



CASE STUDY
Sales Research

okta



SCIENCE * DATA



okta

Case Study: Sales Research

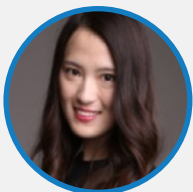
OKTA AGGRESSIVELY SCALES LEAD GEN WITH 1 MILLION CONTACT RECORDS ENRICHED BY CIENCE

Publicly Traded Identity Cloud Company's Acquisition Marketing Team Achieves Significant CAGR of Lead Gen with CIENCE Data Research Capabilities

About Okta

Okta is the leading independent provider of identity for the enterprise. The Okta Identity Cloud enables organizations to securely connect the right people to the right technologies at the right time. With over 6,500 pre-built integrations to applications and infrastructure providers, Okta customers can easily and securely use the best technologies for their business.

Over 8,950 organizations, including Engie, JetBlue, Nordstrom, Takeda Pharmaceutical, Teach for America, T-Mobile and Twilio, trust Okta to help protect the identities of their workforces and customers.



Linda Gong

Acquisition Marketing Manager

Industry

Computer Software

Website

okta.com



OKTA'S CHALLENGE

Okta's software is valued by a wide spectrum of industries, and had a highly developed Buyer Persona, with Decision Makers falling into 3 buckets: IT, Security, and Product. One of the challenges Okta faced was sourcing decision makers' contact info to take their outbound motions to the next level.

Prior to working with CIENCE Data, Okta's business development and sales teams used to do all of their contact research internally, and relied heavily on Demand Gen cornerstones including webinars, white papers, and trade shows to acquire leads. At the time, there was little sophisticated targeting, consistency, or predictability at the top of funnel.

Okta sought a partner to scale contact acquisition efforts to empower their U.S. SDRs to focus on prospecting with accurate contact data.

With regards to Outbound, Okta saw enhanced custom sales research as an opportunity to level-up their contact acquisition strategy and gain a competitive edge in their Outbound motions. They found that some subscription-based research tools had decayed contact data, especially direct phone numbers. An additional pain point was the difficulty (and sometimes outright inability) to acquire accurate email addresses and phone numbers for their ideal decision makers using various social media and research tools. These data validation and cleansing issues were causing enormous time inefficiencies.

With sights set on driving new revenue and creating more sales opportunities, Okta sought an experienced, expert external prospect data and lead generation services company to augment, supplement, and replace some of their internal efforts.



WHY OKTA CHOSE CIENCE DATA AS THEIR LEAD GENERATION PARTNER



"It's really about building a scalable Lead Gen system," says Linda Gong, Acquisition Marketing Manager at Okta. "In the beginning, we primarily focused on our inbound motion, however, we quickly realized that if we wanted to sell at scale and have predictable growth, we needed to focus on our outbound motion too. However, relying on the sales team to do their own contact research wasn't scalable, and we needed to find a solution. We know what personas will be interested in Okta and we want to target those decision-makers in a scalable way."

There were several factors that influenced Okta's decision making process when choosing a lead generation partner.

First and foremost, Okta sought the highest data quality available. They were also looking for a team of people that could support them and handle frequent, urgent requests. Also of importance was the desire for a strong, trust-driven working relationship with their outsourced research team. In addition to these requirements, the CIENCE Data team has built custom processes and tools to ensure accuracy and accelerate the transfer of data and information seamlessly to the Okta acquisition marketing team to use for their outbound go-to-markets.



"We had four primary criteria for a contact research partner: Data quality, contact acquisition at scale, research team support, and ability to build a strong working relationship based on trust," said Gong. CIENCE Data has invested heavily in new and proprietary tools, processes, and training for its people in order to find, curate, and validate hard-to-find contact data.

Gong continues, *"We've been delighted with CIENCE on all four points. After evaluating a few different vendors, we decided to use CIENCE as its data services meet Okta's contact acquisition needs to facilitate the company's expansion."*

HOW CIENCE DATA HELPS OKTA MEET THEIR GROWTH OBJECTIVES

Instead of simply seeking to obtain generalized lead lists, Okta tasked CIENCE Data to build customized, targeted, high-value contact information for specialized personas at very specific organizations. Okta also sought to improve the accuracy and output around contact acquisition.

Rather than Okta's internal team spending countless hours seeking and verifying accurate prospect contact information, CIENCE Data provides them fresh, enriched and custom data to support their sales development teams. CIENCE Data's head researcher, Natalie German – dedicated to Okta – leads the analysis of Okta's database and looks for gaps in persona contact coverage.

"Based on these results, we adjust our research in order to fill in gaps such as tracking contact job changes, a key indicator for Okta's outbound motions," said German. "Our system gives us the flexibility to deliver timely sales data in a market that isn't stagnant. The benefits to Okta's sales team are trust, accuracy, and new information as it's needed to win more deals."

"To use CIENCE to do research is very helpful and efficient," says Gong.

2,800

weekly hours saved by
Okta's teams due to
CIENCE Data's research

~1 Million

contact records
researched and
enriched

99.9%


effective contact
data accuracy

OKTA GAINS OUTBOUND EFFICIENCIES AND PRECISION WITH CIENCE NOW

When Okta is looking to launch a product or feature, CIENCE Data provides accurate info for personas in sectors that Okta had not previously explored. This practice ensures that Okta has the sales intelligence they need before initiating any sales outreach.




The sales intelligence gained through CIENCE Data research also enables Okta to develop new acquisition strategies for new markets which, in turn, creates demand for more data. *"We got lots of insights from contact acquisition, even from the account-level data,"* says Gong.



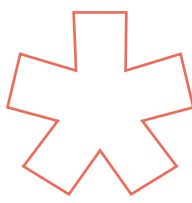
All the data Okta receives from CIENCE Data is cleansed and enriched so their database management team can preserve their time to focus on more important priorities. Okta is also able to harness data from their own sales and marketing teams to create suppression lists which allows CIENCE to refine research and better curate lead lists.

The common understanding of needs is the foundation for Okta and CIENCE's ongoing partnership. Over the years as CIENCE Data has gained the trust of Okta, they can deliver optimal results with minimal direction. This saves Okta's team valuable time and resources.

IMPROVING THE PROCESS - LEARNING FROM A POSITIVE BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP



The Okta Acquisition Marketing team and CIENCE Data leveraged their strong working relationship to develop procedural efficiencies. Over the course of the two-plus year partnership, processes are continually upgraded to accelerate project time frames, resulting in 50x contact data processing times to meet Okta's SLAs and aggressive growth objectives.



"They're super professional, helpful, and very flexible. They listen to us and respond to any urgent requests regarding validation, accuracy, and additional data attributes. We discuss and find a solution," says Gong about CIENCE.


CIENCE continues to build and optimize proprietary contact acquisition software and tools to support Okta's acquisition marketing objectives. These are aimed at increasing data accuracy and providing dashboards for better visibility and faster actionable insights.

"The team is able to improve along the way and that is very helpful for us," says Gong.

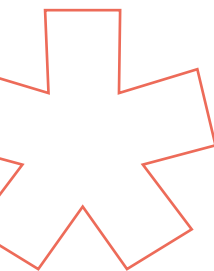
The CIENCE Data team joins Okta's working group meetings as they prepare cross-functional campaigns, affording visibility and transparency. Okta trusts CIENCE to be an integral member of their team.



NUMBERS THAT DRIVE SUCCESS



Since the beginning of Okta's and CIENCE's partnership, **CIENCE has researched and enriched more than 1 million contacts with a 99.9% effective accuracy rate.** Okta's Acquisition Marketing has seen significant improvement in their sales pipeline performance. As CIENCE built new tools and processes to scale contact research and enrichment, Okta continues to make impressive gains attributable to their strategic contact acquisition efforts, with attribution modeling tied to the organization's Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of Lead Generation.



"If I can give you a 12, I would do that," states Gong, referring to her willingness to refer CIENCE Data to a friend or colleague. "But I'll give you 10."



DATA



CIENCE * DATA



Say Hello:

548 Market St #99737
San Francisco CA
94104-5401 US

+1 (949) 424-2906
hello@cience.com