

The Future of Intelligent Selling: How Data Will Drive Sales



Introduction

In order to provide healthy and lasting customer relationships, modern sales professionals need to be proactive and personalized in their approach with buyers. The transition has already taken place; buyers are hyper-informed and they want purposeful, relevant interactions. Buyer expectations have shifted due to the availability of information and all of the immediate solutions surrounding us. Data is ubiquitous, and we've reached a point where innovative technology can extract valuable insights to recommend, anticipate, and enhance customer experiences.

Unfortunately, with sales becoming more complex, sales pros are spending less time selling and are lagging behind in adapting to this new connected reality. While the select few high-performers have found ways to adapt to faster, smarter buyers, most companies' sales teams need more assistance to drive a new kind of customer success that connects people and creates value. Businesses looking to create memorable customer experiences need to use technology to power smart, one-to-one, real-time interactions with every unique customer.

At Dreamforce '15, we unveiled killer new capabilities in Salesforce with Data.com that will better arm your sales team and turn intelligent selling into your competitive advantage.

Table of Contents

- 03** Sales Today
- 04** Intelligent Selling
- 05** Discover the Best Opportunities
- 06** Prioritize Your Prospects
- 07** Understand Your Customers

Chapter 1

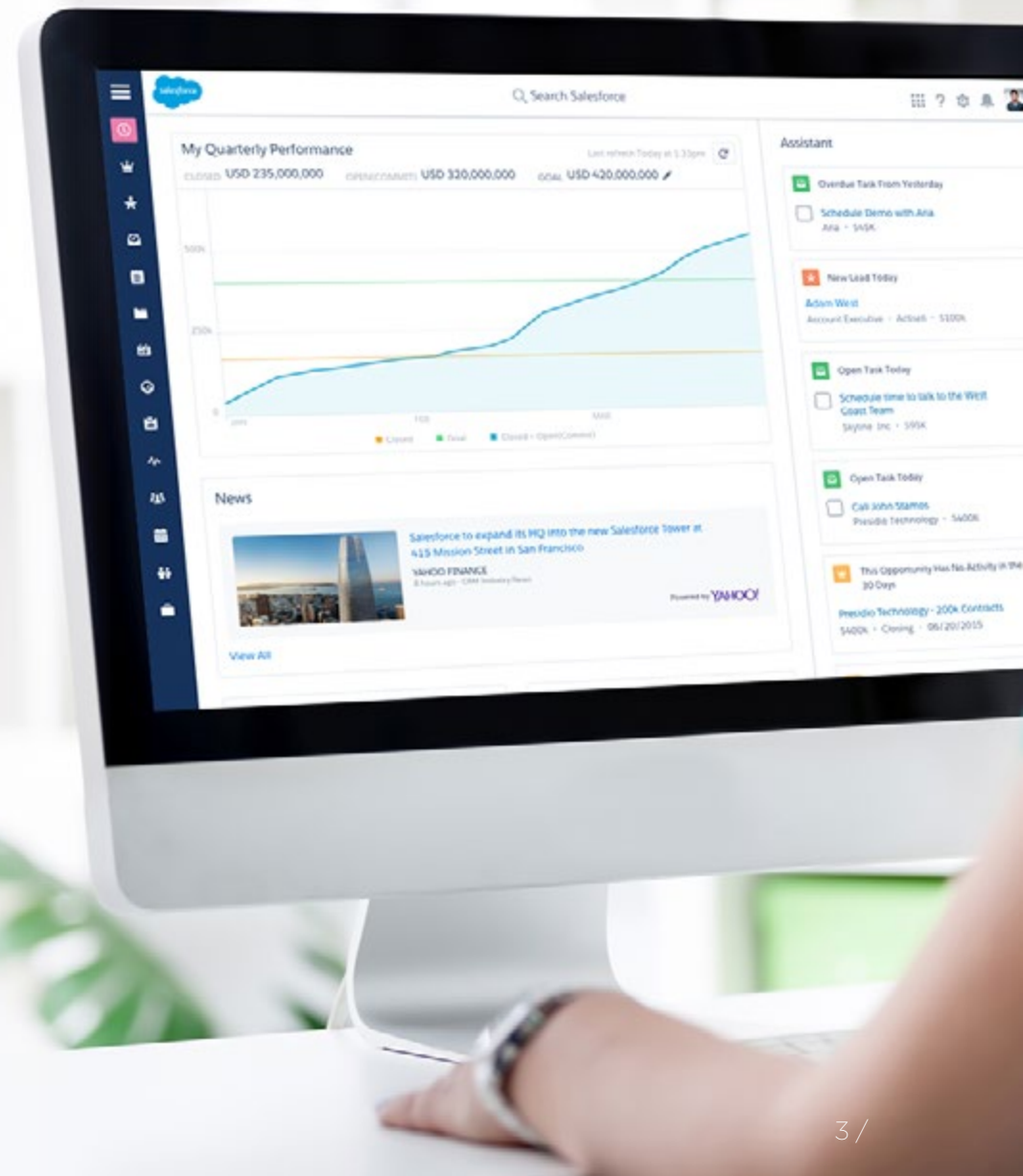
Sales Today

Modern Sales for Modern Buyers

We've entered an exciting new era in the business world. Because of innovative technology, we're hyper-connected, communications are instantaneous, and buyers are more sophisticated than ever. Information is readily available with a few screen swipes and through voice-activated artificial intelligence assistants such as Siri, making it easier for customers to find solutions to their problems on their own. Buyer expectations have shifted—they now expect you to know what their needs are before engaging with them.

What does this new normal mean for today's sales teams?

It means that in order to keep up, businesses must provide their salespeople with the right intelligence to move the sales process forward. This is not just about an IQ test, but about data and technology more efficiently powering your tasks and interactions. This is data that goes beyond a business card, and requires deeper analysis than what a simple dashboard can provide. Luckily, we live in a time when all of this beneficial data and analysis is being generated every second of the day and can be captured and manipulated through CRM, marketing automation, and customer service tools. Today's sales teams have the power to harness data to help them understand their customers in a whole new way so they can find new prospects easily, keep the pipeline filled, and close deals faster.




Challenges

That's not to say the modern sales landscape is without its own challenges. Despite the innovative technology and the plethora of data available to us, many companies still have to learn how to make the most out of data and tools if they want their sales team to be rockstars. Recent research shows that eight out of 10 sales reps are falling short of being prepared, feeling in control, and creating value. Missing data is slowing down their search for prospects, and 65 percent of reps report productivity as their biggest challenge. In a world where market competition is fierce, many sales reps feel overwhelmed by increasing pressures to acquire new customers and grow revenue. Yet according to research from Forrester, 75 percent of executives feel that reps didn't come prepared with knowledge about their business. These challenges are substantial, but they're not insurmountable.

Sales Utopia

What if you could overcome all those challenges? What if you could find the best opportunities easily, without making a bunch of dead-end cold calls, or relying on bottom-of-the-barrel leads? How about being able to quickly prioritize your prospects? You could focus more of your time on the strong ones, instead of chasing leads that aren't ready to buy. What if you could truly understand your customers better? You could stand in their shoes, understand their range of choices, and focus on what they'll need tomorrow. You could walk into a meeting with a prospect, confidently demonstrating knowledge of their business and situation, and offer them relevant recommendations and solutions. All of these scenarios are possible.

Enter intelligent selling.



“What does this new normal mean for today’s sales teams?”



System of Intelligence

Using data to recommend next steps, help make decisions and alert sales to relevant insights.

System of Engagement

Mobile, social, and collaboration were built into CRM to help reps be more effective and productive.

System of Record

CRM first started as a system of record where reps did all of the work and the systems tracked all their knowledge and interactions. with the customer



Chapter 2

Intelligent Selling

CRM is evolving and Salesforce and Data.com are evolving with it to help bring our customers to the future with intelligent selling. We're seeing a trend in technology, in particular with CRM. Companies are investing in solutions to better arm their sales reps with the right data and insight to handle every new breed of customers. Companies are laser-focused on finding and targeting the right prospects. They're getting smarter about prioritizing which leads and accounts get contacted, and giving reps relevant, helpful information. They're helping sales reps understand their customers and accounts more deeply to provide the desired proactive and personalized experiences.

Customer Data in Systems of Record

What we've seen is that CRM first started more as a system of record where reps did all of the work and the systems were there to keep track of all their knowledge and interactions with the customer. No company wants its sales reps performing data entry instead of selling; solutions, such as Data.com, evolved to help support those busy reps. Instead of spending time filling in customer data, Data.com fills in some of the information for them and keeps it up to date as the data changes.

Customer Data in Systems of Engagement

However, to truly be effective for sales, CRM systems needed to evolve to offer better experiences for the sales rep and make it more engaging as they go about their day-to-day activities. This is when we started to see mobile, social, and collaboration built into CRM to help reps be more effective and productive versus being thought of as a daily chore. However,



when it came to customer data and insights, sales reps were still spending a lot of time finding, prioritizing, and understanding their customers outside of the CRM. Once again, we saw new solutions evolve to fit the new way sales reps operated. To address this, Salesforce adapted by offering Data.com as a part of Sales Cloud -- right inside CRM -- to help sales find new prospects, while giving them insights into their customer accounts, industry trends, competitive landscape, and more.

Customer Data in Systems of Intelligence

But where are we headed next? We're seeing an explosion of data and innovation in technology. Customers and employees have access to both and have changed their expectations. We're starting to see an evolution again in enterprise software towards systems of intelligence. What does this look like for sales? Instead of being a reactive tool for the reps, systems need be smarter and more proactive. Why take the extra time to search for prospects? The tool can use historical data to start recommending prospects to target. Wondering about next best actions? Use data to recommend next steps, to help make decisions and alert sales to relevant insights so they can better understand their customer's situation. We believe this is the next shift. Later in this book, we'll show you how Salesforce, along with Data.com, is continuing to evolve.

Ultimately, even with the right tools in place, intelligence relies heavily on data. The recommendations and insights you get from your intelligent system will only be as good as the data on which it's built. Unfortunately, many companies struggle with data quality in their CRM. So they must focus on building a solid System of Record, and then work on evolving from there. Of course, no dataset is ever perfect, but when companies are missing critical information here and there, or accumulate inaccurate data, it makes their entire data foundation unstable over time. After all, you wouldn't want a building's foundation to be missing concrete or built on plywood instead of steel, right? An unstable data foundation ultimately makes the "intelligence" less intelligent and less reliable. Salesforce has worked to build a set of data-driven solutions that help guide organizations through the evolution toward an intelligent system, to help reps find the best opportunities, prioritize their prospects, and understand their customers better.



“We’re seeing an explosion of data and innovation in technology.”

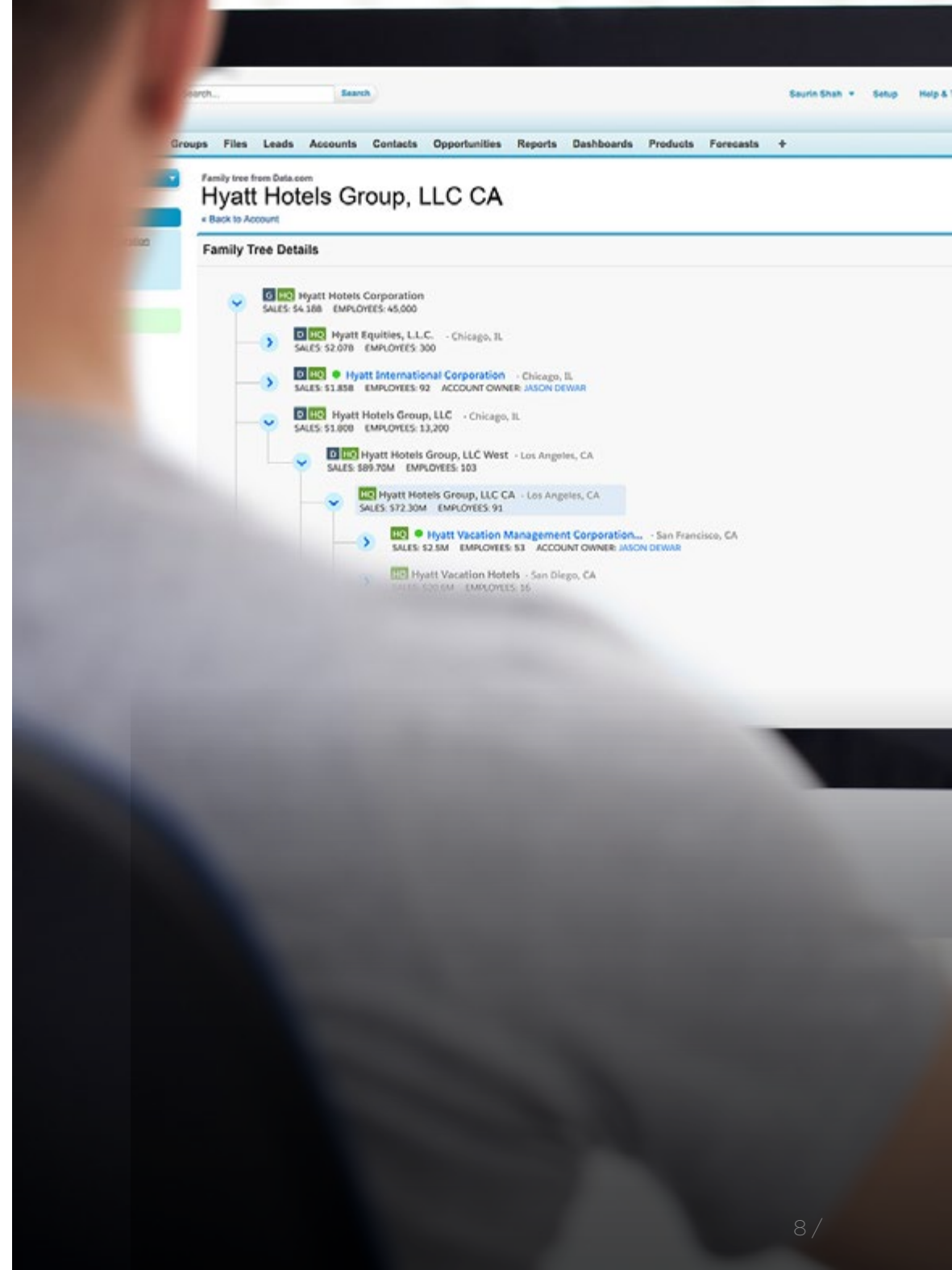
Chapter 3

Discover the Best Opportunities

One of a sales rep's primary and most crucial responsibilities is making sure they're filling the "top of the funnel." This means scouring their territory for opportunities and leads, so they can start building a relationship and selling something. Sometimes this means making the dreaded cold call. Other times, it means employing social-selling tactics, begging for referrals, canvassing conferences, or even buying leads. But with the right data in place, your system can return the best opportunities for your sales team to pursue. It's intelligent prospecting.

Introducing Data.com Company Hierarchies

Today's multinational corporate structure is complex, even for the people who work within it. Every day you hear about new mergers or companies being bought. The new Company Hierarchy feature in Data.com delivers a complete, visual and interactive tool within Salesforce to explore relationships and entities that make up a corporate family. When combined with the rest of your data in Salesforce, sales reps can gain deeper insight about their company's relationship with the customer, as well as how they are selling into the entire corporate family worldwide. For instance, sales reps can see how the global account has evolved over the course of time, view the number of opportunities open, or see deals that have been won or lost across the whole hierarchy. Having this data can help sales find new leads within related companies that were previously unknown, or discover untapped connections to make introductions.



Chapter 4

Prioritize Your Prospects

In a perfect world, every lead that comes your way is a rewarding opportunity. The reality is that sales often has to sift through potential opportunities available to find the most promising ones to pursue. Qualifying these leads can be a tedious process. We know that sales reps often spend time on manual processes, researching, and qualifying leads, instead of focusing on selling. But even when the sales team has put in the work to qualify leads, research shows that 50 percent of qualified leads are not ready to purchase. With Data.com Clean, lead data is automatically enriched for better lead scoring and routing, which helps sales reps better prioritize their work. Additionally, reps can make more informed decisions with confidence, knowing that they have complete, up-to-date information driving their actions.

Announcing Recommended Accounts

Data.com's new Recommended Accounts feature delivers smart searches based on algorithms to find more accounts that look like a rep's set of previous wins. This intelligent tool helps sales reps make better use of their time prioritizing accounts that seem the most promising. They'll be ready with great references, similar success stories, and potential connections. Reps can use their prior experience and solutions-mix to win more great customers and pick the low-hanging fruit in their territory.



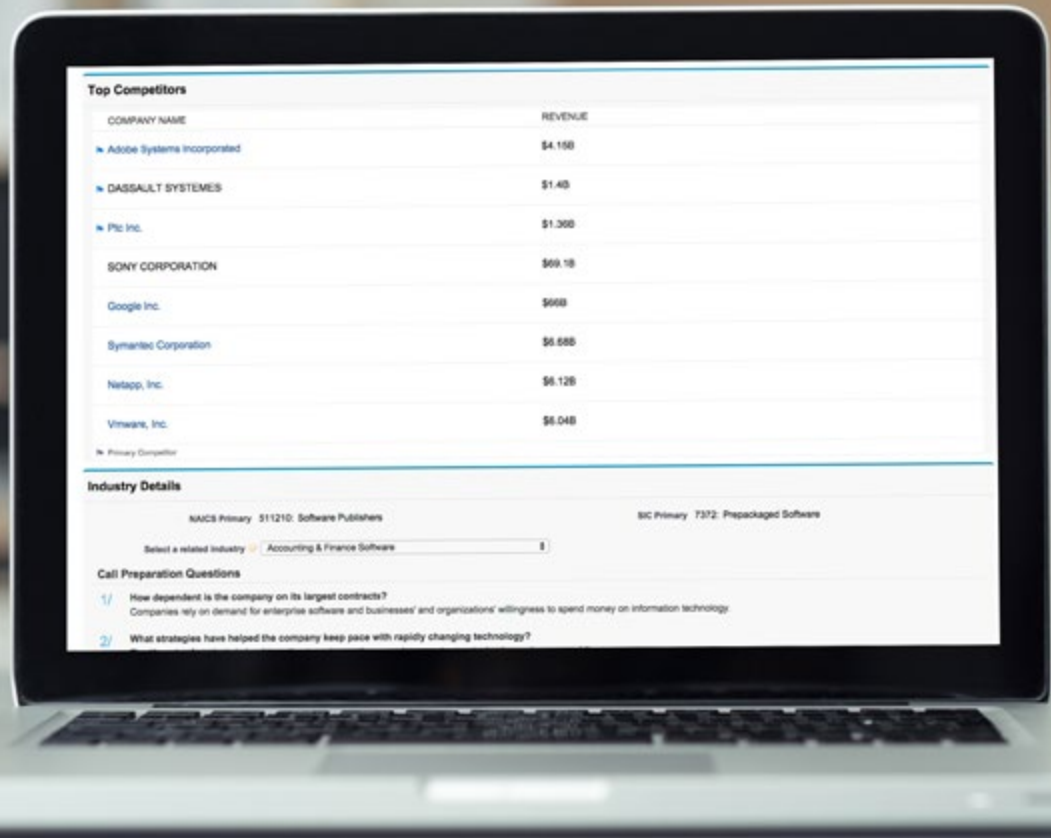
Chapter 5

Understand Your Customers

It's not enough to know specifics about a customer or prospect anymore; sales now needs to know what's going on in their world and have a complete picture. Customers and prospects have come to expect that sales reps have taken the time to know their industry, company and the problems they face. The challenge for your sales team is getting to know the market without spending valuable selling time doing research. Data.com helps you fill in the blanks so you can better see where you are winning – your best industries, regions, and company sizes. Now, with the new Prospecting Insights, we take you one step further.

Available Now: Prospecting Insights

With the Prospecting Insights feature, available now with Data.com, sales can better understand their customer's business. Reps now have access to detailed business background, financial information, the latest industry trends, competitive landscape, and even call prep questions, all within Salesforce. Sourced from D&B and Hoover's First Research, sales spends less time researching and immediately gets deep, insightful content and data that's not available in the typical Internet search. Armed with this knowledge, sales can conduct more impactful and relevant meetings with prospects and customers.



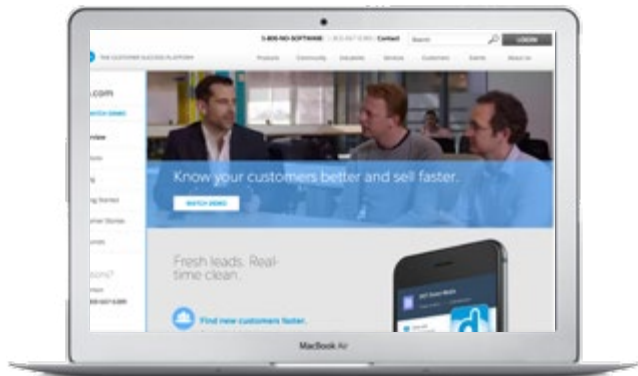
The Future of Intelligent Selling Starts Here

Selling has moved beyond a sales pitch and a handshake. Both CRM technology and the act of selling has become increasingly data-driven and intelligent. The technology is being built to enable more intelligent prospecting, lead management, research, territory alignment, and beyond. Businesses are thinking about customer data differently; they're no longer storing it away, but really using it as a tool to help sales. In the latest era of the CRM evolution, we can better leverage all of the data and customer insights we've collected to drive more efficient selling. By employing intelligent sales tactics, your sales reps can deliver personalized one-on-one experiences, work smarter, and ensure that your customers are successful.

Salesforce is your partner for first ensuring you have a foundation of clean, complete and accurate data, and then unlocking the productivity tools that intelligently assist your reps in better finding, prioritizing, and understanding their customers with Data.com.

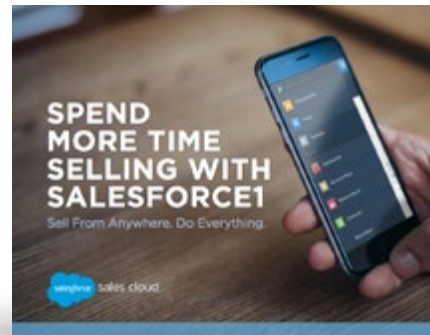


RESOURCES YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE:



Learn More About Data.com

LEARN MORE



Spend More Time Selling
With Salesforce1

DOWNLOAD



See Data.com in action

VIEW THE DEMO

Find even more helpful Sales & CRM content
Visit the Sales Cloud Resource Center.

CHECK IT OUT



THE CUSTOMER SUCCESS PLATFORM

SALES SERVICE MARKETING COMMUNITY ANALYTICS APPS