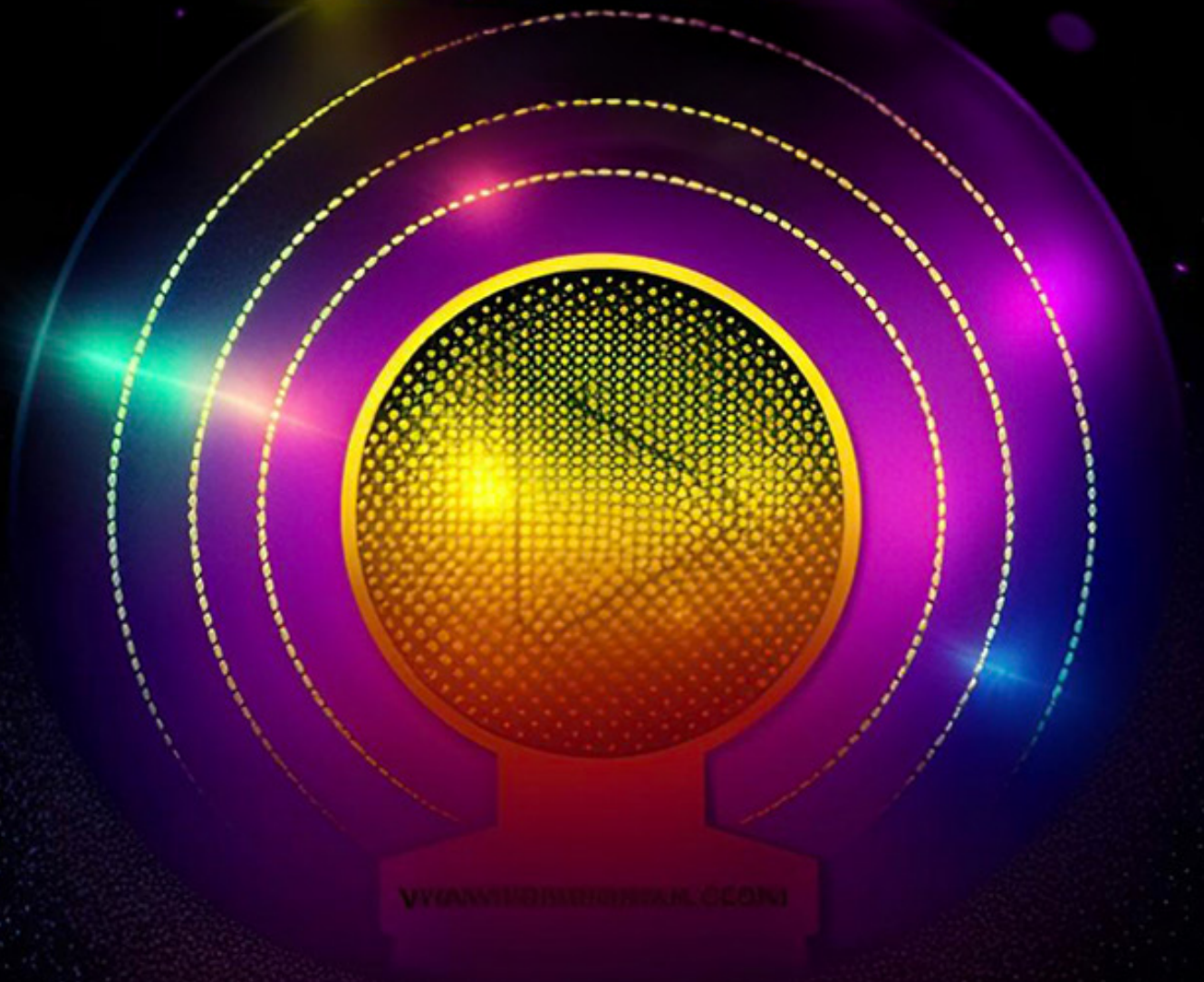# LEADSCALE

Current State - The Challenges we Face

Skip:
Hello and welcome to our second instalment of the Gen Five Podcast. With me today is Francis. Hey, Frankie, how are you doing?

Frankie:
Hello, Skip. Glad to be here.

Skip:
In our last conversation, we laid down the vision for what we're trying to achieve with Gen Five. I won't rehash the whole thing, but essentially, we're aiming to move from a state where there's significant human involvement in B2B lead generation to a more automated and efficient process. Right now, it takes humans to identify needs, define specifications, clarify those specifications, and translate them into something the sellers can use to fulfil the orders for data. This manual process continues until the data ultimately gets back to the client, who then tries to sell their products or services to these new leads.

Frankie:
Exactly. What we're doing with Gen Five is creating an intermediate, transitional step. We're helping people get used to the idea of not needing to be so deeply involved, while also teaching them a new approach to B2B lead generation. This will eventually lead to a fully programmatic system, where choices are made via dropdowns or other user-friendly interfaces, which is then communicated directly to the sellers' systems, which sends the data back and pumps it into the client's CRM—making everyone happy.

Skip:
What are some of the problems Gen Five will solve?

Francis:
It's about improving both processes and practices. These two terms might seem interchangeable, but they're quite different. The process is the specific steps involved in executing a campaign, while the practice is the overall approach or strategy. For example, budget planning is a practice, while the steps taken to plan that budget are the process.

Skip:
What are the problems you're seeing now?

Francis:
Most of the issues we encounter stem from the pre-lead process—how campaigns are planned, budgets set, and agreements made. Gen Five is intended to replace our existing Gen Three and Gen Four functionalities, which focus mostly on campaign delivery and execution. Right now, we get involved once a campaign budget is agreed upon and contracts are signed. But often, by the time we receive the campaign documents, we see problems—like missing information or contradictory details. Even when everything seems fine at first, issues can arise once the campaign starts, usually traceable back to flaws in the pre-lead process.

Skip:
So, it's about addressing the root cause?

Francis:
Yes, exactly. There are four broad areas where we see challenges: communication, reliance on humans, lack of industry standards, and systemic lack of transparency. Communication, in particular, is difficult and often poorly organized, which leads to amplified problems due to human error.

Skip:
Let's talk more about those challenges in communication.

Francis:
Communication only works if both parties understand what's being conveyed. But in our industry, communication can happen over so many different platforms—Teams, Slack, email, phone calls, even over lunch. This makes it incredibly hard to keep track of what was agreed upon. We've engaged with a UI/UX agency to help us design a solution. They've been shocked by how things currently work in our industry. Even a simple task like responding to an RFP can involve managing 15 separate email chains, each with its own set of documents and details. It's chaotic and unsustainable.

Skip:
And that chaos ties into the second problem area, reliance on humans.

Francis:
Absolutely. Human error is a major issue. People make mistakes, and when they do, it can have massive consequences. This creates a sense of dread for many people in our industry. They fear making a mistake that could cost their company millions. Our goal with Gen Five is to reduce that dread by creating systems that prevent these errors from happening in the first place.

Skip:
You mentioned earlier that there's a third problem area—a lack of industry standards.

Francis:
Right. The lack of standards makes it almost impossible for communication to be truly effective. For example, the term "IT decision maker" might mean different things to different people. Without standard definitions, even the best communication systems will struggle. Implementing these standards will be one of the biggest challenges for us, but it's crucial for the industry to operate more efficiently.

Skip:
And the fourth problem area?

Francis:
The fourth area is a result of the first three: a systemic lack of transparency and control. This is especially problematic when teams are working on campaigns, and one person is out on holiday. The remaining team members struggle to figure out where things stand because there's no clear record of what's been done. This lack of transparency can lead to serious issues, especially during audits or when trying to reconcile budgets.

Skip:
It sounds like Gen Five will bring much-needed order to the chaos.

Francis:
That's the idea. By addressing these issues—improving communication, reducing human error, establishing industry standards, and increasing transparency—we can create a more efficient, reliable system that benefits everyone in the industry.

Skip:
Francis, thank you for this fascinating conversation. I'm looking forward to our next session, where we'll dive deeper into campaign communications.

Frankie:
Thanks, Skip. I can't wait!

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info@leadscale.com