



2009 Trend Talk- Inside Sales 2.0, by Josiane Feigon

We are sitting right in the middle of a recession tidal wave. Each time we come up for air, we get hit again, and everywhere we turn we see widespread declines in buying and spending habits. But take heart: even in a bad economy, companies must still purchase goods and services to survive, and inside sales are best positioned to surf these waves to shore.

Rapidly changing Sales 2.0 dynamics and an ever-changing economic crisis are transforming the sales landscape. That means you can no longer survive with old, outdated habits. Just like it's suddenly sexy to be frugal, it's now sexy to be in inside sales. While field sales is busy trying to figure out how to make their quota with frozen T&E expenses, inside sales reps are the real revenue generators. These skilled cubicle sales warriors continue to generate over half of the company's sales revenues.

Brace yourself for a bumpy ride—it's not going to be easy selling in the mass anxiety landscape. The good news is, we will rebound from this—we always do. And inside sales continues to be in the driver's seat. What can we expect in this New Year? Read on!

TeleSmart's Top 10 Trends in Inside Sales for 2009

1. **Less Time Control.** Sales 2.0 has created a glut of web-based tools, technologies, and processes, all designed to help speed up the sales cycle, increase sales efficiencies, and close more opportunities faster. Inside salespeople are drowning in data, overwhelmed with learning new tools, searching for others, and paralyzed by these disparate systems.
2. **Selling to the Opt-Out Crowd.** Cold calling is out. We are all vying for attention when selling to distracted, busy decision makers who are bombarded with messages coming from every direction and in more forms than ever before. They listen in sound bytes, review your messages through two-inch PDA screens, and ask that you not leave them a voice mail message because they'll just delete it. Overloaded inboxes and voice mail spammers have created prospects who will no longer tolerate first-time introductions.
3. **Stay out of the No-Po Zone!** There's a No-Po epidemic going on. That's right, when the economy is tanking and less people have purchasing authority, there are more No-Po's around. Learn to quickly sniff out these powerless gatekeepers and their dangerous entourage. Remember: No-Pos have No-Power, No Purchasing Order, and No Potential.



Trend Talk: Top 10 Trends in Inside Sales 2009

4. **Stick with Substance and Gain Trust.** Surviving in today's selling battlefield means establishing substantial relationships. Today's buyers are more informed than they used to be, but they are also more confused and fearful. Warren Buffett once said, "Trust is like the air we breathe. When it's present, nobody really notices. But when it's absent, everybody notices." During tough economic times, salespeople must take the time to strengthen current relationships, rekindle past relationships, and plan seeds for the future.
5. **I Can't Hear You Now.** Customers are tired of salespeople telling them what they need, and angry at being misunderstood by quota-pressured salespeople who need to set appointments or close a deal. When panic is pervasive and uncertainty is the norm, how can anyone take the time to listen, to believe, or to feel heard?
6. **The Redefinition of Power-** More players than ever before are stepping into the decision-making process. You must be prepared to convince not just one or two people, but a committee of decision makers during your sales process. People no longer swarm around a single omnipotent power buyer praying for that person to sign off.
7. **All I've got is Four Minutes.** Long, on-site meetings are out, and so is death by PowerPoint. You can expect your prospects to bail at the last minute from their webinar or butcher your time by requesting less for your presentation. Polish up your web or video conference skills and cut down your slide deck to 8 — or less! — killer slides.
8. **Riding the Objection Tidal Wave.** Selling in a bleak economy means handling more objections. They come in the same flavors they always have, but now they're delivered via email, text, phone, and chat. Buyers are skittish —all they want now is security, quality, responsibility, fairness, transparency, and comfort. Give it to them!
9. **Got ROI?** Remember to include a strong ROI in your closing comments. This doesn't stand for Running out of Income, it stands for Return on Investment! Your prospects are very risk-adverse now, so put together a reason for them to buy and make them a hero for their sound investment in your solution.
10. **Socially Responsible Networking.** Everyone is leveraging social networking into their sales process. Whether you are on LinkedIn or Facebook, or even Twittering, do it responsibly. An employer will look at your Facebook and LinkedIn presence before hiring you. Make sure you are presentable, desirable, and professional.

Josiane Feigon is President of TeleSmart www.tele-smart.com. Her book *Smart Selling from the Inside Out*, on the shelves in Fall of 2009, is already generating buzz and set to become *the* sourcebook for inside sales. She is a global thought leader in the inside sales community and recognized as one of the world's leading experts on inside sales teams and management talent. Read her blog at www.tele-smart.com/blog.
