

THE MEDIA SALES REPORT

PUBLISHED JANUARY 2023

OVERVIEW

If 2021 saw everyone still reeling from the “year that shall not be named,” then 2022 seems to be one of continued adjustment.

For example, it’s clear that “hybrid work” means different things to different people. Nearly half of sales managers (49%) view their desired hybrid schedule as a 50/50 split between in-office and work-from-home. In this new Media Sales Report, you’ll see that salespeople don’t feel the same way.

65% OF SALES MANAGERS SAY THAT FINDING AND HIRING NEW TALENT IS THE HARDEST PART OF THEIR JOB.

Other trends from the previous year seem to persist or have worsened. Take recruitment, 65% of sales managers say that finding and hiring new talent is the hardest part of their job. That figure is up by more than 10% compared to last year.

This only underscores the sentiment from managers that their sales teams need to grow when, in reality, they have appeared to shrink.

However, not all is dour along the landscape of sales.

Salespeople are receiving the learning and development opportunities they crave, with 80% participating in sales training on a weekly or monthly basis. On top of that, 82% of salespeople say that they have access to the resources needed to exceed their sales goals.

82% OF SALESPEOPLE SAY THAT THEY HAVE ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO EXCEED THEIR SALES GOALS.

And while you will see a contrast between sales managers and salespeople in terms of optimistic outlook, the fact is that 87% of managers see a bright future ahead.



87% of sales managers
see a bright future ahead.

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QUICK TAKES



2/3 OF SALESPeOPLE (65%) ARE LOOKING FOR A WORK MODEL THAT IS EITHER **80% WORK-FROM-HOME & 20% IN-OFFICE OR COMPLETELY REMOTE.**



52% OF SALESPeOPLE SAY THAT IT OFTEN TAKES **5 OR MORE ATTEMPTS BEFORE SUCCESSFULLY SCHEDULING A SALES APPOINTMENT.**



82% OF SALESPeOPLE SAY THAT THEY HAVE ACCESS TO **THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO EXCEED THEIR GOALS.**



87% OF SALES MANAGERS BELIEVE **THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT** WHILE 41% OF SALESPeOPLE ARE **NOT OPTIMISTIC OR ARE UNSURE ABOUT THE FUTURE.**



48% OF SALESPeOPLE TELL US THAT THEY **DON'T USE THEIR CRM (OR FIND IT VALUABLE)** FOR AUTOMATING BASIC TASKS.



OVER HALF (54%) OF SALESPeOPLE TELL US THAT THEIR **MANAGER TALKS WITH THEM ABOUT THEIR TALENTS OFTEN.**

SALES DEPARTMENT

Structure, People, Compensation, and Hybrid/In-Person Work Models

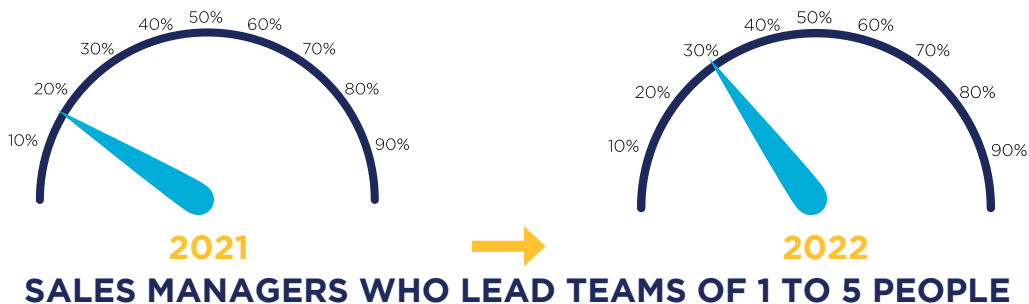
Sales Departments Have Gotten Smaller While Sales Managers & Salespeople Have Different Definitions of “Hybrid”

Once again, we’ve found the, seemingly perennial, truth that recruitment is the largest challenge that sales organizations face.

With 65% of sales managers surveyed telling us that recruiting new talent is the hardest part of their job, this trend shows no signs of abating anytime soon.

65% OF SALES MANAGERS SAY RECRUITING NEW TALENT IS THE HARDEST PART OF THEIR JOB.

This is on top of the fact that sales organizations have seemingly shrunk over the past year. From 2021’s Media Sales Surveys we found that roughly 18% of sales managers led teams of 1 to 5 salespeople. Compare that to this year where nearly 30% of sales teams fall in that 1 to 5 range.



And for sales teams consisting of 11 or more employees? That percentage fell from roughly 41% last year to 32% in 2022.

73% of sales managers feel as though they don’t have the right number of salespeople, with a nearly equal percentage (72%) saying that the size of their teams needs to increase.



73% of sales managers feel as though they don’t have the right number of salespeople.



72% of sales managers believe their sales staff size should increase.

SALES DEPARTMENT

Structure, People, Compensation, and Hybrid/In-Person Work Models

However, when it comes to hiring, sales managers are making good use of sales talent assessments.

83% reported using sales talent assessments in the hiring process with every 3 out of 4 managers telling us that they are accurate in predicting future success.

In terms of compensation, 52% of salespeople prefer salary plus commission (down from 60% in 2021).

83% OF SALES MANAGERS REPORTED USING SALES TALENT ASSESSMENTS IN THE HIRING PROCESS.

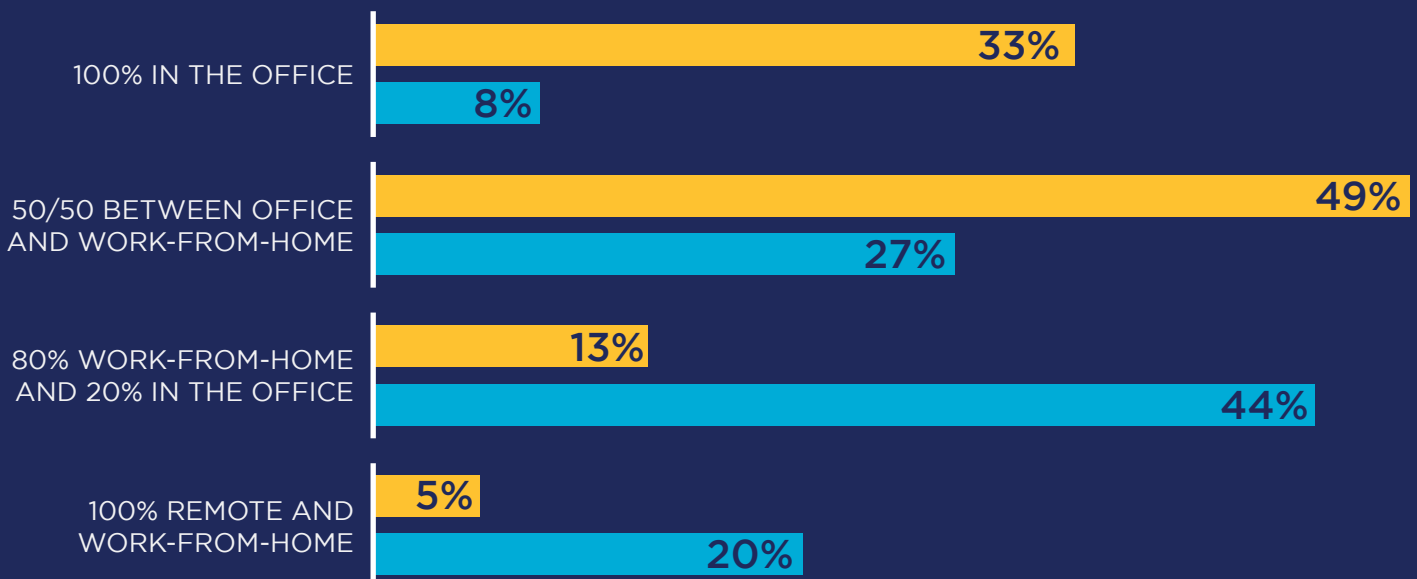
But maybe the most surprising finding from this year's survey was the **DISCREPANCY** in what sales managers and salespeople want from a hybrid work model.

Nearly half of sales managers (49%) prefer a model that is 50/50 between in-office and work-from-home.

Meanwhile, almost 2/3 of salespeople (64%) are looking for a work model that is either 80% work-from-home & 20% in-office or entirely remote altogether.

What **office schedule** would you prefer moving forward?

■ SALES MANAGER ■ SALESPERSON



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Salespeople Are Receiving the Learning and Development Opportunities They Crave

The consensus is clear. 85% of salespeople surveyed agree that having access to learning and development opportunities in their role is “important or very important” to them.

And thankfully, it appears that many organizations are providing what their employees are craving.

OVER HALF (54%) OF SALESPEOPLE TELL US THAT THEIR MANAGER TALKS WITH THEM ABOUT THEIR TALENTS OFTEN.

80% participate in sales training on a weekly or monthly basis.



85% of salespeople agree that having access to learning and development opportunities is “important or very important”.

In addition to those encouraging trends, sales managers are having productive conversations with the individuals on their team. Over half (54%) of salespeople tell us that their manager talks with them about their talents often.

However, 1/3 of salespeople (33%) responded that while their manager discusses their talent with them, it merely feels like a box being checked.



80% of salespeople participate in sales trainings on a weekly or monthly basis.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Speaking of sales managers, almost half (45%) considered 21-40% of their sales team to be superstars.

That is an improvement from last year with every 1 out of 3 managers believing the same to be true at the time.

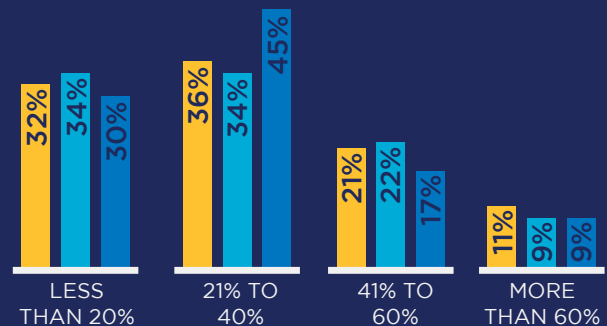
**ALMOST HALF (45%)
CONSIDERED 21-40% OF THEIR
SALES TEAM TO BE SUPERSTARS.**

And while there seems to be an increase in sales superstars, the same, thankfully, can't be said for underperformers.

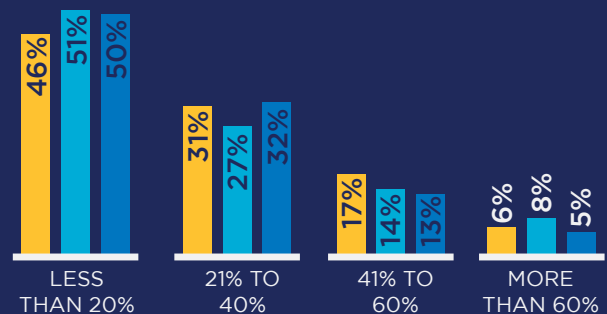
This year, 18% of sales managers believe that 40% or more of their sales teams are underperforming. That is, encouragingly, a slight dip from last year's 21%.

**18% OF SALES MANAGERS
BELIEVE THAT 40% OR MORE
OF THEIR SALES TEAMS ARE
UNDERPERFORMING.**

What percentage of your sales team are what you would consider **superstars**?



What percentage of your sales team is **underperforming**?



2020 2021 2022

SETTING APPOINTMENTS AND SALES PROCESS

Sales Appointments and Qualified Leads Remain Elusive

Both sales managers (83%) and salespeople (80%) agree that appointments are harder to secure than 5 years ago.

In fact, 52% of salespeople say that it often takes 5 or more attempts before successfully scheduling a sales appointment. This is reflected in the 63% who report going on 2-5 scheduled calls (face-to-face or virtual) with prospects a week.

52% OF SALESPEOPLE SAY THAT IT OFTEN TAKES 5 OR MORE ATTEMPTS BEFORE SUCCESSFULLY SCHEDULING A SALES APPOINTMENT.

And half of sales managers roughly confirm that finding, telling us that, on average, their salespeople go on 2-5 scheduled calls per week.



Both sales managers (83%) and salespeople (80%) agree that appointments are harder to secure than 5 years ago.

However, that reality still falls short of what sales managers would like to see, 93% of whom say that, per week, their salespeople should be going on 4 or more appointments (calls).

Sales managers (75%) also think their salespeople are presenting too few written proposals each week, with 65% reporting that number falling anywhere between 1 and 4.

Sellers back that estimate up as well. 80% say that, on average, they find themselves presenting 1 to 4 written proposals in a given week.

According to 79% of managers, "All or Most" of the written proposals presented by their salespeople contain specific business needs outlined by the client.



63% of salespeople report going on 2-5 scheduled calls (face-to-face or virtual) with prospects a week.

SETTING APPOINTMENTS AND SALES PROCESS

Discouragingly, 20% of managers say that only “some” of the written proposals that go out can be described in the same way.

After securing appointments, the closest rival in terms of difficulty is finding qualified leads.

41% of salespeople say that finding qualified leads is only getting harder.

Closing in on that figure is “Closing the Sale,” with 37% of sellers classifying that part of their role as becoming more difficult.

37% OF SELLERS SAY THAT “CLOSING THE SALE” IS BECOMING MORE DIFFICULT.



41% of salespeople say that finding qualified leads is only getting harder.

As far as how sellers go about reaching out to prospects, legacy channels still reign supreme. Over half of salespeople are using email (57%) and phone calls (53%) “all the time” to secure appointments.

Use of social media in contacting prospects has remained relatively flat compared to years past with 70% of sales managers saying that the platforms are “somewhat effective” in reaching prospects.

Roughly half of salespeople (47%) agree with that sentiment.

However, 40% tell us outright that social media is “not very effective” in securing appointments.

And when it comes to the ease or difficulty of converting prospects, salespeople are nearly split. 41% say that conversion is “a bit harder” and 36% tell us that it’s “about the same as in the past.”

40% OF SALESPEOPLE TELL US OUTRIGHT THAT SOCIAL MEDIA IS “NOT VERY EFFECTIVE” IN SECURING APPOINTMENTS.

Compare that to 2021 where almost 60% of salespeople agreed converting prospects had only gotten more difficult.



75% of sales managers think their salespeople are presenting too few written proposals each week.

SETTING APPOINTMENTS AND SALES PROCESS

In terms of the overall sales cycle, half of salespeople (50%) say it takes less than a month to go from the first discovery call to closing the sale. 88% say that their entire sales process takes less than 90 days.

Salespeople also seem to have seen some improvement in renewing clients since last year. Back then, 43% reported that renewing clients was “getting harder.” That figure dropped to 33% this year.



88% of salespeople say that their entire sales process takes less than 90 days.

And a whopping 67% say that renewing is about the same or easier than years past. In 2021, 56% said the same.

As seen last year, the vast majority of salespeople (92%) continue to utilize a CRM in their role, with 47% finding it most useful for tracking clients and prospects.

SALESPEOPLE (47%) AND SALES MANAGERS (69%) FIND THEIR CRM MOST USEFUL FOR TRACKING CLIENTS AND PROSPECTS.

Sales managers also report finding their CRM most useful for tracking clients and prospects (69%), as well as for holding members of their team accountable (57%).

And while 69% of sellers are finding such tools to be helpful overall for their responsibilities, unfortunately, 31% tell us the opposite.

Interestingly, 48% of salespeople tell us that they don't use their CRM (or find it valuable) for automating basic tasks.



48% of salespeople tell us they don't use their CRM (or find it valuable) for automating basic tasks.

How often do salespeople use each of the following to **secure an appointment with prospects**?



LinkedIn

Never/Rarely: **51%**
Sometimes: **34%**
All the Time: **15%**



Phone Calls

Never/Rarely: **7%**
Sometimes: **40%**
All the Time: **53%**



Other Social Media

Never/Rarely: **50%**
Sometimes: **40%**
All the Time: **10%**



Emails

Never/Rarely: **3%**
Sometimes: **40%**
All the Time: **57%**



Texts

Never/Rarely: **42%**
Sometimes: **46%**
All the Time: **12%**



1:1 Personalized Video Message

Never/Rarely: **96%**
Sometimes: **3%**
All the Time: **1%**

Top 3 Categories of Business for **Salespeople and Sales Managers**



Recruitment

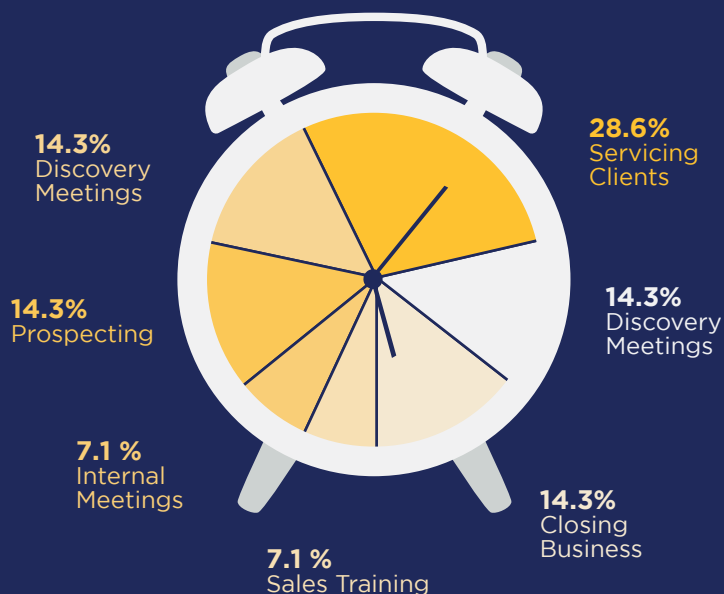


Home Services

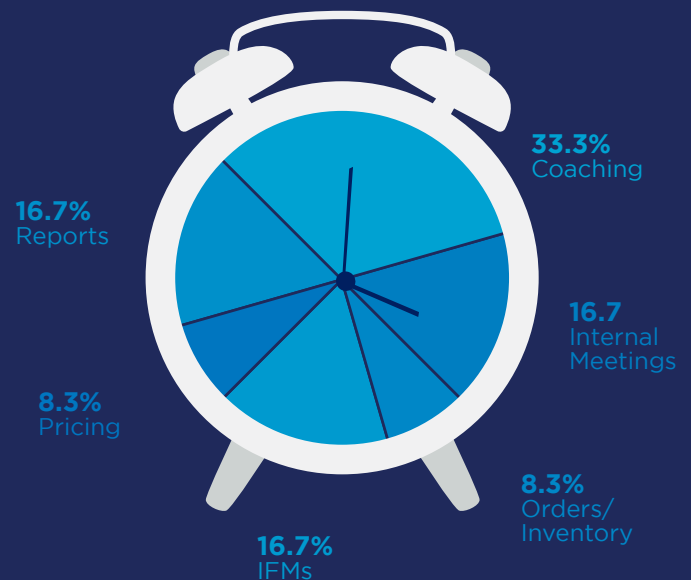


Healthcare

Where do the majority of **salespeople spend their time** each week?



Where do the majority of **sales managers spend their time** each week?



**AVERAGE % OR LESS TIME SPENT BY MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS.*

SALES ENABLEMENT

Too Many Are Dissatisfied with the Quality and Effectiveness of their Sales Enablement Resources

While an amazing 82% of salespeople say that they have access to the resources needed to exceed their sales goals, a boost in quality for their sales enablement resources is needed.

40% tell us that they are dissatisfied or unsure if they are satisfied with the effectiveness of their sales collateral pieces. Even with 60% of salespeople saying the opposite to be true, the number of those unsure or dissatisfied is too large.

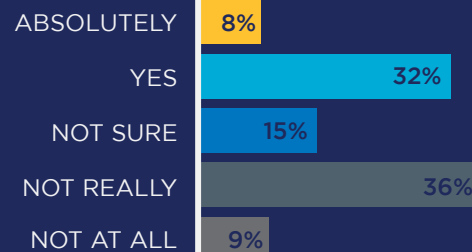
82% OF SALESPeOPLE SAY THAT THEY HAVE ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO EXCEED THEIR SALES GOALS.

Sales managers roughly concur with this sentiment. Almost 2/3 (65%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their sales enablement resources and 37% are unsure or dissatisfied.

However, much like salespeople, managers (81%) feel as though they have access to the proper resources in order to exceed their sales goals.

We asked sales managers:

Does your website make it easy for prospects to learn about your company and the problems that you solve?



When asked if they have more than 2 video case studies, just 30% of sales managers said “yes.” Even worse, 18% of salespeople, when prompted with the same question, said “yes,” as well.

And when it comes to marketing strategies that attract leads and promote thought leadership, just over a quarter (26%) of salespeople say their company doesn’t have one but “they need to.”

A MASSIVE 70% OF SALES MANAGERS AND 82% OF SALESPeOPLE REPORTED NOT HAVING MORE THAN 2 VIDEO CASE STUDIES.

Only 5% say that their company “rocks” in this area. That figure is down from 15% in 2021.



Only 5% of salespeople say their company’s marketing plan and thought leadership “rocks.”

INDUSTRY OUTLOOK AND CULTURE

The Future Looks Bright... Depending on Who You Ask

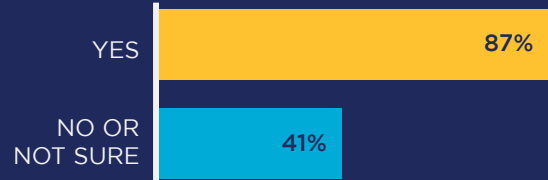
With recruitment headwinds remaining just as strong as last year, even more of an emphasis on company culture is needed to attract and retain top talent.

Thankfully, 78% of salespeople tell us they would recommend their company as a great place to work.

78% OF SALESPeOPLE TELL US THEY WOULD RECOMMEND THEIR COMPANY AS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK.

Are you optimistic about the future of your industry?

■ SALES MANAGER ■ SALESPERSON



On the flip side, almost a quarter (22%) wouldn't say the same.

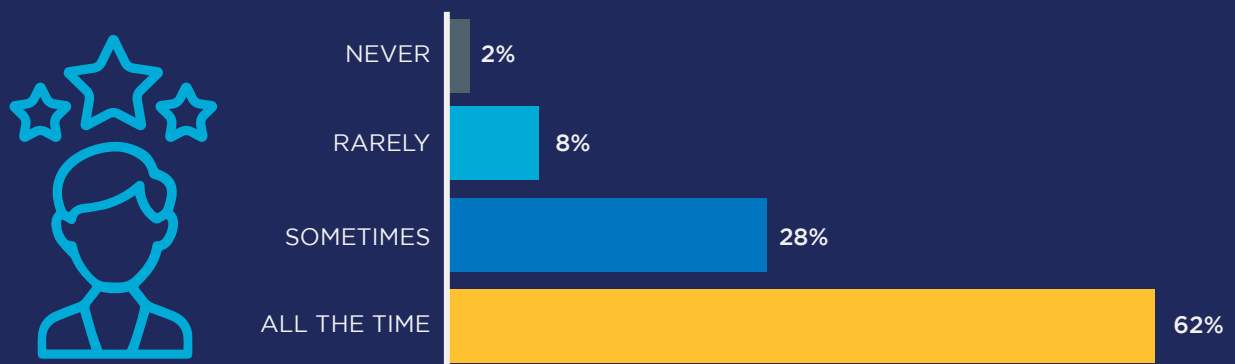
However, 70% of salespeople report feeling supported by their manager with less than 10% saying they "never" feel that way.

Another 62% of salespeople feel valued "All the Time," 28% "Sometimes," and 10% feeling valued "Rarely" or "Never." Any number of employees not feeling valued is cause for concern.

And 41% are not optimistic or are unsure about the future.

That is a stark contrast to the outlook of sales managers with 81% telling us they feel their organizations are well equipped to be competitive in the coming years and 87% believing the future looks bright.

How often do you feel valued by your sales manager?



CONCLUSION

2022 seems to be a year defined by a handful of clashing perspectives.

While, yes, sales managers and salespeople agree in more than a few key areas (recruitment is as hard as ever, sales team sizes need to increase, appointments remain elusive, and continual learning & development is of high importance), there are a few discrepancies that warrant increased focus:

- Sales managers and salespeople are looking for different “hybrid” schedules
- Too many salespeople wouldn’t recommend their workplace to others
- Neither group shares the same level of optimism for the future

Through enhanced efforts in enhancing company culture, improving the quality of sales enablement resources, and hiring new top talent, hopefully these gaps won’t be as wide come this time next year.

METHODOLOGY

The Center for Sales Strategy, a sales performance company, conducted two online surveys in October 2022. Two sample groups were surveyed representing sales managers and salespeople in Radio, TV, Digital, Newspaper, and Cable.

The first sample included 139 sales managers with job titles such as VP of Sales, Director of Sales, and General Sales Managers. The second group was a sample of 153 salespeople, primarily Account Executives. The majority of all respondents were industry veterans with 11+ years of media sales experience representing a balanced cross-section of market sizes.

Numbers have been rounded for readability.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR SALES STRATEGY

Founded in 1983, The Center for Sales Strategy (CSS) has grown to serve hundreds of clients annually, across a spectrum of industries including broadcast, print, and digital media, professional services, non-profit associations, and more. CSS is focused on improving sales performance as it helps sales organizations turn talent into performance and develop the highest-performing sales professionals. Its approach to customer-focused selling and talent-focused management has always been, and continues to be, core to its clients’ success and the organization’s success.

CSS is joined by LeadG2, its sales performance division, and Up Your Culture, its employee engagement and company culture division, to help organizations achieve total revenue performance.



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