



by holly brister

Hey, welcome to episode 3 of Idea to Business. You've checked your idea is a viable business, so now it's time for the bit that actually pays the bills: finding your first clients.

I'm the founder of Regen Digital, a B2B digital marketing agency. I started the agency 3 years ago with my best friend, and before that I worked in PR and tech sales. Sales is the skill I lean on most, every single week.

This is my sales playbook. It's how I find and win clients: the channels I use, the tools behind them, and how they all work together.

The biggest lesson I've learned is that nobody buys from a single message. People need to see you a few times, in a few places, before they're interested. Once you understand that, sales stops feeling pushy and starts feeling like a system.

Let's get started. You don't need a sales team or a big budget for this, just a few simple tools and the discipline to keep showing up.

From this playbook, you will have:

- 01 An understanding of why it takes so many touchpoints to win a client, and why that's okay
- 02 A simple system where your data, platforms and tracking all work together
- 03 A clear way to reach out on LinkedIn, email and Instagram
- 04 A 21-day sequence you can copy, and one prompt to write it all
- 05 My tips on sales psychology, so you sound like a human, not a robot

why one message isn't enough

people need to hear from you more than once

One of the biggest things I've found in sales is the fear of feeling naggy or annoying. Nobody wants to be that person in someone's inbox. But the more you put a proper sales process in place, the more you realise that, unfortunately, in this day and age, you need to be a little bit annoying to get your voice heard.

In sales, every time someone sees or hears from you is called a **touchpoint**. A connection request, an email, a comment on their post. When I worked in sales, people would sometimes reply on my ninth or tenth touchpoint. Even now at Regen, people reply to our LinkedIn messages after the fourth or fifth message.

Of course, every message still needs to give them something of value. But don't feel bad about following up. Everyone else is doing it too, and the numbers back it up.

4.8

touches to get a first reply. In 2022 it was 3.2.

7.4

touches to book a meeting.

7% vs 5%

reply rate when you mix channels, compared with email alone.

62%

of replies come in the first week, so keep going after that first message.

WHAT THIS MEANS

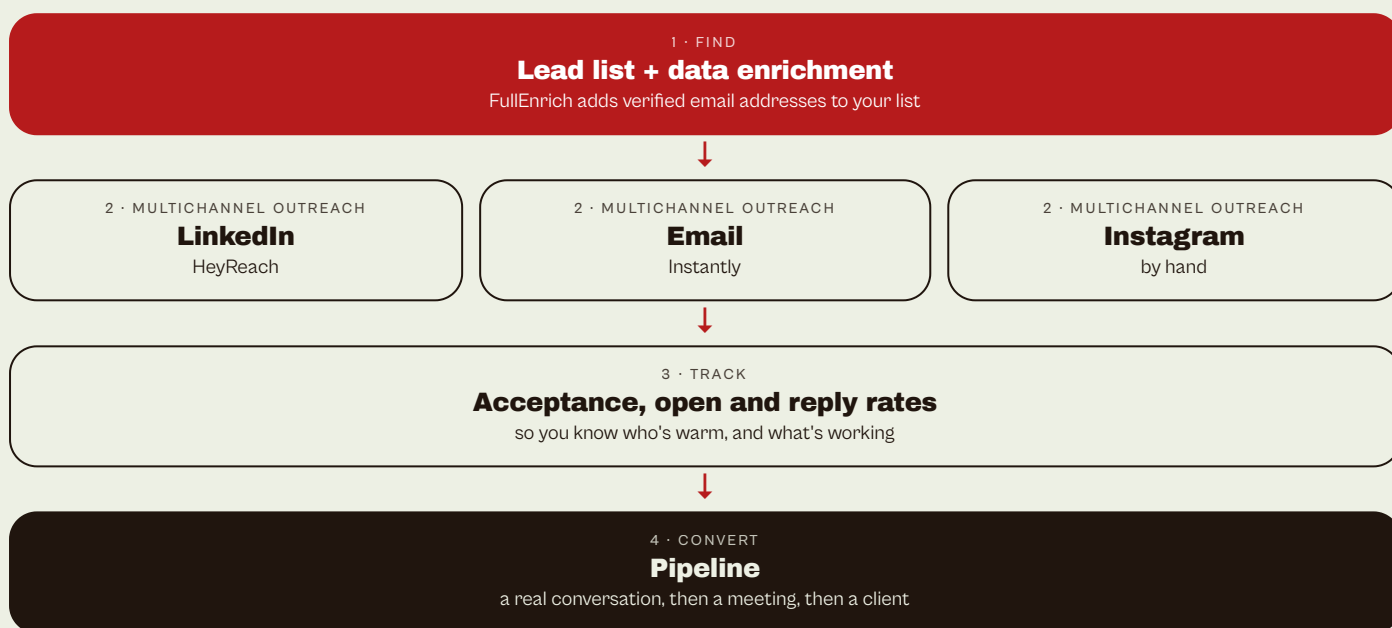
Spread your touches across a few places until your name feels familiar. By the time you ask for a chat, you want them thinking "oh, I know her".

Source: Outreach, The Icebox 2026.

how it all fits together

your outbound sales system, in four parts

There are lots of different tools that go into running a sales strategy, and it can feel like a lot at first. The easiest way to think about it is as one **outbound sales system**: outbound just means you go to the customer, rather than waiting for them to come to you. First, you build your list and get their details. Then you reach them on the platforms they use. Each platform has its own audience, but they all feed into the same pipeline.



HOW THE PLATFORMS TALK TO EACH OTHER

- **Accepted on LinkedIn, no reply?** HeyReach moves them into an email campaign in Instantly.
- **Replied anywhere?** Everything else stops. One conversation, in one place.
- **Keep track of everyone in one place.** A CRM, or even a spreadsheet.

SALES VOCAB, EXPLAINED SIMPLY

Lead

Someone who might buy from you. Cold if they don't know you yet, warm if they do.

Multichannel outreach

Reaching the same person in more than one place, like LinkedIn and email.

CRM

Customer relationship management. The one place you keep track of every lead.

Data enrichment

Adding missing details, like a verified email address, to your lead list.

Pipeline

Everyone you're in conversation with, and how close each one is to buying.

Conversion rate

The percentage of people who move to the next step, like from reply to meeting.

THE PLATFORMS

linkedin*my best avenue, and where I'd start*

TOOL

HeyReach

BEST FOR

B2B decision makers

LIMIT

About 20 to 40 invites a day

LinkedIn is my best avenue because of who I work with. At Regen, our clients are B2B tech founders, decision makers, professional services and construction businesses. In sales, that description is called your **ICP**, or ideal customer profile: the type of business and person you most want to work with. My ICP is on LinkedIn every day, so that's where I put most of my energy. It doesn't mean Instagram couldn't work for me too, it's just where my people are.

START WITH ONE PLATFORM

Don't try to do everything at once. Pick the platform where your customers spend their time, do it well, then add another. For me, that's LinkedIn first, then Instagram.

First, fix your profile. Your headline should say exactly who you help, because everyone you contact will look at it. Then:

1. **Warm up.** View their profile and like or comment on a post.
2. **Connect.** A short note or none. Never a pitch.
3. **Message.** Once they accept: something specific to them and a small question.

Keep an eye on your **acceptance rate**, the percentage of people who accept your connection request. If it's low, your profile or your targeting needs work.

Tip: try a 30-second voice note instead of a message. Hardly anyone does it, so it really stands out.

FOR EXAMPLE

"Hi Priya, saw you've just brought on two new sales reps, congrats! Usually that means marketing's under pressure to fill their calendars. Is that on your plate at the moment?"

THE PLATFORMS

email

part of the system, not the whole thing

TOOL

Instantly

SEQUENCE

3 to 4 emails

DATA

Valid emails only

Email is still part of my system, but I'll be honest: it's become a really saturated market. Inboxes are fuller than ever, and more cold emails get blocked or filtered before anyone sees them. For me, LinkedIn has been a far more personal and professional way in, so I use email alongside it rather than on its own.

If you do use email, the thing to protect is your **deliverability**: whether your emails actually land in the inbox rather than spam. These five rules help:

- **Don't send from your main email.** Set up a second web address just for outreach, so your main inbox stays safe.
- **Warm up new inboxes** for a few weeks first. **Warm-up** means sending a small, slowly growing number of emails so email providers learn to trust you. Instantly does this for you.
- **Send a small number each day.** Slow and steady stays out of spam.
- **Only email addresses FullEnrich marks as valid.** Emails to addresses that don't exist **bounce**, and a high bounce rate tells providers you're spam. Reach everyone else on LinkedIn.
- **Plain text, no links** in your first email.

FOR EXAMPLE

Subject: your new sales hires

Hi Priya, we connected on LinkedIn last week. When B2B teams add sales reps, the bottleneck usually moves to lead flow. We helped [client] go from [x] to [y] leads a month. Worth a 15-minute chat?

THE PLATFORMS

instagram

visual, personal, and content too

BEST FOR

Founders and personal brands

STYLE

Slow and personal

AUTOMATION

None

I still think Instagram is really powerful. Using social media to build relationships before you sell is called **social selling**, and Instagram is perfect for it. It's visual, so your profile does a lot of the selling before you've even said hello. And it works both ways: the effort you put into making your posts look good is content creation too. Your outreach and your content build on each other.

Keep it human:

1. **Engage first.** Reply to a story or comment on a post a few times over a week.
2. **Open with them.** Your first DM reacts to something they posted. No pitch, no link.
3. **Move it on.** When there's interest, suggest a quick chat.

Don't automate DMs. It gets accounts restricted. And start with your **warm leads**: anyone already commenting on or replying to your content. They already know who you are.

FOR EXAMPLE

"Loved your story about hiring your first ops person, such a big moment. How are you finding getting leads in now there's more capacity?"

my 21-day sequence

eight touches, three platforms

Here's how it all comes together. A **sequence** is a planned set of touchpoints, and the **cadence** is the rhythm, how far apart they are. Find 100 people who fit your ICP, get their details from FullEnrich, add them to HeyReach and Instantly, then:

Day 1	View and engage View their profile, like or comment on a post. LINKEDIN
Day 3	Connect Short note or none. No pitch. LINKEDIN
Day 5	Email one Short, specific, small ask. EMAIL
Day 7	Message one If they've accepted. LINKEDIN
Day 10	Engage again Like or comment on another post. LINKEDIN
Day 12	Email two A new angle or useful idea. EMAIL
Day 15	Message two Or an Instagram DM if that's where they are. LINKEDIN
Day 21	Close the loop A friendly last email. Try again in a few months. EMAIL

TRACK EVERYTHING

Tracking is what turns this into a system. HeyReach shows you who's accepted, who's seen your message and who's replied. Instantly shows you who's opened your emails. So you always know who's warm and who to follow up with.

Every Friday, check four numbers: people contacted, replies, meetings booked and clients won. Your **conversion rate** between each one shows you exactly where your **funnel**, the journey from stranger to client, is leaking. Fix that step first.

holly's tips on sales psychology

they're people, not leads

Tools and sequences help, but the thing that actually wins clients is remembering there's a real person at the other end. Here's what I keep in mind every time I reach out.

There's a person reading it

Write like you'd talk to them over a coffee. If you wouldn't say it out loud, don't send it.

Don't sound like a robot

Or like AI. If ChatGPT wrote it, rewrite it in your own words. People can tell.

Be curious, not clever

Ask about them before you talk about you. Everyone likes talking about their own business.

A little persistence is fine

Following up isn't rude, it's normal. Just bring something new each time.

Make it easy to say no

People reply more when they don't feel trapped. "Not right now" is still a reply.

Reply fast

When someone replies, they're warm right now. Don't leave it until tomorrow.

REMEMBER

You're just a human showing someone what you do and how you could help. That's all sales really is.

the prompt

please copy everything below

THE PROMPT · COPY EVERYTHING BELOW

Please write my full outreach sequence for one prospect.

Sound like a real person, not AI. British English. No buzzwords, no fake urgency, no "just following up".

When I tell you who they are and what I sell, please write:

1. LINKEDIN CONNECTION NOTE

Under 200 characters. Specific to them. No pitch.

2. LINKEDIN MESSAGE

Three lines. Something specific, then a small question.

3. EMAIL ONE AND EMAIL TWO

Plain text, under 80 words each, lower-case subject under five words. Email two takes a new angle.

4. SECOND LINKEDIN MESSAGE OR INSTAGRAM DM

Short and relaxed.

5. CLOSE THE LOOP EMAIL

Friendly. Easy to say "not right now".

Please don't invent results. Leave a gap if I haven't given you one.

Please ask me who I'm contacting, what I noticed about them, what I sell, and one result I've got for a client.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for reading my sales playbook. The people who win clients aren't the smoothest talkers. They're the ones with a system who keep showing up. I can't wait to hear about your first booked call.

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