



SALES TECH NOSTALGIA

FROM SPREADSHEETS TO AUTOMATION

Technology has driven the world of sales to new heights. From landlines to cellphones, door-to-door sales to data-driven leads, and excel data capture to automated insights, we've come a long way, baby! Not only does technology play a bigger role in every touchpoint of the modern sales process, but it has restructured the entire sales approach.

How can technology - something intrinsically inanimate - affect sales, an activity that is heavily people-oriented? Well, by its presence and by its absence, there is a marked impact in how sales is done, how managers set targets, and how customers are treated.

RETRO TECH IS STILL PERVASIVE IN MANY COMPANIES, BUT THINGS HAVE CHANGED A LOT SINCE THE 80S. BACK THEN, A PEN AND PAPER, A FAX MACHINE, A WELL-STOCKED ROLODEX, A PHONE LINE, AND A GOOD ATTITUDE WERE ALL YOU NEEDED!

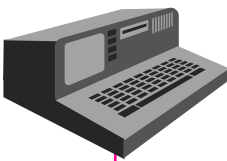
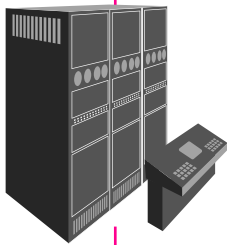
However, to stay competitive in an evolving marketplace, business-to-business (B2B) companies with sales reps have moved away from spreadsheets and manual processes. This is easy to understand, as the benefits are well-documented and abundant. Sales tech allows reps to personalize their approach and close deals. It improves productivity and resource utilization. It helps managers know which stock to move, when, and to which market. And, it preempts shifts in the market so that manufacturers, wholesalers, and distributors are one step ahead of the competition.

In this guide, we will analyze the impact of digitization on the industry. We look at how sales technology has evolved over time. We unpack how benefits from sales tech can enhance the way sales teams do sales. And we explore how sales tech can keep companies relevant in a competitive and ever-evolving world.

SALES TECH, A BRIEF HISTORY

Sales technology has progressed from devices that allow sales reps to just share their message to tools that help them communicate in engaging, relevant, and effective ways. The following major milestones in the history of sales technology have laid the foundation for today's efficient digital sales methods and solutions.

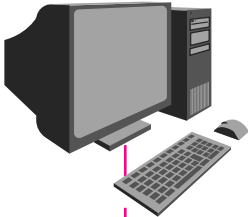
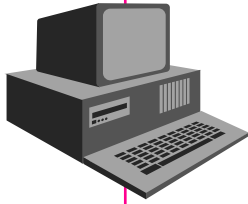
1950-2000



THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

The Digital Revolution saw companies move away from mechanical and analog tech and move toward using digital sales technology. During this time, analog mobile phones paved the way for mobile communication. As a result, door-to-door sales declined, and telemarketing became the norm. Salespeople used the invention of voicemail in the 1980s to ensure their sales messages were reaching prospects.

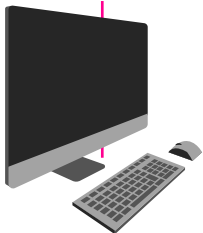
Digital computers and the internet also became available to the public during this time, further accelerating communication. Because of this, the integration of digital record keeping also became a regular business practice.



Shortly thereafter, the first laptops became available for public purchase. This then transformed the way salespeople could work on the go. They could now be just as productive and efficient on a sales trip as they would in the office. The world wide web and the first video conferencing platform, WebEx, further enhanced their ability to connect with customers from anywhere at any time.

This era of sales technology was revolutionary for customer relationship management. ACT! (Automated Contact Tracking) launched in 1986 as one of the first customer relationship management software tools. The concept pioneered ongoing developments of more comprehensive CRM tools. Salesforce then launched in 1999. Although its competitors didn't take cloud services seriously, Salesforce quickly became the world's largest vendor of CRM as customers migrated to the cloud.

2000-PRESENT



THE SMARTPHONE REVOLUTION

Also known as the Information Revolution, the past two decades have seen an evolution in both smart technology and automation. The rise of Facebook (2004), YouTube (2006), and Twitter (2006) changed marketing forever. Salespeople could now leverage social platforms to source leads and easily communicate with prospects. iPads and tablets became useful tools for sales presentations and working on the go.



Smartphones and mobile apps further enhanced information and pricing accessibility. This technology allowed sales managers to track sales in real time. Salespeople could also use these devices to quote clients immediately, finalizing paperwork through their digital tech.

Improved CRM provided the advantage of storing massive values of data in relatively small spaces. Reps could thus start personalizing the sales experience based on accurate customer information. Advancements in sales technology and automation have largely reduced the manual administrative work required in sales, freeing salespeople up to focus on customer relationships.

The evolution of sales tech has essentially allowed reps to optimize their sales opportunities, catch prospects as soon as they are ready, and improve their service. The impact of these advancements can still be seen in how companies run their businesses to this day.

THE BENEFITS OF USING SALES TECHNOLOGY

With how fast business and sales technology is evolving, companies that have not adapted to the new technologies are quickly lagging. This resistance to change is causing a wide gap between the front runners and those who are falling behind.

Traditional methods of telemarketing, manual lead generation, and spreadsheet CRM are obsolete. They hinder growth and slow productivity. Any hesitancy to adopt new sales technology also impairs employee growth. This can render a business irrelevant to the modern consumer and take away from their ability to meet their needs.

While some businesses may not want to use new tech because of the cost, the reality is that sales technology saves time, resources, money, and administrative labor. It also improves productivity and efficiency, which translates to increased sales profits.

THE FOLLOWING LIST OUTLINES THE SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS OF ADOPTING SALES TECHNOLOGY.



Improves ongoing product and sales education



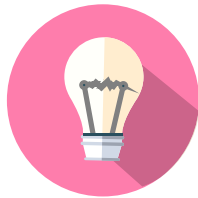
Synchronizes all touchpoints of the sales system



Enhances account personalization



Improves strategic lead generation



Provides on-demand sales resources for every step of the customer journey



Real-time sales tracking



Geographic sales expansion



Improves data-based decision making



Reduces manual administration and thus, human error



Decreases administrative labor costs



Eliminates hard copies and printing costs



Faster proposal and quote turnaround



Sign and deliver contracts anytime from anywhere



Better quality conversions



Improved audits



Interactive sales tools



Sales reps can access data and account information while traveling



Improved communication between departments, salespeople, and customers



Sales managers can track engagement, sales, and monitor content utilization

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

Regardless of how good your product is, an inefficient sales process will not lead to a successful business. Using sales technology can help you find digital solutions to common business and sales problems.

Tech tools have become vital to crafting a streamlined sales process. The following tools can help any business up their sales game to become a leading competitor in their industry.

CRM

A sales CRM automatically organizes customer data, tracks client communication, and sends follow-up reminders. This sales technology is an essential tool that seamlessly manages all touchpoints throughout the sales journey. With automated administration and data organization, sales reps can spend the time saved on fostering meaningful client relationships.

Automated processes also improve data accuracy. An effective CRM stores a significant amount of data in a way that is easy to find. Your salespeople can then access updated customer data from anywhere at any time.



SALES AND MARKETING AUTOMATION

This sales technology automates the many responsibilities that are essential for building a profitable sales process. Among many other functions, sales and marketing automation both involve bulk emailing and personalizing client messages. Marketing automation focuses on attracting leads through industry research, content, and distribution tasks. Sales automation aims to convert those leads to buyers and centers largely on connecting with customers and optimizing the customer experience.

CRM, lead generation, and email marketing software all integrate sales automation tools. Sales automation is essential in helping sales representatives manage their sales processes and tasks more efficiently.



LEAD GENERATION AND PROSPECTING

Manual sales prospecting is a tedious task. It takes away from the time needed to foster new leads and client relationships. This sales technology automates and simplifies the prospecting process by sourcing leads from online channels. These include social media, email, and landing pages. It then collects contact information from prospects who have shown interest in a product. The software then automatically directs the information to the right sales team. The information provided allows sales staff to approach more qualified leads with better insights, tactics, and personalization. This translates into more profitable deals.



VIDEO CONFERENCING

Video conferencing tools should be non-negotiable for every sales business. They allow for seamless client meetings regardless of location and time zones. They also give salespeople the ability to give remote presentations and offer screen sharing.

Video conferencing saves a significant amount of time and money by cutting out travel time and costs while widening the geographic pool of sales candidates. In doing so, it also allows salespeople to meet with a higher number of potential clients daily.



DATA INSIGHTS AND ANALYTICS

Interpreting the mass of customer data collected from retail channels, eCommerce, and social media is a challenging and time-consuming task. Implementing data analytics tools will allow your business to create instant customer profiles from collected data. This sales technology offers behavioral insights that optimize the sales process and personalize the customer experience. Predictive models can determine product recommendations that are most likely to appeal to customers.

When it comes to strategizing sales, data analytics tools can offer insights about supply chain, inventory, and bottlenecks. This helps to direct sales teams on which selling areas they should focus on. For example, if a business has overestimated demand for a product, statistical models



can automatically make recommendations to determine the best price for clearance sales.

With automated updates, reports are always accurate at the time of reporting. Sales reps and managers save time compiling reports and can access them from any device with internet connection. With simplified, flexible, and efficient real-time reporting, businesses can make well-informed decisions. This can help businesses minimize losses. Additionally, they can visualize the results of changes before implementing them with predictive analytics tools.

Another benefit of having access to sales data is that it gives managers complete transparency, which can help when it comes to mentoring the sales team. Managers have visibility into individual progress, as well as agent priorities, strengths, weaknesses, and areas where they may need assistance.



DOCUMENTATION AUTOMATION

Document automation allows you to generate documents in a digital platform by using a template or designing it from scratch. The software shares documents via an automated and secure workflow. This eliminates the need for printed paperwork, manual data entry, and email reminders. It also offers improved security while simplifying accessibility and reducing errors. As a result, it improves the end-user experience.



ACCOUNTING

Accounting software comes with a range of functions that are suitable for companies of various sizes. This is why you should opt for a software solution that can grow with your company.

The software captures and categorizes financial transactions, sends invoices, and runs automated reports. Some also assist with fulfilling bills and payroll. Automated features reduce errors, save time spent manually processing data, and streamline tax filing.

With instant, professional-looking reports and financial statements, insights are easy to interpret and apply in decision making. There is no better way to sync all your financial data for optimal finance management.



SALES ORDER PROCESSING

Manual and paper-based order processing is tedious, slow, and prone to human error. Automated tools fast-track sales order processing by capturing incoming data immediately. At the same time, the system sends order documents and information to the appropriate staff for processing.

This not only improves order fulfillment efficiency and customer service but also speeds up the order-to-cash period. Sales order processing software securely stores details and allows easy access to information from any mobile device.

Sales order processing ultimately allows the business to process more orders and generate increased income in a shorter time span.



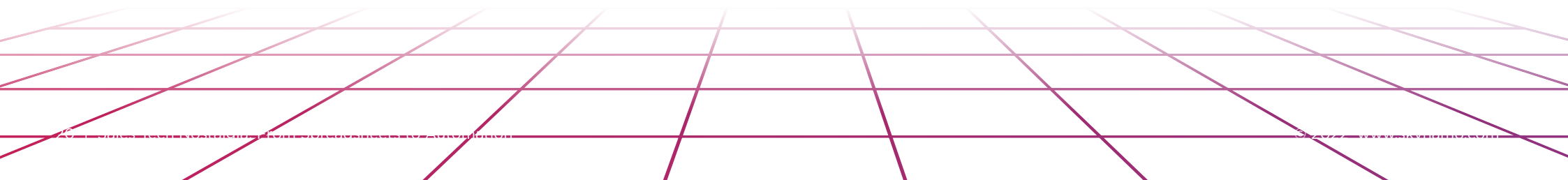


THE DIGITAL SALES REVOLUTION IS HERE, TIME TO UPGRADE YOUR SALES TECH STACK

While B2C companies set the stage for early adoption of digital sales technology, B2B companies were a little slower to jump on the bandwagon. By hesitating to switch to digital sales solutions, some businesses began to fall behind.

B2B companies who have not updated their sales tech are up against competitors who are pulling out all the stops. They're effectively implementing online demos, videos, live chat, comparison engines, and instant quote calculators. They've equipped sales reps with tools to engage with buyers strategically. Their sales interactions are also more time-efficient with live videoconferencing and real-time demos.

To remain relevant and handle the demands of the modern market, sales teams need the right tech. They need tools to help them maximize productivity while fostering personalized customer relationships. Data analytics and automated sales insights are no longer nice-to-haves. These form the backbone of effective decision-making and sales training.



With the right software, digitizing your sales process doesn't have to be complicated. Skynamo's CRM software has all the features your business needs to drive efficient sales processes to meet evolving customer expectations.

The platform is scalable, allowing you to adapt processes as the business grows, without hindering the sales process. With Skynamo, field sales reps have on-demand access to a host of information. They can access customer data, updated pricing, and the most recent product information, anywhere, at any time, from a mobile device. Skynamo's task automation minimizes manual administration and tracks sales activities in real-time.

By digitizing sales processes with Skynamo, your sales teams can use a mobile device to generate quotes, check inventory, and issue orders. We'd love to chat with you to explore ways Skynamo can resolve specific pain points in your field sales management workflow and drive your business to new heights.



"Wonderful, efficient and commercially valuable"

