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# Pay Attention To These Sales Trends



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[Entrepreneurs](#)

*I write about topics that will help companies grow and learn.*

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Smiling sales representative talking to client through earpiece. GETTY

I remember knocking on doors to sell cookies, popcorn, and other treats in my hometown of Peoria, Illinois in 1995. I had a lot of success and considered myself one of the best door-to-door goodie salesmen around. My forward approach worked for a long time, and did for many other salesmen across the years.

Today, I wouldn't consider using that same approach. Why? Because sales tactics and consumer behavior has changed. What worked then would be very inefficient now. Entrepreneurs and business owners should be paying attention to current sales trends so that they can meet the [needs of their consumers](#) and turn a profit. Here are some of the top sales trends you should be paying attention to in 2020:

## Presentation Training

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Terri Sjodin started her company, Sjodin Communications, in her spare room in 1990. Today, it consults with several Fortune 500 companies to provide training and development programs. This year, [Sjodin Communications published a study](#) they did on sales presentation mistakes. They surveyed over 2,500 employees from more than 30 companies about their experiences with botched sales presentations. The results are eye-opening.

Exactly 94% of respondents said that mistakes made during a presentation affected their ability to close a sale. With such a high risk of failure, it's shocking to see that 60% of these people reported having received little to no presentation skills training. This will need to be prioritized in order to increase the efficacy of sales presentations.

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**Why Doing Good Is Good For Business**

The rise of video conference technology will make it easier to connect with others for this type of meeting, but it's just as difficult to make mistakes. Presentation training will be crucial for companies looking to succeed and to help their employees succeed in this new era of communication. According to Sjodin, "Your delivery skills are just as important on Zoom or Teams — or any other video platform."

## Make Things Personal Even With Limited In-Person Interaction

Digital trends have made it easier than ever to quickly purchase anything you need from the comfort of your home. Despite embracing this era of automation and technology, **70% of consumers still prefer human interaction.** They want to

keep things personal even when they're communicating digitally.

As a business, you need to be prepared to offer a high-quality customer experience even when consumers aren't walking into a brick-and-mortar store. Customer Relation Management (CRM) tools are rapidly expanding to take care of this need. Managing phone lines to take care of customer concerns fulfills their desire to have human interaction while also solving their problems.

You can even integrate chat boxes into your website for visitors to easily ask questions. There can be some frustration trying to navigate a new website with unknown information, and an easily accessible chat box can make all the difference.

## Diversifying Lead Sources (Especially Those That Are Digital)

You can no longer rely on a single lead source to run a profitable business. If you expect all of your sales to come from in-person interaction, you're already three steps behind. While hanging a billboard outside of your store might bring in some foot traffic, you should be diversifying your lead sources to maximize the number of customers you can attract. Here are some lead generation strategies you can try:

### Content Marketing

Producing and [distributing content](#) is a growing trend that companies are starting to follow. It expands your business to reach further than before by

tapping into the endless platforms the internet provides.

Businesses can take advantage of social media, a free-to-use platform for all, to share images and videos promoting their brand. This can include sales pitches and deal offers to generate more leads. Developing your brand through this method can also keep you on top of consumers' minds when they're out shopping.

Many companies have a website where they capture leads and convert them into sales. These websites can host blogs to provide regular content relevant to their industry. This is a healthy SEO practice that can boost your webpage in online searches where your target market is looking for your services.

## Email Marketing

While this might seem outdated compared to other lead generation methods, email marketing is alive and well. In fact, of all traditional marketing methods, [email marketing has one the highest returns on investment](#). With less travel and events, there may be a little bit more time for people in their email. A key trend is how authenticity, personalization, and real connection needs to be included in any email marketing strategy moving forward. It's going to be a wild year or two, so any form of trust you can bill will be vital.

Your business can use email as a way to build your brand recognition and capture the attention of new consumers. Many people are drawn to companies because of offers they received through effective email campaigns that they otherwise wouldn't have seen. There are a variety of [free email marketing tools](#)

that you can check out to implement an email marketing strategy.

## Affiliate Marketing

Out in the world there are thousands of people like I was in 1995: hungry to go out and make a sale. Instead of knocking on doors to sell baked goods, this work force is relying on affiliate marketing to hone their [skills in salesmanship](#).

Affiliate marketing is kind of like a referral program. Hopeful marketers contact your business and you provide them with a shareable link. This link is then distributed by your affiliate marketers as they pitch your business and product for you. When you get a sales conversion through one of these links, the corresponding marketer gets paid a commission. This is an easy way to enlist more help in your sales and lead generation.

## Stay Focused Because There Will Be Less Structure

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will influence how we approach sales for a long time. There will be a lot less structure in the lives of many. Jobs have been lost, businesses have gone under, and finances were ransacked by the virus. Companies will have to keep these factors in mind as they reach out to their customers.

Think about how many people are teaching their kids from home, locking themselves indoors for safety, or applying for unemployment support. Does this change how you pitch your service or product to them? These consumers will be

looking for their many needs to be filled. If you present yourself in the right way, you'll be able to reach them better by adapting to the market.

## Being Deliberate About Scheduling Follow-ups

Customer experience expert Joey Coleman wrote a book titled *Never Lose A Customer Again: Turn Any Sale Into Lifelong Loyalty in 100 Days*. In this book, he talks about the importance of engaging with customers during the early phases of a relationship. The first 100 days of customer interaction is when a customer will decide to remain with your company or jump ship. Retaining customers leads to sustainable sales, which both saves and makes you money.

Each customer embarks on a journey with your company from the moment they see your ad or [online content](#) to the moment they purchase their first product. Coleman takes it even further and encourages follow-up to turn each customer into a fan of your brand. Fans keep coming back, but a relationship has to be established first.

Your sales tactics should keep these relationships in mind. You should be deliberate about scheduling follow-ups and nurture that relationship in its early stages.

The sales landscape will continue to shift in the coming years. Stay on top of the trends and you'll be carried further, not left behind. It's important not only for you and your company, but for the millions of consumers seeking solutions for

their needs.

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