LinkedIn SALES NAVIGATOR

The Ultimate Guide to Eliminating Blindspots from Your Sales Pipeline

New from LinkedIn: Introducing **Sales Navigator Deals**

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Blindspot /'blīn(d) ',spät/ *(noun)*

An area where a person's view is obstructed.

Every car has blindspots and what you can't see ***can*** hurt you — sales is no different.

The statistics about the blindspots that sales teams face are downright frightening:

- **24%** of forecasted deals go dark
- **25%** of sales reps change roles annually
- **20%** of buyers also change roles annually

All of that adds up to mean that deals in your pipeline are at risk.

How can you identify which deals and accounts are the most at risk and need the most attention?

That's the question we asked ourselves at LinkedIn Sales Solutions. And here's the answer we found…

You (and sales teams everywhere) need to collaborate effectively on pipeline to make the right decisions for where to invest time and energy to build the right relationships and drive deals forward. If you have the right visibility into your deals and manage the right relationships, pipeline health follows.

Sales Navigator Deals helps sales managers and sales reps alike get more visibility into the buying committee, have more productive deal review sessions, and gain better insight into pipeline health.

Read on to see how Sales Navigator Deals can help your sales organization become more efficient and more effective at managing pipeline health and reducing sales risk.

It's no secret. Every sales manager and every sales rep will tell you that managing a sales pipeline is hard work. Getting more deals in the pipe or logging more calls does not necessarily imply a healthy pipeline. Any successful rep will tell you that winning deals is not just a numbers game.

Sales Navigator Deals **provides visibility**

Instead, high performers maintain a laser-like focus on building and nurturing relationships that help close deals.

While most sales reps are aware of this fact, they often struggle deciding what accounts to focus on and what relationships to invest time in.

And when they have a lot of accounts and relationships to think about, things get complicated very quickly. Ask any sales rep or manager about a deal that went sideways, and you will hear the horror stories:

- There was a decision maker who had verbally committed to go with your organization but then suddenly left company and the deal stalled, leaving the rep scrambling to find the new decision maker.
- The decision makers who assured that they'd checked all the boxes but forgot to mention that the IT partner who had extra questions around security and compliance—and who could block your deal without you knowing why there was no progress.

These situations happen all the time, leaving reps and managers scratching their heads and wondering what went wrong. How could they have gotten in front of this? There are three key sales blindspots that compromise visibility for reps and managers when they're managing their pipeline.

Let's take a **closer look...**

Blindspot No. 1

Deal review sessions are **wasted** on gathering context

Did you know that 24% of forecasted deals go dark?

It is not an uncommon situation that reps and managers are left scrambling at the end of quarter to close more deals.

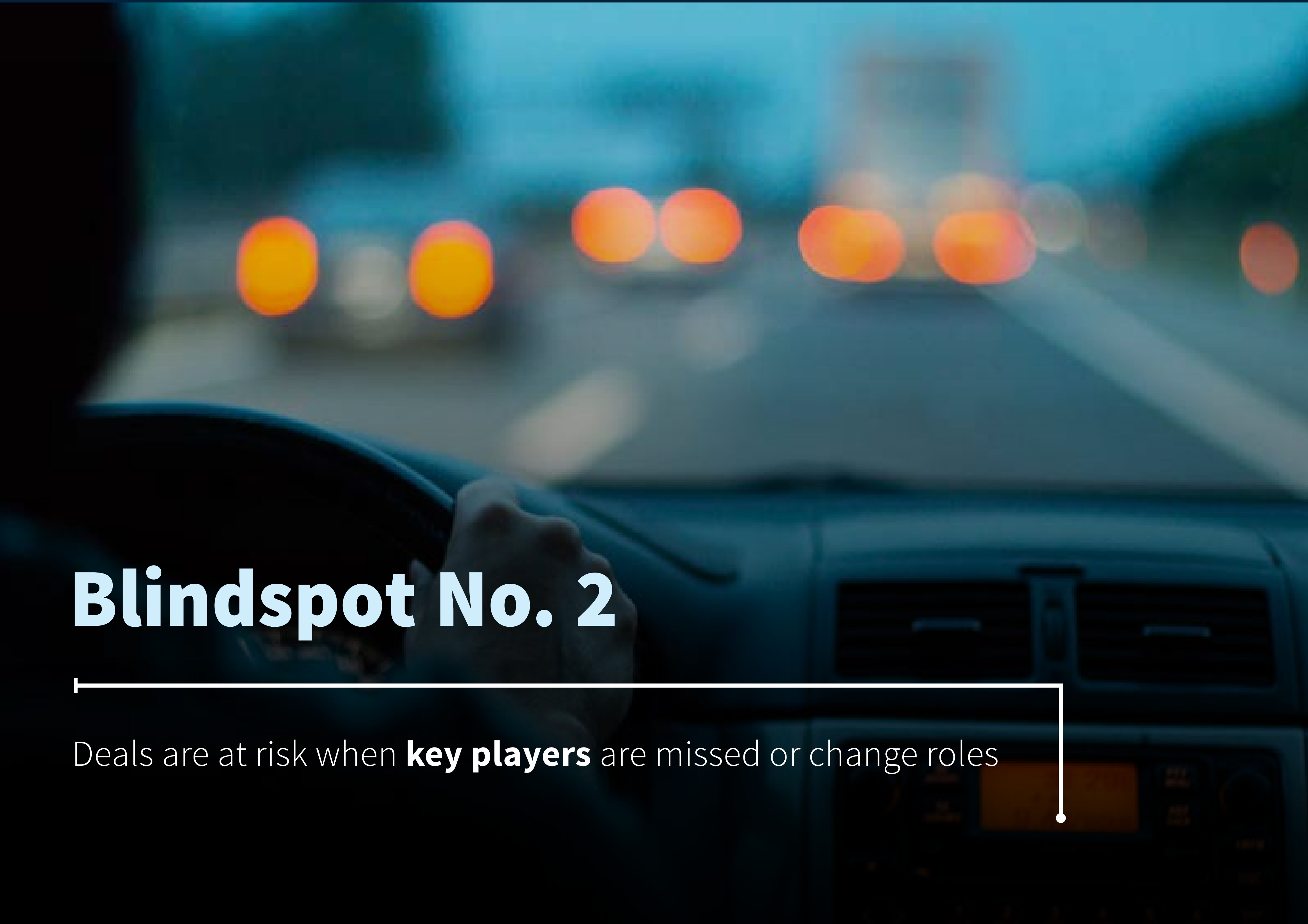
They are often wondering what happened to the deals that were marked 'likely to close' for the past months.

Today sales managers and reps spend too much time during deal review sessions discussing the mechanics for the deal: What is the deal size? When is it expected to close? What stage is it in? What is its probability to close? Did you send the proposal? Have you followed up?

Sales reps frequently track this deal-level information in spreadsheets or notes maintained by reps, but managers have no visibility into these activities. Most managers have to trust that the rep knows what is going on in the account, and managers have no way to verify.

As a result...

managers tend to be very reactive in their approach of influencing deal outcomes. Many times they're not able to lean in until the rep actively flags a deal at risk, and by then it is too late. Despite there being many opportunities earlier in the sales cycle when managers could step in and provide guidance, managers' lack of visibility into pipeline health often leaves them unable to provide the support that their reps need when they need it most.



Blindspot No. 2

Deals are at risk when **key players** are missed or change roles

Gone are the days of finding that one decision maker and leveraging that relationship for budget year after year.

It’s been well proven that, if you don’t get all these people on board pretty early in the process, some of these buyers will derail the deal later when they get involved.

When reps miss critical players in the deal cycle, they’re putting the deal at risk.

Not only do reps need to find all of these people on the buying committee, but they also need to keeping track of them and role they play in the deal. When you layer in the fact that decision makers are typically changing roles at a rate of **20%** per year, it means that even if you found the right people at the beginning of your sales cycle, several of those people may have changed roles before the deal is ready to be signed. And when they leave, new people that you don’t know and haven’t engaged with enter into the mix and could possibly derail your deal.

These constant changes leave your pipeline vulnerable.

6.8

people are now involved in purchase decisions, according to CEB research.

Do you have an efficient way for your reps to track all these decision makers and how they may impact your active pipeline?

Managers on the other hand today do not have the visibility they need to provide critical coaching about the state of play of the relationships in their reps' accounts.

In particular, managers need to know if their reps are speaking to the right people, assess if the rep understands each of their buyers' priorities and, lastly, coach the rep on how to turn each buyer into an advocate. Understanding customer engagement is very critical for a manager when it comes to coaching and guiding their reps to ensure that the deal closes. But today most managers struggle to do this, as for any particular deal they have little visibility into the buyers their reps are interacting with.

73%

of managers spend less than 5% of their time coaching, according to Altify.

Blindspot No. 3

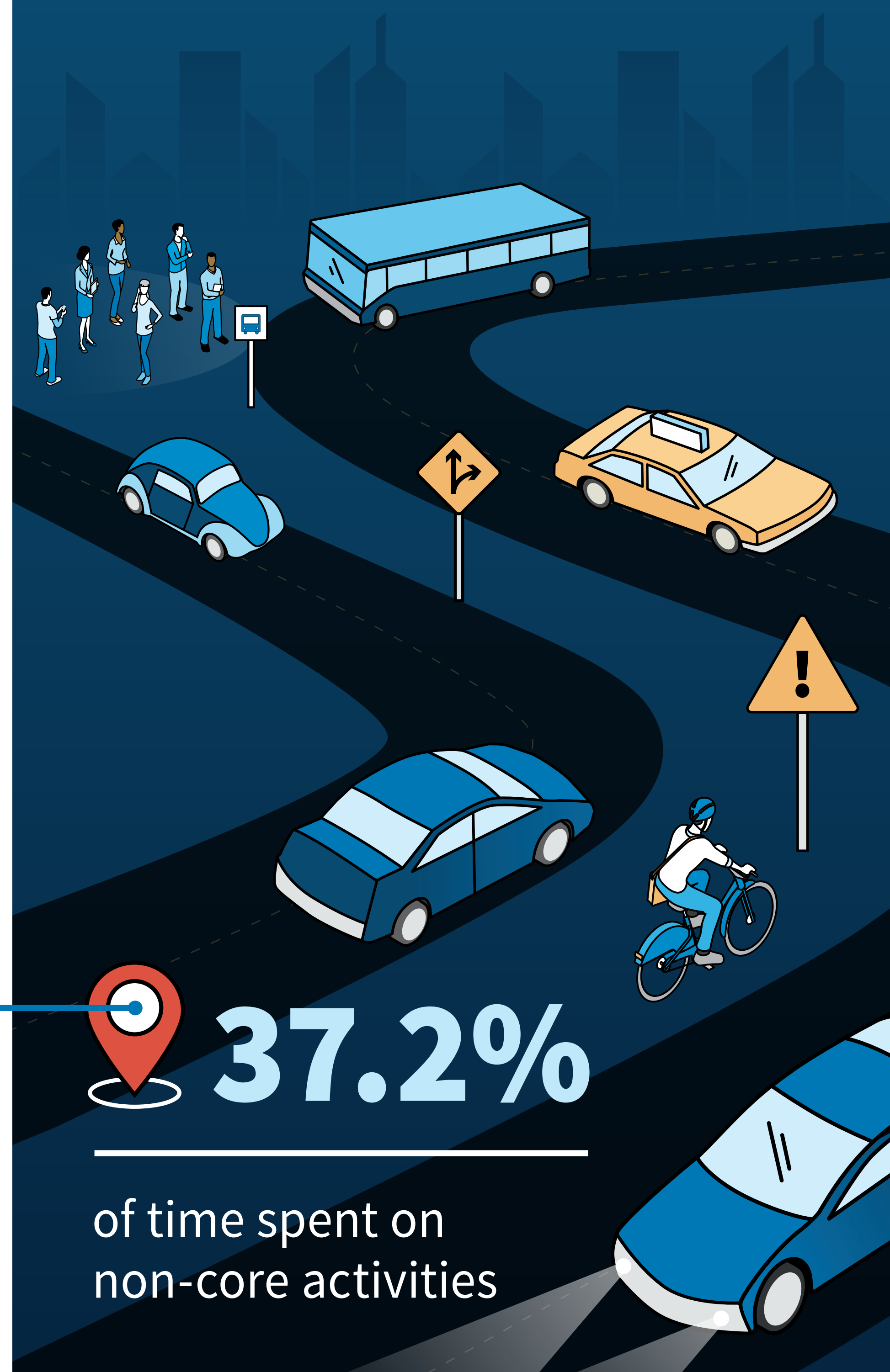
CRM data gets **outdated very quickly**

Keeping track of all the moving parts in a deal can be challenging for reps.

Most organizations rely on their CRM as the single source of truth. But entering data in CRM can be time consuming.

This is apparent from the research from Sirius Insights—reps spend **37.2%** of their time on non-core activities. Since keeping CRM updated takes time away from actual time selling, reps end up putting only the necessary required details that their managers need.

They typically maintain all deal details, including the people they are speaking with, in an offline document. This can be risky for your business, because **25%** of sales reps change roles every year, according to LinkedIn data. If reps are not documenting all the details of the deal—the next steps, the stakeholders involved and what role these individuals play—your deal is suddenly at risk. The new rep taking over has to start from scratch rebuilding the relationships and understanding the account dynamics and history. While your new rep is getting up-to-speed, a competitor can swoop in and win that deal.



How can reps and managers avoid these blindspots and move their deals forward by engaging with the right stakeholders?

Sales Navigator Deals empowers both sales managers and sales reps to effectively collaborate on managing pipeline and reduce sales risk.

A new feature built into LinkedIn Sales Navigator, Deals delivers better visibility for sales teams by providing a single comprehensive view of opportunities, along with insight into the buying committee. With that shared view and the capability to simply make edits to opportunities that are written back to CRM in real-time, reps and managers can spend more time strategizing how to win deals and less time on gathering context of past activities.

Read on to discover the **three key ways** that Sales Navigator Deals can make your entire sales organization more efficient and effective.

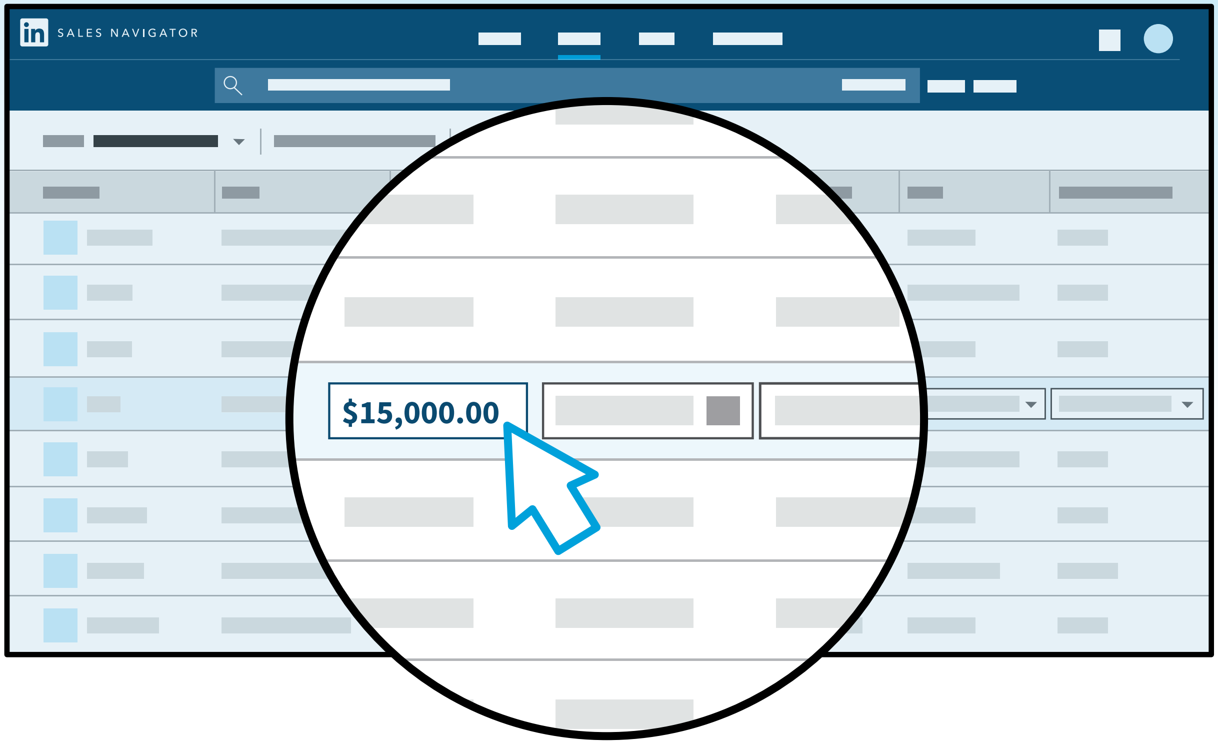
Keep your deals **moving forward**

Enable reps and managers to collaborate effectively on pipeline

Today deal level data is present in separate systems like notepads, spreadsheets and CRM, making it hard for a manager to get a pulse of their reps' deals.

But with Sales Navigator, managers and reps have a single place to assess the state of each of their deals. They can quickly view all relevant information pertaining to the deal including the people involved. On top of that, reps can very easily capture their next steps.

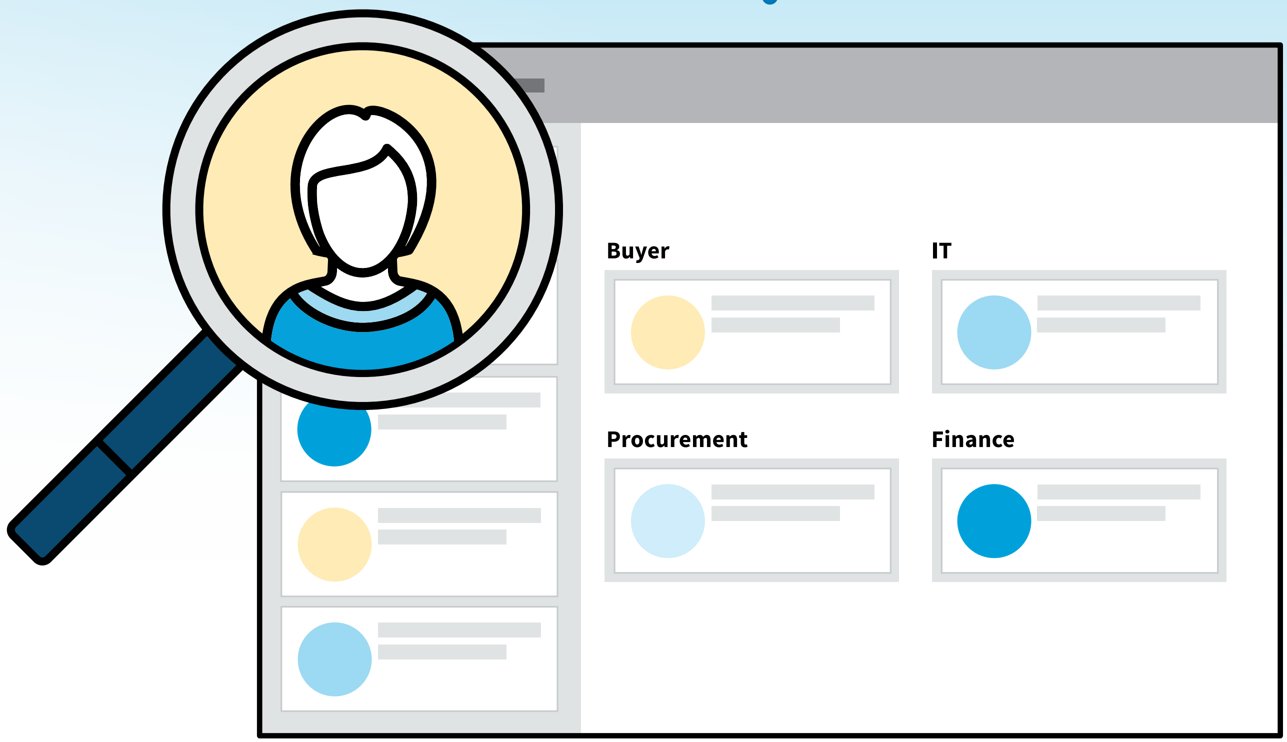
This allows a manager to understand the action the rep is taking on a particular deal. This real-time visibility into deals leads to extremely productive deal review sessions allowing managers to know when to guide reps and prevent stalling or potentially losing deals.



Identify all key stakeholders in a deal

Many sales reps underestimate the number of relationships they need to build and nurture in order to close a deal. They very often lose deals when they miss a person blocking a deal or fail to understand the needs of each decision maker.

Buyer Circle within Sales Navigator Deals enables managers to better understand the decision makers involved so far and identify missing players. With this visibility, the manager not only can hold their reps accountable to build relationships with the right people, but also coach them on strategies to influence each stakeholder and move a deal forward. This elevates the deal coaching that managers provide to their reps.

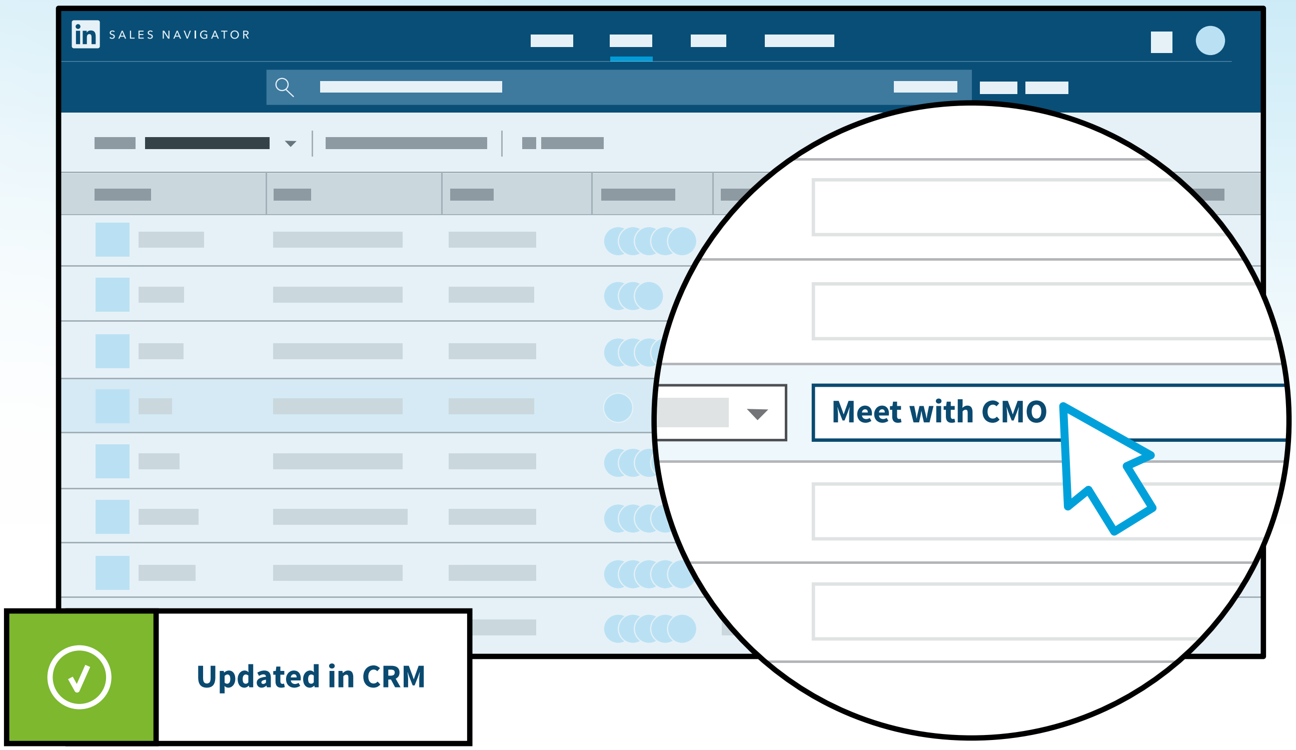


3 Easily keep your CRM up-to-date

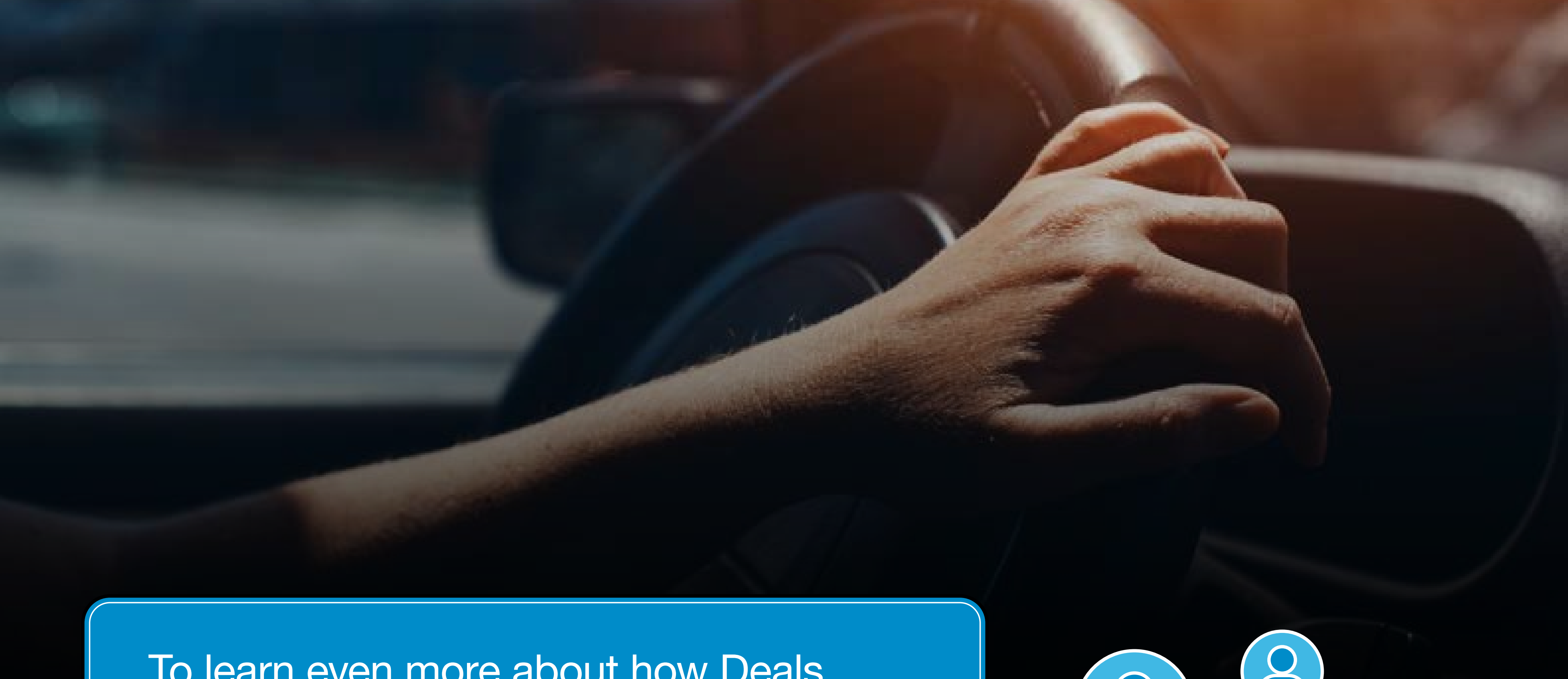
Never before has it been so easy for reps to keep their CRM updated. Reps can now quickly view all deal information in one single place and easily edit this information on the fly, including deal size, stage, close date, next steps and more.

All changes are immediately and automatically written back to CRM. If people in the Buyer Circle aren't already in the CRM, the rep can find the person on LinkedIn and have that person's public information (first name, last name, title and company) written back to the CRM as a new contact associated with the opportunity.

Sales Navigator Deals ensures that all the information about an opportunity and the customer relationships within that account are all up-to-date and accurate. This will up-to-date CRM information will protect you and your company if your rep leaves in the middle of the sales cycle.



*To activate Deals in Sales Navigator, users must be synced with their CRM system and be using the Teams or Enterprise editions of Sales Navigator.



To learn even more about how Deals from **Sales Navigator** can help eliminate blindspots in your sales process, visit: **www.linkedin.com/deals**