

FIFTH EDITION

STATE OF FIELD SALES

TRANSFORMING FIELD SALES TO ACHIEVE MORE



Introduction

Now more than ever, field sales professionals are navigating a complex landscape of heightened competition, economic instability, and evolving buyer expectations, creating a relentless pressure to perform. With these shifting dynamics, field sales teams need not only to secure meetings but to nurture prospects more effectively, all while managing time and resources efficiently.

01

But how
can this be
accomplished?

02

What are those factors that
separate successful field
sales teams despite today's
complex landscape?

03

How can your
team capitalize
on these factors?

To answer this along with other insights on what separates top field sales organizations, SPOTIO surveyed hundreds of field sales professionals reps, managers, and executives across a wide array of experience levels and company sizes. Their responses are covered in this report, reaching conclusions that this era of constant change can also represent a remarkable opportunity for teams willing to take a transformative approach.

By the conclusion of this report, you'll understand the current state of the field sales industry. Armed with this knowledge, you'll be able to overcome the challenges faced by your team and reach your goals consistently while gaining a competitive advantage.

Let's dive in!

Table of Contents

01

Forward by the
CEO of SPOTIO

02

Research
Methodology

03

Deal Trends
and Challenges

04

Process
and Productivity

05

The Role
of Technology

06

The Competitive
Advantage

Foreward



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the fifth edition of our State of Field Sales report. This report has evolved into a go-to resource for understanding the rapid changes and emerging trends shaping the field sales landscape worldwide. Today, field sales professionals face unprecedented challenges, from rising competition and economic pressures to rapidly advancing technology and ever-higher customer expectations. The field sales industry has shown incredible resilience in adapting to these shifts, consistently proving its strength and capacity for growth. But growth in today's landscape is anything but simple. The complexity of field sales has intensified, requiring sales teams to embrace agility and innovation to meet evolving demands. Success in this environment doesn't just come from hard work—it comes from smart, strategic adaptation.

This year's report dives deep into the state of the field sales profession, offering insights, strategies, and best practices to equip you for the unexpected. At SPOTIO, we remain dedicated to supporting field sales professionals by providing the tools and insights to help them thrive. Through data, automation, and actionable insights, we can help field sales teams transform challenges into growth opportunities.

Sincerely,

Trey Gibson | CEO, SPOTIO

“ A heartfelt thank you to the sales professionals and leaders who contributed their valuable perspectives.

This collaboration is at the heart of our shared commitment to success in an increasingly complex field.

Dive in, embrace the insights, and let's continue to innovate and elevate the field sales profession together.



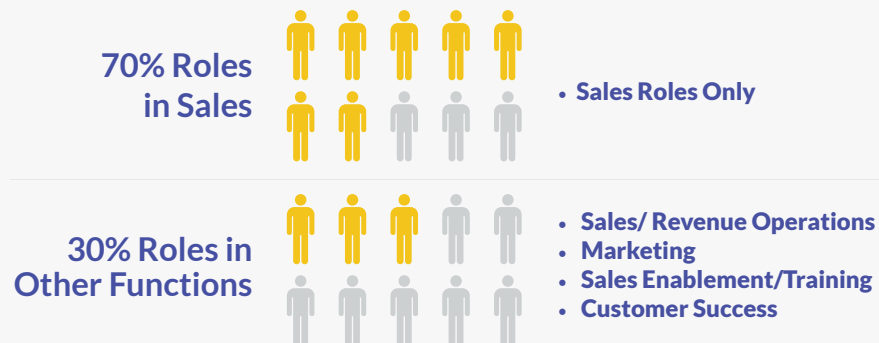
Research Methodology



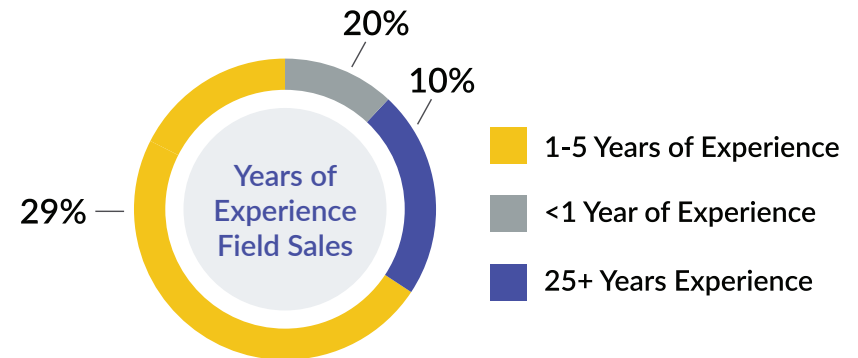
This is the fifth year SPOTIO has released an annual “State of Field Sales” report, showing our commitment to sharing the industry’s latest trends, best practices, and strategies for growth and improvement. This year, we surveyed 515 professionals from various field sales organizations.

Of the 515 survey participants, 70% work directly in sales, while the remaining 30% have other roles in organizations with field sales teams, including sales/revenue operations, marketing, sales enablement/training, and customer success. Three quarters (75%) of them are sales representatives, with the balance in higher level roles, such as manager/director (16%) or higher (9%).

515 Surveyed Professionals



Our survey participants have an average of nine years of experience in sales, though they represent a wide range of backgrounds. Twenty percent have less than a year of experience, while 10% have been in sales for over 25 years. The largest group, making up 29% of the sample, consists of those with one to five years of experience.



Similarly, we interviewed field sales professionals who work for companies of widely differing revenue levels. While 9% report that their companies’ annual revenue is below \$1 million, 6% work for firms generating at least \$1 billion/ year.



The largest group is the 22% at companies with revenues between \$1 million and \$10 million, followed closely by the 20% working in sales at companies that generate annual revenues between \$10 million and \$50 million.



Our respondents tend to focus more on B2C sales versus B2B sales. Forty percent (40%) report engaging only in business-to-consumer selling, while business to business sales is the primary focus of 29% of the field sales professionals in our survey. Nearly a third—31%—of our participants engage in B2B and B2C sales.

Audience Business Segments

B2C Sales Only



B2B Sales Only



B2B and B2C Sales

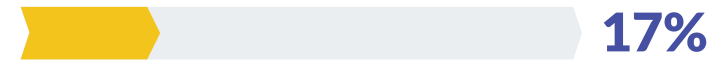


Furthermore, these field sales professionals work in a broad variety of industries, with 17% in residential construction, 13% in telecom/communications, and 12% in home services the most often mentioned by our respondents. On a few occasions in this report, we focus on the responses from those in leadership roles.

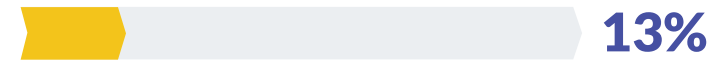
Throughout this report, we occasionally focus on responses from those in leadership roles. These 129 sales professionals manage field sales teams of varying sizes. Over half, or 52%, lead teams of five to 25 people, while 21% oversee teams of fewer than five. Notably, 5% of the sales leaders surveyed manage field sales teams with more than 500 reps.

Distribution of Field Sales Professionals by Industry

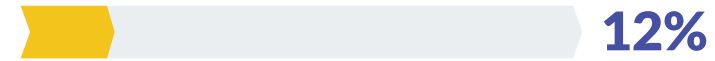
Residential Construction



Telecom/ Communications



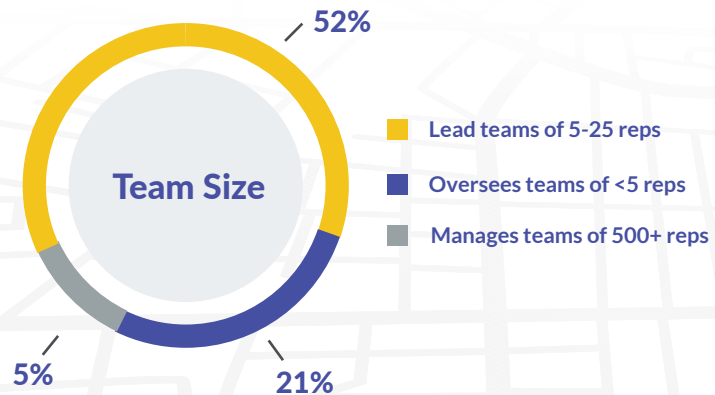
Home Services



Other Industries



Managed Field Sales Team Sizes



Deal Trends & Challenges

In the evolving landscape of sales, perceptions of deal-making challenges are shifting significantly. In fact, 29% of field sales professionals agree with the belief that winning deals in their industry has become harder, this shift reflects a notable increase of nearly double when compared to last year's findings.

“**29% of field sales professionals agree with the belief that winning deals in their industry has become harder.**”

Perceptions of difficulty vary widely depending on the experience level of field sales professionals. For instance, those with less than a year of experience are more than twice as likely to report that winning deals has become easier in the past year. In contrast, among those with over ten years of experience, a substantial 40% feel that winning deals has become harder, compared to just 8% who believe it has gotten easier. A similar pattern appears among professionals at companies with smaller sales teams, who are much more likely to say that winning deals has become more challenging over the past year.

Growth and Expansion

While belief around the difficulty of winning deals has changed, a sign of optimism is that 73% of sales leaders/managers say they plan to grow their field sales team over the next year. This is a significant increase compared to our findings a year ago. Additionally, field sales professionals report positive revenue trajectories.

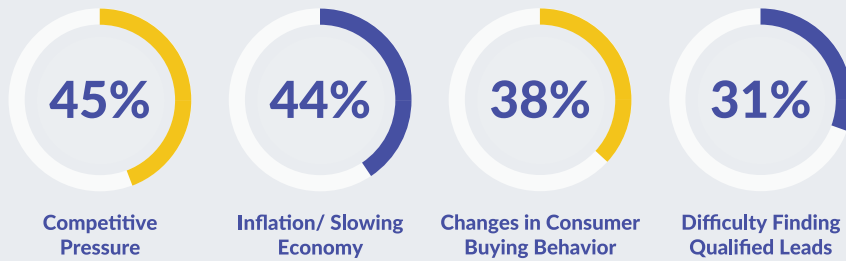
“**62% of our respondents say that their companies have “significantly” or “somewhat” increased revenues versus a year ago.**”

In fact, 62% of our respondents say that their companies have “significantly” or “somewhat” increased revenues versus a year ago. Only 5% report negative year-over-year revenue performances. This positive revenue picture is especially true among those at companies with large sales teams.

Common Challenges

Despite these positive revenue trends, field sales professions face numerous external challenges. Competitive pressure and inflation/a slowing economy, at 45% and 44%, respectively are the most widely cited challenges. These factors are followed by 38% changes in consumer buying behavior, 31% in difficulty finding qualified leads, and 21% in difficulty finding sales talent.

External Challenges Faced by Field Sales Professionals



“ 44% of sales leaders/managers at firms with field sales teams report difficulty with holding salespeople accountable. ”

Sales leaders/managers at firms with field sales teams also report difficulty with holding salespeople accountable 44% say it's one of the biggest challenges they face and affects their ability to hit revenue targets. This is especially pronounced at lower revenue firms. 62% of sales leaders/managers at firms with less than \$1 million in revenue cite this challenge.

Other widely cited internal challenges among sales leaders/managers include high rep turnover/low retention (31%), difficulty ensuring that processes are followed (30%), and a lack of visibility due to missing or incorrect data (22%).

Internal Challenges Faced by Field Sales Professionals



“ 52% of sales leaders/managers say that between 30% and 69% of their team consistently meet sales quotas. ”

These challenges make it difficult for salespeople to meet their quotas. Only 7% of sales leaders report that over 90% of their team consistently meets quota, while 52% say that between 30% and 69% of their team does so. Sales leaders/managers are also confronted with the fact that—in many cases—it takes a long time for the average salesperson to be completely onboarded and fully productive. In fact, 32% of sales leaders/managers report that it takes more than five months to get new sales people up to speed.

“ 32% of sales leaders/managers report that it takes more than five months to get new salespeople up to speed. ”

These findings suggest that while most sales organizations are “getting it done,” enjoying revenue increases, and planning for growth, the marketplace remains challenging. Externally, field service professionals are dealing with heavy competition and economic uncertainty. And internally, challenges like holding sales people accountable, training duration, and turnover limit the number of salespeople who hit their quotas. These difficulties appear greatest among organizations with smaller and less experienced sales teams.

Processes & Productivity



Effective time management is crucial for field sales professionals. The major findings in this year’s study include:

Face-To-Face Appointments and Visits: Nearly half of sales leaders—48%—require their teams to conduct over 26 face-to-face appointments and visits each week. Yet, even with this high bar, only 57% of teams are meeting the minimum goal of 10 appointments and visits, a figure that is highly consistent between those focused on B2B versus B2C sales.

Time Management: 30% of sales leaders cite time management deficiencies as a reason their salespeople do not meet targets.

“48% of sales leaders require their teams to conduct over 26 face-to-face appointments and visits each week. Yet, even with this high bar, only 57% of teams are meeting the minimum goal of 10 appointments and visits.”

Given the findings reported in the previous section about sales leaders/managers’ difficulty with holding sales people accountable, it’s not surprising that more than three quarters (76%) of them report that rep activity and productivity metrics are “critical” or “important” for their companies, and that they are monitoring them at least multiple times per week. In this section, we will share multiple metrics that provide insights into the processes used by field sales organizations.

The field sales professionals taking part in our survey are quite diverse across metrics such as deal size, sales cycle length, and the number of accounts they manage.

“76% of sales leaders and managers report that rep activity and metrics are critical or important for their companies.”

Average Deal Size

In terms of deal size, 33% report their average deal at under \$5,000. Another sizable proportion—27%—oversee average deals valued between \$5,000 and \$25,000. Only 7% report average deal sizes of \$100,000 or greater. Unsurprisingly, the prevalence of such average deal sizes is much higher among companies with greater than \$50 million of annual revenue, at 17%. Average deals of \$100,000 or higher are also more common with those primarily engaged in B2B versus B2C sales by a margin of 15% to 1%.



Average Sales Cycle

There is even greater diversity in average sales cycle length. The field sales professionals we surveyed reported cycles ranging from less than a week to more than a year. The most common average sales cycle length is between one and three months, which 27% of respondents name. Field sales professionals at firms with less than \$1 million in annual revenue, however, are most likely to have average sales cycles of between one and three weeks.

“The most common average sales cycle length is between one and three months, which 27% of respondents name.”

We also see a correlation between deal size and sales cycle length. Field sales professionals with lower average deal sizes report shorter average sales cycles. In fact, 31% of respondents with average deal sizes of less than \$5,000 have sales cycles that last less than a week on average. This rate is roughly three times as high for every other segment of the sample, based on average deal size.

“31% of respondents with average deal sizes of less than \$5,000 have sales cycles that last less than a week on average.”

Average Number of Accounts

Most of the 515 respondents in our study manage many accounts; only 20% of them manage 10 or fewer. However, the exact number of accounts overseen varies widely. The only meaningful correlations between these averages has to do with average deal size and sales experience.

In general, those reporting average deal sizes of less than \$5,000 are more likely—by a margin of 35% to 24%—to manage more than 100 accounts. We also see that the percentage of respondents who handle more than 100 accounts is much higher 34% among those with 11 or more years of experience than those with less than a year of experience 13%.

Attributes for Success

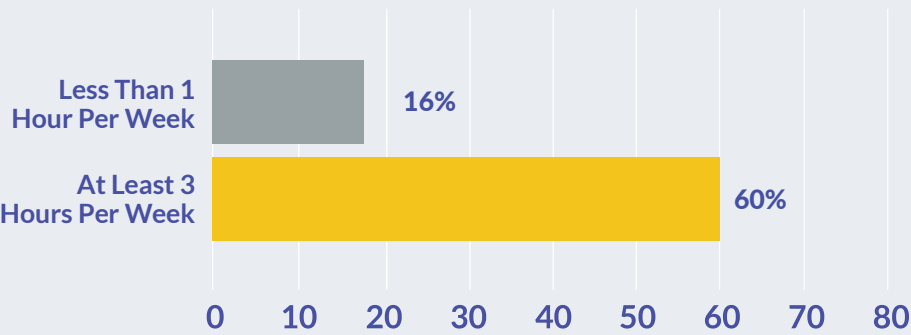
Relationship building was identified by 64% of respondents as the most important attribute for sales success, making it the top priority for both sales reps and managers. Sales reps emphasized it even more, with 70% rating it as important compared to 52% of managers. Comprehensive knowledge of the product or service was cited by 48% as a key factor, while 40% highlighted the importance of a well-organized sales process. Additionally, 39% pointed to selling value as a critical skill, and 38% stressed the importance of reaching decision-makers. Finally, 29% of respondents noted hunting for leads as a significant factor for achieving sales success. These findings emphasize the diverse skills needed for success in field sales.



Sales Coaching and Training

Sales leaders/managers in field sales organizations spend a fair amount of time coaching and training salespeople. While 16% report doing so less than one hour per week, a 60% majority spend at least three hours per week on this task. This is especially pronounced among sales leaders/managers in firms that primarily engage in B2C selling, as 71% of them spend at least three hours engaged in coaching and training.

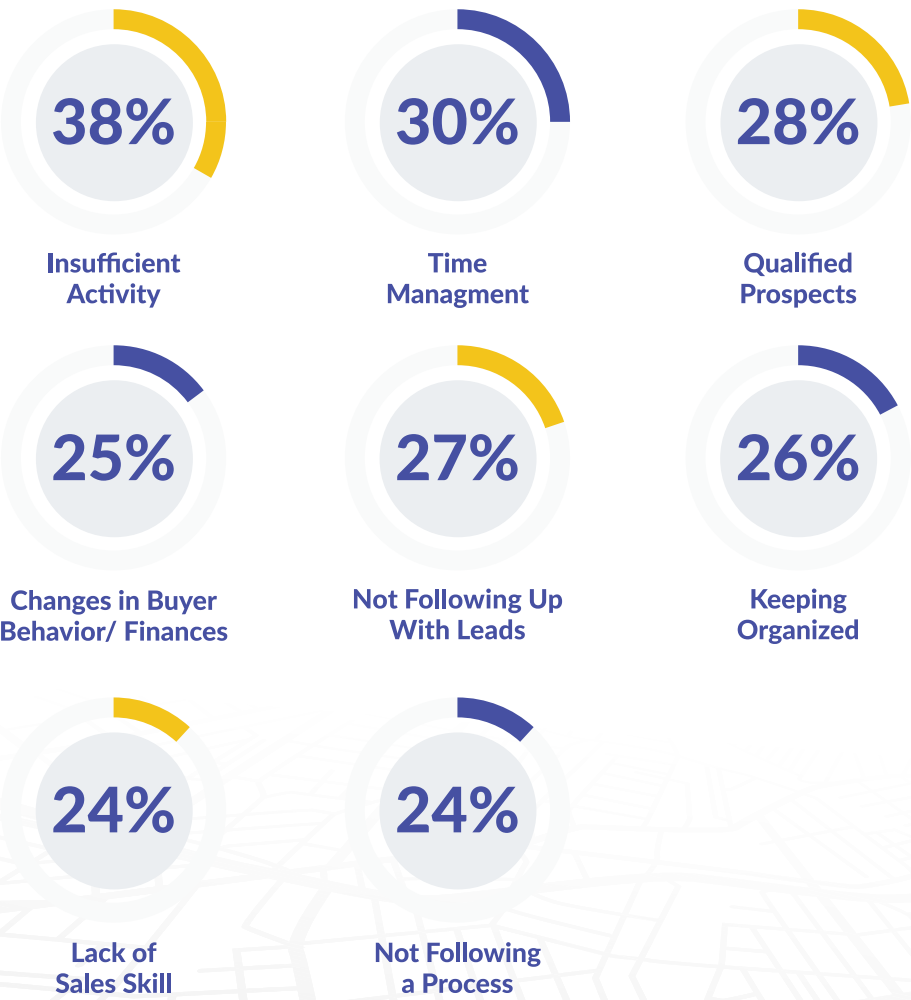
Time Spent Coaching and Training Salespeople



The need for such training and coaching is highlighted by the fact that sales leaders/managers’ expectations and their sales reps’ actions regarding the number of face-to-face activities that reps engage in on a weekly basis are misaligned. Nearly half of sales leaders—48%—require their teams to conduct over 26 face-to-face appointments and visits each week. Yet, even with this high bar, only 57% of teams are meeting the minimum goal of 10 appointments and visits.

It’s not surprising, then, that 38% of sales leaders cite insufficient activity as the primary reason their reps miss targets. However, this factor is only slightly more prevalent than others, including time management (30%), finding qualified prospects (28%), lack of lead follow-up (27%), staying organized (26%), changes in buyer behavior or finances (25%), lack of sales skills (24%), and not following processes (24%).

Internal Challenges Faced by Sales Rep Professionals



“ 38% of sales leaders cite insufficient activity as the primary reason their reps miss targets. ”

Time Spent in Field Sales

Sales leaders/managers engage in a lengthy list of activities, but there's no consensus as to which ones they spend the most time on. None of the ten tasks measured in this survey take up at least 20% of their time. Deal or customer management takes up the most hours, but 81% of sales leaders/managers say they spend less than 25% of their time on it.

Sales Rep Compensation

There is more clarity regarding how sales leaders/managers compensate their field sales representatives. Commissions play a significant role, with 49% of salesleaders/managers using base + commission compensation structures and 43% using 100% commission approaches. Only 4% do not offer any commissions. These findings are consistent across companies in terms of annual revenue, B2B versus B2C, and average deal size.

49%

Base +
Commission

43%

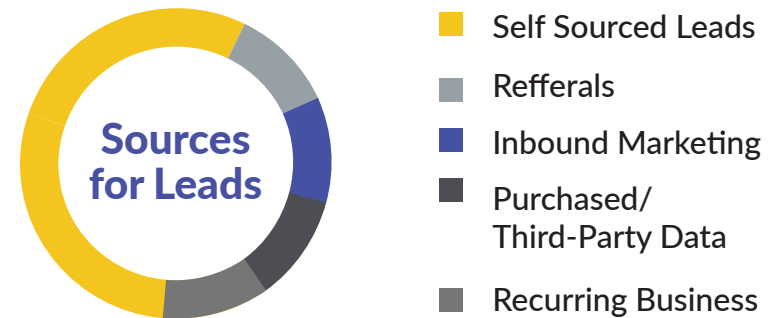
100%
Commission

4%

No
Commission

Lead Generation

Most field sales organizations rely on similar channels to generate leads too, with self-sourcing by salespeople in the clear lead. Salespeople use other sources of leads—referrals, inbound marketing, purchased/third-party data, and recurring business—as well. But more than two-thirds of our respondents report using each of these sources less than 25% of the time. One of the most critical things we found relates to time management.



In summary, many sales leaders/managers do not think their salespeople engage in enough face-to-face activities and thus often fail to meet their targets. Conversely, field sales professionals report spending more time on in-person selling than any other activity.

This kind of misalignment occurs in an environment where most people who engage in sales—across a diverse range of situations in terms of company sizes, average deals sizes, and sales cycle lengths—are: (1) managing a large number of accounts, (2) self-source their own leads, (3) have to invest in relationship building to be successful, and (4) have to spend time in coaching and training sessions. As a result, there is a tremendous need for tools that help with time management.

The Role of Technology



There is strong sentiment among field sales professionals that sales technology plays a vital role in their success. On a one-to-five scale, where “5” indicates “very important” and “1” indicates “not at all important,” 59% give sales technology a “5” evaluation. Furthermore, 79% rate it with a “4” or higher. This emphasis is consistent across all segments of our survey sample.

“59% of field sales professionals consider sales technology to be “very important,” giving it the highest rating of 5 on a 1-5 scale. With 79% rating it a 4.”

Among the eight steps in the sales process we measured, prospecting was the area where most field sales professionals reported using technology, with 73% selecting it. More than half also reported using technology for data storage and reporting at 63%, contracts and proposals at 61%, deal management at 53%, and sales enablement and training at 52%.

“73% of field sales professionals reported using technology for sales prospecting.”

As we observed last year, ease of use remains a key factor in choosing a technology provider, with 63% of survey respondents highlighting its importance. Similarly, 63% of field sales professionals consider reliability and stability to be crucial. More than half also emphasized the importance of features and capabilities at 53%, along with data and reporting accuracy at 50%.

Choosing a Technology Provider

Ease of use



Reliability and Stability



Features and Capability

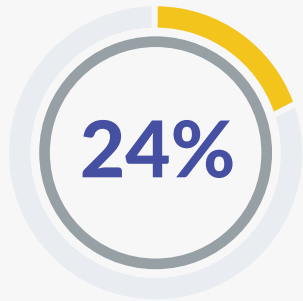


Data and Reporting Accuracy

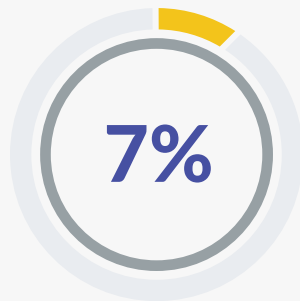


As of today, Artificial Intelligence is not being used on a widespread basis by the field sales industry. Only 24% of field sales professionals report using AI, and of those, only 29% the equivalent of about 7% of our survey respondents—say that AI is affecting their sales efforts a lot.

AI Usage and Impact Among Field Sales Professionals



AI Usage



Significant Impact

Usage of AI in sales is slightly more prevalent among those working in larger revenue companies or managing larger than average deal sizes. But the impact of AI is still muted at this point. Of those who do use AI, personalization of marketing and sales assets is the most common application.

Given the importance that so many field sales professionals place on technology, it's likely that they often reassess the tools and providers they use to ensure a maximum return on investment.

We reached this conclusion because 32% say they plan to implement new technology or change their existing technology provider in the next year, with another 40% likely to do so.

32%

Plan to
implement/
change
technology



40%

Likely
to do so

Although we have yet to detect much impact from the introduction of artificial intelligence tools, salespeople need technology to succeed—and their needs come with strict requirements. Technology needs to help them with prospecting more than anything else and it needs to be easy to use, reliable, and stable.

The Competitive Advantage

This concludes our findings from this year's State of Field Sales Report. The field sales landscape is complex. Heightened competition, economic uncertainty, and evolving customer expectations make it difficult to close deals. Despite these challenges, field sales professionals continue to succeed, thanks to their tenacity and willingness to adapt—especially when it comes to technology. All told, the future of field sales is bright!

To summarize, the best way to give your team the competitive advantage based on our analysis, are those that:

01

Invest in retaining their team

The faster you onboard new reps, the sooner they can close deals for your company. In fact, 32% of sales leaders and managers report that it takes over five months to bring new salespeople up to speed and be fully productive. Investing in retaining your skilled, experienced sales professionals not only reduces this ramp-up burden but also improves team stability and fosters a more experienced, cohesive sales team poised for sustained growth and success.

“

32% of sales leaders and managers report that it takes over five months to bring new salespeople up to speed and fully productive.

”**02**

Emphasize coaching and training

Coaching is essential to the success of your sales department, as it directly influences team performance and overall results. Our research found that 60% of high-performing sales leaders and managers dedicate at least three hours each week to coaching their teams. This commitment to coaching is particularly pronounced among B2C (business-to-consumer) sellers. Effective coaching not only helps in refining sales techniques but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement and accountability within the team.

03

Prioritize their reps' time and efficiency

Nearly half of sales leaders—48%—require their teams to conduct over 26 face-to-face appointments and visits each week. Yet, even with this high bar, only 57% of teams are meeting the minimum goal of 10 appointments and visits. This gap highlights the importance of a robust field sales platform that automates, tracks, and optimizes essential activities, enabling your team to work more efficiently and meet performance targets with greater ease.

“

48% of sales leaders require their teams to conduct over 26 face-to-face appointments and visits each week.

”

04

Utilizes technology to drive performance

Sales technology has advanced tremendously over the last decade, and while much of that innovation has primarily benefited inside sellers, the outside sales industry is finally catching up. Our findings reveal that 59% of field sales professionals consider sales technology to be “very important,” giving it the highest rating of 5, while 79% rate it a 4, underscoring its critical role in driving sales success. With ease of use, reliability, and stability as top priorities for over 60% of decision-makers in selecting a technology provider, it’s clear that adopting the right sales tools is essential for optimizing performance and enhancing productivity.

In closing, maintaining an engaged, efficient, and accountable field sales team is crucial for sustained success in today’s competitive landscape. When sales representatives feel motivated and supported, they are more likely to perform at their best and achieve their targets.

Fortunately, SPOTIO can help with all of these initiatives. With its comprehensive platform designed to enhance productivity, streamline processes, and provide valuable insights into sales activities, SPOTIO equips sales leaders with the resources they need to empower their teams. By leveraging SPOTIO's capabilities, you can create a more engaged, efficient, and accountable field sales team, ultimately leading to improved performance and greater success in reaching your revenue goals.

SPOTIO users agree that:

“SPOTIO is intuitive, offers unmatched support, and provides management with visibility. I would have been very concerned about our performance without it.”

VP of Direct Sales

“My team saw a 20-25% increase in production in the field. Hands down, if you use SPOTIO, your team will be more productive and you will make more money.”

EVP Sales

“Being able to closely manage and monitor our leads is extremely important and valuable to us. Ever since we’ve switched to SPOTIO, it’s been the best decision the company has ever made.”

Director of Operations



Built for Field Reps, Made for Growth.

SPOTIO is the premier field sales engagement platform designed specifically for field sales teams to increase pipeline growth, enhance productivity, and close more deals. SPOTIO centralizes field sales activities, offering organizations critical insights and visibility to drive revenue. Serving thousands of customers globally, SPOTIO is committed to propelling field sales teams to new heights.

[Learn more at SPOTIO.com](https://www.spotio.com)