



2008 TOP TEN TRENDS IN INSIDE SALES

Everybody's talking about it: inside sales. Clearly, the inside folks lead in the SMB and Enterprise space, and they're the best positioned for the Sales 2.0 environment. So as sales organizations undergo major restructuring, inside sales continues to bulk up. Field salespeople are trading in their frequent flyer mileage for cubicle spots within corporate sales—which suggests a year filled with excitement and surprises.

What's in store for the New Year? Here are my Top 10 Trends and predictions for 2008:

Top 10 Trends in Inside Sales

1. Lead Dev Teams Will Burn Out

Unless they receive stronger role definition, clear career pathing, and expectations for success, Lead Dev folks will set out on the hunt for new jobs. True, Lead Dev is the fastest-growing segment in inside sales, but team members face an infinite task—the never-ending cultivation of new leads. Keep them motivated, don't overload them, and measure them with the right metrics.

2. Social Networking Fatigue

Real social networking is all about **who** your friends are, not **how many** friends you have. Use the tools correctly, and you'll find business opportunities on even the young-skewing sites. Facebook will no longer be for just your daughter's college buddies, and LinkedIn will offer more than desperate recruiters. So think twice before adding another contact to your network.

3. Blurring the Lines between Sales and Marketing

It's called "smarketing." Instead of waiting while Marketing drags its feet, salespeople are revving up their own marketing engines. Their favorite pastime? Building a robust email template library. Favorite discussion topics include page visits, opened, received, click-through, and opt-in. Time to turn up the marketing volume.

4. Dashboard Mania

A common problem: low call activity. So it's all about how you measure your teams. Dashboards are being refreshed, revised, and refurbished because forecasting accuracy is big this year. Measure activities that count and build pipelines with shape. Velocity is more important than volume.

5. Stop Competing Against Your Competition

It's time to stop looking at the obvious—because you just might get blind-sided by a new solution that appears out of nowhere. Just when you've figured out how to neutralize your competition, new competitors

pop up and nab your prospects. Climb up over the noise and take a view from above.

6. Create Multi-Touch Points

Too many leads are clogging up the pipeline, and good ones are slipping away. Learn to let go quickly by implementing a 5-7 touch process that manages leads through focused sales stages. Maximize the phone and email and experiment with creative ways to prospect through texting, IM'ing, podcasts, and blogging.

7. Stop Selling to No-Po's (No Power, No Potential, No PO)

It's an epidemic. There are more powerless bottlenecks than ever before—managers with impressive titles who don't have the budget to buy. It's getting harder and harder to find the power as Web 2.0 technologies overload us with data and mergers and acquisitions overwhelm us with titles. Check the power in your forecast and remove the deadbeats with **no-power** and **no potential**—which means **no PO**.

8. "I'm Selling *What?*"

Mergers and Acquisitions continue to escalate to the highest levels in history, and product lines are merging as a result. Inside sales teams are being asked to sell more than they can comprehend, and confusion is everywhere. As already high expectations for new hire on-boarding continue to climb, more investment in skills over products becomes essential.

9. Bigger-Ticket Expectations

\$470K. That's the size of a sale made last year by an inside rep. As larger opportunities are closing from the inside, expectations for skills are increasing. Everyone wants to hire an inside sales winner, and a few extra languages don't hurt. Register for Spanish, French, German, or Japanese courses soon.

10. Innovative Managers

The Innovation Movement is soaring and has gained traction in inside sales. As new tools, systems, and processes enter the organization, managers must pick up speed and become Chief Innovation Officers for their teams. They must invigorate their teams with creative sales strategies and not just manage by the numbers. Create a high motivational environment with plenty of reward and recognition.

About TeleSmart Communications Inc. - www.tele-smart.com

TeleSmart is a 14-year-old global training company based in San Francisco that specializes in developing efficient, focused and strategic telephone and on-line communications for Inside Sales teams and managers.

About the TeleSmart 10 - Our TeleSmart 10 methodology is the only program exclusively designed for global inside sales teams and complements the field training programs in place. Companies such as **Agilent, Apple, Cisco, EMC, Harte-Hanks, Microsoft and VeriSign** have certified their global Inside Sales organizations with the TeleSmart 10 system. TeleSmart has become the chosen solution for global new hire programs.

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The only blog dedicated to the front-line sales champions and managers who are selling and servicing their customers by phone and on-line.

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