

COLD CALLING IS DEAD,

Thanks to LinkedIn



Ken Kroque
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Introduction

It's amazing how powerful a simple idea can be. Ken Krogue, president and founder of InsideSales.com, and Steve Richard, co-founder of Vorsight, created a webinar called "The Science of Using LinkedIn, Technology, & Social Selling for Cold Calling." The two well-known sales leaders teamed up to share little-known tips that are generating big results right now.

Before the webinar went live, it sparked some unexpected controversy. UK-based journalist Steve Masters published an article on the Business 2 Community website titled "[No, LinkedIn Is Not a Source for Your Cold Calling.](#)" He got hung up on the term "cold calling" and just couldn't see past it. He hadn't even seen the webinar yet.

LinkedIn's Head of Marketing for Sales Solutions, [Ralf VonSosen](#), caught wind of this criticism and contacted InsideSales.com. Krogue told him that the webinar was going to show salespeople how to

use LinkedIn the right way, so they would never have to cold call again.

Then Krogue invited VonSosen to participate in a Google Hangout that followed the webinar. VonSosen jumped at the chance to share LinkedIn's perspective on this important topic.

It turned out to be the most successful webinar InsideSales.com and Vorsight have ever done. A total of 5,648 people registered to learn how to use LinkedIn and technology for sales.

Krogue later wrote an article about the webinar that quickly climbed to No. 1 on [Forbes.com](#), racking up 66,749 views.

The concept created so much buzz in the sales community that we decided to turn it into this ebook. We're pleased to present these tips to help you make smarter sales calls.



Ralf VonSosen

Head of Marketing for
Sales Solutions
LinkedIn

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Ken Krogue, president and founder of InsideSales.com, is a results-driven sales leader and visionary for the inside sales industry. The research and data-driven approach he uses has led to best practices for contacting and closing leads. He pioneered the powerful sales automation PowerDialer™, a tool that increases the effectiveness and efficiency of inside sales professionals. Ken is also a regular contributor to Forbes.com.

Connect with Ken on [LinkedIn](#), [Google+](#) and [Twitter](#). Find out more about how to wring the most value out of your leads by visiting InsideSales.com.



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Steve Richard, co-founder of Vorsight, has been featured in The Harvard Business Review, The Washington Business Journal, The Washington Post, CNN/Money and CNBC. Vorsight has been recognized as the Sales Training Provider of the Year four years in a row by the American Association of Inside Sales Professionals.

Connect with Steve on [LinkedIn](#), [Google+](#) and [Twitter](#). Find out more about his sales training services at Vorsight.com.

Pre-Call Research

Use LinkedIn for Pre-Call Research

The original definition of cold calling was reaching out to somebody you don't know anything about and trying to sell them something. Anybody who does that these days is an idiot.

But you'd also be a fool to stop making unexpected sales calls. [DiscoverOrg](#) surveyed more than 1,000 senior executives and found that 75 percent have taken an appointment or attended an event based on an unexpected sales call or email.

The key difference between making unexpected sales calls and cold calling is that when you're making unexpected sales calls, you actually know something about your prospect and can clearly demonstrate how you're bringing value to the conversation.

What you really have to do now is warm up the conversation with research.

LinkedIn is the single most powerful tool on the planet for doing effective pre-call research and for tapping into your existing relationships.

One technique Vorsight teaches is called 3x3 Research*. It's based on the concept that you need to wake up your prospect's brain. You do that by learning something about your prospect before the call.

But there's a fine line between doing too much research and not doing enough. There are two types of sales reps: librarians and cowboys. Librarians spend all day researching and they don't make enough calls. Cowboys are so gung ho about dialing for dialers that they never do any research.

Neither of these approaches is ideal. You want your sales reps to do some quick and dirty research and then dial like the wind.

Find three pieces of relevant information about your prospect in three minutes. That's why it's called 3x3 Research.

Here are some things to look for:

- **Online content that features your prospect.**
- **Previous employers.**
- **Competitors your prospect is currently using.**

Vorsight dug into the data. They discovered that when the sales rep has access to 3x3 Research, the conversion rate from initial prospects to appointments increases 16.7 percent.

* 3x3 Research is a Vorsight term

The Power of TeamLink

Use TeamLink to Mine Second-Degree LinkedIn Connections

Vorsight found that if a salesperson contacts someone who is not at least a second-degree LinkedIn connection, it converts into an appointment 32 percent of the time.

If you have a second-degree connection, the conversion rate rises to 50 percent.

Use [TeamLink](#), one of LinkedIn Sales Navigator's features, to identify hidden work connections in your 3rd degree network.

TeamLink instantaneously connects users with their co-workers. Any time you do a search, you will see if that person is connected to you or to anyone at your company.

Rather than contacting the prospect, contact your co-worker who is connected to your prospect on LinkedIn.

Your co-worker can introduce you to the prospect, eliminating the need for cold calling.



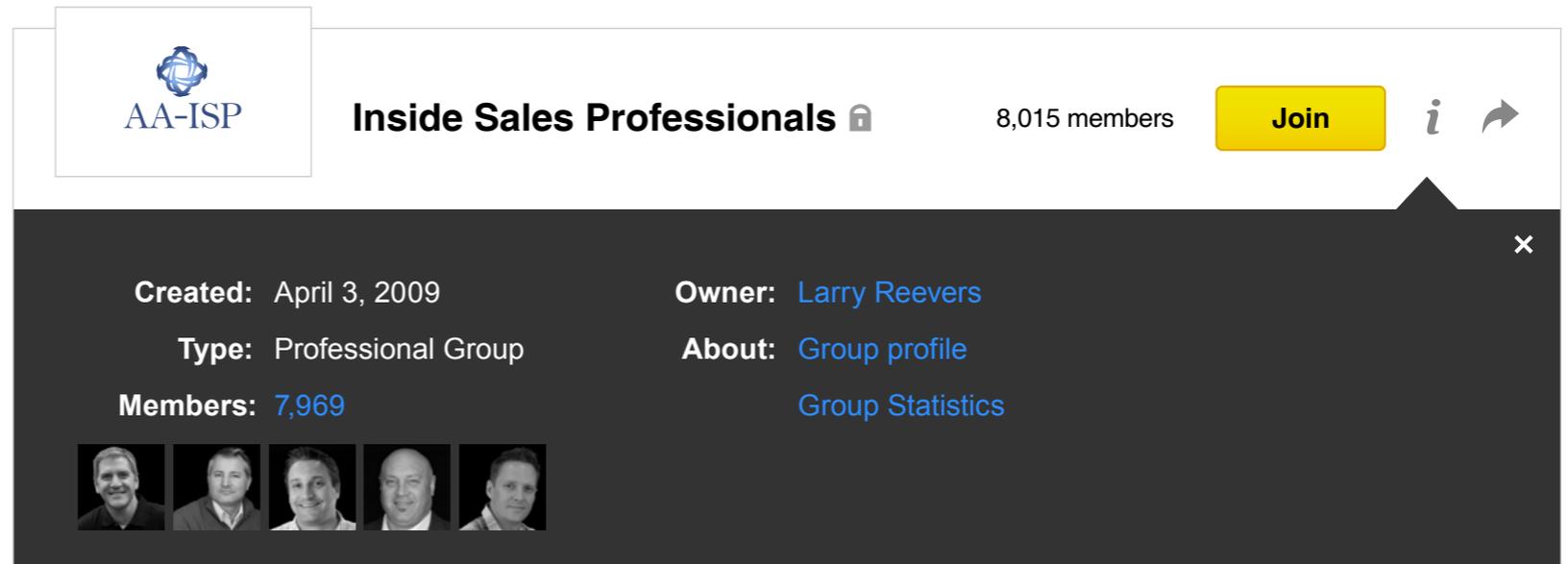
Set More Appointments With LinkedIn Groups

Leverage LinkedIn Groups to Set More Appointments

[LinkedIn groups](#) are a wonderful venue to engage in meaningful conversations with those who have similar interests. Groups allow professionals to understand what the hot topics are in their area, socialize with colleagues, ask questions and give helpful answers.

There are many groups for sales pros. For example, the Inside Sales Experts, Sales 2.0 Best Practices and Salesforce Chatter groups all serve specific communities.

You are 70 percent more likely to get an appointment with someone on an "unexpected sales call" if you are in a common LinkedIn group than if you aren't.



A test was conducted at a call center in Tampa, Florida. The researchers first used a typical cold call strategy on 1,000 numbers. On the second 1,000 dials, they started the conversation with, "I understand we share a common LinkedIn group." Just using that simple statement increased the number of appointments set by 70 percent.

WARNING: Do NOT join groups just to spam them and share your content. You have to be engaged in the dialogue.

The Right Call-to-Action

Are You Using the Right Calls-to-Action?

Salespeople can steal a page from the marketer’s playbook by using effective calls-to-action. Asking for a meeting right off the bat isn’t always the best approach.

Point me to the right person.

Email the CEO or a very senior person in the company. Use the call-to-action: “Send me to the right person.” When that email is forwarded internally, you have a much higher likelihood that the person will respond because it comes from the boss. If you see something coming from your boss, you’re much more likely to take action on it.

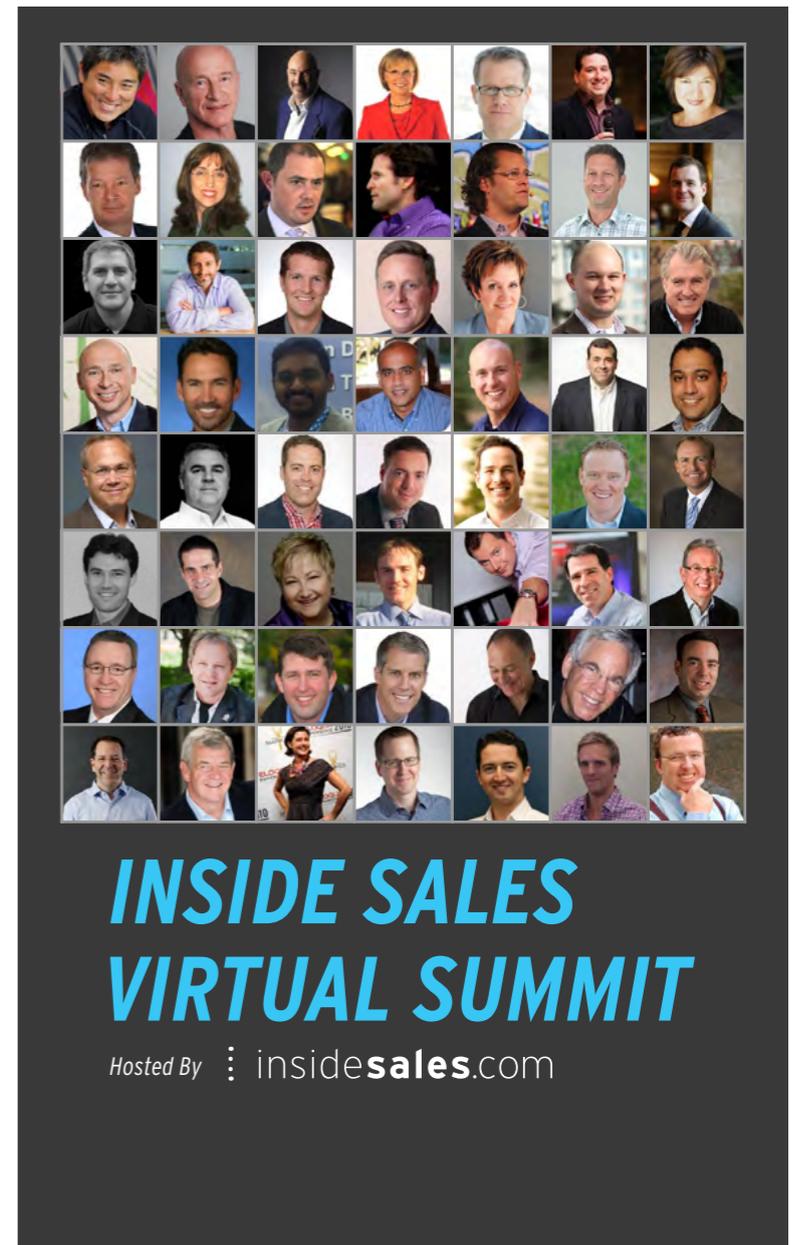
Meet our CEO at the trade show.

Executives at other companies might jump at the chance to meet your CEO at a trade show, especially if you’re growing fast and doing innovative things. This is a better call-to-action than saying, “Come meet with me, the salesperson.”

Attend a webinar or a live event.

If you go straight for the appointment, you might get shot down. But that same prospect might bite on an educational offer. Webinars and live events work really well.

For example, more than 15,000 sales pros registered for the [Inside Sales Virtual Summit](#). InsideSales.com brought together 62 of the top minds in sales to speak on the same day. It was a blast.



Double Dial Technique



Double Down on the Double Dial

Have you ever called a prospect and had him not pick up?

Of course you have. That's just part of being in sales.

Here's a little trick called the double dial. Call a prospect. If she doesn't pick up, immediately call her back. The second time the phone rings, it will pique her curiosity. *"This must be important. They're calling back."*

This tactic works even better if you're using LocalPresence. [LocalPresence](#) is a feature of InsideSales.com's software that allows you to show up as a local number on the other person's CallerID, even when you're calling from a different state.

If you double dial, you will reach 18 percent more of your list, according to Vorsight's research.

CAUTION: Double dialing takes longer. So, don't double dial if you must quickly plow through a huge list. The best time to double dial is when you have a shorter list of key targets.

Get Direct Lines for Senior-Level Execs

Vorsight studied how long it takes to reach an executive through a switchboard versus direct dialing. What they found was fascinating.

If you dial a list of switchboard numbers, it will take you 22.2 minutes to get a VP level executive on the phone. However, if you dial through a similar list of direct lines, it will only take 5.5 minutes.

You are 46 percent more likely to reach somebody at the director level if you call a direct line. And your chances are 147 percent better at the VP level.

KEY TAKEAWAY: If you're calling senior-level executives, it doesn't make sense to use switchboard numbers. You'll be far better off with direct-dial numbers.

Gain Email Visibility



Gain Visibility Into Your Emails With ClearSlide

[ClearSlide](#) is technology that lets you email a presentation to a prospect and see if they open it, when they open it, how long they spend looking at a particular page, etc.

PRO TIP: When somebody opens your document, call them immediately. Strike while the iron is hot. Call them while they're thinking about you.

InsideSales.com's research shows that if you call a lead within five minutes, your odds of contacting will be 100 times higher than if you wait 30 minutes. So, immediate response is crucial. And the same principle applies when you're using ClearSlide.

BONUS TIP: Talk about the pages they spend the most time viewing. If they spend

75 percent of their time looking at Page 4, and that page is all about how you differentiate your technology from another vendor, bring that up when you call them back. You don't have to say that you saw how much time they spent on that page. But you should weave that topic into your conversation.

Vorsight is seeing a 7.5 percent bump in appointments while using ClearSlide.

Some Quick Sales Math

Vorsight's research reveals that 32 percent of its sales conversations turn into appointments. So, for every 3.14 conversations, it sets one appointment.

Vorsight offers a wonderful free resource on its website called [5 Steps to Building a Team of Rock Star Sales Hunters](#).

Specialist and Generalist Model

Specialist Model Outsell the Generalist Model

The Kellogg Survey that was done by [Dr. James Oldroyd](#) in 2007 showed a higher close rate for companies that break their sales model into specialties.

The generalist sales model makes sales reps responsible for the entire end-to-end sales process: finding leads, qualifying leads, closing sales.

The specialist sales model allows different teams to focus on different stages of the sales process. So, for example, you might have a team of business development reps who qualify leads and set appointments for your closers.

If you specialize, you can do more pre-call research so you don't have to cold call. The specialist model also provides a 7-point bump above a generalist model.

InsideSales.com has experienced incredible success using the specialist model and recommends it for other sales organizations.

GENERALIST MODEL



Combined Appointment Setters, Closers, and Account Managers

SPECIALIST MODEL



Dedicated Appointment Setters



Dedicated Closers



Dedicated Account Managers



Dedicated Lead Researcher

Making the Most of Your Calls and Emails

Sales leaders across the country often ask InsideSales.com three crucial questions:

1. How many calls should I make?
2. How many voicemails should I leave?
3. How many emails should I send?

Well, this is the model. It has been validated by research.

- **You should call each person on your list about six times.** That's about what it takes to reach a busy decision-maker.
- **On your 1st call, send a voicemail and an email.**
- **Don't leave voicemails or emails on calls 2 and 3.**
- **On your 4th call, send a voicemail and email.**
- **And on your last call, send a voicemail and email.**

PRO TIP: Right between two and three voicemails is where it's obvious that leaving more voicemails becomes a negative -- and, at that point, you're becoming a pest.

CLOSER Model

Improve Your Sales Process With the CLOSER Model

InsideSales.com has discovered six variables you need to test to improve your sales process in a scientific, systematic way. We call it the [CLOSER Model](#).

- C** Campaign = Test Strategy
- L** List/Leads = Test Sources
- O** Offer = Test Offers
- S** Skill = Test Approaches
- E** Effort = Test Contact Rates
- R** Reporting = Test Results

The 7 Keys to Achieving Better Contact Rates

InsideSales.com provides technology based on research and best practices to help inside sales teams dramatically improve their results. We've developed seven strategies that are proven to boost contact rates. It's our secret sauce.

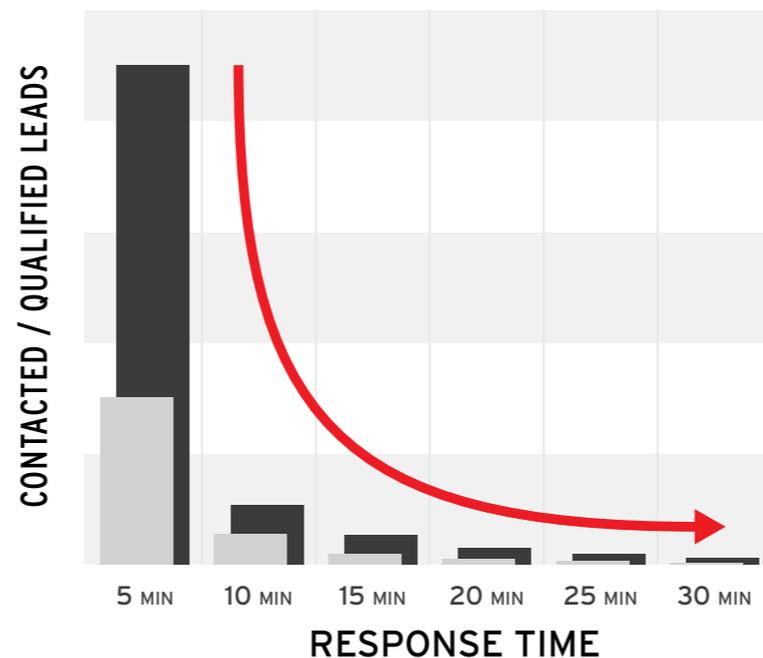
We shared it with our good friends at Marketo, and the first thing they said was, "What did you guys do? Everybody's answering our calls."

And now we're sharing these seven insanely effective strategies with you.

Key #1: Immediacy

Research shows that a lead called within 5 minutes is 100 times more likely to be contacted than a lead called in 30 minutes, and 21 times more likely to become a qualified lead.

CONTACTS MADE FROM FIRST DIALS



WITHIN 5 MINUTES

100 X Higher chance of contacting
21 X Higher chance of qualifying

AFTER 5 MINUTES

Chance of contacting drops significantly

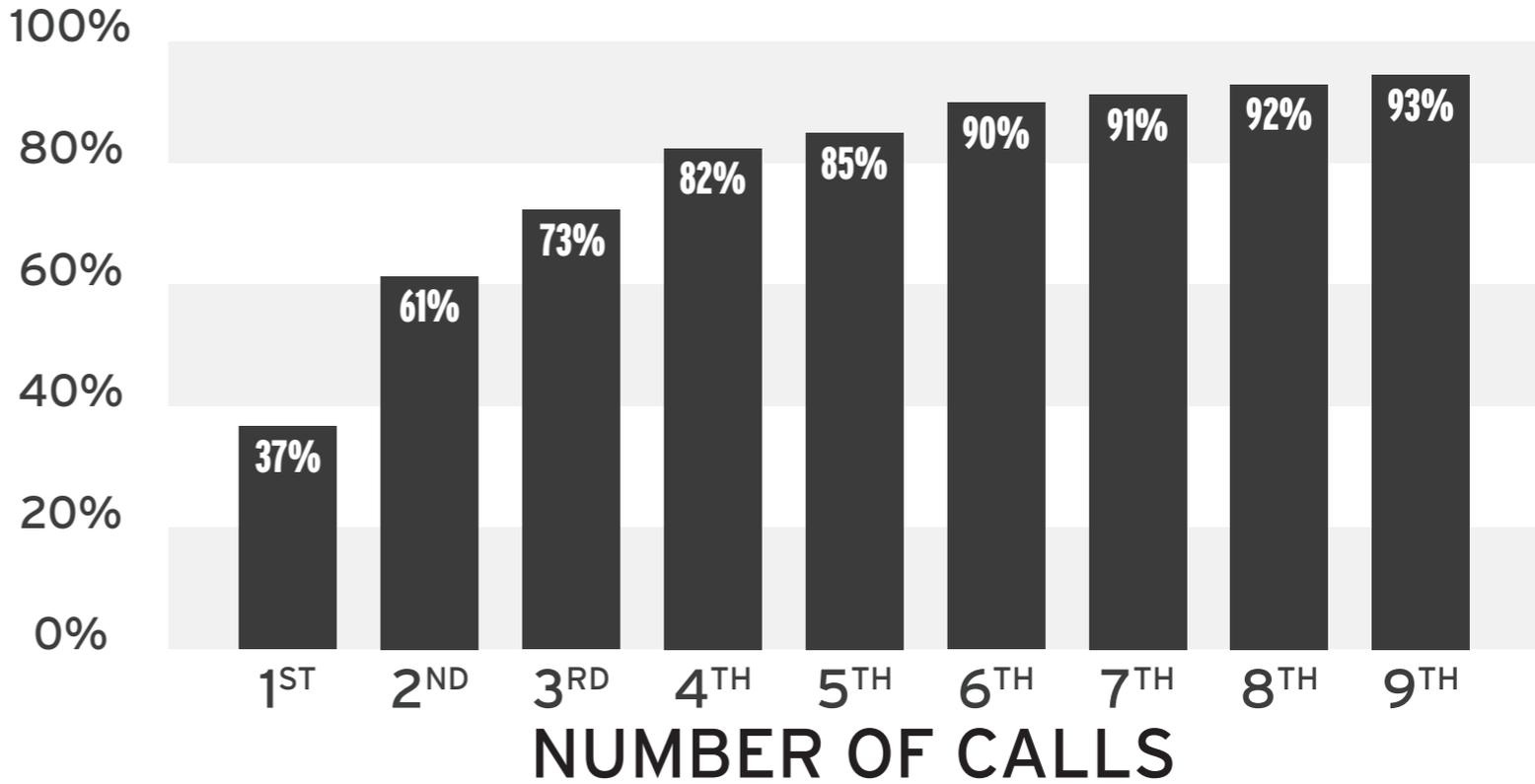
Leads That Become:

■ Qualified ■ Contacted

Key #2: Persistency

The average sales rep only makes 1.3 phone calls per lead before giving up. If you only call a lead once, you wring 37 percent of the value from your lead. Ideally, sales reps should be calling each lead six times. With six calls, you get 90 percent of the value from your leads.

% OF SALES BY CALL ATTEMPT



Key #3: Optimize Calls

As a best practice, ask your leads when is the best time to contact them. This can save sales reps a lot of wasted time. If a lead wants to be contacted, that lead will tell you when is most convenient.

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Phone: Ext.

When is the best time to call you?

8:00am - 12:00pm

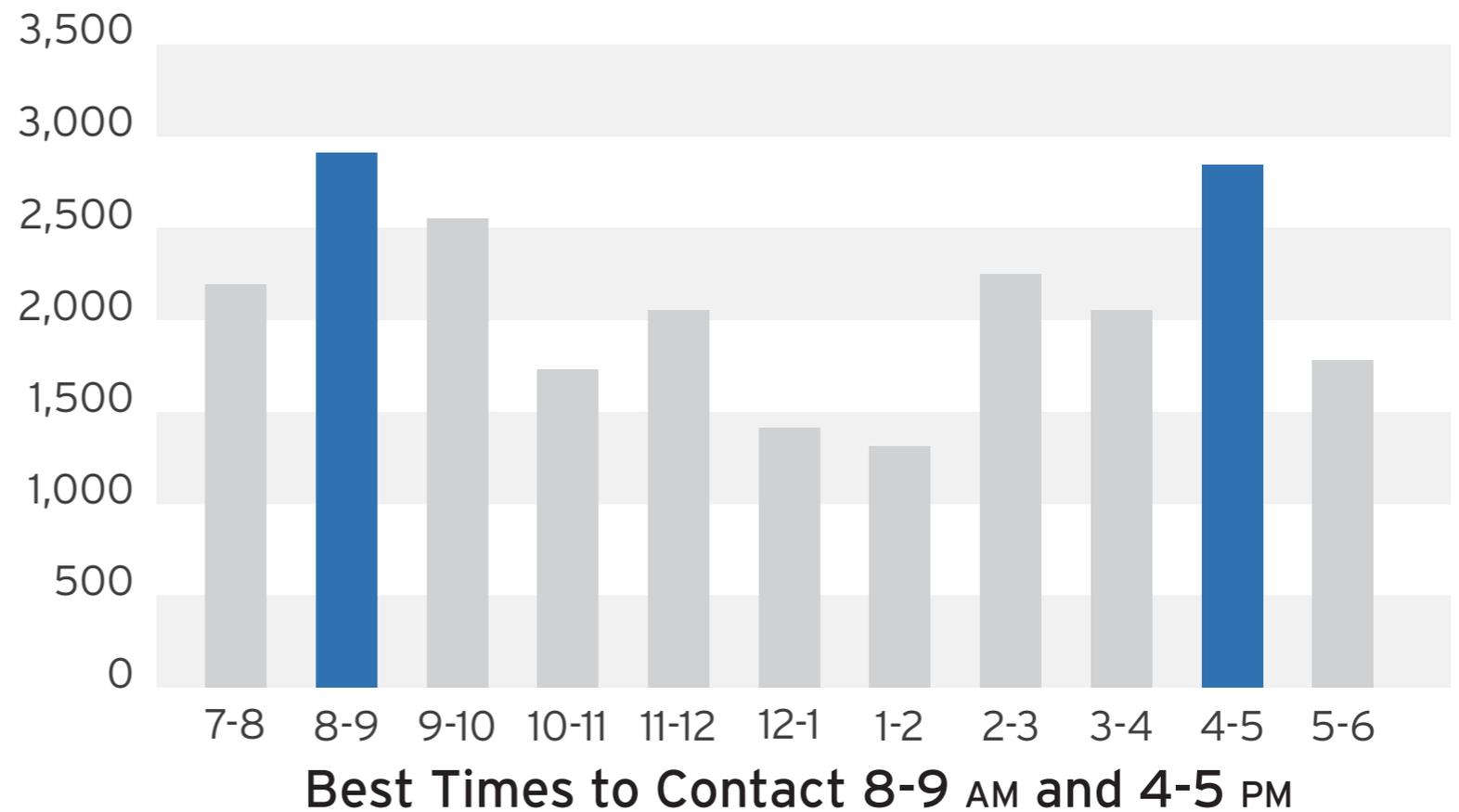
12:00pm - 5:00pm

Submit

Key #4: Time of Day

The best times to contact a lead are between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. or 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. The worst time of day to attempt contact is during the lunch hour. Make sure your sales reps are being most productive during these times.

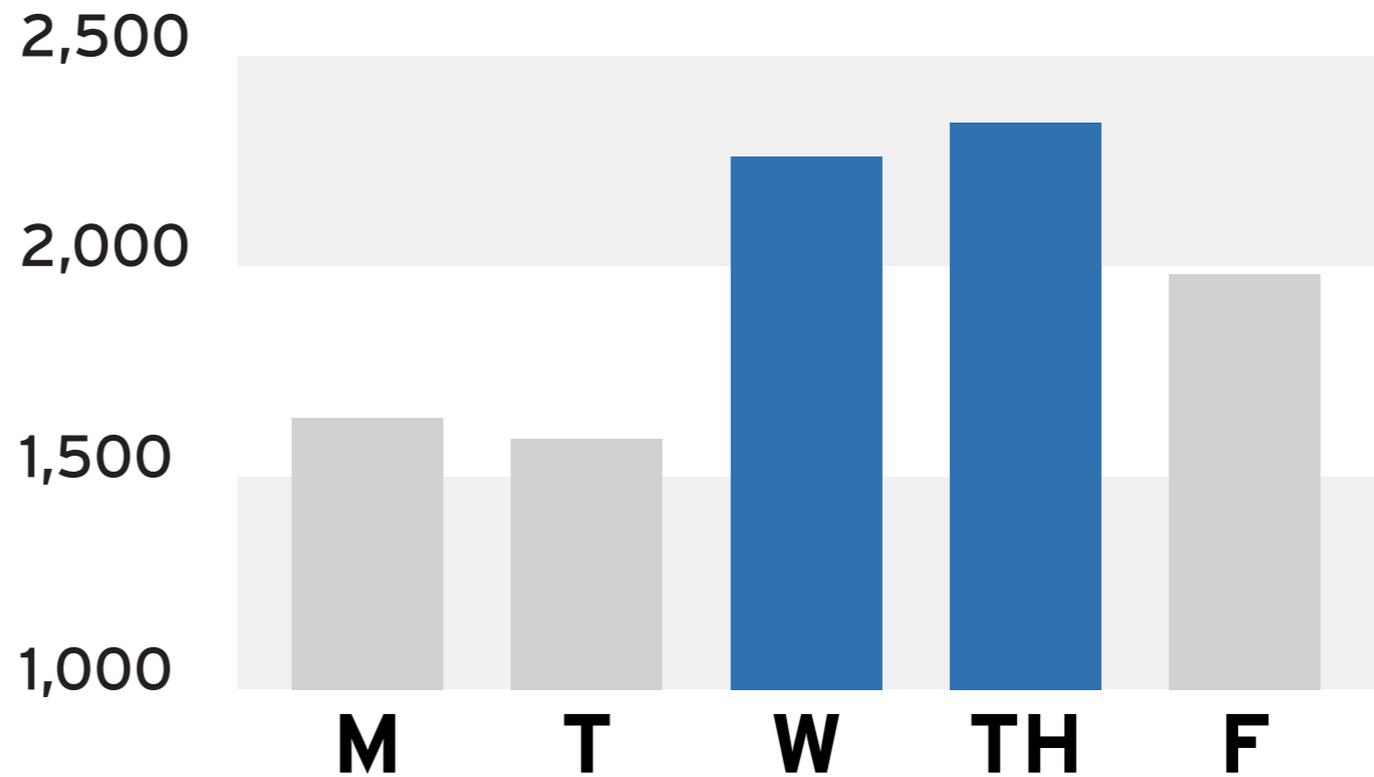
CONTACTS MADE FROM FIRST DIALS



Key #5: Day of Week

Wednesdays and Thursdays are the best days of the week for contacting leads. Tuesdays are the worst. When should you hold sales meetings? Tuesdays during lunchtime.

CONTACTS MADE FROM FIRST DIALS



Key #6: Direct-Dial Numbers

Vorsight’s research that appears earlier in this ebook confirms that reps who gather direct-dial numbers schedule dramatically more appointments. It seems obvious, but many sales reps still aren’t doing this.

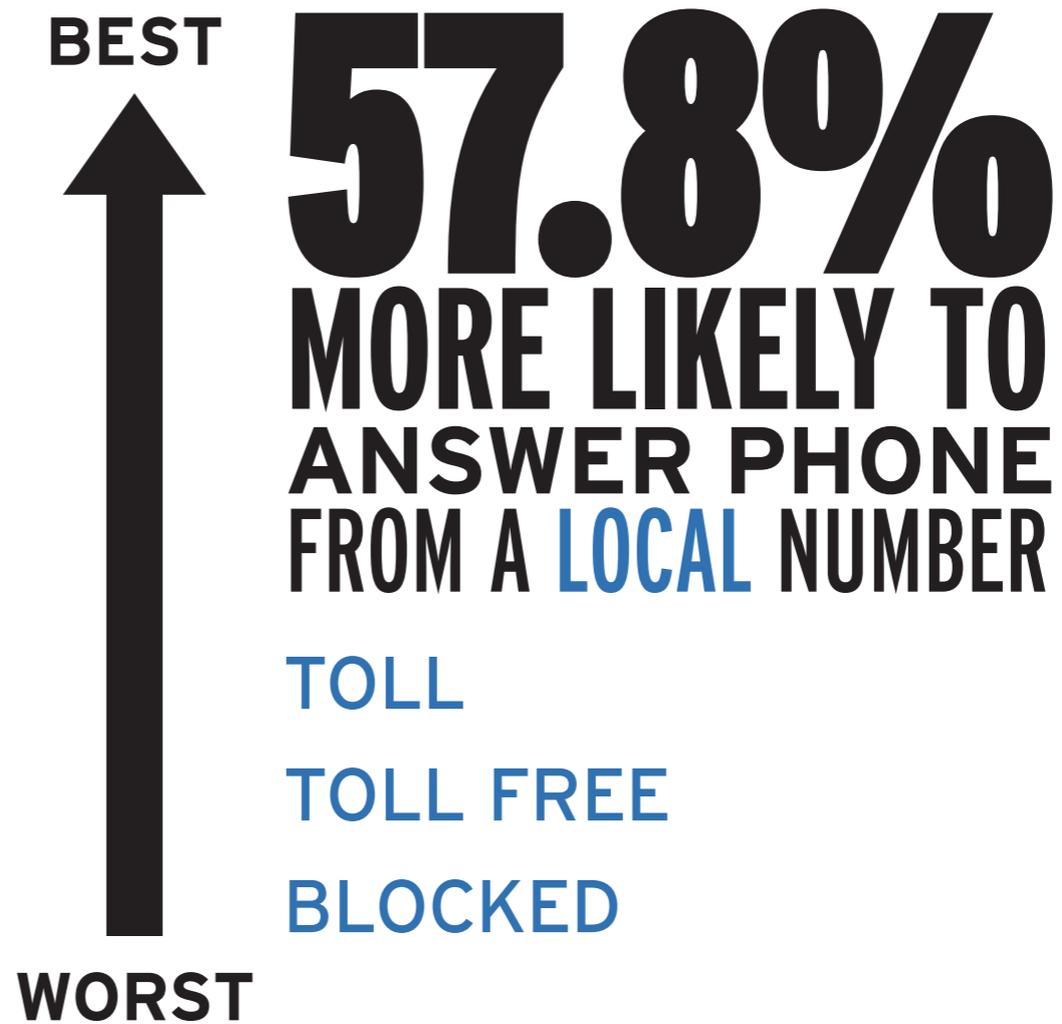
REPRESENTATIVE	AVERAGE MEETINGS PER MONTH (LAST 3)	% DIRECT LINES ON CONTACT LIST
1	11	51%
2	13	45%
3	20	76%
4	22	74%
5	29	87%
6	33	97.6%

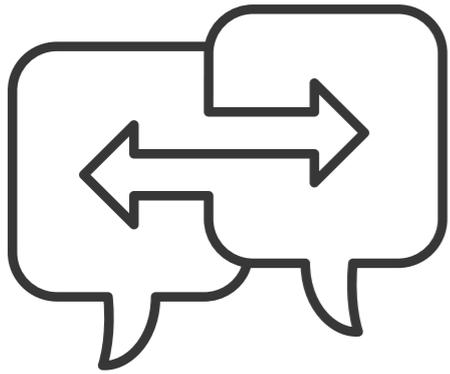
Source Vorsight

Key #7:

Leverage Dialer Technology

Technology has dramatically increased the effectiveness of sales teams. One feature of InsideSales.com's technology is called [LocalPresence](#). If you're calling a lead in New York from San Jose, LocalPresence will display a New York area code on your lead's CallerID. InsideSales.com's research has shown that displaying a local number increases the odds of getting your calls answered by 57.8 percent.

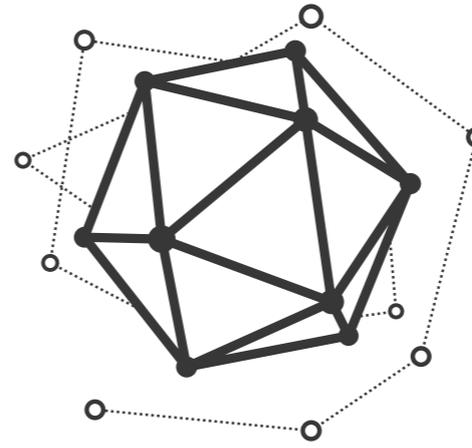




Communications



Gamification



Prediction



Data Visualization

Sales Acceleration Technology

Improve sales through science with InsideSales.com.

- Contact the right prospects, in the right way, at the right time.
- Work smarter by predicting which leads you are most likely to contact, qualify, and close.
- Motivate your sales team by making the sales process visual, competitive, and fun.
- Bring your sales data to the forefront by making it visual, meaningful, and actionable.

Summary & Credits

Traditional Cold Calling is Dead...

Traditional cold calling is dead, thanks to tools such as LinkedIn. However, contacting people you don't already know is still essential to sales.

Fortunately, the initial connection doesn't have to be cold anymore. Use social selling tools to make a connection before the call. Make sure your product would actually benefit your prospect. Have someone introduce you. Doing this changes the sales process. It takes the cold out of cold calling.

Free Resources for Sales Pros

Grab these valuable sales resources. They'll help you sell more – and they're free.

- [27 LinkedIn Tips: LinkedIn Best Practices For Entrepreneurs](#)
- [31 LinkedIn Tips – How to Use LinkedIn Best Practices for B2B Prospecting](#)
- [42 LinkedIn Inside Sales Tips – Ebook](#)
- [Quick Question Voicemail](#)
- [Power Player Voicemail](#)
- [5 Steps to Building a Team of Rock Star Sales Hunters](#)

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