Objective

The purpose of this white paper is to provide insight on some trends within inside sales organizations. It is written by an expert inside sales solution provider, TeleSmart Communications. Inside sales organizations continue to grow, evolve, restructure and merge with other organizations. With all these changes, companies must be prepared to adapt processes, systems and talent to stay ahead of the game.

Top 10 Trends in Inside Sales

1. Inside sales is a known entity – anything and everything exists

Everyone is convinced and knows the value an inside sales organization brings. One model and structure is no longer the norm within inside organizations. The structure can vary drastically and include various groups. Some are outsourced; some are located in different domestic and international offices; some teams are mapped to the field while other are quota-bearing; some report into marketing and some report into sales; some sell different products; some teams work on one CRM and SFA and others are still migrating to another.

2. Finding and keeping good quality talent is challenging- what success metrics do we establish?

According to the 2005 annual inside/telesales survey conducted by PhoneWorks, companies with inside sales groups indicate that more than half (56%) of inside sales personnel have less than two years of experience and annual turnover rate is 42%. With such high turnover, it becomes increasingly difficult to reproduce sales winners. This impacts our standards for identifying good talent as it is continually changing. A few years ago, we could clearly articulate the success factors for an individual rep and today we have very different success requirements.

3. New-hire ramp up must be accelerated but who's got time to train them?

With ramp-up time averaging 6 months, getting new people up to speed quickly is critical. And you must supply your best reps with the tools and motivation needed to retain them. Yet more and more new hires are left to fend for themselves to learn systems, process, skills and structures. Then they are confronted with a large quota that paralyses them and doesn't set them up for success.

4. Mergers and acquisitions have created confusing product messaging, unpredictable sales cycles and silo-ed teams.

The messaging isn't unified because it changes by the minute, so customers are confused and saying "no" to solutions they don't even understand. Increased product offerings and possible bundling solutions has made it harder to predict the sales cycle. More and more

people are involved in the sales cycle but it's not unusual for team members not to know their counterparts.

5. Metrics and measurement processes are constantly evolving and placing new expectations on phone and email results.

Managers are being asked to provide more stringent focus on the numbers and ROI, yet they are finding it difficult to understand what exactly they should be measuring. More measurement options are available but identifying what should be measured and the best method for measuring is the challenge. Telephone activity being down and email activity is up.

6. Salespeople need to rev up their own marketing engine and not wait for the marketing department.

The days of waiting for marketing to provide glossy collateral are gone. Salespeople must proactively create their own lists, campaigns, demos, strategies, etc. They must not only be experts on their sales offering but also have an understanding on how to market it within their target organization.

7. 95% of new managers came from being individual contributors.

The majority of managers started as individual contributors. The skills that got them promoted are different from the skills required to effectively manage their inside team. Many junior managers are asked to start new groups or restructure old ones, which is clearly over their level of expertise. And yet they must strike a balance between building their teams, growing revenue, juggling increased responsibilities and ensuring success at the executive management level.

8. Desktop distractions are at an all time high – teams are inefficiently multi-tasking.

When you peek into a team member's cubicle, you may see a computer with 8-10 screens open, two land lines ringing, a cell phone on the desk, several instant messaging screens, and a chat screen. Even though a certain amount of multi-tasking is part of the job, no one can expect to be efficient and at the top of their game with this many distractions. A distracted salesperson may have trouble listening to the customer. And distractions might make them go into "reactive" mode and simply wait for low-hanging fruit.

9. Too many different teams, languages and skills.

An inside organization can average 7-9 different teams, including lead development, telesales, chat, renewals, channels, government, and an outsource firm that generates leads all located in remote and international offices. Having teams that speak different languages can make communication a challenge. And since each team requires a unique set of skills in order to best serve their customers, training, metrics and processes can be difficult to standardize across the inside organization.

10. Inside teams are getting more recognition than ever before – but they still receive field methodology training that doesn't address phone and on-line essentials.

Most field sales methodology is designed for field sales and maximizing the face-to-face presentations but does not translate to tactical 15-seconds or less phone communications. The investment in field sales training continues to be stronger than inside sales training and when you consider the average inside rep makes 300-500 new contacts per month, they are touching many more customers. Training should be on-going and must happen at least each quarter for inside teams. If reps lack one skill (such as opening statement or questioning) this will have a detrimental impact on their results.

About TeleSmart Communications Inc.

TeleSmart is a 12-year global training company based in San Francisco. They specialize in developing efficient, focused, and strategic telephone and on-line communications for inside sales teams and managers. Clients such as **Agilent, Documentum, Harte-Hanks and, VeriSign** have certified their global inside sales organizations with the TeleSmart 10 system. We address communication skills from the **TeleSmart 10- Sales Booster Series**.

The TeleSmart 10 system includes essential skills inside team and managers must have for telephone and email effectiveness. These 10 skills are organized and designed to correspond with the sales cycle. This solution is the answer to providing regular, tactical and relevant training to inside sales teams and managers.

TeleSmart 10 Certification Program- One Solution- Inside Sales Teams and Managers

TeleCompetency	Lead Development	Telesales	Management Team	Customer Support	Renewals Team
Introducing	"Communications Mastery"	"The Immediate Wow: Opening Statements"	"Got Talent?"	"Communications Mastery"	"First Impressions: The Voice and Language that Sell"
Navigating	"Prospecting with a Purpose"	"Prospecting: Getting In and Navigating Through"	"Motivating with Metrics"	"Setting Expectations with Success"	"How to Get In When You're Feeling Shut Out"
Questioning	"Strategic Questioning Techniques"	"Questioning Diagnostics"	"Productivity Coaching"	"Questioning to Control the Call"	"Questioning; The Key to Effective Sales Control"
Listening	"Buying Behaviors for the New Economy"	"Listening for Buyer's Pain"	"Listening and Providing FAST Feedback"	"Listening isn't Pressing the Mute Button"	"Listening Buyer's Pain and Impact"
Linking	" Linking Authority and Influence"	"Talking up the Pain Chain"	"Identifying Your Team's Skills Gaps"	"Linking Needs"	" Linking Authority and Influence"
Presenting	"Maximizing Presentations"	"Competitive Selling: Holding Your Ground in a Wobbly Market"	"Holding Effective Sales Meetings"	"Creating Compelling On-Line Presentations"	"Creating Compelling On-Line Presentations"
Handling Objections	"Handling Objections with Success"	"From Slump to Pump: Becoming a Sales Warrior"	"Managing Conflict with Teams"	"From Slump to Pump: Becoming a Sales Warrior"	"Handling Objections with Success"
Closing/ Negotiating	"Creating Urgency and Compelling Events"	"Creating Urgency and Compelling Events"	"Ready, Set, Close"	"Creating Urgency and Compelling Events"	"Closing and Gaining Commitment"
Planning & Time Management	"Pipeline Management"	"Quick Account Planning: A Formula for Success"	"Modeling Effective Time Management"	"Pipeline Management"	"Prioritizing and Setting Non-Negotiable Time"
Partnering	"Partnering for Success"	"Partnering for Success"	"Cheerleading through Contests, Incentives and Spiffs"	"Creating Profitable Strategic Alliances"	"When Your Field Rep Can't Live without You"