

2015

State of Sales

Technology and performance insights
from over 2,300 global sales leaders




About This Report

Salesforce Research surveyed more than 2,300 global sales leaders to discover:

- The unifying goals, stumbling blocks, and success metrics for today's sales teams
- How high-performing sales teams are evolving to stay ahead of the curve
- Areas where sales is doubling down to supercharge business in the next 12–18 months

This report highlights sales trends in 2015, including the central role of sales teams in an integrated customer success platform. Throughout the report, data is examined relative to sales performance to identify patterns for overall customer success.



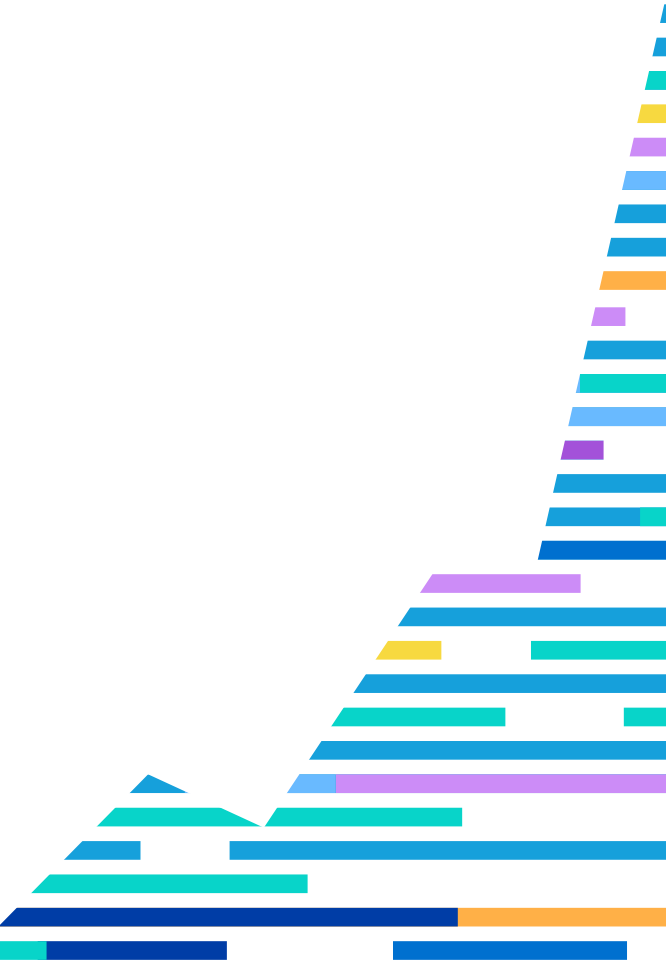
Salesforce Research, part of Salesforce, provides data-driven insights to help businesses transform how they drive customer success.

In this report, we define high-performing sales teams as those that most consistently keep up with prospects' and customers' changing expectations. Additionally, high-performing teams are far more likely to rate their sales capabilities as outstanding or very good and are increasing the size of their sales force in the next 12–18 months.

Conducted in early 2015, this survey resulted in responses from 2,372 full-time global sales leaders from the U.S., Canada, Brazil, U.K., France, Germany, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Due to rounding, not all percentage totals in this report equal 100%. Respondents included customers and contacts who had opted in as well as third-party panelists.

Table of Contents

- Executive Summary 4
- Introduction: Defining Success for Today's Sales Leaders 6
- Analytics Use Soars Among Top Teams 7
- High Performers Sell More with Mobile 10
- Teams That Sell Together, Win Together 13
- High Performers Are High Tech 15
- Last Look: What Makes a Winning Sales Team in 2015? 18
- Appendix 19



Four key takeaways

Welcome to the age of buyer sophistication, where behaviors and expectations are fueled by the constant information streams at customers' fingertips. What does this new normal mean for today's sales teams? And which practices separate thriving sales leaders from those merely treading water? Our research revealed four clear trends:

01 | **Analytics use soars among top teams.** (see page 7)

Where there's analytics use, there's likely a winning sales organization. High-performing sales teams are 3.5x more likely than underperforming teams to use sales analytics. Across teams at all levels, we'll see a 58% increase in sales analytics use from 2015 to 2016. Smart selling, fueled by technologies like predictive analytics, starts piquing sales teams' interest and is expected to jump 77% among high performers in the next 12-18 months.

02 | **High performers sell more with mobile.** (see page 10)

Today's top sales organizations are significantly more likely to use mobile sales apps, helping them close business from anywhere. In fact, nearly 60% of high-performing sales teams already use or are planning to use a mobile sales app (2x more than underperformers). Among all sales leaders surveyed, mobile sales app use will more than double in the next two years (125% growth).

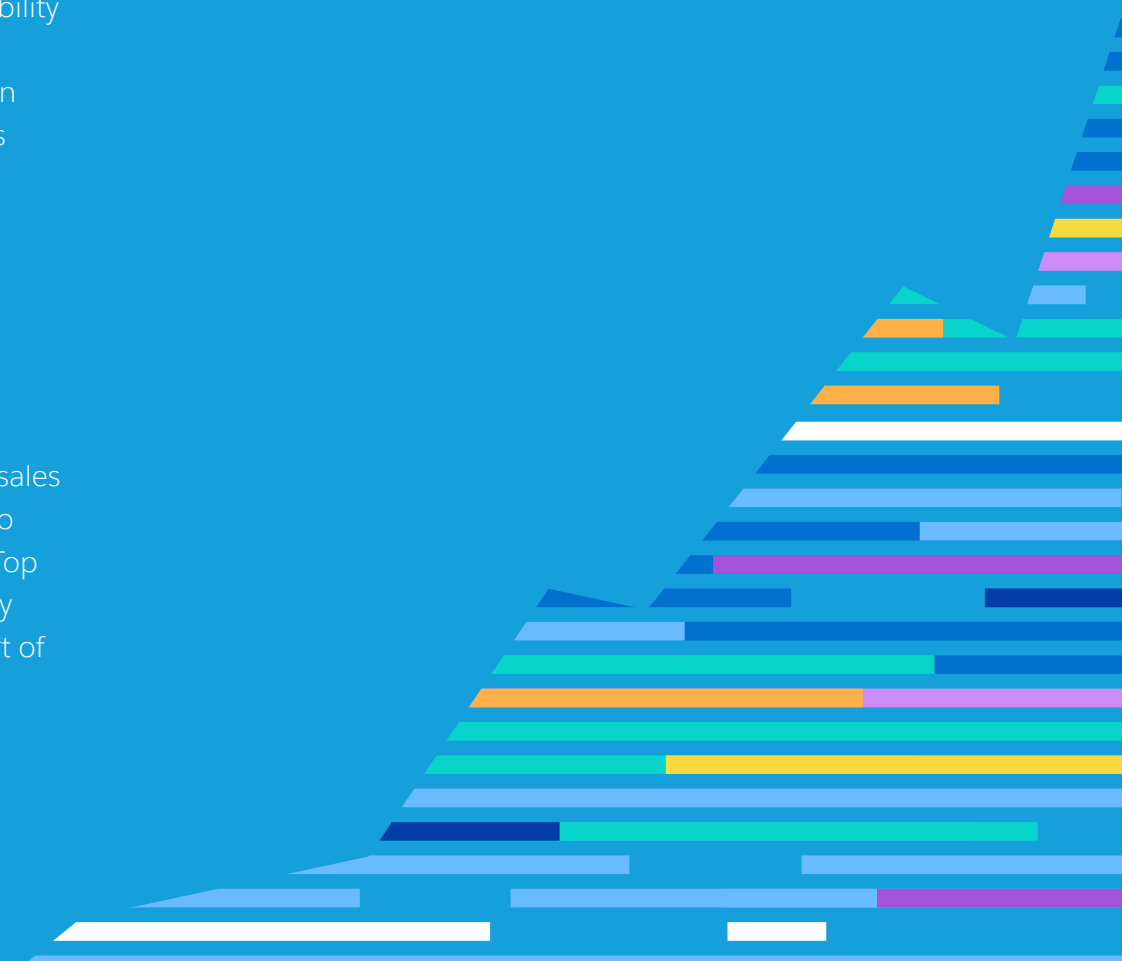
Four key takeaways

03 | **Teams that sell together, win together.** (see page 13)

Achieving sales excellence takes a village. High performers are nearly 3x more likely than underperformers to view sales as 100% the responsibility of the entire organization. Winning teams are also connecting with customers in more ways than ever before, and are 4.7x more likely than underperformers to be outstanding or very good at omnichannel sales interactions.

04 | **High performers are high tech.** (see page 15)

When it comes to managing customer relationships, high-performing sales teams use technology to accelerate sales processes and free up time to sell, using nearly 3x more functionality than underperforming teams. Top performers are nearly 8x more likely than underperformers to be heavy tech adopters, showing winning teams' proclivity to optimize every part of the process.



Introduction: Defining Success for Today's Sales Leaders

The "2015 State of Sales" survey asked more than 2,300 global sales leaders about their priorities, challenges, metrics, and strategies for the year. Here's a quick look at the current state of sales.

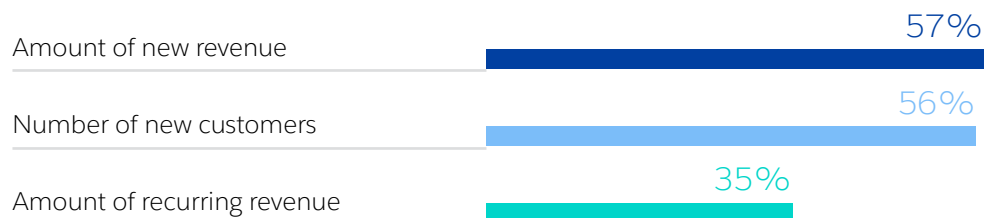
Top 3 Sales Objectives

Customer connections take priority. This suggests sales leaders view growing a base of loyal, connected customers – rather than “one and done” deals – as instrumental to sustained success.



Top 3 Sales Success Metrics

Growth matters most. Increasing revenue, powered by an expanding customer base, outranks margin optimization as a measure of success.



Top 3 Sales Challenges

Sophisticated customers pervade the market. Sales teams have long felt the pinch of heightened competition and price wars, but the rapid rise of customer sophistication brings new complications as teams strive to stay connected in real time.

58%

See increased market competition

55%

Find customers seeking the lowest price possible

47%

See customers' needs have grown more sophisticated

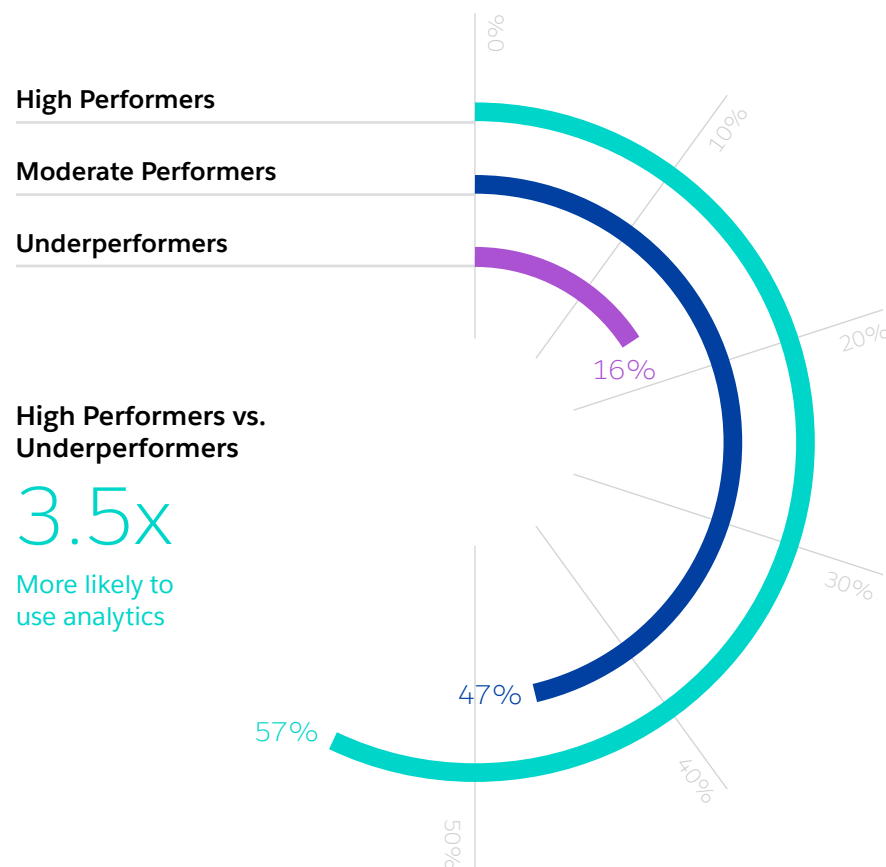
See Appendix A for a deeper dive into topline data.

01 | Analytics Use Soars Among Top Teams

Where there's analytics in use, there's likely a winning sales organization. **High-performing sales teams are 3.5x more likely than underperforming teams to use sales analytics.** Top teams are also 4.6x more likely than underperformers to rate their basic sales analytics capabilities as outstanding or very good. For these leading teams, analytics likely provide visibility into accounts and help dictate where to focus energy for the most productive customer and prospect conversations.

High-Performing Sales Teams Are 3.5x More Likely to Use Sales Analytics than Underperforming Teams

Meanwhile, the gap between the sales analytics “haves” and “have-nots” will shrink as underperformers increase their use by more than 180% over the next 12-18 months.

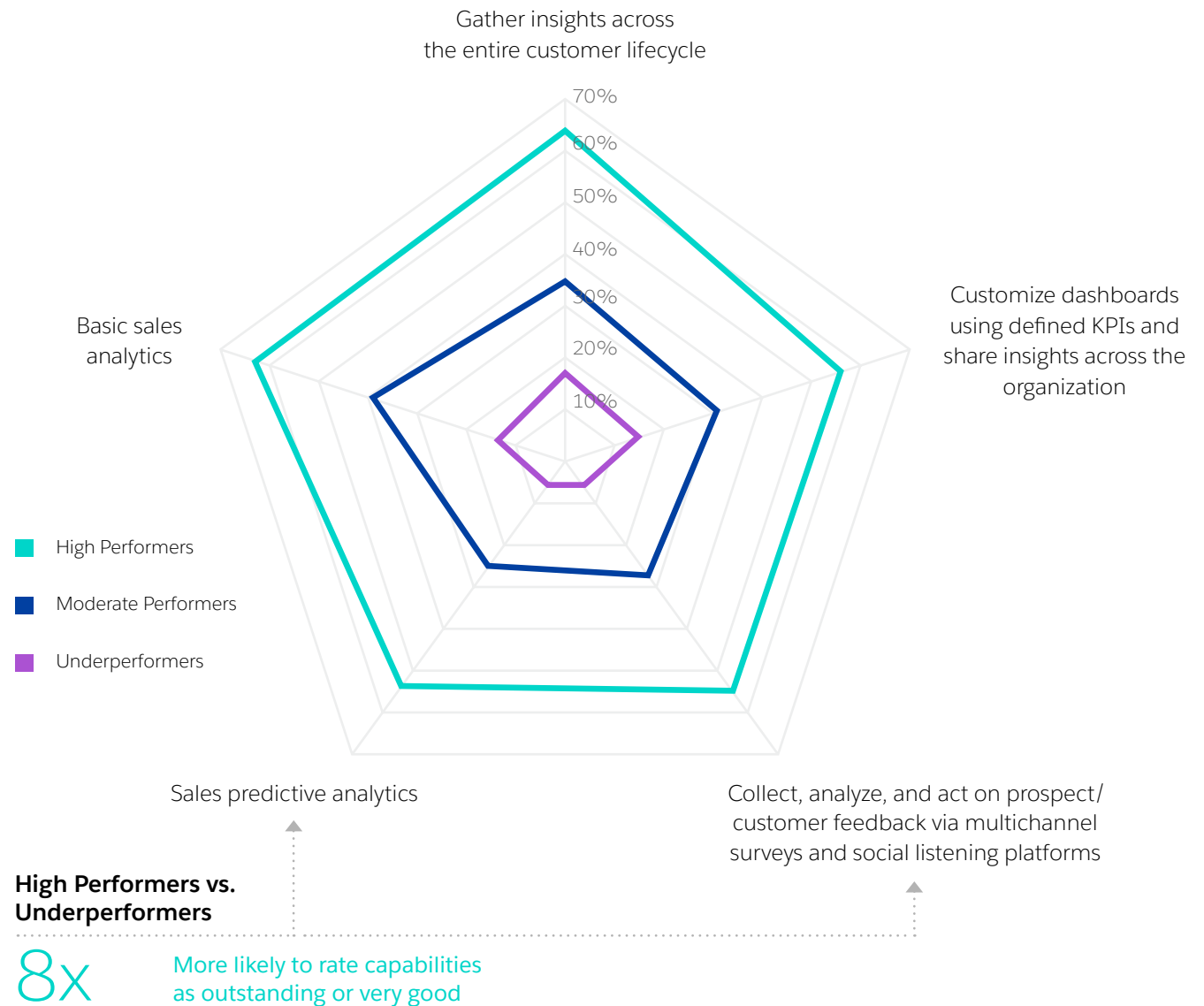


See Appendix B for a deeper dive into analytics data.

01 | Analytics Use Soars Among Top Teams

Analytics Becomes a Dominant Sales Tool

Data analysis helps sales teams make more informed decisions and find improvement opportunities. The best sales teams not only collect customer data, they also analyze and act upon that data to make more informed, behavior-based decisions that fuel customer success. Here we see the percent of leaders rating their sales analytics capabilities as outstanding or very good.



01 | Analytics Use Soars Among Top Teams

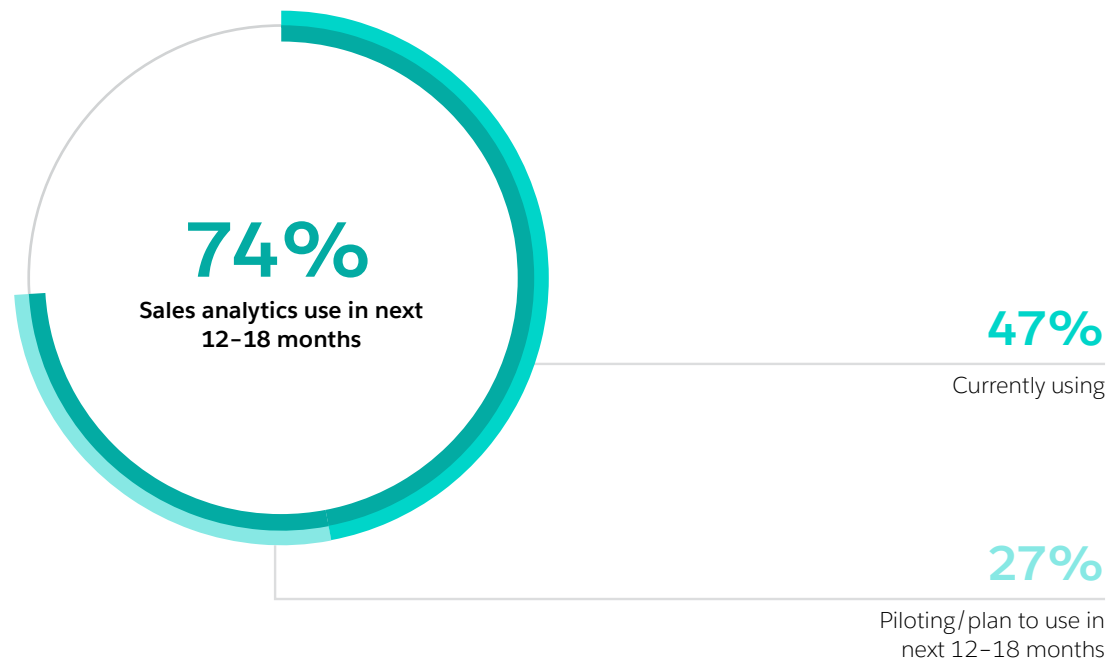
While high performers have already cracked the code on analytics, the surge among sales teams at all levels is spiking and expected to continue.

Among all sales organizations surveyed, there's a 58% increase in planned sales analytics use from 2015 to 2016. With this rise in new technologies making it easier for reps to derive real-time insights, we expect sales organizations to widely increase and improve their sales analytics capabilities.

Current use of technologies like predictive analytics is comparatively low, but sales leaders across the board value adding it as a sales function; more than twice as many are piloting or planning to use in the next 12-18 months (135% growth).

Huge Growth Expected in Analytics Use

Seventy-four percent of sales leaders are using or piloting/planning to use sales analytics in the next 12-18 months.



Predictive Analytics Use



02 | High Performers Sell More with Mobile

The universe of smartphones, tablets, and apps in the consumer world has created equal demand for always-connected mobile access in the business world. Today's top sales organizations are significantly more likely* to use mobile sales apps for everything from lead management to sales forecasting, letting them close business from anywhere.

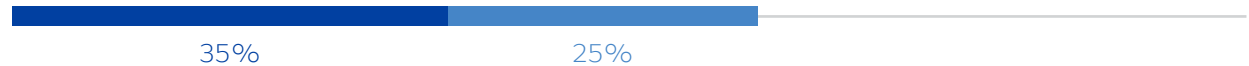
In fact, nearly 60% of high-performing sales teams already use or are planning to use a mobile sales app. **High performers are 2x as likely as underperformers to use or have plans to use a mobile sales app.**

Among all sales leaders surveyed, use of mobile apps for salespeople will more than double in the next two years (125% growth).

Mobile Sales Apps Help Reps Keep Pace with Customers

High-performing sales teams are significantly more likely to already use a mobile sales app, enabling them to move deals along while on the go.*

High Performers



Moderate Performers



Underperformers



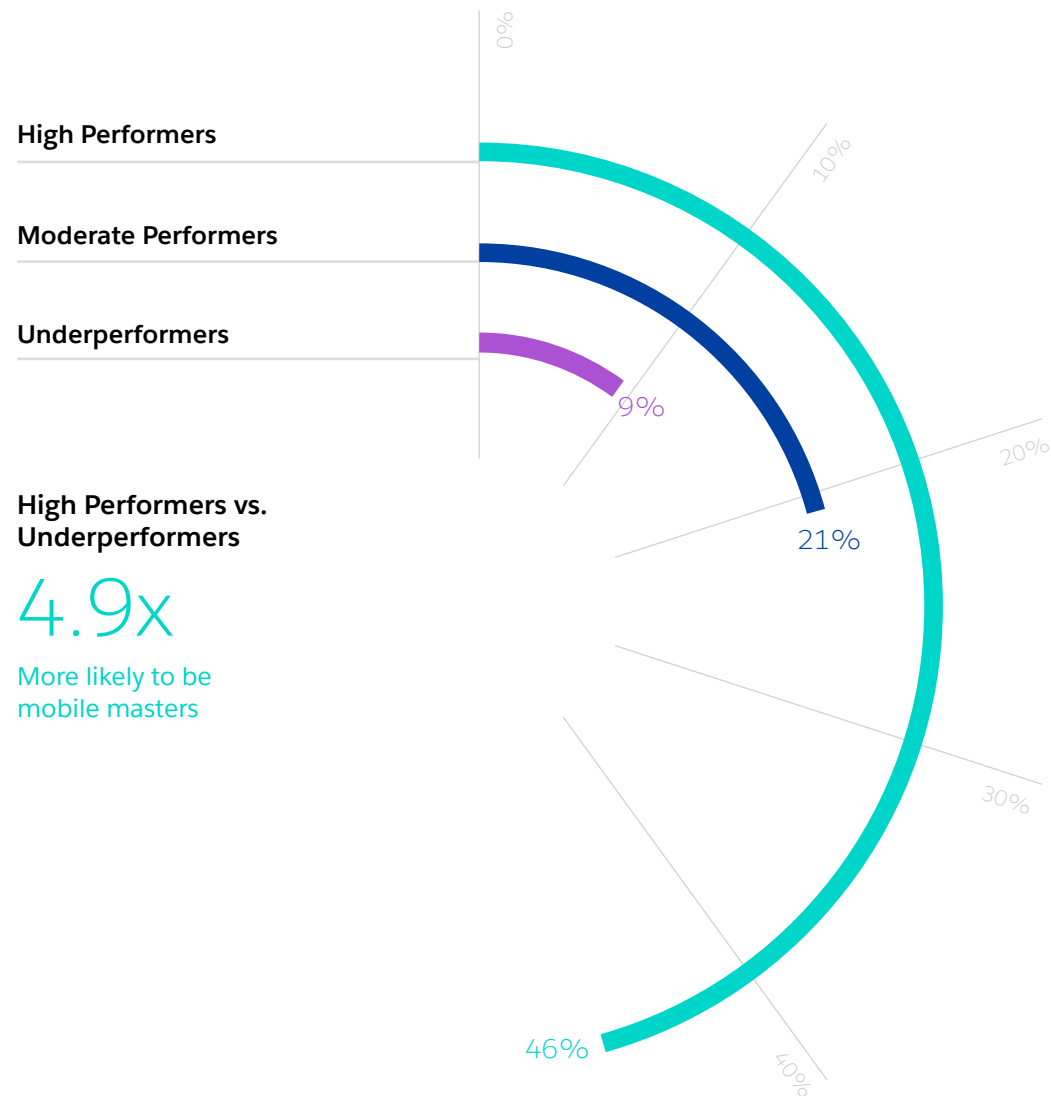
■ Already providing a mobile sales app ■ Plan to have a mobile sales app within two years

* Denotes statistical significance at the 95% confidence level

02 | High Performers Sell More with Mobile

The Best Sales Teams Are Mobile Masters

Top performers are nearly 5x more likely to have outstanding or very good capabilities in mobile sales, wielding smartphones to dominate sales. Here we see the percent of leaders ranking their mobile sales capabilities as outstanding or very good.



02 | High Performers Sell More with Mobile

SPOTLIGHT

More Companies Are Accelerating Sales with Customer-Facing Apps

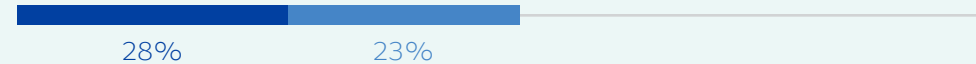
In addition to growth in mobile sales apps, we see an uptick in plans to provide sales directly to customers via mobile apps. More than half of high-performing companies currently deliver or plan to deliver sales directly to customers and prospects via a mobile app within the next two years. Our “2015 State of Marketing”¹ research shows 27% of marketers already have a mobile app, with another 34% piloting or planning to create one in the next 12 months. In the “there’s an app for that” age, customers and prospects expect mobile access for purchases, making it more important than ever for sales and marketing to provide a unified experience, whether face-to-face with a sales rep or on a mobile device.

¹ “2015 State of Marketing,” Salesforce Research, January 2015.

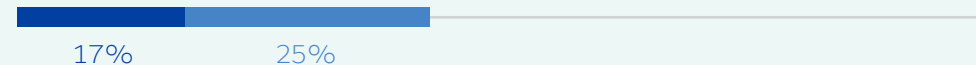
* Denotes statistical significance at the 95% confidence level

Evidence of the increasingly blurry line between sales and marketing, high-performing sales teams are significantly more likely to already provide sales via a mobile app to customers and prospects.*

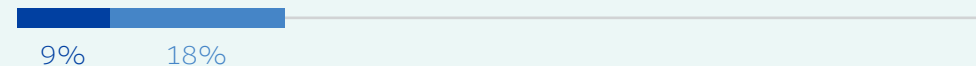
High Performers



Moderate Performers



Underperformers



■ Already providing sales via a mobile app for our prospects/customers to use today

■ Plan to deliver sales via a mobile app for our prospects/customers to use within two years

03 | Teams That Sell Together, Win Together

Organizations that are rising to the top are those that have mastered a holistic customer approach – they know that today’s sophisticated buyer has an equally complex and unique relationship with your business, extending to every sales, marketing, and service touchpoint. High-performing teams understand this and they see sales as the responsibility of the whole company, adopting a true team-selling approach.

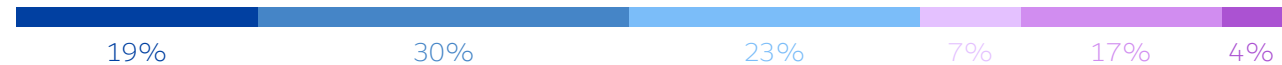
Achieving Sales Excellence Takes a Village

High performers are nearly 3x more likely than underperformers to view sales as 100% the responsibility of the entire organization, discerning that customer behaviors are transforming siloed roles and creating a need for a team-selling mindset. Here we see how teams view the responsibility of sales.

High Performers



Moderate Performers



Underperformers



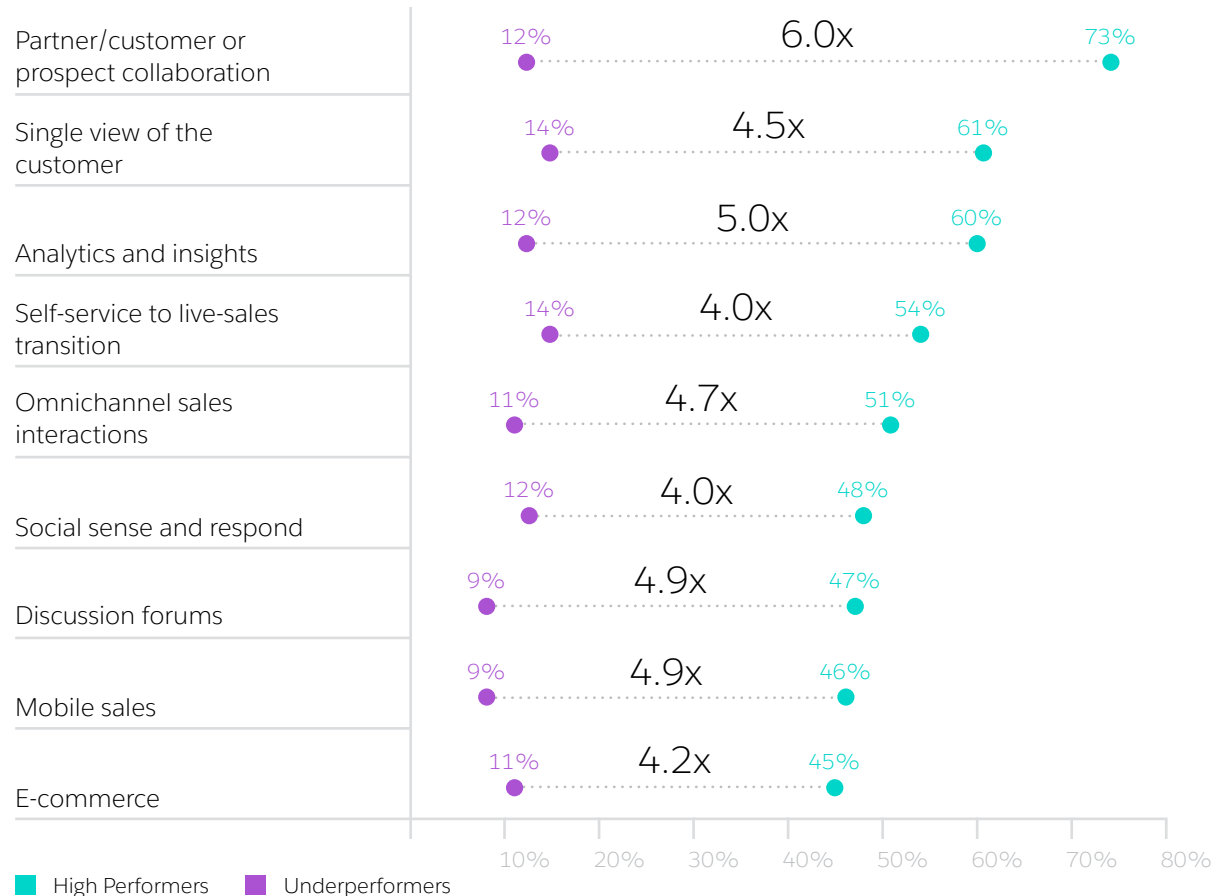
See Appendix D for a deeper dive into team and customer connection data.

03 | Teams That Sell Together, Win Together

Top sales performers are also connecting with customers in more ways than ever before. The data shows that **winning sales teams have top-rated capabilities across a broad range of channels.** High performers, for example, are 4.7x more likely than underperformers to rate their capabilities in omnichannel sales interactions as outstanding or very good. Whether gaining a single view of the customer or managing discussion forums, the scope of capabilities mastered by top sales teams continues to evolve.

High-Performing Teams Are Always Finding New Ways to Connect with Customers

High performers rate their customer-connection activities as outstanding or very good far more than underperformers. For complete list, see Appendix D.



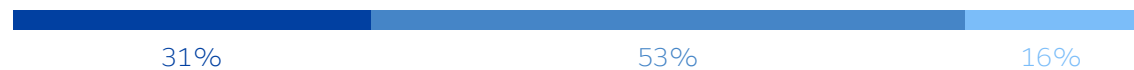
04 | High Performers Are High Tech

High-performing teams maximize technology to meet the demands of today's sophisticated customers (a challenge cited by 47% of respondents as noted in the Introduction). **High-performing sales teams use nearly 3x more sales tech than underperforming teams, freeing them from process-heavy tasks and giving them more time to actually sell.**

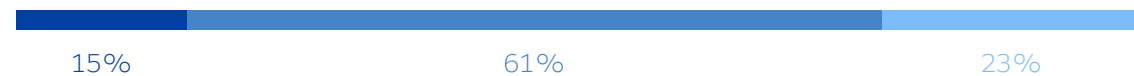
Top Teams Supercharge Their Processes with Tech

*Bringing speed to previously cumbersome activities, high performers are nearly 8x more likely than underperformers to be heavy tech adopters.**

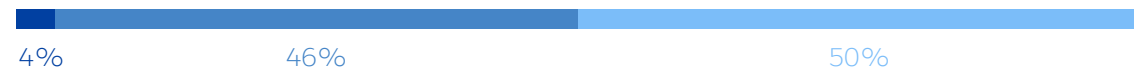
High Performers



Moderate Performers



Underperformers



■ Heavy tech adoption ■ Moderate tech adoption ■ Minimal tech adoption

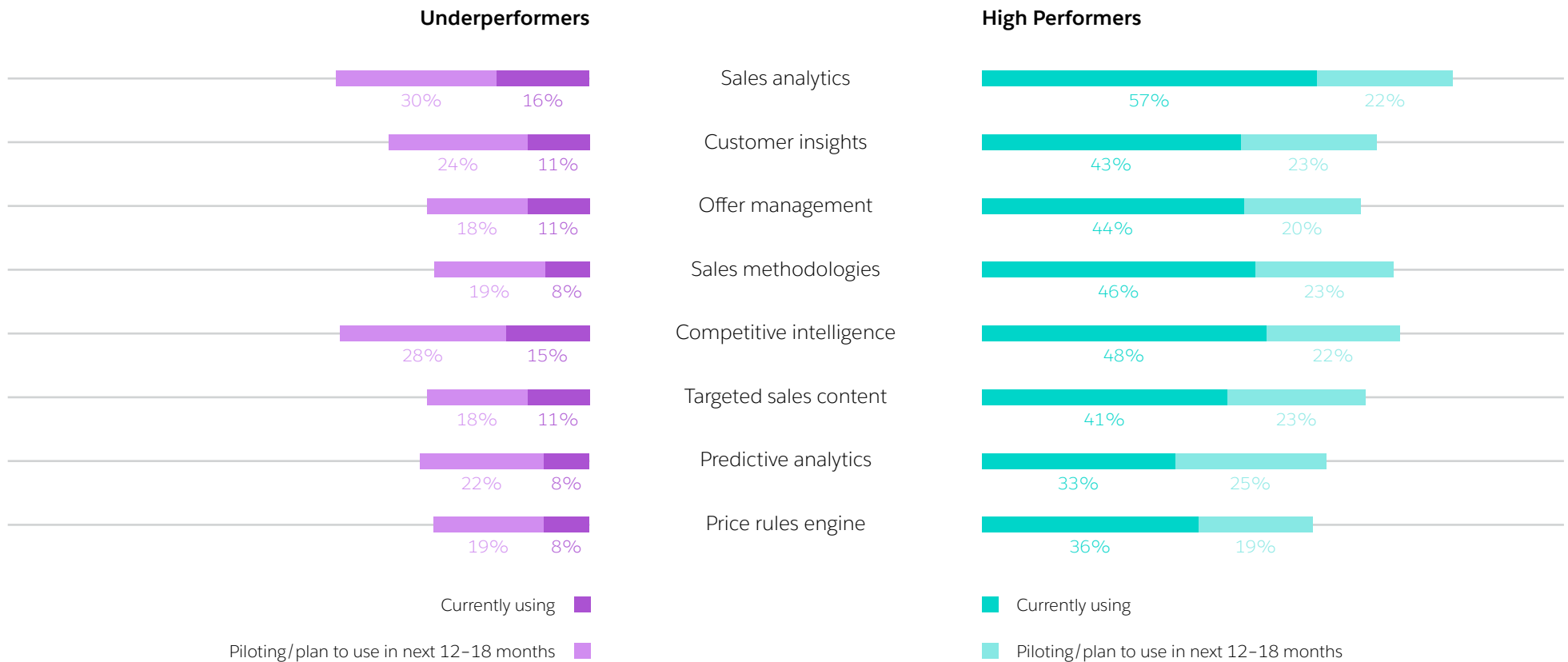
* Heavy and minimal tech adoption are defined as above or below 1 standard deviation from the average number of functionalities currently used.

See Appendix E for a deeper dive into sales tech data.

04 | High Performers Are High Tech

High-Performing Sales Teams Are First to Embrace Technology

Top teams are significantly more likely* than underperforming teams to enhance the sales process with tech when managing customer relationships.



* Denotes statistical significance at the 95% confidence level

04 | High Performers Are High Tech

SPOTLIGHT

Putting Wearables to Work for Sales

To better understand the landscape of connected devices and their impact on the future of sales, we turn to a recent Salesforce Research report detailing wearable tech in the workplace. Data on this page is from a 2015 survey of 500 wearable tech adopters who said they were currently using, piloting, or planning to implement wearable technology in the enterprise.

For more in-depth coverage of wearable tech use, get the full report, "Putting Wearables to Work," at www.salesforce.com/wearablesreport.

76%

of sales teams say that wearables are or will be strategic to their company's future business success.

83%

of sales teams are currently using or planning to use wearables in some form in the next two years.

100%

of sales teams using/ planning to use wearable tech will increase spend in the next 12 months.

Sales teams are already focusing on use cases such as access to business analytics and alerts, safety alarms, and providing customer-facing employees with real-time access to customer data.

23%

Access to business analytics and alerts

23%

Safety alarms or alerts

20%

Providing customer-facing employees with real-time access to customer data (shopper preferences, past purchases, etc.)

Last Look: What Makes a Winning Sales Team in 2015?



Maximize Analytics Use

High performers use tools to view real-time business analytics and make informed decisions in the most efficient manner. Their mantra is “accountability drives productivity” and they enforce best practices by measuring activities and pipeline.



Go Mobile

High performers are significantly more likely to use a mobile sales app, closing deals from anywhere at any time. They understand that mobility is imperative for any team that wants to win.



Break Down the Silos

High performers are significantly more likely to rate their sales team as a key differentiator and view sales as the entire company’s responsibility. The power of selling as a team helps reps connect with experts across the company and keep deals moving.



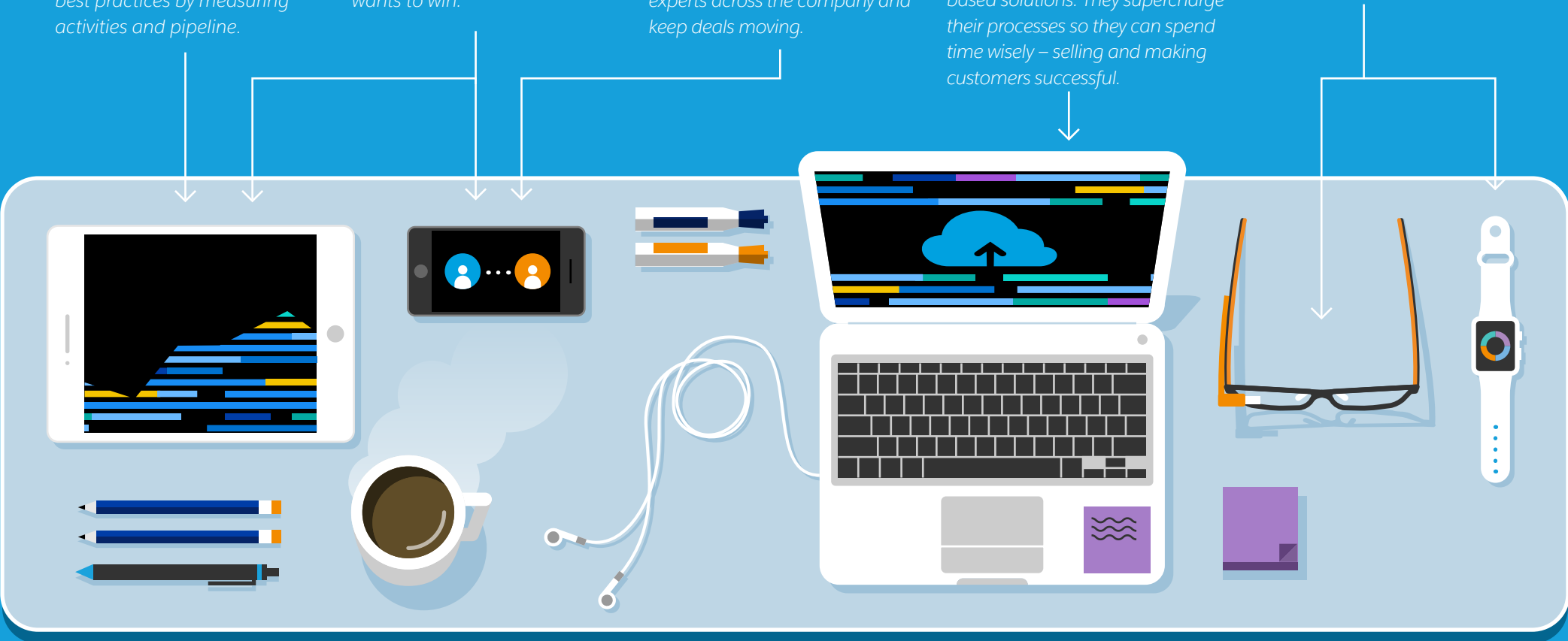
Optimize with Tech

High performers meet the needs of today’s customers by working smarter with tech solutions. They’re significantly more likely to have already replaced all or most of their sales apps with cloud-based solutions. They supercharge their processes so they can spend time wisely – selling and making customers successful.



Find Ways to Innovate

High performers see growth opportunities around connected devices and wearable tech, and they consider how cutting-edge advancements can help reps stay connected and informed.

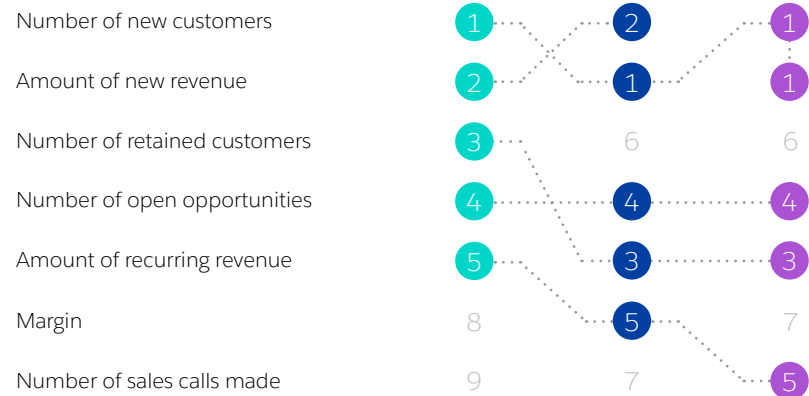


Appendix A: Diving Deeper into How Today's Leaders Define Success

Connecting with customers is the top priority. Here's how sales leaders at each performance level rank their top objectives.



Growth matters most. Here's how sales leaders at each performance level rank their top sales metrics.



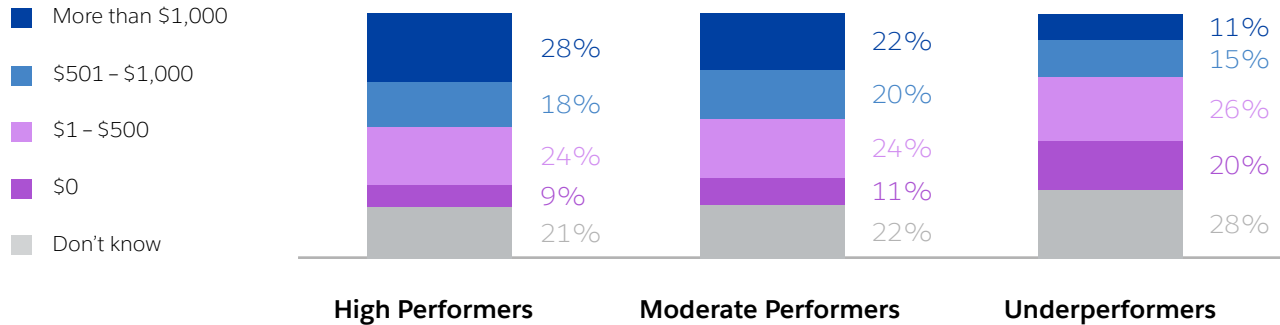
Sophisticated customers pervade the market. Here's how sales leaders at each performance level rank their top challenges.



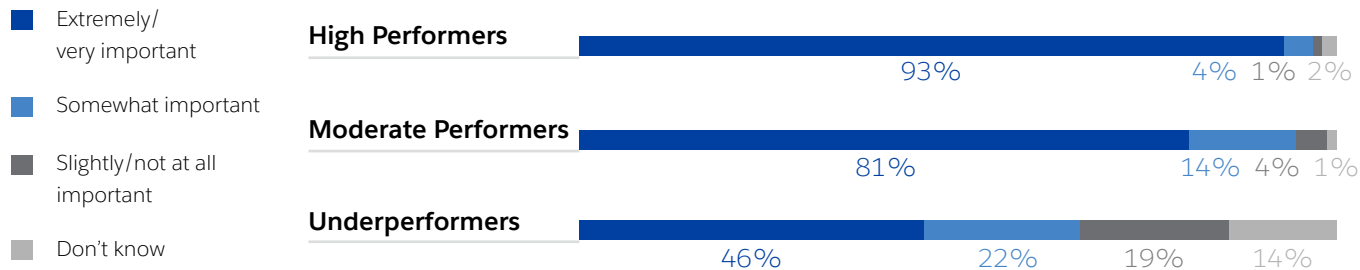
■ High Performers
 ■ Moderate Performers
 ■ Underperformers

Appendix A: Diving Deeper into How Today's Leaders Define Success

Top teams invest in training. Companies with high-performing sales teams are 2.6x more likely than underperformers to invest more than \$1K in annual training.

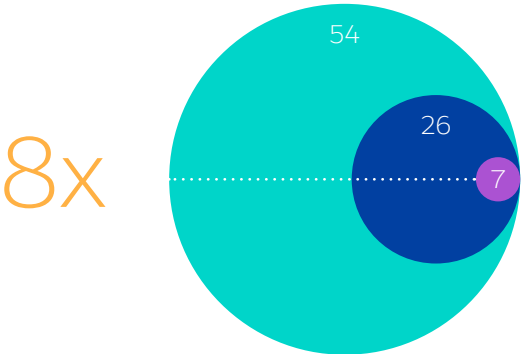


The importance of sales team satisfaction directly correlates with high performance. Top sales organizations are 2x more likely than underperformers to say that the importance of their salespeople's satisfaction is key to successfully selling/servicing prospects and customers.

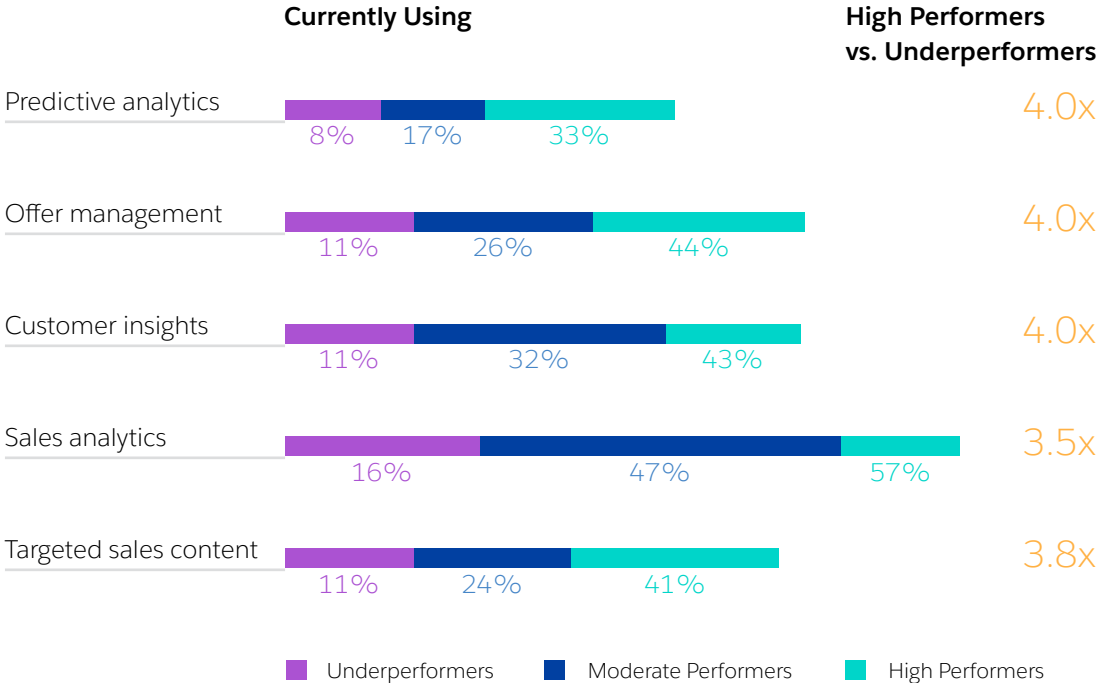


Appendix B: Diving Deeper into Analytics

Top teams are better at using predictive analytics.
 Here we see the breakout of sales leaders ranking their predictive analytics capabilities as outstanding or very good.

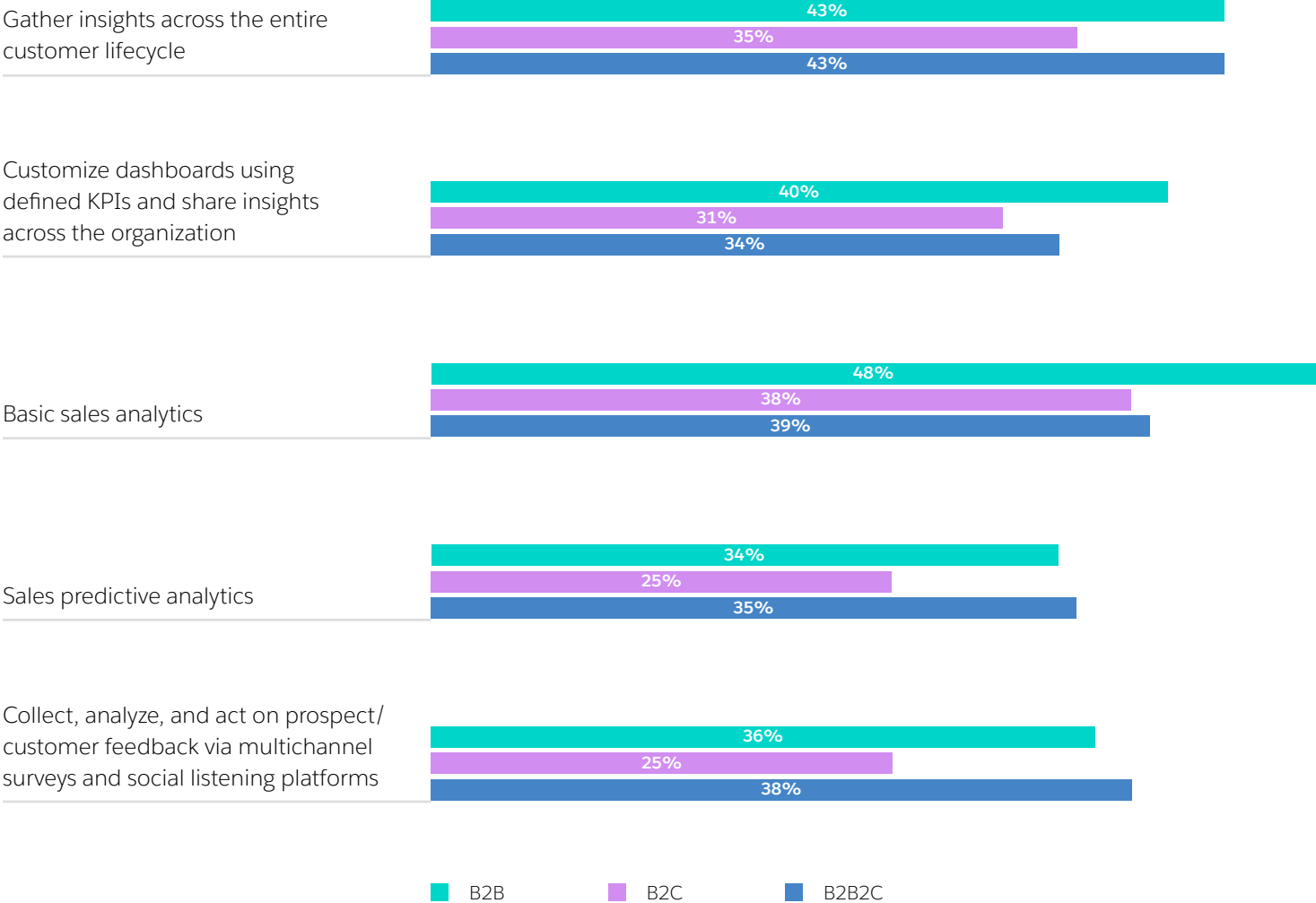


Teams are broadly increasing analytics use. Here are the sales functionalities most commonly used by sales leaders at each performance level.



Appendix B: Diving Deeper into Analytics

B2C sales leaders show room for improvement. Here we see the breakout of sales leaders by business type ranking their analytics capabilities as outstanding or very good.



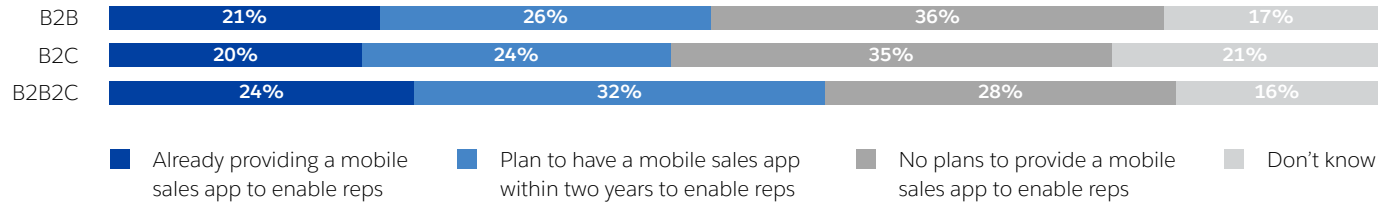
Appendix B: Diving Deeper into Analytics

Hospitality, travel, and transportation put up big numbers. Here we see the breakout of sales leaders by industry ranking their analytics capabilities as outstanding or very good.

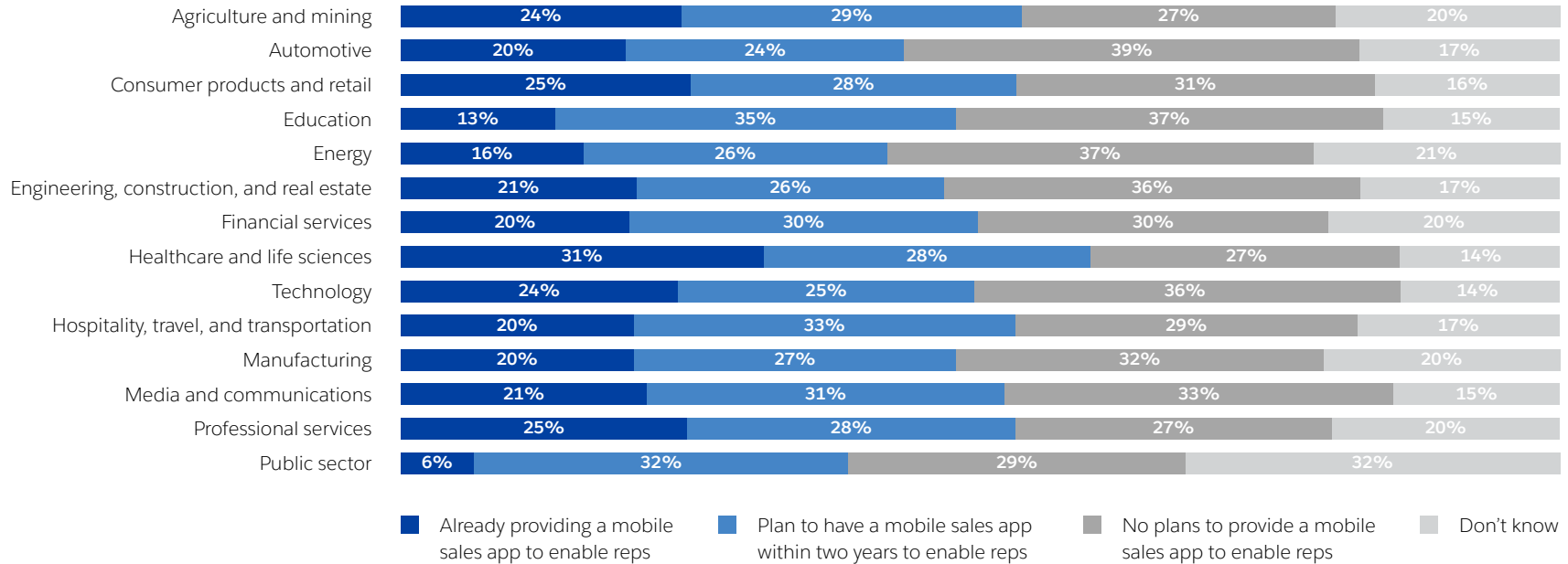
	Gather insights across the entire customer lifecycle	Customize dashboards using defined KPIs and share insights across the organization	Basic sales analytics	Sales predictive analytics	Collect, analyze, and act on prospect/customer feedback via multichannel surveys and social listening platforms
Agriculture and mining	44%	41%	32%	22%	34%
Automotive	52%	41%	46%	28%	28%
Consumer products and retail	43%	33%	46%	36%	40%
Education	46%	31%	40%	33%	37%
Energy	37%	34%	45%	21%	29%
Engineering, construction, and real estate	38%	29%	35%	29%	31%
Financial services	41%	33%	45%	34%	31%
Healthcare and life sciences	34%	25%	44%	23%	23%
Technology	37%	34%	42%	27%	29%
Hospitality, travel, and transportation	48%	44%	48%	41%	37%
Manufacturing	33%	32%	36%	25%	27%
Media and communications	40%	41%	41%	29%	32%
Professional services	41%	35%	44%	33%	36%
Public sector	35%	23%	29%	23%	19%

Appendix C: Diving Deeper into Mobile

B2B2C takes the lead in mobile apps used by sales. Here we see the percentages of organizations providing mobile apps for salespeople, split by business type.

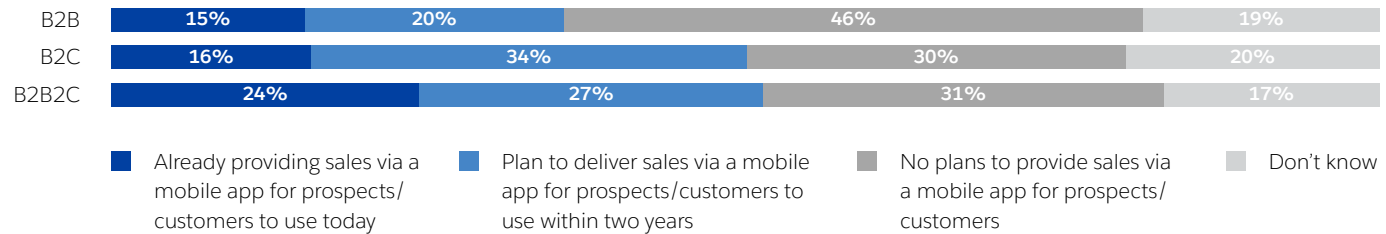


Healthcare and life sciences pull ahead of the mobile app curve. Here we see the percentages of organizations providing mobile apps for salespeople, split by industry.

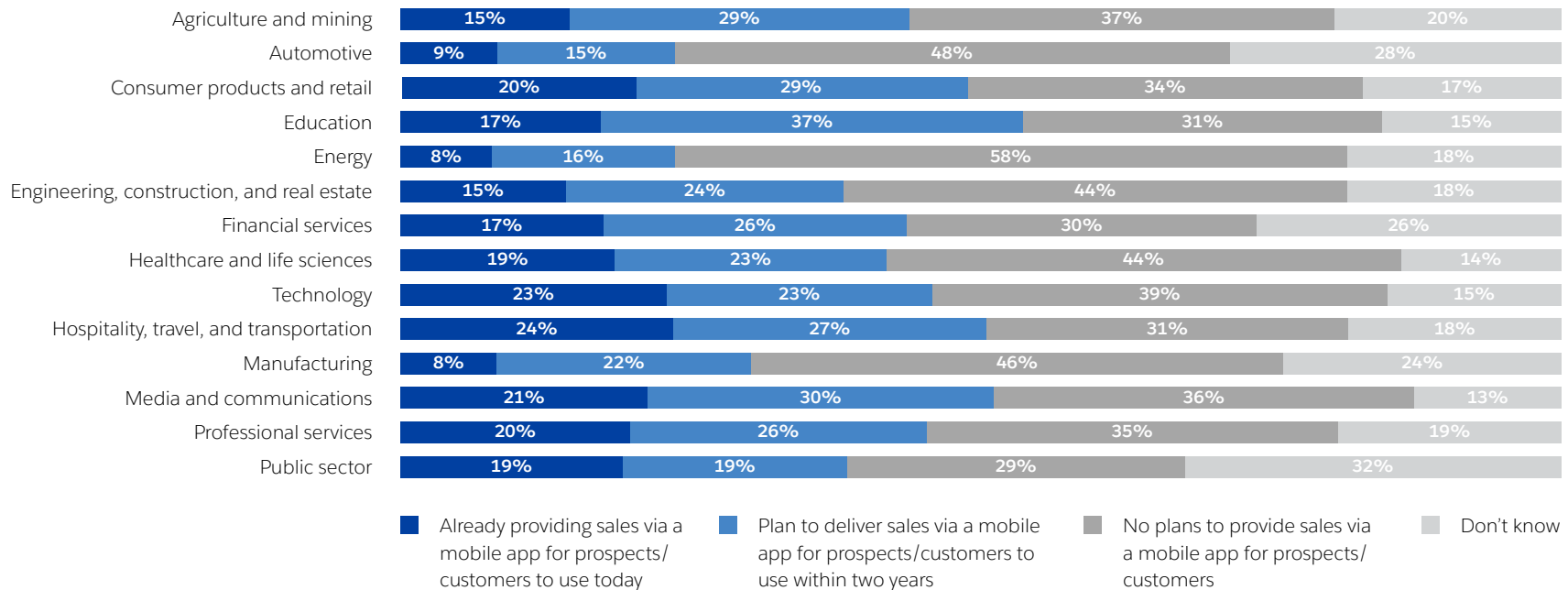


Appendix C: Diving Deeper into Mobile

B2B sales leaders lag in delivering sales via mobile apps. Here we see how each business type ranks for delivering sales directly to customers via mobile apps.

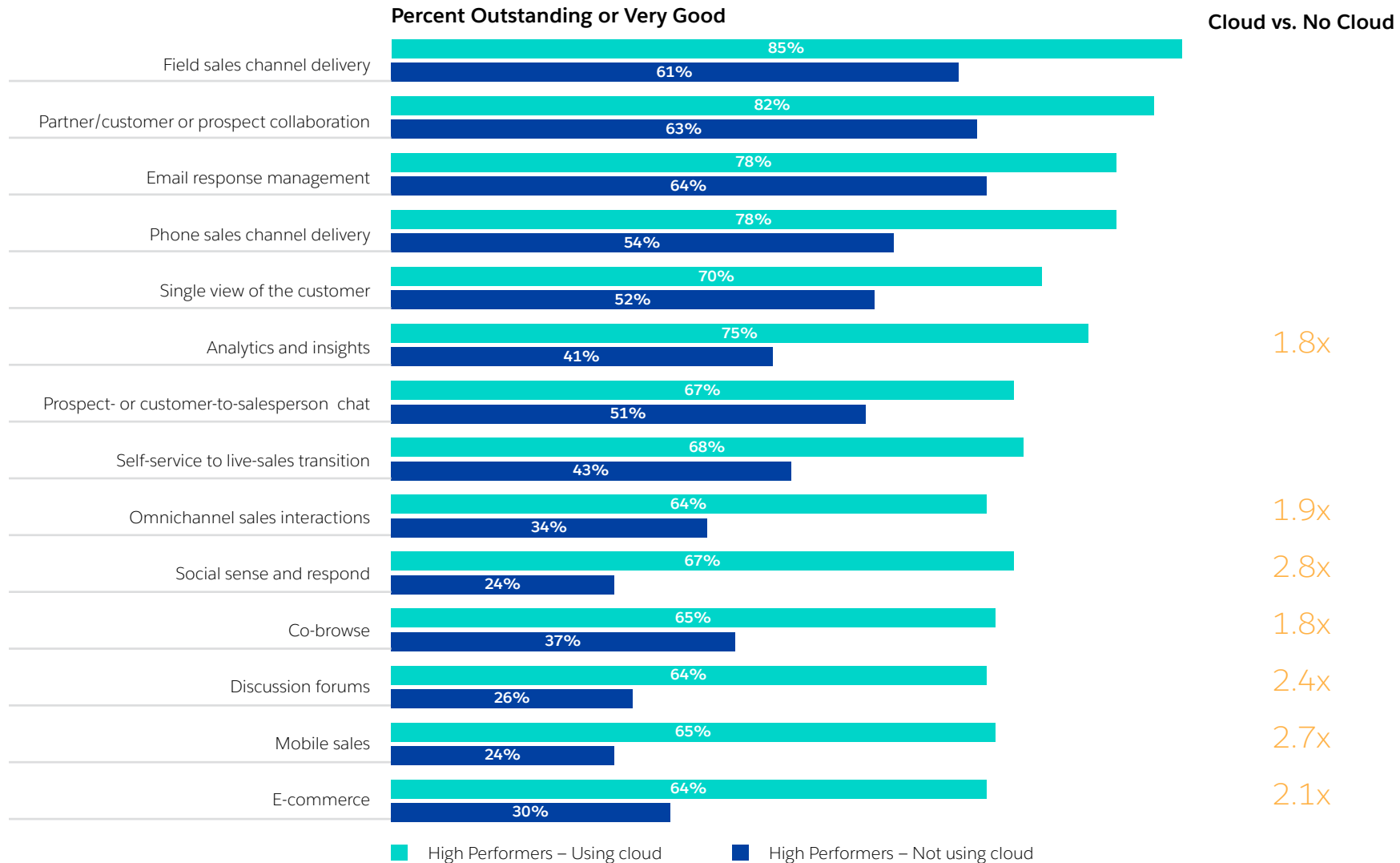


Education and media and communications step up. Here we see how each industry ranks for delivering sales directly to customers via mobile apps.



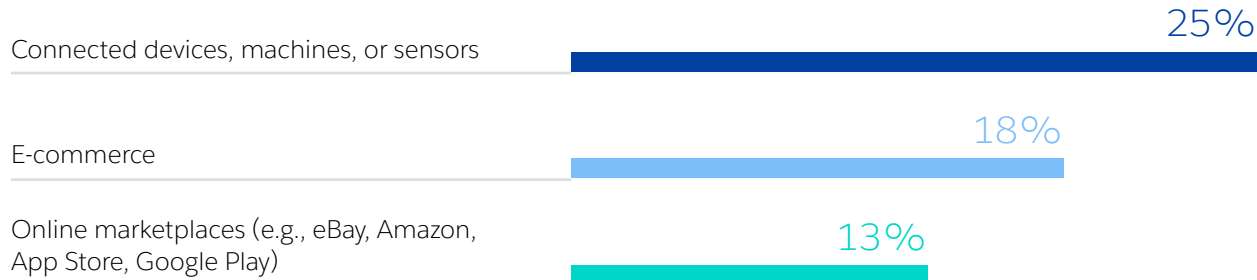
Appendix D: Diving Deeper into Team and Customer Connections

Cloud solutions lend an added edge. Here we see the breakout of sales leaders ranking various capabilities as outstanding or very good, comparing high performers using cloud solutions to those not using cloud solutions.

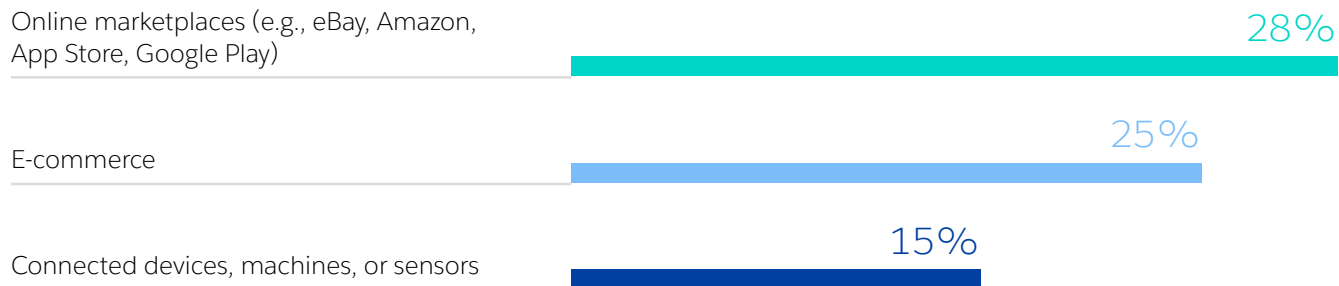


Appendix D: Diving Deeper into Team and Customer Connections

Connected devices show the most near-term growth potential. Here are the top three growth channels for sales in the next 12-18 months.



Online marketplaces are a boon for B2B sales. According to B2B sales leaders, here are the top three growth channels for sales in the next 12-18 months.

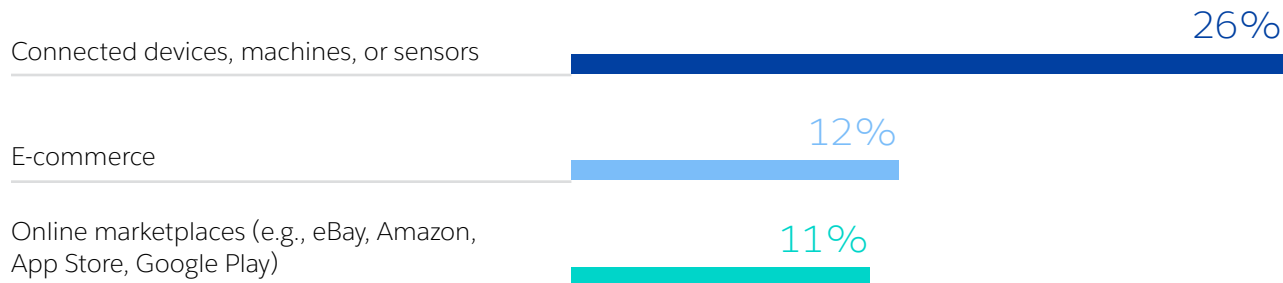


Appendix D: Diving Deeper into Team and Customer Connections

B2C leaders look to connected devices. According to B2C sales leaders, here are the top three growth channels for sales in the next 12-18 months.



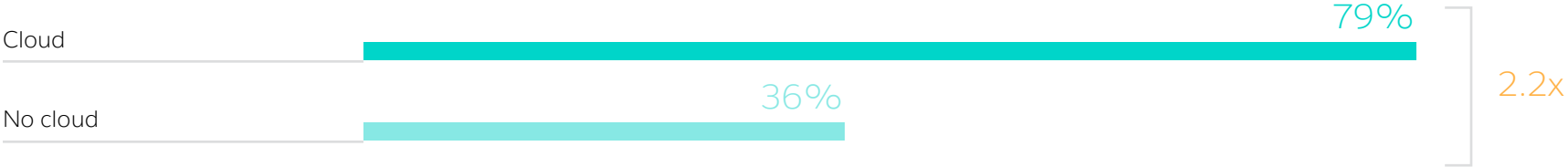
Connected devices also capture B2B2C attention. According to B2B2C sales leaders, here are the top three growth channels for sales in the next 12-18 months.



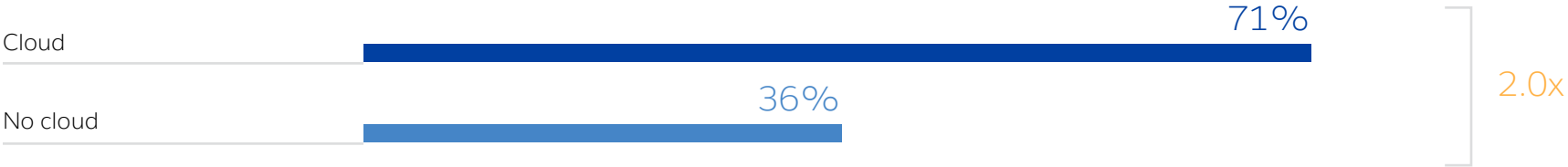
Appendix D: Diving Deeper into Team and Customer Connections

Sales teams using cloud solutions show greater growth numbers. Here we see the planned growth of sales teams, using cloud vs. not using cloud, for each performance level.

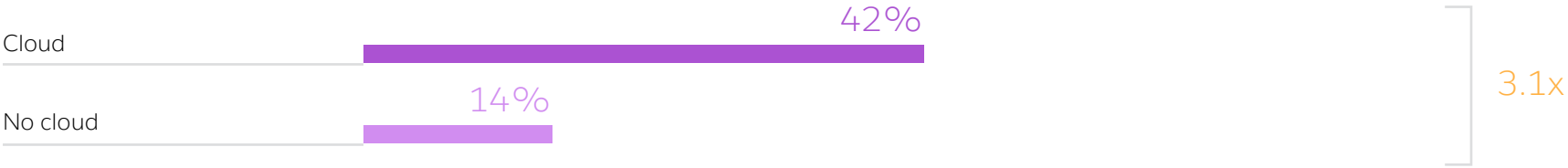
High Performers



Moderate Performers

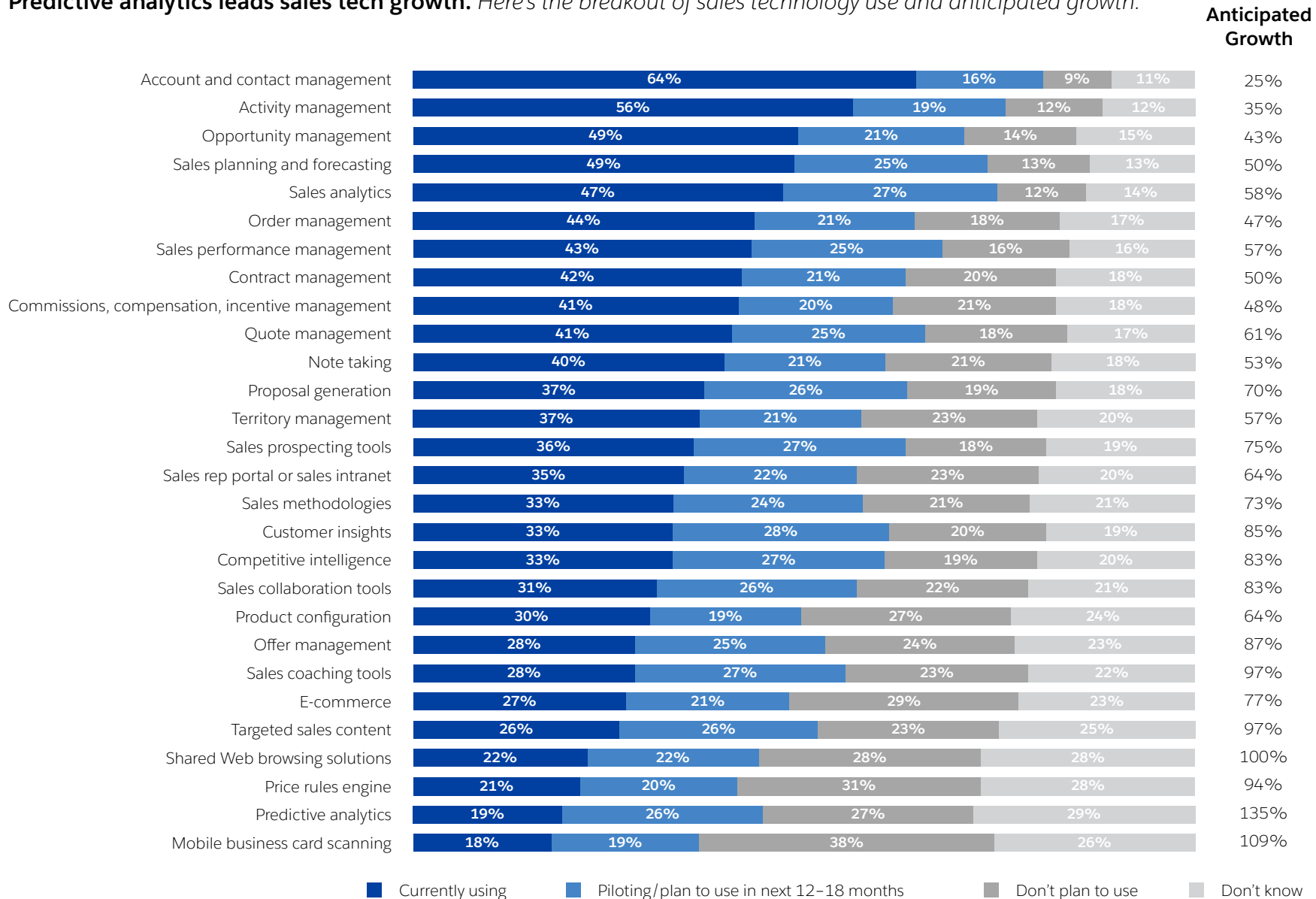


Underperformers



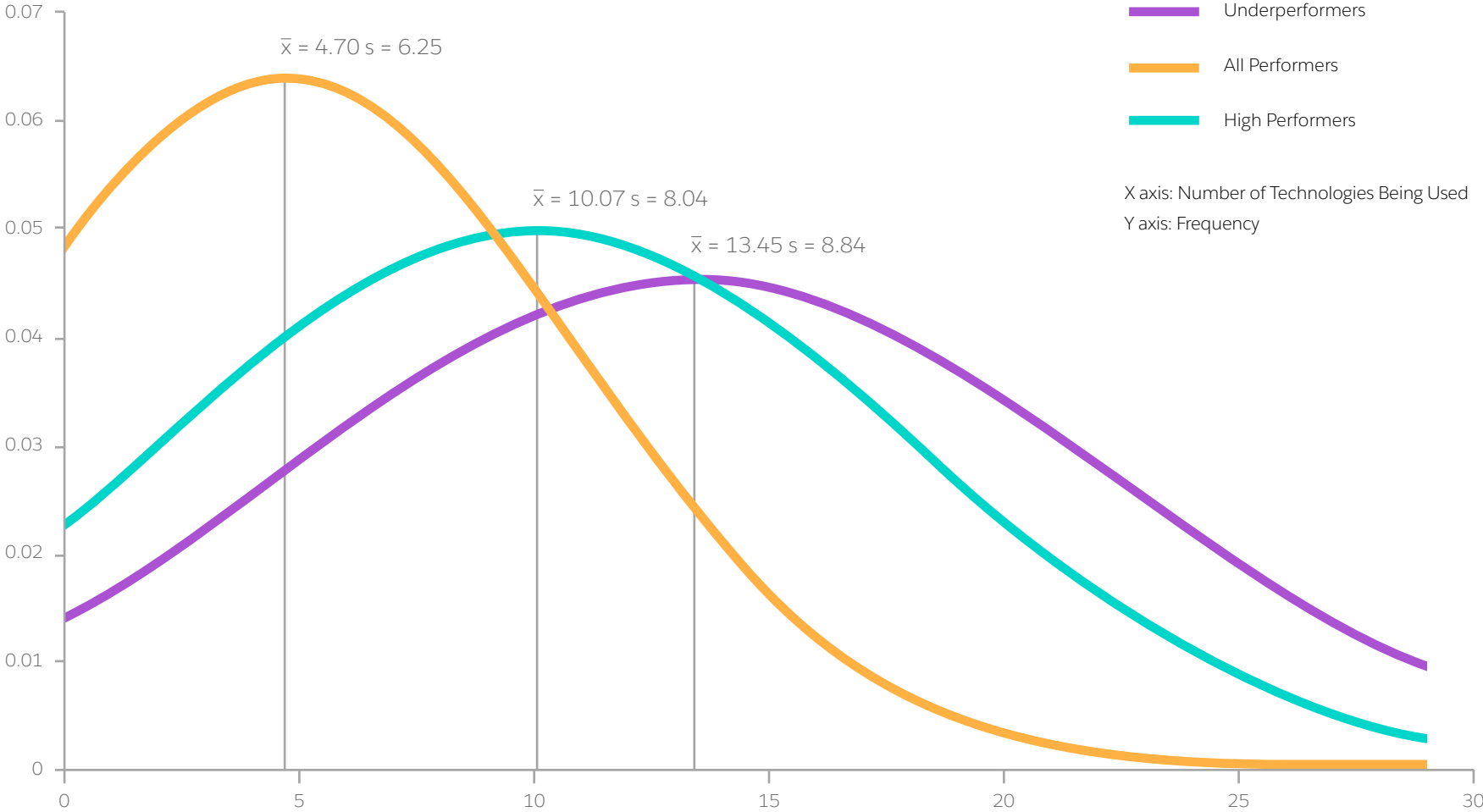
Appendix E: Diving Deeper into Sales Tech

Predictive analytics leads sales tech growth. Here's the breakout of sales technology use and anticipated growth.



Appendix E: Diving Deeper into Sales Tech

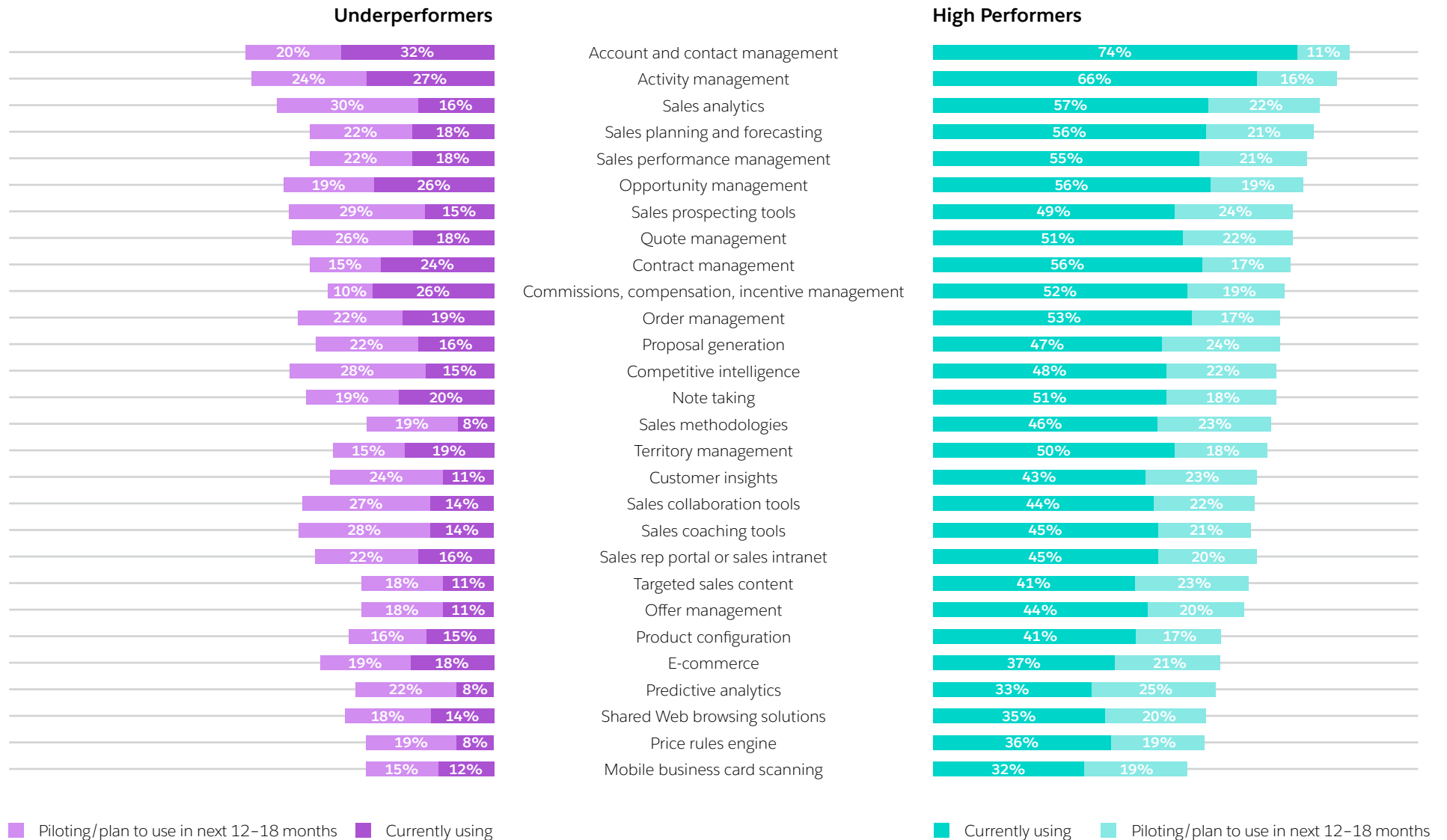
High performers are more likely to be heavy tech adopters.* Here we see the distribution of tech adoption by performance level.



* Heavy and minimal tech adoption are defined as above or below 1 standard deviation from the average number of functionalities currently used.

Appendix E: Diving Deeper into Sales Tech

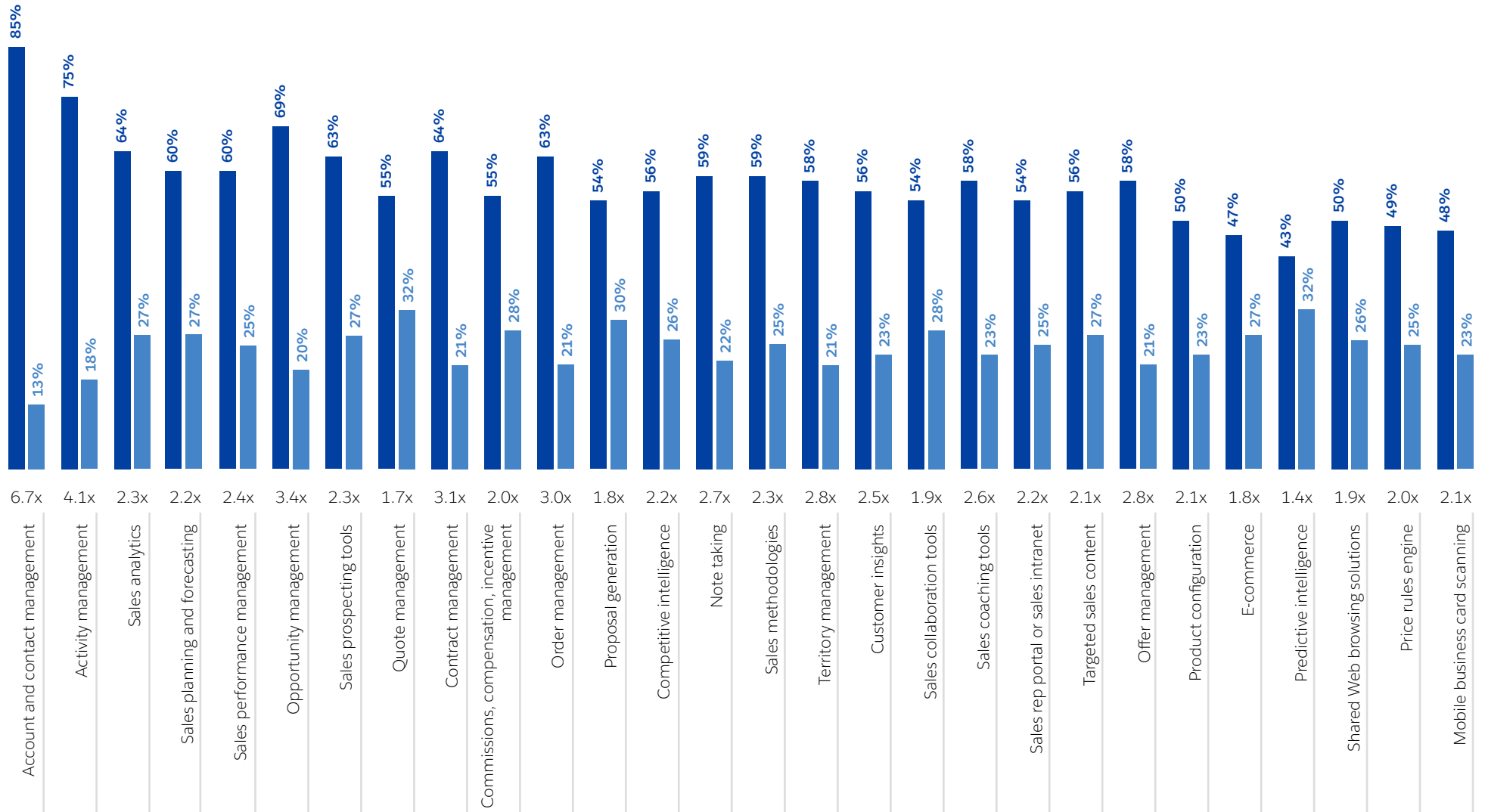
High-performing sales teams embrace technology to ensure customer success. Here we see the breakout of tech types used, comparing top teams with underperformers.



Appendix E: Diving Deeper into Sales Tech

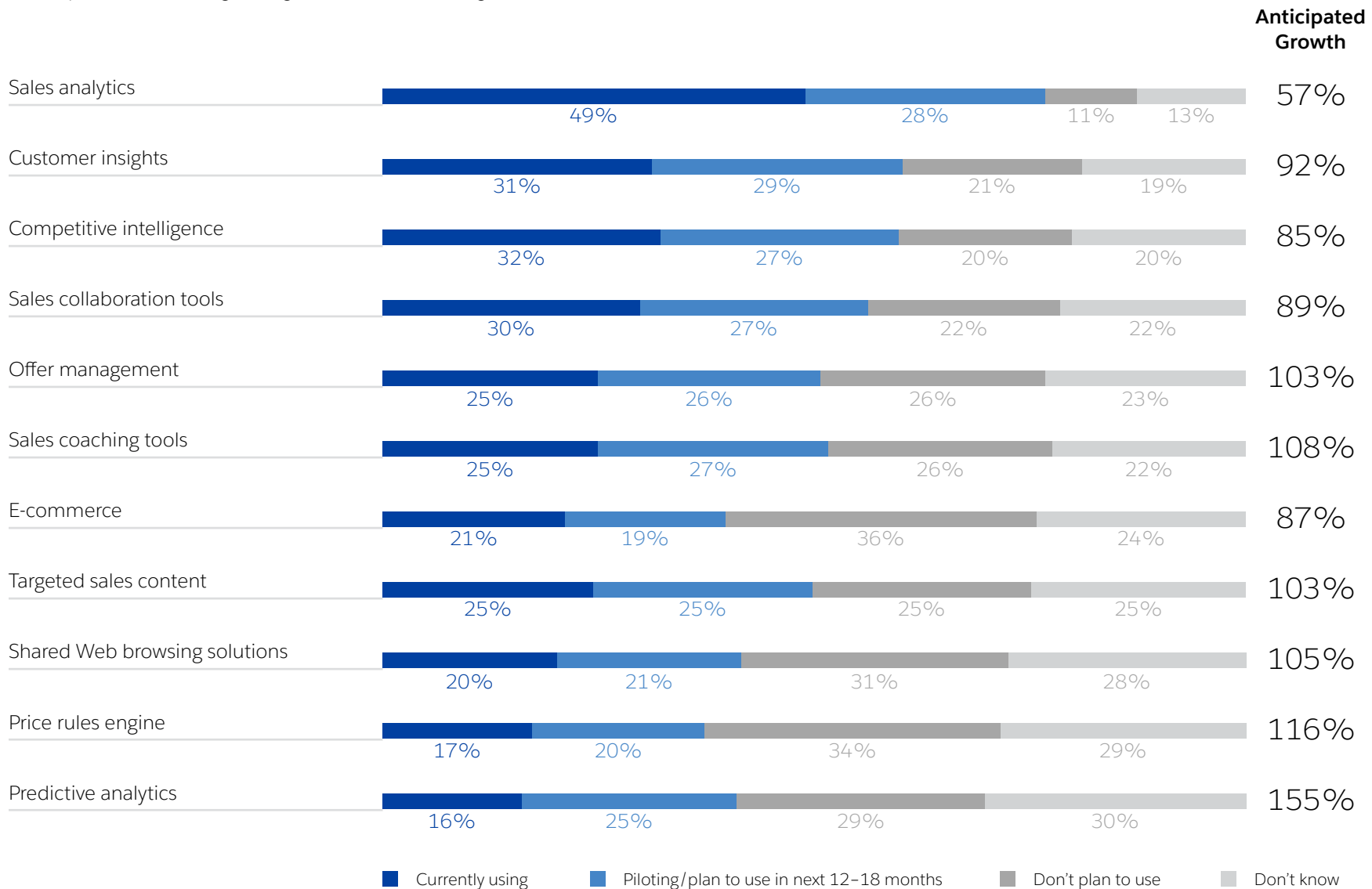
High performers using cloud solutions leverage more tech. Here we see usage rates for sales tech and tools, comparing high performers using cloud solutions to those not using cloud solutions.

■ Cloud + currently using functionality
 ■ No cloud + currently using functionality



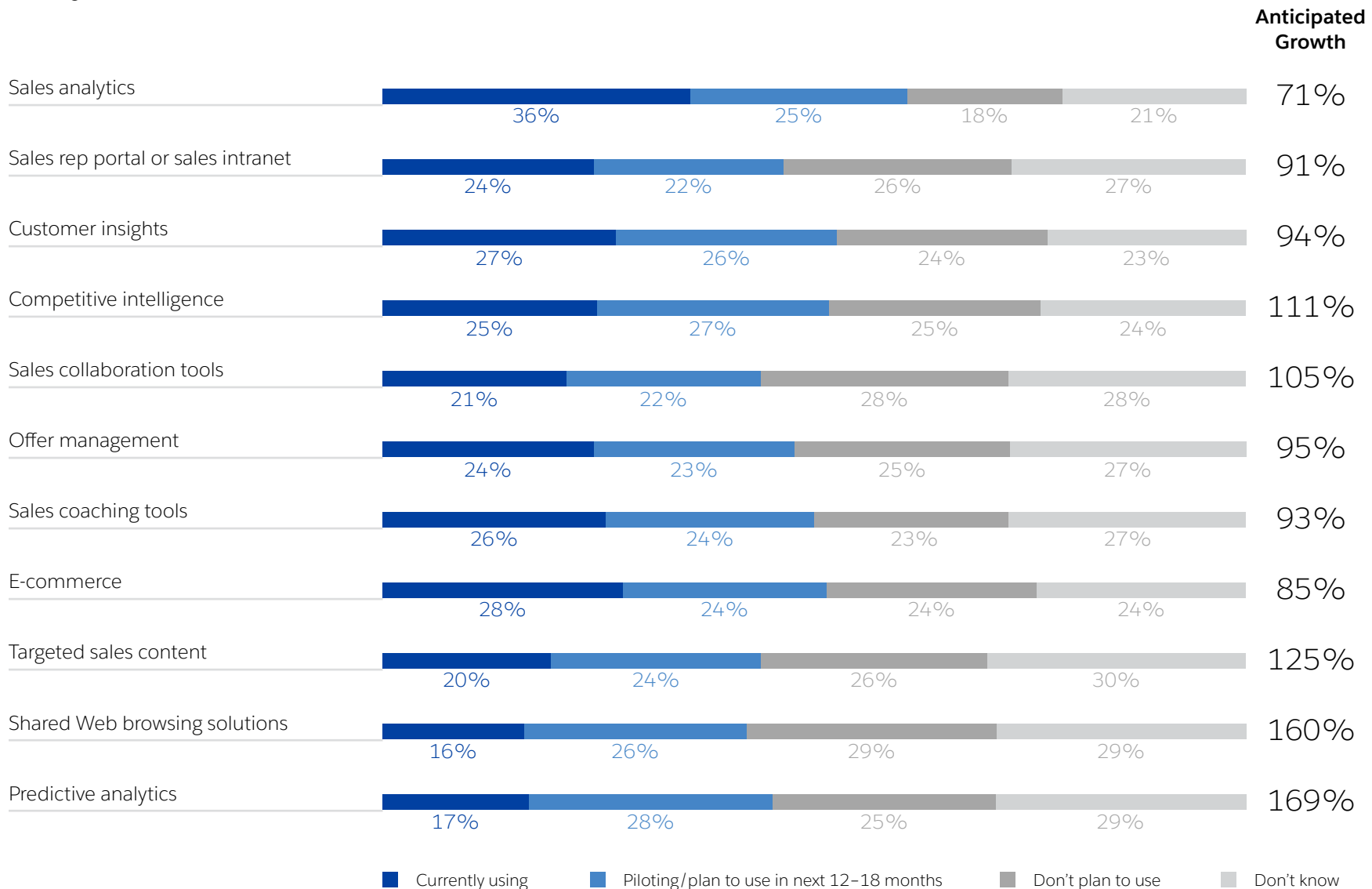
Appendix E: Diving Deeper into Sales Tech

Predictive analytics leads B2B sales tech growth. Here we see the technologies that will experience the highest growth rates among B2B sales teams.



Appendix E: Diving Deeper into Sales Tech

Predictive analytics leads B2C sales tech growth. Here we see the technologies that will experience the highest growth rates among B2C sales teams.



Appendix E: Diving Deeper into Sales Tech

Predictive analytics will see triple-digit growth in the B2B2C space. Here we see the technologies that will experience the highest growth rates among B2B2C sales teams.

