THIRD EDITION

State of
Sales

Insights and trends
from over 2,900 sales
professionals worldwide
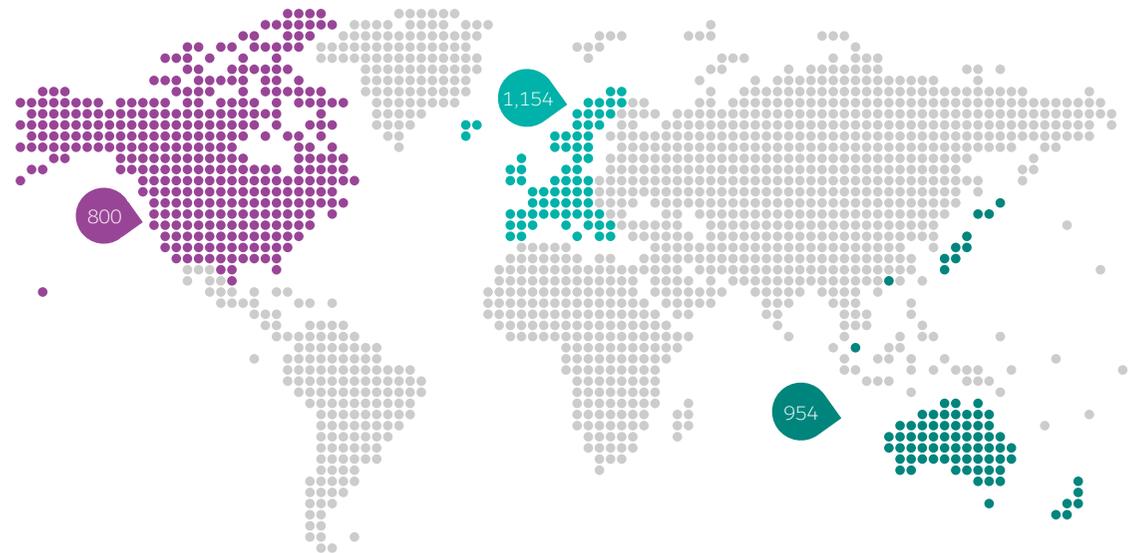
About This Report

For the third edition of the "State of Sales" report, Salesforce Research surveyed over 2,900 global sales professionals and leaders to discover:

- Which overall trends are changing the role of sales?
- What challenges do sales teams face in the midst of these changes?
- What are the current and future roles of new technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) as they relate to the sales profession?

Data in this report is from a blind survey conducted from February 12 through March 15, 2018, that generated 2,908 responses from full-time sales professionals in the U.S., Canada, U.K./Ireland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, Australia/New Zealand, Hong Kong, and Singapore. All respondents are third-party panelists (not limited to Salesforce customers). See page 55 for detailed respondent demographics.

Due to rounding, not all percentage totals in this report equal 100%. All comparison calculations are made from total numbers (not rounded numbers).

Salesforce Research provides data-driven insights to help businesses transform how they drive customer success. Browse all reports at salesforce.com/research.
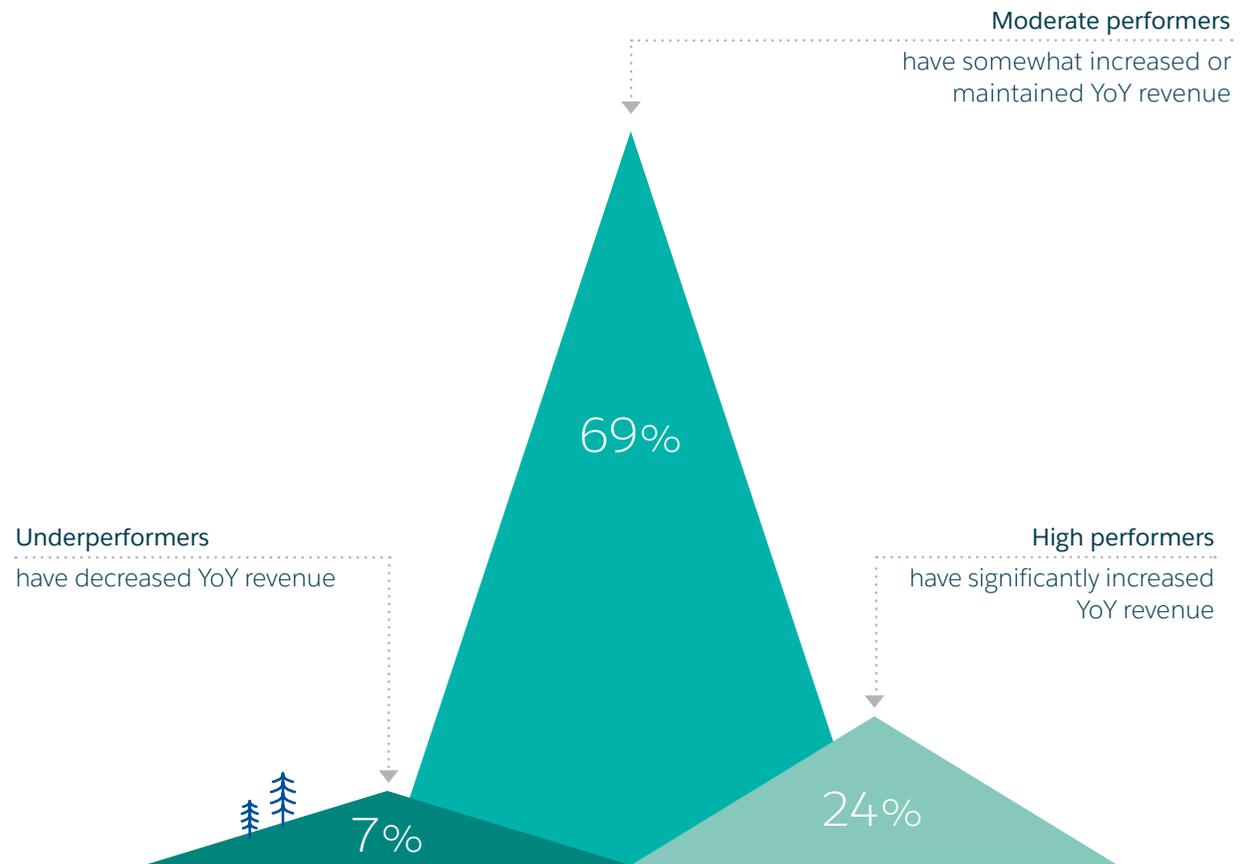
About This Report

Throughout this report, data is examined relative to business performance to identify patterns for overall success. High-performing sales teams are those that significantly increased year-over-year (YoY) revenue.

In this research, we refer to several sample respondent groups, defined as follows:

- **Sales reps:** Quota-carrying sales representatives.
- **Sales leaders:** Sales executives and managers.
- **Sales teams:** Sales professionals answering on behalf of their teams.
- **Salespeople:** All types of sales professionals, including reps, leaders, and development staff.
- **Business buyers:** Employees that purchase on behalf of their companies.

Breakdown of Sales Performance Levels

High-performing sales teams represent 24% of the overall survey population. Sales professionals surveyed include B2B, B2C, and B2B2C teams.

Moderate performers
have somewhat increased or maintained YoY revenue

69%

Underperformers
have decreased YoY revenue

High performers
have significantly increased YoY revenue

7%

24%

Survey question phrasing varied based on respondent type: reps were asked questions about themselves while managers/execs were asked questions about their teams. These differences may not be reflected in the report.

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Contents

Executive Summary

Technology is pushing customer expectations to all-time highs, and sales organizations into uncharted territory. Accountable for quotas – but also for customer success – salespeople have far greater mandates than before.

How are sales organizations coping? New data-driven approaches to sales, increasingly underpinned by AI, are emerging in tandem with big changes spanning customer engagement, staffing models, and cross-functional collaboration.

This report takes a closer look at how the world of sales is changing. Here's an overview of our top research findings.

01 | **Sales Teams Fall Short of Rising Customer Expectations**
(See page 6)

As customers expect more personalized, consultative engagement, salespeople bear the brunt of the change. Increasingly responsible for emerging customer success, but also overwhelmed by tasks, reps report spending a mere one-third of their time selling. **Fifty-seven percent of sales reps expect to miss their quotas this year.**

02 | **A Data-Driven Sales Playbook Emerges**
(See page 11)

Soft skills, such as ability to listen and demonstrate attention to detail, are still critical to winning deals, but teams are increasingly bolstering ingenuity with data-driven insights. In the process, traditional approaches to lead prioritization and forecasting are falling by the wayside. **Twice as many teams primarily prioritize leads based on data analysis of propensity to buy than on intuition.**

03 | **The Impact of Artificial Intelligence Takes Shape**
(See page 15)

Sales teams' use of AI is nascent, but the majority of teams expect it will gain ground quickly for a variety of use cases. Despite industry rumblings that AI will displace sales jobs, those using AI continue to expand their teams. **Sales leaders expect AI adoption to grow by 155% by 2020.**

04 | **Virtual Selling Hits a Tipping Point**
(See page 20)

As the pace of business accelerates and customers rely less on in-person meetings, reps are spending more time in front of a screen – and staffing models are pivoting toward inside roles. **Time spent connecting *virtually* with customers has increased 3.2x more than time meeting customers in person.**

05 | **Top Sales Teams Break from the Silo Mentality**
(See page 23)

As customers demand more contextualization and personalization across their entire buying journeys, sales teams are taking a collaborative approach. To enable this, teams are embracing a free and open internal flow of customer data. **Eighty-one percent of teams say a connected view of data across the customer journey is important.**

Sales Teams Fall Short of Rising Customer Expectations

Technological innovation is changing everything at breakneck speeds – and for sales teams the reality is stark: The moment companies meet the standard, customers again raise the bar. Great products or low prices alone won't woo them. Today's customers demand superior experiences, as well as a commitment to their success, in exchange for their business and loyalty.

While this phenomenon is commonly recognized by companies that cater to the B2C space, it's not always top of mind for B2B companies. Yet business buyers' expectations are being similarly transformed – 82% want the same experience as when they buy for themselves.

Elevated customer experience may be table stakes for service teams, but it's a relatively new focus for salespeople. Winning deals is more about understanding customers' unique markets and preferences – and ultimately being a trusted advisor.

78% OF BUSINESS BUYERS SEEK TRUSTED ADVISORS — NOT JUST SALESPEOPLE — THAT ADD VALUE TO THEIR BUSINESS.

Customers Raise the Bar for Sales Standards

Technology-savvy customers have increasingly high standards, and explicitly seek trusted advisors over traditional salespeople.

Percentage of Business Buyers Who Agree with the Following

I want the same experience as when I'm buying for myself	82%
It's easier than ever to take my business elsewhere	79%
I seek salespeople who act as trusted advisors	78%
My standards for how companies interact with me are higher than ever	73%
I expect vendors to personalize engagement to my needs	72%
I feel more empowered than ever *(in control of my relationships with companies)*	67%
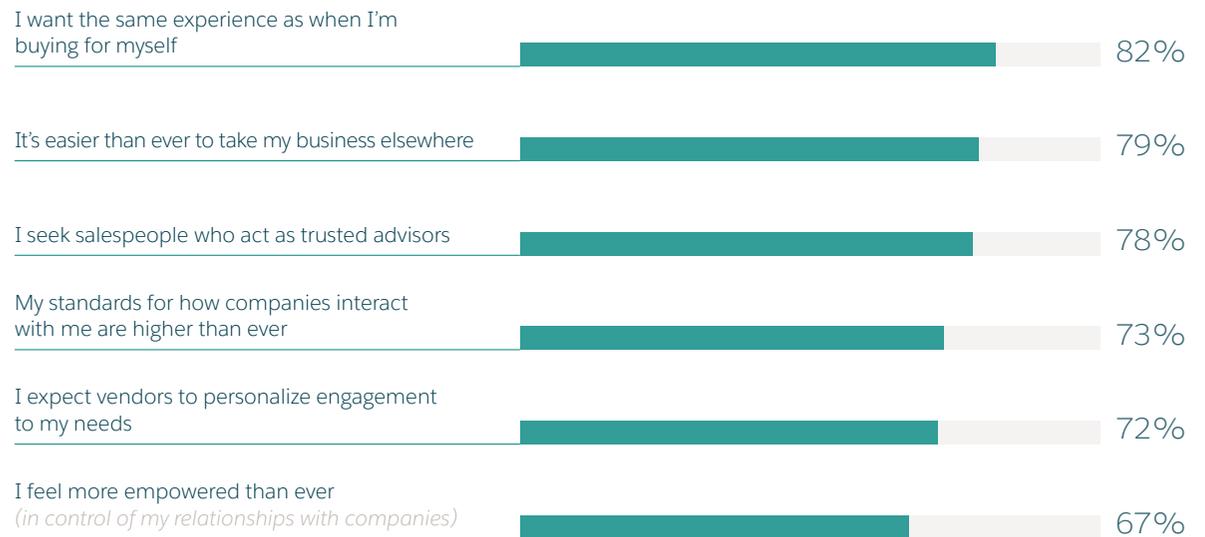
Source: State of the Connected Customer survey, Salesforce Research, April 2018.
Data may or may not be reflected in the "State of the Connected Customer" report.

SALES LEADER INSIGHT

"To be seen as a necessary part of the buying process going forward, sellers need to bring much more value-add to the table than ever before."

— Jim Dickie, Co-Founder, CSO Insights

Customer satisfaction (CSAT) is now the number one measure of sales success, if only by a small margin. This puts sales teams in good company, as metrics are leaning toward customer experience no matter the department. But while customer experience is a top priority, especially within the C-suite, there's no universally accepted way for sales teams to measure their role in delivering it.

While CSAT is a worthy metric, it's arguably vague. More pointed experience metrics, such as customer usage and Net Promoter Score (NPS), aren't as widely tracked today – but adoption is on the rise.

While sales leadership is holding reps accountable for great customer experience, quotas aren't falling by the wayside. In fact, metrics like customer lifetime value have explicit ties to *both* experience and business performance.

Sales KPIs with the Highest Projected Two-Year Growth

+118%   Net Promoter Score (NPS)

+105%   Pipeline accuracy

+94%   Customer lifetime value (CLV)

As Sales Strategy Shifts, Customer Experience Metrics Lack Consensus

Sales teams are redefining traditional success metrics with an eye on customer experience, but there's no wholesale way to measure it.

Percentage of Sales Teams That Track or Plan to Track the Following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPI	Currently track	Plan to track within two years
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	66%	23%
Team quota met	65%	23%
Individual quota met	65%	22%
Customer retention/attrition	58%	27%
Customer usage (e.g., consumption, deployment, utilization)	52%	30%
Conversion rate	51%	28%
Activity quantity (e.g., calls made, emails sent)	45%	26%
Customer acquisitions cost (CAC)	43%	33%
Customer lifetime value (CLV)	36%	34%
Pipeline accuracy	31%	33%
Net Promoter Score (NPS)	28%	33%

■ Currently track
■ Plan to track within two years

01 Sales Teams Fall Short of Rising Customer Expectations

Selling to today's savvy, empowered customer base is no easy task. Adjusting to this new reality is proving difficult for sales reps. In fact, well over half of reps expect to miss their quotas this year.

This can't be blamed entirely on unrealistic goals, as 72% of reps say that management sets quotas with a data-driven approach. Our research points to shortfalls in traditional sales metrics, but also in overall approaches to customer engagement. In the face of so much opportunity to differentiate on experience, these shortfalls are a detriment to sales force productivity.

57% OF SALES REPS EXPECT TO MISS THEIR QUOTAS THIS YEAR.

Reps Struggle to Hit Quotas

The majority of sales reps expect to miss their quotas this year.

Percentage of Sales Reps Who Expect to Meet the Following Share of Their Quotas This Year

11% ≤50% of quota

17% 51-75% of quota

29% 76-99% of quota

57% Expect to miss quota

42% Expect to meet quota

16% >100% of quota

26% 100% of quota

Base: Sales representatives
Percents may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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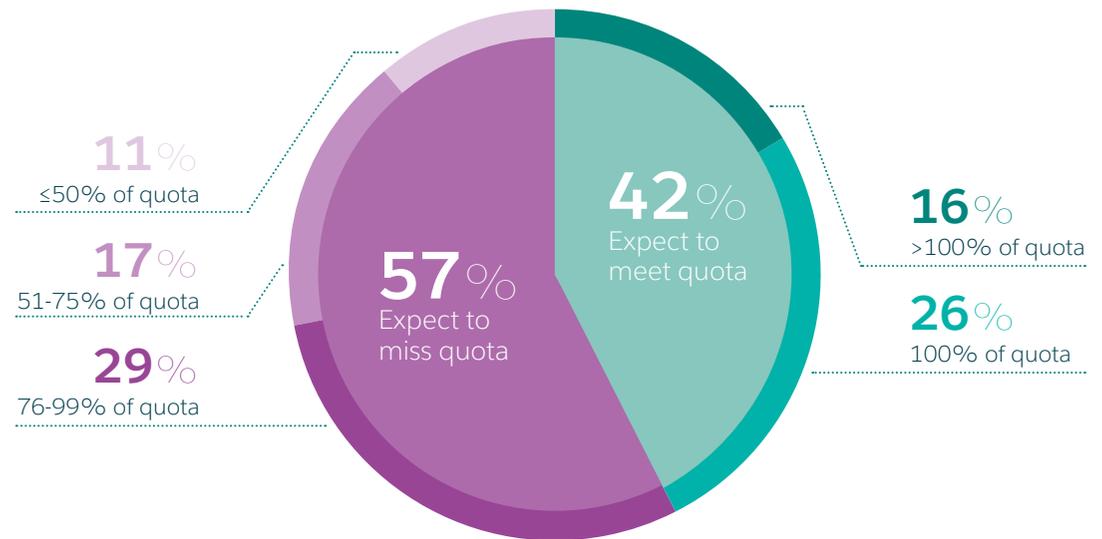
To find the crux of what sales reps grapple with, look no further than their time management. Today's sales reps – who are expected to not only cater to the unique needs of individual customers but also close deals that keep revenue flowing – have far more on their plates than their predecessors. All the while, days have not gotten any longer; the result is an environment in which sales reps spend a mere 34% of their time actually selling.

More often than not, reps are bogged down with data entry, quote generation, and other administrative tasks that prevent them from cultivating meaningful – and profitable – customer relationships.

SALES REPS SPEND ONLY 1/3 OF THEIR TIME SELLING.

Selling Takes a Backseat to Other Tasks

Sales reps spend a mere 34% of their time actually selling, while the majority of their time is spent on other duties.

Percentage of Sales Reps' Time Spent on the Following During an Average Week

7% Downtime

7% Prioritizing leads/opps

8% Manually entering customer/sales info

8% Internal meetings/ trainings

9% Researching prospects

9% Generating quotes, proposals, and gaining approvals

34% Selling

66% Not Selling

15% Meeting customers in person

11% Connecting with customers virtually

9% Prospecting

9% Administrative tasks

9% Preparation and planning
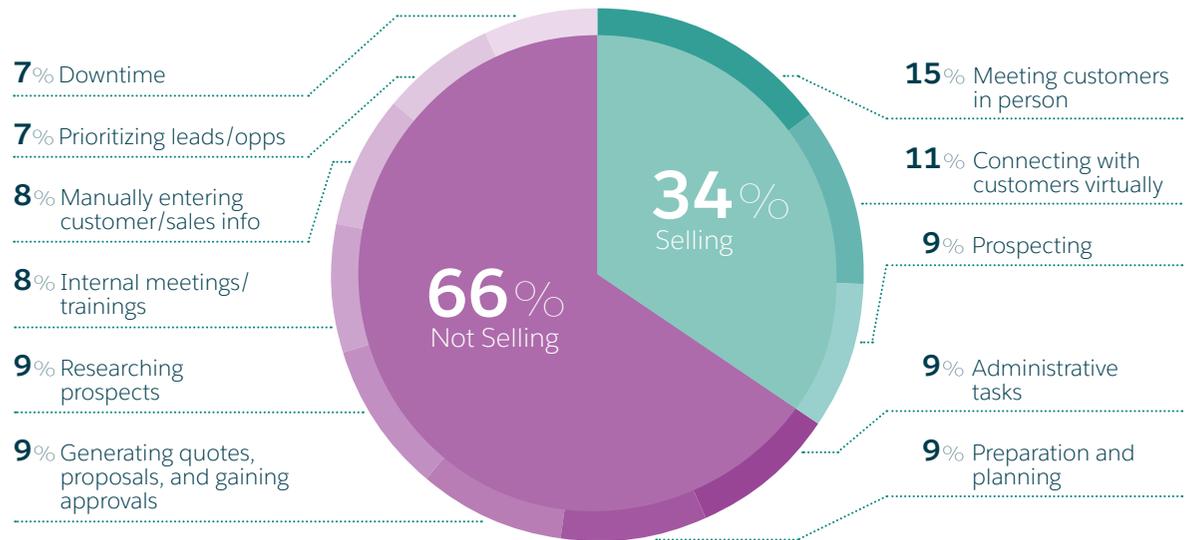
Base: Sales representatives
Percents may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SALES LEADER INSIGHT

"Successful salespeople spend more time on activities that produce sales and less time on those that don't. You should spend 75% of your time reflecting, talking, prospecting, and closing."

— Laura Stack, President & CEO, The Productivity Pro

If you ask a salesperson what they do for a living, they probably won't say "manage emails" or "do data entry." In reality, however, they likely spend quite a bit of time in their inboxes or conducting menial tasks.

It seems reps would rather spend time doing things like understanding their customers' needs, competitors' offerings, and pipeline of opportunities. In other words, reps spend quite a bit of time on administrative tasks at the expense of fostering the trusted relationships their customers expect.

Long To-Do Lists Leave Insufficient Time for Customers

Even with all the advancements in technology, reps are stuck between menial tasks and customer relationships.

Top 5 Things Reps Say They Spend **Too Much** Time On

1 | Managing emails

2 | Logging activities

3 | Inputting sales data and customer notes

4 | Finding the right person to contact

5 | Creating follow-up tasks

Top 5 Things Reps Say They Spend **Too Little** Time On

1 | Researching competitive activity

2 | Researching competitive offerings

3 | Discovering a customer's/prospect's needs

4 | Reviewing pipeline

5 | Researching a customer's/prospect's current solution

Base: Sales representatives

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02 A Data-Driven Sales Playbook Emerges

Data insights are emerging as the weapon of choice for top sales teams, and lead prioritization is a prominent use case. In the past, sales reps relied on intuition when weighing which opportunities to pursue – and how to nurture them. Yet as reps' mandate to develop deeper customer relationships has intensified, intuition is no longer the status quo.

Today, sales teams' primary method of prioritizing leads is data analysis of propensity to buy.

High Performers vs. Underperformers

1.6X more likely to prioritize leads based on data analysis – and half as likely to prioritize based on intuition

Still, data-driven lead prioritization is hardly universal. Only one-third of teams use this methodology by default, while others stick with more basic criteria such as geography, company size, or job title.

Data Supersedes Intuition When Prioritizing Leads

Today's sales teams are twice as likely to prioritize leads based on data analysis of propensity to buy than on intuition.

Percentage of Salespeople Whose Leads and Opportunities Are Primarily Prioritized Based on the Following

33% Data analysis of propensity to buy

16% Intuition

14% Geography

13% Company size

7% Job title

5% Last in/first out

5% Alphabetically

6% None of the above (*I don't prioritize leads*)
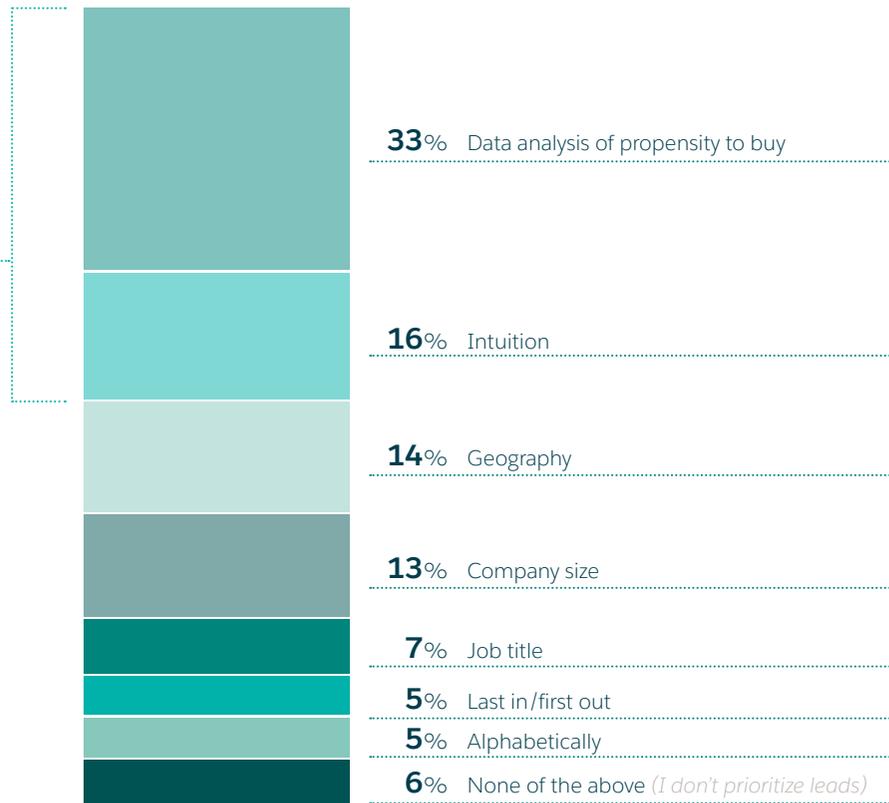
Base: Sales representatives, executives, and managers
See page 54 for data broken down by performance levels.

When it comes to lead prioritization, salespeople put the most stock in understanding the nuances of a prospect's relationship with their company.

Reps also place high value on insights like estimated revenue from an opportunity and likelihood for add-on business that could tip the scale in making one opportunity more of a priority than another.

All this points to an overall focus on the *value* of leads, rather than the volume, a sharp departure from the traditional sales and marketing dynamic.

Salespeople Seek Guidance to Prioritize Precious Time

Detailed knowledge of a customer's past or existing relationship is viewed as the most helpful insight, but hardly the only one.

Percentage of Salespeople Who View the Following Insights as Helpful at Prioritizing Leads and Opportunities

Insight	Percentage
Past or existing relationship with our company	80%
Estimated revenue	77%
Business insights (e.g., growth, initiatives, news, etc.)	77%
Likelihood for add-on business/ propensity to buy more	75%
Decision makers involved	75%
Reference value	70%
Estimated deal cycle time	63%
Deal complexity	58%

Base: Sales representatives, executives, and managers
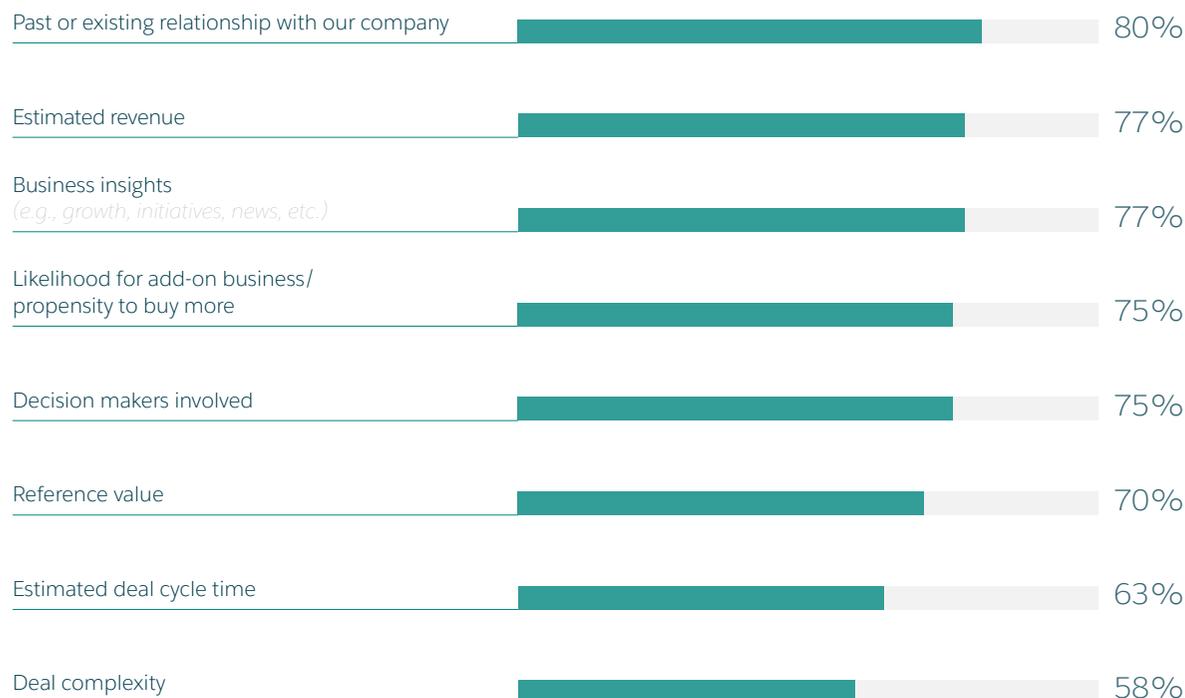
02 A Data-Driven Sales Playbook Emerges

Some seasoned salespeople, used to unpredictable opportunities and prospects, may view forecasting as a fool's errand. Many teams, however, have made strides in leveraging data to produce timely, accurate forecasts that spur action. Half of all sales teams say their forecasting is now primarily data-driven, while only 16% say it's primarily based on gut feeling.

High Performers vs. Underperformers

1.5X more likely to base forecasts on data-driven insights

While top teams are even more likely to base their forecasts on data, underperforming sales teams are 1.7x more likely to forecast based on gut feeling.

Tides Turn Toward Data-Driven Forecasting

Sales forecasting has reached a turning point, with half of teams now using data to project their numbers.

Percentage of Salespeople Whose Forecasts Are Primarily Based on the Following

16%
Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

50%
Data-driven insights

34%
A fairly even mix

Base: All respondents

Salesforce Research
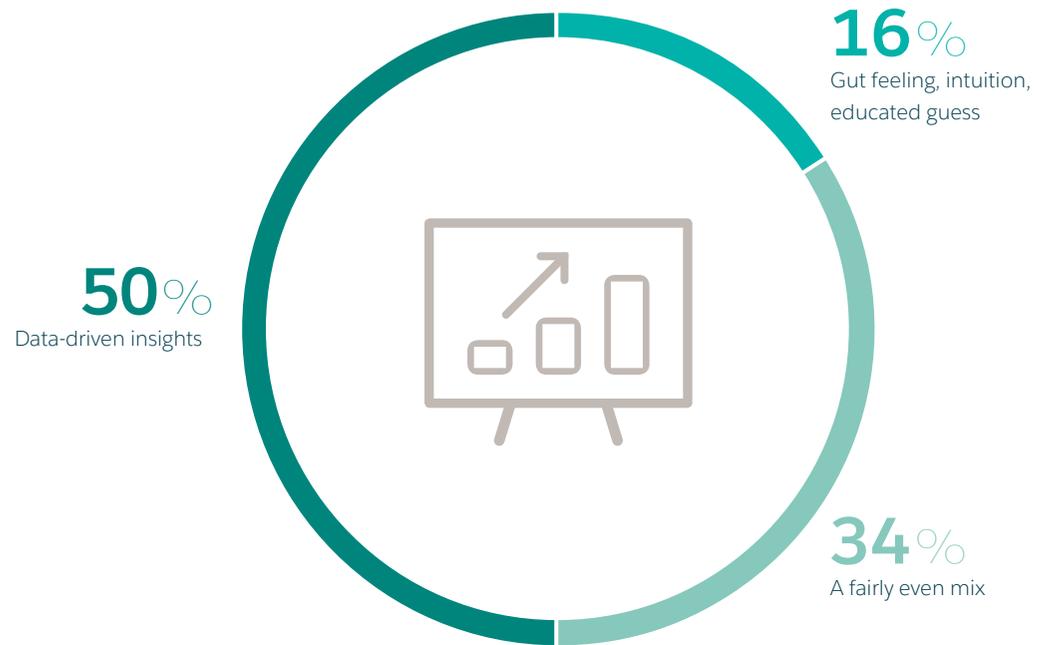
While sales teams make more data-based decisions, winning deals still takes a human touch. After all, 81% of business buyers expect companies to understand their needs and expectations.[1] In this regard, selling is a deeply personal activity that requires a great deal of soft skills.

But not all soft skills are inherent to everyone, and not all customer needs are readily apparent. Some skills, like attention to detail and industry knowledge, can take years to hone. Others, like knowing exactly when to engage, aren't entirely possible without the aid of technology.

The majority of salespeople credit a combination of their own ingenuity and data-driven insights in turning an opportunity into a deal. Knowing how to integrate these insights into their daily routine is an emerging soft skill in and of itself.

THE TOP TWO FACTORS FOR CONVERTING PROSPECTS ARE A MIX OF HUMAN SKILL AND DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS.

A Balance of Human Ingenuity and Data Insights Wins Deals

Soft skills like listening and building personal rapport are essential to converting prospects, but so are a variety of insight-driven factors.

Percentage of Salespeople Who Say the Following Have an Extreme or Substantial Impact on Converting a Prospect into a Customer
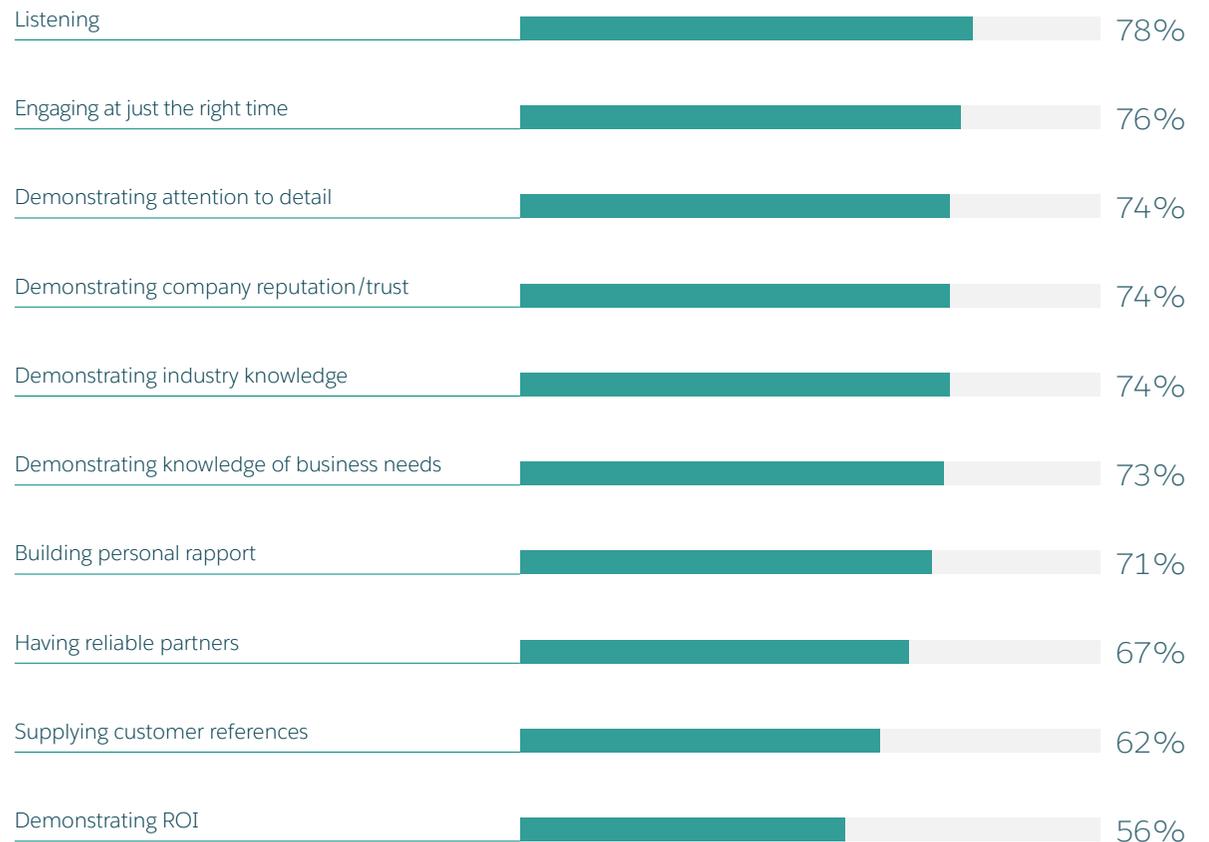
Listening	78%
Engaging at just the right time	76%
Demonstrating attention to detail	74%
Demonstrating company reputation/trust	74%
Demonstrating industry knowledge	74%
Demonstrating knowledge of business needs	73%
Building personal rapport	71%
Having reliable partners	67%
Supplying customer references	62%
Demonstrating ROI	56%

[1] State of the Connected Customer survey, Salesforce Research, April 2018. Data may or may not be represented in the "State of the Connected Customer" report.

Base: Sales representatives, executives, and managers

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03   The Impact of Artificial Intelligence Takes Shape

Sales teams are looking to do more with their data than basic organization and analysis. In the near future, sales leaders expect a groundswell of intelligent tech adoption. While only 21% of sales leaders say their organizations use AI today, adoption is set to skyrocket by 155% over the next two years.

SALES LEADERSHIP FORESEES AI REACHING A CRITICAL MASS BY 2020, WHEN 54% EXPECT TO USE THE TECHNOLOGY.

The projected growth of other task-streamlining capabilities – from marketing and sales process automation to configure-price-quote tools – further emphasizes the rise of intelligence.

High Performers vs. Underperformers

4.9X more likely to use AI

Artificial Intelligence Stands Out Among Fast-Growing Sales Tech

Sales leaders expect their teams AI adoption to grow faster than any other technology. Other sophisticated capabilities such as marketing and sales process automation also rank high.

10 Sales Technologies with the Highest Projected Two-Year Growth

Technology	Growth
Artificial intelligence	+155%
Marketing automation	+104%
Partner relationship management (PRM) system	+95%
Sales process automation	+86%
Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution	+82%
Opportunity management	+80%
Customer insight tool	+79%
Mobile sales apps for employees	+77%
Sales prospecting tools	+69%
Competitive intelligence	+68%
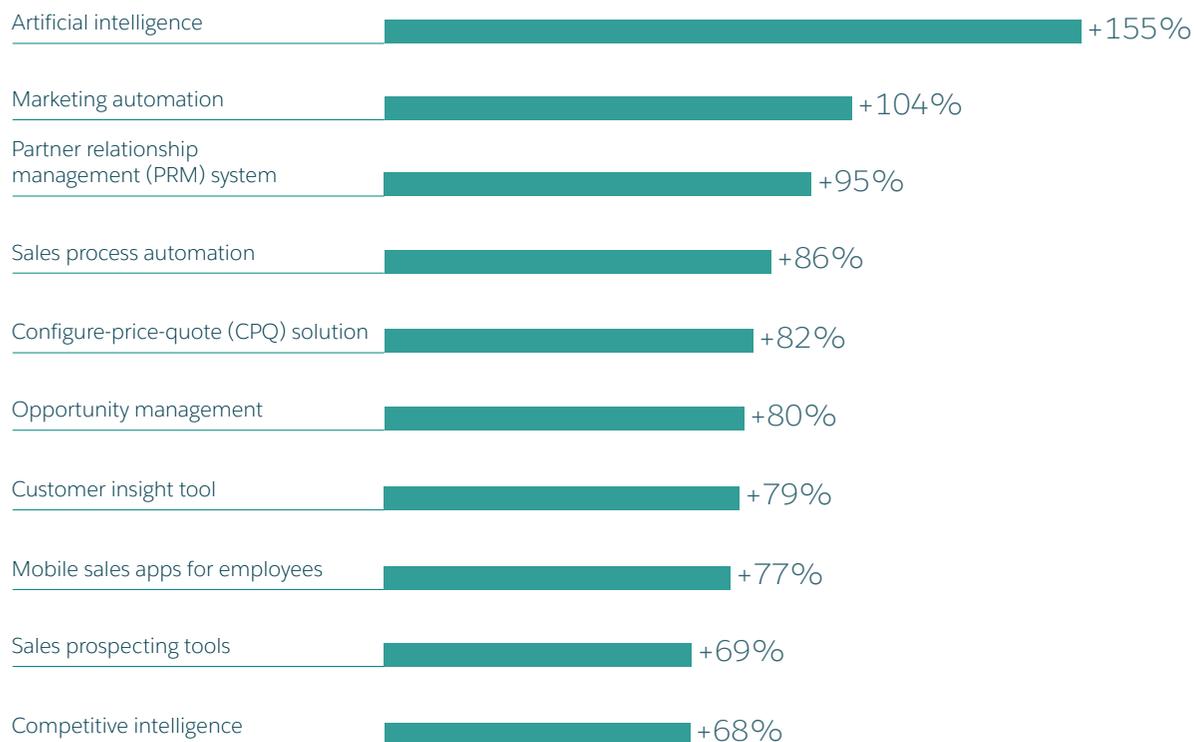
Base: Sales executives and managers
See page 45 for all technology adoption data.

SPOTLIGHT
As AI Gains Momentum, People Remain the Backbone of Sales

AI's rapid ascent has elicited job security fears across many roles – and sales is no exception. Yet today's customers say they want consultative, trusted advisors focused on achieving their unique needs – an innately human pursuit. AI's role for salespeople is not to replace them, but to help them understand their customers' needs better – while easing the burden of manual tasks – thereby empowering them as advisors.

This dynamic is reflected in hiring trends among sales teams using AI. The majority of sales teams are adding staff, including over three-quarters of teams already using AI.

76% OF TEAMS USING AI HAVE INCREASED SALES REP STAFF SINCE 2015.

AI Is Not Replacing Salespeople

Sales remains a growing profession, with the majority of teams increasing the number of reps on staff. Hiring trends show that teams already using AI are more likely to have added reps over the past three years.

Percentage of Sales Teams Whose Rep Staff Levels Have Changed as Follows Over the Past Three Years

Currently using AI — 76% | 22% | 3%

Planning to use AI within two years — 67% | 28% | 5%

Not planning to use AI — 48% | 45% | 7%

■ Increased ■ Maintained ■ Decreased
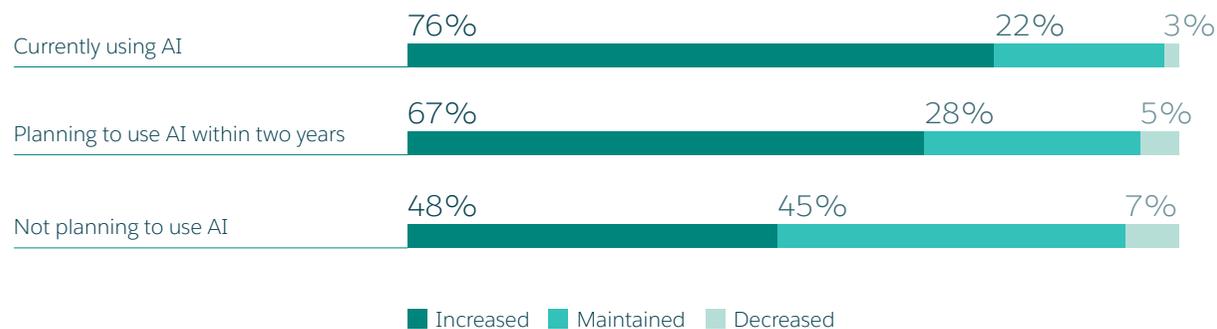
Base: Sales executives and managers

SALES LEADER INSIGHT

"AI is digital, humans are analog. The difference is important. When we have sufficiently large data sets, we can rightly hold algorithms to higher standards of accuracy and consistency, but we can't infuse the algorithm with judgment, integrity, creativity or compassion."
— Donal Daly, Executive Chairman, Altify, Inc.

03 The Impact of Artificial Intelligence Takes Shape
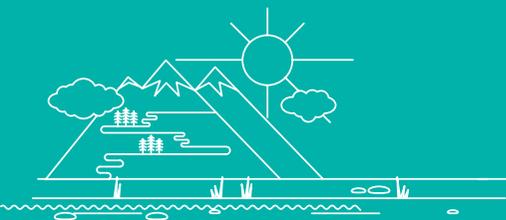
Given how many sales teams are leaning into data-driven forecasting, it's of little surprise that intelligent forecasting is the AI use case with the biggest expected impact – but only by a slim margin. Sales professionals expect that opportunity insights will have nearly as great an influence. A majority of salespeople also see a big role for AI in helping prioritize leads, surfacing account insights, and automating data entry via activity capture.

Nearly half of salespeople think AI will play a role in guided selling-related capabilities like opportunity rankings and suggested next steps.

62% OF HIGH-PERFORMING SALESPEOPLE FORESEE A BIG ROLE FOR GUIDED SELLING THAT RANKS POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY VALUE AND SUGGESTS NEXT STEPS.

Across the board, top teams are nearly twice as likely as underperformers to anticipate an important role for AI in their work over the coming years.

AI Use Cases Go Beyond the Expected

High-performing sales teams are far more bullish than their underperforming competition on the impact of AI across various use cases.

Percentage of Salespeople Who Believe AI Will Transform or Substantially Impact the Following Within Five Years

High Performers vs. Underperformers

Intelligent forecasting (*i.e., data science insights on commit, open pipe, and likelihood to deliver on target*) — 70% / 57% / 35% — **2.0x** more likely

Opportunity insights (*e.g., customer sentiment, competitor involvement, and overall prospect engagement*) — 66% / 55% / 39% — **1.7x** more likely

Lead prioritization (*i.e., automatically prioritize leads most likely to convert based on history*) — 66% / 53% / 32% — **2.0x** more likely

Account insights (*i.e., surfacing of business developments relevant to accounts*) — 65% / 52% / 34% — **1.9x** more likely

Activity capture (*i.e., connecting data from sources like email, calendar, and CRM to automatically update records*) — 65% / 49% / 34% — **1.9x** more likely

Guided selling (*i.e., opportunity ranking by potential value and sales activity effectiveness*) — 62% / 47% / 32% — **1.9x** more likely

High performers | Moderate performers | Underperformers

Base: All respondents

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03 The Impact of Artificial Intelligence Takes Shape

The reality is that most sales teams are operating with little-to-no AI guidance. But those that do have the capabilities in place are ready to shout their success from the rooftops.

For example, only 46% of sales reps have data insights on customers' propensity to buy. But among them, 85% say this makes them more effective in their job.

34% OF SALES REPS GET ALERTS TO KEY ACTIONS REQUIRED ON AN OPPORTUNITY — BUT 85% AMONG THEM SAY THESE MAKE THEM MORE EFFECTIVE IN THEIR JOB.

This gap is particularly noteworthy since reps say engaging at the right time is one of the top factors that impacts their ability to close a deal.

Reps Face Productivity-Sapping Intelligence Gaps

While strong majorities of sales reps view a variety of intelligent capabilities as helpful for doing their jobs more effectively, relatively few actually have them.

Sales Reps Who Report They Have the Following Capabilities

Market intelligence on customers/prospects

51%
81%

Data insights on customers' propensity to buy

46%
85%
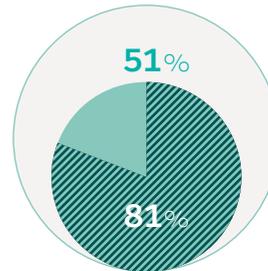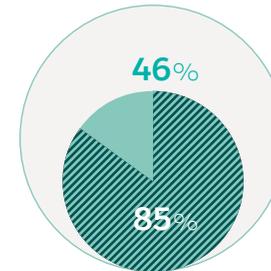
Automatic surfacing of leads/opportunities most likely to close
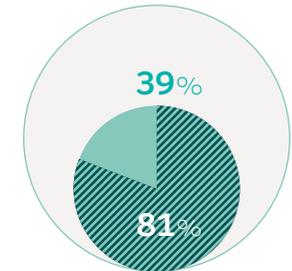
39%
81%

Suggested next steps on an opportunity

37%
82%

Alerts to key actions required on an opportunity

34%
85%
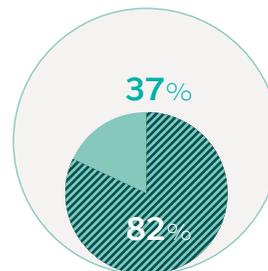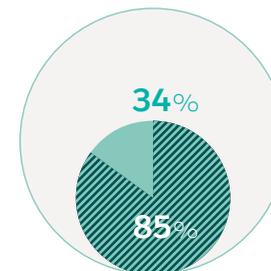
☐ All reps

■ Reps with capability

▨ Reps with capability that find it helpful to doing their jobs more effectively

Base: Sales representatives

03 The Impact of Artificial Intelligence Takes Shape

Intelligent capabilities are more commonplace among sales leadership than they are among reps. At least half of sales executives and managers have insights into individual and team performance.

However, when it comes to deeper insights like intelligent forecasting, most sales leaders come up empty-handed. For example, fewer than half have alerts to resources such as overlays or other support that their teams may need. And while data-driven forecasting is becoming the norm, only one-third of sales leaders have intelligent forecasting that can automate this process or consider criteria that may not be readily apparent.

34% OF SALES LEADERS HAVE INTELLIGENT FORECASTING — BUT 90% AMONG THEM SAY IT HELPS THEM DO THEIR JOB MORE EFFECTIVELY.

SALES LEADER INSIGHT

"The only real management insights come from data analysis. Observations are nice, but they can deceive. Hunches are fun, but hard to defend. Data is the lifeblood of great sales management."

— Jason Jordan, Partner, Vantage Point Performance

Management Grapples with a Lack of Insights

Much like their reps, sales leaders view a variety of intelligent capabilities as helpful for catering to an empowered customer base. Yet relatively few sales leaders actually have such capabilities.

Sales Leaders Who Report They Have the Following Capabilities

Performance insights on individual reps
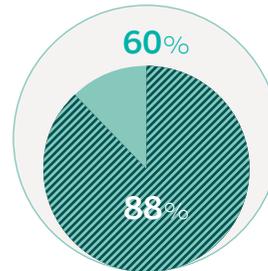
60%
88%

Data insights on team performance patterns

52%
88%

Data insights on book of business that provide guidance on targeting

44%
84%
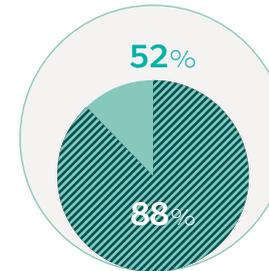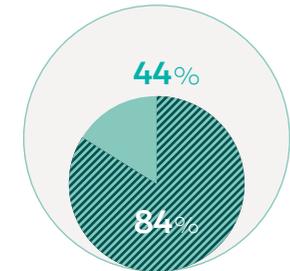
Automated notification of team resources needed

35%
82%

Intelligent forecasting

34%
90%
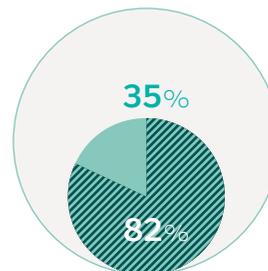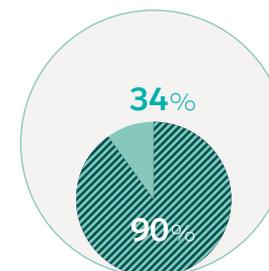
☐ All sales leaders

▨ Sales leaders with capability

▨ Sales leaders with capability that find it helpful to doing their jobs more effectively

Base: Sales executives and managers

04 Virtual Sales Hits a Tipping Point

Despite being overloaded with tasks, salespeople are making a big effort to spend more time with customers and prospects.

In an era of constant connectivity, the biggest gains are in time spent connecting virtually. In fact, 60% of reps report an increase in virtual meetings over the last three years. What's more, there are three times as many sales reps who now spend less time with customers in person than there are those who spend less time with them virtually.

This shifting dynamic coincides with a general trend toward screen time, in general, among salespeople.

SALES REPS HAVE INCREASED THEIR TIME CONNECTING VIRTUALLY WITH CUSTOMERS AT A RATE 3X GREATER THAN CONNECTING IN PERSON.

Selling Has Gone Virtual

Time spent meeting with customers virtually has increased at a rate over three times that of meeting in person.

Percentage of Sales Reps Who Spend More or Less Time on the Following Compared to 2015

Net Change Since 2015

In front of a screen
(i.e., time on a computer, tablet, or smartphone)
62%   30%   8%   **+12**%

Connecting virtually with customers/prospects
(e.g., via Hangouts, Skype, email, etc.)
60%   32%   8%   **+12**%

Meeting in person with customers/prospects
48%   30%   23%   **+4**%

■ Increased   ■ Stayed the same   ■ Decreased
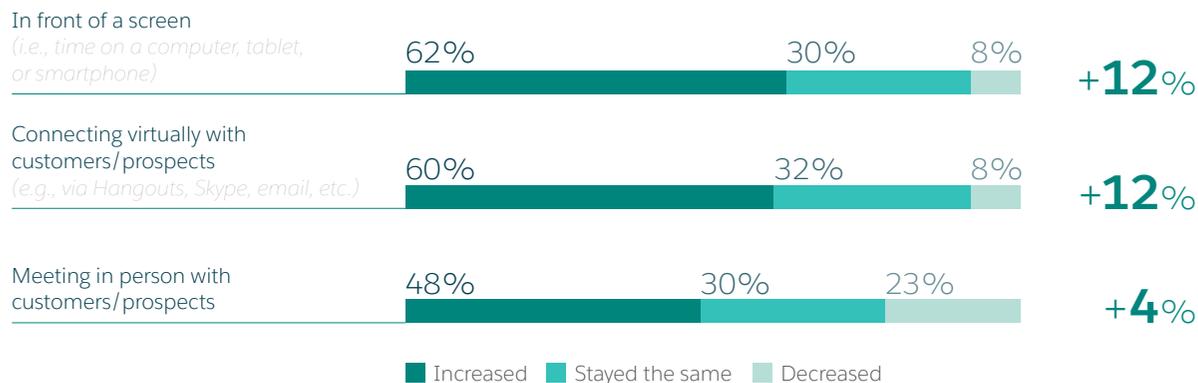
Base: Sales representatives

SALES LEADER INSIGHT

"Among the many factors driving the increase in virtual selling, buyer preference stands out. Buyers are digital-first and don't feel the need for face-to-face communication."

— Trish Bertuzzi, President & Chief Strategist, The Bridge Group

Salesforce Research

O4 Virtual Sales Hits a Tipping Point

As selling goes virtual, hiring practices are reflecting this trend. On average, staffing of inside sales roles has increased by 7% since 2015, and sales development reps have increased by 6%.

Sales performance and inside staffing trends march in lockstep; high performers are 2.3x more likely than underperformers to have hired more inside reps, and 2.7x more likely to have hired more sales development reps.

While sales leaders cite a variety of reasons for shifting to an inside sales staffing model – including better opportunity for rep specialization and lower costs – improved technology ranks as the top motivator.

Top 5 Reasons Given for Hiring More Inside or Sales Development Reps

1 | Improved technology that makes inside reps more effective

2 | Better opportunities for rep specialization without a larger field territory

3 | Improved team dynamics/cohesion

4 | Better suited to our dispersed customer base

5 | Lower business costs

Base: Sales executives and managers

Inside Roles Take Center Stage

Since 2015, the average sales team has increased their inside sales rep headcount by 7% and their sales development rep headcount by 6%.

Percentage of Sales Teams Whose Staff Levels Have Changed as Follows Over the Past Three Years

Inside Sales Reps

High Perfomers vs. Underperfomers

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
High performers	54%	41%	5%
Moderate performers	41%	53%	5%
Underperformers	24%	66%	10%

2.3x more likely to have increased

■ Increased ■ Stayed the same ■ Decreased

Sales Development Reps

High Perfomers vs. Underperfomers

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
High performers	55%	42%	3%
Moderate performers	37%	57%	6%
Underperformers	20%	69%	11%

2.7x more likely to have increased

■ Increased ■ Stayed the same ■ Decreased

Base: Sales executives and managers

SPOTLIGHT

The Technology Stacks Powering Sales

Looking at the most widely used sales technologies could help explain the shift to virtual selling.

Sales reporting and analytics tops the list of technologies used, with over two-thirds of teams keeping tabs on the state of their customers, opportunities, and pipeline. Other data-centric technologies popular among sales teams include account and contact management, sales forecasting tools, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems that organize all this data in a central location.

Rounding out the 10 most popular sales technologies are mobile sales apps. Sales managers and execs expect mobile sales app adoption will jump 70% by 2020 (see page 48) – perhaps to appease the 73% of business buyers who say on-demand engagement is very important for winning their business.[1]

[1] State of the Connected Customer survey, Salesforce Research, April 2018. Data may or may not be represented in the "State of the Connected Customer" report.

Analytics Reigns as the Most Adopted Sales Technology

Sales reporting and analytics is used by over two-thirds of sales teams, followed by account and contact management and customer relationship management (CRM) systems.

10 Sales Technologies with the Highest Adoption

Technology	Adoption
Sales reporting/analytics	68%
Account and contact management	65%
Customer relationship management (CRM) system	58%
Sales forecasting tools	56%
Sales coaching and training solution	54%
Email/CRM integration	51%
Compensation/incentive management	49%
Sales prospecting tools	47%
Competitive intelligence	47%
Mobile sales apps for employees	46%
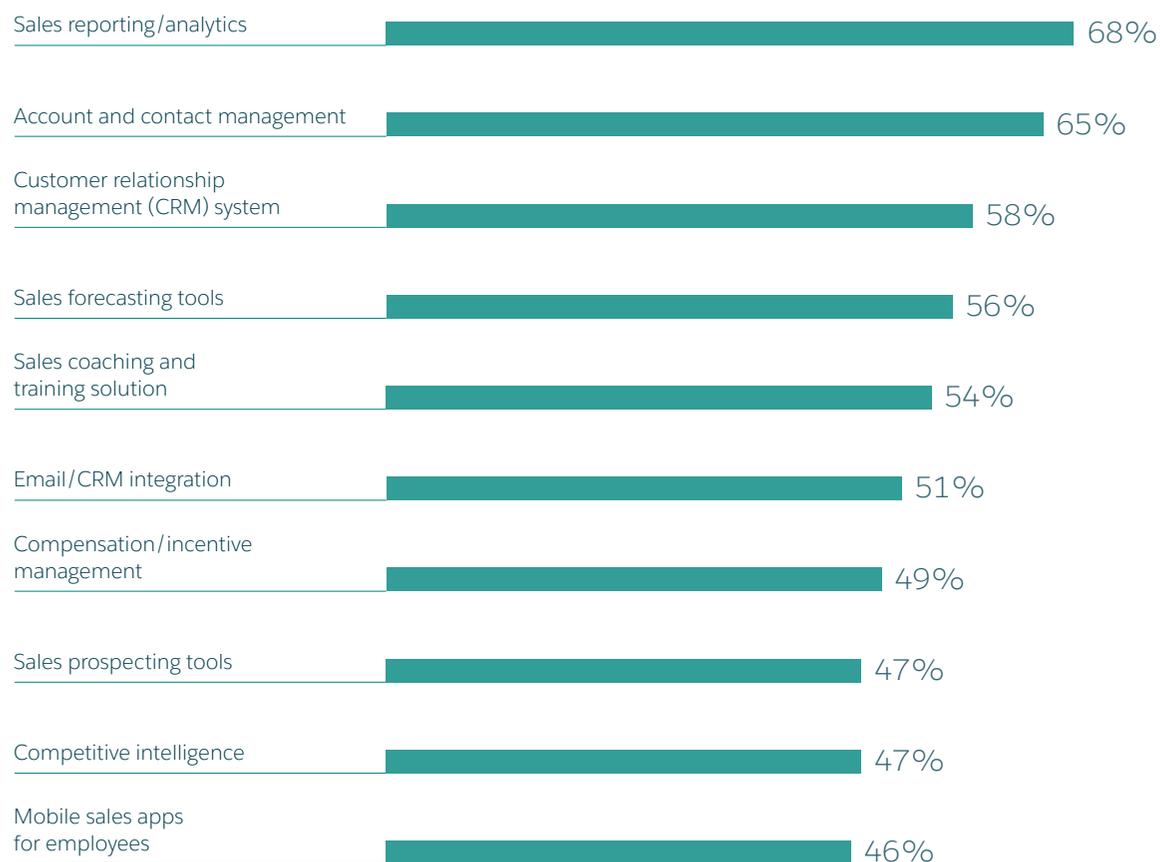
Base: All respondents
See page 46 for all technology adoption data.

Salesforce Research

05 Top Sales Teams Break from the Silo Mentality

As executive leadership focuses on delighting customers, sales teams recognize that connected experiences entail far more than sales interactions. In fact, 75% of business buyers say connected processes – across marketing, sales, and service interactions – are very important to winning their business.[1]

Seventy-seven percent of salespeople say selling collaboratively with other departments is important. This model is akin to selling by committee, through which various perspectives from across the customer journey are incorporated.

To make this approach work, 81% say a connected view of data across the customer journey is important. Teams increasingly rely on this 360-degree customer view of marketing campaign engagement, service history, and more to not only increase customer satisfaction, but ramp up their own productivity.

In the tangle of disparate legacy systems and APIs, a true, 360-degree customer view requires linked data sources – yet only 49% of sales teams have such fully integrated systems.

High Performers vs. Underperformers

2.1x more likely than underperformers to have fully integrated systems

Sales Values a Connected Customer View

Strong majorities of salespeople cite a single, shared view of customer data across marketing, sales, and service interactions as important for a variety of objectives that impact the bottom line.

Percentage of Salespeople Who Say a Connected View of Customer Data Is Important to the Following
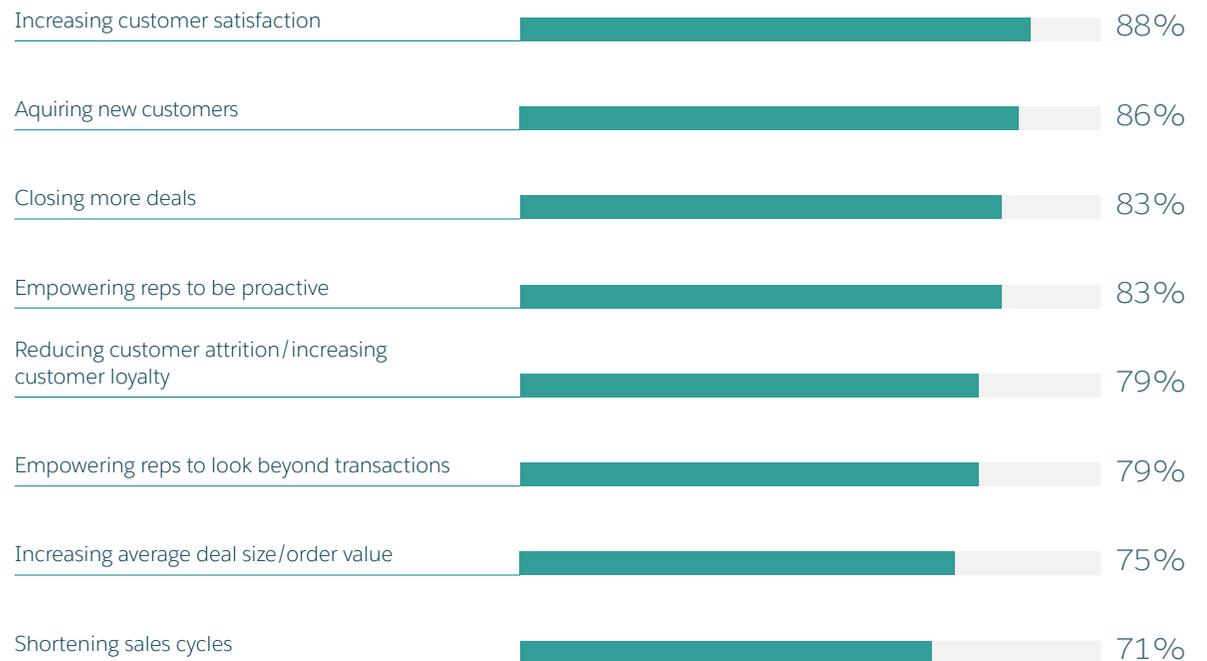
Increasing customer satisfaction — 88%

Aquiring new customers — 86%

Closing more deals — 83%

Empowering reps to be proactive — 83%

Reducing customer attrition/increasing customer loyalty — 79%

Empowering reps to look beyond transactions — 79%

Increasing average deal size/order value — 75%

Shortening sales cycles — 71%

Base: All respondents

Collaborative selling demands sales and marketing alignment. After all, 74% of business buyers say in order to win their business it's very important for salespeople to be aware of marketing campaigns and offers.[1] True collaborative selling, however, extends beyond merely knowing the offers to understanding precisely which ones resonate with customers. This alignment has become a best practice; the majority of teams across performance levels say they're empowered to collaborate and share common goals and metrics.

High Performers vs. Underperformers

1.9X more likely than those on underperforming teams to always understand why marketing passes them a lead

Another disparity between top sales teams and their underperforming peers is the ubiquity of account-based marketing (ABM) – programs in which messages and offers are targeted to a market of one. This practice is in place for 80% of high-performing teams, but only 47% of underperformers.

Marketing Partnerships Signal High-Performing Sales

Top sales teams are highly likely to share common metrics and data sources with each other. Most importantly, they're likely to know why they're receiving a lead.

Percentage of Salespeople Who Agree with the Following Statements About Their Relationships with Marketing Colleagues

High Performers vs. Underperformers
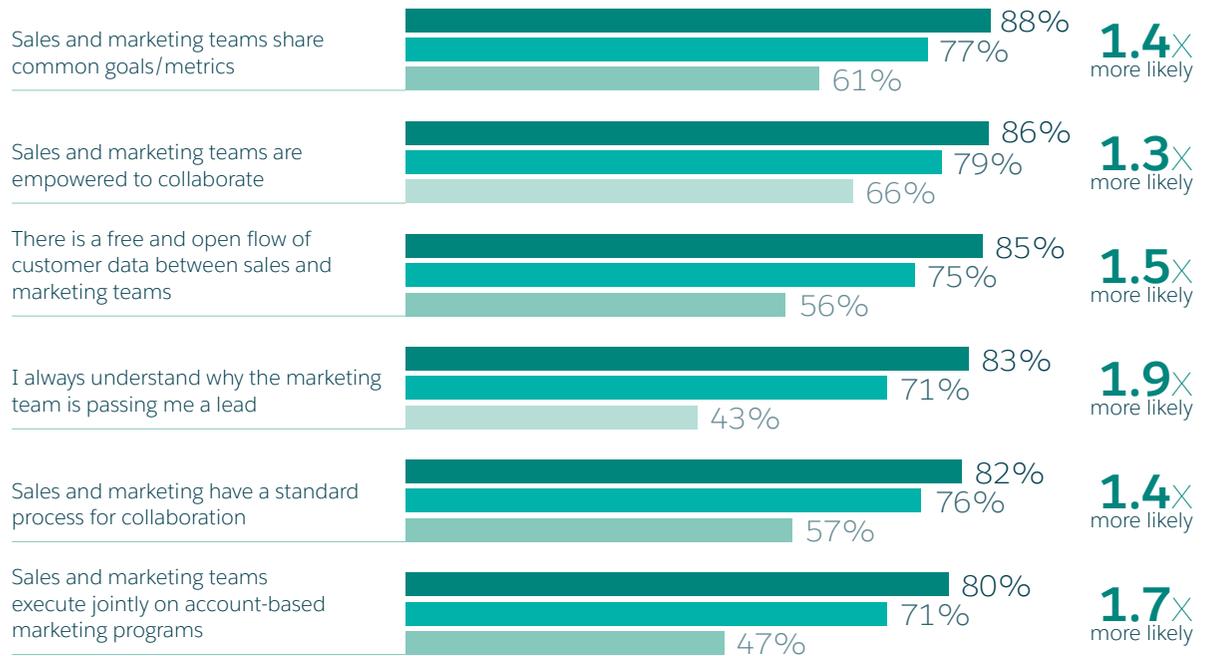
Statement	High performers	Moderate performers	Underperformers	Ratio
Sales and marketing teams share common goals/metrics	88%	77%	61%	1.4X more likely
Sales and marketing teams are empowered to collaborate	86%	79%	66%	1.3X more likely
There is a free and open flow of customer data between sales and marketing teams	85%	75%	56%	1.5X more likely
I always understand why the marketing team is passing me a lead	83%	71%	43%	1.9X more likely
Sales and marketing have a standard process for collaboration	82%	76%	57%	1.4X more likely
Sales and marketing teams execute jointly on account-based marketing programs	80%	71%	47%	1.7X more likely

■ High performers ■ Moderate performers ■ Underperformers

Base: All respondents

Salesforce Research

O5 Top Sales Teams Break from the Silo Mentality

A collaborative selling structure doesn't stop with sales and marketing; 77% of business buyers expect salespeople to be aware of service interactions.[1]

Companies are increasingly judged by the quality of their customer service, compelling reps to stay in lockstep with customers' ongoing needs. What's more, tight collaboration between sales and service teams may surface opportunities that'd otherwise go unnoticed.

Collaboration, common goals, and shared customer data are now common practices among all sales and service teams, with high performers leading the pack once again.

High Performers vs. Underperformers

1.6X more likely than underperformers to say service reps proactively alert them about opportunities

Sales and Service Alignment Becomes the Norm

Across the performance spectrum, the majority of sales teams are now empowered to collaborate with service colleagues, and have implemented processes to ensure they work in tandem.

Percentage of Salespeople Who Agree with the Following Statements About Their Relationships with Service Colleagues

High Performers vs. Underperformers

Statement	High performers	Moderate performers	Underperformers	High Performers vs. Underperformers
There is a free and open flow of customer data between sales and service teams	84%	74%	59%	1.4X more likely
Sales and service teams are empowered to collaborate	83%	79%	65%	1.3X more likely
Service reps proavtively alert sales reps to opportunities	83%	72%	53%	1.6X more likely
Sales and service teams share common goals and metrics	81%	74%	59%	1.4X more likely
Sales and service teams have standard processes for collaboration	81%	74%	54%	1.5X more likely

■ High performers ■ Moderate performers ■ Underperformers

Base: All respondents

SALES LEADER INSIGHT

"The trifecta of delivering a compelling and meaningful customer experience happens when sales, customer service, marketing are all focused on customer success and how to measure it, instead of siloed objectives."

— **Tiffani Bova, Global Customer Growth and Innovation Evangelist, Salesforce**

[1] State of the Connected Customer survey, Salesforce Research, April 2018.
Data may or may not be represented in the "State of the Connected Customer" report.

SPOTLIGHT

Channel Partners Extend Sales' Reach

Among salespeople at companies with channel or partner programs, 72% say they're important to their overall sales processes. Such strategies can extend the reach of core teams into new industries, territories, and segments without significant additional overhead.

But as customers come to expect consistency across all interactions, sales leaders are mindful to arm their partners with the right resources.

The majority of salespeople at companies with partner sales programs prioritize things like opportunity management resources, marketing development funds, distributed marketing capabilities, and channel analytics. Yet high-performing teams diverge from underperformers by also placing high value on additional resources – such as enablement resources, learning management, and automated onboarding.

Top Teams Take a Resourced Approach to Channel Sales

While many sales teams agree on providing channel partners with resources, high-performing teams are far more likely to value learning management systems and automated onboarding.

Percentage of Salespeople Who Consider the Following Channel/Partner Sales Resources as Important

High Performers vs. Underperformers

Resource	High performers	Moderate performers	Underperformers	
Qualified leads	86%	76%	62%	**1.4**x more likely
Enablement resources	83%	74%	46%	**1.8**x more likely
Opportunity management	82%	77%	64%	**1.3**x more likely
Channel analytics	80%	70%	59%	**1.4**x more likely
Learning management system (LMS)	80%	67%	41%	**2.0**x more likely
Distributed marketing capabilities	79%	70%	63%	**1.3**x more likely
Automated onboarding	77%	60%	32%	**2.4**x more likely
Marketing development funds	77%	72%	62%	**1.2**x more likely

■ High performers ■ Moderate performers ■ Underperformers

Base: Channel/partner sales representatives OR sales executives and managers of teams using channel/partner programs
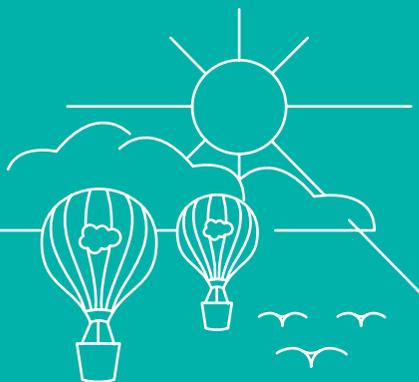
Last Look
4 Practices That Drive Sales and Customer Success

01 | Make Time for Selling

Winning deals and fostering loyalty with today's customers takes far more than a good product at the right price. Salespeople must look beyond the transaction by demonstrating a thorough understanding of their customers' unique needs, expectations, and circumstances. Teams whose reps are weighed down by processes and tasks will find it harder to meet elevated customer expectations.

02 | Trade Intuition for Insights

It's been said that selling is an art form – but that doesn't mean we can ignore the science. Sales teams in general, and particularly high performers, are taking a new approach to selling: sharpening their skills with data-driven insights. As these insights become more ingrained in top teams' processes, those without them risk falling behind the competition.

03 | Get Smart About AI

AI is projected to grow faster than any other sales technology – and little wonder, since teams expect it to make a tremendous impact on a variety of use cases. Rather than viewing AI as an existential threat, teams that embrace AI to bolster reps' performance may have a leg up in meeting – and even predicting – their customers' expectations.

04 | Rally Around the Customer Journey

With customers demanding consistent, contextualized, and personalized experiences, selling is a team sport with reps playing quarterback. Shared views of customer data across not just sales and marketing or sales and service – but the three together – are a critical ingredient for customer success.

Salesforce Research

Country Profiles*

* Please keep in mind that cultural bias impacts survey
results across regions.

Country Profile
United States (500 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

73% Team quota met

69% Customer satisfaction (CSAT)

68% Individual quota met

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+101% Net Promoter Score (NPS)

+91% Pipeline accuracy

+75% Customer lifetime value (CLV)

Rep Quota Attainment

58% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

64% Connecting virtually

43% Meeting in person

+18% Net change

+5% Net change

35% Selling

65% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing 83%

Service 78%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

71% Sales reporting/analytics

70% Account and contact management

66% Sales forecasting tools

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+153% Artificial intelligence

+91% Partner relationship management (PRM) solution

+86% Marketing automation

Artificial Intelligence Use

23% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

- 38%
- 16%
- 46%

- Data analysis of propensity to buy
- Intuition
- Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- 18%
- 30%
- 52%

- Data-driven insights
- A fairly even mix
- Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Country Profile
Canada (300 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

Team quota met	74%
Individual quota met	69%
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	64%

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+212% Net Promoter Score (NPS) **+135%** Pipeline accuracy **+97%** Customer acquisition cost (CAC)

Rep Quota Attainment

51% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

57% Connecting virtually
+15% Net change

40% Meeting in person
+3% Net change

37% Selling
63% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing	77%
Service	76%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

Sales reporting/analytics	75%
Account and contact management	67%
Sales forecasting tools	63%

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+226% Artificial intelligence **+162%** Customer insight tool **+142%** Partner relationship management (PRM) solution

Artificial Intelligence Use

13% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**
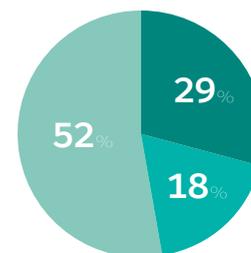
- 29% Data analysis of propensity to buy
- 18% Intuition
- 52% Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- 51% Data-driven insights
- 37% A fairly even mix
- 12% Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Country Profile
United Kingdom/Ireland (300 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

- Customer satisfaction (CSAT) — 82%
- Team quota met — 75%
- Individual quota met — 72%

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

- **+92%** Pipeline accuracy
- **+69%** Net Promoter Score (NPS)
- **+63%** Customer lifetime value (CLV)

Rep Quota Attainment

64% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

45% Connecting virtually
+11% Net change

25% Meeting in person
-2% Net change

35% Selling
65% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

- Marketing — 81%
- Service — 77%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

- Sales reporting/analytics — 75%
- Account and contact management — 67%
- Customer relationship management (CRM) system — 66%

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

- **+126%** Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution
- **+112%** Artificial intelligence
- **+95%** Sales process automation

Artificial Intelligence Use

26% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

- 37% Data analysis of propensity to buy
- 23% Intuition
- 40% Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- 53% Data-driven insights
- 31% A fairly even mix
- 16% Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research
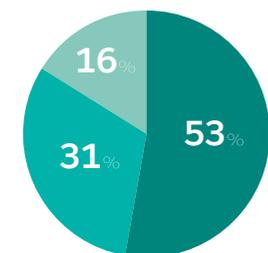
Country Profile
France (300 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

69%	67%	61%
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	Team quota met	Individual quota met

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+135% Customer lifetime value (CLV)   **+126**% Net Promoter Score (NPS)   **+122**% Customer acquisition cost (CAC)

Rep Quota Attainment

56% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/ prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

70% Connecting virtually

47% Meeting in person

+13% Net change

+2% Net change

34% Selling

66% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing	77%
Service	77%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

74%	72%	60%
Account and contact management	Sales reporting/analytics	Sales coaching and training solution

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

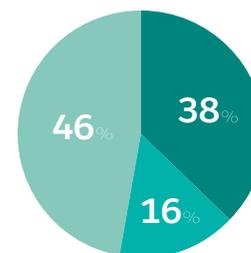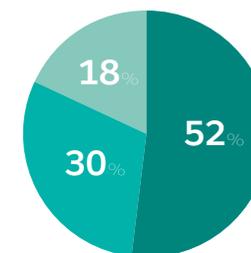**+136**% Sales process automation   **+135**% Marketing automation   **+118**% Artificial intelligence

Artificial Intelligence Use

25% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence
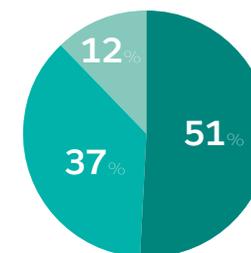
Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

- 29%
- 11%
- 60%

■ Data analysis of propensity to buy
■ Intuition
■ Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- 18%
- 45%
- 37%

■ Data-driven insights
■ A fairly even mix
■ Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Country Profile
Germany (322 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

73%	60%	58%
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	Individual quota met	Customer retention/attrition

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+211% Net Promoter Score (NPS)   **+171**% Customer lifetime value (CLV)   **+88**% Pipeline accuracy

Rep Quota Attainment

53% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

57% Connecting virtually

+7% Net change

65% Meeting in person

+6% Net change

33% Selling
67% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing 84%   Service 84%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

68%	64%	56%
Account and contact management	Competitive intelligence	Customer relationship management (CRM) system

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+221% Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution   **+189**% Opportunity management   **+128**% Artificial intelligence
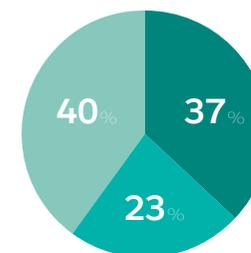
Artificial Intelligence Use

33% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

33%
11%
57%

- Data analysis of propensity to buy
- Intuition
- Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

14%
34%
52%

- Data-driven insights
- A fairly even mix
- Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Country Profile
Netherlands (232 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

67%	52%	50%
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	Customer acquisition cost (CAC)	Customer retention/attrition

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+180% Pipeline accuracy   **+141**% Net Promoter Score (NPS)   **+87**% Customer usage (e.g., consumption, deployment, utilization)

Rep Quota Attainment

41% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

68% Connecting virtually   **66**% Meeting in person

+11% Net change   **+7**% Net change

32% Selling
68% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing 82%   Service 75%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

66%	66%	59%
Customer relationship management (CRM) system & sales reporting/analytics	Account and contact management	Email/CRM integration

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+137% Artificial intelligence   **+106**% Partner relationship management (PRM) solution   **+90**% Competitive intelligence
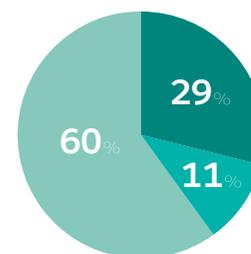
Artificial Intelligence Use

33% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

31%
20%
49%

- Data analysis of propensity to buy
- Intuition
- Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

17%
31%
53%

- Data-driven insights
- A fairly even mix
- Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Country Profile
Japan (300 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

78%	Team quota met
74%	Individual quota met
56%	Customer retention/attrition

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+125% Pipeline accuracy

+92% Customer lifetime value (CLV)

+64% Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Rep Quota Attainment

54% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

---

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

43% Connecting virtually

34% Meeting in person

+10% Net change

+1% Net change

38% Selling

62% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing 62%

Service 57%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

67%	Sales reporting/analytics
56%	Competitive intelligence
52%	Account and contact management

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+550% Artificial intelligence

+233% Marketing automation
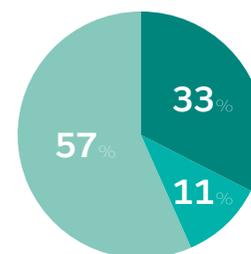
+141% Sales process automation

Artificial Intelligence Use

11% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales
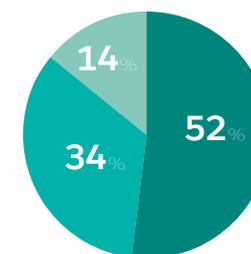
Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

- 26%
- 18%
- 56%

■ Data analysis of propensity to buy
■ Intuition
■ Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- 47%
- 30%
- 24%

■ Data-driven insights
■ A fairly even mix
■ Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

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* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research
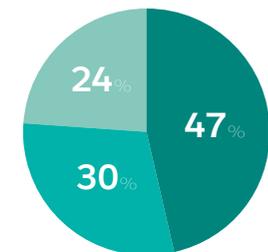
Country Profile
Australia / New Zealand (300 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

63%	59%	53%
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	Individual quota met	Customer retention/attrition

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+130% Net Promoter Score (NPS)   **+98%** Customer acquisition cost (CAC)   **+92%** Pipeline accuracy

Rep Quota Attainment

70% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/ prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

57% Connecting virtually   **52%** Meeting in person

+6% Net change   **+4%** Net change

31% Selling
69% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing   78%   Service   71%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

60%	54%	53%
Sales reporting/analytics	Sales forecasting tools	Account and contact management

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+142% Artificial intelligence   **+117%** Competitive intelligence   **+94%** Mobile sales apps for employees
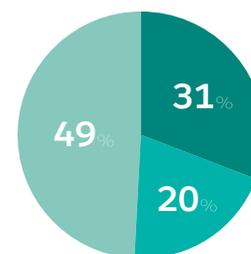
Artificial Intelligence Use

31% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

30%
17%
54%

- Data analysis of propensity to buy
- Intuition
- Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

12%
54%
35%

- Data-driven insights
- A fairly even mix
- Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Country Profile
Hong Kong (163 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

60%	58%	57%
Individual quota met & team quota met	Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	Customer usage (*e.g., consumption, deployment, utilization*)

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+136% Customer lifetime value (CLV)   **+106**% Pipeline accuracy   **+100**% Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Rep Quota Attainment

66% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/ prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

70% Connecting virtually   **51**% Meeting in person

+15% Net change   **+2**% Net change

34% Selling
66% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing 80%   Service 75%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

72%	66%	63%
Sales reporting/analytics	Account and contact management	Customer relationship management (CRM) system

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+176% Artificial intelligence   **+144**% Marketing automation   **+132**% Partner relationship management (PRM) solution
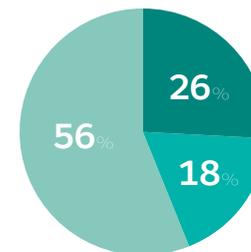
Artificial Intelligence Use

23% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

- **40**% Data analysis of propensity to buy
- **11**% Intuition
- **49**% Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- **43**% Data-driven insights
- **40**% A fairly even mix
- **17**% Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Country Profile
Singapore (191 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

67%	65%	59%
Team quota met	Individual quota met	Conversion rate

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+135% Customer lifetime value (CLV)   **+123**% Customer acquisition cost (CAC)   **+118**% Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Rep Quota Attainment

68% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/ prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

75% Connecting virtually   **41**% Meeting in person

+17% Net change   **+5**% Net change

35% Selling
65% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing — 76%   Service — 70%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

65%	62%	58%
Sales reporting/analytics	Customer relationship management (CRM) system	Sales forecasting tools

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

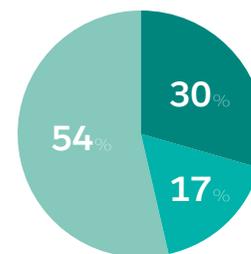**+216**% Artificial intelligence   **+131**% Sales prospecting tools   **+131**% Marketing automation

Artificial Intelligence Use

24% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence
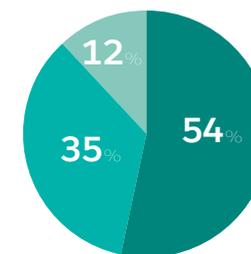
Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

40%   40%   20%

- Data analysis of propensity to buy
- Intuition
- Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

12%   44%   45%

- Data-driven insights
- A fairly even mix
- Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research
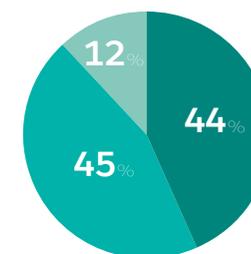
Industry Profiles

Industry Profile
Retail and Consumer Goods (900 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

67%	62%	61%
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	Team quota met	Individual quota met

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+129% Net Promoter Score (NPS)   **+105**% Customer lifetime value (CLV)   **+100**% Pipeline accuracy

Rep Quota Attainment

63% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/ prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

64% Connecting virtually

52% Meeting in person

+10% Net change

+6% Net change

35% Selling
65% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing 81%   Service 80%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

68%	65%	61%
Sales reporting/analytics	Account and contact management	Sales forecasting tools

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+135% Artificial intelligence   **+106**% Opportunity management   **+103**% Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution
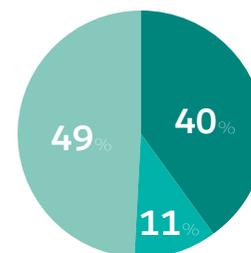
Artificial Intelligence Use

25% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

- **36**% Data analysis of propensity to buy
- **15**% Intuition
- **49**% Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- **51**% Data-driven insights
- **32**% A fairly even mix
- **17**% Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Industry Profile
Financial Services (336 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

67% Team quota met

62% Customer satisfaction (CSAT) & individual quota met & customer retention/attrition

55% Conversion rate

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+91% Net Promoter Score (NPS)

+89% Pipeline accuracy

+73% Customer usage *(e.g., consumption, deployment, utilization)*

Rep Quota Attainment

50% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

---

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

61% Connecting virtually

+10% Net change

53% Meeting in person

+5% Net change

32% Selling
68% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing **76%**   Service **70%**

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

68% Sales reporting/analytics

65% Customer relationship management (CRM) system

62% Account and contact management

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+120% Artificial intelligence

+98% Partner relationship management (PRM) solution
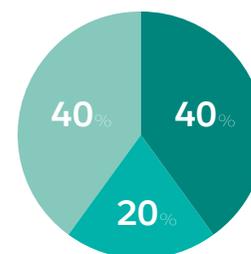
+71% Marketing automation

Artificial Intelligence Use

31% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:*

- **33%** Data analysis of propensity to buy
- **13%** Intuition
- **54%** Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- **54%** Data-driven insights
- **34%** A fairly even mix
- **13%** Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

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* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Industry Profile
Manufacturing (321 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

71% Individual quota met	
69% Team quota met	
63% Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+112% Customer lifetime value (CLV)   **+111%** Pipeline accuracy   **+94%** Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Rep Quota Attainment

59% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

---

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/ prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

63% Connecting virtually   **44%** Meeting in person

+13% Net change   **+1%** Net change

37% Selling
63% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing **75%**   Service **69%**

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

68% Sales reporting/analytics	
62% Account and contact management	
56% Customer relationship management (CRM) system	

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+248% Artificial intelligence   **+176%** Marketing auto- mation   **+110%** Partner relationship management (PRM) solution
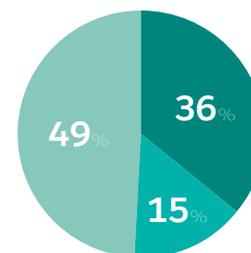

Artificial Intelligence Use

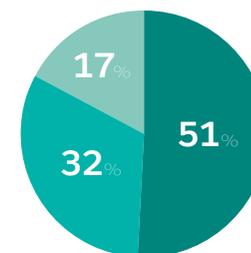**18%** of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

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Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

32%
17%
51%

- Data analysis of propensity to buy
- Intuition
- Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

46%
35%
19%

- Data-driven insights
- A fairly even mix
- Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Industry Profile
Healthcare and Life Sciences (161 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

71%	Team quota met
69%	Individual quota met
65%	Customer satisfaction (CSAT)

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+125% Pipeline accuracy

+115% Net Promoter Score (NPS)

+91% Customer lifetime value (CLV)

Rep Quota Attainment

56% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

59% Connecting virtually
+14% Net change

46% Meeting in person
+4% Net change

33% Selling
67% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing 73%

Service 70%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

66%	Account and contact management
63%	Sales reporting/analytics
61%	Customer relationship management (CRM) system

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+221% Artificial intelligence

+114% Sales process automation
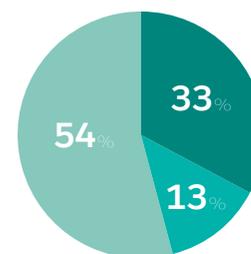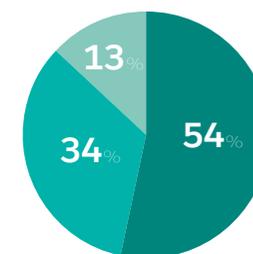
+104% Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution

Artificial Intelligence Use

21% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**
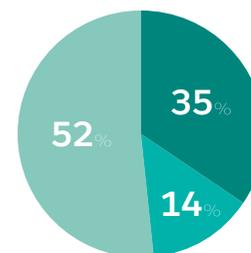
- **35%** Data analysis of propensity to buy
- **14%** Intuition
- **52%** Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:
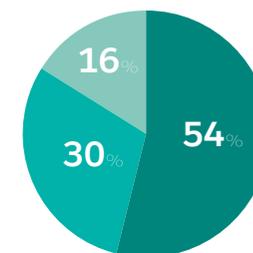
- **54%** Data-driven insights
- **30%** A fairly even mix
- **16%** Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Industry Profile
Telecommunications and Media (135 Sales Professionals)

Top Sales Metrics

Top KPIs currently tracked by sales teams*

71%	62%	60%
Customer satisfaction (CSAT)	Individual quota met & customer usage (*e.g., consumption, deployment, utilization*)	Conversion rate

Top KPIs for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+150% Customer lifetime value (CLV)   **+125**% Net Promoter Score (NPS)   **+106**% Pipeline accuracy

Rep Quota Attainment

52% of sales reps expect to miss their annual quota this year

Rep Time Allocation

Reps have increased time spent engaging with customers/ prospects in the following ways over the past three years:

50% Connecting virtually   **48**% Meeting in person

+11% Net change   **+5**% Net change

31% Selling
69% Not selling

Time reps spend selling vs. not selling in an average week

Cross-Team Collaboration

Sales teams that share common goals and metrics with:

Marketing	80%	Service	76%

Top Sales Technologies

Top technologies currently used by sales teams

72%	65%	59%
Sales reporting/analytics	Account and contact management	Customer relationship management (CRM) system

Top technologies for anticipated growth over the next two years*

+147% Sales process automation   **+131**% Marketing automation   **+121**% Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution
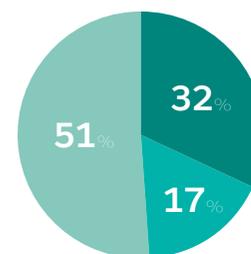
Artificial Intelligence Use

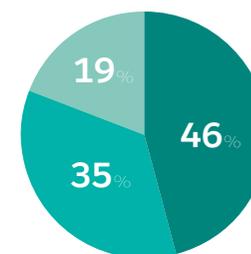**31**% of sales teams currently use artificial intelligence

Data-Driven Sales

Sales teams primarily prioritize leads based on:**

- 26% Data analysis of propensity to buy
- 20% Intuition
- 54% Other

Sales teams primarily forecast sales based on:

- 53% Data-driven insights
- 36% A fairly even mix
- 12% Gut feeling, intuition, educated guess

* Base: Sales executives and managers
** Base: Sales executives, managers, and reps

Salesforce Research

Appendix

Percentage of Sales Teams That Use the Following Technologies

|	High Performers	Moderate Performers	Under-performers	High Performers vs. Underperformers
Sales reporting/analytics — 68%	68%	69%	58%	**1.2**x more likely
Account and contact management — 65%	67%	64%	57%	**1.2**x more likely
Customer relationship management (CRM) system — 58%	62%	59%	42%	**1.5**x more likely
Sales forecasting tools — 56%	62%	56%	40%	**1.6**x more likely
Sales coaching and training solution — 54%	60%	54%	43%	**1.4**x more likely
Email/CRM integration — 51%	60%	50%	32%	**1.8**x more likely
Compensation/incentive management — 49%	56%	48%	35%	**1.6**x more likely
Sales prospecting tools — 47%	57%	46%	30%	**1.9**x more likely
Competitive intelligence — 47%	55%	45%	42%	**1.3**x more likely
Mobile sales apps for employees — 46%	57%	44%	30%	**1.9**x more likely
Customer insight tool — 45%	52%	44%	31%	**1.6**x more likely
Opportunity management — 43%	51%	42%	29%	**1.8**x more likely
Sales process automation — 42%	53%	41%	23%	**2.3**x more likely
Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution — 40%	49%	39%	24%	**2.1**x more likely
Partner relationship management (PRM) solution — 37%	44%	36%	20%	**2.2**x more likely
Marketing automation — 35%	45%	33%	16%	**2.8**x more likely
Artificial intelligence — 24%	36%	21%	7%	**4.9**x more likely

Base: All respondents

Appendix

Percentage of Sales Teams That Used the Following Technologies in 2016 Versus Those Using Them Today

Technology	Currently use	Used in 2016*	2016–2018 Growth
Sales reporting/analytics**	68%	54%	+25%
Account and contact management	65%	61%	+6%
Customer relationship management (CRM) system***	58%	N/A	N/A
Sales forecasting tools	56%	47%	+18%
Sales coaching and training solution**	54%	43%	+28%
Email/CRM integration***	51%	N/A	N/A
Compensation/incentive management**	49%	50%	+30%
Sales prospecting tools	47%	36%	+30%
Competitive intelligence	47%	36%	-1%
Mobile sales apps for employees	46%	29%	+61%
Customer insight tool**	45%	37%	+22%
Opportunity management	43%	40%	+9%
Sales process automation**	42%	36%	+18%
Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution	40%	41%	-2%
Partner relationship management (PRM) solution***	37%	N/A	N/A
Marketing automation	35%	30%	+17%
Artificial intelligence**	24%	22%	+11%

■ Currently use   ■ Used in 2016*

* Source: State of Sales survey, Salesforce Research, August 2016. Data may or may not be represented in the second annual "State of Sales" report.

** Some technologies were phrased slightly differently in the 2016 survey.

*** Technology was not included in the 2016 survey.

Growth rates calculated using the following: (currently use – used in 2016)/(used in 2016)

Base: All respondents

Percentage of Sales Teams That Use or Plan to Use the Following Technologies

2018–2020 Growth
(projected)

Technology	Currently use	Plan to use by 2020	Growth
Sales reporting/analytics	67%	22%	**+32**%
Account and contact management	64%	22%	**+35**%
Customer relationship management (CRM) system	57%	25%	**+43**%
Sales forecasting tools	54%	26%	**+49**%
Sales coaching and training solution	51%	29%	**+56**%
Email/CRM integration	49%	28%	**+56**%
Compensation/incentive management	46%	27%	**+58**%
Competitive intelligence	45%	31%	**+68**%
Sales prospecting tools	45%	31%	**+69**%
Mobile sales apps for employees	44%	31%	**+70**%
Customer insight tool	43%	34%	**+79**%
Opportunity management	41%	33%	**+80**%
Sales process automation	38%	33%	**+86**%
Configure-price-quote (CPQ) solution	37%	31%	**+82**%
Partner relationship management (PRM) solution	34%	32%	**+95**%
Marketing automation	32%	33%	**+104**%
Artificial intelligence	21%	33%	**+155**%

■ Currently use ■ Plan to use by 2020

Base: Sales executives and managers
Growth rates calculated using the following:
(plan to use by 2020)/(currently use)

Percentage of Sales Reps Who Have the Following Capabilities

	High Performers	Moderate Performers	Under-performers	High Performers vs. Underperformers
Collaboration tools *(e.g., internal social networks, instant messaging)* — 57%	58%	58%	47%	**1.3**X more likely
Market intelligence on customers/prospects — 51%	53%	52%	36%	**1.5**X more likely
Mobile sales capabilities *(i.e., access and edit customer, account, and opportunity information from a mobile device)* — 50%	52%	46%	24%	**2.2**X more likely
Fully integrated systems *(i.e., linked data sources)* — 50%	55%	50%	29%	**1.9**X more likely
Data insights on customers' propensity to buy — 46%	49%	51%	41%	**1.2**X more likely
Offline data access *(i.e., access and edit customer, account, and opportunity information without an internet connection)* — 39%	34%	42%	29%	**1.2**X more likely
Automated surfacing of leads/opportunities most likely to close — 39%	42%	39%	19%	**2.2**X more likely
Suggested next steps on an opportunity — 37%	44%	35%	21%	**2.1**X more likely
Alerts to key actions required on an opportunity — 34%	35%	35%	12%	**2.9**X more likely

Base: Sales representatives

Percentage of Sales Leaders Who Have the Following Capabilities

		High Performers	Moderate Performers	Under-performers	High Performers vs. Underperformers
Performance insights on individual reps	60%	63%	58%	65%	—
Data insights on team performance patterns	52%	55%	53%	41%	**1.4**x more likely
Fully integrated systems *(i.e., linked data sources)*	49%	62%	47%	27%	**2.3**x more likely
Data insights on book of business that provide guidance on targeting	44%	52%	43%	31%	**1.7**x more likely
Automated identification of team resources needed *(e.g., overlays, support, etc.)*	35%	47%	33%	20%	**2.3**x more likely
Intelligent forecasting	34%	40%	33%	17%	**2.3**x more likely

Base: Sales executives and managers

Percentage of Salespeople with a CRM Who View It as Important and Agree with the Following Statements About the Technology

Connects data across departments — 84%

Helps me understand what happens across my deals — 83%

Makes it easy to find the right information at the right time — 83%

Streamlines processes — 81%

Provides insights and information I wouldn't know otherwise — 79%

Connects me with my sales peers — 77%

Automates data entry — 75%

Percentage of Salespeople with a CRM Who View It as Unimportant or Neutral and Agree with the Following Statements About the Technology

Feels like busy work — 58%

Isn't where my actual work happens — 57%

Isn't where other departments' work happens — 57%

Makes it difficult to find the right information at the right time — 55%

Doesn't provide valuable insights/reports — 54%

Is difficult to use — 52%

Is often broken or doesn't work properly — 47%
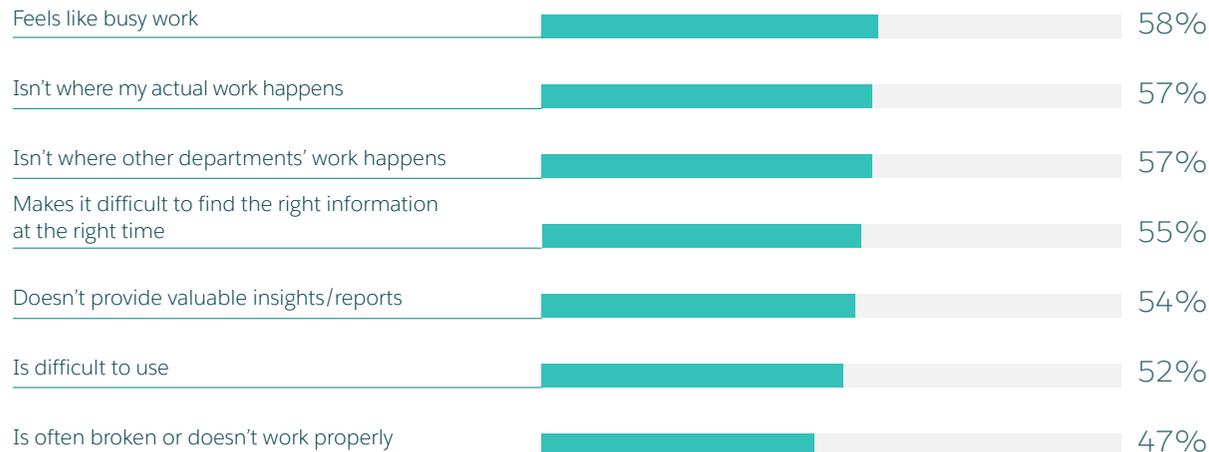
Sales Reps' Perception of Their Time Spent on the Following Aspects of an Opportunity

	Too much	About the right amount	Too little
Managing emails	62%	30%	7%
Logging activities *(e.g., emails, phone calls)*	58%	34%	8%
Inputting sales data and customer notes	56%	36%	8%
Finding the right person to contact	50%	39%	11%
Creating follow-up tasks	48%	40%	12%
Generating quotes/proposals and gaining approvals	46%	43%	11%
Researching competitive offerings	44%	36%	20%
Discovering a customer's/prospect's needs	44%	41%	15%
Researching a customer's/prospect's current solution	44%	42%	14%
Reviewing pipeline	43%	42%	15%
Prioritizing leads/opportunities	42%	45%	13%
Researching competitive activity	40%	40%	21%

■ Too much   ■ About the right amount   ■ Too little

Base: Sales representatives

Percentage of Salespeople Who Are Confident of the Following

	High Performers	Moderate Performers	Under-performers	High Performers vs. Underperformers
Industry knowledge — 80%	84%	79%	68%	**1.2**X more likely
Customer's/prospect's business needs — 77%	85%	77%	57%	**1.5**X more likely
People involved in decision-making — 76%	86%	75%	58%	**1.5**X more likely
Customer's/prospect's entire relationship with our company *(e.g., marketing and service interactions)* — 74%	83%	73%	52%	**1.6**X more likely
Executive priorities — 67%	76%	66%	39%	**2.0**X more likely
Competitive bids — 66%	77%	65%	42%	**1.8**X more likely
Approved budget — 65%	79%	63%	35%	**2.2**X more likely
Customer/prospect intelligence beyond LinkedIn profiles *(e.g., personal interests)* — 61%	76%	59%	34%	**2.2**X more likely

Base: Sales representatives, executives, and managers

Appendix

Percentage of Salespeople Whose Leads and Opportunities Are Primarily Prioritized Based on the Following
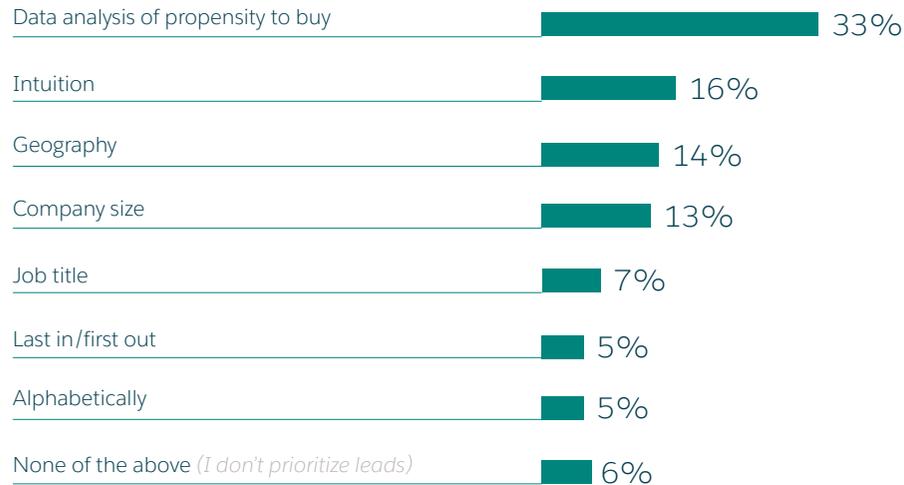
	High Performers	Moderate Performers	Under-performers
Data analysis of propensity to buy — 33%	35%	34%	22%
Intuition — 16%	12%	17%	24%
Geography — 14%	13%	14%	13%
Company size — 13%	14%	13%	17%
Job title — 7%	9%	6%	6%
Last in/first out — 5%	6%	5%	3%
Alphabetically — 5%	5%	5%	6%
None of the above (I don't prioritize leads) — 6%	6%	5%	8%

Base: Sales representatives, executives, and managers

Percentage of Sales Teams Whose Forecasts Are Primarily Based on the Following
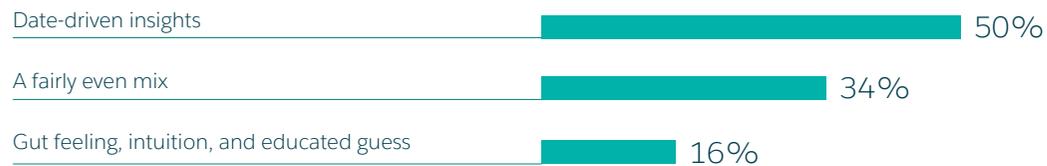
	High Performers	Moderate Performers	Under-performers
Date-driven insights — 50%	55%	49%	38%
A fairly even mix — 34%	31%	35%	38%
Gut feeling, intuition, and educated guess — 16%	15%	16%	25%

Base: All respondents

Survey Demographics

Survey Demographics

Industry

Retail 21%
Manufacturing 11%
Consumer products 10%
Technology 7%
Automotive... 6%
Professional services 6%
Banking... 6%
Engineering, architecture,
construction, real estate 6%
Insurance 5%
Hospitality, travel, transportation........................ 4%
Healthcare (provider) 3%
Communications 3%
Education... 2%
Energy 2%
Media and entertainment.................................... 2%
Life sciences and biotechnology......................... 2%
Agriculture and mining 1%
Capital markets.. 1%
Recreation and sports 1%
Wealth management 1%
Other.. 3%

Company Type

Business-to-business (B2B)...............................32%
Business-to-consumer (B2C)............................38%
Business-to-business-to-consumer
(B2B2C)...31%

Company Size

Small (1–100 employees) 27%
Medium (101–3,500 employees).................57%
Enterprise (3,501+ employees) 15%

Generation

Baby Boomers/Traditionalists
(born before 1964)..15%
Gen Xers (born 1965–1980) 48%
Millennials/Gen Zers (born 1981–1999)......37%

Role Within Sales

Owner... 4%
President or CEO.. 2%
C-level executive
(CIO, CTO, COO, CMO, etc.) 3%
Sales vice president... 8%
Sales manager or director 32%
Sales representative..31%
Sales support... 7%
Sales trainer, coach, or equivalent 2%
Sales operations 9%

Sales Primary Area of Focus*

Inside sales 52%
Outside/field sales 41%
Channel/partner sales 6%

Country

United States..17%
Germany 11%
Australia/New Zealand 10%
Canada 10%
France 10%
Japan 10%
United Kingdom/Ireland.....................................10%
Netherlands... 8%
Singapore 7%
Hong Kong... 6%

Region

EMEA 40%
APAC 33%
NAM..28%

Want more sales tips and wisdom?

Quotable

Story of Sales