

LinkedIn Sales Solutions

# Sales spotlight: The Chief Revenue Officer

Why this member of the  
buying committee matters



# What is a Chief Revenue Officer (CRO)?

Meet the CRO. They're a C-suite decision maker with a typical 10+ years' experience under their belt. They're directly accountable to the board and they stay in the role for 2.5 years on average<sup>1</sup>.

CROs act as the cornerstone that brings together siloed teams with a shared goal and provides the vision, tools and processes they need to stay focused on revenue. They look at the bigger picture and help bring together the strategy that guides a number of teams – not just the sales team. And while they do focus on the money side of things, unlike the CFO, they're not responsible for accounting.



## Their goals:

Unlocking predictable, long-term growth the business can count on. They keep their focus on the distance, always looking 18 months ahead for risks and opportunities.



## Their KPIs:

CROs are metrics obsessed. They want to improve everything from monthly recurring revenue to the churn rate of customers and cost per acquisition. These data points prove that the steps they're taking are driving revenue.



## Their toolkits:

Teams, technology and data. They work across teams to unite them with a shared goal and find ways to improve collaboration. They stay ahead of rapidly evolving technology and adopt the tools that will help their business create revenue. They call on data to understand ROI and where the opportunities lie.

# The Rise of the CRO

The buying committee is growing. According to Gartner, **the average buying committee is between six and ten people**, and the seat at the table that's rising in prominence is the CRO<sup>3</sup>. The role may be relatively new, but it won't be soon. It's expected that 25% of businesses will have a CRO by 2030<sup>4</sup>. Businesses are under pressure to be agile and adapt to the changing needs of societies. They need CROs who will identify where their revenue will come from next.

the average buying committee is between **six and ten people**,



CROs are more than another head to convince. They are responsible for

implementing tools and processes that maintain revenue over the long term. That means they are the ones making sure that purchasing decisions are aligned to the wider strategy – and that strategy is driven by the board. CROs are who the board turns to for a clear picture of how new services and solutions will drive revenue, taking into account the cost of acquisitions.

With their laser focus on ROI, the CRO may seem like a difficult person to win over, but building the relationship is worth it. CROs are looking for long-term solutions to challenges impacting everything from sales and marketing to finance and customer services. That means they're looking beyond short-term fixes and are instead focusing on adopting a wide range of solutions for the long haul. So through CROs, sellers have an opportunity to build enduring partnerships with businesses. Doing so will require a deep sales approach to search beneath the surface and uncover the root challenges that impact the business' revenue potential – just as a CRO does.



*The CRO role shifts from being a leader of sales to a leader of coordinated sales.”*



# Uncertainty Becomes the Norm

Climate change, the the lingering effects of the pandemic, geopolitical risks and subsequent record inflation are impacting businesses across the world and across sectors. Business confidence in the European Union dropped by 11.9% in January 2023<sup>5</sup>. All eyes are on CROs to protect the revenue pipeline as confidence dampens and inflation continues to rise. They're under pressure to understand what their customers value now, how their talent will be impacted, and how to reprice for this inflationary environment.

Just like consumers during times of record inflation, CROs will have to be careful with spending. Sellers need to provide clear visibility of ROI to help them make confident buying decisions. But this uncertain climate is also an opportunity to bring clarity to CROs. As they look to minimise the impact that macroeconomic changes have on their revenue, they need solutions that drive steady growth now and in the future – solutions that you may be able to deliver.



Average CRO  
tenure is 2.5 years<sup>6</sup>

It's mission-critical to build relationships with CROs quickly. Taking a deep sales approach gives you a shortcut. By gathering rich insights on the business, you can answer their pain points and bring certainty to their decisions from the first point of contact.

*Really understanding how things happen, what the timeline is, who your sponsors are, who's going to sign things off, and how long various parts of the process take can be difficult because we're still dealing with a lot of stakeholders from a distance, and it can be a challenge to put those pieces together.'*



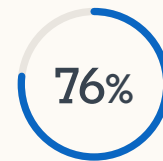
Peter Carlisle  
CRO, Adarma



# New Customer Expectations

Changes in customer expectations are happening rapidly. More than 60% of consumers say they now have higher customer service standards post-pandemic. Another 60% also say they expect their experiences with a company to be personalised<sup>7</sup>.

CROs are at the forefront of understanding these shifts in customer expectations and adapting their business strategies to meet them. They are under pressure to adjust everything from marketing to sales and technology to better support personalised buying journeys, but they will do so with a long-term vision. Businesses classed as high performers in customer service are 5.7% more likely to have a three-year strategy for the experience they want to create<sup>8</sup>. CROs will be the ones driving that plan.



of top performing sellers say they always perform research before reaching out<sup>9</sup>

CROs are the big thinkers. Before a relationship can begin, it is crucial to find out their focus and align with it.

LinkedIn Sales Navigator's deep sales tools will uncover those insights for Sellers with customer-focused solutions either need to show CROs how they can support the strategy or inspire a new plan. LinkedIn's [deep sales](#) platform help sellers know the best approach. LinkedIn Sales Navigator and Sales Insights provide information on the content that your targets are interacting with, helping you to gauge their level of buyer intent. These insights mean you can get ahead of the competition and reach out to CROs at a time when input on their strategy is most valuable – making you an invaluable connection.

# Evolving Revenue Models

Following fast-paced advancements in technology and the changing customer expectations that have ensued, businesses across sectors are transforming their revenue models. So much so that they're seen as a top driver of transformation for 55% of CEOs in tech firms, 38% of CEOs in finance firms and 30% of CEOs in manufacturing firms<sup>10</sup>.

We are already seeing new revenue models take shape. Ecosystems, subscriptions, usage-based pricing, platform-based experiences and new styles of logistics are just some examples. CROs

take the lead in designing and implementing these models, but this is a momentous challenge. They will have to show the board how these new business models will impact revenue. Sellers have an opportunity to share insights that help CROs understand the possibilities at play.

To have the biggest impact on CROs, the insights sellers share need to be relevant. Using intelligent deep sales tools, you can learn where CROs are in their transformation plans and use this information to gear conversations around the challenges they're facing at a given moment.



89%

89% of buyers say they are more likely to consider a product or service if the salesperson changes how they think<sup>11</sup>

As CROs move forward with their business transformation plans, doors are opening for sellers to provide support and guide them through major change



# Technology

Many businesses are struggling to keep pace with advancements in technology. AI, big data and social selling are all fundamentally changing how businesses operate, but many are left with fractured processes. They're using outdated systems, making decisions based on based on out-of-date or inaccurate data, and using multiple tools, which is creating friction and duplicating tasks. With seven out of ten sales executives planning to increase technology spending this year, these challenges are only going to continue<sup>12</sup>. And it is up to CROs to refine the tech stack to support revenue goals.

Sellers with tech solutions will need clear evidence that new solutions are more effective at driving revenue or cost savings – or both. Whether or not you have tech solutions to offer, any outreach with CROs needs to be targeted. They understand the possibilities for tech and will be sensitive to uninformed strategies where communication feels out of touch with their needs.

By 2025, **60%** of B2B organisations will move away from intuition-based selling and towards data-driven selling<sup>13</sup>

Through a deep sales approach, sellers can tap into meaningful data that uncovers a CRO's priorities and shows when they're actively looking for a new solution. It makes it possible to build connections that are valued from the first point of contact.



Organisations have **976** applications on average<sup>2</sup>

CROs will be looking to streamline the tech stack to make their teams more efficient.

For Credit Agricole Italia, deep sales has brought greater visibility greater visibility to every aspect of the sales process. It has helped the firm accurately size market opportunities, transform the leads the team targets, and accelerated the speed at which deals close.

*“Knowing who to reach out to is a great advantage. Having a platform for reaching out in an informed way is more valuable still. “Companies really appreciate it when we approach them on LinkedIn. It’s a less well-trodden path, which means that we stand out and get a more positive response. We’re able to reach out in a way that’s personalised – and that gets things moving faster.”*



**Marco Perocchi,**  
Corporate Banking Director,  
Crédit Agricole Italia.



# Deepening Your Connections with CROs

The LinkedIn deep sales platform combines the capabilities of LinkedIn Sales Solutions to inform stronger sales strategies. By gathering data on two billion interactions happening on LinkedIn every day, we can give sellers more than names and job titles – we provide insights into buyer activity. That means you can drill down into the topics that prospects care about, discover where they are in the sales journey, and uncover the strengths and weaknesses of your connections.

LinkedIn's tools bring you these deeper insights so that you can build deeper relationships.

[Learn More](#) about LinkedIn Sales Solutions

*“I find it difficult to think about a solution that can replace what we can do with LinkedIn because of the size of its social network and membership. I’m sure there are companies that extract data from various other sources, but the immediate access it provides and the ability to parse and create account lists, and identify a reason for a sales rep to reach out, I think that is something that would be very difficult to replace.”*

Aviel Katz

VP of Revenue Operations,  
Checkmarx

#### Sources:

- 1 Salesforce, 5 Traits of Game-Changing Chief Revenue Officers
- 2 Salesforce, 2023, The Key for Any Tech Business in 2023: Be Agile, Keep Your Customers First
- 3 Gartner, The B2B Buying Journey: The B2B buying process has changed, has your sales strategy?
- 4 Korn Ferry, Do you need a Chief Revenue Officer (CRO)?
- 5 CEIC, 2023, European Union Business Confidence Growth
- 6 Salesforce, 5 Traits of Game-Changing Chief Revenue Officers
- 7 Zendesk, 2022, CX Trends 2022
- 8 Zendesk, 2022, CX Trends 2022
- 9 LinkedIn, 2022, Global State of Sales 2022
- 10 EY, 2022, Why industrial companies need to lead business model innovation
- 11 LinkedIn, 2022, Global State of Sales 2022
- 12 Korn Ferry, The new CRO playbook: 7 sales tech & data challenges
- 13 Gartner, 2020, Gartner Says 60% of B2B Sales Organizations Will Transition to a Data-Driven Selling Approach By 2025