



5 Ways Inside Sales Has Changed



Role of Inside Sales Representatives

When you look at the sales landscape and the worldwide marketplace, it is obvious that things have changed A LOT over the past 10 to 20 years, particularly when you consider the impact of the Internet and the utilization of websites, social media and technology. One role in particular, the role of the inside sales representative, has changed drastically.

“ *Great inside sales representatives are socially savvy, educated individuals who understand how to build relationships and trust by utilizing proven email or phone techniques. While their pitch is typically not scripted, the path to success generally requires several touches and has changed considerably in the last two decades* ”



By definition, inside sales is professional sales done remotely or virtually. But inside sales representatives are absolutely not “smile and dial” B2C single-touch telemarketers. They are generally selling larger, more complex and more expensive B2B products or services. Great inside sales representatives are socially savvy, educated individuals who understand how to build relationships and trust by utilizing proven email or phone techniques. While their pitch is typically not scripted, the path to success generally requires several touches and has changed considerably in the last two decades.

To master any game, you must continually examine the changing landscape and understand HOW it has changed. Below are five huge new developments in the landscape of inside sales that you need to understand in order to compete effectively:

1. You Can Now Pre-research the Target Person or Company

Great inside sales reps now understand a little investigative work can go a long way. With the invention of the Internet and social media, there is a lot of information you can find on companies and individuals that can help quickly warm a conversation. Three minutes of research can make all the difference in determining whether or not you open the door to a 30-minute conversation and start building a relationship with your prospect.

2. Inside Sales Reps Are Flocking to Social Media

The new breed of inside sales representative understands that social media is a crucial way to stay in front of clients. Not only does social media let your buyers find out more about you, it gives you a platform to educate them about your product and service while you continue to build the relationship.

3. Refining the Value Proposition

Inside sales reps now know that their job is not just to provide information about their product or service—it is to refine their value proposition. Because the Internet gives potential customers vast amounts of information about the products or services they are investigating, most customers these days are already 60% of the way through the buying process before they ever speak to an inside sales rep. What does this mean for the rep? General info about your product or service is not going to be enough. A good inside sales rep is going to push to differentiate their product or service with use cases and client success stories, industry analysis, and by evaluating the competitive landscape.

4. Collaboration Solutions

Collaboration solutions have opened up the playing field to selling “anytime, anywhere.” With new cloud meeting software capabilities, inside sales representatives now have a huge leg up on their past counterparts. If the need arises for a presentation, they can easily log into a meeting solution and share their presentation digitally. With the Internet, the sales agent can be in any time zone in any part of the world. Learning to leverage the full capabilities of cloud collaboration can allow the inside sales agent to provide expertise anytime, anywhere.

5. Being a Facilitator

Inside sales reps are now becoming “great facilitators.” These days in sales, there are really only a few points in a client relationship (the demo, the quote, the contract negotiation) that require an inside sales rep to “sell.” Much of the game in inside sales is to be accessible to provide expertise. If a customer needs reviews or research done, often a good inside salesperson will help facilitate the sharing of information. They will also recruit colleagues as resources for discussions and expertise.

Today, good inside sales representatives can wear many hats. They can cross into being product managers, social media marketers or content gurus, and they need to understand all of the basic principles of sales and communication. While there will be multiple touches that go into any inside sales effort, learning to leverage the new tools and capabilities of today's landscape will go a long way. The world marketplace is constantly changing, and inside sales is no different.

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Contact Us

AMERICAS

sales.noram@zinfitech.com

6200 Stoneridge Mall Road, Suite 300
Pleasanton, CA 94588
United States of America

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

sales.emea@zinfitech.com

Davidson House
Forbury Square, Reading
RG1 3EU, United Kingdom

ASIA PACIFIC

sales.ap@zinfitech.com

3 Temasek Avenue
#21-00 Centennial Tower
Singapore 039190