

The 2020 Sales Prospecting Performance Report

Actionable Research to Build Your Sales Pipeline

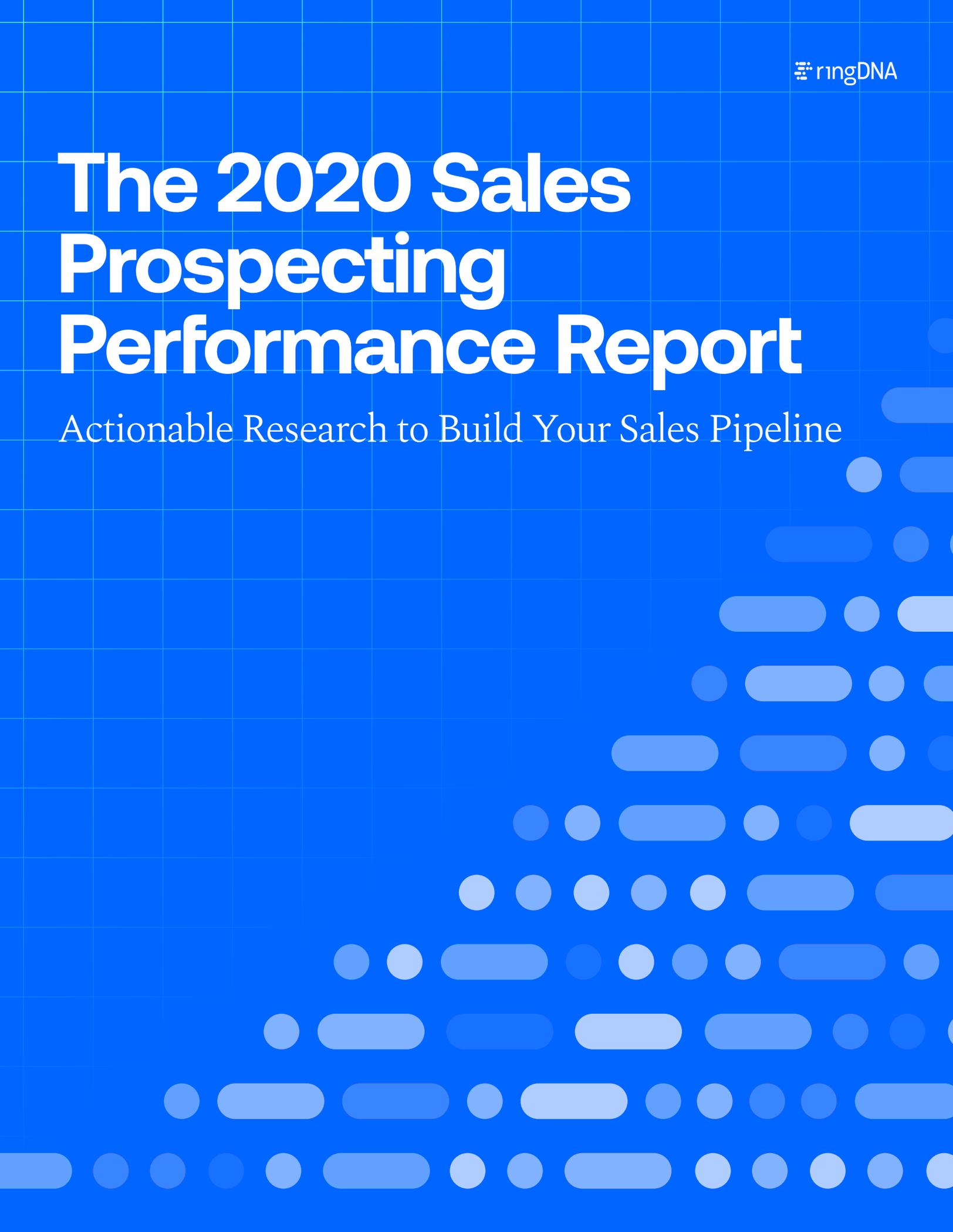


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Introduction

How often should reps follow up with hot leads? When is the best time to email and call? What is the ideal talk-to-listen ratio?

Experienced sales leaders ask questions like those each day because they know the market conditions shift frequently. Fortunately, our 2020 Sales Prospecting Report is full of answers. These findings are the result of an analysis of 130 million sales conversations that reveal exactly how sales teams can effectively engage target customers and how to maximize the outcome of their interactions.

A few of my favorite takeaways:

- Plan your most important calls for mid-to-late morning. Call answer rates are at their peak between 10 and 11:30am across time zones.
- Schedule your high-priority emails between noon and 3pm when open rates peak.
- Don't go on lengthy monologues during sales calls - the average talk streak of top sales performers was only 12 seconds and those reps balance longer monologues with extended periods of listening.

That's just a small sample of the actionable insights offered in our latest report, and a fraction of the discoveries unique to individual industries and segments that ringDNA customers benefit from.

Sales Activity Benchmarks

First and foremost, sales has always been and will always be a numbers game. The more calls, emails, and messages you send, the more (proportionately) you will receive in return. Then, since more leads are moving through your sales pipeline, you will win more deals and generate more revenue.

However, there is a balance. Sales technology has granted reps the ability to make hundreds of calls and send thousands of messages a day and now teams can perform so much outreach that they have begun to focus purely on numbers, rather than actual quality of their interactions. Reps must walk a fine line. A massive quantity of outreach sacrifices quality, but salespeople should not be so focused on quality that they have no quantity.

To hit your revenue goals, it is important to calculate the volume and frequency of sales activities it takes to reach your target. Start with the goal you aim to hit and work backward. What percentage of leads close? What percentage of calls turn into

opportunities? How many calls need to be made per week? Per day? Per hour?

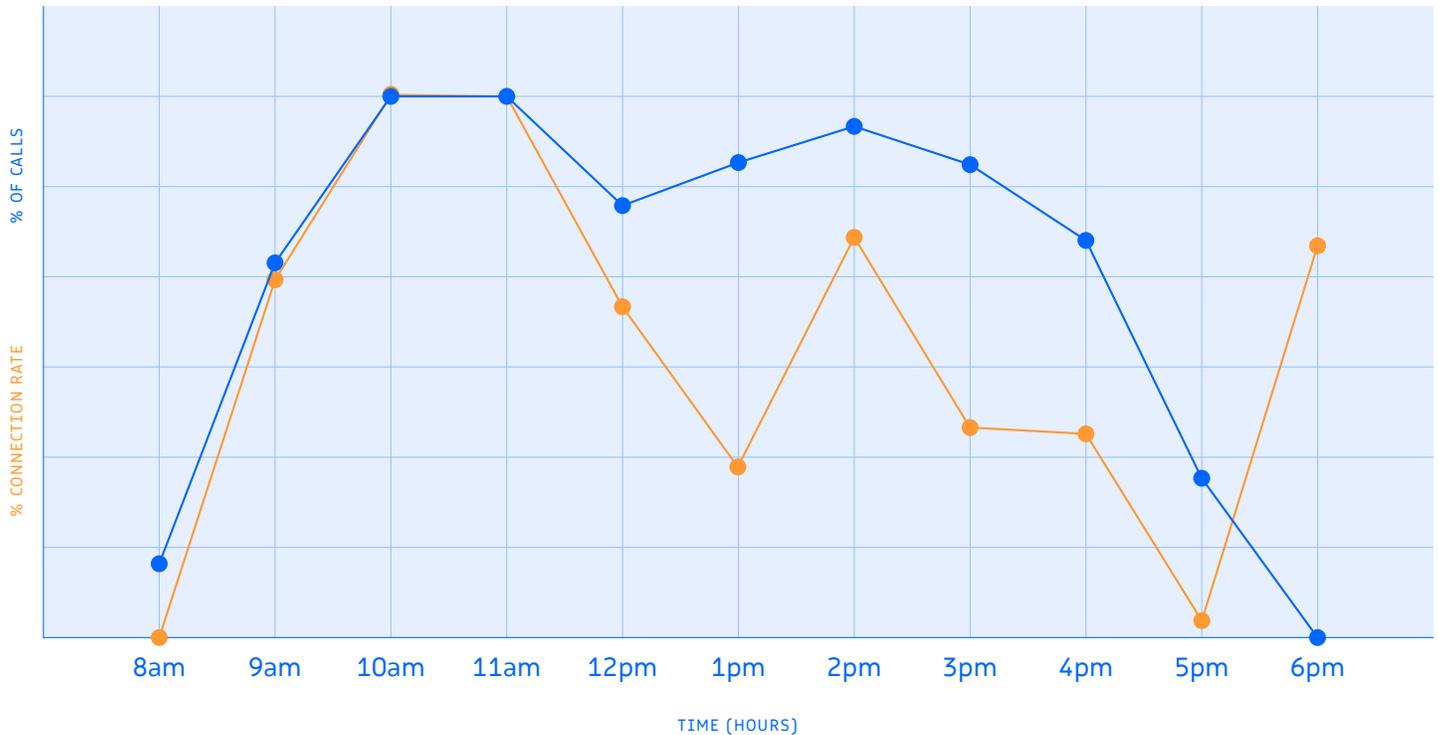
As a benchmark, ringDNA has found that **a single outbound sales rep should make 60 calls per day.**

For best results, sales reps should average 60 calls per day. B2B Tech reps typically achieve half of that.

Data further shows that **B2B technology reps usually average 35 calls per day and spend a total of 55 minutes each day speaking with prospects.**

TOPO found that the most effective sales sequences contain 12-16 touches spread over 3 to 4 weeks.

The Best Time to Make Sales Calls

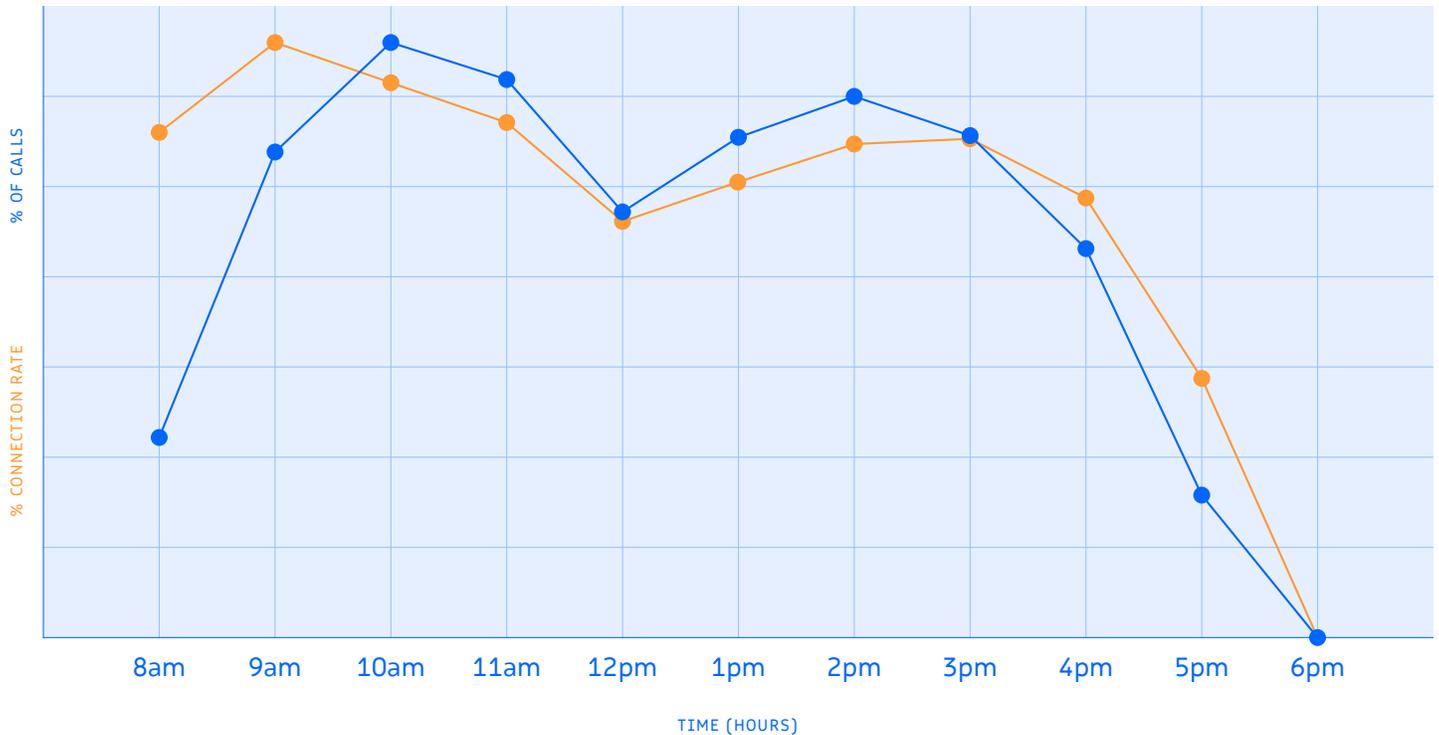


More important than the number of calls made, is when calls are made. ringDNA data shows that **call answer rates peak between 10 and 11:30am**, with a secondary spike at 1:30pm.

For maximum pickup rates, sales calls should be made between 10 and 11:30am in your respective time zone.

To maximize the impact of their dials, reps should dedicate these times to making calls. Sales teams should avoid mid-morning meetings and avoid taking late lunches to capitalize on high answer rates.

Capitalize on Connection Rates



The alignment between times of high connection rates and when sales reps perform relevant activities also appears to be off. Reps spend the majority of their mornings (in each of their respective time zones) not making calls and do not fully capitalize on the window of high answer rates. They also make many calls right after lunch, when the answer rate is still low.

The lack of sales activity early in the day may indicate a disordered call list, morning meetings, or unorganized starts to the day. There also may be issues with motivation, rejection, or both.

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Using data to understand how to optimize sales communication delivery and schedule lead follow-up is extremely important now and will be for many years to come.

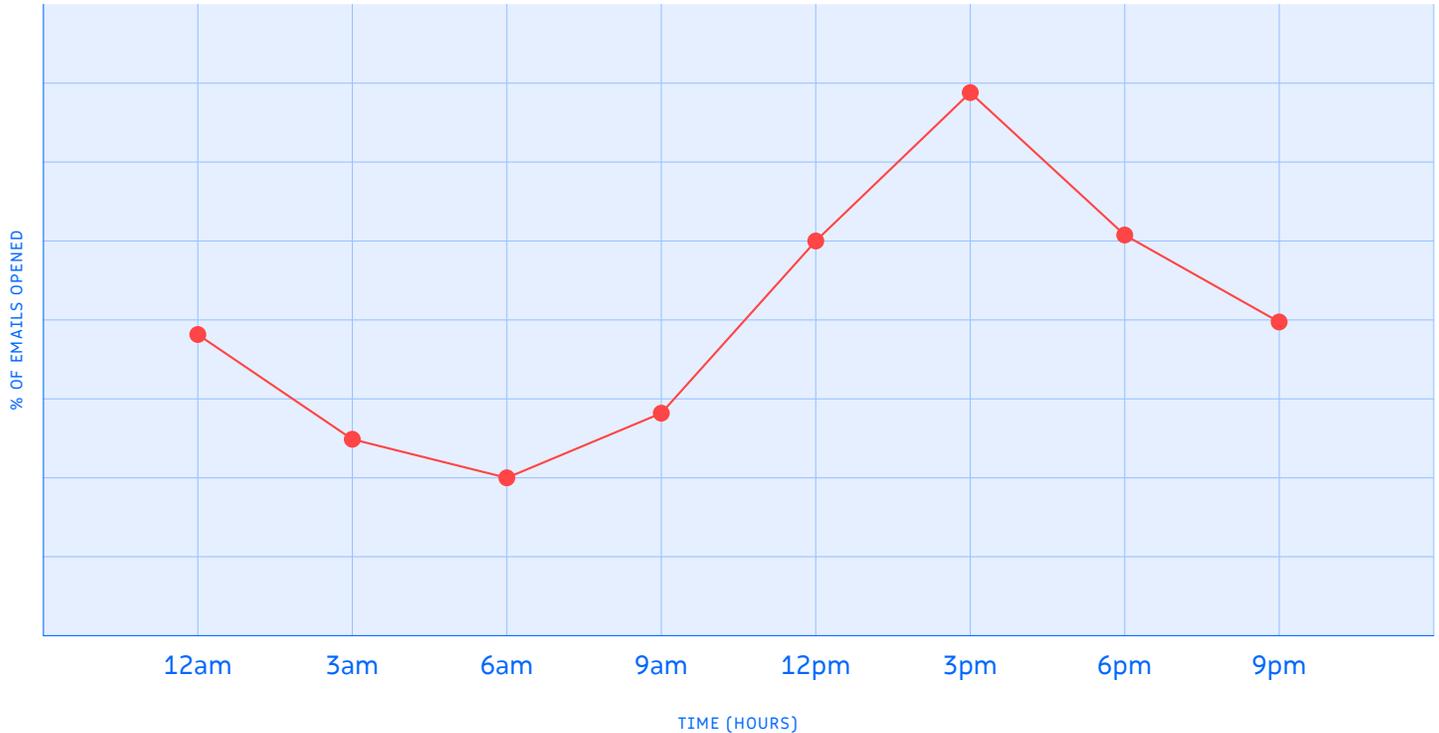
But using AI-powered analysis to understand the in-depth conversational techniques that win more deals is truly groundbreaking.

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William Tyree
CMO, ringDNA

The Best Time to Send Sales Emails



Conveniently, email open rates spike during some of the lower call connection times. **Peak email opens occur at 3pm, and peak send time is between 12 and 6pm** (source: Campaign Monitor). This means reps send at least half of their emails after prime open times. To properly take advantage of this, reps should send emails between noon and 3pm, so they can take advantage of the highest openings happening at 3.

Prospects open their emails at 3pm, send at or before this time to maximize your open rates.

The Best Daily Schedule for Sales Prospecting Performance

This means that for 2020, sales reps should schedule their call blocks in the morning, between the hours of 10 and 11:30am to maximize their connection rates. Further, they should plan to send emails in the afternoon, between noon and 3pm to increase the likelihood of an open.

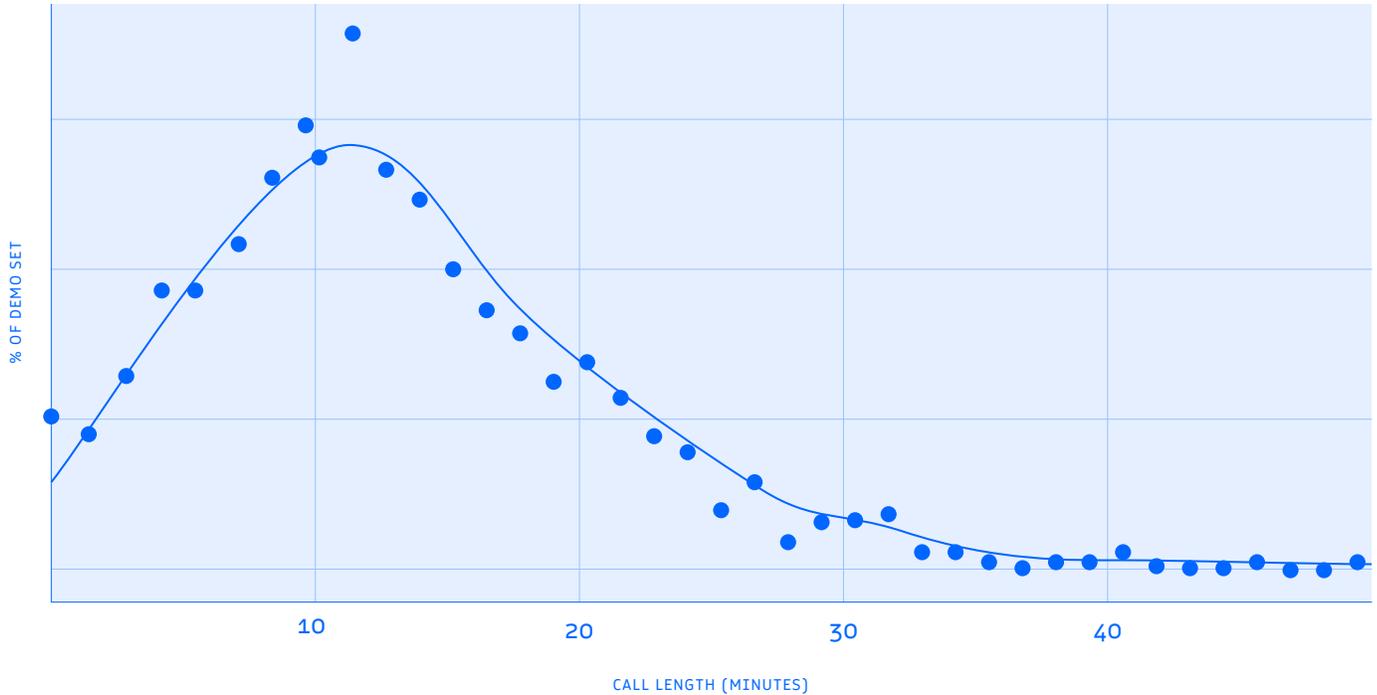
These calls and emails should be part of a 12-16 touch sales sequence that runs over 3-4 weeks.

Organizations can also invest in tools that automate sales sequences using AI, and that prioritize and organize leads in call lists so reps know exactly who to call and when, and don't waste precious morning call time trying to figure it out.

Sales reps should make calls between 10 and 11:30am and save their emails for the afternoon, ideally between noon and 3pm.

Sales managers can help encourage this by blocking out periods of time specifically for calls and emails. They should also avoid morning meetings so reps have time to prep for and make calls.

The Optimal Sales Prospecting Call Length



ringDNA conversationAI data shows that prospecting calls that result in a demo set average 14.3 minutes in length. Furthermore, charts show that the likelihood of setting a demo on a call increases as the call length reaches 14 minutes. However, after that, there is a significant decay.

The most successful sales prospecting calls average 14.3 minutes in length.

This indicates that it only takes a few minutes to confirm interest and establish a demo on a call. After that is done, reps typically perform administrative duties like confirming dates and times, collecting email addresses, and gathering qualification information.

How to Have Effective Sales Conversations

Thanks to AI call analysis solutions like ringDNA, not only do we now understand the best times to make calls, we can see what the best sales calls look like.

The best sellers have unique conversational traits. During sales conversations, their prospects do most of the talking and are also more likely to respond and engage due to conversational behaviors.

ringDNA found that the **best sellers have average monologues (uninterrupted segments of speech) of only 12 seconds, with the longest single period of talking stretching to 72 seconds.**

Top sellers also use silence but don't let it dominate a conversation.

Winning conversations had by top sellers have silent periods that last no more than 8 to 10 percent of the total call time.

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The best sales reps know more than just how to listen. They know when to listen and when it is time for them to speak. Longer monologues in sales conversations are okay, but the best reps balance those extended periods of listening.

Experienced conversationalists have the ability to recognize when a prospect is sharing something valuable and allow them to do so, and combined with the use of silence, are able to gain important information that helps them win.

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David Masover

B2B Sales Accelerator, David Masover Sales Consulting

Author of *The Salesman's Guide to Dating*, *Mastering Your Sales Process*, and *Managing the Sales Process*

How Closers Balance Monologues in Sales Conversations



Data shows that conversations with longer monologues have a higher close rate. However, in this case, data is deceiving. What we are actually seeing is that as opportunities advance through the sales

funnel, reps have conversations that contain longer monologues. This is likely because they are providing demonstrations, explaining features, answering complex, technical questions, or having negotiations.

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Developing great communication skills is certainly essential to achieving great results. Training on those skills is just the start. Managers must coach and review on a regular basis to make certain those skills are being practiced, employed, and improved all the time.

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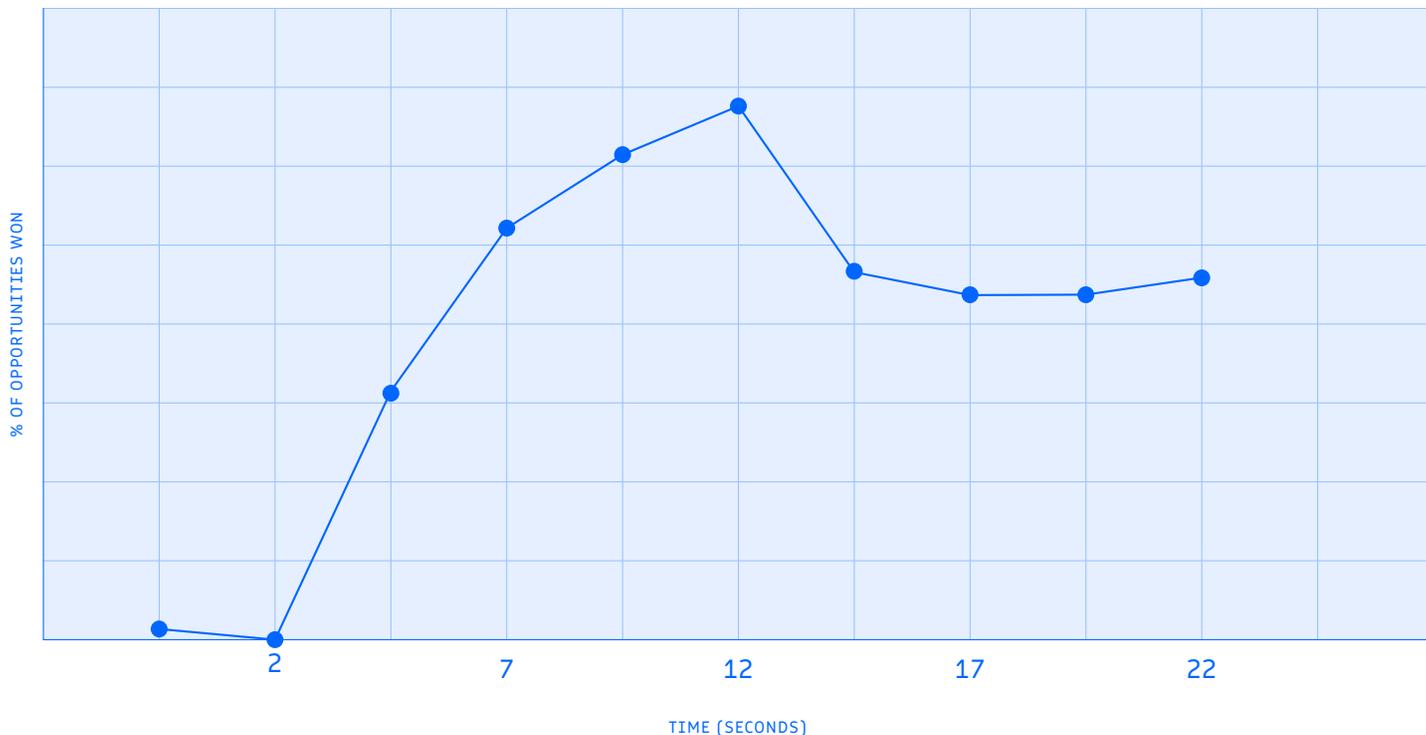


John Doerr

Co-founder & President, RAIN Group

Co-author of WSJ bestseller *Rainmaking Conversations: How to Influence, Persuade, and Sell in Any Situation*, and *Insight Selling: Surprising Research on What Sales Winners Do Differently*

Winning with Monologues in Sales Conversations



The real way to have winning sales conversations is to **be aware of monologue time, do not be afraid to go on longer monologues when the discussion calls for it.** These longer monologues should be balanced with extended periods of listening.

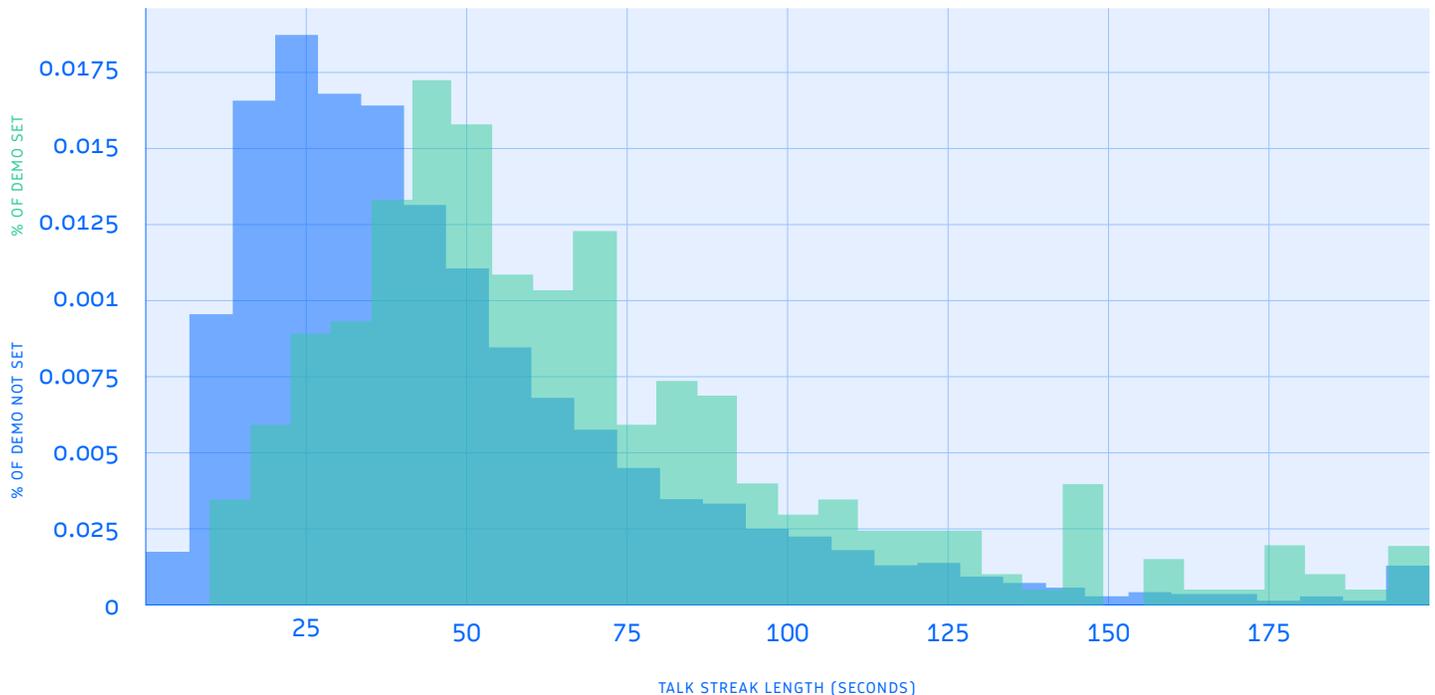
During conversations, **top performers' talk streaks average 12 seconds.** The likelihood of a close drops steeply after average streak increases over the 12-second mark.

In reality, **data shows that top performers know how to balance their monologue**

time with listening and short sentences. So although they may speak for up to 72 seconds, they spend a **significantly longer amount of time listening or responding in short sentences, which decreases the average talk time.**

The talk streaks of top sales performers average 12 seconds long. The individual monologues can extend up to 72 seconds when necessary, but are always balanced by extended periods of listening to reduce average talk time. Top reps understand when to speak and when to listen.

Longer Monologues Are More Successful When Combined with Listening



ConversationAI data shows that reps with longer monologues are actually more successful at setting demos. This indicates that sales rep to provide a longer, more detailed, and more personalized pitch to book demos.

Calls that result in a demo set contain longest rep talk streaks that average 67 seconds.

ringDNA examined the longest talk streak within sales calls. Calls that result in demos set contain an average longest rep talk streak that lasts 67 seconds. Call without demos set have a rep talk streak of 47 seconds. Again, top reps balance these monologues with extended periods of listening that result in a reduced overall average talk time.

Beyond Calls & Emails

To be the most effective prospecting engine possible it's important to go beyond what happens on the phone or in the inbox. There are several other very important data points to pay attention to in order to maximize prospecting effectiveness.

For ringDNA customers, the most important sales KPIs are often:

- 1. Conversion rate by response time**
 - a. The faster you can reach out to inbound leads, the better the chance of converting them into an opportunity.
- 2. Answer rate for local presence phone calls**
 - a. For outbound callers, a local area code significantly increases the answer rate.

3. Time between touches

- a. Depending on your industry and organization, this may vary. Experiment with the amount of time (hours or days) between touches in your sales sequence in order to maximize results.

4. Daily rep talk time by call volume

- a. The ratio of talk time to call volume will help sales managers diagnose struggling reps. If they make many calls, but don't have much talk time, then they aren't connecting with the right people, or are struggling to answer.

If there is high talk time, and low call volume, they may be having trouble qualifying, or are connecting, but not with the right people.

Skills to Increase Sales Prospecting Performance

Sales managers should also take the necessary steps to properly coach their reps in the skills that they need to succeed. A properly coached and effective rep can

multiply the performance of an entire team. When it comes to sales conversations, these are the skills that matter:

SKILL	% OF SALESPEOPLE WHO SAY IT HAS AN EXTREME/SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT ON CONVERSION RATES
Listening	78%
Engaging at the Right Time	76%
Demonstrating Attention to Detail	74%
Demonstrating Company Reputation/Trust	74%
Demonstrating Industry Knowledge	74%

(source: [2019 Salesforce State of Sales report](#))

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Conversations have always been at the core of human connection. However, understanding what makes a great conversation, and how conversational techniques impact sales, has long been hidden behind the curtain and known only to the best reps. Today, Artificial Intelligence is pulling back that curtain.

The power of AI helps forward thinking teams go far beyond traditional sales coaching, enabling managers to uncover which reps need coaching and how, while surfacing actionable insights, such as the importance of open-ended questions and balancing talk/listen ratio, that help each rep improve their skills and increase meetings booked, opportunities created and revenue won.

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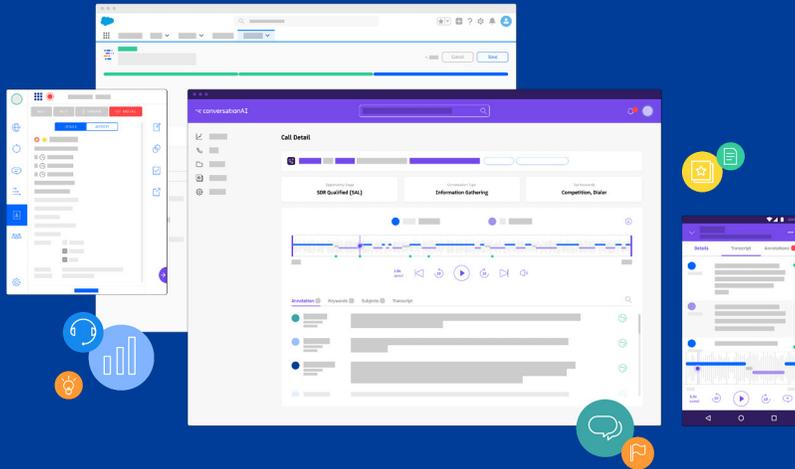


Howard Brown
Founder & CEO, ringDNA

Discover the Sales Experience Platform That Uses AI to Scale Revenue Growth.



POWERING 130 MILLION CONVERSATIONS AROUND THE WORLD



A complete solution for sales engagement, sales playbook execution, performance insight, conversation intelligence and much more.



Sales Productivity

Gain thousands of productivity hours across your entire sales team



Conversation Intelligence

Discover the sales talking points & techniques that win more deals



Sales Playbook Execution

Perfect your emails, calls, & follow-through

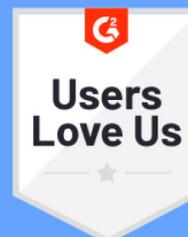


Sales Performance Insight

Real-time performance insights that scale & elevate your entire sales team

Capture 100% of your team's calls, emails, texts, & performance metrics in Salesforce

TRUSTED BY THE WORLD'S BEST SALES TEAMS



The Only Complete AI-Powered Solution for Inbound, Outbound, Sales Management, & Performance Analytics.



WORKS WITH



Gmail

Outlook

zoom

Google Ads



Conversation Intelligence

Scale Your Sales Management

- Easily correlate sales behavior with revenue & other sales outcomes
- Automate call transcription, keyword alerts, performance analytics, & more



Email, Call, & Text Sequencing

Automate Sales Engagement

- Execute your playbook
- Follow-up across your entire sales team
- Automate sales cadences, performance analytics, CRM data capture, & more



Intelligent Dialing

More Productivity & Call Context

- 300% more productivity on inbound & outbound dials
- Automate local area code dialing, scheduling, voicemail drop, analytics, & more



Sales Performance Analytics

Real-Time Insight Into Revenue-Generating Activities

- Actionable team and individual metrics
- Optimize sales operations for more predictable revenue
- Foster a sales coaching culture



Inbound Call Tracking

More Revenue from Inbound Calls

- Discover which marketing efforts drive revenue from inbound calls
- Convert more inbound callers into customers
- Works with Google Ads, G2, and any online or offline source



Thank You

Check out more free resources
at ringdna.com/sales-strategy