FORCEMANAGER®

EBOOK

Aim: Professionalize the image of the salesperson

A compilation of our best blog articles about sales and sales team management

INDEX

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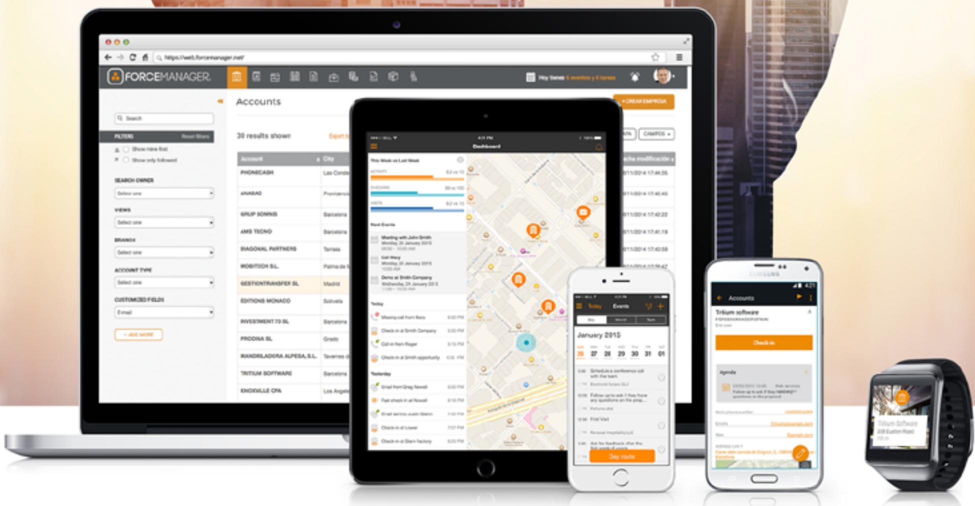
15 DAY TRIAL

The mobile CRM that allows you
to measure, analyse and improve your sales team's performance.



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01.
SHORTER CALLS RESULT IN HIGHER SALES

Follow us:

ForceManager has analysed more than 50,000 calls made or received by companies specialising in B2B sales, and with sales teams of between 10 and 50 people. The conclusion? **The most effective sales calls last no more than three and a half minutes**. After this point, sales drop rapidly.

Sales reps whose calls average three and a half minutes are invariably in the top 40% of salespeople in their company. They are **clear as to the objectives of each communication, and organise their phone time accordingly**. On the flipside are salespeople whose calls are longer than four minutes. Beyond this point sales capacity is limited and sales objectives are secondary.

ForceManager's analysis also revealed that sales reps whose average sales calls last more than five minutes, sell 80% less than the most successful sales person in the company.

As **Oscar Macia, ForceManager's CEO explained, "Bad management of calls is a symptom of bad time management."** In Macia's experience, "many salespeople either make excessively short and overly direct calls, or they speak for so long they forget why they called in the first place."

TWO ARGUMENTS EXPLAIN POOR SALES CALL MANAGEMENT:

1. Getting through to people who are “toxic”, or “charlatan”, who tend to have a senior profile and a conflictual attitude. According to a study on sales opportunities published by the Harvard Business Review, this type of person usually occupies an intermediary position with apparent decision-making capability. This makes them all the more “dangerous”, as they lead the sales person to falsely believe there’s a chance of a sale.

2. A huge number of salespeople excessively prolong their calls. Their conversation tends to be vague, and they easily lose sight of the actual objective of the call.

3 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE SALES CALLS

According to Macia, an expert in Spanish sales networks, there are 3 simple techniques for making calls more effective and increasing sales:

1. Be clear about the **points to cover** with the other person, and the **ultimate objective** of the call.

2. If the call becomes too long and is no longer productive, **bring the conversation to a natural conclusion.**

3. **Identify and avoid “toxic” people** who will cause your sales opportunities to plummet.

02.
5 TACTICAL TIPS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE SALES

Follow us:

Managing a company's sales activity means taking into account a lot of different factors. If you're looking to save costs or spot business opportunities, it's no longer enough to look to your business plan. Time was the business plan served as a compass that told us roughly where we'd be in x years, and gave us a snapshot of our market; the SWOT analysis was key to knowing exactly who we were, analyzing the competition and knowing how to sell.

But we're now firmly in the information era, where consumers have access to an infinite number of open doors through which they can look, choose and buy. The last few years have also seen the rise in importance of measuring. Each phase of the conversion funnel is accompanied by metrics (qualified reach, perception of brand recognition, final rating of a particular action, ROI…). We have no choice but to be flexible, adapt to the constant changes presented by the market, and heed the latest advice on how to be more effecti-ve at selling.

Here are our top 5 tips on boosting your sales efficiency:

1. CREATE BUYER PERSONAS

To sell your product or service you first need to define who you want to sell it to. Sit down with your team and describe your ideal client. What are their needs and buying habits? What's their typical behaviour? What motivates them? What statistics do you have for them and what are their demographic profiles? Giving a real name to each of your buyer personas makes it easier to identify them and create a personalized offering that meets their needs.

2. LISTEN TO YOUR CUSTOMERS THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS

Communicating well doesn't mean persuading. If you don't want to annoy your potential customer, be transparent and show you want to work with them. It's people who share our goals and values that move us forward, and today we can connect with consumers through web 2.0 communities. The new generation of customers expects real news, answers to their questions, and rewards for their loyalty. If you're in the social networks you should be in, ask the right questions and you'll get the answers you need for business success.

These communities are also the preferred platform for giving opinions on brands. Your customer service team needs to put their 5 senses to work in these conversations to make the viral effect (recommendations to friends) a positive one, and avoid a possible reputation crisis.

3. OPT FOR MOBILITY-BASED SALES MANAGEMENT

Use the potential of tablets and smartphones to get useful information on clients who are nearest your current location. **Revenues of innovative companies that use mobility as a competitive advantage grow almost 50%more** than those of traditional companies yet to use geolocation.

How is ForceManager different from other solutions? We enable companies using a mobile sales force to implement the management model best suited to their sales operations. We've designed software based on mobility, allowing sales representatives to detect opportunities for a sales call - or actual sale - near their current location, and identify the quickest way of getting there.

4. KEEP TRYING UNTIL YOU GET IT RIGHT

The only constant in the sales world is… change. If you don't want the competition to get ahead, you need to keep experimenting with multiple variables until you find the formula for success. Test A versus B (e.g. landing pages, emails), study phone calls, try out new sales scripts, and use influential contacts to generate sales opportunities. A well-executed, scientific approach will give you the results you're looking for.

5. ANALYSE ALL YOUR DATA IN REAL TIME

Avoid being over-confident; you can't rely on hunches and gut feeling when it comes to business. Quantitative analysis based on qualitative reflection is the only way to build a more effective sales force. And it's essential to have access to that data wherever you are, thanks to mobile devices.

What type of sales action is most effective for selling each product? How much of the sales effort is being used to open new markets? Or to generate repeat sales – up-selling or cross-selling? How much sales time is invested in each type of customer? ForceManager answers these questions in real time. For us, **total transparency of sales activity, identifying sure-fire opportunities for improvement and applying the appropriate corrective measures, are essential.**

03.
HOW TO COACH YOUR SALES TEAM TO THE TOP

Follow us:

What does it take to be an effective sales leader?

According to a study by Neil Rackham, an international expert on sales strategy, teams that receive training but no coaching or reinforcement post-training, experience a *drop of 87%* in knowledge acquired. A **culture of coaching increases productivity** because of the active participation of all those involved. And it makes for a more attractive workplace. And having long-term employees who know the company well - and are passionate about their work - accelerates sales growth and helps assure a secure future for the company.

Sales managers can all too easily fall into the trap of managing expenses and monitoring the sales cycle, overlooking the human aspect of the business. The reality, of course, is that the most important responsibility of all is the **growth and development of each member of the sales team.**

If you're a sales manager and want to encourage **a culture of talent development coupled with maximum transparency and efficiency**, here are some useful tips:

PLANNING

- Take the time to **get to know your sales team**. Find out what motivates them, what difficulties they encounter, what training they need. You can then build a persona-lized training plan for each member of the team according to their aptitude and profes-sio-nal experience.

- Develop a **clear line of vision between sales objectives, sales actions and expected outcomes**. Remember that your objectives must be **SMART: Specific, Mea-su-rable, Attainable, Realistic y Timebound**.

- **Make a list of questions** that spark an interest in the challenges of the sales fun-nel. Don't tell your sales agents what to do. If they question how to optimize their work themselves, they'll take greater responsibility for it. What type of sales action is more effective for selling each product? How much sales effort is dedicated to opening new markets? For repeat sales, are we up-selling or cross-selling? How much sales time are we investing in each type of client?

SALES FOLLOW-UP

- **Opt for a one-on-one approach**. If you decide to dedicate more time to each of your sales reps, you can tell them what you liked about their performance, and share areas for improvement. Transparency is key: a good sales director creates a culture of ta-lent development by sharing the company's successes, and pointing out mistakes made so that lessons can be learned. Show that each person is unique - but that together they make an extraordinary sales team.

- **Teach through experience**. Empathy is one of the most valuable qualities a sales manager can have. Show you know what you're talking about because some years ago you were in the position of that sales representative. Ongoing training is essential to learn new sales techniques and keep up with technological innovation.

- **Make the most of the talent within your team**. Your coaching strategy should be based on maximising strengths, offering opportunities for improvement, and teaching individuals to recognize their weaknesses and convert them into challenges. A good sales leader knows how to transform the talent of their team into effective performance.

- **Share sales performance metrics with your team**. Rank sales representatives by level of activity and sales generated, and sales effort by geographical distribution or time allocation, or type of client. This is essential information for assessing your team's performance and identifying good practice - or opportunities for improvement.

The following analysis, generated by ForceManager, provides a totally objective picture of the sales force's exact interaction with the market. It combines information on the intensity of sales activity with sales generated by each agent, and provides a complete overview of the sales network's performance.

Our coaching is based on sharing performance metrics with each sales representative. This type of transparency is essential in maximising efficiency. Thanks to our ForceManager software, company sales management receives a personalized report they can analyse together with the sales agent. In a constructive and supportive way, they can then give advice on improving performance and results.

RECOGNITION

- **Don't forget to recognize work done!** Reward the team's efforts with a celebration or an award that recognizes individual and collective effort, and dedication for having reached the agreed objective. A gesture of gratitude is a galvanising force, and will help to ensure the team is motivated, happy and keen to continue improving their results.

04.
MOBILITY – THE SOLUTION FOR INCREASING YOUR SALES

Follow us:

The ForceManager solution is based entirely on the concept of mobility to drive efficiency in the management of sales networks. In our view, mobile technology offers two key advantages: it gives you instant access to information on your customer, and allows for automatic recording of that information using mobile devices. With a proven return on investment.

Everything points to 2014 as the year in which mobile finally becomes a consolidated marketing solution. According to Telefonica, the penetration of smartphones in Spain in 2015 will reach almost 70%, led by Android devices. A study by Forrester Research maintains that in four years the proportion of tablets sold to companies will increase from 12% to 18% - nearly 1 in 5 tablets will be bought for corporate use.

The data relates to the short term. If your business is to take full advantage of these opportunities, it's essential that you invest in technology right now to improve productivity and competitiveness. A mobile solution provides two clear reasons for doing so:

1. MOBILITY GIVES YOU INSTANT ACCESS TO CLIENT INFORMATION

A mobile solution gives you **easy, real-time access** to data from anywhere, via your smartphone or tablet. It also offers opportunities for the sales force to work as a team by consulting the shared database to keep abreast of calls, emails, and notes on clients. Thus tasks aren't duplicated, and there's no loss of information as communication is transparent, fluid and instant.

Access to information is entirely secure. Thanks to the cloud, data is housed in a secure server and access can be restricted to certain devices and users. If a device is lost, access from that device can be blocked, a happy contrast to losing a computer and with it, all the Excel documents with the company's commercial data.

ForceManager also uses **geolocation** to provide the sales representative with a map of sales opportunities near their current location, indicating the quickest route for getting to the next appointment.

2. YOU CAN AUTOMATICALLY RECORD INFORMATION USING MOBILE DEVICES

Mobility also allows for the automatic recording of all communication and interaction with customers from smartphones and tablets. This has considerable advantages:

2.1 The sales agent no longer has to report to the company, making their work easier, more motivating and more productive.

Thanks to ForceManager software, sales representatives can use a check-in facility to record all their calls, emails and sales visits automatically, and in a totally transparent way. As sales impacts are measured automatically, sales reps no longer need to report on their activity because the system is already aware of it.

The accuracy of the information recorded is guaranteed, relieving sales agents of the tedious task of manual reporting and allowing them to dedicate all their time to selling.

2.2 Sales management has clear insight into the sales team's activity.

Each impact generated by the sales network is recorded and linked to a geographical position, a time and a contact. This data can be combined with information on quotes offered, or on revenue generated, to give a highly detailed overview of the sales team's activity. Sales managers can then identify good practice, problems, and opportunities for improvement - thus optimising sales force efficiency.

The technology records the performance of sales agents, and the response of the prospect right from initial contact - much faster than traditional processes in which information was noted manually following the visit and shared back at the office. Mobility means that sales teams have access to the latest technology, anywhere, and can take corrective measures quickly thanks to real time information on the interaction.

MOBILITY HAS A CLEAR RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Opting for a mobile solution is a safe bet. ForceManager increases the volume of sales impacts between the sales network and potential customers by more than 20%. here's how:

On average, a sales representative spends 6 hours a week – or 15% of their time - on administrative tasks. supposing they earn a monthly salary of €3,000 and your company employs 40 sales agents, that means you're paying your sales team €18,000 a month for time not spent selling. these are valuable resources that are being wasted.

if you work with a mobile solution you're reducing time spent on administrative tasks, freeing up sales agents to generate more impacts. the sales force will therefore conclude more sales - and you'll see improved business results.


SALES
EFFICIENCY
ON THE MOVE
Activities
Today
Gabriel Corleone
John Taylor
Yesterday
To Manuel Grossi
AMS Tecno
From Manuel Grossi
Previous week
Starsystems Inc
Phone Call Report
Sandra Smith
Tritium Software

05.
7 TIPS FOR PREPARING AN EFFECTIVE SALES VISIT

Follow us:

Do you have an important sales opportunity coming up? If so, follow our 7 recommendations and we guarantee you'll be ready to dazzle your potential client.

1. FIND OUT WHAT YOU CAN ABOUT YOUR PROSPECT

Even before noting your next sales meeting in your diary, there's a quality you need to fine-tune if you want to start off well: **your powers of investigation**. if you want to convince a potential client, then start by finding out who they are. What are their concerns? Which solutions can you provide them with to be top of mind in their sector?

A good place to begin is the "about us" section of their website. also check out linkedin for information on the people you're going to meet and their roles within the company. Find out what strengths and weaknesses shape their market, who their competitors are, and search google to find news about them. You can then refer to these facts during the meeting.

Commit all the information you've found to memory, so that when you get to the meeting your client sees you take their needs seriously. You'll make them feel important simply because you've managed to connect with them.

2. BE CONCISE AND THOROUGH

You don’t have much time to convince them that your solution is the one they’re looking for. You therefore need to be concise, and thorough. Remember it’s important to present specific data backed up by metrics. Your prospect wants to see achievable and realistic KPIs to feel confident about working with you. Demonstrate your company can meet its professional objectives within the agreed deadlines; citing successful experiences with other clients is the best reference they can have.

3. DON’T PRESENT PRODUCTS. OFFER SOLUTIONS

Your potential client doesn’t want to listen to the numerous benefits of your product or service. they want to see that you understand their problem, and can provide a solution.

To do this, you need to know how to listen. When preparing the sales visit, follow the advice of *John Barrows [1]*, one of the greatest mentors in the sales arena. think of two or three open questions to ask the person in front of you to help get to know them, and identify their main concern for their company. this will encourage your potential client to open up and give you additional information to sharpen your sales proposal, adjusting it to their specific context.

4. DON’T CRITICIZE THE COMPETITION

This is your opportunity to shine, but not at the expense of others. if your client sees you criticising the competition, they’ll know your way of working is based on finding fault in others. they might also suspect that once the visit is over, you’re capable of doing the same to them.

show them your company isn't like that: that your proposal stands on its own merits because behind it is a team of professionals who work hard, and are committed to a job well done.

5. TALK TO THEM ABOUT THEIR MARKET

Your visit is more than a company meeting. try to inform your customer about the problems that could come up in their market and how your company can help avert those risks. Do they need to reduce costs? Innovate? Broaden their market niche? This type of attention will help your potential client see your offer as an effective solution, based on a thorough, personalized investigation.

6. BE HONEST

According to *Collen Francis [2]*, the secret of establishing and maintaining credibility in the eyes of our clients boils down to one thing: never lying to them. and at ForceManager we totally agree. as salespeople we need to be masters in the art of open, transparent communication, focusing our efforts on creating a positive experience. Only by being honest will we gain the confidence – and loyalty - of our clients.

Following on from this, here are two more useful pieces of advice: **don't make promises you can't keep**, and **learn how to say 'no'**. Many salespeople are afraid to say 'no' to potential clients for fear of losing the sales opportunity. if you know you can't come up with what they're asking for, then say so. You probably have alternative solutions that still make you their best option.

7. LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE

This type of meeting isn't over once you've exchanged business cards and shaken hands. note everything you've learned from being with the other person. the feedback is invaluable for improving future visits and for sales follow-up. With each meeting you'll see other details to improve on. after all, it's the lessons in life that make the difference.

[1] John Barrows, *What you should do before every meeting*

[2] Collen Francis, *Secrets of the Top 10% - Part III: Honesty Sells!*

06.
LESSONS LEARNED FROM CRM

Follow us:

Every company that uses CRM (customer Relationship Management) shows a clear commitment to get to know its customers better by studying their needs - and offering them a personalized solution. a CRM is a strategic tool, powered by technology and cloud computing, and helps build cooperation between sales and the other departments within the company.

In addition to increasing sales force efficiency, CRM also develops relationship marketing. it helps you build lasting relationships with your customers thanks to its ability to store and analyse data on their preferences, needs and/or buying habits.

You can then optimize the whole process of obtaining leads, and convert them into potential sales. the result is improved communication, greater loyalty and higher profits, due largely to better quality feedback on the work you're doing.

Here are the lessons CRM has taught us, with a view to identifying opportunities for improvement:

1. DON'T FORGET THE PRELIMINARY STEPS

To start working with a CRM system you need a client database, corporate website and a social media presence. it doesn't matter if you're an sMe or a large company, as CRM is a technological solution that can adapt to any company size. it's entirely flexible, and can develop and improve functionality should your business really take off.

CRM technology should integrate easily with other business solutions and be scalable, i.e. it can adapt to increased productivity or demand. the system stores huge quantities of data and therefore needs to be user-friendly.

In developing our solution we've taken these requirements into account: ForceManager can easily be integrated with any eRp/cRM system. the web-service interface allows for two-way integration, and therefore totally synchronized information. the data entry interfa-ce is based on an exchange of excel (XSL) or plain text (CSV) files exported regularly from the ERP/CRM.

2. OPT UNANIMOUSLY FOR HI-TECH

A good CRM system should collect concrete data on your relationship with the customer via any channel (phone call, email, a landing page form) and at any stage of the buying process.

You therefore need to invest time and resources to develop or buy the system, to have the quantity of data needed to implement company sales strategy. the data warehouse is where client information from both internal and external sources is stored, while data mining technology allows you to identify user/customer behaviour patterns by analyzing the data.

3. TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE HUMAN FACTOR

All this may give the impression that the cRM is an intelligent system for acquiring data. But it's the people who work with the technology, the company employees, who determine whether or not it's successful.

A company that deploys cRM needs to train its employees on adopting the new custo-mer service culture. it may be a simple programme, but a lot of information is at stake. Accor-ding to a study by 1010data, lack of training continues to pose the biggest problem in making use of Big Data in the corporate world. If you want to add value to the company and the customer, anticipate customer needs and offer personalized solutions, you need an excellent command of CRM.

4. MOVE TOWARDS SOCIAL CRM

Thanks to traditional CRM systems, you've collected information based on company-client interaction. social CRM is the natural development of saas applications, and is no longer a long-term goal. If you want to know who your clients are, both real and potential, you have to have a social media presence - and listen to what those clients are saying.

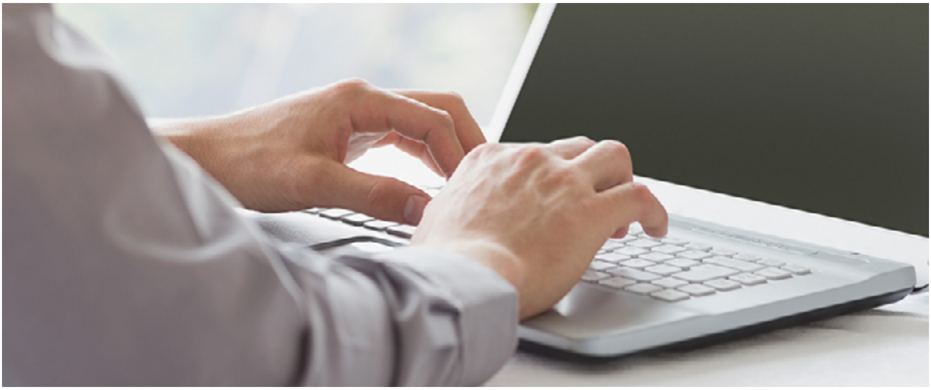
Social CRM helps you define and launch campaigns aimed at a concrete target, identified through their social profile and conversations, including their tastes, opinions, complaints, and contributions to group discussions. One to one contact is then a further means of better understanding the relationship between clients and brands – another way of recording information and monitoring our contacts. It's a dialogue in constant evolution that offers a number of advantages: the ability to develop new proposals per target, anticipate a possible reputation crisis, or provide incentives for brand loyalty.

07.
HOW TO BOOST YOUR EMAIL OPEN RATE BY WRITING GREAT SALES COPY

Follow us:

Nearly 70% of US email recipients report email as spam based on the subject heading. This statistic published on the *Convince & Convert* website shows how the email open rate can plummet if you don't write an effective headline. You need to stand out and generate interest both through your product offering – and your writing.

So how do you convert leads to customers through persuasive sales copy? Here are some of the key elements:



THE MESSAGE

Before tackling the copy, think about what you want to communicate. It's simple: you need to **introduce yourself** and – more importantly – tell your reader **how you can help them**.

Taking a direct approach means your prospect won't filter you out into Spam. You're not interrupting them to tell them how wonderful your company is; the first thing they'll see is that you're offering them a solution. And we all love to feel someone is listening to us and giving us some personal attention.

With this in mind, come up with a message telling them straight away **why you've contacted them**. By making the recipient the focus of the email, you show them you care and can offer a solution adapted to their needs.

Continue by explaining **why you're writing to them now**, which is when you make a **simple request that's easy to respond to**. If you're sending an email to present your company, you can suggest arranging an initial meeting. If your email is part of a lead nurturing campaign, encourage your prospect to click through to a landing page including a call to action in your text.

Most email conversions are the result of knowing how to capture the reader's interest by offering them valuable content (e.g. a new downloadable eBook, a newsletter with relevant articles, a promotion or a discount). If they fill in the form with their contact details to request regular updates, or reply to your email to find out more about you – congratula-tions! You're accompanying your lead through the buying process, which is the objective. You need, however, to master another key area to guarantee email success.

EMAIL ELEMENTS AND STYLE

The structure and components of your email are vitally important.

Subject. 8 out of 10 people on average will read headline copy, but only 2 out of 10 will read the rest. *[1]* Which is why you have to choose a relevant subject that sparks curio-sity. To help spark our copywriting creativity, *American Writers & Artists* came up with the Secret of the Four U's. Applying their rule to your email headline, it should meet the following criteria:

- Be **USEFUL** for the reader
- Convey a sense of **URGENCY**
- Communicate the idea that your key benefit is **UNIQUE**
- Provide **ULTRA-SPECIFIC** information

Sender. Which inspires more confidence: an email from 'no reply' or a personalized message from the sales director of your company? Put yourself in the reader's position and design your email in the most personalized and professional way you can.

Greeting. Address the reader as personally as you can, by their first and last name. You want to show that behind this message is a team of people, not a machine sending out thousands of emails. This means doing some preliminary research on your recipient: who are they, what does their company do, what concerns do they have for their business and what solution can you provide?

Content. The most difficult part is done, but don't let the reader down with unattractive copy in the body of the text. Communicate a single idea using simple, friendly language and persuasive writing. Don't include too many links or images (or you'll go straight into the Spam box) and check your email design is compatible with any email provider (e.g. Gmail, Yahoo, Outlook).

Sign-off and contact details. Thank your reader for their time, and include your contact details when you sign off so they can easily reply to you.

Test out different versions of your email copy, and vary sending times to find the optimum time frame. Little by little you'll find the email formula you need to convert sales opportunities into actual sales.

[1] Brian Clark de Copy Blogger, *Writing Headlines That Get Results*

08.
LEARN TO SELL THROUGH SOCIAL LISTENING

Follow us:

It all comes down to whether you see the glass as half empty or half full. True, it's becoming more difficult to find a market niche and create offerings that surprise the consumer. But we live in a time when **social networks, if they're used well, can tell you exactly what people are looking for**. You just need to find out how to maximize the potential of social media, and build it into your sales process.

Social media platforms have, in a short space of time, revolutionized the brand-user relationship. In spite of the economic context and the saturation of existing offerings, it's clear that social media is continuously opening doors, helping us connect with our target market and generate loyalty.

We're now designing products and services based on what we listen to on social networks. In the words of *Janet Fouts*, social media coach and director of Tatu Digital Media, "Social media allows salespeople to see what prospects are saying about their brand and competitors." *[1]*. It's all about generating a dialogue with clients and prospects in the right networks, **getting to know their expectations based on their requests, complaints, recommendations and congratulations**.

OK, so **should you be present in just any social network?** The answer is no. You need to find out where your target audience congregates online, based on your business profile, and focus your communication strategy on those media. If you want to network and opt for a direct, formal introduction, LinkedIn is the best option.

If, however, you prefer to showcase your extensive product catalogue, opt for visual social media such as Instagram or Pinterest. According to a recent study by Business Insider, 63% of users claim to consult online catalogues before buying, and 35% say they use Pinterest to plan their purchases. Specialty Retail Report says that 90% of US retailers have an account in both social networks.

Whatever network you use, it's essential that you share valuable content, created by your company to show your experience in the sector, and activate your community. The latest change to Facebook's algorithm significantly lowers the organic reach of posts in all pages. If you don't share the information your target customer is looking for or provide a solution for their needs, you won't appear in their news feed. You need engagement to generate recommendations and increase the leads following your activity. As Max Fackeldey put it at the Social Media World Congress, "Social media is gasoline and content is the fire!"

Audiences are well informed and have learned to dodge the multitude of sales impacts that come their way on a daily basis. Interaction in the 2.0 community builds more confidence, even though it takes time and dedication. Work on social media should be combined with other actions such as phone calls, emails and public relations campaigns to support buying opportunities throughout the sales funnel – and to make conversions. Sales take place outside the social networks, but work carried out within them is priceless.

If you're thinking about which promotion to launch, want to avoid a brand reputation crisis or know how your competition works to generate fan/follower loyalty, you need to have a presence in social media. If you already have a corporate page, check out exactly what's being said about your brand using tools such as *Google Alerts* or *Muck Rack*. Sales take place outside the social networks, but work carried out within them is priceless.

[1] Forbes 2014, *How To Use Social Media To Make Sales*

09.
IMMEDIATE RESPONSE - CONVERSIONS GUARANTEED

Follow us:

An immediate solution, even a mediocre one, is much more valuable than a perfect solu-tion delivered 8 days later, according to André Maurois? We're not suggesting, of course, that you offer mediocre solutions. But if there's one fundamental ingredient in securing a sale, it's providing an instant response.

Companies that respond to queries from potential customers in less than an hour are 7 times more likely to qualify the lead *[1]*. Every time a lead gets in touch with you, take action. Showing speed and efficiency will accelerate the buying process.

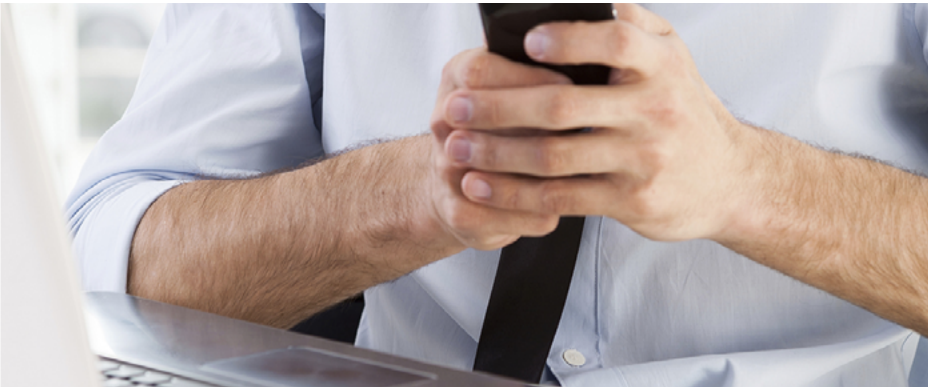
A report in eMarketer on key digital trends for 2014 *[2]* talks of new consumer demands in an age where connectivity has removed limits of time and space. The study announ-ces the end of 24- or 48-hour response times. Your potential clients now have access to all the information they need from multiple sources. If you don't want to lose those clients in your sales funnel, you need to respond to them immediately (right from the consideration phase through to after-sales service).

A recent study authored by Google and Nielsen supports those findings. *Mobile Path to Purchase: Five Key Findings [3]* explains that more than half (55%) of the sample said they want to make a purchase within an hour of conducting research on their mobile device. We can conclude, then, that most searches on a mobile are carried out to satisfy an immediate need.

If you're looking to perfect your interaction with the consumer, read on for some key tips:

Configure your alerts: Whether we're talking emails, missed calls, tweets, or comments in a LinkedIn discussion that cite your company, you need a system of alerts to follow up on requests, complaints or recommendations concerning your brand.

Prioritize personal contact: As questions can come from a wide variety of media, all the company's employees need to dedicate part of their time to answering requests. Email in boxes needs regular checking and phone calls noted, plus you need to manage your social network community and monitor what the media say about you. Adopt a friendly, open attitude, and if you receive a comment that could damage your brand reputation, address it in a private conversation.



Respond instantly - and accurately: Prepare responses quickly and back them up with relevant data. You don't want to keep a customer waiting, pass their request from one colleague to another or provide information that doesn't solve their problem first time round. You need to get a sales impact with every opportunity that presents itself.

If you're a big user of social networks but don't want social activity to interrupt other tasks, use services such as Hootsuite, TweetDeck or Buffer to manage publication times. It's important to know how to plan, and not to improvise.

Personalize responses (but watch out for autoresponders): Always address a poten-tial client by their first and last name. Don't try to save time by using automatic responses with a general message. If you do, you risk giving a negative impression.

Encourage customer experience: A question-answer interaction is a great way of gaining feedback and detecting opportunities for improvement. Listen to your market and find out what it needs. A two-way dialogue will also put your customer at ease. Use each request to advise them, get to know what motivates them, and quickly adjust proposals that aren't tailored to their needs. In short, promote a customer experience worthy of recommendation.

[1] Harvard Business Review, *The Short Life of Online Sales Leads*

[2] Emarketer, *Key Trends for 2014: New Demands Accelerate Marketing*

[3] Urban Times, *Google Study on Mobile Sales Shows Immediacy and Proximity Are Key*

10.
GO FOR A CRM BASED ON MOBILITY?

Follow us:

Versatile, user-friendly technology… Simplified processes, increased productivity… These are just some of the advantages for sales forces of using a mobile CRM. And not only is the sales process more efficient. Mobile devices have completely transformed the way we interact with our clients.

In the UK, the number of smartphone users has increased over the past year by nearly 12%, and tablets represent a staggering 60% of computer sales worldwide. If your company is yet to invest in these solutions but wants to improve results and stand out from the competition… take note.

So how does mobility help you accelerate the sales process?

BOOST COMMITMENT AND TRUST

The fact that a salesperson works from a tablet doesn't change their professional rela-tionship with the sales director, which is still based on trust. But what does change, and fundamentally, is their way of working. Using the new terminal, the salesperson can now perfect their sales technique - but with clear added value. Thanks to the tablet, they can present information more quickly and in a more attractive way, look up data in real time and instantly record information on the sales visit.

Gone are the days when the sales rep had to be in the office to enter data on how the meeting went. The result is an increased sense of satisfaction - which translates into a greater commitment to the job.

INCREASE SIMPLICITY – AND PRODUCTIVITY

Mobility means an end to paperwork. It also allows for an instant exchange of information with the sales team on the status of leads. This added flexibility means the sales rep can fit in more sales visits per month. As the CRM is updated each time they meet with a pros-pect, their time is optimized and they can set up more visits. By year-end, the sales team has converted more clients - and increased sales income.

ENGAGE CLIENTS DIGITALLY - YOUR RESPONSE

Tablets and smartphones give you access to information stored in the cloud. This means salespeople can back up their sales pitch right from the word go with attractive presen-tations, or send potential clients a useful ebook during the sales visit. It's small details like these that will spark the interest of your prospects.

It's also important to arrive at the sales meeting knowing as much as you can about the person you're meeting (company history, SWOT analysis, social media presence etc.) and their needs. Only then can you offer a personalized quote and position yourself as their best buying option.

REINFORCE TEAMWORK

ForceManager's geolocation capabilities are recognized as a key tool in facilitating the reporting of sales visits. Thanks to geolocation software, client files can be updated with a record of calls and visits, and synchronized with any CRM-ERP. This considerably reduces time spent by the sales team on administrative tasks.

You can also communicate easily with your sales team on the sales activity carried out. The total transparency of mobile files means that members of the sales force all pull in the same direction; they're up to date with priorities and the status of accounts, and can easily exchange questions, tips and alerts. As a result, your client response time is more immediate.

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