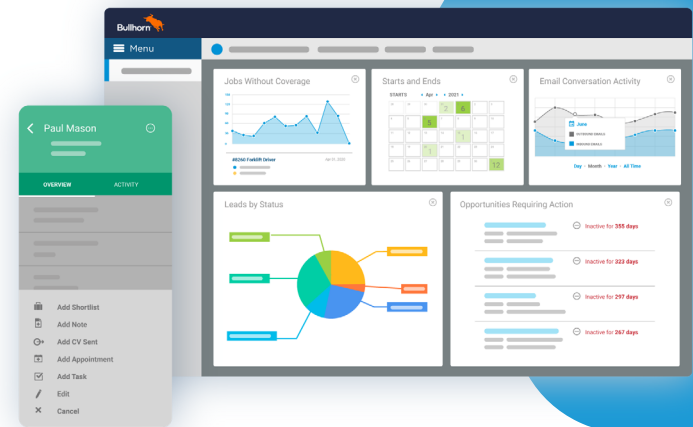
**Scott Fiore,**  
**President, TriStarr**



# About Bullhorn

Bullhorn is the global leader in software for the staffing and recruitment industry. More than 10,000 companies rely on Bullhorn's cloud-based platform to power their recruitment processes from start to finish. Headquartered in Boston, with offices around the world, Bullhorn is founder-led and employs more than 1,600 people globally.

To learn more, visit [bullhorn.com/uk/win-new-business/](https://bullhorn.com/uk/win-new-business/) or follow Bullhorn on LinkedIn or X.



Let's talk about a winning business development strategy.

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