

# UK State of Sales: Key findings

500 B2B sales professionals and 510 buyers throughout the United Kingdom were surveyed to create The UK State of Sales 2018, a definitive look at where sales stands right now — and where it's headed in 2019 and beyond.

LinkedIn's research revealed some notable trends in the technologies and strategies that set top-performing salespeople apart from their counterparts, as well as the considerations that are most important to buyers today.

## Trust

Relationships, built on a foundation of trust, are crucial to sales professionals. **35%** of salespeople ranked trust as the number one factor in closing deals (placing it top of their concerns, followed by ROI - **28%** - and price - **18%**) and a further **22%** rank it second.

However, for top performing salespeople\*, price is a primary concern (26%) followed by value and ROI (both 23%).

## Technology

Sales technology is utilised well with **33%** using it at least once a day and **48%** once a week or more. More than half of respondents (**56%**) say they spend more time using sales technology this year as compared to last year; with only **9%** spending less time. For top performing salespeople, the proportion using more sales technology this year than last raises to **74%**, and amongst millennials - the highest age group - it raises to **64%**.

More than three quarters (**79%**) use sales technology as a strategy to close more deals and of that group, almost all (**99%**) feel it is very important (**56%**) or important (**43%**).

When asked about the pain points within sales technology, the top two concerns were too many tools being available and tools being too expensive (**22% each**). **16%** of respondents feel it takes too much time; **13%** say it is not compatible with their current operating system and **11%** report sales technology as being too difficult to learn.

In terms of investment, **56%** of respondents said their company will invest more money in sales technology next year. Comparatively, only **5%** expect their organisation to invest less money.

## Networks

Professional and social networks are helping top performing sales professionals better understand buyers' needs and establish trust early on in a deal. **95%** of top sellers consider networking platforms to be very important, compared with **87%** of all salespeople. When asked which networks sales professionals use, **71%** use LinkedIn.com and **70%** use Facebook as their networking platform of choice.

LinkedIn is the social media platform where sales professionals are most active for business purposes (**80%**). This is followed by Facebook (**74%**), Twitter (**73%**), YouTube (**61%**), and Instagram (**57%**).

## Integration with marketing

Top performing sales professionals are embracing marketing and sales orchestration, a sales approach that involves tighter collaboration between marketing and sales departments to better target prospects and are closing more deals as a result. **75%** of top performers believe marketing plays a very big role.

## The buyer perspective

LinkedIn also surveyed 510 UK B2B buyers as part of the report. For buyers, the key factors that will lead them to choose a specific vendor include a sales professional being informed about their company and business' needs and favourable pricing (both top for **43%** of respondents). These were followed by a strong brand (**38%**); recommendations from someone in their network (**36%**), and a favourable impression of the sales professional (**33%**).

When asked about their reasons for not engaging with a salesperson, **78%** of decision makers say they won't engage with salespeople who don't have insights or knowledge of their business. Followed by the products or services being too expensive (**77%**); and the products or services not being relevant to their company (**76%**).

## Methodology - Sellers / Buyers

\*NB: Top performing salespeople are defined as those who exceeded their target by at least **25%**.

A total of 500 UK panel respondents completed the sellers survey and 510 UK panel respondents completed the buyers survey. In addition to country, there were 8 screeners for the survey to determine eligibility. 21 or older/ FT employee/ in a sales department/has at least 2 years of experience/ works for a B2B company/company has 2 or more employees/ in a customer facing role/in a revenue generating role (not administrative assistant, data analyst, etc.)/use sales technology in current role/met or exceeded their target in 2017/is the decision maker or involved in the decision making process as it relates to purchasing products and services for the company or department they are in. This would include software, hardware, services, etc. Sample was provided by Market Cube, a research panel company.