

EBOOK

The Step by Step Process for Effective Lead Conversion

A compilation of marketing insights
from the ForceManager team

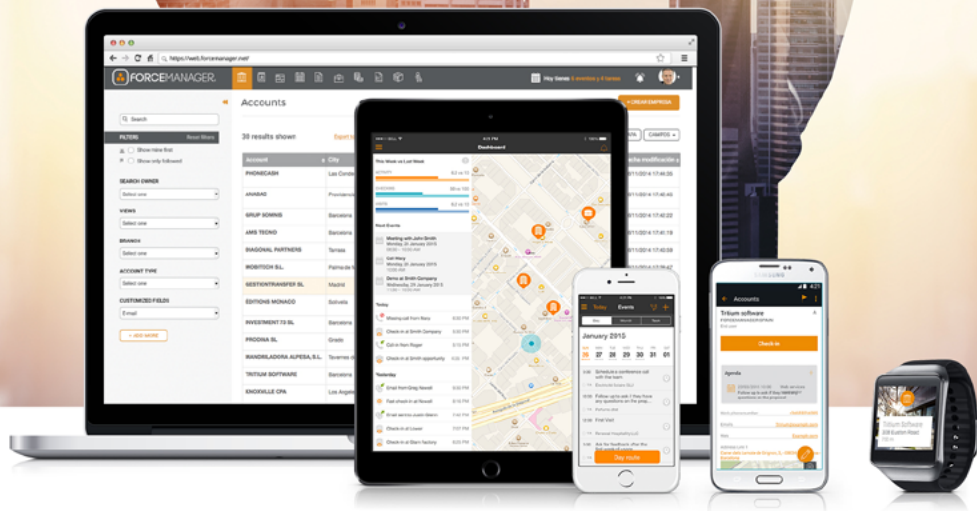
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01. SHORTER CALLS RESULT IN HIGHER SALES

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01. Shorter calls result in higher sales

ForceManager has analysed more than 50,000 calls made or received by companies specialising in B2B sales with sales teams of between 10 and 50 people. The conclusion? That 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 sales people in their company. They are clear as to the objectives of each communication and organise their phone time accordingly. On the flipside are sales people 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 call lasts more than five minutes, sell 80% less than the most successful sales person in the company.

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

01. Shorter calls result in higher sales

Here are two arguments for explaining 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 sales people excessively prolong their calls. Their conversation tends to be vague, and they easily lose sight of the actual objective of the call.

How to tighten up your sales call:

According to Maciá, 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.

WHEN'S THE BEST TIME TO COLD CALL?

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02. When's the best time to cold call?

Officially: **the best time to make cold calls is between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.**

InsightSquared analysed more than 10,000 sales calls to identify the optimum time in the day to connect with a prospect. The results are high-value information for salespeople and managers, as they help you get more out of each call.

You can achieve this in two ways:

- Choose the most effective time to make cold calls
- Use the information to coach your sales team to achieve a higher lead ratio with fewer cold calls.

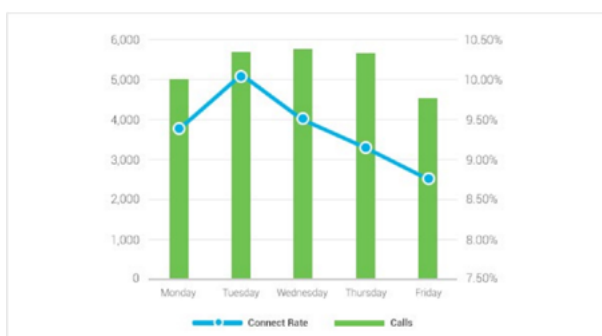


As the graph shows, making a high volume of calls in the morning (8 a.m.-9 a.m.) to capture the attention of your prospect isn't the best strategy. The optimum response tends to be after 10 a.m. And in the afternoon there's a clear drop-off: leads are less alert to sales calls after 5pm, when many people are finishing things off before leaving the office.

You can refine your strategy further by adding other variables. Did you know, for example, that Tuesday is the best day of the week to achieve a sales impact?

02. When's the best time to cold call?

After Tuesday (which has a connection rate of 10%) there's a gradual decline in interest, with the lowest interest point on Friday (8.7%). The difference of 1.3% may seem insignificant, but it has a clear impact on your results. What's at stake is profitable use of your time - and training of your team - to make effective cold calls that result in sales.



Salespeople responsible for prospecting have a limited amount of time in the week to do so. If Tuesday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. is the ideal moment to cold call, you can plan the rest of your week accordingly. Do so with agility, and avoid spending time on prospects that are not interested in buying. We should point out that the best time and day of the week also depends on the industry you work in. For an accurate picture, make sure you analyse your own call data.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO DURING THE “DOWN” TIMES?

It just so happens that the worst times to use the phone to identify leads are also the best for sending emails. Jena McGregor of [*The Washington Post*](#) points out that the most common time to consult emails is between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m., before starting the working day.

02. When's the best time to cold call?

According to time management experts, if you want to stand out in a prospect's inbox the sales impact should be made in the morning. The highest email Click-through rate takes place over a coffee, early in the morning, in public transport on the way to work. That's the time we typically review our daily workload and delete irrelevant emails.

03. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE - CONVERSIONS GUARANTEED

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03. Immediate response - conversions guaranteed

An immediate solution, even a mediocre one, is much more valuable than a perfect solution delivered 8 days later. We're not suggesting 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 announces 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 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.

Prioritise 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.

03. Immediate response - conversions guaranteed

Email inboxes 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.



Personalise responses (but watch out for autoresponders): Always address a potential 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.

03. Immediate response - conversions guaranteed

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*](#)

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