

Building your own solution for integrating and managing third-party leads?

Review our checklist before you decide!

When companies engage in buying third-party leads and other consumer data, it's easy to think that an in-house solution is the way to go -- after all, you can build what you want and save money. But a DIY solution isn't always the right choice. Review the checklist below to see if an in-house solution is your path to success, or if a solution like LeadConduit might be a more cost-effective choice.

1 Evaluate your IT resources

Whether you're a small company relying on a tiny technical team, or a large company with competing priorities, building a solution to integrate leads from multiple sources, normalize the data, optimize it, and route it to multiple destinations is complicated. And that's without additional features such as rejecting or accepting data in real time based on your acceptance criteria.

Furthermore, managing third-party integrations takes ongoing work. Vendors come and go, established integrations need troubleshooting, and strategies shift. As you test new data sources, being able to quickly set up new integrations becomes a critical step of your strategy. Ongoing maintenance also means quick troubleshooting when data errors inevitably occur - ideally by your marketing team, rather than needing to call IT all the time.

If you build in-house, be sure your team is large and experienced enough to support this, and weigh the cost/benefit against competing priorities. If you are considering contract resources, be sure to take ongoing maintenance into account - both the cost and the dedicated management that will ensure your need for changes and troubleshooting can be addressed promptly.

Look for the hidden price tag. Building a custom solution may seem like the cheaper alternative, but can leave you stuck with unanticipated costs.

A purpose-built solution like LeadConduit makes it a snap to add, remove, or test new lead vendors and data enhancements, as well as workflows and distribution channels such as call centers, CRMs, and CDPs.

Check the box:

- Adding and removing partners
- Handling rejections and returns
- Changes to workflows and acceptable rules
- Ongoing enhancements, maintenance, and troubleshooting
- Marketing control over daily activities

2 Assess your expertise

If you're an experienced lead buyer with established, stable, long-standing vendor relationships - and you know exactly which data enhancements you need to cleanse and augment your data - then you may not feel that you need an experienced technology partner. But if you need help finding the right vendors, establishing best practices, and testing your processes, you'll need a partner with experience doing just that.

But even if you do have that knowledge, some of your lead partners may not. It isn't always easy to find sellers with the technical expertise to integrate using your format and submission instructions -- and generic data integration tools may not be the answer, either. They can't help you manage your integrations or provide uniform lead submission instructions to vendors.

Furthermore, some of our most experienced customers tell us how much they appreciate our veteran industry knowledge and experience. Not only can we make suggestions for lead sources, but we can also connect you with the right partners for your business.

In the lead-buying business, where margins can be razor-thin, ActiveProspect brings a competitive edge to the table.

Check the box:

- Managing vendor relationships
- Standardizing data submissions
- Leveraging industry connections & expertise

3 Don't forget reporting!

Pulling data from other systems to build reports can be tricky. Data has to be structured so that it can be smoothly pulled from one system to another.

But designing meaningful reports and dashboards is even harder. It's difficult to predict what information will be useful - plus, as your strategy evolves, you'll need new insights to support it.

Simply put, building a reporting structure can be just as complex as building an entire product.

Lead management solutions like LeadConduit include built-in reports designed with our customers' needs in mind. Years of experience have taught us what information you need to successfully manage your lead-buying business.

Check the box:

- Understanding the data insights you need
- Integrating transactional data into a reporting structure
- Ongoing enhancements, maintenance, and troubleshooting

4 Audit your infrastructure

When you're buying leads, every second counts. Receiving them too late can render them worthless, and downtime that results in extensive lead failures can devastate your business.

You need a solution that is well-tested, managed by a professional team, and hosted using state-of-the-art services. On top of that, you want to be sure that your technology can scale with you as you grow.

On the security side, it is ever more critical that prospect and customer information is safe, as a data breach can leave you vulnerable to lawsuits and jeopardize your entire business. The ActiveProspect platform undergoes a SOC2 audit annually to ensure we meet the top security standards, so you can rest easy knowing your data is in safe hands.

Check the box:

- Reliable system uptime
- Data and system security

5 If you buy leads on the ping....

If real-time ping/post lead buying is part of your strategy, then a third-party solution is essential. That's because in order to assess which leads to purchase - and at what price - you need data that vendors don't share until you own the lead.

LeadConduit sits between the lead buyer and seller, receiving full lead data on ping and applying those data points to the buyer's bidding rules. A homegrown system simply cannot fill this role.

Check the box:

- Trusted third party to receive PII data on the ping

6 Remember: Compliance is always critical

TCPA compliance is critical to your lead generation and purchase initiatives, but homegrown systems by definition can never be the independent third party necessary to compliance. Be sure you have taken into consideration not just the technical and business aspects of building your own compliance solution, but also the legal ramifications. [Check out our post](#) on the risks of building your own TCPA solution to learn more!

Check the box:

- Independent third-party verification