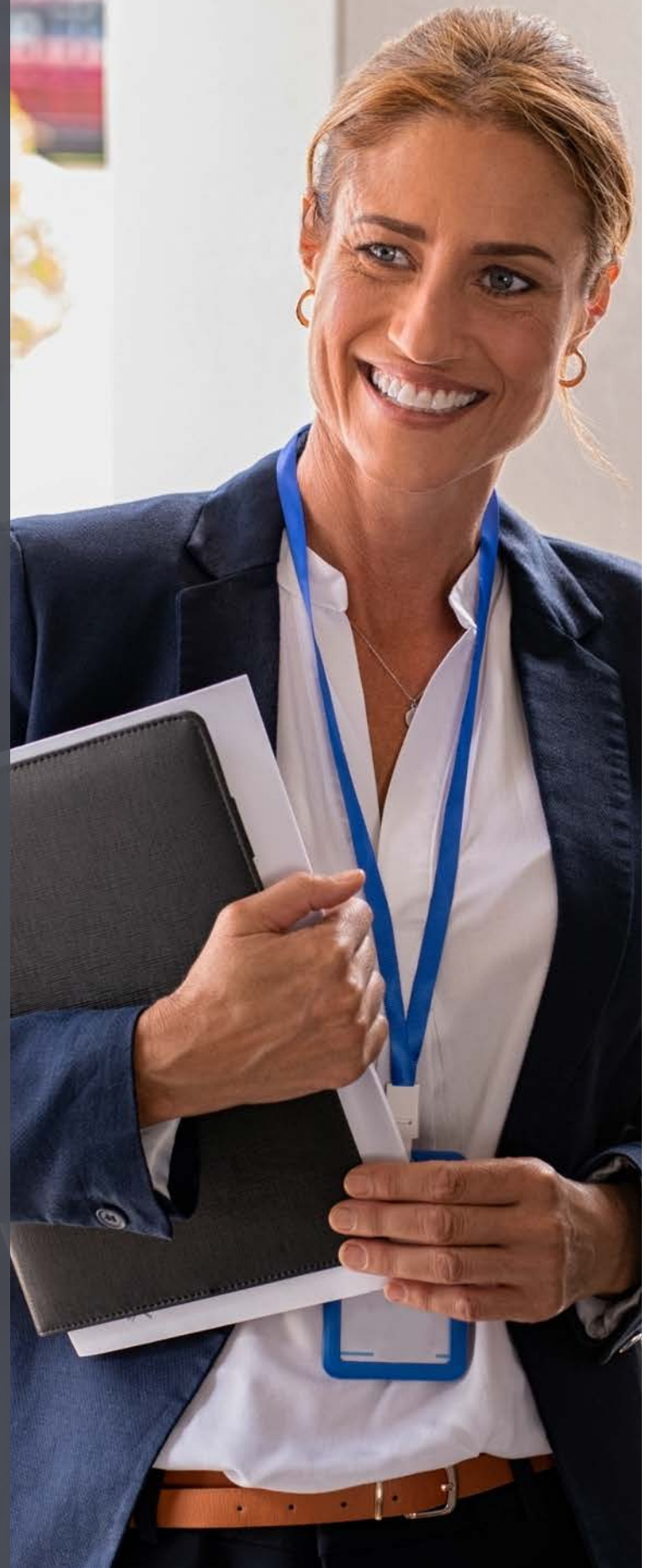# 2022 State of Field Sales Report

THIRD EDITION
Published December 2021

This is the third edition of SPOTIO's State of Field Sales Report, in which we survey a wide range of B2B field sales professionals and leaders to understand their challenges and forecast where the industry, as a whole, is going.

Each year we request responses from several hundred individuals, receiving back an average of 200 submissions for each years' report. The valuable information they shared with us is available to you in the pages below.

Summary

2021 has proven to be an interesting year for field sales. Many professionals in this industry were forced to adapt to a pandemic, while facing proclamations that field sales is dead. We explore this statement in this report, concluding that field sales is very much alive and well moving into 2022, while understanding that success as a field sales rep requires proper tools.

Customer relationship management (CRM) software, sometimes referred to as a System of Record, is a popular solution in sales circles. But the results of our State of Field Sales Report are clear: CRM software alone is not enough. To get the most out of their CRMs, sales leaders need to invest in a System of *Action* as well.

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By using a proven CRM software and a System of Action platform in tandem, field sales teams will be able to overcome common challenges, improve their results, and propel their organizations forward, both now and in the future.
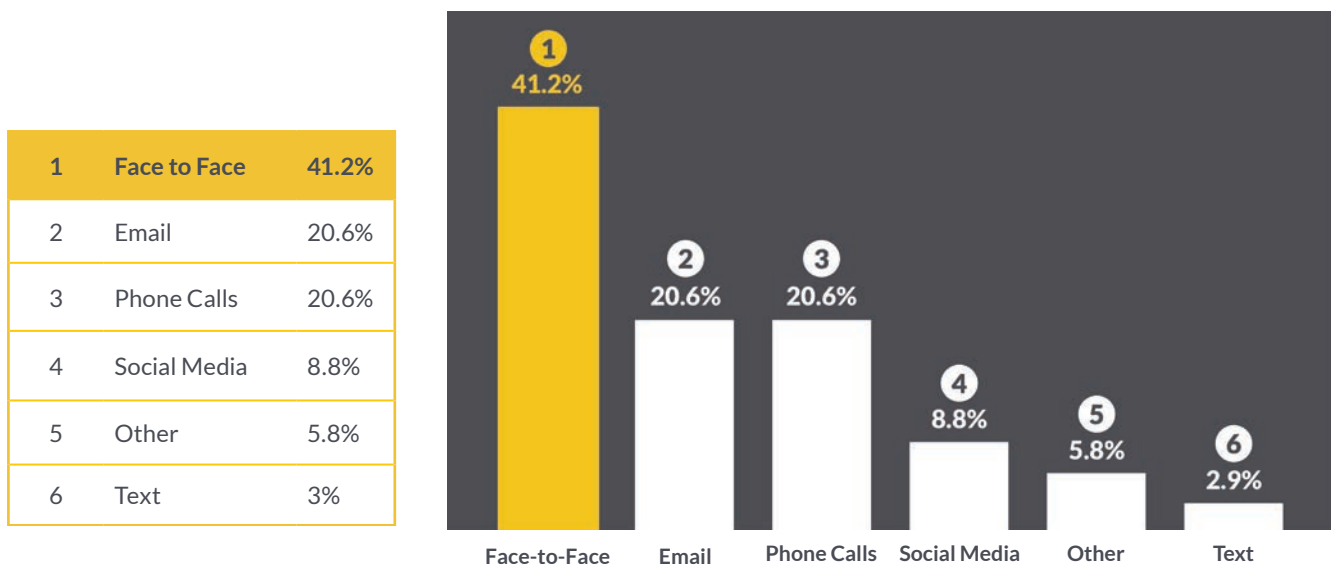
Will Field Sales be Relevant in 2022?

The rise of inside sales, as well as the proliferation of software designed to help inside sellers, has many within the industry asking if field sales teams are relevant. The debate reached a fever pitch during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when field sales teams were largely sidelined due to public health and safety concerns.

Research supports that field sales teams are still relevant moving into 2022.

SURVEY RESPONSE
Which communication channel is most effective for prospecting?

1	Face to Face	41.2%
2	Email	20.6%
3	Phone Calls	20.6%
4	Social Media	8.8%
5	Other	5.8%
6	Text	3%

① 41.2% — Face-to-Face
② 20.6% — Email
③ 20.6% — Phone Calls
④ 8.8% — Social Media
⑤ 5.8% — Other
⑥ 2.9% — Text

The number of survey respondents who prefer to find prospects via face to face interactions, *is at least double those who prefer email, phone calls, or other channels.*

The truth is, many businesses see better results when selling products and services in a face to face manner. Moreover, a significant portion of customers prefer to purchase said products and services from salespeople that they can physically shake hands with.
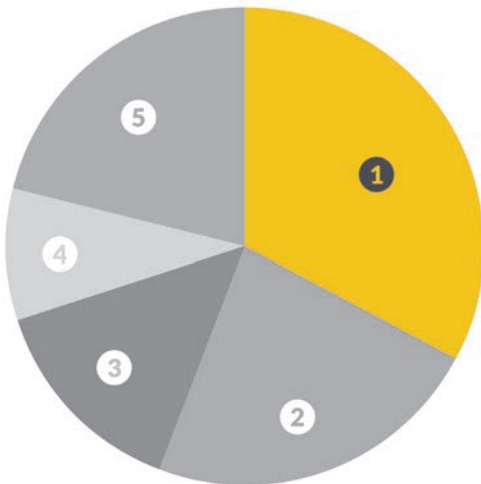
This is why many businesses—even those who have historically funnelled 100% of their resources into inside sales and/or eCommerce strategies—are looking to evolve their sales models and employ field sales teams in the near future.

How Can Field Sales Teams Improve?

There's always room for improvement. When it comes to field sales, the quickest and easiest way for most teams to achieve greater success is to invest in better tools.

SURVEY RESPONSE
"What capabilities would drive the largest incremental improvements in sales team performance?"

1	**Access to tools and software that enable success**	**33%**
2	Getting early indicators of what reps are underperforming and why	23%
3	Getting a clear understanding of where my reps are getting stuck in the sales process	14%
4	Getting a clear understanding of the activities of my distributed sales reps	9%
5	Other	21%

When it comes to field sales, top performing reps use *CRM software to organize customer information*, and *Systems of Action to close deals faster.*

It doesn't matter what industry you are in, the tools you use matter. These tools have been proven to improve sales by **29%** and productivity by **46%** respectively.
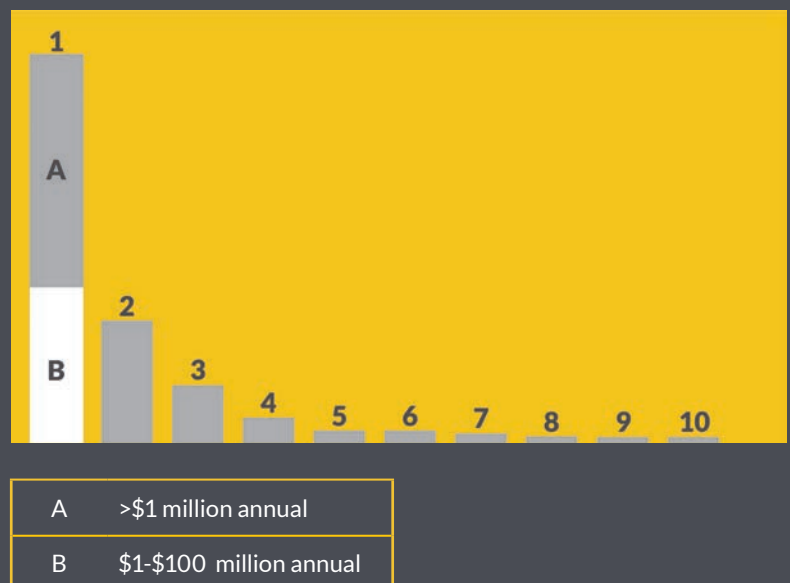
Who is Using CRM Software?

Given the above statistics about CRM software, one would think that every field sales department would invest in and use this kind of tool. But that's not the case.

SURVEY RESPONSE
"What is your company's current CRM software?"

1	They do not have/use one	57.55%
2	Salesforce.com	19.81%
3	Microsoft Dynamics	8.49%
4	Hubspot	3.77%
5	SAP	2.83%
6	Pipedrive	2.83%
7	Zoho	1.89%
8	Agency Bloc	.94%
9	Google	.94%
10	Oracle	.94%

A	>$1 million annual
B	$1-$100 million annual

Over 57% of survey respondents said they do not have/use a CRM software.

Nearly half of people who responded this way work for small businesses who drive less than $1 million in revenue per year. *But 41% of them are employed by medium-sized businesses* whose annual revenue numbers lie somewhere between $1 million and $100 million.

Massive companies like Salesforce, Oracle, SAP, and HubSpot have introduced CRM technology to millions of people, helping them grow sales at revolutionary speeds. Despite this, many businesses have yet to adopt a true System of Record. The question is *why?*

salesforce   ORACLE   SAP   HubSpot

Does CRM Software Have Value?

The stats are clear: sales teams that use CRM software achieve better results. *So why don't more businesses use this kind of tool?*

According to survey respondents, beliefs about the efficacy of CRM platforms is questionable. Some of these results include:

65%
Believe CRM software is either unhelpful or a hindrance to success in their roles

63%
Do not believe CRM platforms help efficiently manage their pipeline

56%
Do not believe CRM platforms help close highest-value leads

Yet, 33% of respondents' teams *miss their quotas.*

What's causing the disconnect between the proven power of CRM software and its perception amongst professional sellers? The answer is the way CRMs are used.

When used as a System of Record *alone*, CRM software has the potential to bog field sales teams down. Cataloging prospect and customer information in a company-wide system becomes a chore—a chore that seemingly takes away from sales.
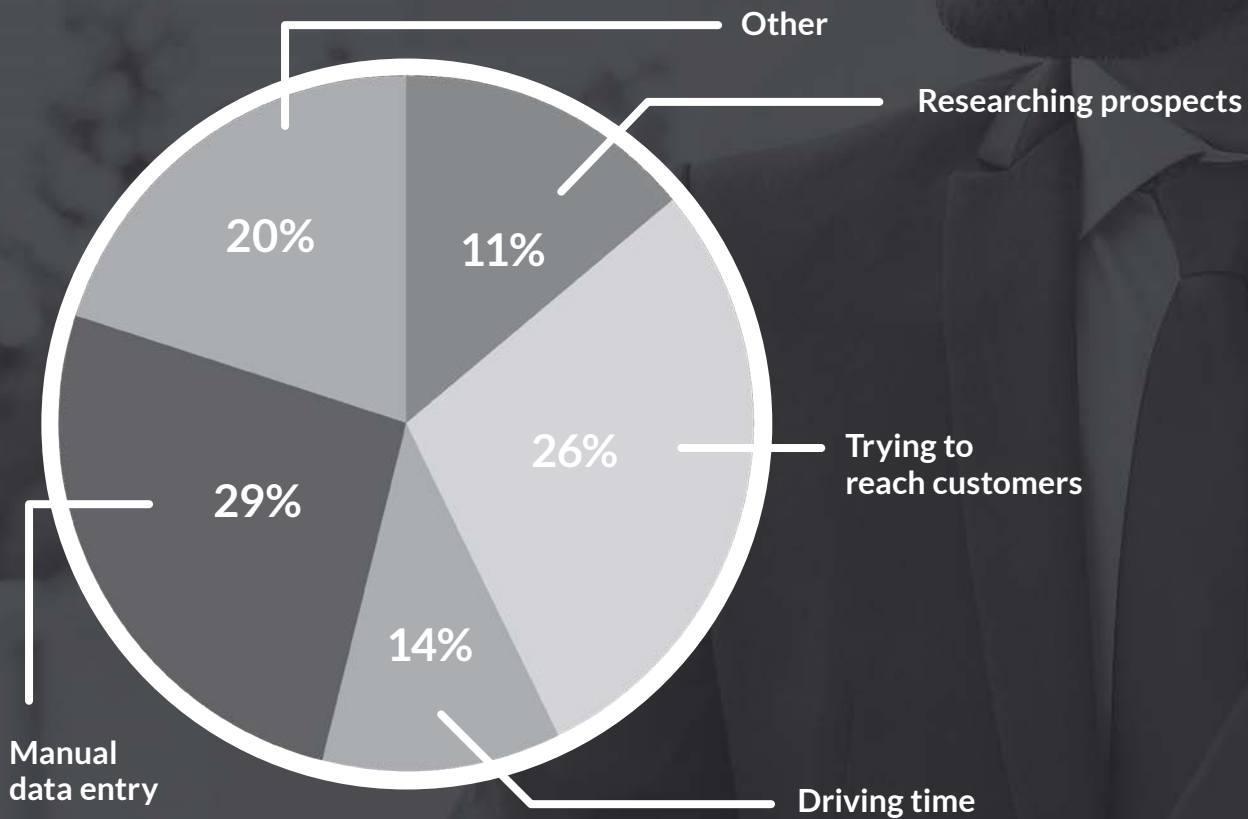
In fact, *a lack of time is one of the biggest challenges* that field sales teams face.

The Common Challenge That Field Sales Teams Face

The average sales rep spends as little as **30%** of their time selling. The other 70% or so is spent on non-selling activities like data entry, meetings, training, and travel.

SURVEY RESPONSE
"When you think about your day to day, what is the biggest time-waster or distraction from achieving your goals?"

Other

Researching prospects

20%

11%

26%

Trying to reach customers

29%

14%

Manual data entry

Driving time

Field sales teams face the same challenges as every other seller: *a lack of time*

It's difficult to close deals at a consistent clip when your days are filled with CRM upkeep and travel from one prospect to the next. Fortunately, Systems of Action offer a solution to this problem, as well as the key to success with your CRM platform of choice.

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Getting the Most Out of CRM with a System of Action

66% of survey respondents claim to not use sales engagement software.

Of the 34% who do, most report existing CRM tools *deployed for tasks they were not designed to do.*

Systems of Action helps streamline the sales process via lead generation, communication, territory management, routing, and analytics tools.

This indicates *a huge opportunity for growth.*

If field sales teams adopt a true sales engagement platform, and combine it with a proven CRM, they have the potential to revolutionize their sales processes and create actionable, data-based strategies.

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Benefits of a System of Action

INCREASE REP PRODUCTIVITY

Most field sales reps don't have enough time to complete the tasks assigned to them and meet quota. Things like data entry and travel eat away at their available hours. Systems of Action help them save time via advanced automations.

- **Automatically log interactions** between reps and leads, capture data during sales meetings, and pass accurate records to a chosen CRM platform.

- **Plan the most efficient travel route** from one rep to the next in order to reduce windshield time, while automatically cataloging mileage information.

- **Build messaging templates** based on proven interactions that can be quickly customized and sent to prospects from any device via email or text.

CLARIFY REP'S NEXT STEPS

21% of survey respondents said they'd like access to tools and software that make it clear _what they need to do to be successful on the job_.

Top-rated Systems of Action allow sales managers to create a customized series of events for their reps to follow. Doing so shows reps exactly who to engage with, how to engage them, and when to make contact so that nothing falls through the cracks.

The results of these customized event series can then be cataloged in a CRM software, where they'll be stored for future reference and analysis.

GENERATE BETTER LEADS

Top Systems of Action give users better access to information about potential prospects via integrations with Google Places, as well as filters, which will allow them to find their exact target customer in less time.

26% of survey respondents said better leads would make them a better sales person.

Once high-value leads are found with a System of Action, they can easily be moved to a CRM via seamless integrations.

EVALUATE REP PERFORMANCE

Finally, professional Systems of Action give users the ability to create customized reports based on the data that matters most to _them and their organization_. That way they can properly evaluate rep performance and act accordingly.

Are your reps missing their sales goals? _Why is that?_

As a sales manager, you need to know if your reps are underperforming because of a lack of effort or poor training.

The analytics dashboard inside your System of Action will give you the answers.

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Conclusion

The 2022 State of Field Sales Report illuminates the advantages and shortcomings of CRM software. While sales teams can achieve amazing results with this kind of tool, many do not. This is because most CRMs are either difficult and/or time-consuming to operate properly.

Ultimately, CRM software is designed for company leadership. As such, it often lacks the simplicity and elegance that sales reps require for day-to-day use.

Systems of Action, commonly known as sales engagement platforms, *are the missing piece of the puzzle...*

Systems of Action, commonly known as sales engagement platforms, are the missing piece of the puzzle because they allow field sales teams to easily log information into their CRMs, and make sure the data they collect is both accurate and usable—something most CRMs aren't equipped to do on their own.

When your company's technology stack includes a CRM software and a System of Action, you'll be able to boost field sales rep efficiency, maintain better customer records, close more deals, and help your organization achieve greater levels of success.

About SPOTIO

SPOTIO is the only sales engagement software designed specifically for field sales professionals. Field sellers in a variety of industries use SPOTIO to prospect for customers more efficiently, manage territories more effectively, increase productivity via route planning and task automation features, and properly manage sales reps. If you want to grow your company's field sales revenue by 23%, **request a free demo** of SPOTIO today.

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