

The State of Sales 2019



Australia Edition



Want to know what really makes the difference?

We've surveyed the most successful B2B sales professionals in Australia to find out what technology and trends are helping the top **10%** to smash their quotas.

I've been working in sales for over 20 years and selling has never been more challenging. Highly personalised services like Netflix and Amazon are driving customers to expect more from the brands they interact with, including those with B2B sales teams. Millennials, who have especially high expectations for personalisation, are gaining influence in the workforce and will make up 46% of professionals by 2020. This is why many sales teams are now relying on technology to give them an edge.

For example, a global bank recently wanted to find out which private companies in Sydney were growing the fastest and which of these companies had never been spoken to. They ran a company search for organisations in Sydney who have grown employee head count by over 40% in the last year. Next, they used the 'CRM Sync' feature to identify which companies they had not spoken to before. The search results brought up accounts in the CRM, their warm paths in, and clarified if they had spoken to them before. The result? A new multi-million account identified, prioritised and won.

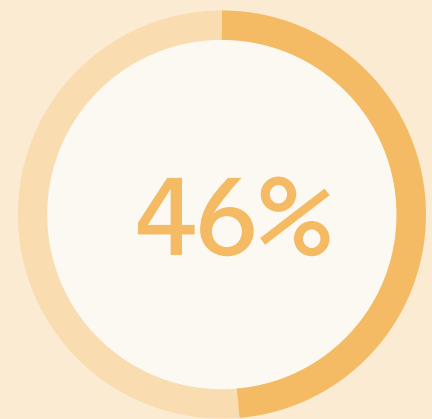
Not only do we know how the best sales people are hitting their numbers here in Australia but this research was part of a global survey of over 2,500 responses. This means we're able to see how some of the macro trends can be harnessed this side of the pacific.

Read on for Key Findings, I'm keen to see how you'll use these insights to boost your sales performance.

Letrechia Tippet

Head of LinkedIn Sales Solutions, ANZ

“Millennials, who have especially high expectations for personalisation, are *gaining influence* in the workforce and will make up



of professionals by 2020.”

Executive Summary: 5 key findings in Australia

1

Technology gives sales professionals a competitive edge. Nearly all sales professionals (93%) use sales technology to close more deals. Seventy-nine percent of sales professionals considered sales intelligence tools or networking platforms such as LinkedIn Sales Navigator or Premium/Facebook as extremely critical.

2

Decision makers expect understanding and human connection. Virtually all decision makers (95%) say they're more likely to consider a brand's products or services if sales professionals have a clear understanding of their business needs.

3

Marketing and sales orchestration helps close deals, but data silos remain. The top sales professionals are working more closely with marketing and seeing better results, but there's room for improvement. Only 34% of sales professionals report a significant overlap in the data used by marketing and sales to target leads.

4

Millennial sales professionals tap into marketing insights at higher rates. Millennials (ages 21-38) are quicker to implement new strategies like marketing and sales orchestration, which is contributing to their success as the highest-performing age group.

5

Without trust, fewer deals close. Sales professionals rank trust as the No. 1 factor in closing deals (27%)—above ROI and price—and 51% of decision makers rank trust as the top factor they desire in a salesperson.





CHAPTER 1

Sales technology
is the x factor
for closing deals

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Businesses are increasingly investing in sales technology. In particular, sales teams are turning to cloud-based software to accelerate productivity, gather contextual details about customers, and automate tedious tasks.

Nearly all sales professionals (**93%**) use technology to close more deals in Australia. Of this group, 98% consider sales technology “very important” or “important.” Top performing sales groups used more technology than their counterparts. **82%** are using sales technology just as much or more than in 2017. CRM adoption alone has grown **22%** since 2017, with **over half (52%)** of sales

professionals reporting that they use CRM applications. Of the CRM users, **77%** described it as extremely critical to their jobs.

With sales tech on the rise, it’s no surprise that companies are pouring more resources into equipping their salesforces with these tools.

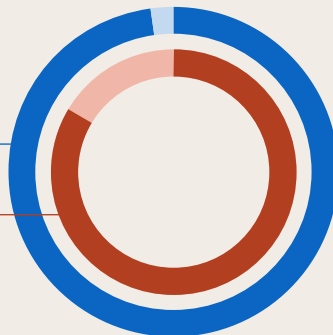
How important are these sales technology platforms in closing deals?

Sales professionals who rely on sales technology outperform their peers. Here’s how top sales professionals differ from their peers when rating the technology platforms, they consider “very important” or “important” to closing deals.

Networking platforms

Top sales professionals **98%**

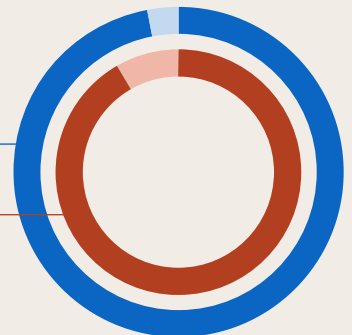
Others **79%**



Collaboration tools

Top sales professionals **97%**

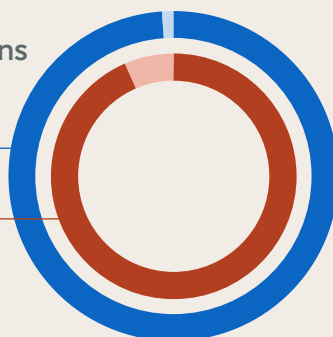
Others **91%**



Sales intelligence solutions

Top sales professionals **99%**

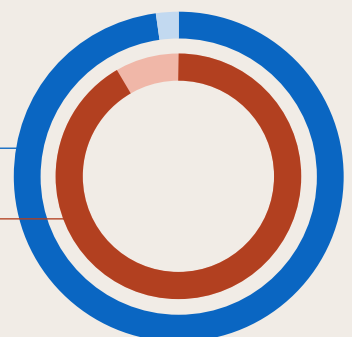
Others **94%**



Email tracking tools

Top sales professionals **98%**

Others **91%**





Social platforms are
table stakes for the
modern seller

62%

of sales professionals say they're most active on LinkedIn for business purposes, using tools like LinkedIn Sales Navigator (33%) and LinkedIn Premium (29%), compared to social media platforms like Facebook (47%), Google Search (37%) and Twitter (27%).

Technology usage is up across multiple platforms:



52%

More than half of sales professionals (52%) use CRM applications like Salesforce and Microsoft Dynamics—**up 28% from 2017**

45%

45% use collaboration tools like Box, Google Docs, Microsoft Office and Dropbox

46%

46% use networking platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook

37%

37% use enterprise communication platforms like Salesforce Chatter, Slack, and Twitter



CHAPTER 2

Sales technology
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a human touch

Sales technology is ineffective without a human touch

Personal connection matters. As beloved B2C brands have conditioned everyone to expect highly personalised recommendations, content and personalised interactions, decision makers have embraced similar expectations of the B2B path to purchase. Conventional sales approaches don't stack up—buyers now find them cold, impersonal and obviously automated.

As a result, decision makers are more likely to consider a brand's products or services when the experience is personalised, for instance if a sales professional has a clear understanding of their business needs (95%) or their role (95%); shares content relevant to their role (95%); provides personalised communications (95%); or targets the appropriate people at their company for initial discussions (93%).

Decision makers are more likely to engage with sales when introduced through a mutual connection, particularly if the sales professional represents a strong brand (49%). **The influence of a strong brand is the No. 1 factor** cited by decision makers when choosing to engage with sales.

Which factors most influence decision makers in an initial engagement?

49%

Representing a well-known company with a strong professional brand

46%

Providing specific information relevant to their current job

41%

Mentioning the sales professional's company and product solutions

40%

Referencing a colleague they both know

40%

Having good charisma



48%

of decision makers say **websites**
are a company's top asset
influencing purchasing decisions

Decision makers are least likely to engage with sales professionals who lack knowledge about their company (84%) and whose products or services are irrelevant to their company (85%).

Online first impressions matter.

Forty-eight percent of decision makers say a company's website is the top marketing asset influencing their purchasing decisions.

Which top marketing assets most influence purchasing decisions?

24% eBooks



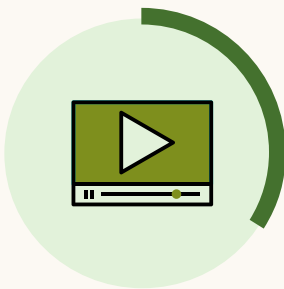
27% blogs



23% webinars



34% videos



44% events



48% website





CHAPTER 3

The sales and marketing divide diminishes

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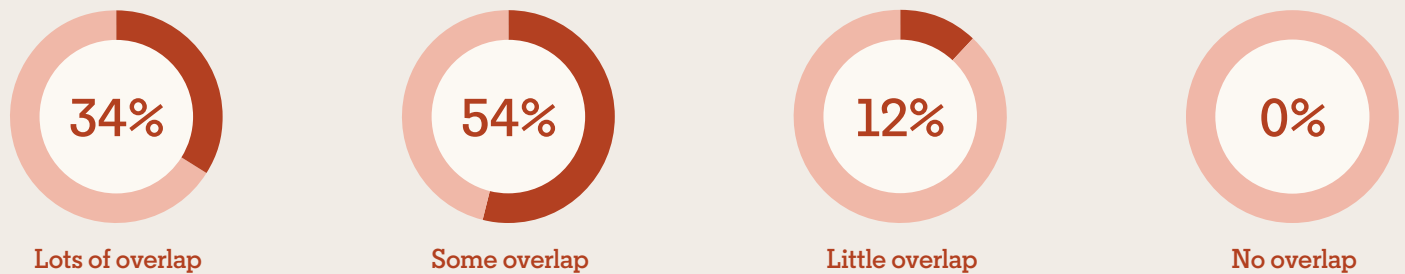
Sales and marketing are starting to work more closely together, benefiting both sales professionals and decision makers alike. Ninety-four percent of sales executives say they work more closely with marketing than in past years.

Top sales professionals have a stronger relationship with their marketing counterparts. They are **22%** more likely to say they work “very closely” or “closely” with marketing in prospecting efforts than their peers.

On a scale of one (a very small role) to 10 (a very big role), **89%** of the top sales professionals rate marketing’s importance in closing deals at an eight or above, while **82%** of their average counterparts say the same.

Still, the data divide remains. While many sales and marketing teams are keen to partner more closely, data is often siloed in the technology platforms used by each function. Only **34%** of sales professionals say they see significant overlap in the data used by marketing and sales to target prospects.

To what degree does marketing and sales data overlap to target leads?



This misalignment could contribute to the quality of leads sales professionals say they receive from marketing. Only **33%** say leads from marketing are excellent and **42%** say they’re good.

Marketing and sales misalignment impacts brand perception. Ninety-two percent of decision makers say

consistent marketing and sales language about a product is “very important” (**46%**) or “important” (**46%**).

Nearly three quarters of decision makers (**73%**) say they often or always experience different messaging from sales and marketing when learning about a solution.



CHAPTER 4

Millennials are
eager to orchestrate
marketing and
sales efforts

Millennials are eager to orchestrate marketing and sales efforts

Millennials are quicker than other age groups to use new strategies and technologies. These younger sales executives mirror the technology usage of the most successful sales professionals at the highest rates. Forty-two percent of millennials say they anticipate spending more time this year using sales technology.

A tight-knit relationship with marketing is paying off for both millennials and non-millennials. **Ninety-six percent** of millennials work closely with marketing in prospecting efforts with **88%** of non-millennials not too far behind.

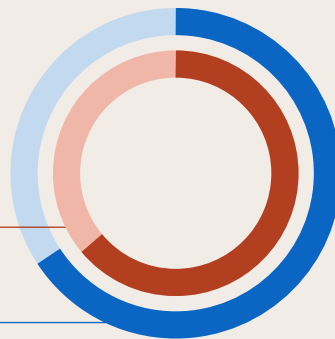
Millennials and non-millennials use LinkedIn (**69% vs 77%**) but there's a larger difference when it comes to Sales Navigator with **43%** of millennials using it versus **57%** of non-millennials.

How did 2017 sales performance compare by generation?

Exceeded their 2017 projected target revenue by over 25%

Non-millennials **64%**
(Baby Boomer and Gen X)

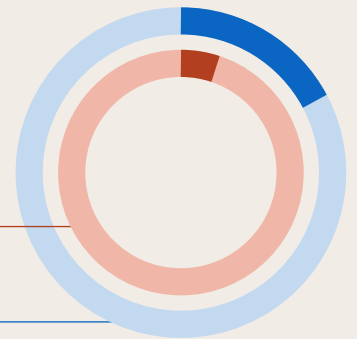
Millennials **66%**



Exceeded their 2017 projected target revenue by over 50%

Non-millennials **5%**
(Baby Boomer and Gen X)

Millennials **17%**



Millennials (57%) and non-millennials (54%) alike think CRM applications are “very important” to their success.

Millennials and non-millennials also think similarly about sales intelligence solutions. **56%** of millennials and **53%** of non-millennials find it “very important”.



CHAPTER 5

Trust is the top
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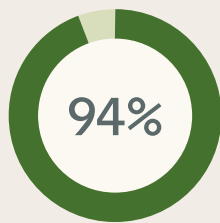
It's more important than ever for sales professionals to earn and maintain trust as consumer skepticism of big brands peaks.

Ninety-eight percent of sales professionals say trust is “very important” or “important” to winning new business. **Twenty seven percent** rank trust as the most important contributor to closing a deal – even above ROI of the product or service (**20%**) and price (**20%**). An additional **18%** rank trust second. In the global results of the 2017 survey, trust was also ranked as the most important aspect.

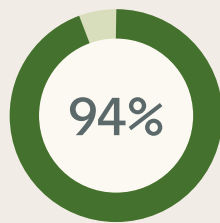
Fifty-one percent of decision makers rank trust as the No. 1 factor they desire in a salesperson, followed by responsiveness (**42%**), expertise in the field (**42%**), problem solving (**37%**) and transparency (**37%**).

Sales professionals earn high marks from buyers

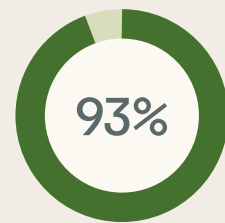
When asked how they perceive sales professionals they work with, decision makers “strongly agree” or “agree” sales professionals are:



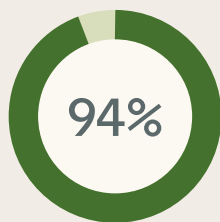
Professional



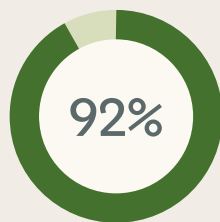
Well informed about their industry



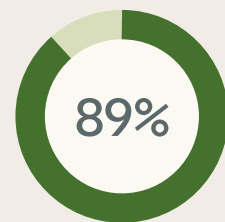
Consultative



Well informed about their company



Trusted advisors



Focused on building relationships

78%

Over three quarters (78%) of decision makers feel the sales professionals they work with are essential partners all or most of the time (36% and 42%, respectively).

Conclusion

Today's selling landscape comes with heightened consumer expectations and skepticism—without a personalised purchasing experience, you'll quickly lose buyers' interest.

That's why it's important to implement a modern selling strategy: tap into technology to scale, lean into marketing to align insights, but don't forget real human connections are irreplaceable. Top sales professionals are closing more deals on a foundation of trust; relationships are still at the heart of selling.

This approach will enable you to better target prospects, personalise experiences and meet buyers' expectations, today and in the future.

Methodology

Market Cube, a research panel company, conducted two online surveys from November 2-29, 2018.

For 2018, two sample groups were surveyed representing both sales professionals and decision makers. The first was a sample of 505 professionals from Australia who primarily work in B2B sales. The second was a sample of 501 business decision makers from Australia who have influence over purchasing decisions at B2B companies. Both samples includes respondents over 21-years-old who are employed at companies of different sizes and functions.

The report also references a group of "top sales professionals" who are defined as sales professionals who exceed their sales target by at least **25%**.

Try out the Sales Navigator demo

