

SECOND ANNUAL

salesforce research

State of Sales

Insights and trends from over
3,100 global sales trailblazers

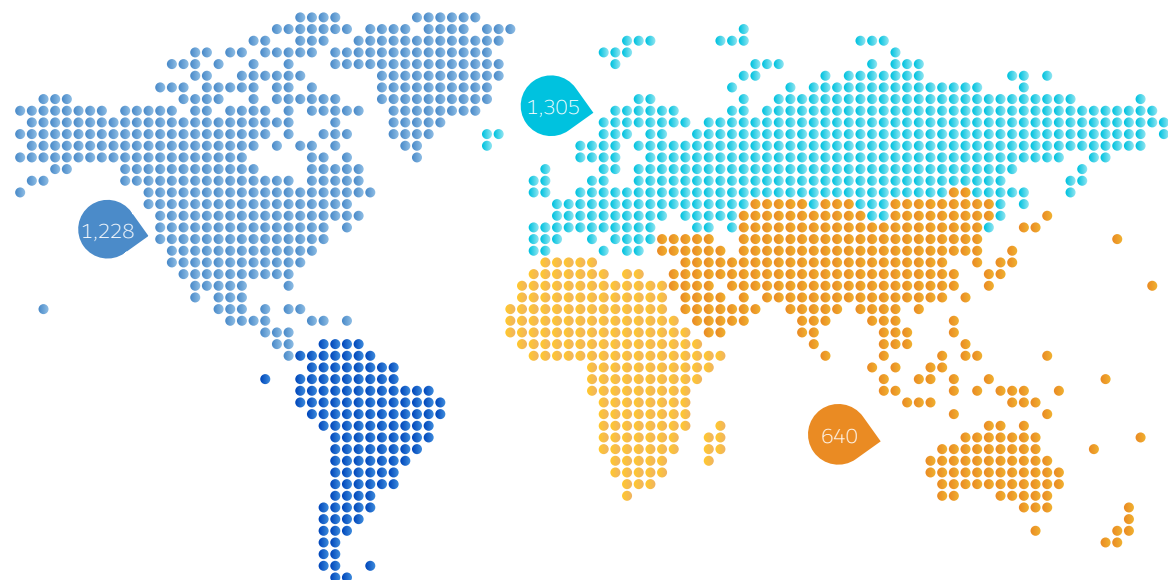


About This Report

Salesforce Research surveyed over 3,100 global sales professionals to discover:

- Which overall trends are changing the role of sales?
- How is sales pivoting to be smarter, faster, and more customer-centric?
- Which technologies are the most impactful for improving sales productivity and efficiency?
- Which strategies and tools are high performers adopting to stay ahead of the pack?
- What does the future of selling look like?

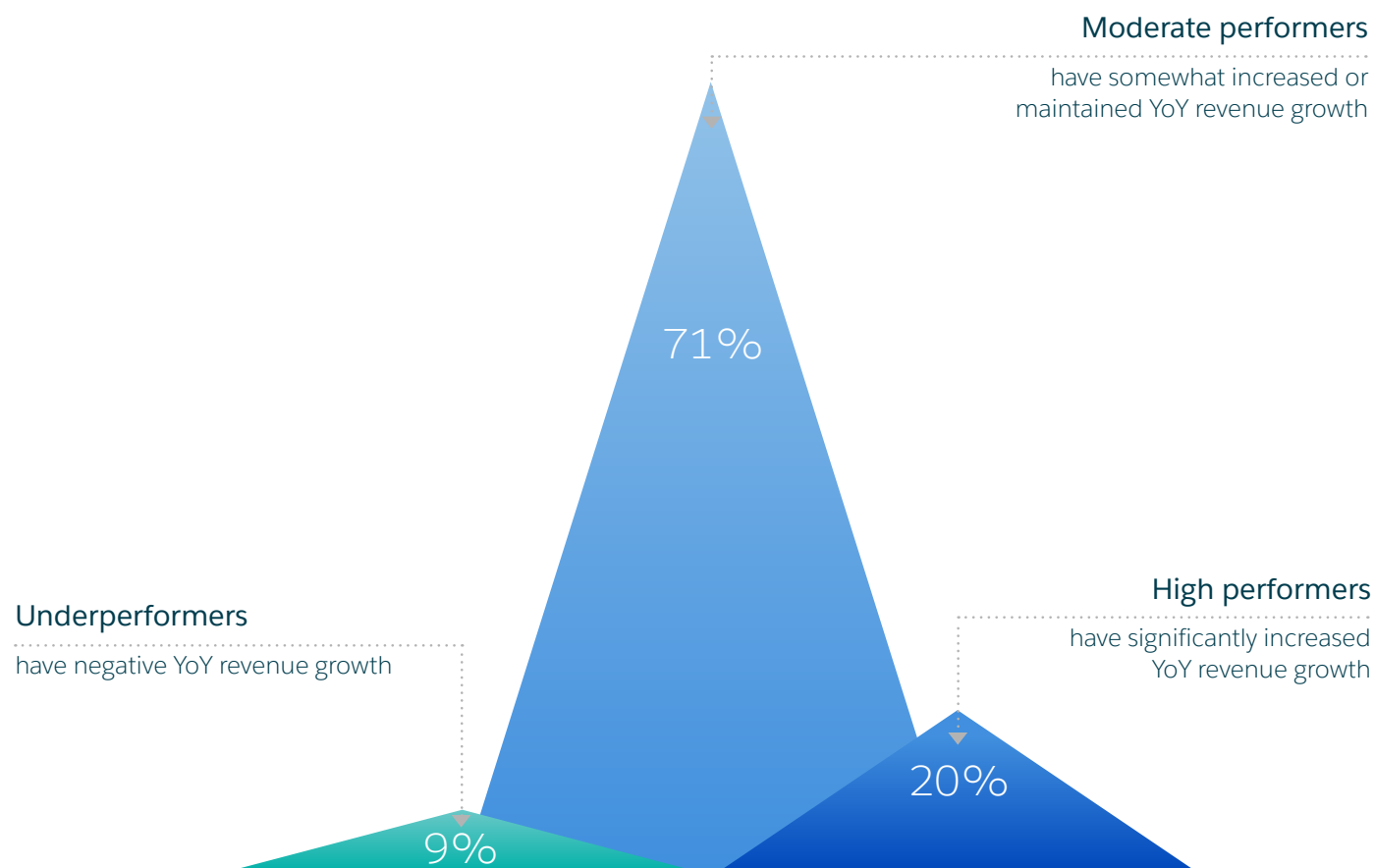
Throughout this report, data is examined relative to business performance to identify patterns for overall success. High-performing sales teams are those that significantly increased year-over-year (YoY) revenue. See page 4 for a breakdown of high performers, moderate performers, and underperformers.



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

Breakdown of Sales Performance Levels

High-performing sales teams represent 20% of the overall survey population. Sales professionals surveyed include B2C, B2B, and B2B2C teams.



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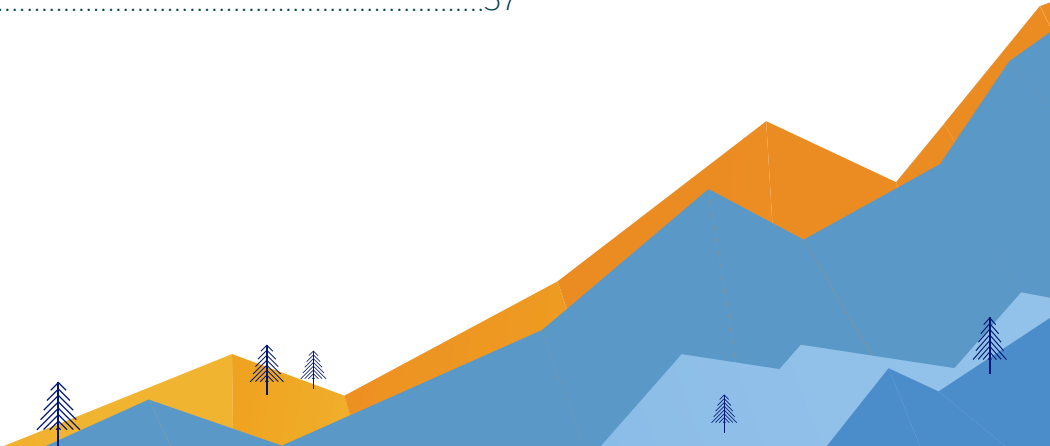
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What trends define the new era of selling? Technology-empowered and information-savvy customers now expect sales reps to be intuitive, knowledgeable, fast, and personal. The new blueprint of sales replaces product pitches with tailored customer solutions, reshapes traditional success metrics to prioritise customer experience, and overhauls business-as-usual processes with innovative technology adoption. As companies ready for the intelligent marketplace of the future, successful sales teams are arming their reps with smarter selling capabilities.

This report takes a deeper look into how the role of sales is changing and what defines success in the Age of the Customer. Here is an overview of top findings from our research.

01

Rethinking Success: Customer Experience Is Now the Top Sales Benchmark

(See page 9)

In today's connected marketplace, informed customers have more power to dictate which businesses lead – and which fall behind. As a result, sales teams are pivoting to focus on customer-centricity. This shift is influencing sales teams to think differently about how they quantify success.

Customer experience/success is ranked as the top type of KPI used to measure success.

02

A New Sales Blueprint: Sales Becomes More Connected and Proactive

(See page 12)

Sales teams must reimagine the traditional sales approach in order to keep up with customer preferences for instant, tailored, and always-on sales. Leading teams are better at understanding and anticipating their customers' needs with collaboration, strong partner ecosystems, cross-channel interactions, and immediate engagement. **High performers are 2.9x more likely than underperformers to strongly agree their company is available to customers anytime.**

03

The Productivity Gap: Top Sales Teams Turn to Tech and Training

(See page 17)

Facing increased customer demands, sales teams can no longer afford to be hindered by time-consuming and manual administrative tasks. Top teams are bullish on technology that will help them close the productivity gaps, while others continue to lag behind. **Among sales teams that cite ineffective internal processes as their top challenge, excessive administrative tasks was the top cause.**

04

Smarter Selling: Intelligent Sales Takes Off

(See page 22)

Intelligent technologies with the ability to automate, simplify, and ultimately transform the sales process are no longer confined to wish lists – they're here now. In fact, **triple-digit growth is expected in areas such as predictive intelligence (118%), lead-to-cash process automation (115%), and artificial intelligence (139%) in the next three years.**

Sales Teams Shift to Match the Connected Customer Mindset

The road maps for the marketplace are changing – customers are now in the driver's seat of business success and disruption. As seamless customer experience becomes the North Star for companies across industries, the way businesses operate is fundamentally changing.

For sales, this means greater mindshare and control over the business strategy as an increased ownership of the customer experience is needed from every part of the business. Sales departments are now positioned to be the testing grounds for advanced technologies of the future, such as automation and intelligence, to meet customers on their turf. Leading sales teams empower reps with these cutting-edge capabilities to usher in the Age of the Customer.

89% of high-performing sales professionals say that empowerment of sales has increased over the past five years – 2.1x more so than underperformers.

Sales' Influence on Business Strategy Execution Continues to Grow

Sales is becoming a more powerful, strategic voice within companies. Seventy-three percent of sales professionals say the attention paid to sales has increased over the past five years.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Say the Role of Sales Has Increased Significantly or Somewhat in the Following Ways Over the Past Five Years



Sales Teams Shift to Match the Connected Customer Mindset

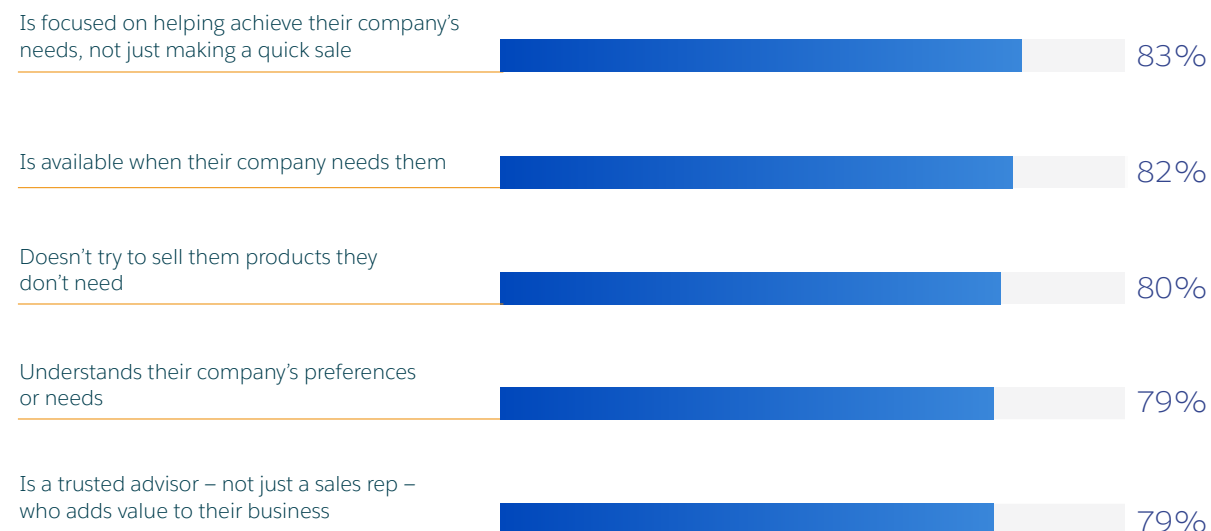
Technologies like mobile, social, and the Internet of Things have enabled customers to be connected and in control. Sixty-one percent of consumers – and 76% of business buyers – say they feel significantly more empowered than they did five years ago, according to Salesforce Research's "State of the Connected Customer" report. To keep pace and meet increasingly sophisticated customer expectations, the traditional sales process must evolve to be smarter, faster, and more intuitive.

Today's customers seek personalised and seamless engagement with the brands they choose to do business with, and they expect their sales reps to learn, understand, and anticipate their needs – like personal consultants. Otherwise, these customers can and will revoke their loyalty with the click of a button. In fact, 7 out of 10 consumers – and 82% of business buyers – agree that technology has made it easier to take their business elsewhere.*

Connected Customers Demand a Smarter Sales Experience*

Customers want sales reps who are personal consultants. Seventy-nine percent of business buyers say it is absolutely critical or very important to interact with a salesperson who is a trusted advisor – not just a sales rep – who adds value to their business.

Percentage of Business Buyers Who Say It's Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Interact with a Salesperson Who...



“SALES LEADER perspective”



“The more we understand what's motivating our customers at a personal level, the better we'll be able to partner with them to reach their desired outcomes.” – **WALTER ROGERS, CEO, CCI GLOBAL HOLDINGS** **

* "State of the Connected Customer," Salesforce Research, October 2016

** Taken from Quotable's "7 Steps to Building a Customer-Obsessed Culture in Your Sales Organisation"

Sales Teams Shift to Match the Connected Customer Mindset

The changing customer climate is proving difficult for sales teams to acclimate to – new technologies, roles, and processes that extend beyond the confines of the sales organisation are needed to truly succeed in this new age. Today, sales reps – and other parties they increasingly collaborate with – must be proficient not only at selling products or services but also at understanding and anticipating customer needs. Otherwise, companies will forfeit loyalty to competitors that do.

There is a stark cultural and structural shift that sales organisations need to undergo in order to exceed customer expectations and avoid disruption. In fact, **the top two process challenges sales organisations face are meeting customer expectations and dealing with competitive concerns.**

Customer Expectations Race to the Top of Sales Challenges

Meeting customer expectations is listed as the top overarching challenge to a sales organisation's process. Of the sales teams that cite it as a top challenge, the growing sophistication of customer needs is listed as the top reason. Here are the top six reasons, ranked.

Ranked Reasons Why Meeting Customer Expectations Is a Top Challenge for Sales Teams*

1

Customer needs have grown more sophisticated

4

Customers expect the same level of service in every interaction (e.g., speaking with sales or customer service)

2

Customer motivations have shifted from price to value

5

Customers expect sales to be available 24/7

3

Customers have become more experienced with competitive, disciplined bidding

6

Customers expect sales to be a trusted advisor (e.g., go beyond a sales rep role to be consultative to customers)

* This chart is a partial list. For the complete list, see page 38.
Data reported is out of a base of respondents who selected "Meeting Customer Expectations" as the top overarching challenge in their sales process.

Sales Teams Shift to Match the Connected Customer Mindset

High-performing sales teams in this report are those that cite a significant increase in YoY revenue growth. These top teams lead the pack by aggressively innovating and pivoting toward the customer. **High-performing sales teams are 2.8x more likely than underperformers to say their sales organisations have become much more focused on personalising customer interactions over the past 12–18 months** and 2.9x more likely than underperformers to say the same about providing customers with a consistent experience.

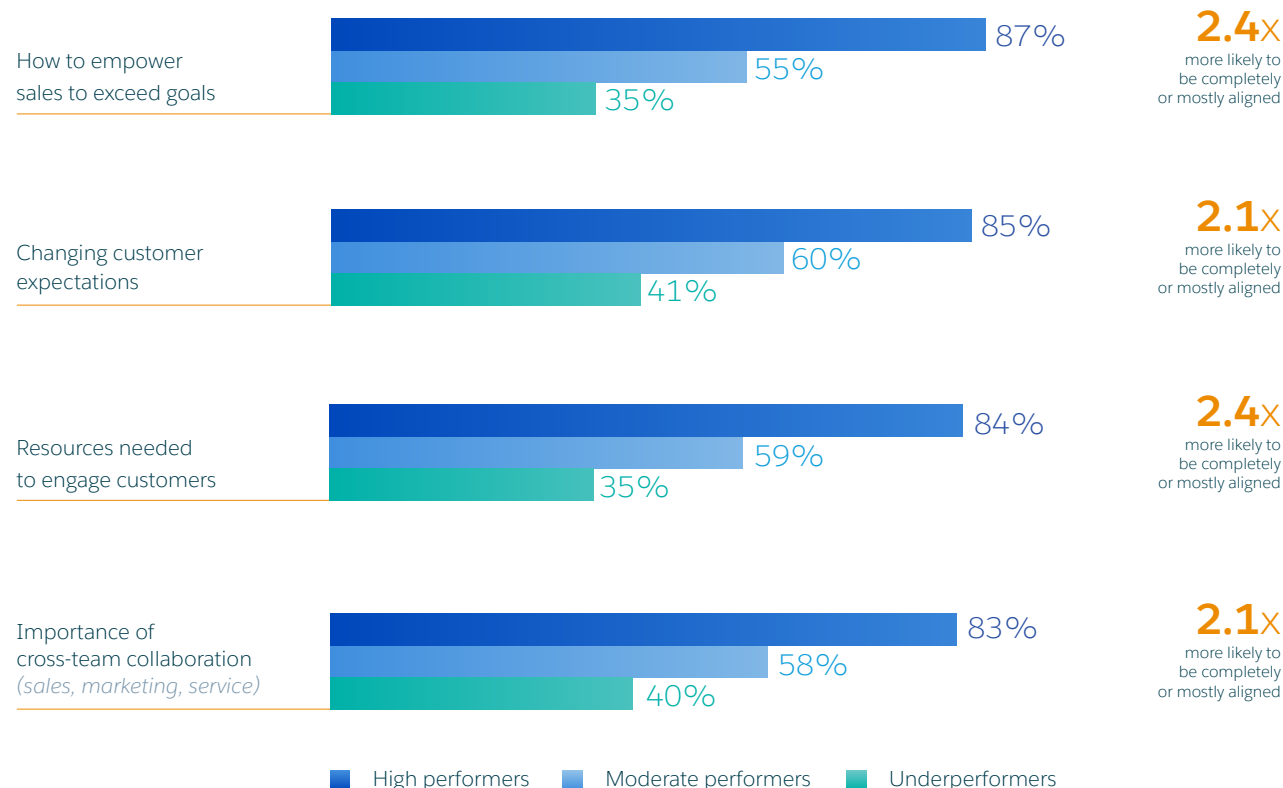
These teams thrive in companies that understand the importance of arming reps with advanced and intelligent technologies. This approach empowers top teams to collect and understand customer data across departments, cut down on process time, deliver instant and proactive experiences, and create personalised interactions – ultimately resulting in higher revenue growth.

Sales Innovation Goes Hand-in-Hand with Revenue Growth

Top teams are able to significantly grow their revenue because their entire company is aligned on how to empower sales teams to meet customer demands. Eighty-seven percent of high-performing sales teams say their company is aligned on how to empower sales to exceed goals.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Who Say Their Company Completely or Mostly Aligned on the Following

High Performers vs. Underperformers



01 Rethinking Success

Customer Experience Is Now the Top Sales Benchmark

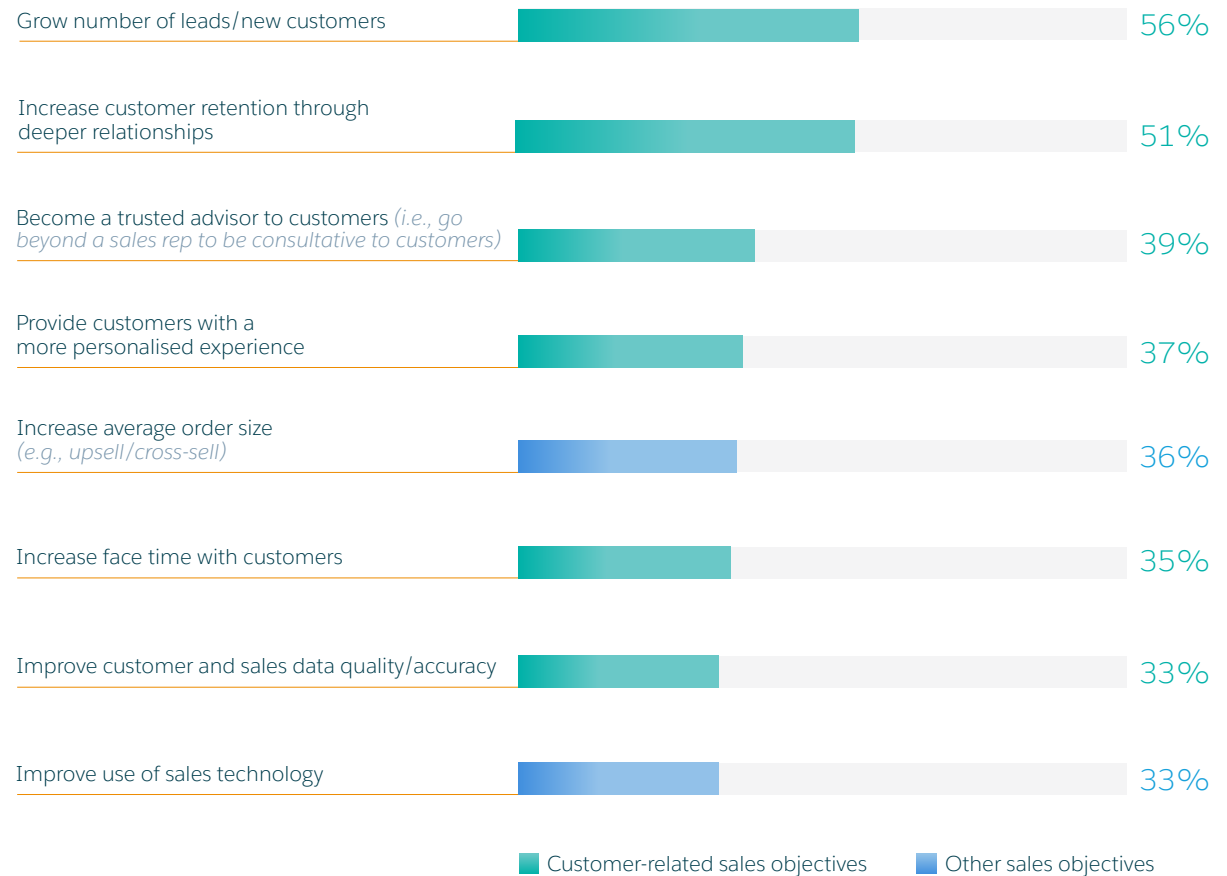
Skeptics of the new sales paradigm need look no further than the shifting objectives of sales teams across industries, geographies, and sizes. Although bread-and-butter priorities such as customer acquisition and hiring more reps aren't going away any time soon, evolving objectives reflect the pivot to a customer-first mindset. These newly elevated aspirations include increasing retention through deeper relationships (51%), becoming trusted advisors to customers (39%), and providing customers with a more personalised experience (37%).

Sales teams are adapting to their customers' behaviors by emphasising the customer experience and focusing on enabling personalised consultants rather than traditional product or service reps.

Sales Teams Shift Priorities to the Customer Relationship

Sales teams are becoming more customer focused – six out of the top eight objectives over the next 12–18 months are customer-centric.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Rate the Following as One of Their Most Important Sales Objectives Over the Next 12–18 Months*



* This chart is a partial list. For the complete list, see page 41.

01 Rethinking Success

Customer Experience Is Now the Top Sales Benchmark

As seen on the previous page, customer experience and revenue-generating activities are no longer mutually exclusive. While these two areas become more intertwined, traditional metrics such as quota and pipeline-generation alone don't suffice as definitive success metrics. The quality of the customer experience is now key to setting sales teams apart from the rest and therefore has also become the top KPI type used by sales organisations.

Customer experience ⚡

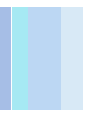
is ranked the top KPI type used by sales organisations to measure success.

Customer Experience Overtakes Process as the Top KPI Type

Sales teams are supplementing traditional success measures by benchmarking against customer satisfaction. Customer experience/success is ranked as the top type of KPI used by sales teams to measure success.

Ranking of Sales Teams' Top KPI Types

1	Customer experience/success (e.g., Net Promoter Scores [NPS], customer satisfaction)	6	Forecast (e.g., visibility, accuracy, predictability)
2	Sales process (e.g., lead-to-cash time, customer interactions)	7	Pipeline quality (e.g., lead quality, accuracy, validation)
3	Organisational performance (e.g., amount of new/recurring revenue versus targets)	8	Guided selling (e.g., opportunity ranking by potential value)
4	Account management (e.g., sales performance versus account plan, account profitability, account growth rates)	9	Proposal/quote generation (e.g., lead-to-quote time)
5	Representative (individual) performance/productivity (e.g., calls made, proposals sent, converted leads)	10	Pipeline generation (e.g., conversion rate, conversation rate)



01 Rethinking Success

Customer Experience Is Now the Top Sales Benchmark

There is a stark mindset shift in sales, as evident by customer experience becoming the standard bearer for success. With this pivot comes the added challenge to not just deliver, but also track the customer experience. While most sales teams understand the relevance of customer success and the impact it has on their business, many lack the resources necessary to effectively measure progress. Sales teams that lack the necessary tools – such as analytics – to understand the level of customer satisfaction, what those customers need, and how to take action, are already behind in the connected era.

Top teams are empowered with the right tools to track and improve engagement. For example, **high performers are 2.4x more likely than underperformers to rate their team's analytics and insights capabilities as outstanding or very good.**

Many Sales Organisations Struggle to Track Customer Experience

Though customer experience has become the marker for sales success, it's difficult to track without the right technology and tools. For those who didn't list customer experience or success as one of their top three types of KPIs used to measure success, "not easy to track" was the top reason.

Ranked Reasons Why Sales Teams Haven't Prioritised Customer Experience/Success KPIs*

- 1 Not easy to track
- 2 Lack required tools/software to track
- 3 Not tied to performance rating/bonus
- 4 Not relevant across the business
- 5 Not useful

* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who did not select "Customer Experience/Success" as a top three KPI type used by their sales organisation to measure success.



02 A New Blueprint

Sales Becomes More Connected and Proactive



In order to successfully deliver and track customer experience, teams must fundamentally change how they sell. Sales organisations can no longer exist in siloes – they must now connect across different departments, channels, and partners in order to have complete visibility into the customer journey. Seventy-three percent of consumers say they are likely to switch brands if a company provides inconsistent levels of service (i.e., it feels like they are dealing with a different company, instead of a different department at the same company, when they talk to a sales rep versus a service rep).^{*} Sales teams across all performance levels understand that collaborative selling is key.

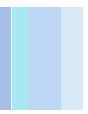
60% of sales professionals say that collaborative selling has increased productivity by more than 25%, and more than half (52%) say it has done the same for increasing pipeline.

Collaboration Is Seen as Key to a Connected Sales Journey

Collaboration is crucial to streamlining the sales process and ensuring customer success. Across all performance levels, 73% say collaborating across departments is absolutely critical or very important to their overall sales process.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Rate the Following Selling Techniques as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Overall Sales Process





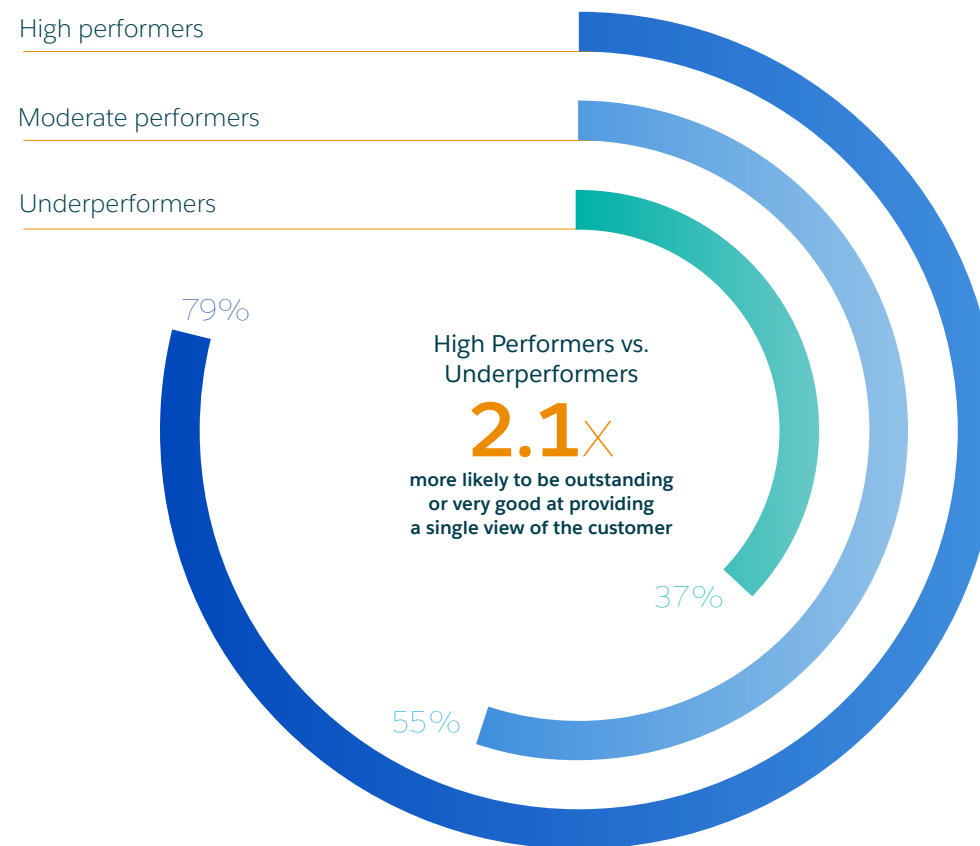
True collaborative selling is only possible with a single view of the customer across all organisations. Digital transformation now allows established companies to connect their disparate systems of engagement, while successful startups are built from the ground up with the single view in mind. **Sixty-eight percent of sales professionals say it is absolutely critical or very important to have a single view of the customer across departments/roles.** Yet, only 17% of sales teams rate their single view of the customer capabilities as outstanding.

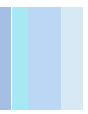
Top teams prioritise access to customer data across the entire organisation. These companies are better equipped to quickly understand, socialise, and act on customer data at any given touchpoint – such as preferences determined by a marketing nurture campaign, shopping behaviors gathered by an e-commerce website, or future needs expressed on a service call.

High-Performing Sales Teams Master a Single View of the Customer

Top teams are 2.1x more likely than underperformers to be outstanding or very good at having a single view of the customer.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Are Outstanding or Very Good at Providing a Single View of the Customer





02 A New Blueprint

Sales Becomes More Connected and Proactive

Collaborative selling isn't just about working together internally, it's now also about building and bolstering a supportive partner ecosystem. A truly connected sales process includes many different facets –

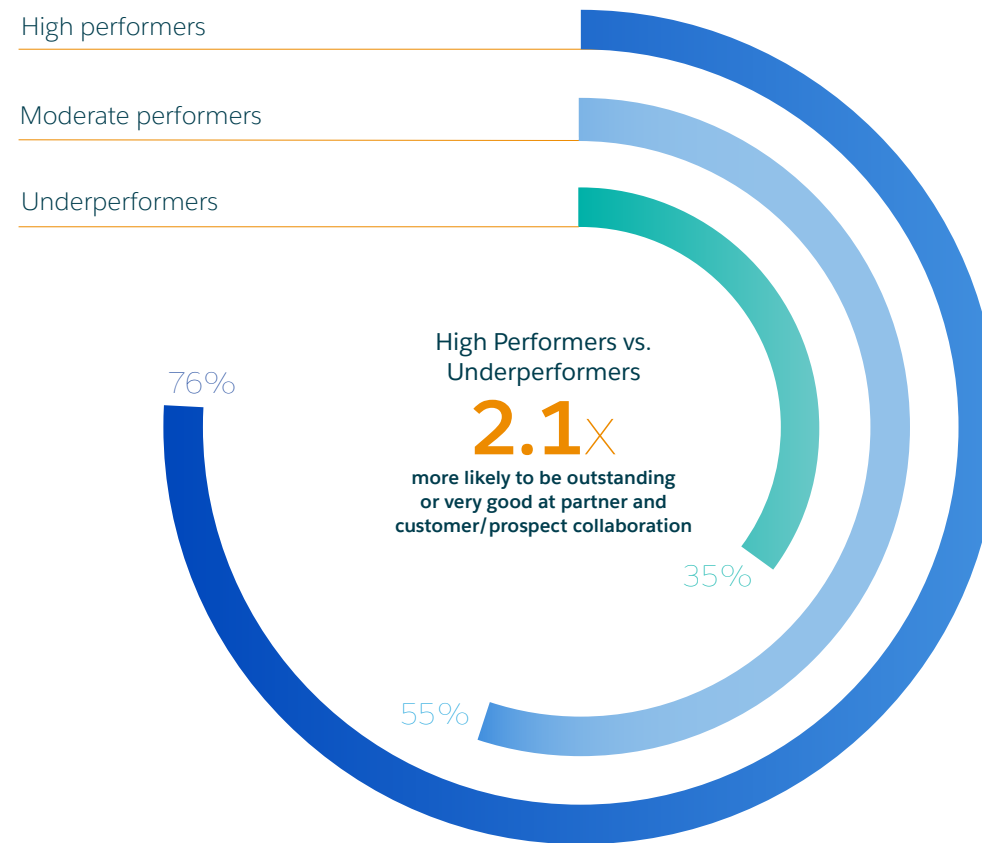
75% of sale professionals agree their company connects customers, employees, partners, and products.

The right partners can help companies discover hidden opportunities they wouldn't be able to access on their own, while still delivering a seamless, branded experience. For example, if a hotel chain partners with an airline and rental car agency, they can ensure that customers are recognised across their journey and that their trip is smooth from the time they depart to the time they return. Similarly, unique preferences learned by these partners can be leveraged by sales reps to tailor their pitches with personalised recommendations.

Successful Connected Selling Extends to the Partner Ecosystem

Creating a connected sales experience for the customer extends beyond internal collaboration. Top teams also prioritise partner relationships – 76% of high-performing sales teams rate their partner and customer/prospect collaboration capabilities as outstanding or very good.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Are Outstanding or Very Good at Partner and Customer/Prospect Collaboration





02 A New Blueprint

Sales Becomes More Connected and Proactive

While communicating across partner experiences and on every channel is a key component of success – **on average, sales teams rate six channels as absolutely critical/very important for connecting with customers** – nothing yet eclipses the impact of a human conversation. While many may imagine a world where technology replaces reps entirely, data shows that the desire for one-to-one human connection is still more powerful than technology innovation for its own sake. Two-thirds of consumers, and 72% of business buyers say they are likely to switch brands if they're treated like a number instead of an individual.**

Spotlight

Top Teams Scale Engagement with New Channels

Self-service channels enable customers to engage on their terms and seek human interaction when needed.

Online Communities

Knowledge Bases

High Performers vs. Underperformers

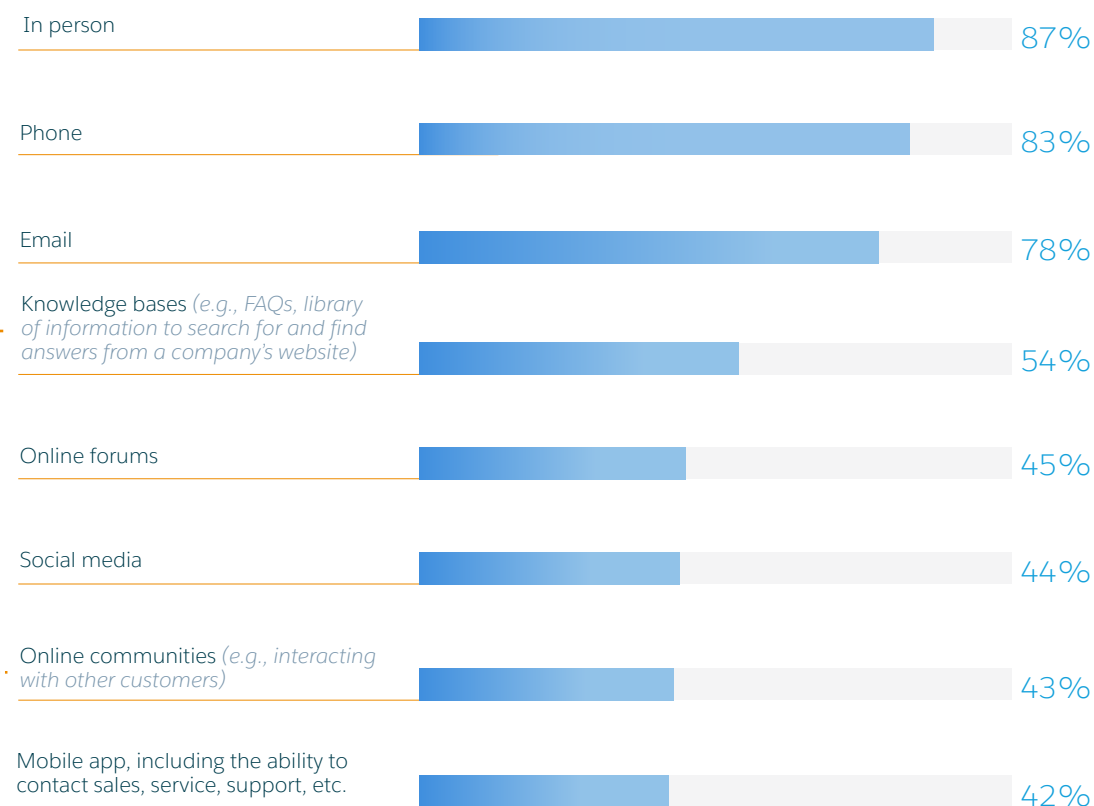
2.7x | **1.9x**

more likely to say absolutely critical or very important

Sales Seeks to Drive Personalisation at Scale

Despite technology innovation expectations, customers still look for human connections. As a result, sales teams are finding the most success when they blend personal interactions with technologies that scale. In-person remains sales' top communication channel for connecting with customers.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Who Say It's Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Connect with Customers Using the Following Communication Channels*



* This chart is a partial list. For the complete list, see page 45.

** "State of the Connected Customer," Salesforce Research, October 2016



02 A New Blueprint

Sales Becomes More Connected and Proactive

Beyond having a presence across multiple channels and prioritising human interactions, sales teams must overhaul business-as-usual processes to adapt to customers' real-time expectations. Modern-day customers live in a culture of immediacy in which mobile has completely altered the definition of "timely" interactions. Sixty-four percent of consumers say they expect companies to interact with them in real time, and 80% say a company responding immediately when they reach out for help influences their loyalty.* However, only 29% of sales teams are currently providing a mobile app to their salespeople.

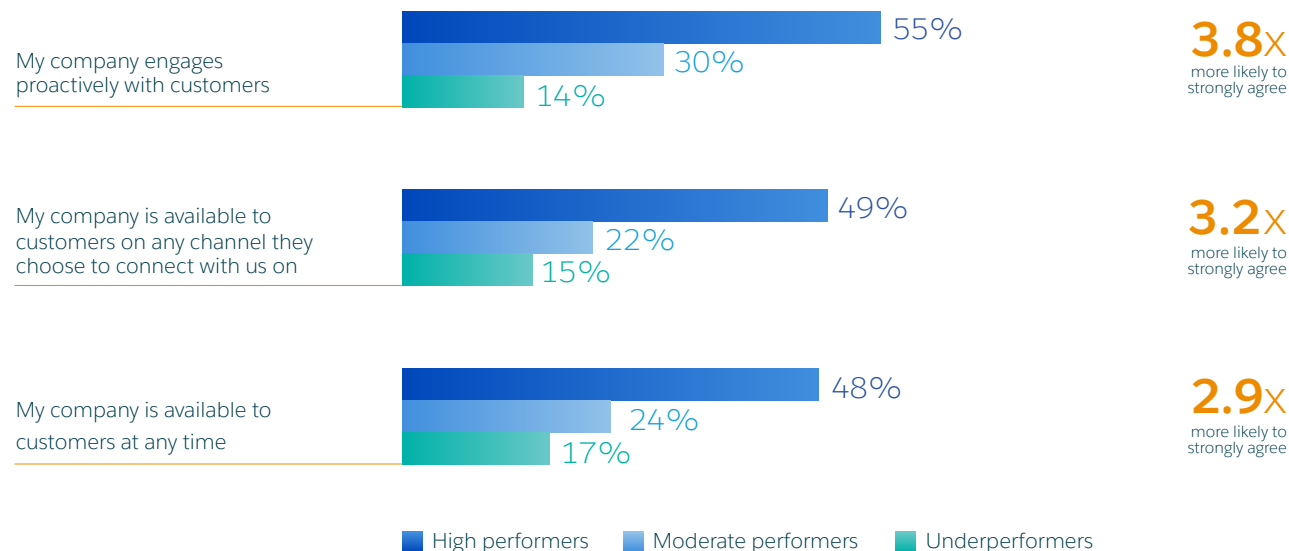
Sales teams can no longer afford lag time between customers' initiating contact and the company responding. Top-performing teams meet customers where they are, at the exact moment – or even before – they are needed. **High performers are 3.8x more likely than underperformers to strongly agree their company reaches out to customers proactively.**

Leading Sales Teams Rise to New Anytime, Anywhere Expectations

Successful teams exceed customer demands for instant interactions wherever they engage. High performers are 2.9x more likely than underperformers to strongly agree their company is available to customers at any time.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Who Strongly Agree with Each Statement about Their Company

High Performers vs. Underperformers



* "State of the Connected Customer," Salesforce Research, October 2016

03 The Productivity Gap

Top Sales Teams Turn to Tech and Training

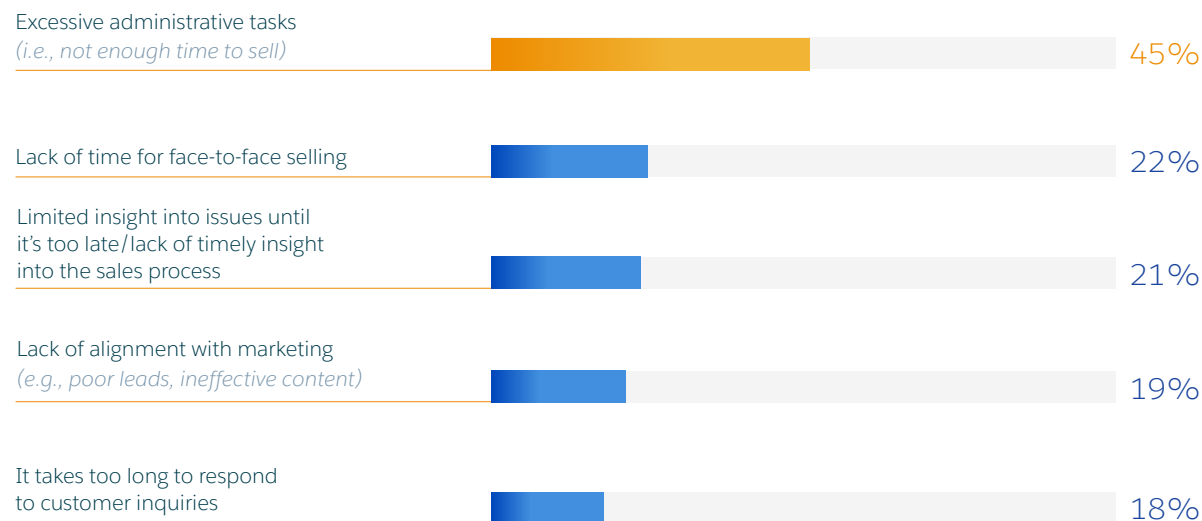
While sales departments move to innovate and become more customer-centric, the day-to-day sales process is still plagued by time-consuming administrative tasks, siloed customer information, and outdated management systems. If sales reps aren't armed with capabilities at least as sophisticated as those of their customers, they risk continually falling short of customer demands.

Technologies like analytics, mobile, and automation can go a long way to improving a sales rep's daily productivity. Analytics tracks and interprets actionable customer data. Mobile sales apps allow reps to look at those insights instantly as well as act on the information from anywhere. Automation provides relief from human error, manual data entry, and cumbersome processes.

Inefficient Processes Hinder Sales Teams

Decreased productivity impacts the success of not only sales, but also the entire company. Among teams who cite ineffective internal processes as their top challenge, they point to excessive administrative tasks as the primary cause.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Say the Following Are Reasons Why Ineffective Internal Processes Is Their Sales Challenge*



“SALES LEADER perspective



*“Sales productivity is one of the reasons why Zillow is as successful as it is today. And a lot of the sales efficiency came as a result of putting better sales tools and information at the fingertips of salespeople.” – TONY SMALL, VP AND GM, PREMIER AGENT, ZILLOW ***

* This chart is a partial list. For the complete list, see page 47.

Data reported is out of a base of respondents who selected “Ineffective Internal Processes” as the top overarching challenge in their sales process.

** Taken from Quotable's [“How to Boost Sales and Productivity by 275% with Zillow's Tony Small”](#)

03 Spotlight

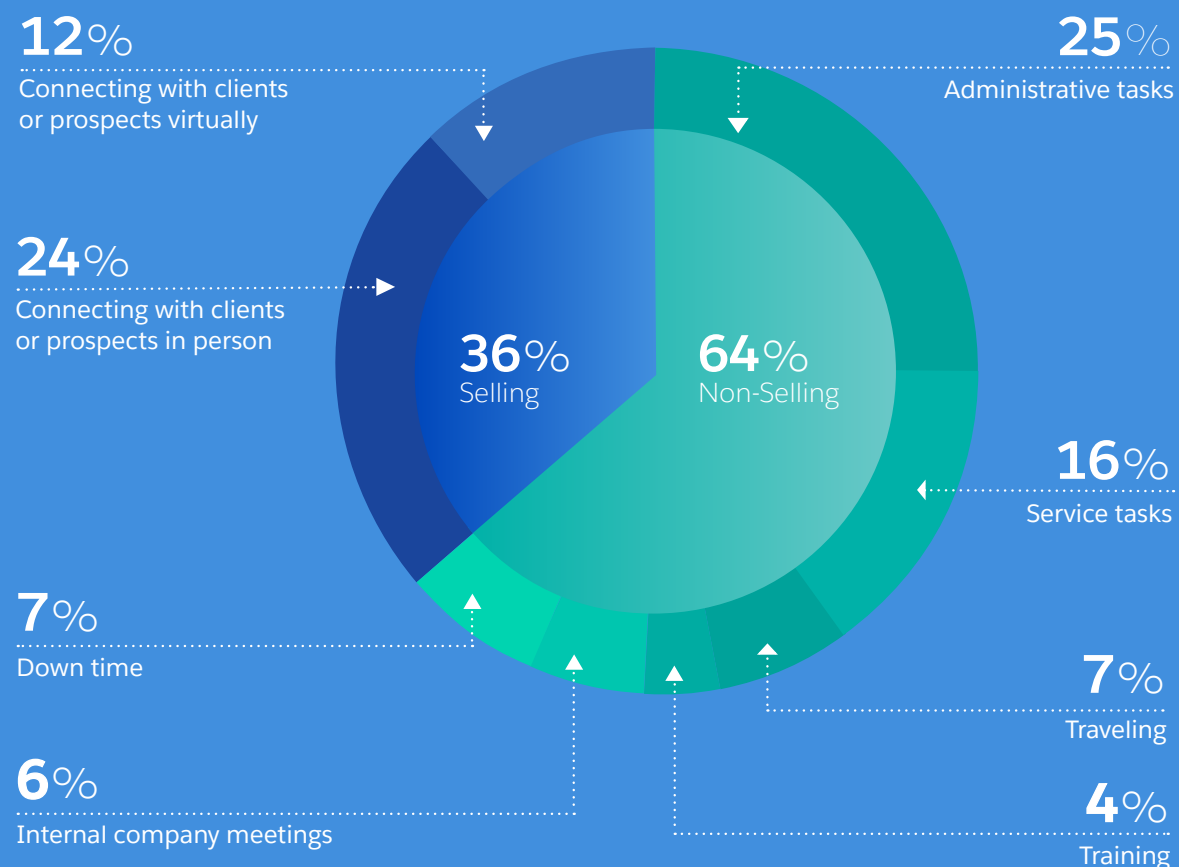
A Day in the Life of a Sales Rep

Much of the success of the entire sales organisation rests on the productivity and efficiency of its reps. Reps are the primary enablers of the customers' experience in the sales process. These employees are on the ground engaging customers, and facilitating new deals. However, according to Quotable's "Day in the Life of a Salesperson" report, while half of sales reps say that relationship building is their favorite activity,* the data shows that most of their time is still spent on non-selling tasks such as manually entering data, calendaring, and account maintenance.

Sales Reps Aren't Spending Most of Their Time Selling

While half of sales reps report relationship building as their favorite activity,* most are too bogged down by day-to-day tasks to engage with customers as much as they'd like. On average, sales reps spend 64% of their time on non-selling tasks.

Percentage of Time in an Average Week Sales Reps Spend on the Following Tasks**



* Taken from "A Day in the Life of a Salesperson" by Quotable, a Salesforce publication.

** Data reported is out of a base of respondents in a sales rep or self-employed/consultant role.

03 The Productivity Gap

Top Sales Teams Turn to Tech and Training

Mobile technology is a critically important element of the modern sales toolkit. It enables sales organisations to lean into the culture of immediacy and meet customers where they are. Over the past 12–18 months, 70% of sales teams have become more focused on providing customers with real-time response and feedback as a result of changing customer expectations. When reps have data, analytics, and automation in their hands, they can interact with customers, collaborate, and close deals from anywhere, at any time.

Top teams are already mastering mobile. Successful sales teams have a robust mobile strategy in place and are able to arm their reps with apps that allow guided selling, real-time visibility into analytics, and instant collaboration.

High-performing sales teams are 3.5x more likely than underperformers to rate their mobile sales capabilities as outstanding or very good.

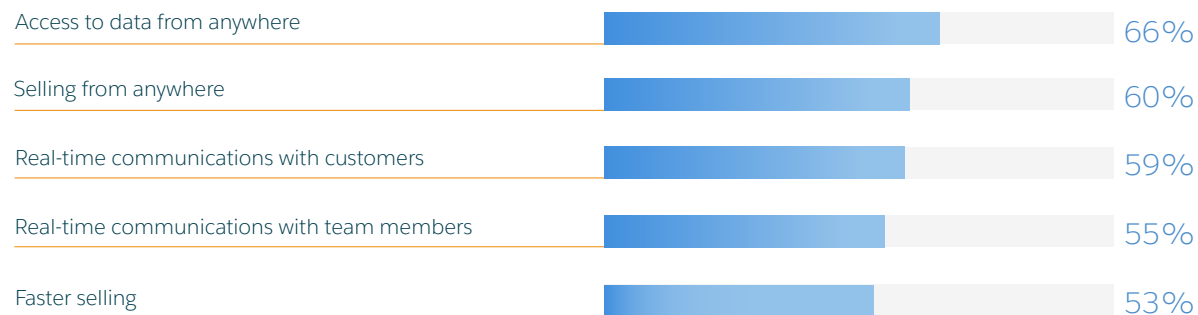
Sales Teams Adopt a Mobile Mindset*

Mobile not only allows reps to meet the new real-time mandate, it also enables anywhere, anytime selling and collaboration among reps.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Use Mobile Apps in Their Sales Process in the Following Ways**



Percentage of Sales Teams Who Cite a Major Benefit from Using a Mobile Sales App



“SALES LEADER perspective



*“A mobile selling environment is far more than putting a cell phone in the hands of every member of your team. It’s about understanding and embracing a completely new way of doing business.” – COLLEEN FRANCIS, OWNER, ENGAGE SELLING SOLUTIONS ****

* Data reported is out of a base of respondents whose sales organisation uses a mobile sales app.

** This chart is a partial list. For the complete list, see page 48.

*** Taken from Quotable’s [“Want to Increase Sales Productivity? Adopt Mobile Selling”](#).

03 The Productivity Gap

Top Sales Teams Turn to Tech and Training

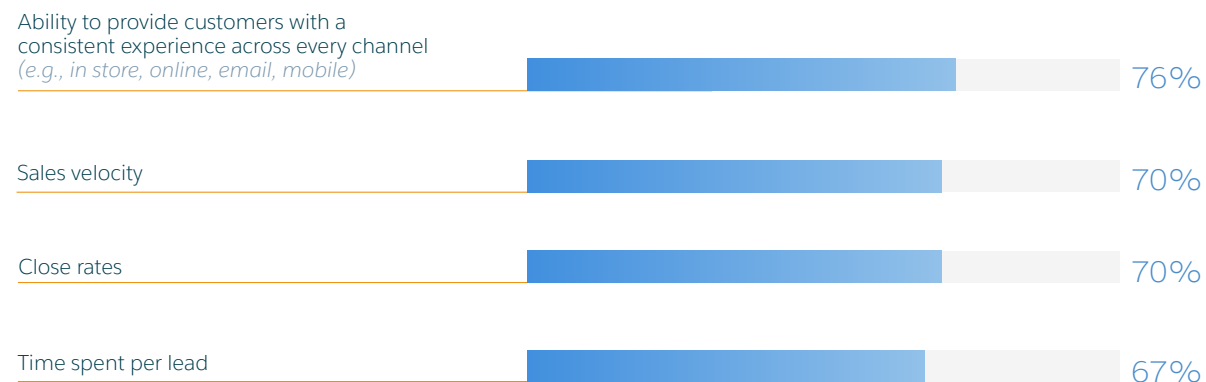
When leveraged correctly and proper processes are established, analytics can be transformative, especially in areas such as lead quality or providing visibility to managers. The ability to interpret customer and operational data – as well as act on the insights – opens the door to a more efficient, accurate, and personalised process. High performers are 2.4x more likely than underperformers to rate their team's analytics capabilities as outstanding or very good.

79% of sales teams currently use or are planning to use sales analytics technology.

Sales Reps Experience Increased Efficiency with Analytics

Analytics is a powerful tool for sales teams. Seventy-six percent say it has improved their ability to provide customers with a consistent experience, while 70% say the same about sales velocity.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Who Say Using Sales Analytics Has Significantly or Somewhat Improved the Following*



* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who use sales analytics.

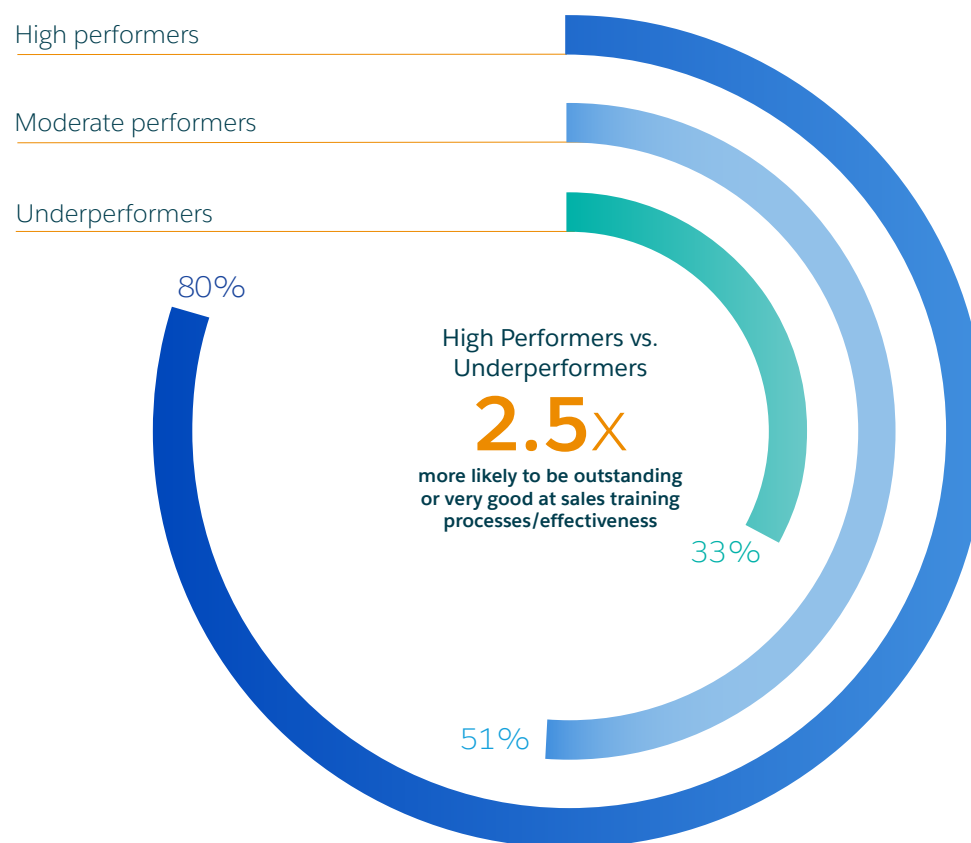
Without buy-in and extensive education for sales reps, companies will fall short on realising the potential of even the most advanced technologies.

Top teams understand training is imperative to effectively empower sales reps with productivity-enhancing technologies and ultimately better engage with customers. Informed teams perform better, and training must be built into the evolving strategies as organisations take a more holistic, collaborative, and intelligence-driven approach to the sales process.

Training Is Core to a Successful Sales Process

Successful sales teams understand how rapidly the marketplace is changing and the importance of training is during this critical shift. Eighty-percent of high-performing sales teams rate their sales training process as outstanding or very good.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Are Outstanding or Very Good at Sales Training Processes/Effectiveness



Intelligent technologies open the gates to a smarter, more efficient sales process. Forward-thinking teams are already planning how to use these technologies for a leg up in the Age of the Customer. For instance, **high-performing sales teams are 2.3x more likely than underperforming teams to currently use guided selling.**

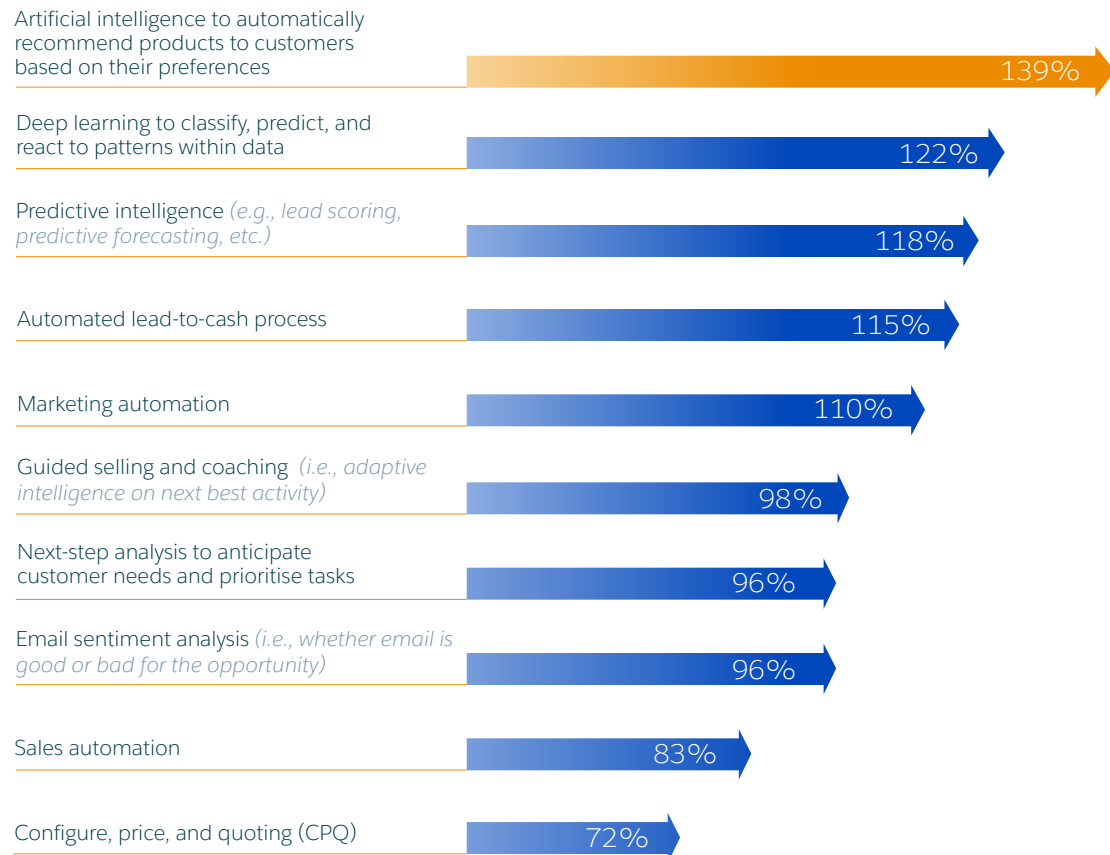
Although current adoption is nascent (see [page 54](#) for the current adoption rates), smart technology adoption is on everybody's roadmap. In the next one to three years, sales teams will embrace an entirely new, smarter sales process powered by automation and intelligence.

Soon, product recommendations, lead scoring, email response, and even day-to-day administrative tasks will be effortlessly and autonomously integrated so that sales reps can focus on delivering the best customer experience.

Major Growth Expected for Sales Intelligence and Automation

Sales teams are making a shift toward intelligent technologies to streamline processes. Triple-digit growth for smarter capabilities like predictive intelligence and guided selling. Artificial intelligence is the top growth area for sales teams – 139% plan to use it in the next three years.

Sales Teams' Anticipated Growth in Usage of the Following Intelligent Selling Capabilities Over the Next Three Years



While current adoption may still be low, the select forward-thinking teams that have already integrated automation and intelligence into their process are seeing drastic results. Mastery of these next-generation capabilities is setting the high performers apart from the laggards.

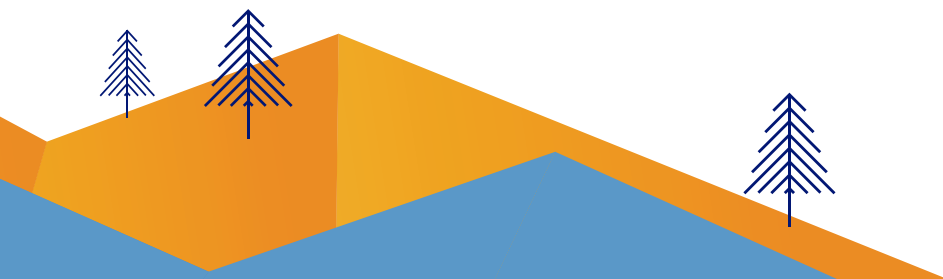
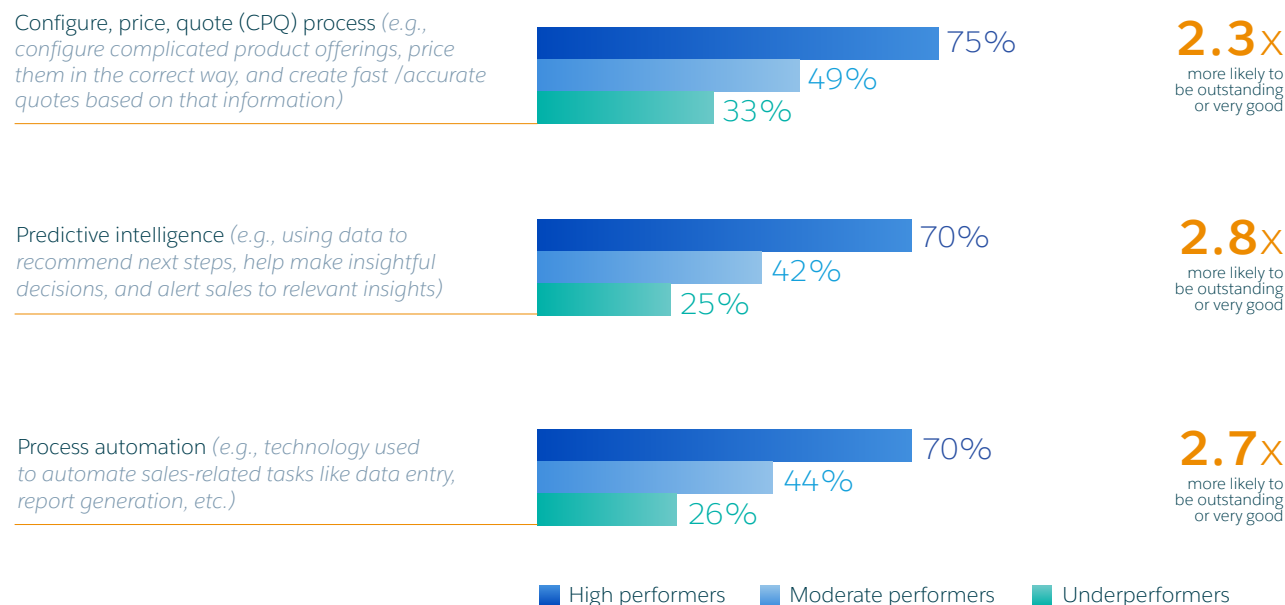
Configure, price, quote (CPQ) processes; process automation; and predictive intelligence give top teams the advantage by creating a streamlined process with the added ability to be proactive in their workflows. As more teams become bullish on smarter tech, the sales industry will experience an entirely new way of selling – predictive.

Successful Teams Work to Master the New Intelligent Process

Top teams are adept at implementing a smarter, faster sales process. For example, high-performing sales teams are 2.8x more likely to be outstanding or very good at predictive intelligence.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Are Outstanding or Very Good in the Following Areas

High Performers vs. Underperformers



Predictive selling is the new frontier for sales. By 2020, more than half (51%) of consumers and 75% of business buyers expect companies to anticipate their needs and make relevant suggestions before customer contact.* The sales rep of the future must be able to fully anticipate and fulfill customer needs before contacted.

Embracing the new wave of intelligent technologies early will put sales teams ahead of the competition. In addition to being included in the top three technologies that sales teams plan to adopt, **predictive intelligence is being used or forecast to be used in the next three years by 86% of high-performing teams.**

Sales Teams Shift Focus to a Proactive Mindset

Based on customer demands, sales teams are shifting toward a predictive selling approach. Seventy-eight percent of sales teams say they are more focused on anticipating customer needs, and 76% say the same about being proactive.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Have Shifted Their Focus Over the Past 12–18 Months to Be Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following



* "State of the Connected Customer," Salesforce Research, October 2016

The future competitive advantage for sales teams will be intelligent capabilities like AI.

High-performing teams are 3.4x more likely than underperforming teams to use artificial intelligence (AI) currently.

Intelligence isn't only a forward-looking concept. It's already upending the traditional sales process and transforming it for the better. Today, smart tools prevent sales reps from being bogged down by inefficient processes, manual data entry, or repetitive tasks and direct their energy toward what matters.

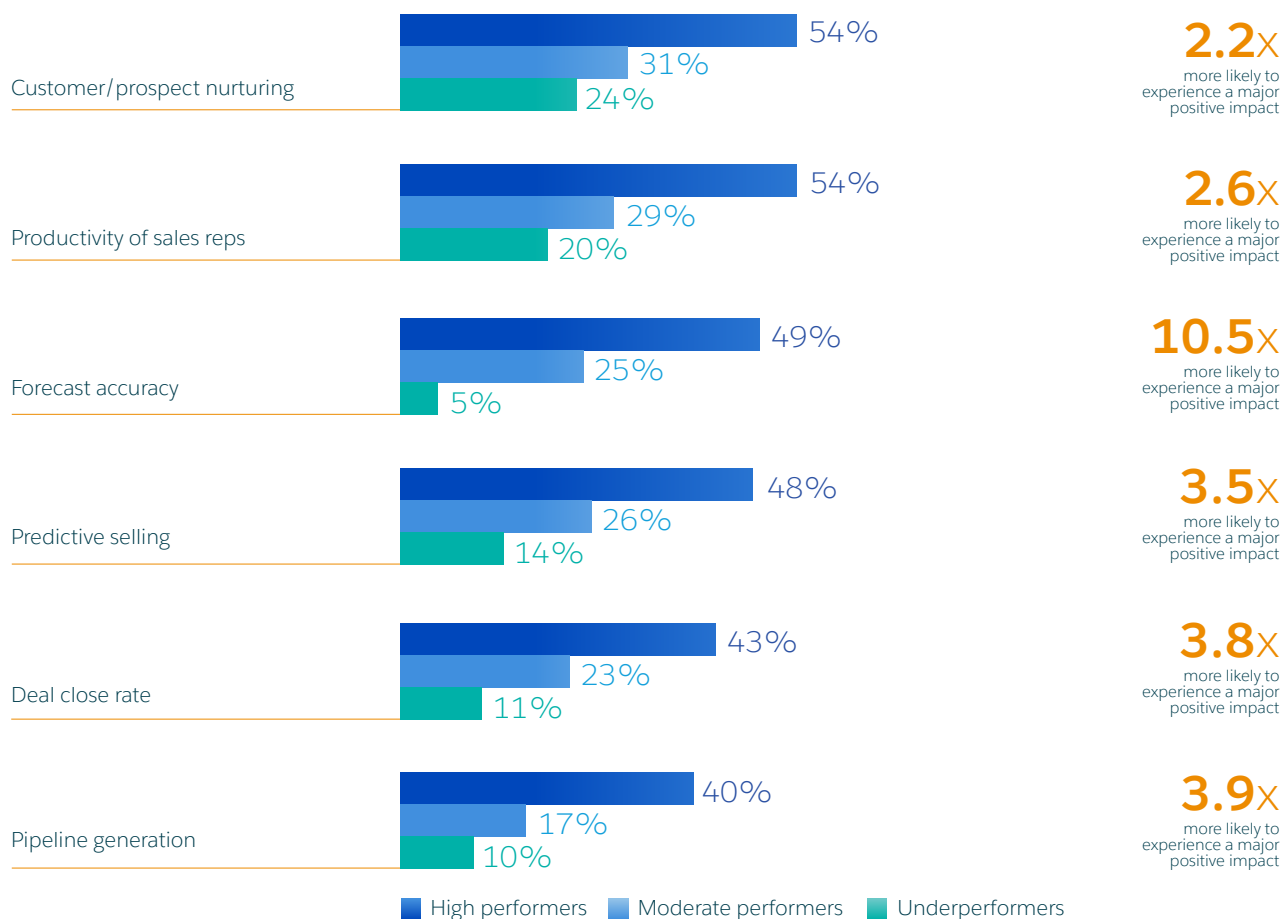
Leading teams are experiencing substantial improvements with intelligence across a wide breadth of areas such as prospect nurturing, forecast accuracy, and pipeline generation.

Top Teams Experience Broad Impact with Intelligence

When done right, intelligent capabilities lead to profound sales success. For example, high-performing sales teams are 10.5x more likely than underperformers to experience a major positive impact on forecast accuracy when using intelligent capabilities.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Have Experienced a Major Positive Impact Across the Following from Using Intelligent Selling Capabilities*

High Performers vs. Underperformers



* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who use intelligent selling capabilities.

01 | Start Tracking Customer Experience

02 | Adopt the New Sales Blueprint

03 | Minimise Inefficient Processes

04 | Take the Leap into Smarter Selling

Country Profiles

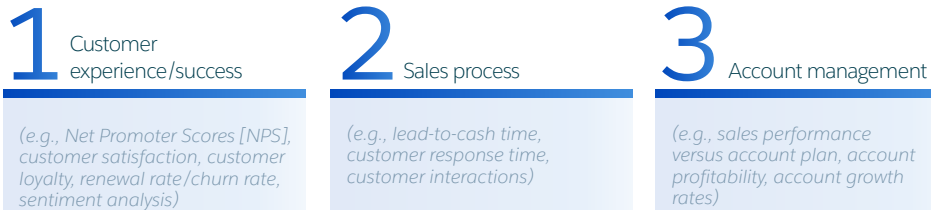
Country Profile

United States (903 Sales Professionals)

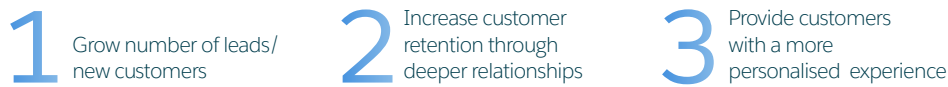
State of Sales 28

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs



Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months



Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

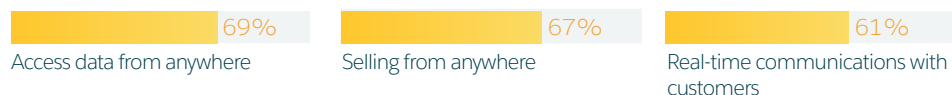
56% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases



Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following



Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process



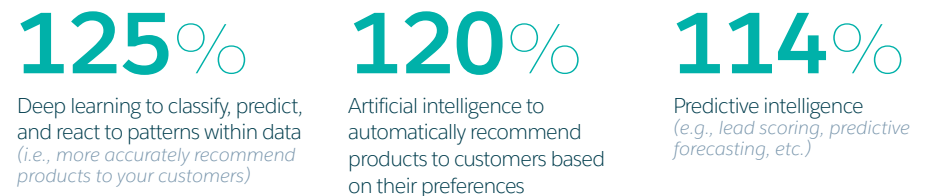
Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following



Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years



Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months



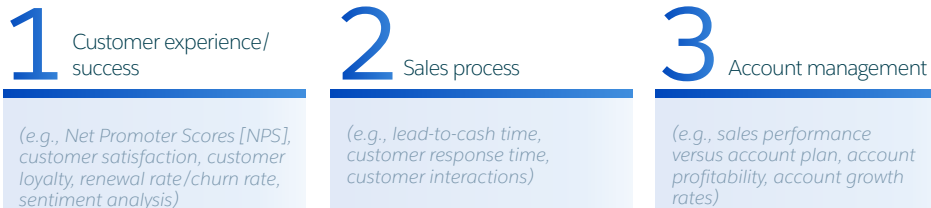
Country Profile

Canada (325 Sales Professionals)

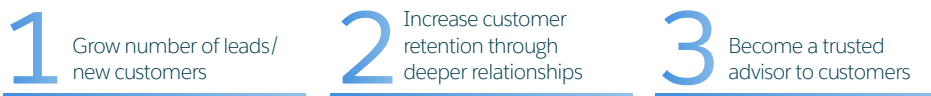
State of Sales 29

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs



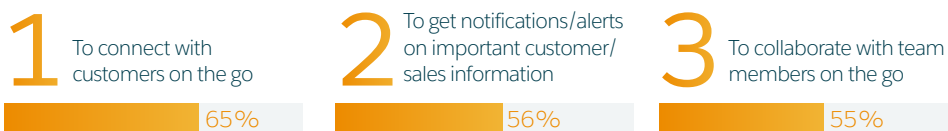
Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months



Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

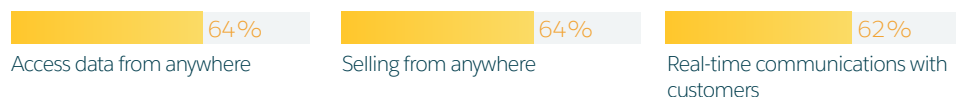
61% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases



Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following



Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process



Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following



Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years



Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months



Country Profile

France (325 Sales Professionals)

State of Sales 30

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs

- 1 Customer experience/success
- 2 Organisational performance
- 3 Sales process

(e.g., Net Promoter Scores [NPS], customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, renewal rate/churn rate, sentiment analysis)

(e.g., amount of new/recurring revenue versus targets)

(e.g., lead-to-cash time, customer response time, customer interactions)

Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months

- 1 Grow number of leads/new customers
- 2 Increase customer retention through deeper relationships
- 3 Provide customers with a more personalised experience

Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

76% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases

- 1 To connect with customers on the go
- 2 To search and access files
- 3 To get notifications/alerts on important customer/sales information

51%

50%

50%

Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following

71%

Access data from anywhere

66%

Real-time communications with customers

65%

Selling from anywhere

Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process

77%

Collaborating across departments

70%

Having a single customer view across departments/roles

65%

Collaborative selling

Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following

37%

Predictive selling

34%

Productivity of sales reps

33%

Deal close rate

Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years

142%

Automated lead-to-cash process

139%

Marketing automation

134%

Artificial intelligence to automatically recommend products to customers based on their preferences

Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months

84%

Anticipating customer needs

78%

Being proactive

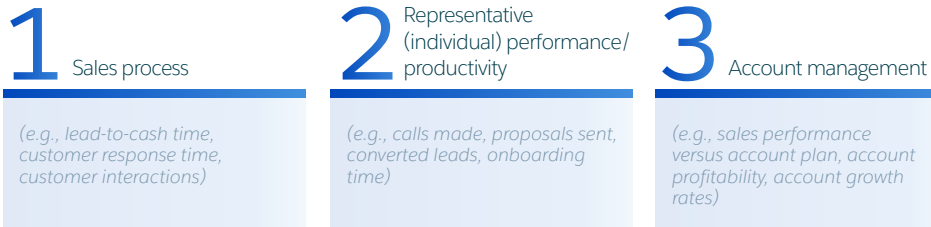
Country Profile

Germany (326 Sales Professionals)

State of Sales 31

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs



Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months



Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

72% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases



Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following



Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process



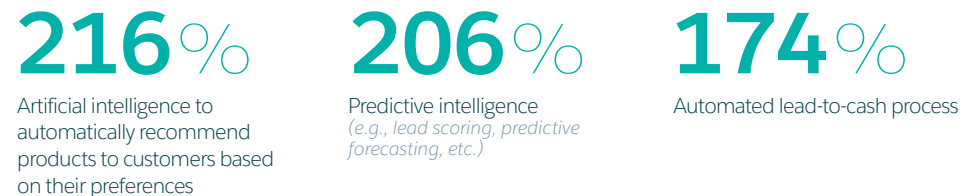
Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following



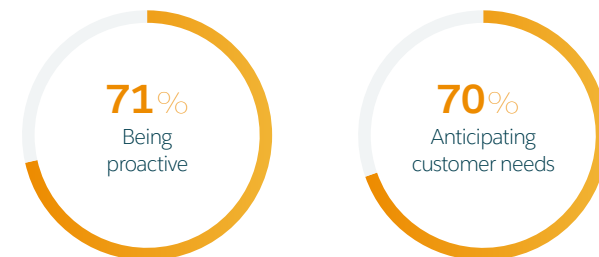
Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years



Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months



Country Profile

Netherlands (325 Sales Professionals)

State of Sales 32

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs

- 1 Guided selling
- 2 Customer experience/success
- 3 Sales process

(e.g., opportunity ranking by potential value, sales activity effectiveness)

(e.g., Net Promoter Scores [NPS], customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, renewal rate/churn rate, sentiment analysis)

(e.g., lead-to-cash time, customer response time, customer interactions)

Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months

- 1 Grow number of leads/new customers
- 2 Increase customer retention through deeper relationships
- 3 Become a trusted advisor to customers

Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

68% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases

- 1 To get notifications/alerts on important customer/sales information
- 2 To prioritise and manage emails
- 3 To create and assign tasks

40%

38%

38%

Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following

68%

68%

55%

Access data from anywhere

Real-time communications with customers

Selling from anywhere

Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process

87%

79%

77%

Collaborating across departments

Having a single customer view across departments/roles

Collaborative selling

Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following

49%

47%

47%

Customer/prospect nurturing

Productivity of sales reps

Forecast accuracy

Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years

101%

83%

79%

Artificial intelligence to automatically recommend products to customers based on their preferences

Deep learning to classify, predict, and react to patterns within data (i.e., more accurately recommend products to your customers)

Predictive intelligence (e.g., lead scoring, predictive forecasting, etc.)

Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months

88%

Anticipating customer needs

87%

Being proactive

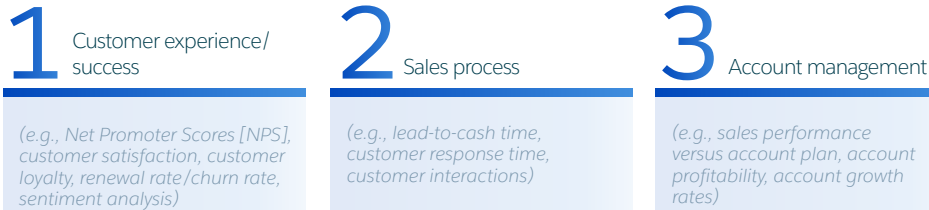
Country Profile

United Kingdom/Ireland (329 Sales Professionals)

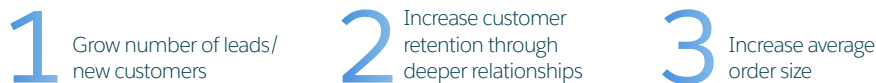
State of Sales 33

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs



Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months



Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

52% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases



Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following



Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process



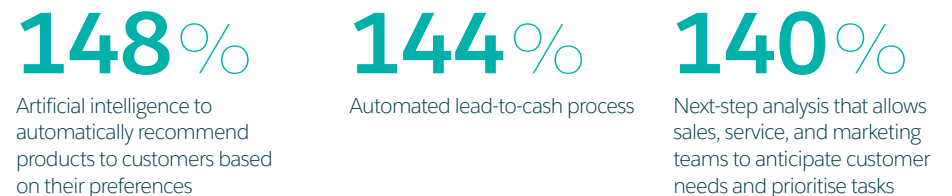
Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following



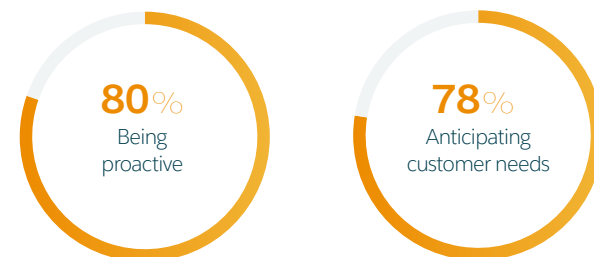
Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years



Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months



Country Profile

Japan (325 Sales Professionals)

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs



Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months



Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

36% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases



Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following



Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process



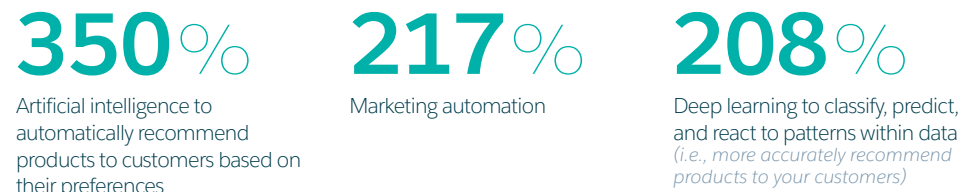
Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following



Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years



Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months



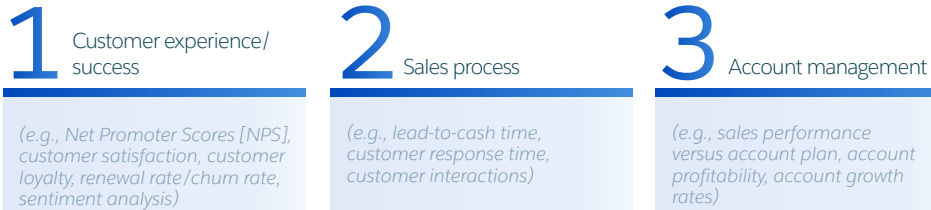
Country Profile

Australia/New Zealand (315 Sales Professionals)

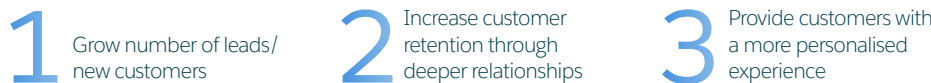
State of Sales 35

Top of Mind for Sales Professionals

Top Types of KPIs



Top Sales Objectives Over Next 12–18 Months



Mobile's Impact on the Sales Process

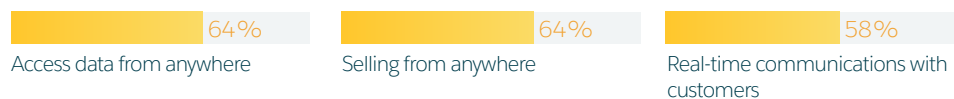
47% of sales professionals say their company is using or planning to use mobile apps in the next two years.

Top Mobile App Use Cases



Top Mobile Selling Benefits

Percentage Experiencing a Major Benefit Across the Following



Cross-Team Collaboration

Percentage Who Rate the Following as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Sales Process



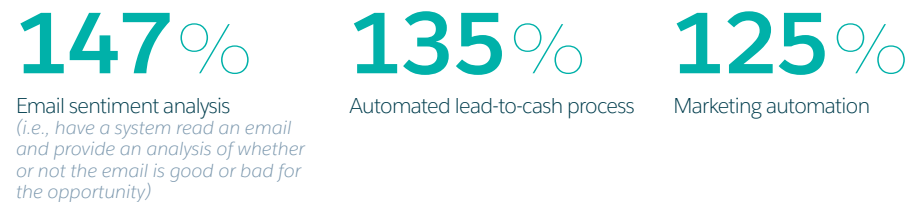
Benefits of Intelligent Selling

Percentage Experiencing a Major Positive Impact on the Following



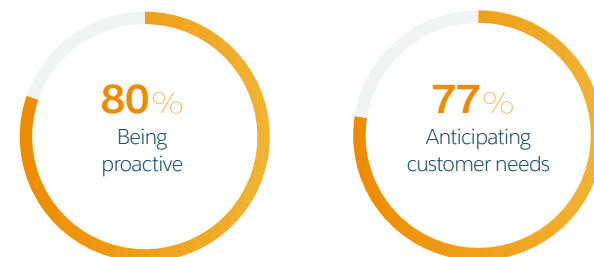
Anticipated Growth in Intelligent Sales Tech Use

Growth in Use Expected Across the Following Technologies Over the Next Three Years



Predictive Selling Comes into Focus

Percentage Who Have Become Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following Over the Past 12–18 Months



Appendices

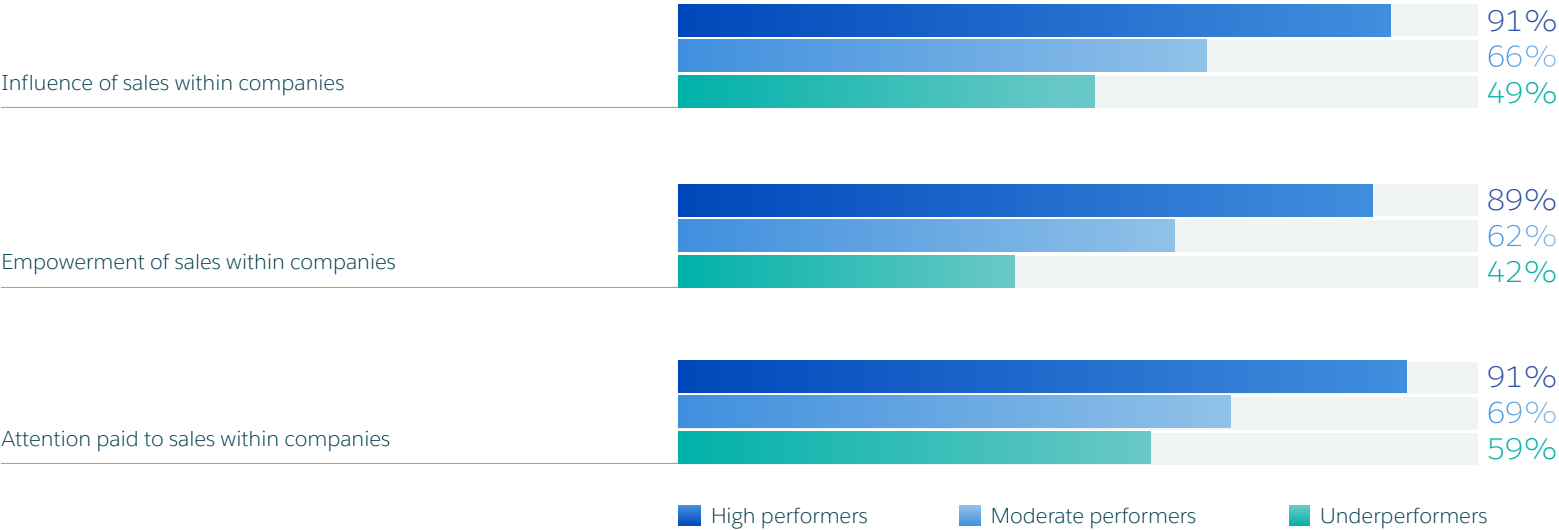


Appendix

Sales Teams Shift to Match the New Customer Mindset

Top performers are significantly more likely than underperformers to say the role of sales has increased over the past five years.
Here we see the percentage of sales teams who say the role of sales has increased significantly or somewhat over the past five years.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Say the Role of Sales Has Increased Significantly or Somewhat in the Following Ways Over the Past Five Years by Performance



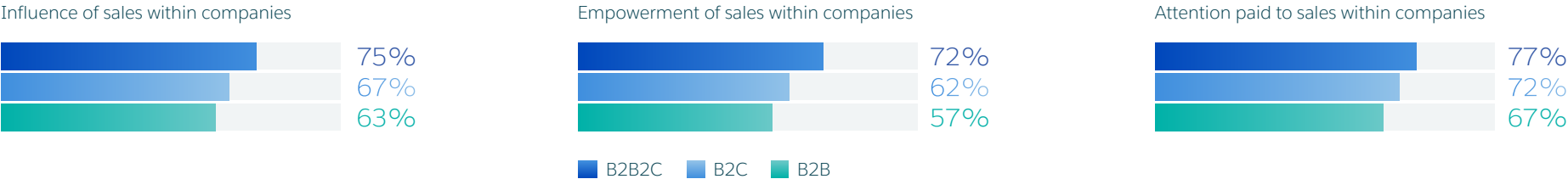
High Performers vs. Underperformers

1.8x
more likely to report an increase over the past five years

2.1x
more likely to report an increase over the past five years

1.6x
more likely to report an increase over the past five years

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Say the Role of Sales Has Increased Significantly or Somewhat in the Following Ways Over the Past Five Years by Business Type



Sales Teams Shift to Match the New Customer Mindset

Sales teams struggle to meet customer expectations due to customers' needs becoming more sophisticated.

Here we see the reasons why the top challenge sales teams face is trying to meet customer expectations.

Ranked Reasons Why Meeting Customer Expectations Is a Top Challenge for Sales Teams*

1

Customer needs have grown more sophisticated

5

Customers expect sales to be available 24/7

9

Customers are less loyal because they're wary of being locked into a vendor

2

Customer motivations have shifted from price to value

6

Customers expect sales to be a trusted advisor
(i.e., go beyond a sales rep role to be consultative to customers)

10

Customers expect interactions to happen in real time

3

Customers have become more experienced with competitive, disciplined bidding

7

Customers want a more personalised experience

11

Customers expect to be able to interact with us via their mobile device

4

Customers expect the same level of service in every interaction
(e.g., speaking with sales or customer service)

8

Customers expect a consistent experience *(e.g., personalisation, timely response)* across every channel *(e.g., mobile, social)*

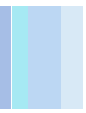
* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who selected "Meeting Customer Expectations" as the top overarching challenge in their sales process.

Sales Teams Shift to Match the New Customer Mindset

**Ranked Reasons Why Meeting Customer Expectations
Is a Top Challenge for Sales Teams by Performance
and Business Type***

		High Performers	Moderate Performers	Underperformers	B2B2C	B2C	B2B
1	Customer needs have grown more sophisticated	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Customer motivations have shifted from price to value	3	3	4	4	2	7
3	Customers have become more experienced with competitive, disciplined bidding	6	2	6	3	8	6
4	Customers expect the same level of service every time we interact with them	7	4	2	7	4	3
5	Customers expect us to be available 24/7	1	6	10	2	6	9
6	Customers expect us to be a trusted advisor	8	4	5	9	7	2
7	Customers want a more personalised experience	5	7	8	6	3	10
8	Customers expect a consistent experience across every channel	3	9	9	5	5	8
9	Customers are less loyal because they're wary of being locked into a vendor	9	8	3	8	9	5
10	Customers expect interactions to happen in real time	9	9	7	10	10	4
11	Customers expect to be able to interact with us via their mobile device	11	11	11	11	11	11

* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who selected "Meeting Customer Expectations" as the top overarching challenge in their sales process.

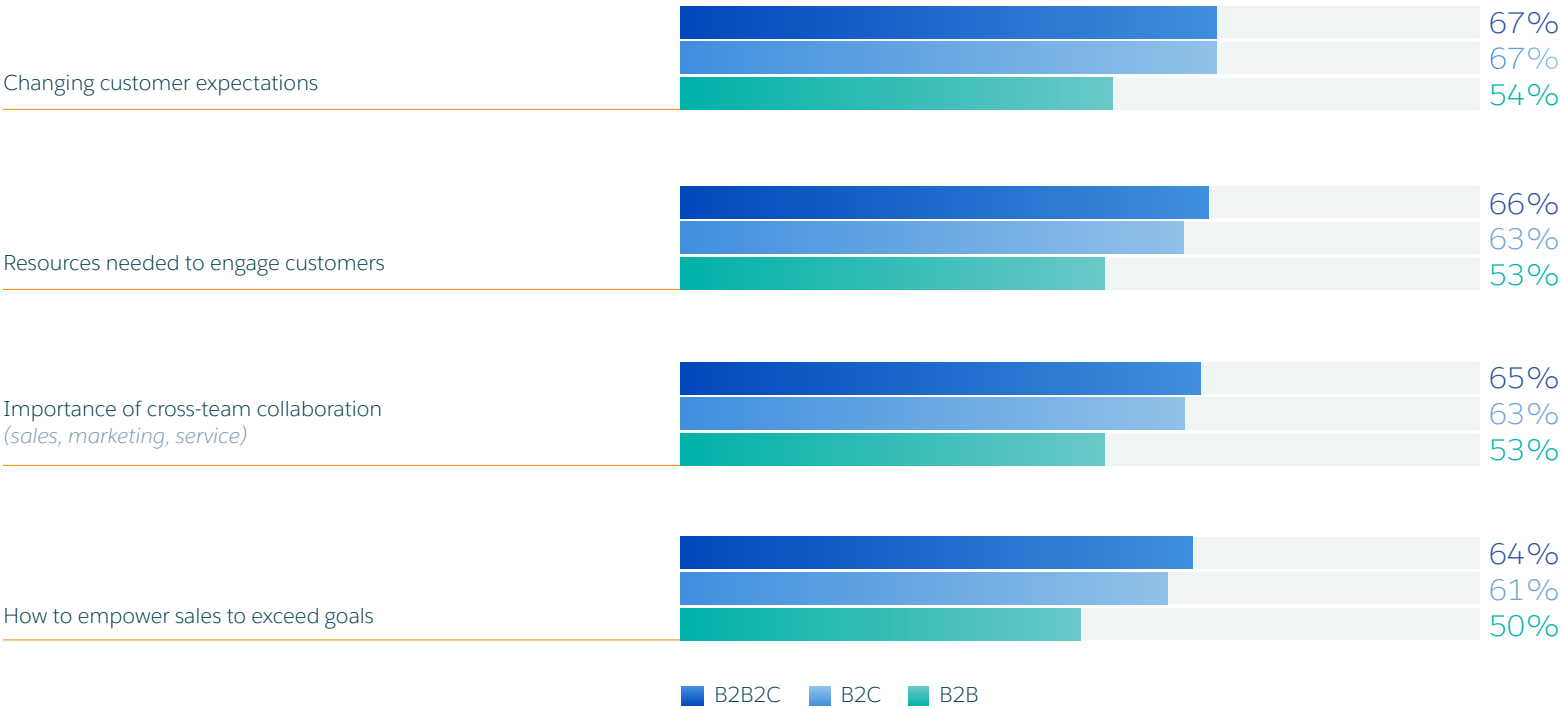


Appendix

Sales Teams Shift to Match the New Customer Mindset

Sales teams are focused on alignment around changing customer expectations.
Here we see the percentage of sales teams who say their company has achieved alignment.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Say Their Company Is Completely or Mostly Aligned on the Following by Business Type





Customer Experience Is Now the Top Sales Benchmark

Growing the number of leads/new customers is the leading sales objective for sales professionals.
Here we see the most important sales objectives, ranked by sales professionals, over the next 12–18 months.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Rate the Following as One of Their Most Important Sales Objectives Over the Next 12–18 Months		High Performers	Moderate Performers	Underperformers
Grow number of leads/new customers	56%	52%	57%	60%
Increase customer retention through deeper relationships	51%	45%	52%	54%
Become a trusted advisor to customers	39%	38%	39%	41%
Provide customers with a more personalised experience	37%	37%	38%	35%
Increase average order size	36%	33%	36%	40%
Increase face time with customers	35%	34%	34%	38%
Improve customer and sales data quality/accuracy	33%	34%	33%	29%
Improve use of sales technology	33%	31%	34%	25%
Improve margins/reduce discounting	31%	24%	32%	41%
Reduce sales cycle time	25%	22%	25%	28%
Improve team selling through better enterprise collaboration	23%	31%	22%	20%
Increase existing account penetration*	22%	23%	22%	21%
Improve forecasting accuracy	22%	21%	23%	18%
Provide educational resources	16%	22%	15%	12%
Hire more sales reps	16%	22%	14%	15%
Move to lower-cost sales channels	16%	18%	15%	16%
Reduce new rep ramp-up time	9%	14%	8%	8%

* Asked if in B2B or B2B2C sales.



Appendix

Customer Experience Is Now the Top Sales Benchmark

Underperforming sales teams struggle to get required tools/software to prioritise customer experience KPIs. *Here we see the reasons sales teams give for not making customer experience KPIs a priority.*

Ranked Reasons Why Sales Teams Haven't Prioritised Customer Experience/Success KPIs by Performance*

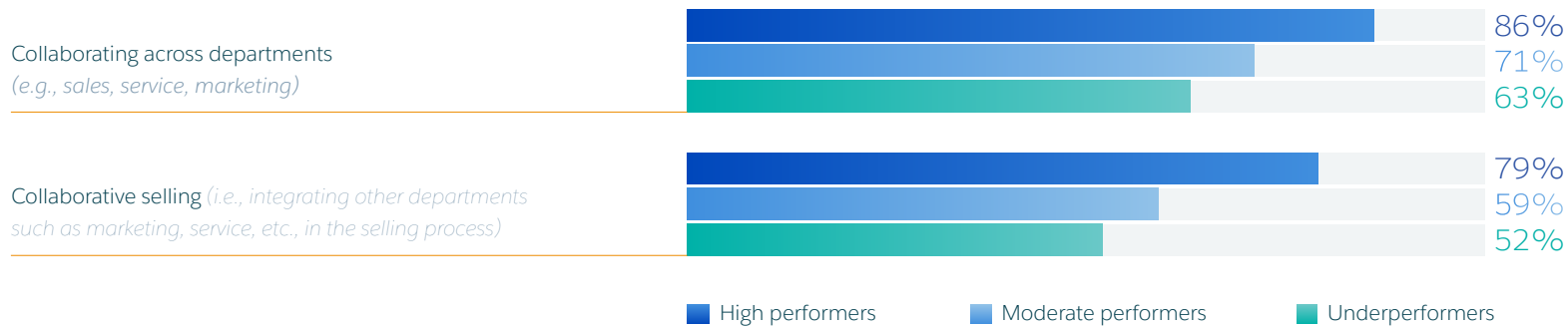
	High Performers	Moderate Performers	Underperformers
1	Not easy to track	Not easy to track	Lack required tools/software to track
2	Lack required tools/software to track	Lack required tools/software to track	Not easy to track
3	Not tied to performance rating/bonus	Not tied to performance rating/bonus	Not tied to performance rating/bonus
4	Not relevant across the business	Not relevant across the business	Not relevant across the business
5	Not useful	Not useful	Not useful

* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who did not select "Customer Experience/Success" as a top three KPI type used by their sales organisation to measure success.

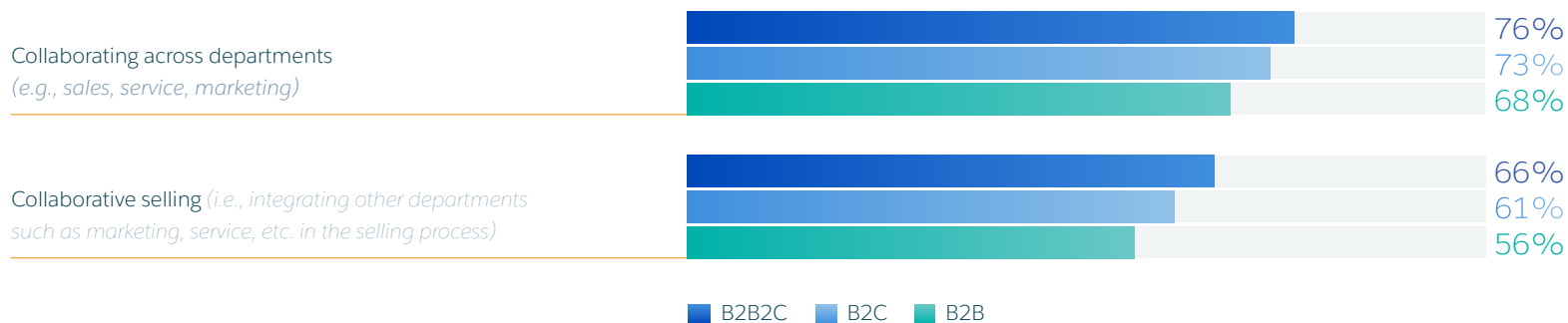
Sales Becomes More Connected and Proactive

Top performers say it's very important to collaborate with other departments within their organisation. Here we see the percentage of sales teams who say each selling technique is absolutely critical or very important to their overall sales process by performance and business type.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Rate the Following Selling Techniques as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Overall Sales Process by Performance



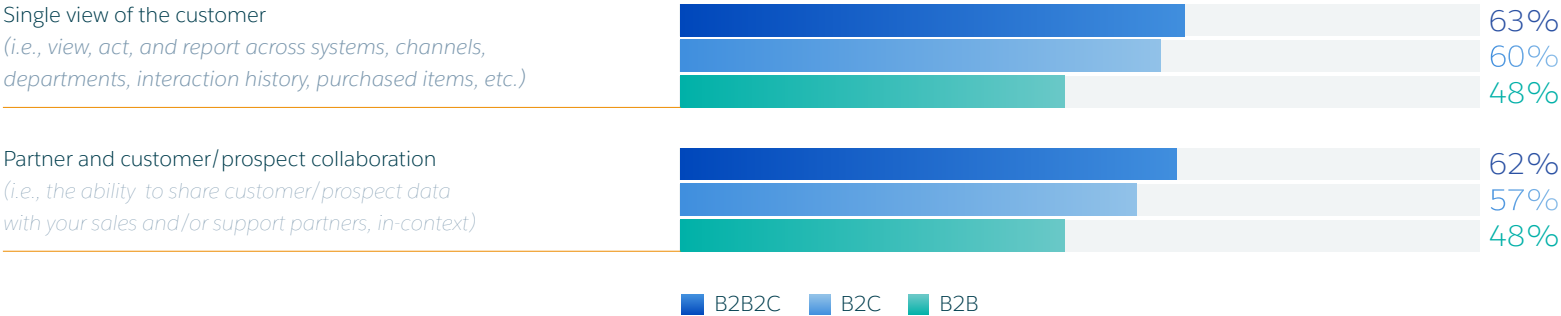
Percentage of Sales Teams Who Rate the Following Selling Techniques as Absolutely Critical or Very Important to Their Overall Sales Process by Business Type





Almost two-thirds of B2B2C companies rate their ability to have a single view of the customer and to collaborate with partners and customers/prospects as very good. Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who rate their team's capabilities as outstanding or very good by business type.

Percentage Who Rate Their Sales Team's Capabilities in the Following Areas as Outstanding or Very Good by Business Type





Appendix

Sales Becomes More Connected and Proactive

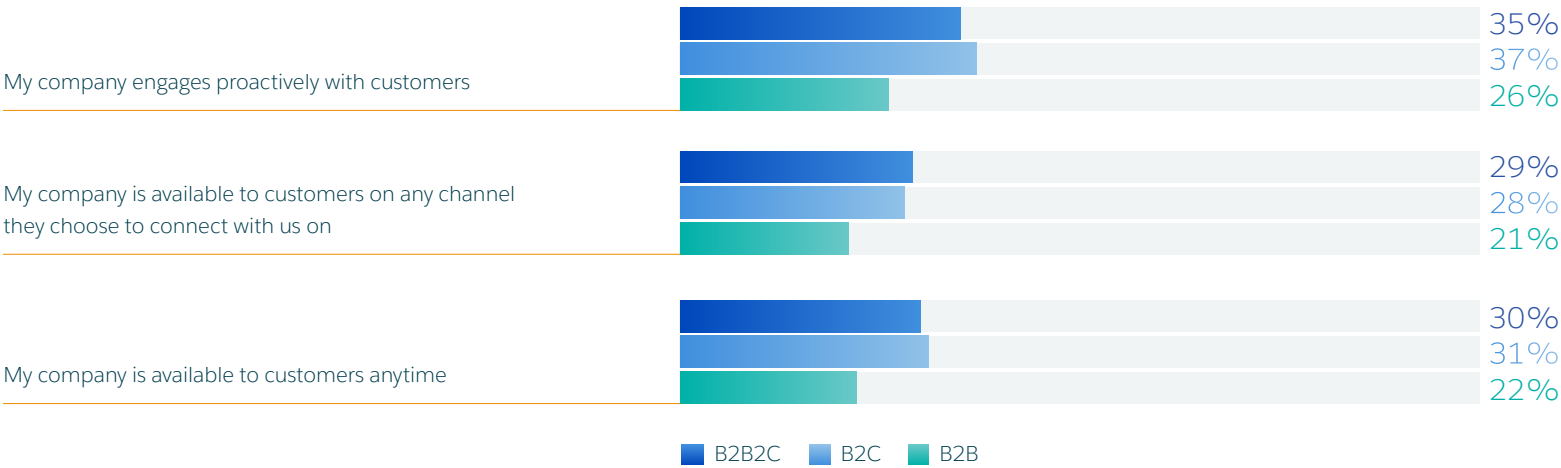
Top performers are 9.2x more likely than underperformers to rate interactive voice assistants as a very important communication channel. *Here we see how sales professionals rate the importance of each communication channel.*

Percentage of Sales Professionals Rating Each Communication Channel as Absolutely Critical or Very Important for Connecting with Customers		High Performers	Moderate Performers	Underperformers
In person	87%	91%	86%	87%
Phone	83%	89%	81%	83%
Email	78%	85%	76%	73%
Knowledge bases	54%	75%	51%	39%
Online forms	45%	68%	40%	27%
Social media	44%	67%	40%	27%
Online communities	43%	69%	37%	25%
Mobile app, including the ability to contact sales, service, support, etc.	42%	67%	36%	32%
Online chat/live support	38%	64%	33%	18%
Text/SMS	36%	55%	31%	26%
Customer-facing messenger apps	33%	60%	28%	17%
Internal-facing messenger apps	30%	55%	25%	15%
Interactive voice assistants	22%	49%	16%	5%



With the constant change in the marketplace, sales teams struggle to be where their customers are, from omni-channel interactions to proactively engaging customers. Here we see the percentage of sales professionals that strongly agree with each statement about their company by business type.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Who Strongly Agree with Each Statement about Their Company by Business Type



Top Sales Teams Turn to Tech and Training

Excessive administrative tasks are impeding sales professionals from achieving the highest results.

Here we see the overarching challenges sales teams encounter in their sales process.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Say the Following Are Reasons Why Ineffective Internal Processes Is Their Top Sales Challenge*

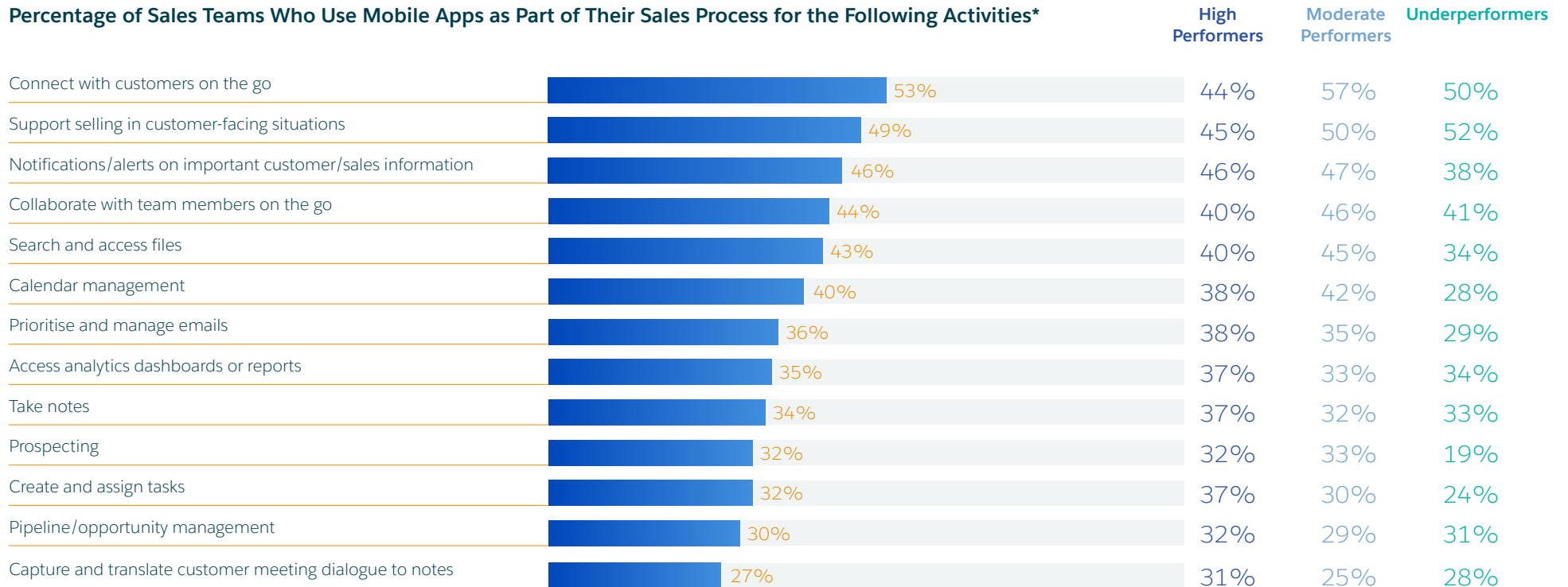
		High Performers	Moderate Performers	Underperformers
Excessive administrative tasks	45%	45%	45%	46%
Lacking time for face-to-face selling	22%	22%	22%	25%
Limited insight into issues/timely insight into sales process	21%	17%	22%	21%
Lacking alignment with marketing	19%	13%	19%	28%
It takes too long to respond to customer inquiries	18%	17%	18%	18%
Complicated order management	18%	20%	19%	11%
Lacking indirect channel/direct sales team collaboration	18%	17%	17%	26%
Sales cycle is too long	17%	15%	18%	18%
Lacking single view of customer across departments/roles	16%	15%	16%	19%
Lacking alignment with customer service	16%	14%	16%	19%
Reporting errors from manual data entry	15%	20%	16%	4%
Difficulty knowing how to take action on data	15%	19%	15%	9%
Poor lead quality	14%	13%	14%	18%
Lacking required resources to close deals	12%	18%	10%	18%
Complicated/long quote-to-cash process	12%	11%	12%	11%
Errors in quote/discounting process	11%	14%	11%	4%
Sales reps engage too late in the sales cycle	10%	10%	11%	9%

* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who selected "Ineffective Internal Processes" as the top overarching challenge in their sales process.

Appendix

Top Sales Teams Turn to Tech and Training

The primary way sales professionals use mobile apps is to connect with customers on the go. Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who use mobile apps as part of their sales process for the following activities by performance level.



* Data reported is out of a base of respondents whose sales organisation uses a mobile sales app.

The primary way sales professionals use mobile apps is to connect with customers on the go.

Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who use mobile apps as part of their sales process for the following activities by business type.

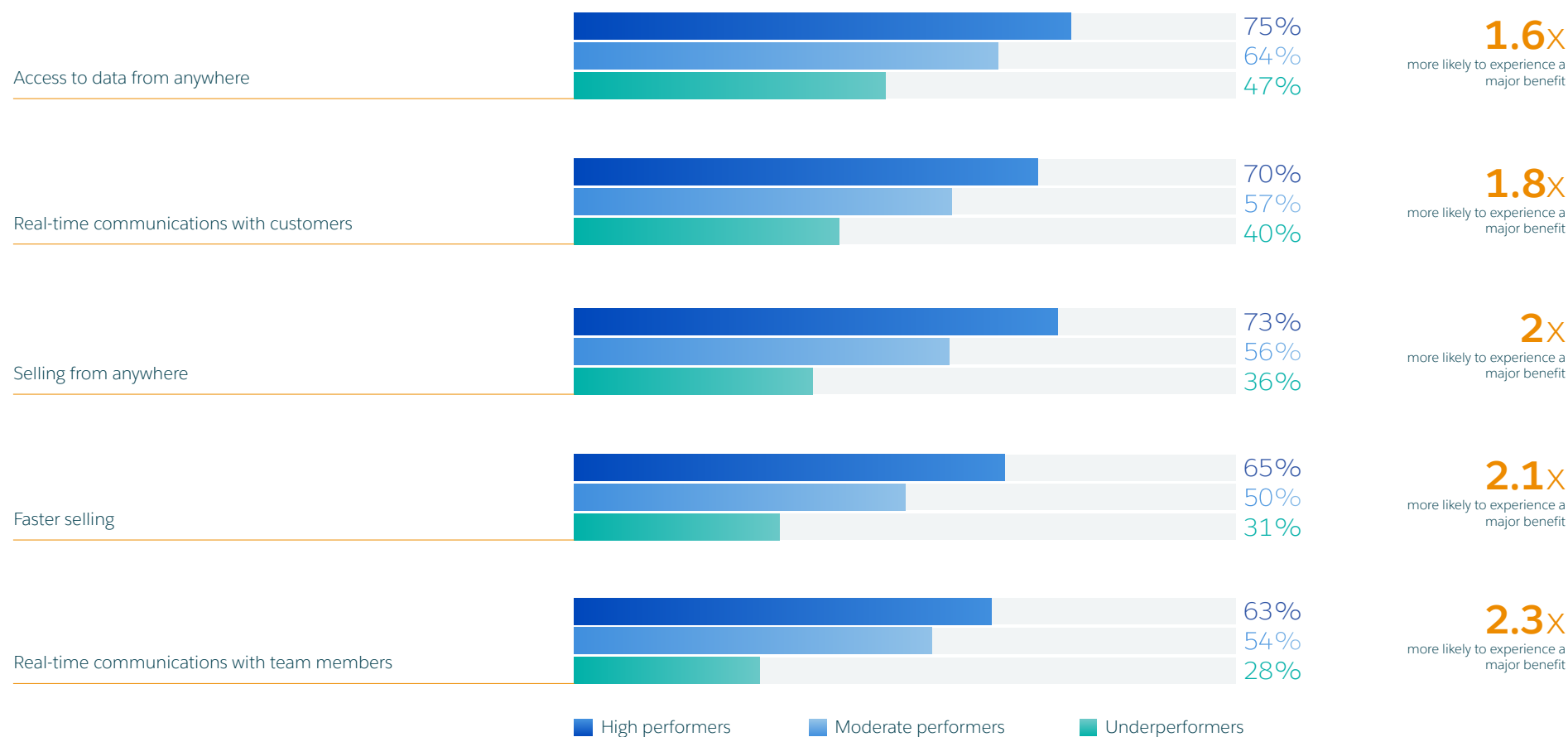
Percentage of Sales Teams Who Use Mobile Apps as Part of Their Sales Process for the Following Activities*

		B2B2C	B2C	B2B
Connect with customers on the go	53%	56%	48%	53%
Support selling in customer-facing situations	49%	51%	46%	48%
Notifications/alerts on important customer/sales information	46%	49%	46%	39%
Collaborate with team members on the go	44%	46%	37%	48%
Search and access files	43%	48%	37%	39%
Calendar management	40%	42%	38%	38%
Prioritise and manage emails	36%	40%	32%	30%
Access analytics dashboards or reports	35%	39%	29%	34%
Take notes	34%	38%	27%	34%
Prospecting	32%	37%	27%	29%
Create and assign tasks	32%	33%	31%	30%
Pipeline/opportunity management	30%	31%	26%	34%
Capture and translate customer meeting dialogue to notes	27%	32%	24%	20%

* Data reported is out of a base of respondents whose sales organisation uses a mobile sales app.

Top teams are 2.3x more likely than underperformers to say they have benefited from real-time communication from team members through adoption of mobile app selling capabilities. Here we see the percentage who rate each of the following as a major benefit of adopting mobile app sales capabilities by performance.

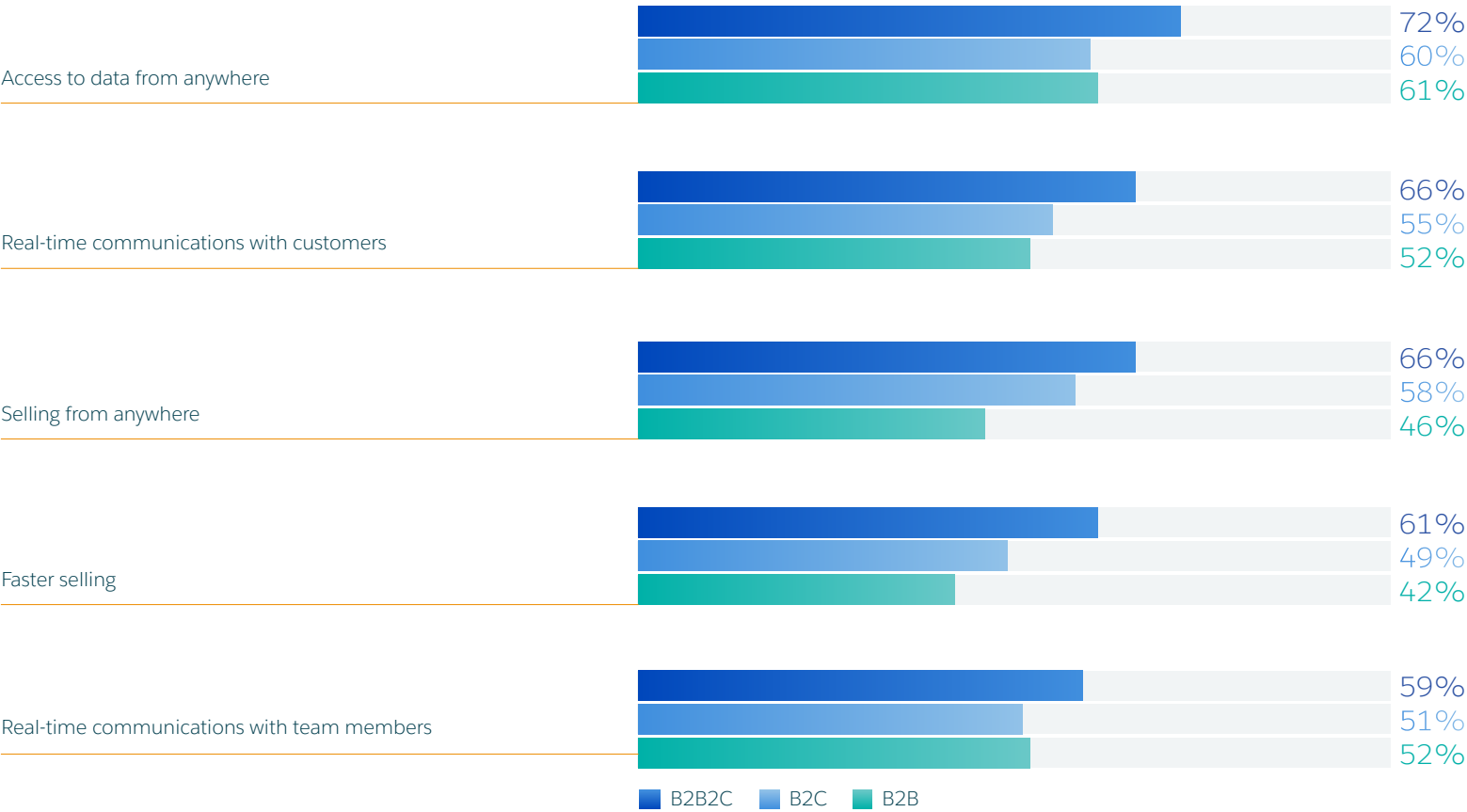
Percentage Sales Teams Who Have Experienced a Major Benefit Across the Following from Adopting Mobile App Selling Capabilities by Performance*



* Data reported is out of a base of respondents whose sales organisation uses a mobile sales app.

B2B2C companies are experiencing major benefits from adoption of mobile app selling capabilities. Here we see the percentage who rate each of the following as a major benefit of adopting mobile app sales capabilities by business type.

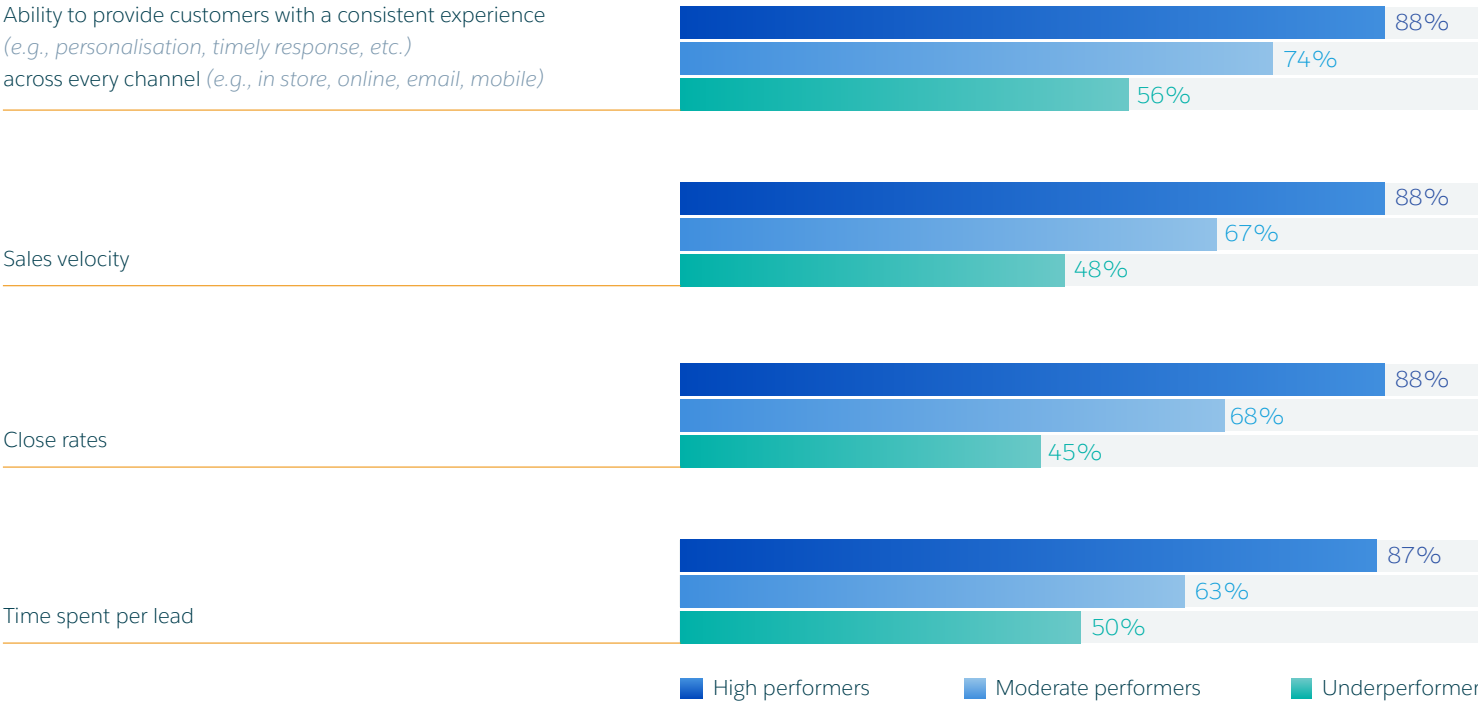
Percentage of Sales Teams Who Have Experienced a Major Benefit from Adopting Mobile App Selling Capabilities by Business Type*



* Data reported is out of a base of respondents whose sales organisation uses a mobile sales app.

Top performers are at least 1.6x more likely than underperformers to see positive results from sales analytics.
Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who say analytics has improved their sales efficiency.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Who Say Using Sales Analytics Has Significantly or Somewhat Improved the Following by Performance*



High Performers vs. Underperformers

1.6x
 more likely to rate as significantly or somewhat improved

1.8x
 more likely to rate as significantly or somewhat improved

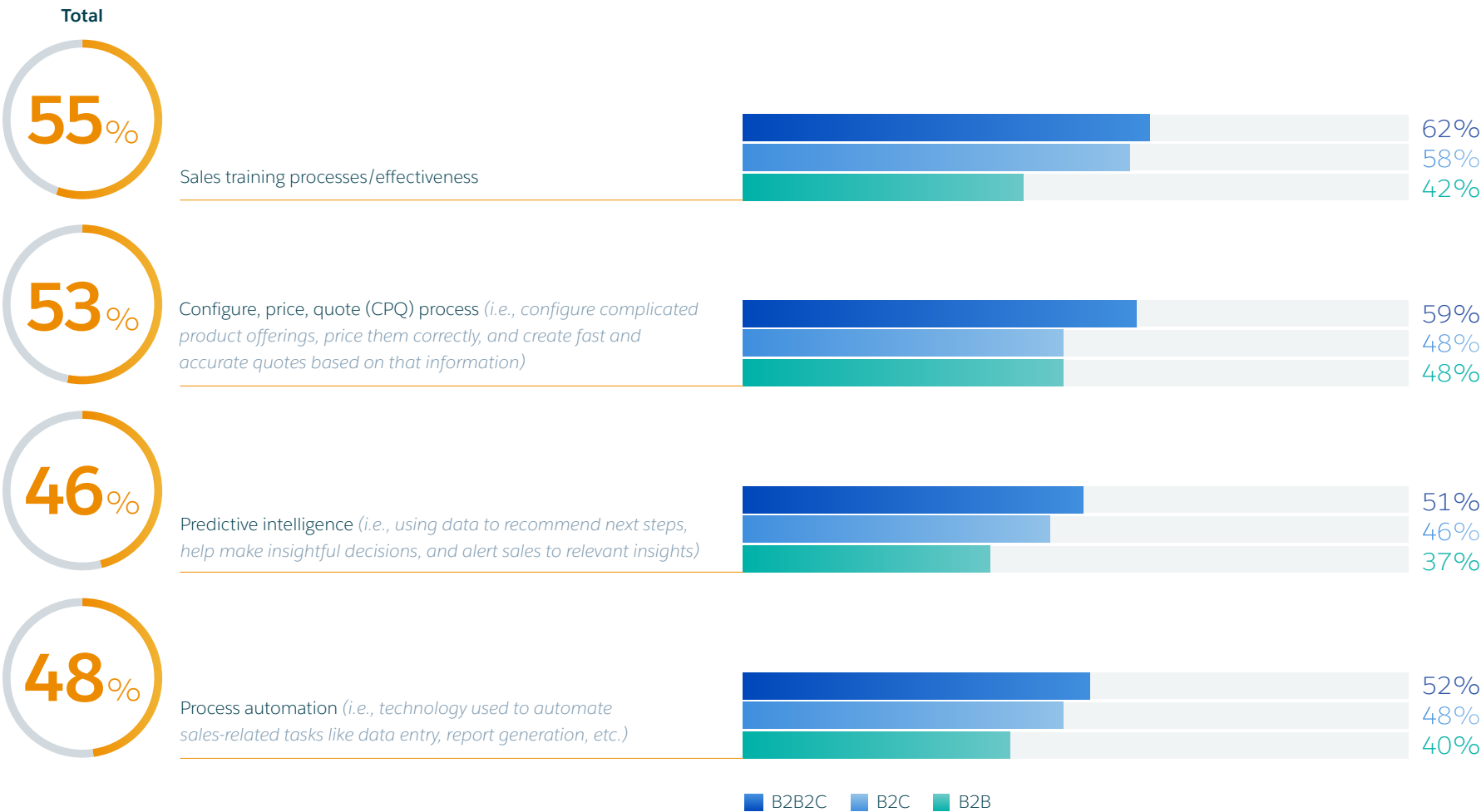
2x
 more likely to rate as significantly or somewhat improved

1.7x
 more likely to rate as significantly or somewhat improved

* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who use sales analytics.

With rapid change in the marketplace, sales training allows teams to be more agile and meet the customer at every turn. Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who rate their sales team’s capabilities as outstanding or very good in the following areas by business type.

Percentage of Sales Professionals Who Rate Their Sales Team’s Capabilities as Outstanding or Very Good in the Following Areas by Business Type





Appendix

Intelligent Sales Takes Off

Although adoption has been slow, across performance levels, strong growth is expected for the following intelligent selling capabilities over the next three years. Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who use each intelligent selling capability by performance.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Use Each Intelligent Selling Capability

Next-step analysis that allows sales, service, and marketing teams to anticipate customer needs and prioritise tasks

Deep learning to classify, predict, and react to patterns within data (i.e., more accurately recommend products to your customers)

Email sentiment analysis (i.e., have a system read an email and provide an analysis of whether or not the email is good or bad for the opportunity)

Artificial intelligence to automatically recommend products to customers based on their preferences

Predictive intelligence (e.g., lead scoring, predictive forecasting, etc.)

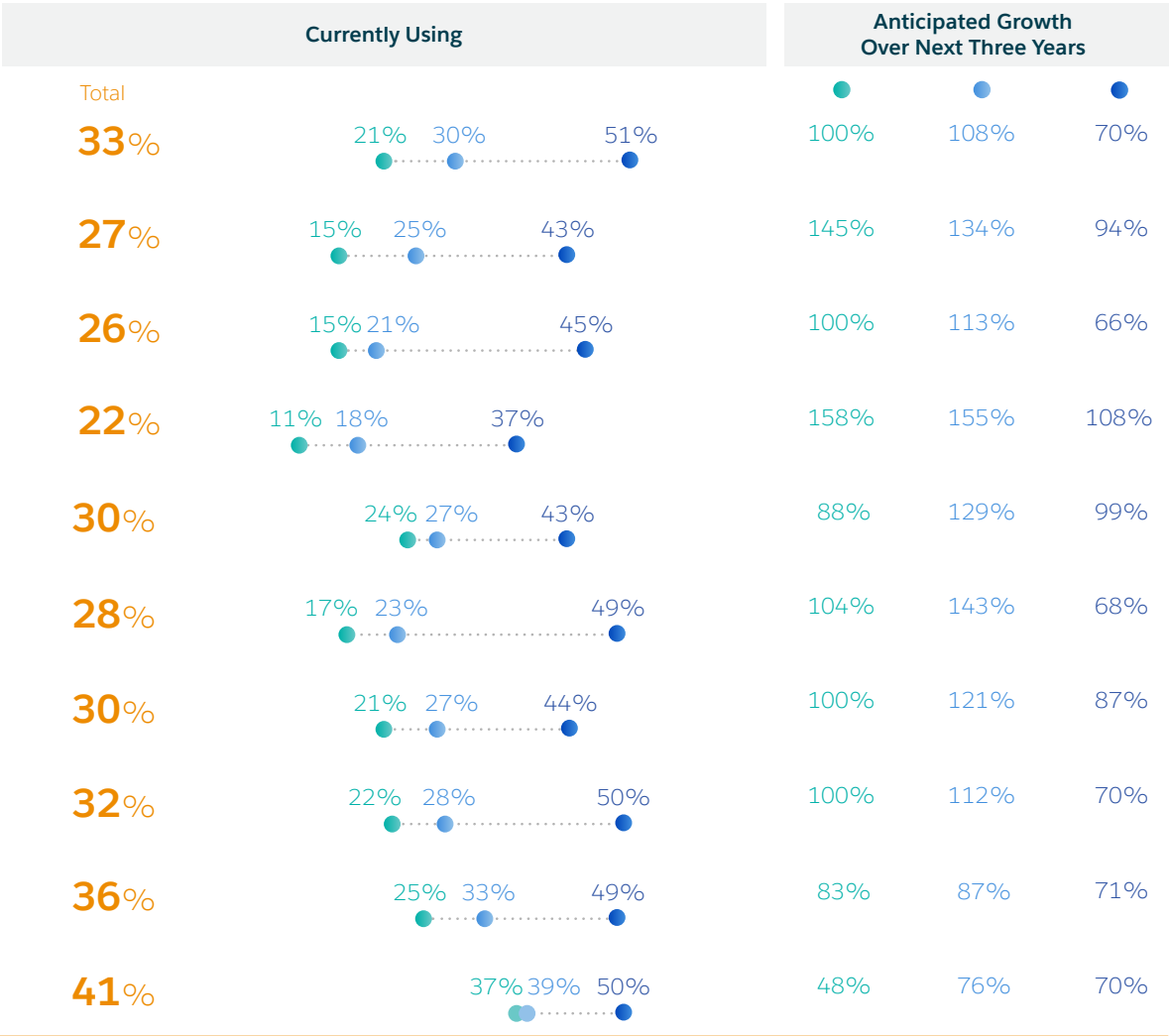
Automated lead-to-cash process

Marketing automation

Guided selling and coaching (i.e., adaptive intelligence that uses contextual data to provide recommendations for next best sales task, activity, or offer)

Sales automation

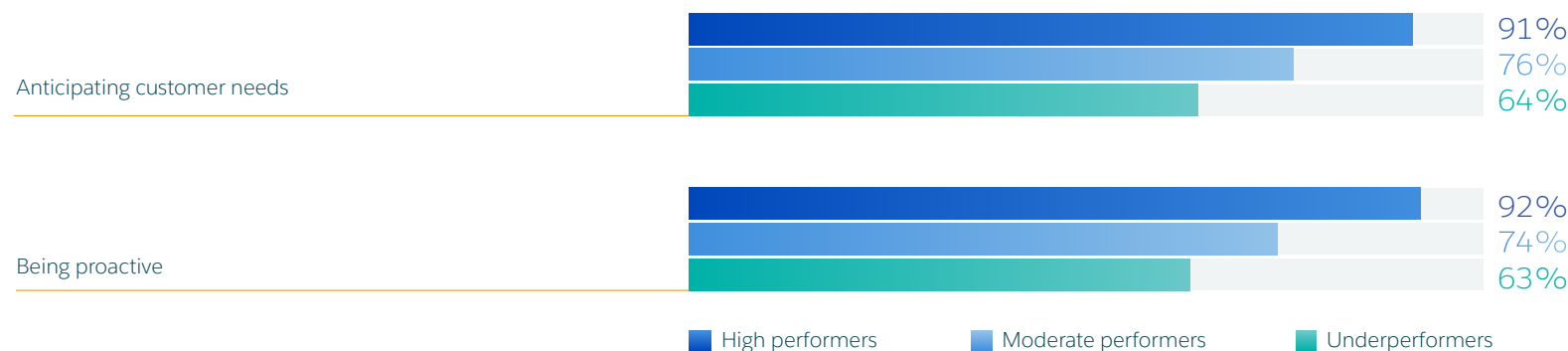
Configure, price, and quoting (CPQ)



● High performers ● Moderate performers ● Underperformers

Sales teams are shifting their focus squarely on the customer. Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who, over the past 12–18 months, say they have been more focused on anticipating customer needs and being proactive.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Have Shifted Their Focus Over the Past 12–18 Months to Be Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following by Performance

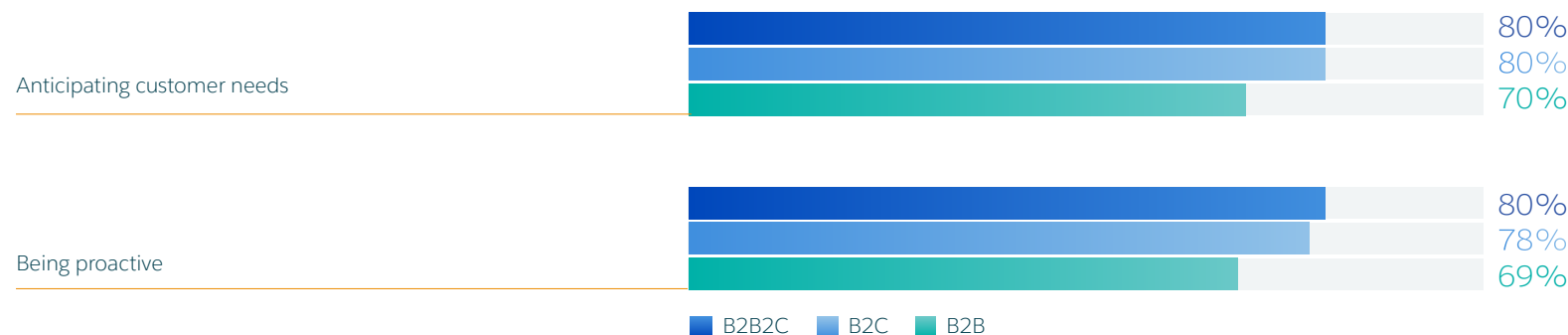


High Performers vs. Underperformers

1.4x
more likely to be much more or somewhat more focused on

1.5x
more likely to be much more or somewhat more focused on

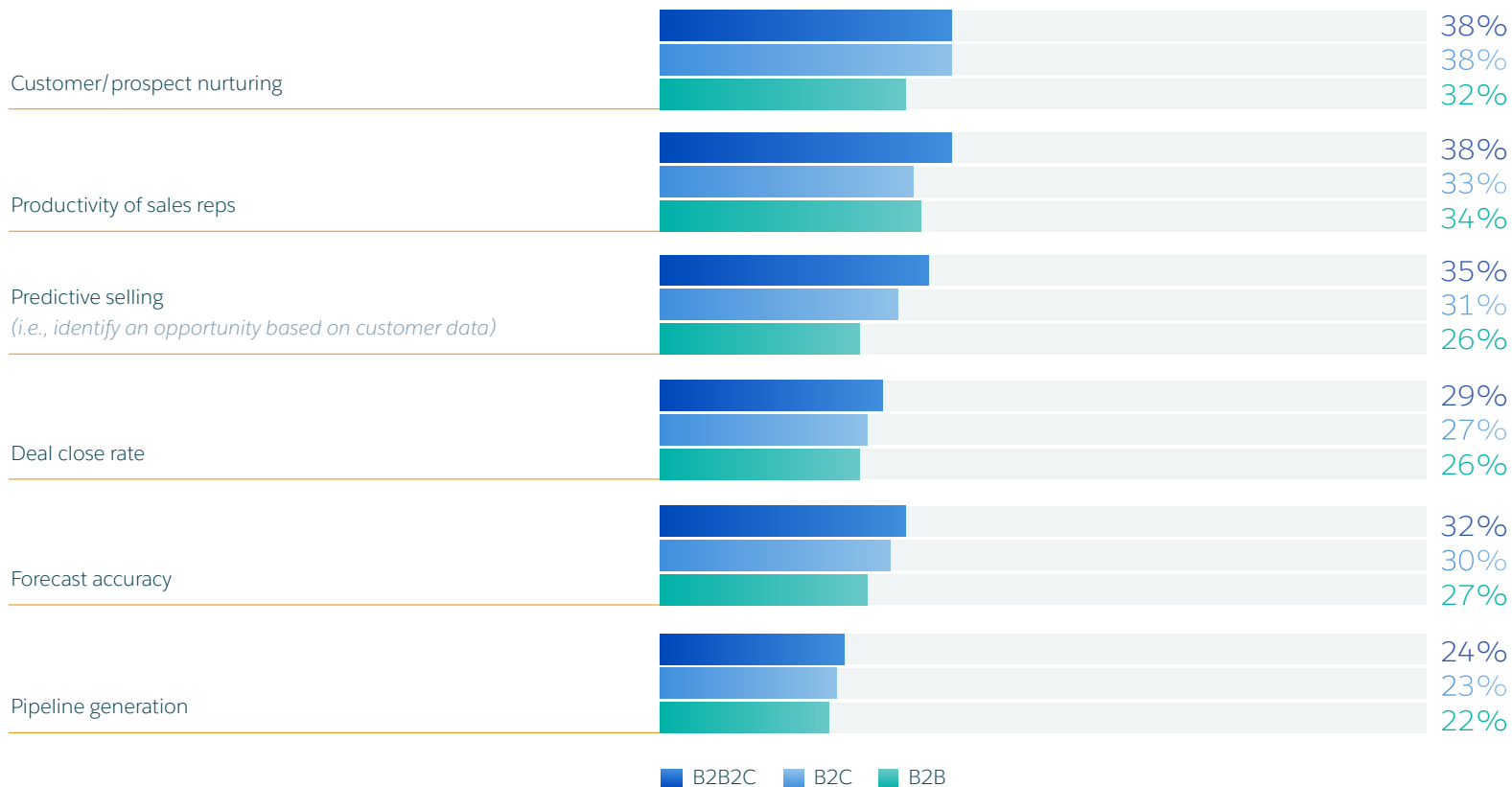
Percentage of Sales Teams Who Have Shifted Their Focus Over the Past 12–18 Months to Be Much More or Somewhat More Focused on the Following by Business Type





Customer/prospect nurturing and sales rep productivity are experiencing the most positive impact from the use of intelligent selling capabilities. Here we see the percentage of sales professionals who say they have experienced a major positive impact from using intelligent selling capabilities.

Percentage of Sales Teams Who Have Experienced a Major Positive Impact Across the Following from Using Intelligent Selling Capabilities by Business Type*



* Data reported is out of a base of respondents who use intelligent selling capabilities.

Company Type

Business-to-business	25%
Business-to-consumer	31%
Business-to-business-to-consumer	44%

Industry

Consumer products and retail	29%
Manufacturing	12%
Professional services	9%
Engineering, construction, real estate	8%
High tech	8%
Financial services	7%
Hospitality, travel, transportation	5%
Healthcare and life sciences	4%
Automotive	4%
Communications	3%
Media	2%
Public sector	2%
Education	2%
Energy	2%
Agriculture and mining	2%

Company Size

Small (1–100 employees)	38%
Medium (101–3,500 employees)	40%
Enterprise (3,501+ employees)	22%

Country

United States	28%
United Kingdom/Ireland	10%
Germany	10%
Canada	10%
France	10%
Japan	10%
Netherlands	10%
Australia/New Zealand	10%

Region

EMEA	41%
APAC	20%
NAM	39%

Role

Owner	14%
President or CEO	6%
C-level executive (CIO, CTO, COO, CMO, etc.)	10%
Sales Vice President	4%
Sales team leader (supervisor, manager, director, etc.)	31%
Sales representative or specialist	15%
Sales trainer, coach, or equivalent	1%
Sales operations	9%
Sales support	4%
Sales analyst, developer, IT, engineer, etc.	3%
Sales coordinator, administrator, or assistant	1%
Self-employed or consultant	1%

Generation

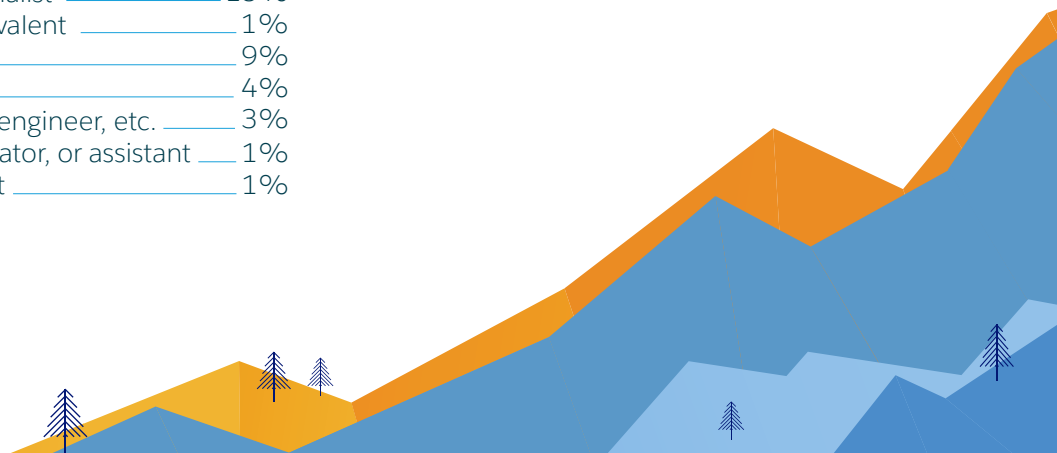
Baby Boomers/Traditionalists (1900–1964)	28%
Gen Xers (1965–1980)	43%
Millennials (1981–2000)	29%

Sales Primary Area of Focus

Inside sales/sales development	51%
Field sales	38%
Indirect channel sales	5%
Other	6%

Sales Team Size


Less than 25 sales employees	34%
25 to 50 sales employees	15%
51 to 250 sales employees	17%
251 to 500 sales employees	10%
501 to 1,000 sales employees	6%
1,001 to 2,000 sales employees	5%
More than 2,000 sales employees	12%



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