**sparklane**

# HOW SALES INTELLIGENCE IS **TRANSFORMING B2B SALES**

From Lead Generation To Predictive Lead Scoring

# INTRODUCTION

To say that the sales business has changed is an understatement. From traditional sales before the age of computers and the Internet through to the 2020 horizon, the changes have been incredible and there is more to come. These developments will accelerate even further with even more sophisticated Big Data tools and predictive analysis coming to sales teams.

**Sales Intelligence makes the transformation simple**

Sales Intelligence - all the technologies, applications and practices related to the collection, integration, analysis and extrapolation of data and customer and prospect behaviour used to maximize sales - has become essential because it closely answers the profound changes in the practice and nature of the sales and marketing roles.

In its 2015 report on sales effectiveness and Big Data[1], IDC found that 47% of businesses had already implemented integrated sales processes around Big Data. But there are still nearly 50% of businesses who are using bespoke or opportunistic methods. A 2015 study conducted by BARC found far lower penetration numbers (25% and 23% respectively for marketing and sales departments)[2].

The scope of change is considerable and the transformation of the sales profession which is being led by Big Data and predictive analysis is just beginning.

1 / Using Big Data + Analytics To Drive Business Transformation : http://www.sap.com/bin/sapcom/en_us/downloadasset.2015-05-may-01-16.big-data-analytics-to-drive-business-transformation-idc-pdf.bypassReg.html
2 / BARC : Big Data Use Cases, 2015

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# 1

# THE UNDENIABLE IMPACT
## OF BIG DATA ON B2B SALES

*Automated scoring of 13 million prospects meant that DocuSign saved the equivalent of 4875 years of work.*

Big Data, and its processing, has many applications. Data collection, as well as data storage and analysis technologies invented by Google, Amazon or Facebook, have a direct impact, whether in medical research, in the prevention of crime, sentiment analysis of a whole population or a segment like investors. These technologies have many different uses in business: indeed, after the hype of recent years, early trends in Big Data usage are beginning to appear which show a genuine evolution in their use. According to Gartner, 76% of companies have invested or plan to invest in Big Data analysis in the next 2 years, up from 58% in 2012. Marketing is one notable area where Big Data shows lots of promise. The analysis of customer behaviour using data from the Web and social networks allows us to better understand customers and to construct more specific segmentations, resulting in better targeted email campaigns.

However, this is far from the only application: industrial and service businesses have seized the opportunity to optimise their production processes and their use of internal resources. Sales operations can also benefit by using Big Data to increase sales and improve sales efficiency. We are at the dawn of a new discipline – Sales Intelligence.

Search engines, social networks and B2C sites have all shown that users' behavioural data can be collected and analysed, and then used to provide hyper targeted advertisements or services which best fit the individual customer profile. It is an approach that works, so why not do the same with your own customers? This technique is not restricted to e-commerce and B2C - even purely B2B focused companies can increase their sales significantly by using it.

DocuSign is a business specialising in digital signatures which works primarily with businesses. This Californian company used Sales Intelligence techniques with the data it holds on its 13 million prospects. A mass canvass of these prospects would have required an employee the equivalent of an eye-watering 4875 years of work. The company used an automated scoring system to show which of the prospects was closest to the act of making a purchase. Thanks to this selection of 'hot prospects', DocuSign was able to launch a marketing campaign which had a 23.8% engagement rate (opening emails, calls, site visits) and generated $1 million of orders[3] .

The daily life of a B2B marketer involves finding the right prospects, giving them a score and then segmenting them before finally offering them the service or product which corresponds to their requirements. Sales Intelligence can greatly assist in this task and make itself an indispensable tool.

Establishing a Big Data approach within a business is no longer exceptional. A global study conducted in 2015 by IDG Enterprise[4] showed that the number of Big Data projects had increased by 125% since 2014. So, as the popularity of Big Data continues to grow, what are the results? According to a 2015 European study conducted by BARC[5], the average increase in turnover for companies which have integrated Big Data into their processes is around 13%. In addition, these same companies have seen a reduction in costs of 16%. However, not all companies measure the ROI of their Big Data and the study points out that only a third of companies asked were able to provide an answer.

« **Businesses which integrate Big Data have seen their turnover figures increase by 13%.** »

3 / http://www.mintigo.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/DocuSign-case-study3.pdf
4 / IDG Enterprise : "Big Data and Analytics Survey", 2015
5 / BARC : Op cit

## LEADS BEFORE EVERYTHING

According to the same study by BARC, 25% of marketing departments and 23% of sales departments already use Big Data analysis. Marketing and sales are, in reality, the two largest users of data in business, behind finance and IT (21%). Both these departments are client-centred, so it is unsurprising that it also found that Big Data was primarily being used for the acquisition of new leads. This was confirmed by a separate study from the Aberdeen Group[6] which found that the number one objective for 61% of businesses that had a Sales Intelligence strategy was to increase the number and quality of leads so as to increase sales.

Businesses are benefiting by changing from a traditional approach, which provides a standard, static business page, to delivering information which is much richer and relevant to the prospect. The aim is to give the sales team all the weaponry they need to be able to persuade and ultimately complete the sale in the best way. Examples of the data reports compiled by companies for their sales department include information on the target company, information about their leaders, market reports along with news articles, specialist reports and content published by the businesses themselves. When questioned by researchers, sales people placed the contact details of decisions makers at the heart of the target business as the most important information to them.

The Aberdeen Group also stressed the importance of measuring results. Indeed, when looking at the most successful companies among the 206 survey respondents, the research showed that 72% measured their ROI on Sales Intelligence, much higher figure than the average (47%). It also showed that 58% of these successful companies were able to monitor the impact of third-party data sources on their sales.



6 / Aberdeen Group : "Sales Intelligence : Best-in-Class Strategies Adopted by Salesforce Data.com Customers", August 2013

# 2 HOW SALES INTELLIGENCE REVOLUTIONISES
## THE SALES PROFESSION

*89% of B2B purchases start with a Web search*

**T**he ZMOT (or Zero Moment Of Truth) is an acronym invented by Google to designate the first stage of the purchasing process, one where the client will look online for information about the product that he wishes to acquire. This term is not restricted to B2C, it also applies to business to business. This phenomenon of customer information overload can be seen as a threat to the seller. However, it can also be an opportunity to grow your expertise and stand out. In this respect, Big Data has everything required to become a weapon for sales. We have identified two transformational phases (or you could say revolutionary phases) in sales using Big Data.

**PHASE 1:**
THE CHANGE IN THE POWER OF THE SELLER

The importance of the Web in the buying process is well established. In an article published in 2015[7], Google stated that 89% of B2B purchases begin with an Internet search. In other words, the vast majority of B2B buyers get ahead of the vendors by seeking out information for themselves. B2B vendors have gradually lost their status as a provider of information and innovation.
The consequence of the Zero Moment Of Truth is that it puts salespeople in to a subordinate role. And in this context, the hard seller is no longer what the market needs: the seller must instead play the role of adviser, so that they will add value to their client. For that, they

have to get to know the buyer: their needs, «pains»[8], desires, background, knowledge level, economic status… Sales Intelligence is hugely important because it is it can make this information available to the innovative salesperson, allowing them to immediately contact the right prospects at just the right time.

Understanding exactly what the customer needs and what he wants in a particular context and a specific time, the salesperson is able to provide, at the perfect moment, all the information the customer needs. So hyper targeted content can be sent through whichever channels are most likely to work for the prospect according to their status, their profile and their position within the buying journey. The salesperson can then approach the new customer with better knowledge of both them and their situation. This new sales technique, helped by the Sales Intelligence, is no longer about canvassing the target but about knowing the customer's needs and positioning themselves more as an essential partner than a seller.
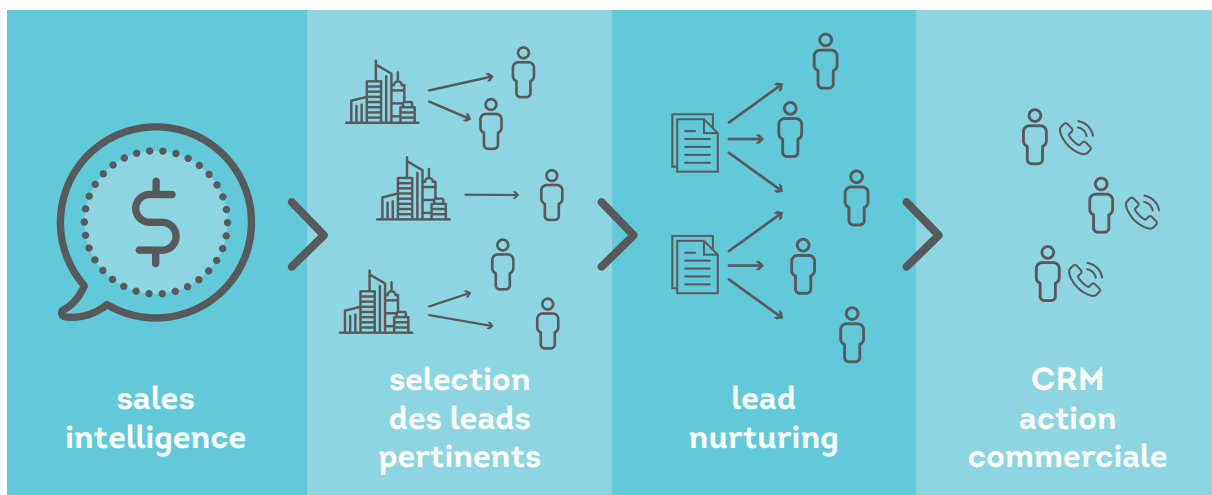
## PHASE 2 :
## THE AUTOMATION OF B2B SALES

This phenomenon is not unique to large accounts. In 2020, to combat growing competition, SMEs in the B2B market will also reconcile marketing, sales and customer service. Using Sales Intelligence, they will better know their clients, better target their offerings and will engage in predictive analytics: this opens the door to a full automation of the sales process. Automation will be done through a combination of three complementary elements: the search for leads, targeting and CRM.

The first element, at the company level, is the one dedicated to targeting leads using Sales Intelligence tools. The sales service and / or sales support teams, can achieve a multi-faceted hyper targeting (combining different factors including the industry sector, turnover, growth, financial data or the recruitment policy of the business). Sales Intelligence tools, such as Sparklane, using data from corporate databases, give companies the power to carry out hyper focused multi-criteria searches which can create lists of businesses that are more likely to purchase and then to pick which leads to secure. With these tools, it is finally possible to go beyond the simple business profile, as was the case when using the

Figure 1: ideal configuration of an automated sales process linked to sales intelligence when the business is equipped with a marketing automation system



| sales intelligence | selection des leads pertinents | lead nurturing | CRM action commerciale |

7 / https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/articles/the-changing-face-b2b-marketing.html

8 / The famous customer pain points as described by Michael Bosworth, author of the "Social Selling" method of sales, who asked the question "What is keeping my client awake at night?"

commercial databases of old. These hyper focused searches make it possible to integrate the concept of «business signals,» such events in the life of a company which are significant in sales terms: a headquarters move, the recruitment notice for a new manager, the appointment of a person known to the leadership of the company, a new fundraising, etc. The data is enriched by commercially useful qualitative criteria.

The second element is to work at the level of the decision-making contact and to sort the leads to target the hottest. This is done through the behavioural targeting of individuals, made possible by tracing the path taken by targeted users and comparing it with the behaviour of relevant leads provided by the Sales Intelligence tool. It is then possible to deduce the preferences and interests of leads and use this to establish scenarios to adapt the approach. Typically, this is what marketing automation tools like Eloqua do- they target contacts within selected companies and follow their journey through the sales cycle. This is accompanied by a «lead nurturing» or «incubation» approach which consists, according to the scenarios mentioned above, of delivering tailored content to prospects in order to guide them, step by step, in the sales cycle. The tracking of prospects' behaviour in rela-

tion to different content allows businesses continually to adapt their nurturing strategy and convince the target to make contact with a salesperson.

Finally, the third element comes with the sales team, which can use a CRM tool, such as Salesforce, to plan and follow the interactions undertaken with the qualified prospect until the conclusion of the sale. If the company is not equipped with a marketing automation solution, it can go directly back to the first element (Sales Intelligence) with sales teams directly calling leads who have been identified through their business signals.

This automation – whether total or partial – is not a luxury for businesses. A study by Forrester[9] indicated that 93% of B2B[10] buyers preferred to buy online rather than going through a salesperson. Businesses, especially SMEs, have every reason to make the transition now – or face the full impact of the arrival of sales automation in their competitors.

Figure 2: simplified configuration of a sales process linked to Sales Intelligence when the business is not equipped with a marketing automation system



**sales intelligence**   **selection des leads pertinents**   **CRM action commerciale**
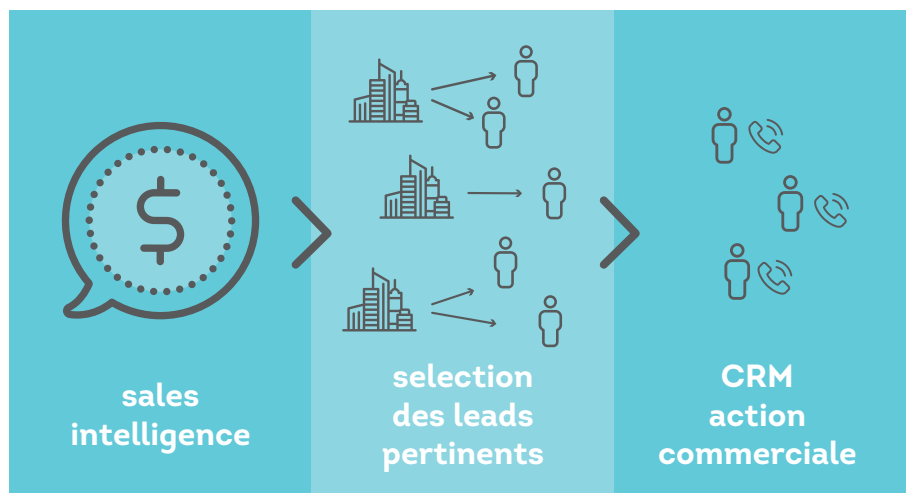
9 / https://www.forrester.com/report/Death+Of+A+B2B+Salesman/-/E-RES122288
10 / Study undertaken in the United States.

# MARC CHEMIN, CAPGEMINI

## SALES INTELLIGENCE :
## STATE OF PLAY AND PERSPECTIVE



**Marc Chemin is Global Insights & Data Consulting Leader at Capgemini Consulting.**

**S**ales Intelligence is a popular topic with B2B companies looking to optimise their sales processes. Where are we on its adoption? What are the differences between France and the UK? How will Sales Intelligence evolve? Will it mutate? Here is the view of Marc Chemin, Data Consulting Leader at Capgemini.

### IS SALES INTELLIGENCE REALLY A NEW PRACTICE?

Targeting and sales performance have always been a central concern of B2B companies. This issue has seen something of a revival, on one hand with Big Data which has opened up many possibilities, and on the other thanks to tools like Salesforce maturing. We can now fuse the data and analyse it to optimise targeting, both in terms of segmentation and also in better understanding the target. There has also been progress in the sales phase, with the management of the sales funnel increasing success rates. So we can see that data can help us to better understand the people with whom businesses interact and help guide conversations towards better sales.

### ARE ALL BUSINESS SECTORS EQUAL?

In relation to business sectors, aside from the tech sector (which, naturally, is closest to these technologies), it isn't really possible to identify which are more advanced than others. Let's just take the example of Dell, which is one of the pioneers in this area : the company deployed a Sales Intelligence tool in 2011 within its B2B sales divisions. That responded to three needs : to identify the best prospects from within a massive database, to adapt conversations so that they were relevant to the client so as to maximise sales, and to make the data (clients, products, availability...) accessible to all the sales teams, no matter where, immediately.
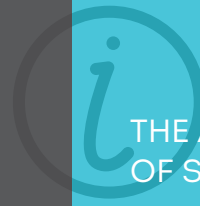
## HOW WILL SALES INTELLIGENCE EVOLVE?

The adoption of Sales Intelligence will increase. The marker of this trend is the use of Salesforce, which usually replaces the old platforms. This trend will strengthen in the coming years. To fully benefit from Sales Intelligence techniques will require companies to adapt their sales processes. It is the evolution of this process, coupled with the spread of increasingly powerful tools based on Big Data that will enhance sales efficiency. The depth of the current changes rely on the evolution of the business model – even of the company itself - and the adaptation of its sales processes, which depends on its deep knowledge of customers and their behaviour.

Take the example of Caterpilar which sold mining equipment. Then it changed its business model to sell 'hours of use' of its engines, with a minimum service contract. It was a radical change in strategy and commercial approach with perfectly married up the use of Sales Intelligence and Marketing Automation. Even bigger disruption from Sales Intelligence is yet to come. We are more in a phase of use and application of new techniques with a view to optimising processes than in a revolutionary phase for sales processes. However, it is clear that things will evolve positively in the future, due to the increasing maturity of businesses using Sales Intelligence.

# THE ADOPTION AND EVOLUTION OF SALES INTELLIGENCE

### THE RAPID ADOPTION OF SALES INTELLIGENCE

Among the 50 % of Salesforce's American clients who installed applications from APPExchange (the marketplace for publishers of applications[11] ), approximately a third installed one or more Sales Intelligence applications. Sales Intelligence was identified as "one of three Appexchange application categories which saw the most spectacular growth in downloads in 2015"
Source : State of Salesforce survey by Bluewolf and MIT's Sloan School of Management based on interviews with 1,000 Salesforce.com users .
Source: étude State of Salesforce Survey par Bluewolf[14] et MIT's Sloan School of Management sur la base de l'interview de 1,000 utilisateurs de Salesforce.com[15] .

### FIGURES AND THE REALITY OF SALES INTELLIGENCE

When asked how important they thought Sales Intelligence was, 62 % of B2B sales staff asked by researchers at the Aberdeen Group in 2012 said that it allowed them to obtain more leads and that they were higher quality[14] . In 2015, in their report called "Sales effectiveness in 2015 : how to achieve our goals[15] ?", Boston Research noted that "the most effective organisations in our sample are two times more likely to be the first to adopt sales effectiveness solutions" when compared with the rest of the sample.

### SALES IN THE "ERA OF DISTRACTION"

Tomorrow's winners will be those who have connected their clients and Sales Intelligence tools to active sales management and automation technology, so that they can send predictions about the behaviour of prospects directly to the sales teams at the moment they need it. It is less a question of spending more time on sales than of providing sales staff with insights and prospects to enable them to succeed.
Source : Accenture, Selling in the Age of Distraction, 2016[16] .

11 / https://appexchange.salesforce.com/
12 / http://www.gryphonnetworks.com/blog/sales-intelligence/
   sales-intelligence-adoption-numbers-don%E2%80%99t-lie-
13 / http://www.bluewolf.com/state-of-salesforce
14 / http://www.manageyourleads.com/2015/02/how-better-
   sales-intelligence-leads-to-bigger-sales/
15 / http://aberdeen.com/research/10616/10616-rr-sales-effec-
   tiveness-technologies/content.aspx
16 / https://www.accenture.com/t20160802T022927__w__/us-
   en/_acnmedia/PDF-27/Accenture-Strategy-Selling-Age-Dis-
   traction.pdf

# 4 INFOGRAPHIC
## PARTIE 1

## COMPANIES DEMAND MORE CUSTOMER KNOWLEDGE
**Survey by Sparklane with 672 participants in June 2016**

DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR CRM FULLY ALLOWS YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR CUSTOMERS?

| 33,1% | 66,9% |
|---|---|
| YES completely | NO not enough |

DO YOU FEEL SUFFICIENTLY INFORMED ABOUT THE BUSINESS SIGNALS COMING FROM YOUR CUSTOMERS AND PROSPECTS?

| 9,7% | 32,4% | 48,8% | 9,1% |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes absolutely | Yes a bit | Not enough | Not at all |
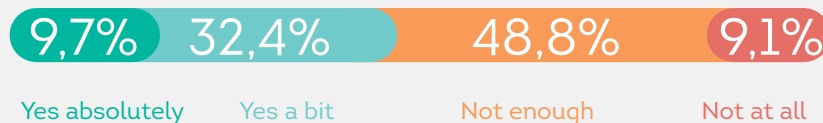
DO YOU THINK THAT INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTEXT OF YOUR TARGET COMPANIES ALLOWS YOU TO STRENGTHEN YOUR SALES PITCH?

| 81,8% | 18,2% |
|---|---|
| Yes | No |
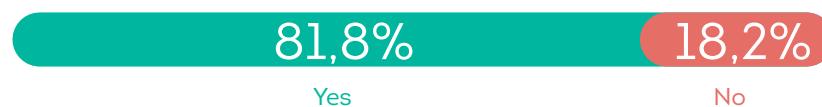
DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE TOOLS THAT LET YOU ANTICIPATE THE NEEDS OF YOUR PROSPECTS?

| 71,3% | 28,7% |
|---|---|
| Yes | No |
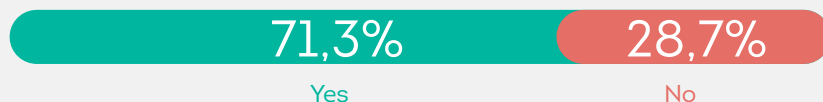
BESIDES CRM, WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE A PREDICTIVE LEAD SCORING SOLUTION WHICH CAN SUGGEST THE MOST RELEVANT LEADS IN YOUR SALES TERRITORY?

| 77,4% | 22,6% |
|---|---|
| Yes | No |
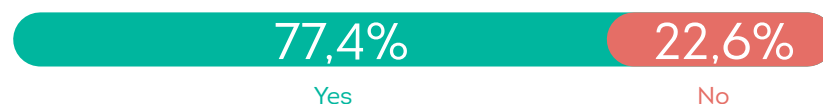
# COMPANIES FACE UP TO BIG DATA
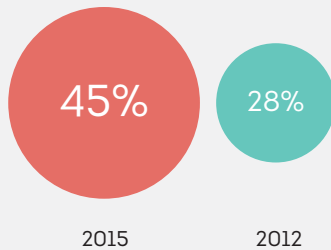**Data from global studies**

## 1 HAS YOUR BUSINESS INVESTED IN BIG DATA?

**45%** 2015

**28%** 2012

In 2015, 45% of businesses had invested in Big Data. In 2012, it was 28%.
Source : Gartner, 2015

## 2 THE BENEFITS AND COST REDUCTIONS OF BIG DATA

INCREASE IN TURNOVER
**+13%**

**-16%**
REDUCTION IN COSTS
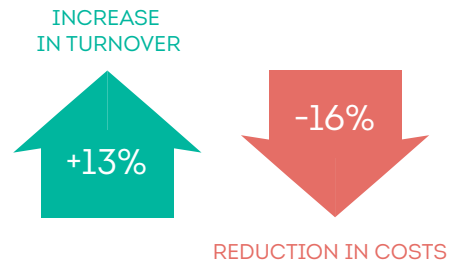
Source : BARC study "The use and practice of Big Data", 2015 (Europe)

## 3 IS YOUR CRM PROPERLY SUPPLIED WITH DATA?

**70%** of the data collected by companies will not be put to use in its CRM.
Source : IDC, 2014

**76%** of records are affected by a poor data entry.

**53%** of records are damaged by system updates.

**48%** of records contain defects caused by data migration and conversion from one format to another.
Source : Common CRM Data Problems (2014)

**C R A P** Data Quality : Monitor Your CRAP
Is it **C**orrupt, or is it Correct?
Is it **R**ubbish, or has it been Re-purpo-sed?
Is it **A**bortive, or is it Appropriate?
Is it **P**oor, or is it Perfect?
Source: https://www.dqglo-bal.com/2014/06/12/common-crm-da-ta-problems/ Common CRM Data Problems (2014)

**45%** of the best performing companies* coupled their CRM with their Sales Intelligence tools, as opposed to 39% for other businesses.

Source : Aberdeen, 2013

## 4 BIG DATA : IN WHICH AREAS ARE BUSINESSES INVESTING?

**25%** MARKETING

**23%** SALES
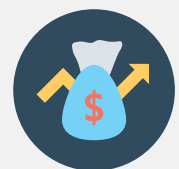
**21%** FINANCE & MANAGEMENT

**21%** IT

**19%** PRODUCTION

**18%** R&D

Source : Barc 2015

*the best performing businesses : in relation to 2013, Aberdeen identified the best enterprises in terms of their sales performance (20% of the sample interviewed) and compared them to the other business in the sample.

# 5

# WHY PREDICTIVE LEAD SCORING IS A CRUCIAL TOOL FOR THE BOTTOM LINE



**P**redictive Lead Scoring has become a must-have not just for lead hungry companies large and small but also for those who want to ensure that the leads which reach the end of the funnel are of the highest possible quality. Predictive Lead Scoring yields high ROI for all types of business.

*Gartner reports 10 times revenue increases in the first two years of use of Predictive Lead Scoring.*

## WHAT IS PREDICTIVE LEAD SCORING AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Predictive Lead Scoring is sometimes seen as an evolution of more traditional methods of lead scoring. In reality, it is a revolution brought about by the explosion of new available data and more powerful technology to analyse and digest it. As discussed in the interview with Michael R Levy in this White Paper on page 24, these predictive technologies mark a realignment following the power-shift in the vendor/purchaser relationship caused by the increasing amount of information available to potential clients prior to them making an approach.

Whereas traditional methods typically use a limited amount of explicit data types such as the prospect's job title, company name and turnover, predictive methods also use implicit data such as online behaviour and content interaction along with models that can match a wide range of characteristics with likely future behaviours and choices.

changed fundamentally in years, predictive methods are continually improving and become more accurate – with no cherry picking in sight!

## WHY DO B2B COMPANIES NEED PREDICTIVE LEAD SCORING?

According to Sirius Decisions, 90% of users of Predictive Lead Scoring say that it provides more value than traditional approaches[17] – but what can Predictive Lead Scoring do that gives rise to this incredible statistic?

Predictive Lead Scoring has many benefits – some specific to individual company users and- others more general:

## ACCURATE ANALYSIS

Even before the advent of Predictive Lead Scoring, traditional manual methods were prone to human error. Traditional methods are based on assumptions on what works and biases from individuals who have dealt with particular clients. Meagen Eisenberg, VP of DocuSign has been quoted as saying "We used to think our lead scoring models were great but... it was just automated cherry-picking". In contrast, predictive methods are based on computer power and cold, hard data analytics – all sentiment is gone.

Predictive systems are capable of using a volume of data that would be simply impossible for humans to deal with manually, using computer models which are not only incredibly complex but also evolving as more new data – both internal and external - comes on stream. Whereas traditional methods have not

*90% of users say Predictive Lead Scoring provides better value than traditional approaches.*
**source: Sirius Decision**

17 / Sirius Decisions, http://www.slideshare.net/SiriusDecisions/
predictive-lead-scoring-infographic

## MORE FOCUSED IN-FUNNEL NURTURING

There are a range of applications of the data produced by this analysis and key among them are the optimisation of segmentation, content and customer interaction. As Gartner points out, using traditional methods, sales and marketing professionals are effectively using a 'rear-view mirror approach'[18] – using data on what has worked in the past. Better understanding the predictive elements allows the targeting of focused inbound and outbound campaigns on leads who are displaying all the attributes of those about to buy or those who need more targeted information to lead them in that direction.

With increasing data and better predictive profiling, marketing and sales professionals can more accurately predict not only where a potential lead is within the marketing and sales funnel but also their likely requirements, stress points and actions.

## INCREASED SALES EFFICIENCY

According to MarketingSherpa, 79% of marketing leads never convert into sales[19] and 73% are not sales ready when handed over by marketing[20] - this is mainly down to poor lead nurturing. Obviously, Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) are important but, more important is that they are of sufficient quality that they can be converted into Qualified Sales Opportunities (QSOs).

Spending time on poor quality MQLs is a waste of resources and having too many MQLs of indeterminate quality can cause staffing issues. Predictive Lead Scoring can help by prioritising those prospects displaying the largest signals and putting them to the front of the queue, with those who are less advanced remaining in the funnel. As Gartner observed "More rapid response and a potential ability to engage with prospects earlier in their journey may lead to more opportunities being created"[21].

18 / Gartner, Tech Go-to-Market: Using Big Data to Focus on the Right Prospects Can Improve Sales and Marketing Effectiveness, August 2014
19 / MarketingSherpa, quoted http://hubspot.com/marketing-statistics
20 / http://sherpablog.marketingsherpa.com/email-marketing/b2b-lead-nurturing-importance/
21 / Gartner, Tech Go-to-Market: Predictive Lead Scoring Can Yield Significant ROI for Technology Provider Marketers, Even For Lower Lead Volumes, March 2016

## WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM PREDICTIVE LEAD SCORING AND WHAT IS THE ROI?

While, in the early stages, costs, data availability and infrastructure meant that Predictive Lead Scoring was the preserve of the biggest businesses, now any business that is looking for more sales can benefit from it, regardless of its size. Indeed, one of the benefits of Predictive Lead Scoring is that it is very scalable. Small businesses can start using it and it will grow with them and their sales teams. Besides, the ability of predictive technologies to aid the prioritisation of leads can be particularly useful for small teams struggling with a high number of Qualified Sales Opportunities (QSOs). The statistics about the financial benefits of using predictive technologies in the sales and marketing funnel could not be clearer:

Forrester research has shown that predictive marketers are 2.9 times more likely to report revenue growth at rates higher than the industry average[22].

Gartner has reported companies achieving payback within one quarter of Predictive Lead Scoring being used[23].

Gartner also reports 10 times revenue increases in the first two years of use[24].

In addition, other benefits include shorter sales cycles, lower spending on ineffective marketing and sales practices and greater staff efficiency as they focus on higher quality QSOs.

> **《** *Companies using Predictive Lead Scoring being used achieve payback within one quarter.* **》**
> *(source : Gartner)*

Predictive Lead Scoring does not just rely on pumping as many new MQLs into the system as possible. It is about providing better qualified leads that convert and add to the bottom line in as an efficient manner as possible. By streamlining the process and providing better opportunities to sales, Predictive Lead Scoring has become the must-have technology for any business wanting to increase its profitability.

21 / http://www.forbes.com/sites/louiscolumbus/2016/01/24/89-of-b2b-marketers-have-predictive-analytics-on-their-road-maps-for-2016/
22 / Gartner, Tech Go-to-Market: Predictive Lead Scoring Can Yield Significant ROI for Technology Provider Marketers, Even For Lower Lead Volumes, March 2016
23 / Gartner, Tech Go-to-Market: Predictive Lead Scoring Can Yield Significant ROI for Technology Provider Marketers, Even For Lower Lead Volumes, March 2016
24 / Gartner, Tech Go-to-Market: Predictive Lead Scoring Can Yield Significant ROI for Technology Provider Marketers, Even For Lower Lead Volumes, March 2016

# 6

# 3 PERFECT MOMENTS
## FOR PREDICTIVE
## INTELLIGENCE IN SALES

**P**redictive data analytics have the power to make a real difference to a business's bottom line. As businesses begin to better understand the mass of data and analytics that are at their fingertips, the question becomes when can the data be used within the sales and marketing funnel. The reality is that there are very few points in the funnel where predictive data cannot help. Here we look at three 'perfect moments' where using predictive data can bring concrete results.

**① FROM THE START - USING PREDICTIVE DATA TO LOWER NEW BUSINESS ACQUISITION COSTS**

According to research carried out by Radius[25], 68% of B2B marketers consider their top-of-funnel efforts to be ineffective in identifying leads. Understanding why is key to overcoming this depressing statistic and it is an area in which Big Data can provide the real solutions.

Businesses applying predictive Sales Intelligence techniques are able to adapt their campaigns for maximum effect. In a 2015 study[26],

Regalix found that 81% of users of sales, Web and marketing analytics stated that their data helped them identify which sales channels were providing the best ROI and 76% said it helped them prioritise the best marketing mix. Using Big Data predictively allows marketing teams to ensure efforts are concentrated on the right channels at the outset and reduces sales acquisition costs.

## ② IN THE FUNNEL - GUIDING POTENTIAL CLIENTS TOWARDS EFFECTIVE TRIGGERS

McKinsey[27] research  has shown that two-thirds of B2B deals are lost before a formal request for proposal process begins and that a typical B2B customer will regularly use six different interaction channels throughout their decision journey with 65% being frustrated by the experience.

Big Data allows businesses to analyse and understand where the drop points are within their sales and marketing funnel – for instance, by analysing exit channels within their website data, or nurturing leads according to their points of interest - and also the points that trigger an engagement, request or sale.

Reducing the dead-ends through predictive Sales Intelligence and Big Data makes it more likely that the customer will not get frustrated and will, instead, make it to the sale.

## ③ AT THE SALE - PROPOSING UPSELL AND CROSS-SELL – MAXIMISING MARGINS

All businesses recognise the point at which the customer makes the decision to buy – what P&G's A.G. Lafley described many years ago as 'the moment of truth'[28] for consumers and is also applicable to B2B. This is the point at which people are most susceptible to buy – and also to agree to upsell.

However, businesses also know that, while some customers will not make an additional purchase, there are further trigger points and moments where it becomes more likely in the future – and also that it is much easier to monetise an existing customer than win a new one. This could include, depending on the industry, extended warranties, service contracts, consumables or peripheral and complementary products.

Figures show[29] that only around a third of marketers are using predictive technologies. However, with raw data readily available in every enterprise, an excellent opportunity exists for all businesses to use predictive methodologies and maximise income from existing customers.

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# THIERRY LELIEVRE, WATSON

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: WHAT FUTURE FOR SALES?

**Thierry Lelievre is the sales director at Watson Group (IBM). In this interview, he describes how cognitive services work and what they can bring to B2B sales.**

### WHAT ARE THE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPED BY WATSON?

Watson is a cloud based cognitive service. A cognitive service is a set of functions similar to human behaviour, such as speech recognition, emotion detection, speech. Like any human cognitive system, it needs information to be effective. So we have to feed in data to help it learn: it is given a body of data, some of which is structured (spreadsheets) and some unstructured (social networks, Wikipedia...) to enrich its knowledge.

In the end, the cognitive behaviour is very «human» : we «educate» the computer and it learns little by little, but every time in a limited area (for example with chess, jeopardy, sales...).

This learning technique is not new: Watson's ancestor, Deep Blue, already had the same ability in the 1990s. During his chess games against Kasparov, the machine had lost several times, but it also enriched its body of data with the games that it played against the Russian champion. With this additional data had been fed in, the machine developed intelligence. Simply put, the more Kasparov played, the more intelligent the machine became.

Another similarity with human behaviour is that Watson has a probabilistic approach and not deterministic one. It provides answers with a confidence index depending on the relationships it has established from the body of data available to it. Just like a human who would say «I'm sure...» «I think...» or «it has to be...», the cognitive service will give an answer with a particular degree of certainty. In B2B sales, this system is similar to that of lead scoring, which, from structured and unstructured data on a customer, will estimate whether they will be interested in one service or another.
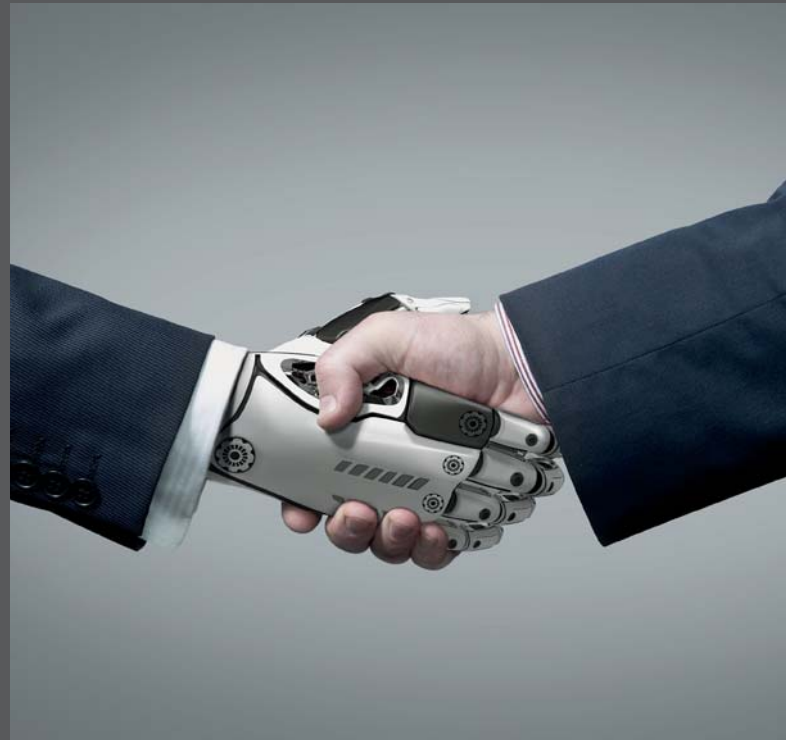
## HOW CAN YOU USE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SALES INTELLIGENCE?

Watson consists of several APIs (currently 28) which IBM has developed or acquired through the acquisition of companies, which are each specialist in one particular aspect of artificial intelligence (image recognition, the recognition and processing of spoken or written language, conversational tools, etc.). For example, Tone Analyzer is able to analyse the different emotions that are expressed in a conversation and, from that, analyse the relationship between the prospect and the seller. The Personality Insights API will, in turn, define the personality of an individual in seconds by scanning their activity on social media and provide an estimation of their personality traits (openness, curiosity, stability...). From these characteristics, the API may issue advice to the salesperson, such as «this person is not willing to take financial risks.»

Artificial intelligence is also useful when looking for weak signals on trends. For example, the major luxury groups looking for a brand with great potential will use artificial intelligence to analyse large amounts of data on social networks to understand the feeling and excitement generated by a product or brand. We are able to find trends according to different targets and geographical areas and suggest to buyers which businesses have strong potential. «Taking the temperature» of social networks is very time-consuming to do manually but it is made easy with a cognitive service. In addition, it allows businesses to adapt their services or create new ones based on insights gathered from this type of analysis.

## ARE WE MOVING TOWARDS FULL AUTOMATION OF B2B SALES?

The cognitive approach always works the same way: it is based on a body of data and it sets up a mathematical model for declaring the objective and seeking answers. The model learns from itself gradually as it grows richer and, in turn, the answers become more and more detailed. Unlike a rules engine that will repeat the same thing endlessly, cognitive engines adapt to change and adapt their response.

The reality is that we are edging, little by little, towards automation – with one caveat : we will always be in charge of the final decision. All cognitive systems are probabilistic: they provide humans with a pathway and it is up to them how they exploit it. After that, we can have automated sales procedure, and it is for the seller, depending on the context, to determine how far intelligence should play a part in that.
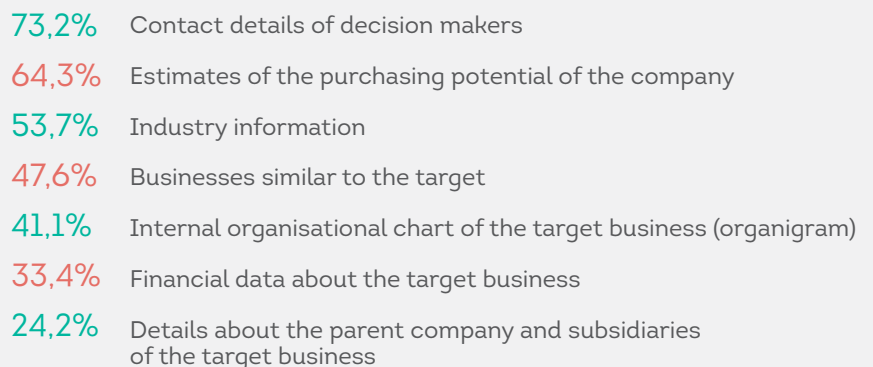
# 8 INFOGRAPHIC
## PART 2

## COMPANIES DEMAND MORE CUSTOMER KNOWLEDGE
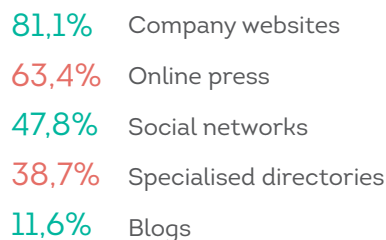### Survey by Sparklane with 672 participants in June 2016

DO YOU HAVE PROFESSIONAL TOOLS ALLOWING YOU TO QUICKLY IDENTIFY THE MOST RELEVANT LEADS IN YOUR SALES TERRITORY?

| 12,7% | 27,4% | 39,1% | 20,8% |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes absolutely | Yes a bit | Not enough | Not at all |

### WHAT INFORMATION IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR SALES PROSPECTING?

| | |
|---|---|
| 73,2% | Contact details of decision makers |
| 64,3% | Estimates of the purchasing potential of the company |
| 53,7% | Industry information |
| 47,6% | Businesses similar to the target |
| 41,1% | Internal organisational chart of the target business (organigram) |
| 33,4% | Financial data about the target business |
| 24,2% | Details about the parent company and subsidiaries of the target business |

### WHAT KINDS OF INFORMATION SOURCES DO YOU USE TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR SALES PROSPECTING?

| | |
|---|---|
| 81,1% | Company websites |
| 63,4% | Online press |
| 47,8% | Social networks |
| 38,7% | Specialised directories |
| 11,6% | Blogs |

### IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS EVENTS WHICH ARE POTENTIAL GENERATORS OF SALES OPPORTUNITIES?

1. New business locations
2. New projects and innovations
3. Launch of products and services
4. Projects abroad
5. Business start ups
6. Appointments of managers and executives
7. Fundraising
8. Recruitment
9. Attendance at trade shows
10. Liquidations and suspension of payments

# SALES INTELLIGENCE AT THE SERVICE OF SALES PERFORMANCE

**Data from global studies**

## 1 WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF SALES INTELLIGENCE?

**61%** to increase the number and quality of leads

**36%** to improve the sales staff's knowledge of the client so as to optimise their approach to them

**27%** to identify hot prospects from key events

**16%** to follow interactions with prospects

**16%** to automate the collection of external information that is useful to sales staff

Source : Aberdeen, 2013

## 2 IS IT WORTH IMPLEMENTING A LEAD NURTURING STRATEGY?

**9/10**

9 out of 10 B2B purchasers agree that the content they found online had a moderate or major impact on their purchases
(Source: CMO Council)

**63%**

63% of consumers needed to hear a business's message 3 to 5 times before they understood the contents.
(Source: Edelman Trust Barometer)

**47%**

Leads which are incubated (lead nurturing) make purchases which are 47% larger than those from other leads.
(Source: The Annuitas Group)

## 3 SALES INTELLIGENCE : CLEAN DATA MEANS LESS TIME SPENT ON PROSPECTING

**52%** **35%**

52% of sales staff at the best performing businesses which use Sales Intelligence* estimate that their data is reliable, compared to 35% for other businesses.

**20%** **27%**

Sales staff at the best performing businesses which use Sales Intelligence* spend 20% of their time prospecting, against 27% for lesser performing businesses.

Source : Aberdeen, 2013

*the best performing businesses : in relation to 2013, Aberdeen identified the best enterprises in terms of their sales performance (20% of the sample interviewed) and compared them to the other business in the sample.

# MICHAEL LEVY, GZ CONSULTING

## SALES INTELLIGENCE – JUST WHO IS IT FOR?

**Michael R Levy is an expert in Sales Intelligence and is the Principal at US market research and competitive intelligence consultancy, GZ Consulting. We caught up with Michael to ask him about his views on Sales Intelligence and who it's for.**

Just how savvy are today's B2B sales departments when it comes to Sales Intelligence? There are some companies that have had Sales Intelligence products for fifteen years. However, it's so complex for companies to know what they need to be able to compete and a lot of companies feel they're in catch up mode. There was a recent study by Forrester that surveyed businesses with 250 employees or more. They asked mid-level managers how they felt about digital and whether they felt their company was truly digital when it came to their sales practices. Somewhere between 15-25% felt comfortable that their company was well positioned. For example, 26% said they had a clear vision for digital but only 14% felt their companies had the right processes in place. These are the larger companies feeling that they're getting their feet wet - they aren't quite comfortable with Sales Intelligence and how it benefits their company.

For the last 3 or 4 years, there's been a lot of talk about marketing technology and not a lot about sales tech. It's only in the past year or so that, all of a sudden, companies have said "Oh there's this other area, further down the funnel, that we need to pay attention to" and they're calling it sales tech. Sales tech is broader than Sales Intelligence but Sales Intelligence is encompassed within that sales tech umbrella. So there's still a lot that can be done and companies are quickly evolving their offerings.

### SO, IN YOUR OPINION, DO YOU THINK THAT SALES INTELLIGENCE IS JUST SOMETHING FOR BIG BUSINESSES?

I think it benefits companies of all sizes. If we look at the smallest companies, they really obtain their advantage through customer intimacy and through direct face to face interactions with their customers. It's often just one or a handful of individuals who work with customers but, even at that level, they can still benefit from firmographics (information

about the company itself) versus biographic information about people. Firmographics are things like: what industry is this company in, how many employees does it have, what is its turnover, what year was it incorporated, as well as any sort of credit concerns.

As you get larger and bring in more people, that ability to have an intimate understanding of your industry and of your customers becomes more difficult. Growing companies have tended towards using things like Sales Intelligence to help make up for that.

What we do know is that customers are much better informed than they used to be - they call it Buyer 2.0. This is a trend that's been going on for at least a decade. It's where businesses and purchasing departments do their research long before they ever reach out to a sales rep. These customers know a lot about companies and their products and their offerings and strengths and weaknesses. Buyer 2.0 has really given a huge advantage of information to the buyers and purchasing departments. Sales reps are in catch up mode today. The reps are coming in knowing less about the company that they're calling into than the company knows about them.

### SO, IN ESSENCE, SALES INTELLIGENCE IS A WAY OF REDRESSING THE BALANCE?

Correct! In the UK market and across Europe, there's a strong filing regime. In the case of the UK, it's with Companies House. Companies have to file information and there are about three million companies that are active.

So we may begin with things like who are the directors and who are the shareholders. You'll also find information about where the company's located – but they have operating addresses and Registered Addresses. So you want to look for a Sales Intelligence product that can make the distinction between those two. Other information in the UK that's readily available is financial information - once com-

panies get to a certain size they need to start filing a balance sheet and then a P&L. These financial filings means credit information about those companies is more accurate. So Sales Intelligence users in the UK have access to this broad set of intelligence about companies.

### HOW CAN SALES INTELLIGENCE BE USED TO IMPROVE OF TRADITIONAL, MANUAL B2B LEAD QUALIFICATION METHODS?

Traditional lead qualification is often 'let's go out to the website and see what we can find' or 'let's go out to a credit company'. With Sales Intelligence, the process is much less haphazard. If you can obtain much of this information directly, then you can quickly qualify that prospect. You can also understand some of the basics about them with information including emails, direct dial information and biographies. It can also provide you with links to LinkedIn. You can find out if they are new or have been there for ten years, what they are responsible for or whether they are not necessarily a great prospect, even though their title looks good. So if you're calling in to somebody, you can quickly pull this information together and have it at your fingertips. That is what makes companies much more effective and efficient in their sales and marketing processes.

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# SALES INTELLIGENCE
## IS THE FUTURE OF B2B SALES

**I**s technology behind the changes in business or is it the changes in business that are the origin of this new technological break-through? The question might seem trivial but the influence of context is often mixed with technological in-novation to produce a hybrid result and bring about a change of function. Sales Intelligence is no exception to this idea. The combination of these two elements makes possible the total reconfiguration of the sales profes-sion through the expansion of Sales Intelligence and predictive tools for sales support.

THE END OF TRADITIONAL SALES AND THE DAWN OF THE REIGN OF DATA

Sales have mutated. In fact, the salesman of the past died twice, under pressure from au-tomation and customisation.

The SME market has been quick to embrace automation and online sales for economic reasons but also because of changing buyer behaviour (as they look for autonomy and un-biased information, preferring e-commerce, even in a B2B context).

For medium and large-sized companies, be-haviours have also changed. Sales teams are moving toward consultative selling and mar-keting which focuses on lead nurturing and

automation. These new practices will allow the buyer to fulfil their need for autonomy while providing them with rich content. Sales Intelligence plays a central role in this evolution by allowing lead qualification and giving sales support teams (and sales forces themselves) real, powerful prospecting tools.

## DATA, PREDICTABILITY AND AUTOMATION

Faced with upheaval in the business landscape, the dominance of data, of automation and of behavioural prediction is obvious. Sales Intelligence is the pivot point of a substantial change in the sales function which sees the tools evolve along with the craft. This is what we have demonstrated throughout this white paper.

Be careful of misunderstanding though. Sales is not a matter of robots. Sales Intelligence, marketing automation and predictive behaviour analysis are primarily instruments to help make decisions and support sales - lead scoring does not replace that. It just makes it more effective.

At the end of the day, things are different now. As seen in a Forrester report we have quoted extensively on our blog, we are facing a dramatic rise in power of B2B e-commerce in the next five years.

## THE FUTURE OF SALES, HERE AND NOW

Our prediction: the old arguments between marketers and salespeople will disappear under the influence of Big Data and changing professions.

On the one hand, B2B marketing is continually looking towards sales as a crucial tool for inputting leads. The explosion of contacts, the appetite of decision makers for content, sales automation, the abundance of data and Predictive Lead Scoring, all of which allows

more efficient upstream qualification, radically transform the job by putting it at the service of sales.

On the other hand, these same sales staff must rapidly evolve and adapt to the new market conditions, to serve and not fight the marketing automation tools, to adopt social selling and learn to use Sales Intelligence. All these tools will ultimately allow them to sell better.

These fundamental changes are mainly down to the evolution of the sales market but also to technologies, including Big Data and predictive analytics, which offer a new range of possibilities.

Going back to the question at the start, it is unclear who, business or technology, is responsible for this change. What is certain though is that, with the development of the new discipline of Sales Intelligence, those working in the field of sales and for the operational marketers that accompany them, nothing will ever be the same again.

28 / Sur la résurrection du vendeur en B2B : https://www.sparklane-group.com/en/2016/02/17/infographic-the-resurrection-of-the-b2b-salesman/

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WHO ARE YOUR NEXT CLIENTS ?

IDENTIFY YOUR SALES TARGETS

GET SCORED LEADS

CLOSE MORE DEALS

# SPARKLANE PREDICT

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Quickly identify your "hot" leads through customised monitoring of the market's business signals

& Maximise your chances to close deals by getting a better understanding of your prospect's needs.

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