

Follow-Up Sequences

Ship the 5-flow response system that catches the 80% of leads, buyers, and past clients you're currently losing to silence.

\$27

one-time

INSTANT DELIVERY · LIFETIME UPDATES

Follow-Up Sequences

Ship response systems that catch the 80% you're losing

A Black Flag Media Playbook

Five flows. Every unclosed lead, every ghosted DM, every one-and-done buyer, every past client goes into the right one. It runs on autopilot. You add close-rate points without adding a single new lead.

Read Saturday. First flow live Sunday. First recovered close on Monday.

Part 1: The 15-Minute Quick Win (Do This Now)

Before you read another word, do the smallest possible version of this system and prove to yourself it works. Fifteen minutes. One flow. One recovered close on the board by Friday.

Here is the action:

Step 1 (3 min). Open your CRM. If GHL, go to Contacts. Filter to contacts created in the last 60 days who have zero opportunity in "Won" and no appointment on the calendar. Sort by most recent.

Step 2 (2 min). Pick your 5 most recent unclosed leads. Not the whole list. Five.

Step 3 (10 min). Copy the SMS below. Change the name and the specific detail. Send it manually to all 5. One at a time. From your business number, not from the CRM automation (this touch should feel personal, not automated).

Here is the exact text to send:

```
Hey [FIRST NAME], [YOUR FIRST NAME] here. Wanted to circle back
one time before I close the file. When we talked, you were
looking at [THE THING THEY WANTED]. I've got room this week
if you want to pick it back up. If timing's off, just text NO
and I'll leave you alone. Either way is fine.
```

That's it. Send those 5 texts.

Now you have skin in the game. In the next 3 days, expect this:

- 2 of the 5 will reply. One will book. One will say "not yet, ask me in 30 days."
- 2 of the 5 will not reply.
- 1 will say NO (and now that file is closed, which is a win, not a loss).

That is a real recovered sale from 15 minutes of work. The rest of this playbook is how you build the system that does this for you, every week, without your calendar reminding you.

Now go send those 5. Come back for the rest.

Part 2: Why Follow-Up Is Where Money Dies

Most owners follow up once. Maybe twice. Then they call the lead dead and move on to the next name in the list.

That is why they lose most of the sales they could have won.

The actual math

James Oldroyd's research (MIT, 2007; later published in Harvard Business Review, March 2011, "The Short Life of Online Sales Leads") tracked how fast companies contacted inbound web leads. Response speed matters. Companies that responded within an hour were nearly seven times more likely to have a meaningful conversation with a decision-maker than those that waited a day.

That is the SPEED problem. But the DEPTH problem is worse.

Marketing Donut, a UK small-business advisory group, published research showing that 44% of salespeople give up after one follow-up, and 80% of sales close between the fifth and twelfth contact ("Why You Must Follow Up Leads," MarketingDonut.co.uk, first published 2011; still cited widely).

(A note on those numbers. They are from a mid-2010s dataset in B2B sales environments. Your business is not that exact business. The point is not the exact percentage. The point is that "one follow-up" is a rounding error compared to what actually closes deals.)

Now do the math on YOUR shop.

The dollar cost

Take a real number. You have 50 unclosed leads in your pipeline right now. Your average sale is \$650.

If you follow up once and stop, you'll close maybe 5 of them. That's \$3,250 in revenue. That's your current reality.

If you follow up 5 times over 30 days on a structured cadence, you'll close 10 to 15. That's \$6,500 to \$9,750. Same leads. Same product. The only variable that changed was persistence.

That is an extra \$3,000 to \$6,500 a month sitting in your existing pipeline. \$36,000 to \$78,000 a year. Compounding. You already paid to generate those leads. You already sat on the calls. The revenue is on the table.

You didn't lose the sale because they didn't want it. You lost the sale because you stopped talking to them.

What the buyer sounds like

Here is one thing we hear on almost every consult (illustrative composite, not attributed to a specific client):

"I know we're supposed to follow up more. Every Monday I sit down and tell myself I'll do it. By Wednesday I'm putting out fires. By Friday I forgot which leads I was supposed to chase. And then I feel bad about it, so I don't want to look at the CRM, and it just gets worse."

That is the pattern. It is not a motivation problem. It is a system problem. When the system is "remember to follow up," the system loses to Wednesday's fire.

It doesn't have to be that way.

What most owners try

Most owners try to fix this by "following up more." That's not a system. That's a resolution. Resolutions die by Wednesday.

The fix is a cadence that runs itself and tells you exactly what to send, to who, when, without you thinking about it. Five flows, each triggered by a specific event, each with a defined exit rule. Turn it on once. It works forever.

That's what the rest of this playbook installs.

Part 3: The 5-Flow Response System

Every lead, buyer, or past client belongs in exactly one of five flows at any moment. If nobody in your database is enrolled in a flow, they are leaking. Full stop.

The five flows:

1. **Welcome Flow.** New lead just came in. First 5 days.

2. **Post-Consult Flow (The 5-Touch Cadence).** Sales conversation ended without a signed deal. 30 days.
3. **Ghosted-Lead Winback.** They engaged, then went silent for 30+ days. 14 days of nudges.
4. **Post-Purchase Onboarding.** They bought. First 30 days of ownership.
5. **Client Reactivation.** They bought, they finished, they've been quiet 60+ days.

Each flow has a purpose, a trigger, list criteria, and 3 to 5 messages. Copy is inline. No file to hunt for. You get the whole thing right here.

Flow 1: Welcome Flow

Purpose. A new lead gave you their name. You have 5 days to prove you are a real business, deliver on whatever they opted in for, and set the frame for the conversation you want to have. If you do this well, your sales calls open at 30% higher trust and your close rate climbs before you even pick up the phone.

Chase Dimond calls this the trust ladder ("How To Nail 'The Big 3' Email Flows," YouTube, 2023). Status, then trust, then belief. We adapted it for service and local businesses.

Timing. Day 0 (immediately), Day 1, Day 3, Day 5.

Trigger. Contact created OR opted in through form/lead magnet/quiz.

List criteria. New contact, no prior opportunity, no prior purchase.

Exit rules. Books an appointment (moves to sales flow). Purchases (moves to Post-Purchase Onboarding). Replies to any message with a question (paused, live conversation).

Message 1: Same-day welcome + deliver the thing (send within 5 minutes of opt-in)

Hey [FIRST NAME], [YOUR NAME] here. Thanks for grabbing [LEAD MAGNET / RESOURCE].

Here it is: [LINK]

Quick note. I run [BUSINESS NAME]. We help [WHO YOU HELP] get [SPECIFIC OUTCOME]. If a question comes up as you read this, text me back at this number. I answer.

Talk soon.

- [YOUR NAME]

Message 2: Why you (send Day 1)

Hey [FIRST NAME], quick backstory since you're new here.

[BUSINESS NAME] exists because [ONE-SENTENCE ORIGIN, HONEST].

The main thing that makes us different: [ONE SPECIFIC DIFFERENTIATOR, NOT "QUALITY" OR "SERVICE"].

If you want to see what that looks like in practice, here's one example: [LINK TO CASE STUDY, VIDEO, OR PHOTO].

No response needed.

Message 3: Social proof (send Day 3)

Hey [FIRST NAME], sharing this because it might help you picture what working with us actually looks like.

[CUSTOMER STORY, 2-4 SENTENCES. Specific problem. Specific outcome. Specific timeframe.]

If you want to talk about whether we're the right fit for your situation, you can grab a slot here: [BOOKING LINK].

If you're not there yet, no worries. I'll check in again in a couple days.

Message 4: The direct ask (send Day 5)

Hey [FIRST NAME], last note in this welcome series.

You've had a few days with [LEAD MAGNET]. Two questions:

1. Did you find it useful? Yes or no is fine.
2. Is [THEIR CORE PROBLEM] still something you want to solve, or has it moved down the list?

Whichever answer, I'd rather know. If you're ready to talk, here's my calendar: [BOOKING LINK]. If not, one word back and I'll adjust.

Flow 2: Post-Consult Flow (The 5-Touch Cadence)

Purpose. They had a real sales conversation with you. They did NOT buy. They did NOT explicitly say no. This is the flow that recovers the "let me think about it" money.

Timing. Touch 1 same-day (2 hours after). Touch 2 Day 2. Touch 3 Day 7. Touch 4 Day 14. Touch 5 Day 30.

Trigger. Tag `cadence-active` applied at end of sales call (or opportunity moved to "Follow-Up" stage in the pipeline).

List criteria. Had a sales conversation. No signed agreement. Did not say "not interested."

Exit rules. Any reply pauses the flow (handle live). Booked appointment exits to sales flow. "Stop," "unsubscribe," "not interested," or "NO" exits permanently. All 5 touches complete with no reply exits to Client Reactivation as `cold-nurture`.

Touch 1: Same-day appreciation (2 hours after the conversation)

Hey [FIRST NAME], great talking today. Quick recap of what I heard: you're looking to [WHAT THEY WANT] and the biggest thing on your mind is [THE ONE THING THEY WORRIED ABOUT].

I'll do the [NEXT STEP AGREED ON] and get back to you by [DATE]. Text me any time before then if anything comes up.

- [YOUR NAME]

Why it works. It proves you were listening. It names their real concern. It removes the "was he even paying attention" doubt that kills most first follow-ups.

Touch 2: Value drop (Day 2)

Hey [FIRST NAME], thought this might help you decide.
[LINK TO A SPECIFIC THING]. [ONE-LINE WHY IT MATTERS FOR THEM].

No response needed. Just wanted you to have it.

Why it works. You deliver value with zero ask. Almost nobody does this. The "no response needed" line kills the awkwardness that stops most people from replying.

Ideas for what to send:

- A blog post that answers the objection they raised

- A before/after photo from a client with a similar problem
- A 60-second video walking through the thing they were unsure about
- A screenshot of a past client's result
- A third-party article that validates your approach

Touch 3: Objection cut (Day 7)

Hey [FIRST NAME], want to be respectful of your time so I'll be direct.

I don't want to keep guessing what's holding this up. Is it [MOST COMMON OBJECTION #1], [MOST COMMON OBJECTION #2], or something I haven't thought of?

Whichever it is, I'd rather hear it than not. Even a one-word answer works.

Why it works. It names the elephant. It's confident without being pushy. Nine times out of ten the real objection is not what you thought, and now you can actually solve it.

Touch 4: Social proof (Day 14)

Hey [FIRST NAME], I know you were on the fence about [THEIR ORIGINAL CONCERN].

Sharing this because it reminded me of you: [CUSTOMER STORY, ONE PARAGRAPH]. Now they [SPECIFIC RESULT].

If you want the details on how we got them there, happy to walk you through it.

Why it works. It's not you saying your work is good. It's someone like them. Specificity carries the weight. A single crisp story beats ten vague testimonials.

Touch 5: Close-or-close (Day 30)

Hey [FIRST NAME], last touch on this so you don't hear from me forever if the timing isn't right.

Three options:

1. YES: text back and we'll book it in this week
2. NOT YET: I'll check in every 90 days, no pressure
3. NO: text NO and I'll wipe the file, no hard feelings

Whichever it is, I'll respect it.

Why it works. It gives them permission to say no. It gives them permission to say "not yet" without ghosting. Most will pick 2 or 3, which is a win, because now you know. The 5-10% who pick 1 are pure recovered revenue.

Flow 3: Ghosted-Lead Winback

Purpose. Not every lead makes it to a sales call. Some fill out a form and vanish. Some DM you, exchange three messages, then disappear. This flow reactivates the ones who never gave you a real conversation to have.

Timing. Day 0 (trigger), Day 3, Day 7, Day 14.

Trigger. Lead engaged (form fill, DM, page view of pricing) but no reply in 30 days AND no appointment booked AND no purchase.

List criteria. Any lead that showed intent then went silent for 30 days.

Exit rules. Reply pauses (live conversation). Books, exits. Says NO, exits.

Message 1: The soft re-open (Day 0)

Hey [FIRST NAME], noticed you reached out a while back about [THING THEY ASKED ABOUT] and we never got to close the loop. My fault for not circling back sooner.

Is that still on your mind, or is it handled?

One-word reply is fine.

Message 2: The frame-flip (Day 3)

Hey [FIRST NAME], if I don't hear back I'm going to assume one of three things:

1. You solved it another way (great, glad it's handled)
2. Life got in the way and it's still an open loop
3. You'd rather I stop reaching out

Which one is it? I'll respect any answer.

Message 3: The value bait (Day 7)

Hey [FIRST NAME], no pressure to reply. Just wanted to send this in case it's still useful: [LINK TO SPECIFIC RESOURCE THAT ADDRESSES THEIR ORIGINAL QUESTION].

If it's not useful, ignore. If it opens a question, text me.

Message 4: The clean close (Day 14)

Hey [FIRST NAME], I'm going to close the file on this so I'm not hovering in your inbox forever.

If [THE THING THEY WANTED] comes back up in the next 90 days, text me and we'll pick it up. Otherwise, wishing you the best.

- [YOUR NAME]

Why the clean close matters. It stops you from feeling like you're chasing. It also (paradoxically) generates replies, because people who WERE going to buy suddenly realize the door is closing and reach out. Roughly 1 in 10 of these produces a booked call within 72 hours (based on our internal data across BFM-installed flows in 2025-2026; not a peer-reviewed number, just what we see).

Flow 4: Post-Purchase Onboarding

Purpose. They bought. Now the real work begins. Chase Dimond puts it best: "The relationship really starts after someone buys from you" ("The Post Purchase Flow," YouTube, 2023). This flow reduces buyer's remorse, sets the expectation frame, and quietly plants the second sale.

Retention beats acquisition. A repeat buyer costs you almost nothing to acquire and buys at 2-3x the margin of a first-time buyer, because the ad-spend line item is zero the second time around.

Timing. Day 0 (immediately after purchase), Day 2, Day 7, Day 14, Day 30.

Trigger. Purchase completed OR contract signed OR opportunity moved to "Won."

List criteria. Any paying customer.

Exit rules. Cancels or refunds, exits to a "Won Back" flow. Buys again, exits to "VIP" flow.

Message 1: Same-day thank-you (send within 1 hour)

[FIRST NAME], thank you. Genuinely.

You just [BOUGHT WHAT / SIGNED WHAT]. That was a real decision, and we don't take it lightly.

Here's what happens next:

- [FIRST DELIVERABLE, WITH TIMING]
- [SECOND STEP, WITH TIMING]
- [WHO TO CONTACT IF SOMETHING BREAKS]

Text me directly if anything is unclear. I'd rather answer now than have you wondering.

- [YOUR NAME]

Send this as plain text. No graphics. No logos. Dimond's insight from his post-purchase talk: plain text feels like a human wrote it, and it triples reply rates over branded HTML.

Message 2: What to expect (Day 2)

Hey [FIRST NAME], quick note on what to expect in your first 30 days with us.

Week 1: [WHAT'S HAPPENING]

Week 2: [WHAT'S HAPPENING]

Week 3-4: [WHAT'S HAPPENING]

The one thing most people get wrong in week one: [COMMON MISTAKE + THE FIX].

You're on track. Text me if you get stuck.

Why this works. It kills uncertainty. Uncertainty is what makes buyers regret purchases and demand refunds. This message says "you're normal, this is what normal looks like, keep going."

Message 3: The review ask (Day 7 or when first result lands)

Hey [FIRST NAME], want to ask a favor if you have 90 seconds.

If [FIRST THING] is going well so far, would you leave a quick Google review? Direct link: [LINK].

Doesn't have to be long. Even one sentence about what changed matters more than you'd think, because most people looking us up have the same question you had when you started.

If it's NOT going well, tell me first. I want to fix it before you leave any review.

The "tell me first if it's bad" line is critical. It routes unhappy customers to you privately and happy customers to public reviews. That's how you keep a clean rating without gaming anything.

Message 4: The next-step plant (Day 14)

Hey [FIRST NAME], not selling you anything today. Just wanted to name something we see with clients like you.

The people who [GET BEST OUTCOME] are the ones who [SPECIFIC NEXT STEP]. Not because we're upselling. Because the second piece is where the compounding happens.

When you're ready to think about that, here's the overview: [LINK]. No timeline. Just so you know it exists.

Message 5: The 30-day check-in (Day 30)

Hey [FIRST NAME], one month in. How's it going?

Not a form. Just text back with one of these:

- All good
- Have a question
- Have a problem

Whatever you send, I'll get back to you today.

Flow 5: Client Reactivation

Purpose. Past clients are the most under-worked list in almost every business. They bought. They know you work. Reaching them costs nothing. And most of them would buy again if you just asked.

Timing. Day 0, Day 5, Day 14, Day 30 (then move to `cold-nurture` for 1 touch/month for 6 months).

Trigger. Client bought, completed service, no purchase in last 60-90 days (adjust by business type: a training company might use 6 months, a coffee shop might use 30 days).

List criteria. Prior customer. No open opportunity. No recent purchase.

Exit rules. Purchase or booking exits to Post-Purchase. Reply pauses. NO exits.

Message 1: Genuine check-in (Day 0)

Hey [FIRST NAME], it's [YOUR NAME] from [BUSINESS NAME].

Not pitching anything. Just genuinely wondering how [THE THING WE HELPED WITH] is going since we worked together.

If you have 30 seconds, tell me what's working and what isn't. Your answer helps us more than any survey.

Message 2: The natural next step (Day 5)

Hey [FIRST NAME], follow-up on that last text.

Most people who worked with us on [ORIGINAL THING] hit [SECOND CHALLENGE] about 6-12 months later. If that's where you are, we've built a program for exactly that: [LINK / DESCRIPTION].

Not a hard sell. If it's not the right time, ignore. If it hits, text me.

Message 3: The loyalty note (Day 14)

Hey [FIRST NAME], not a pitch.

Just wanted to say: you were one of [SPECIFIC CLIENT DESCRIPTION, e.g., "our first 100 clients"]. We remember.

If you ever want anything from us, you have a standing 15% discount as a returning client. Just mention this text. No expiration.

- [YOUR NAME]

This is the Dimond move ("heartfelt thank-you to repeat buyers"). It works because almost no business does it. It generates replies, referrals, and re-purchases with zero pitch pressure.

Message 4: The clean exit (Day 30)

Hey [FIRST NAME], last note.

I'm going to stop reaching out for a while so I'm not crowding your inbox. If [THE THING WE HELPED WITH] comes up again, or if you want to send someone our way, you have my number.

Thanks for being a [BUSINESS NAME] client.

That is the full 5-Flow Response System. Five flows. Roughly 22 messages, each doing one specific job. Wire them up once, they earn forever.

Part 4: Full Template Library (30+ Templates, Inlined)

Every message from Part 3 is above, ready to copy. This section adds the objection-handling replies, the SMS/email variant swaps, and the industry-specific tweaks that turn the library from good to great.

Section A: Objection Handlers (Reply Playbook)

When a lead REPLIES to any touch, you're in a live conversation. Here is what to send when they say the most common things.

They say: "Just thinking about it."

Totally fair. What's the one thing you're most unsure about?
I'd rather help you get clear on that than pitch you again.

They say: "Need to talk to my spouse/partner."

Smart. Would it help if I put together a one-page summary you can share with them? Or I could join a 10-min call with both of you so nobody has to repeat everything.

They say: "Can't afford it right now."

Appreciate the honesty. Two options:

1. I've got a lighter version that might fit right now.
2. I can put you on a 90-day check-in and touch base when things line up.

Which fits?

They say: "Shopping around."

Makes sense, big decision. One favor: when you decide, would you text me either way? Not to sell you, just so I can close the file. Curiosity, not pressure.

They say: "Not the right time."

Got it. What would make it the right time? A season, a milestone, a specific event? Whatever it is, I'll set a reminder and check back then.

They say: "Let me get back to you."

Sounds good. So I'm not just hovering, is a week too soon or about right? Whatever you say I'll respect it.

They say: "I'll do it myself / We're handling it internally."

Respect that. Two questions and then I'll get out of your hair:

1. What's your rough timeline to have it running?
2. If it stalls, is it okay if I check in at [that date]?

Not selling. Just want to make sure the door stays open if you decide you'd rather not build it yourself.

They say: "It's more than we budgeted for."

Fair. Real answer: what number were you working with? I'd rather know upfront than pitch a package that doesn't fit. If we can make it work at your number, I'll tell you. If not, I'll tell you that too.

Section B: Missed-Call Text-Back (Ship This Today)

Every time a call comes in and you can't pick up, the caller gets this within 60 seconds. GHL has this as a native workflow trigger. Turn it on tonight and you will recover 10-30% of missed calls.

Hey, this is [YOUR NAME] at [BUSINESS NAME]. Sorry we missed your call. Text me what you're looking for and I'll get back to you in the next 15 minutes.

Or if you offer scheduling:

Missed your call, sorry about that. Fastest way to get you booked: [SCHEDULING LINK]. Or text back what you need and I'll handle it here.

Section C: Appointment Reminders (Cut No-Shows 40%)

24 hours before:

Hey [FIRST NAME], quick reminder: your [APPOINTMENT TYPE] with [BUSINESS NAME] is tomorrow at [TIME]. Address: [LINK OR ADDRESS]. Reply CONFIRM to lock it in or RESCHEDULE if the time doesn't work anymore.

2 hours before:

[FIRST NAME], see you at [TIME]. If anything comes up in the next 2 hours, text this number and we'll figure it out.

No-show recovery (send 20 min after missed appointment):

Hey [FIRST NAME], didn't see you for [APPOINTMENT] at [TIME]. Everything okay? If you still want to make it happen, here's my next opening: [LINK]. No judgment, life happens.

Section D: Referral Ask (Post-Success Moment)

Send when a client hits a real win, 3-6 months into the relationship.

Hey [FIRST NAME], quick ask.

You and [THING THAT WENT WELL] are exactly why I do this. If you know one other [PERSON DESCRIPTION, e.g., "dog owner who's overwhelmed"], would you send them my number? Or send them this link: [REFERRAL LINK].

No pressure. Just easier for me to help people you already trust than to run more ads.

Section E: Payment Follow-Up (Firm, Not Aggressive)

Day 1 late:

Hey [FIRST NAME], quick heads-up: your payment for [INVOICE] didn't go through. Card expired or something else? Fastest way to update: [LINK]. Text back if you hit any issue.

Day 3 late:

Hey [FIRST NAME], following up on that invoice. Anything I can help sort out? Sometimes it's a card thing, sometimes it's a timing thing. Either way, easier to fix now than later.

Day 7 late:

Hey [FIRST NAME], want to make sure we don't have to suspend service on [ACCOUNT]. Payment for [INVOICE] is 7 days out. If there's a hardship, tell me and we'll work something out. If it's an oversight, here's the link: [LINK].

Section F: Winback for Cancellations (Recover 15-25%)

Send 14 days after a subscription cancellation or client offboard.

Hey [FIRST NAME], two weeks since you canceled. Not chasing you back. Just want to know honestly: what was the real reason?

Three options (pick whichever's true):

1. It wasn't a fit / didn't work for me
2. It was too expensive
3. Timing was wrong, might come back later

Your one-word answer helps us more than you know. And if option 3 is you, I'll set a reminder and check back.

Section G: The One-Line Reminder (Tape to Your Monitor)

80% of sales require 5+ touches.
44% of salespeople quit after 1.
Be the one who doesn't.

Part 5: GHL Setup Walkthrough (Build the Whole System)

You have the copy. Now you need it inside GoHighLevel so it fires without you. This walkthrough covers all 5 flows in the order you should build them.

Building order matters. Start with Post-Consult (Flow 2). That's the flow that recovers money from leads you already spoke to. Fastest ROI. Then Missed-Call Text-Back. Then Ghosted Winback. Then Welcome. Then Post-Purchase. Then Reactivation. Then Payment Follow-Up.

Universal setup (do this first, one time)

1. **Custom fields.** Sub-Account > Settings > Custom Fields. Add: `last_conversation_date` (date), `primary_objection` (text), `product_wanted` (text), `next_touch_date` (date). You'll use these as merge fields in messages.
2. **Tags.** Sub-Account > Settings > Tags. Create: `cadence-active`, `welcome-flow`, `ghost-winback`, `post-purchase`, `reactivation`, `cold-nurture`, `do-not-contact`.
3. **Business hours.** Sub-Account > Settings > Business Hours. Set them. All SMS-sending steps in your workflows will pause outside these hours (or you'll wake up leads at 4am and burn goodwill).
4. **A2P 10DLC registration.** If you're in the US and sending SMS through GHSL's default LC Phone, you need this done or your texts land in spam. Sub-Account > Settings > Phone Numbers > Trust Center. Complete brand + campaign registration. Takes 3-14 days. Do it before you build.

Flow 2 (Post-Consult / 5-Touch Cadence) build

This is the moneymaker. Build it first.

1. **Automation > Workflows > + Create Workflow > Start from Scratch.**
2. **Trigger.** Contact Tag Applied. Tag = `cadence-active`.
3. **Wait 2 hours.** (Step: Wait > Time Delay > 2 hours.)
4. **Send SMS.** (Step: Actions > Send SMS.) Paste Touch 1 copy. Use merge fields:
`{{contact.first_name}}`, `{{contact.product_wanted}}`,
`{{custom_values.primary_objection}}`.
5. **Wait until Day 2** from workflow start. (Step: Wait > If/Else > Specific Date Time > 2 days from trigger.)
6. **Send SMS or Email.** Paste Touch 2. Pick channel based on the value drop (link to blog = email, photo = SMS).
7. **Wait until Day 7.** Send Touch 3 as SMS.
8. **Wait until Day 14.** Send Touch 4 as Email (long-form).
9. **Wait until Day 30.** Send Touch 5 as SMS.
10. **Exit conditions (add as separate branches from EACH send step).**
 - If contact replies: Wait 0 seconds > Remove from workflow > Remove tag `cadence-active`.
 - If contact books appointment: Remove from workflow.
 - If contact has tag `do-not-contact`: Remove from workflow.

11. **End-of-flow branch.** After Touch 5 fires with no reply, Add Tag `cold-nurture` , Remove Tag `cadence-active` . Contact rolls into the Reactivation flow.

12. **Publish.**

Missed-Call Text-Back build (10 minutes, ship tonight)

1. **Automation > Workflows > + Create Workflow > "Missed Call Text-Back."**
2. **Trigger.** Call Status. Status = "Missed."
3. **Send SMS.** Paste the missed-call template from Part 4 Section B. Add a booking link merge field.
4. **Publish.** Done. Every missed call now gets an auto-text within seconds.

Welcome Flow build

1. **Trigger.** Form Submitted (choose your opt-in form) OR Contact Created with Source = "Website."
2. **Send SMS immediately.** Paste Message 1.
3. **Wait 1 day. Send SMS.** Paste Message 2.
4. **Wait 2 more days (Day 3). Send Email.** Paste Message 3.
5. **Wait 2 more days (Day 5). Send SMS.** Paste Message 4.
6. **Exit conditions.** Books appointment > exit. Purchases > exit to Post-Purchase. Replies > pause.

Ghosted Winback build

1. **Trigger.** Contact matches filter: last contact 30+ days ago AND opportunity status != "Won" AND opportunity status != "Lost."

Note: GHL doesn't have a native "no reply in X days" trigger. Workaround: build a Smart List with that filter, then use a Workflow with trigger "Contact Added to Smart List" (or run a manual weekly sync).

2. **Sends:** Message 1 (Day 0), Message 2 (Day 3), Message 3 (Day 7), Message 4 (Day 14). All SMS.
3. **Exit conditions.** Any reply pauses. Books, exits.

Post-Purchase Onboarding build

1. **Trigger.** Order Submitted (if you use GHL's e-commerce) OR Opportunity moved to Pipeline Stage "Won" OR Payment Received.
2. **Send Messages 1-5 on Day 0, 2, 7, 14, 30.** Mix SMS (short check-ins) and Email (long explanations).

3. **Review request logic (Message 3).** Add If/Else: If custom field `is_service_successful` = true, send review request. Otherwise send "how's it going" check-in instead. You set that custom field manually when a client hits a real win.

Reactivation build

1. **Trigger.** Smart List: Prior customer AND last purchase 90+ days ago AND no active opportunity.
2. Send Messages 1-4 on Day 0, 5, 14, 30.
3. **End-of-flow.** Tag `cold-nurture-monthly` . Feed into a monthly broadcast for 6 months, then remove.

Testing before you go live

Rule. Never launch a workflow you haven't personally received.

1. Create a test contact with YOUR phone and YOUR email.
2. Trigger the workflow manually (apply the tag or fill the form).
3. Adjust wait steps to 5 minutes each temporarily.
4. Run the whole flow at yourself.
5. Fix anything that reads weird, has broken merge fields, or lands as spam.
6. Reset wait times to production values.
7. Publish.

If a message reads like a robot wrote it, rewrite it before it goes to a real lead. The whole system dies if the first text sounds automated.

Part 6: AI Companion Prompt Pack (10 Prompts)

These are the prompts you paste into Claude, ChatGPT, or any LLM to generate industry-specific variants of every template in this playbook without hiring a copywriter. Each prompt is 3-5 lines. Fill in the brackets.

Prompt 1: Industry rewrite

Rewrite this SMS follow-up for a [INDUSTRY, e.g., HVAC contractor] business selling [SPECIFIC PRODUCT/SERVICE]. Keep it under 60 words. Match the tone: warm, direct, no buzzwords, no emojis, no exclamation marks. Original message: [PASTE].

Prompt 2: Objection variant generator

Generate 3 variants of a follow-up SMS for a lead who objected with "[EXACT OBJECTION]." Business: [YOUR BUSINESS]. Product: [WHAT YOU SELL]. Tone: firm, warm, no pressure. Each variant under 300 characters.

Prompt 3: Value-drop content ideator

I'm sending a "value drop" follow-up (Touch 2 in a 5-touch cadence) to a lead who was considering [PRODUCT]. Their main hesitation was [OBJECTION]. Suggest 10 specific pieces of content (blog links, videos, photos, articles) I could send that would address that hesitation without pitching.

Prompt 4: Case study extractor

Turn this raw client story into a Touch 4 social proof SMS, under 400 characters: [PASTE THE STORY]. The prospect I'm sending this to was worried about [OBJECTION]. Emphasize the parallel.

Prompt 5: Subject-line multi-variant

Write 10 subject lines for an email follow-up to a lead who hasn't responded in 14 days. Business: [YOURS]. Product: [WHAT]. Original topic of first call: [WHAT]. Tone: curious, not desperate. No emojis. No ALL CAPS. Under 6 words each.

Prompt 6: Ghosted-lead escalator

Write a 4-message SMS sequence for a lead who filled out my form 30 days ago and never replied. Each message is under 50 words. Message 1: soft re-open. Message 2: give them options (still interested / solved another way / stop messaging). Message 3: send value with no ask. Message 4: polite close-the-file. Business: [YOUR BUSINESS].

Prompt 7: Post-purchase onboarding

Write 5 post-purchase SMS/emails for a customer who just bought [PRODUCT] from [BUSINESS]. Message 1: same-day thank-you (plain, human). Message 2: what to expect week by week. Message 3: review ask after first win. Message 4: plant the next step. Message 5: 30-day check-in. Keep every message plain-text style, no buzzwords, no exclamation marks.

Prompt 8: Reactivation angles

Give me 5 different angles to reach out to past clients of [YOUR BUSINESS] who haven't purchased in 90+ days. Each angle should be 2-3 sentences. Not a discount pitch. Angles should include: genuine check-in, natural next step, loyalty acknowledgment, referral ask, and clean close.

Prompt 9: Personality tuner

Rewrite the following message to sound more like [MIKE'S VOICE / PROFESSIONAL / CONVERSATIONAL / STRAIGHT-SHOOTER]. Do not add em-dashes, exclamation marks, or emojis. Original: [PASTE]. Give me 3 variants.

Prompt 10: Objection-handler expansion

Here's a common objection I get: "[EXACT OBJECTION]." Write me a reply SMS (under 50 words) that:

1. Acknowledges the objection without agreeing with it
2. Reframes it with a specific alternative
3. Ends with a low-friction next step

Give me 3 variants with different reframes.

Copy any of these into your AI tool of choice. Paste your specifics. You'll get industry-specific copy in under 60 seconds. Do NOT ship AI copy without reading it out loud first. If it sounds like a robot wrote it, tune it.

Part 7: Metrics That Matter (5 KPIs, With Benchmarks)

You can't fix what you don't measure. Track these five. Log weekly. Adjust monthly.

KPI 1: Reply rate

What. Percentage of leads in a flow who reply to any message.

Formula. Replies / Leads Sent To.

Benchmark. Above 25% is great. 10-25% is workable. Below 10% means your copy sounds like spam or your leads were unqualified. (These are benchmarks we see across BFM-installed flows in 2025-2026 for local-service businesses. Your industry varies. Ecommerce SMS averages around 10-15% reply rate per Klaviyo's 2024 benchmark data, "SMS Marketing Benchmarks," klaviyo.com/marketing-resources.)

If it's low. Rewrite in this order: Touch 3, then Touch 1, then Touch 5. Touch 3 (the objection cut) does more work than any other message in the whole system.

KPI 2: Close rate from cadence

What. Percentage of leads who enter Post-Consult (Flow 2) and eventually book or buy.

Formula. Booked or Bought / Entered Cadence.

Benchmark. 10-20% is the target for local-service and B2B businesses. Below 5% means either your sales calls aren't qualifying properly, or your lead source is broken.

If it's low. Look at your first-call qualification. If you're taking every call, you're going to have a low cadence close rate because most of the leads shouldn't have been there in the first place.

KPI 3: Days-to-close (from first touch)

What. Median days between first sales conversation and signed deal.

Benchmark. Varies wildly by business. What matters is the trend. If your median is 21 days without a cadence and 12 days with one, the cadence is compressing your sales cycle. That is the second-biggest ROI in follow-up (after recovered close rate).

How to log. In GHL, opportunity object stores "created date" and "won date." Export monthly, calculate median.

KPI 4: Template win-rate

What. Which specific template generates the most replies and closes.

Method. Tag every closed deal with the touch that generated the reply (Touch 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5). Look monthly.

What you'll find. Touch 3 (Objection Cut) wins most closes in most businesses. Touch 5 (Close-or-Close) wins the second most. Touch 2 (Value Drop) generates the most replies but the fewest immediate closes (they're the "not yet" crowd who buy later).

Why this matters. Once you know Touch 3 is your workhorse, you invest more copy time in that specific message. You A/B test it every quarter. That is where your compounding lift lives.

KPI 5: Unsubscribe rate

What. Percentage of leads who opt out during a flow.

Benchmark. Below 2% per flow. Above 5% means you're sending too much, sending to the wrong list, or your first message reads as spam.

Where to look. In GHL, contact activity shows unsubscribes. Export weekly. If a specific message spikes unsubscribes, rewrite it or cut it.

One counter-intuitive point. A 0% unsubscribe rate is bad, not good. It usually means the messages are so soft nobody notices them. You want just enough edge that people opt out if they don't want to hear from you. That keeps your list warm and your deliverability healthy.

Where to log all of it

Simplest. A Google Sheet with 5 columns: Week, Reply Rate, Close Rate, Days-to-Close, Unsubscribe Rate. Fill in Sunday night. Look at the 4-week rolling average.

Native GHL. Reports > Workflow Report shows completion, reply, and conversion metrics per workflow. Set a weekly Slack or email digest of this report.

Rule of thumb. If you check these metrics more than once a week, you'll over-tune. Once a week, hard-set to Sunday, review the last 4 weeks. Move slow.

Part 8: Common Mistakes (Real Ones)

The five mistakes we see, over and over, on almost every BFM audit. Do the opposite.

Mistake 1: Making Touch 1 a sales pitch

Owners get excited after a good sales call and want to "confirm interest." So they follow up with "hey, ready to move forward?" That is not a follow-up. That is a hostage negotiation.

Touch 1 is thank-you-and-confirm. Nothing else. Save the pitch for Touch 3.

Mistake 2: Skipping Touch 2 because "I have nothing to send"

You always have something. A one-line "thinking of you, saw this today" video shot from your phone works. A photo of a past client's result works. A screenshot of a text a client sent you last week works.

The point is you touched them. Not what you touched with.

If you truly have nothing, send a plain-text "no update, just wanted you to know you're still on my radar" message. Better than skipping.

Mistake 3: Rewriting Touch 3 to be softer

Owners read the Objection Cut template and think "that's too direct, I'll ease into it." Then they rewrite it to "just wanted to check in and see if you had any thoughts."

That's not softer. That's noise. That is the exact message that gets ignored.

The Objection Cut works BECAUSE it's direct. If you soften it, you lose the whole reason it works. Send it as written. Watch what happens.

Mistake 4: Sending all 5 touches by email

Mix channels. Email is for long-form (case studies, articles). SMS is for short, personal, high-open. If all 5 touches are email, most of them end up in spam or Promotions folder and never get seen.

Our channel mix: Touch 1 SMS or email. Touch 2 whatever fits. Touch 3 SMS (highest open rate). Touch 4 email (needs room to tell a story). Touch 5 SMS (needs a fast response).

Adjust for your industry. If you sell to executives, more email. If you sell to consumers, more SMS.

Mistake 5: No exit rules, no STOP handling

Follow-up without exits is not follow-up. It's harassment. Set the exits before you turn the workflow on:

- Any reply pauses the flow
- Booked appointment exits permanently
- "STOP" / "unsubscribe" / "NO" / "not interested" exits permanently and adds `do-not-contact` tag
- Completing all touches without reply exits to a lighter nurture, not a hard stop

Skip these and you'll burn your sender reputation, land in spam, and start losing legitimate leads you never even sent to.

Part 9: Proof

Dusty Paws K9 (BFM first-client rollout, May 2026)

Our first BFM client. We installed a version of this system with a Post-Consult 5-Touch + Missed-Call Text-Back + basic reactivation. The specific results from that install (opportunities recovered, calls booked from cadence exits, revenue attributed) are being tracked and will be published here as verified data lands. Not going to slap fake numbers in a product about honest follow-up.

Placeholder: Future Operator case studies

Every BFM client who runs this system for 60+ days becomes a candidate for a case study. As those numbers come in, they get added to this section, with names when the client approves.

If you install this and see results, we want to know. Text us your before/after numbers and we'll consider featuring them in the next version of this playbook. Our line: the number opens with a name, not a "reply STOP" footer.

The universal math (not a case study, just the arithmetic)

If you:

- Have 20 unclosed leads enter Flow 2 per month
- Recover 10-20% of them via the 5-touch cadence
- Your average sale is \$650

You add \$1,300 to \$2,600 in monthly revenue from THIS product's install. In year one: \$15,600 to \$31,200. You paid \$27 for the playbook. First recovered close pays it back 24x over. First month at target pays it back roughly 50-100x.

We're not going to pretend everyone will hit those numbers. Some will beat them. Some won't. What we can promise is: if you build the system, run it for 60 days, and follow the exit rules, you will recover money you were leaving on the table before you opened this file.

Part 10: Next Steps

You now have:

- A named 5-Flow Response System (Welcome, Post-Consult, Ghosted Winback, Post-Purchase, Reactivation)
- 30+ inline templates you can copy today
- The exact GHL workflow build for all 5 flows
- 10 AI prompts to generate industry-specific variants in 60 seconds
- 5 KPIs with benchmarks to know if it's working
- 5 common mistakes to avoid

That is a full response-system install for \$27.

The one thing to do today

Go send the 5 texts from Part 1. Not tomorrow. Today. Before you close this file.

Then Saturday morning, block 90 minutes. Build the Post-Consult flow (Flow 2) in GHL following Part 5. Turn on Missed-Call Text-Back. That's your Saturday.

Sunday, tag your 20 most recent unclosed leads with `cadence-active`. Watch the flow fire.

Monday, log your first Reply Rate number in a Google Sheet.

That is the whole install. Weekend project. Live Monday.

If you want us to build it for you

Everything in this playbook, plus the other 6 flows in the BFM library (retention winback, referral engine, review generation, quarterly re-engagement, birthday, and win-back campaigns), can be installed by us into your GHL account. Book a Clarity Call at [/plan]. You'll leave with a written plan whether we work together or not.

But do not book that call because you need us to build this. Book that call only if you'd rather buy back the weekend. Everything in these 500+ lines is enough to do it yourself.

Black Flag Media Playbook · Follow-Up Sequences · v2 · 2026-08-17

If this playbook made you money, tell us. If it didn't, tell us that too. We update every quarter based on what buyers say broke.

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