

A man with glasses and a woman are in a warehouse. The man is looking at a tablet held by the woman. They are standing in front of metal shelving units filled with boxes. The image has a blue tint. On the left side, there is a decorative graphic of a grid of hexagons, with one hexagon highlighted as a 3D cube.

# THE FIELD SALES BENCHMARK REPORT 2021

How do you compare with hundreds of manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors surveyed, when it comes to field sales?



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# INTRODUCTION

We surveyed over 250 manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors with field sales teams over the course of 2021 to find out what their biggest challenges are and how they use technology to overcome them. In a separate survey, we asked over 700 sales managers and business owners with field sales teams what technology they use to manage their sales operations.

This benchmark report for 2021 should give you some insight into how you and your sales team compare in terms of challenges, technology used and sales rep productivity and effectiveness.

# STUCK FOR TIME?

CHECK OUT OUR KEY FINDINGS.

Here is a selection of the most insightful figures of this report to whet your appetite:

26

different industries represented in our global survey.

58%

of those surveyed listed *'Too much admin'* as their biggest pain point.

47%

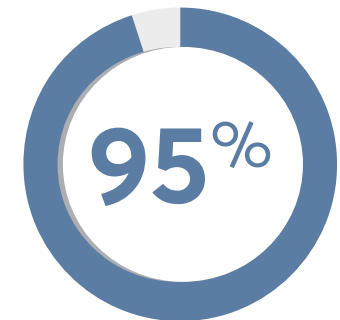
of those surveyed indicated they need to increase order accuracy



the average sales team size was calculated to be 9 field sales reps.

58%

of people use a CRM.



of people use an ERP or accounting package.

**HOW IS YOUR  
INDUSTRY DOING?**

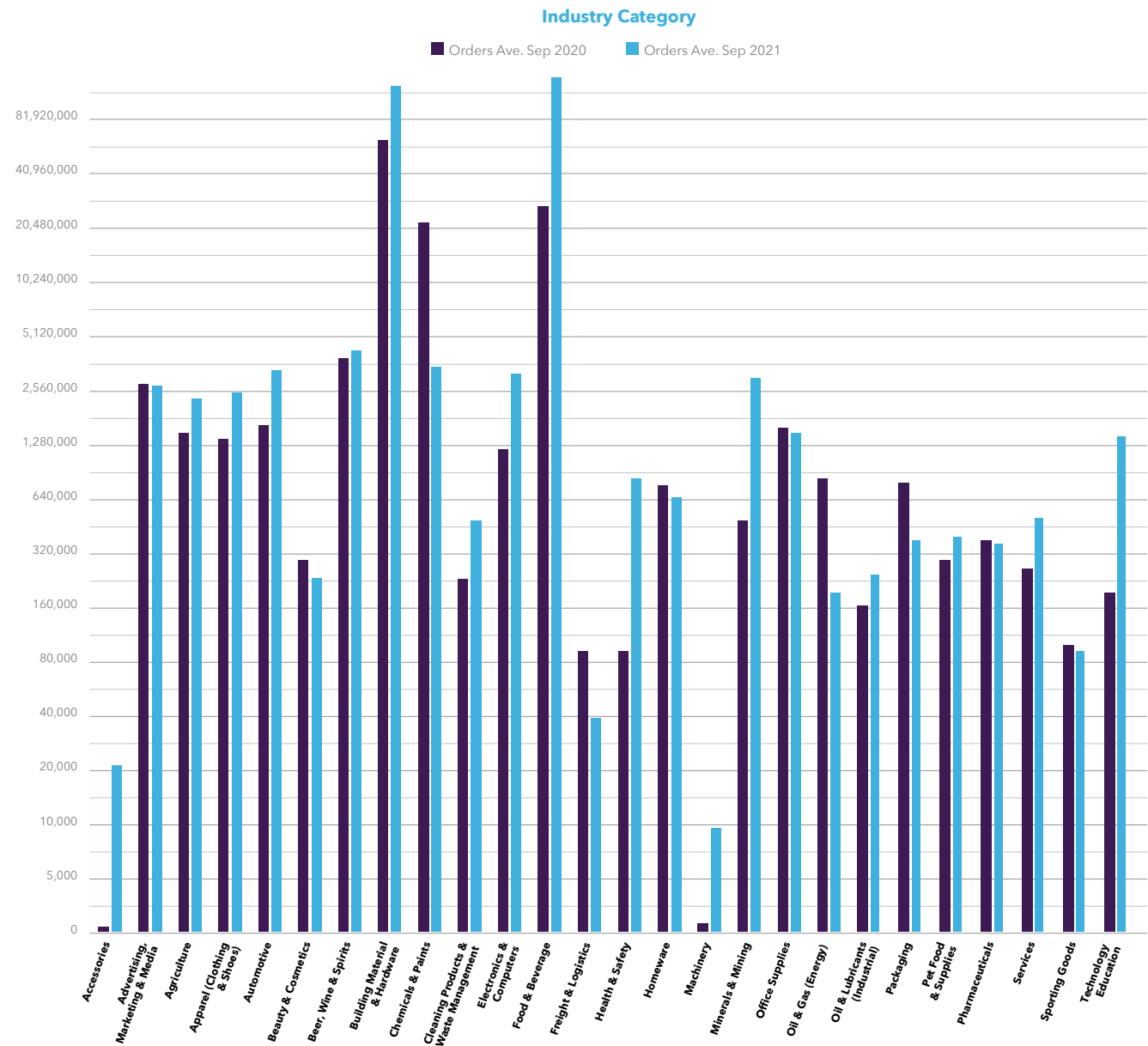




BUSINESSES IN THE FOLLOWING INDUSTRIES CAPTURED THE HIGHEST VOLUME OF ORDERS ON THE SKYNAMO PLATFORM IN AUGUST 2021:

1. Beer, Wine and Spirits
2. Automotive
3. Minerals and Mining
4. Electronics and Computers
5. Advertising, Marketing & Media

See how your business compares to Skynamo customers in your industry [here](#), using the Skynamo Industry Thermometer.



# OUR PARTICIPANTS





Since January 2021 between 250 and 700 business owners, sales managers and reps in the manufacturing, wholesale and distribution sectors around the world took part in two separate surveys of top challenges and needs in Field Sales, as well as technology used. The majority of those surveyed were from North America, the United Kingdom and Europe, and Africa and the Middle East, specializing in B2B product sales to existing customers via a team of field sales reps.

TOP 3 PAIN POINTS	TOP 3 NEEDS
Too much admin	Increase order accuracy
Can't see what reps are up to	Efficient collection of information, forms and photos during visits
Processes are too complex and long	Visibility into sales rep activity





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“Skynamo increases the amount of time reps enjoy in the field to see customers, helps them to be more effective, and to cut out errors and deliver a better service to customers. If we look after customers, they will look after us. The better service we give them the more likely they are to continue ordering products through us.”

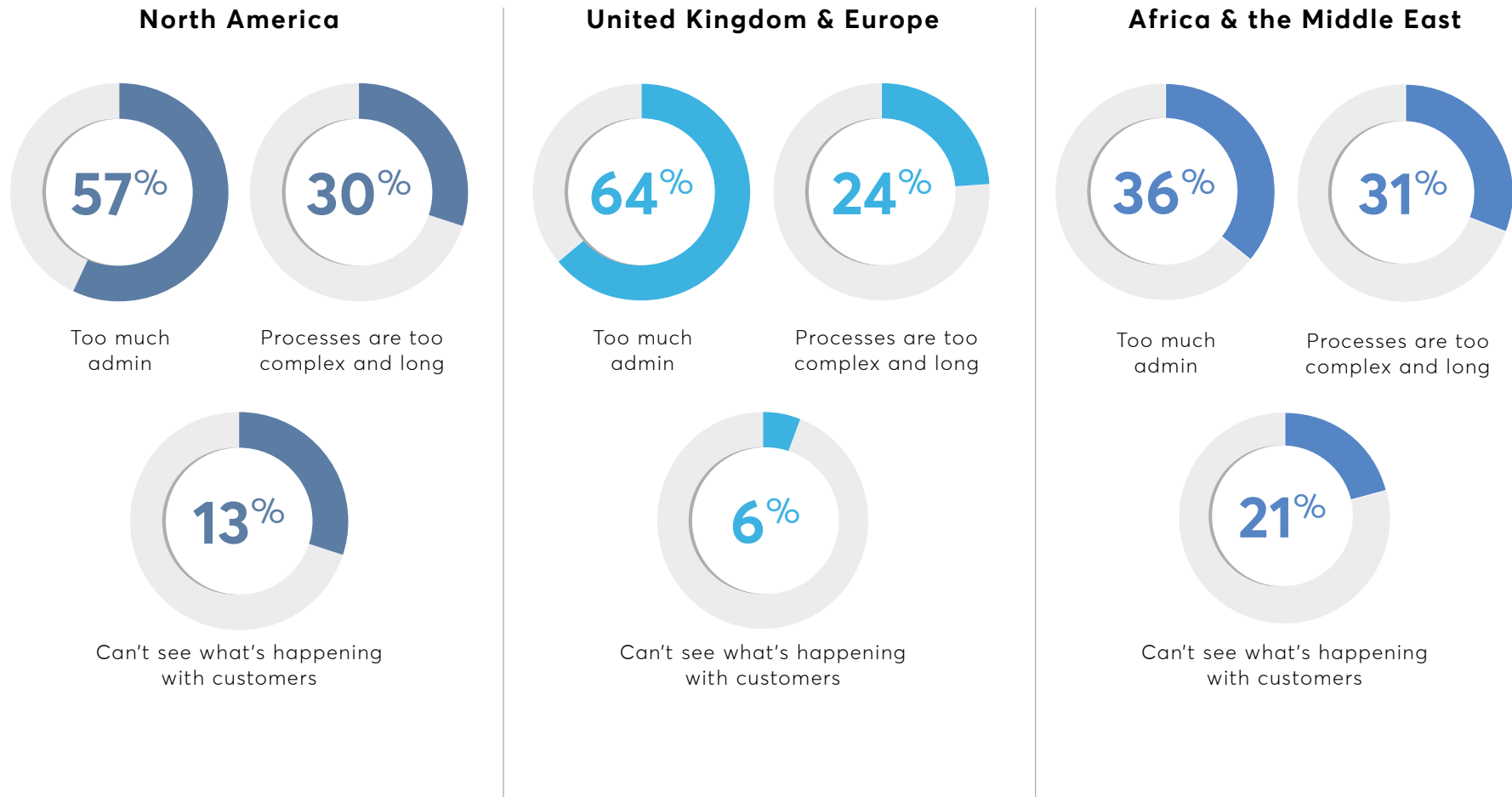
FOUNDER, WD AGENCY

# **BIGGEST CHALLENGES**





We asked business owners, sales managers and reps, in three different regions, what they found the most challenging about their jobs and daily activities. Their responses revealed three main challenges that were almost identical across the three regions surveyed:





# 1. TOO MUCH MANUAL ADMIN FOR REPS

**52% OF BUSINESS OWNERS AND MANAGERS SURVEYED EXPRESSED "TOO MUCH ADMIN FOR THEIR REPS" AS THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE. IT WAS SEEN AS DIVERTING TIME AWAY FROM VISITING CUSTOMERS AND SELLING.**

This challenge was further validated in a separate survey we conducted of field sales reps which revealed that **14%** of a rep's day (6 hours a week) is made up of attending to admin related tasks when this time could be in fact spent selling. We also found that nearly a quarter (**23%**) of reps wait until the end of the day to enter data, when they are tired and can't remember exact details that were discussed during customer visits. It's no wonder that 9 out of 10 reps believe their own reporting processes fail to deliver information that accurately portrays their customers' business needs.

## HOW CAN THIS BE SOLVED?

A Field Sales CRM with built-in GPS technology can automate many of the mundane tasks for field sales reps. This includes logging drive time and customer visits, as well as providing important field sales effectiveness data for managers and even automatically generating detailed call or visit reports."

## WHAT COULD THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE ONCE THIS IS SOLVED?

Automatically generated call or visit reports eliminate the need to manually log driving time and distance, to write up call/visit reports and to transcribe customer visit notes. By eliminating manual, time-consuming tasks, reps are freed up to spend more time visiting customers and selling.

"Skynamo's been a great help in building brand loyalty. We've reduced reps' time in the office from an average of three hours a day to the amount of time it takes them to pick up and return their company vehicle. As a result, we've been able to more than double the number of customer visits we make."

**- Sales Manager, Triangle Lubricants**



## 2. PROCESSES ARE TOO LONG & COMPLEX

IN OUR GLOBAL SURVEY, **19%** OF BUSINESS OWNERS AND MANAGERS SAID COMPLEX AND LONG PROCESSES WERE THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE. MANY WERE USING A COMBINATION OF PAPER-BASED FORMS, EXCEL SPREADSHEETS AND INSTANT MESSAGING AND EMAIL TO MANAGE THEIR FIELD SALES TEAMS.

Our separate survey of field sales reps revealed that **5%** of reps still use paper-based filing systems and **41%** rely on informal email updates and instant messaging to submit orders and customer and sales activity information. This means collecting all of this data via different communication channels and entering the very same information manually into back-office systems.

### HOW CAN THIS BE SOLVED?

Streamline or consolidate information gathering via multiple channels into one made-for-purpose application, such as a Field Sales CRM application.

### WHAT COULD THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE ONCE THIS IS SOLVED?

A more accurate view of sales activity builds greater transparency and trust between managers and their teams. With accurate, real-time visibility into field sales activity at hand in real-time a check-in no longer begins with questions but with answers: managers are able to analyse and provide tips, guidance and advice to improve sales performance. It enables managers to act as a coach rather than as a micro-manager. It enables managers and their teams to jointly identify new sales opportunities and new tactics to try to improve sales effectiveness.

"Skynamo's visit analysis report provides us with relevant feedback to discuss strategies to increase reps' weekly customer visits and found it to produce successful results. We will notice, for instance, that one of our consultants never visit anyone on Fridays. We then tried to rearrange their weekly schedule to see if Fridays deliver a higher visit rate. It worked. We helped one of our consultants increase his weekly visits by nearly **50%**."

**- Sales Manager, Protekta Safety Gear**



# 3. CAN'T SEE WHAT MY TEAM IS UP TO

18% OF BUSINESS OWNERS AND MANAGERS SURVEYED SAID, THE LACK OF VISIBILITY INTO FIELD SALES ACTIVITY WAS THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE. THEY WANTED TO FEEL CONFIDENT THAT THEIR TEAM WAS VISITING THE RIGHT CUSTOMERS AT THE RIGHT TIME AND WORKING ON THE RIGHT THINGS. THEY WERE AFRAID SALES REPS WERE NOT BEING EFFECTIVE OR EFFICIENT BUT HAD NO REAL WAY OF KNOWING.

Managers feel a sense of having to chase up and check in on sales reps to ensure the right customers are being visited and provide them with sales coaching. However, these check-ins come across as interrogations rather than coaching sessions. The lack of visibility into where reps are, who they are visiting and how long they are spending with customers, creates a sense of having blind spots and being more vulnerable to competition.

## HOW CAN THIS BE SOLVED?

A GPS enabled Field Sales CRM generates an accurate view of field sales activity, such as which customers have been visited, products sold and notes and information captured during the visit, as well as duration of visits.

## WHAT COULD THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE ONCE THIS IS SOLVED?

A more accurate view of sales activity builds greater transparency and trust between managers and their teams. With accurate, real-time visibility into field sales activity at hand in real-time a check-in no longer begins with questions but with answers: managers are able to analyse and provide tips, guidance and advice to improve sales performance. It enables managers to act as a coach rather than as a micro-manager. It enables managers and their teams to jointly identify new sales opportunities and new tactics to try to improve sales effectiveness. of field sales activity.

"Now, we've got the information, all the customer notes are on Skynamo, we've got sales histories now. We've generated reports so you can see the last 24 months' worth of sales for the sales guys. From our side, you can see how many customers are being seen, who's not being seen, and so on."

- Sales Manager, G.Fox



# 4. CAN'T SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH CUSTOMERS

**10% OF BUSINESS OWNERS AND MANAGERS EXPRESSED THE INABILITY TO GET AN ACCURATE VIEW OF CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENTS AS THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE.**

Managers surveyed feel they are not getting accurate or comprehensive information regularly from their reps about customer visits and competitors, which left them feeling vulnerable to blind spots that competitors could take advantage of.

## HOW CAN THIS BE SOLVED?

The ability to easily capture information such as meeting notes, surveys and photos of products and shelves via one single platform such as a fit-for-purpose Field Sales CRM will ensure managers have a more comprehensive and accurate view of customer visits and customer status.

## WHAT COULD THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE ONCE THIS IS SOLVED?

A more accurate and comprehensive view of customer orders, shelves and meeting notes enables managers to anticipate demand or churn and identify new sales opportunities for reps to pursue with a customer.

"We've seen a **25%** year-on-year growth in sales revenue over the last four years. This is massive when you consider that the biggest co-op we work with strives for an annual growth of **11%**. This could largely be ascribed to the fact that we get around to our customers much more often, increasing our daily visits from around 3 to a consistent 8 since the implementation of Skynamo."

**- Regional Sales Manager, Lionel's Vet Supplies**





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“Our reps can now see their accounts in real-time, so admin efforts are spent where they count. At least 3-4 hours that used to be spent on admin can now be applied elsewhere. There’s so much less pressure and stress, which increases our efficiency.”

SALES MANAGER, PERMOSEAL



# INSIGHTS AND RESULTS



# IS YOUR COMPANY USING AN ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP) OR ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE?

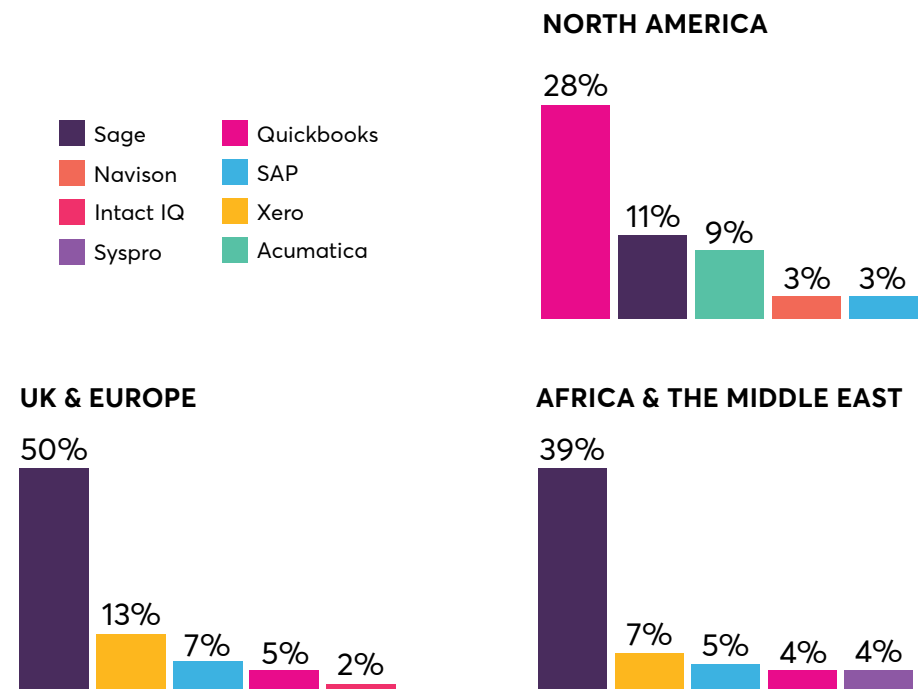
Integrating your back office with a field sales CRM software brings efficiency and accurate information to the field. It also unlocks further value from your investment in your accounting or ERP systems.

Integration of a field sales CRM software with ERP or accounting packages can not only provide reps with accurate product information such as availability, descriptions, and applicable discounts, but also allow them to submit orders from the field during a customer visit.

In a separate survey of +700 business owners, sales directors and sales managers:

- Just **5%** of them said that they were not using any ERP or accounting software at all.
- **95%** of people on the other hand said they were using an ERP or accounting software.

The Top 5 ERP or accounting software being used by those surveyed, broken down by region, are:



# IS YOUR COMPANY USING A CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM) SOFTWARE?

In this same survey of +700 business owners, sales directors and sales managers with field sales teams:

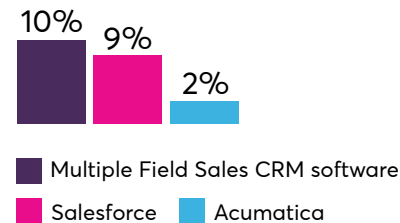
- **42%** of people responded to NOT having a CRM in place.
- **58%** of people on the other hand said that they were using a CRM software.

This means that only **58%** of the businesses surveyed are keeping track of their customer engagements and building stronger customer relationships. **42%** of businesses on the other hand do not have this capability and are not efficiently keeping track of their customer relationships. **12%** of those that revealed that they have a CRM in place said that they were using a combination of paper, email, Excel and WhatsApp as their CRM software.

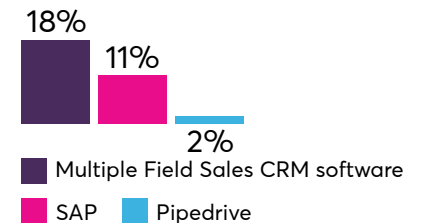
Our survey showed that the CRM market is still very fragmented with no CRM system being used by the majority of respondents stating they had a CRM system in place.

**Top 3 CRM software being used by those with a CRM system in place broken down by region are:**

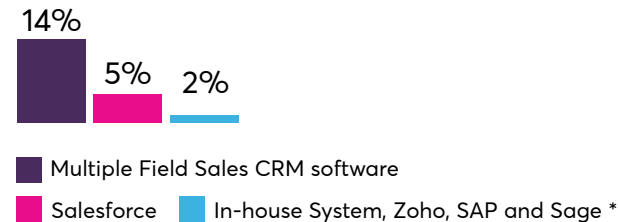
## NORTH AMERICA



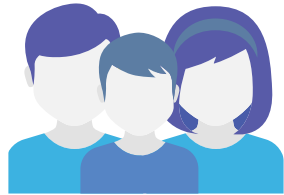
## UK & EUROPE



## AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

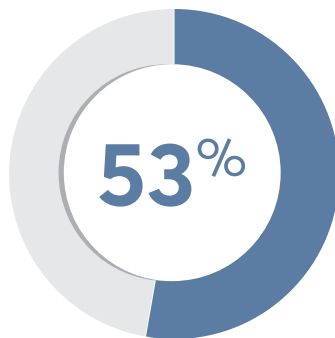


\*Each CRM was used by 3% of respondents with CRM systems.

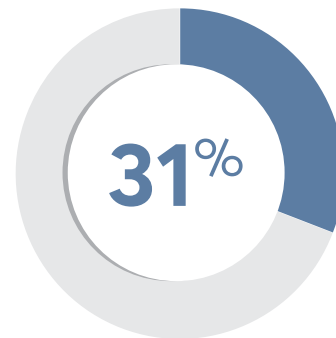


# HOW BIG IS THE AVERAGE FIELD SALES TEAM?

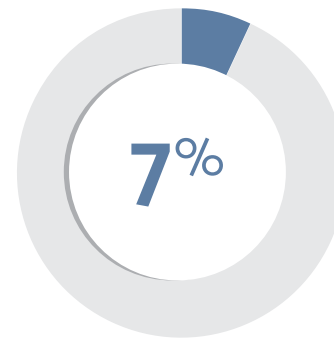
Analysis of field sales team size of the original +250 business owners, sales managers and reps surveyed revealed:



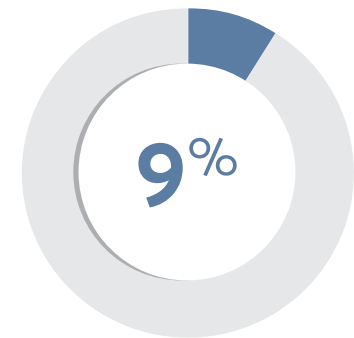
said their sales team was between 1-5 reps.



indicated that their sales team was between 6-10 reps.



said their sales team had between 11-15 reps.



indicated that their sales team had more than 15 reps.

The average sales team size was calculated to be 9 field sales reps with the highest number in the study being over 130 reps.

**IS YOUR SALES TEAM  
READY FOR FIELD  
SALES CRM?**





# DON'T GET LEFT BEHIND

AUTOMATE AND STREAMLINE YOUR SALES AND CRM PROCESSES

Healthy relationships are crucial to sales success – but many business leaders just aren't sure about the role that technology can play in growing business relationships. This is understandable when you consider that a lot of the technology we've developed to connect people across the digital landscape has actually isolated us even more. While the facts are important and are without a doubt a motivating factor, it is the human, face-to-face interactions that people are often looking for in sales. These interactions influence a person to become one of your next customers or remain a loyal customer for years to come. Facts don't persuade people, trust and rapport do and this is only achieved by spending more face-to-face time with the prospect or customer.

In today's rapid and ongoing automation of traditional manufacturing and industrial processes, you could be left behind by your competition if you choose not to automate and streamline your sales and customer relationship management processes with a Field Sales CRM. While competitors digitize their sales process, streamline their sales and improve their face-to-face interactions with customers, you could be left struggling to keep up and ultimately be paying even more for slower, error-prone sales processes.



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“It also helps our reps in terms of planning, reducing their workload and getting information to us. One of the big challenges they faced was just trying to report to a manager. With Skynamo it’s all automated, and we can get that information in real time, as we need it.”

HEAD OF SALES AND  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT,  
ZEBRA MEDICAL



# **CHOOSING THE RIGHT SOFTWARE FOR PRODUCT SALES**





Choosing the wrong software can be incredibly frustrating and end up slowing you down if it's cumbersome, complex, difficult to use and not fit-for-purpose. Here are seven key features we believe make for the 'right' sales software for B2B / business to business product sales:

- 1 Data Analytics**  
Use accurate and comprehensive data to make smart decisions.
- 2 Sales Activity Reporting**  
Track customer engagements and product sales to ensure your reps are using the face-to-face time with the customers efficiently and effectively and maximizing profits.
- 3 Order & Invoicing Processing**  
Give your reps the ability to manage every interaction with customers from order placing to final payment. data to make smart decisions.
- 4 Integration with other software**  
Your software should integrate with any Inventory Management, ERP or accounting software you are using to ensure your data is duplicate- and error-free.
- 5 Customized Form Management**  
Give your reps the flexibility to use pre-designed template forms and an unlimited cluster of your own forms for any contacts, health and safety and visit information you might need.
- 6 Ease of Use and Offline functionality**  
Give your reps the flexibility to use pre-designed template forms and an unlimited cluster of your own forms for any contacts, health and safety and visit information you might need.
- 7 Mobile First**  
Your team of reps should be able to use the software on a phone, iPad or tablet. It also needs to be built for mobile users, so it's easy to capture any information from their device.

For more information on these key features and other sales technology details, please check out our **Quick Beginner's Guide to Understanding Sales Technology** [here](#).



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“What we found when we started using Skynamo is that a full **30%** of our customers weren't being visited, or even called. When I saw that, literally, my mouth was agape.”

CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER,  
ENZYMEDICA

**WHAT DOES THE  
FUTURE HOLD FOR  
THE SALES TEAM  
THAT ADOPTS FIELD  
SALES CRM?**





Technology can make your business more responsive, faster, and more effective by automating and streamlining your processes and freeing you up to focus on the more important things. Massive advances in technology provide us with all the components needed to make it easier for salespeople to gather and have access to high quality data. Instead of wading through paperwork, emails, and Excel spreadsheets you and your sales reps could be:



The right sales technology can help you achieve all of the above. You'll no longer waste time searching through spreadsheets and notes to find the answers you need and be left wondering if it's correct or the latest information. And with accurate reporting from sales reps and sales activity, you and your reps will be able to make smarter sales decisions that lead to more sales and stronger customer relationships.



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“We have saved hours on admin and unnecessary rekeying of orders and mistakes. All of this allows us to serve our customers better, by freeing up our reps' time to concentrate on building those relationships.”

DIRECTOR, ROCKCLIFFE  
GROUP

# WHAT DOES YOUR NEXT STEP LOOK LIKE?

If you would like to find out more about sales technology for yourself, please check out our **Quick Beginner's Guide to Understanding Sales Technology** [here](#).

If you are in the process of taking a big leap forward in how you manage your field sales team and enable them to substantially increase their productivity, have a look at our **Field Sales CRM Buyer's Guide** [here](#), for everything you need to know before buying Field Sales CRM.

And if you have any questions or want further information at all please reach out to us [here](#), and we'll help you overcome your challenges together.





# ABOUT SKYNAMO

Skynamo is the leading field sales management CRM and ordering app in one used by manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors to manage their field sales operations and capture orders and information in the field.

Field sales managers and business owners use Skynamo's cloud-based CRM software and mobile app to gain real-time insight into field sales activity and effectiveness, enabling smarter sales decisions and coaching of their field sales teams remotely.

Field sales reps use Skynamo's mobile app to increase productivity, eliminate admin, track customer engagements, capture orders in the field, and access accurate information, such as inventory, pricing, product availability, historical sales, and customer information.

Skynamo integrates with back-office systems (e.g. ERP, accounting and inventory management systems) to improve order accuracy and order fulfilment turnaround times. Skynamo customers typically experience an increase in sales of up to **20%** their first year and a doubling of customer visits thanks to increased efficiency and productivity, and smarter sales decisions.

For more information and a free demo, visit [www.skynamo.com](http://www.skynamo.com)



 **Skynamo**