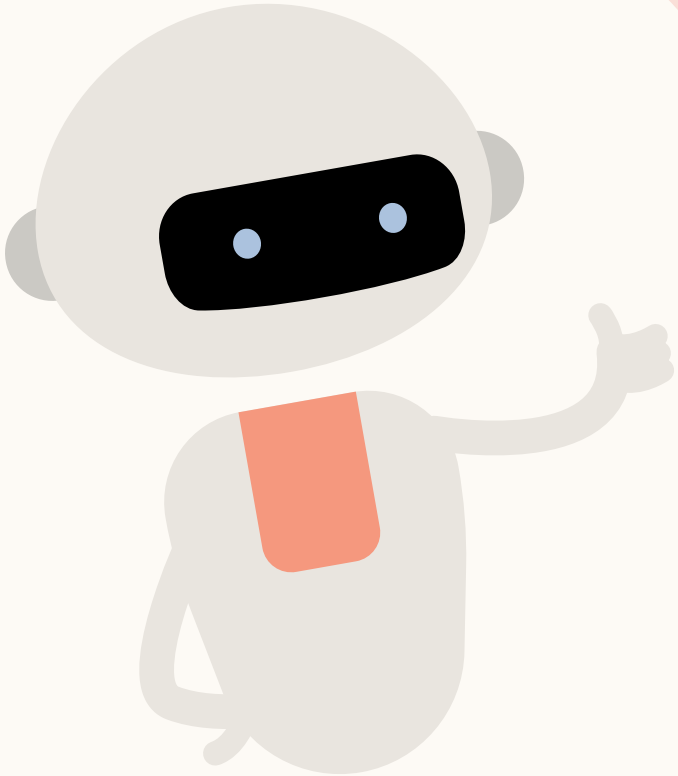
LinkedIn Sales Solutions

# Smarter Sales Strategies

How sales intelligence tools are reshaping the industry.



# Sales intelligence: the salesperson's smartest sidekick

Effective sales is all about knowing who to target. While indiscriminately engaging as many prospects as you can creates a certain number of leads, smart sellers know that they need to be more specific. With so much customer data now potentially available, sales teams can know more about their ideal prospects than ever before. Turning that data into actionable insight requires sellers to harness the right digital solutions. This is where sales intelligence systems are starting to have a huge impact on sales processes around the world.

The smarter our technology becomes, the larger role it can play in our success. Businesses are beginning to grasp the opportunities emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) can bring as an active participant to growth. The field of AI is concerned with creating machines that think and perform like humans. It is not only shifting mundane tasks off desks but is becoming an intelligent tool to identify opportunities and help leaders seize them.
One of the most powerful forms of AI for sales is 'machine learning'. As well as being able to process large sets of data, this kind of software uses smart algorithms to extract powerful insights from that data.

As AI expert and CEO of DeepMind, Demis Hassabis, puts it:

> *AI is the science of making machines smart*

It is an effective way for businesses to unlock thinking beyond what the human mind alone can achieve.

Yet AI is not designed to replace humans altogether. Rather, it allows people to understand more about others so that they can build stronger professional relationships. In sales, using AI means creating more human connections. No salesperson has the time to exhaustively look for and thoroughly research every potential lead. After all this research, they certainly won't have the time to engage with each lead in the best way. Smart sales tech allows humans to quickly get the information they need so that they can focus on optimising every conversation.

Our LinkedIn Sales Solutions tools, Sales Navigator and Sales Insights, bring such insights on your leads directly into your CRM. They work hard to surface the right leads and intelligence about each one so that you can power up your conversations.

# Smart sales tech: the ultimate assistant

Despite fears that smart sales tech would replace humans, research shows that in 2022, 73% of teams plan to increase their use of sales intelligence solutions.[1] When automation and machine learning streamline the sales process, this gives sales teams the ability to focus on engaging with leads and building the relationship. It also generates more leads, meaning a business needs a larger sales team to nurture the connections delivered by those tools.[2]

LinkedIn's smart sales tools work in a similar way to uncover more leads for your team. Sales Navigator, for example, uses algorithms to recommend leads without you having to find them yourself. It is thanks to these kinds of insights that Sales Navigator users made on average 3.6 times more connections to decision makers in 2021.[3]

While sales intelligence software can go beyond the human brain in terms of data analysis, it cannot replace the personal side of sales, which is crucial for building long-term relationships with clients. Ultimately, people want to interact with people. Clients want to know that they are dealing with knowledgeable experts who understand their needs and can create a solution that addresses their unique concerns. We aren't at the point where chatbots are preferred over sales experts, but we are at the point where sales leaders can ensure the process behind every interaction is as seamless and efficient as possible.

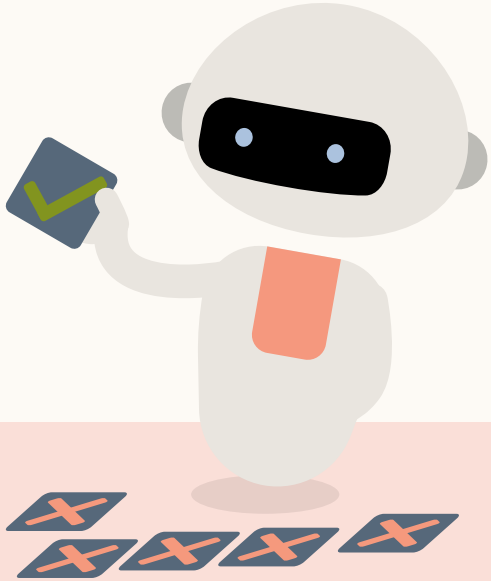
Sales intelligence is so powerful because it can supercharge elements across the sales process. It is not taking over sales teams entirely, but it is revolutionising the success that individuals can achieve.

*[1] LinkedIn 2022 Seller Survey – Global Frequency Report*
*[2] Salesforces, 2022, State of Sales*
*[3] LinkedIn, 2022, LinkedIn Internal Data*

> *AI is the equivalent of having a digital assistant who conducts the research and serves up information you can pass along. Its algorithms can scan through millions of events to find patterns and correlations that you would never notice. Think of AI as your brain on steroids, making it possible for you to crunch numbers and uncover insights faster than humanly possible.*
>
> **Alex Hisaka, LinkedIn blog**

# Buyer intelligence tools are transforming the sales process

Sales is on the brink of revolution, and it is all thanks to machine learning and automation. This technology is fast becoming a salesperson's best friend. It is helping teams be more organised, focused and effective. Ultimately, it can help you win more clients – and importantly, more of the right ones. Here's how.



## Identifying the best leads

The human brain is limited. The number of new lead searches it can conduct is finite. Not only that, but the human brain is biased. We carry assumptions about people based on everything from their location to their experience. Salespeople can also find themselves attached to the prospect's initial pain point, which might not be as significant as others the prospect faces. They can often favour the deals that will close the quickest and spot patterns in sales journeys that are in fact coincidences.[4] These biases mean that salespeople can inadvertently dismiss leads or tailor their conversations around less important points.

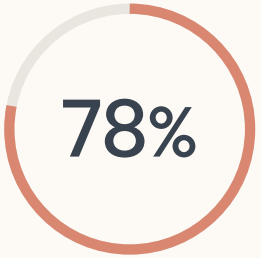
Buyer or sales intelligence solutions, on the other hand, can analyse extensive databases quickly from an unbiased standpoint, meaning it can identify more leads that are suited to your business. Smart sales teams will be looking for the right leads, not just more of them, and smart tools can give you control over which leads surface. With LinkedIn Sales Navigator's Advanced Search function, you can determine the kinds of businesses, professionals or pain points you want to target, and simply let it do the hard work of pinpointing them for you.

*[4] 2017, HubSpot, 12 Sneaky Psychological Biases That Affect How You Sell*

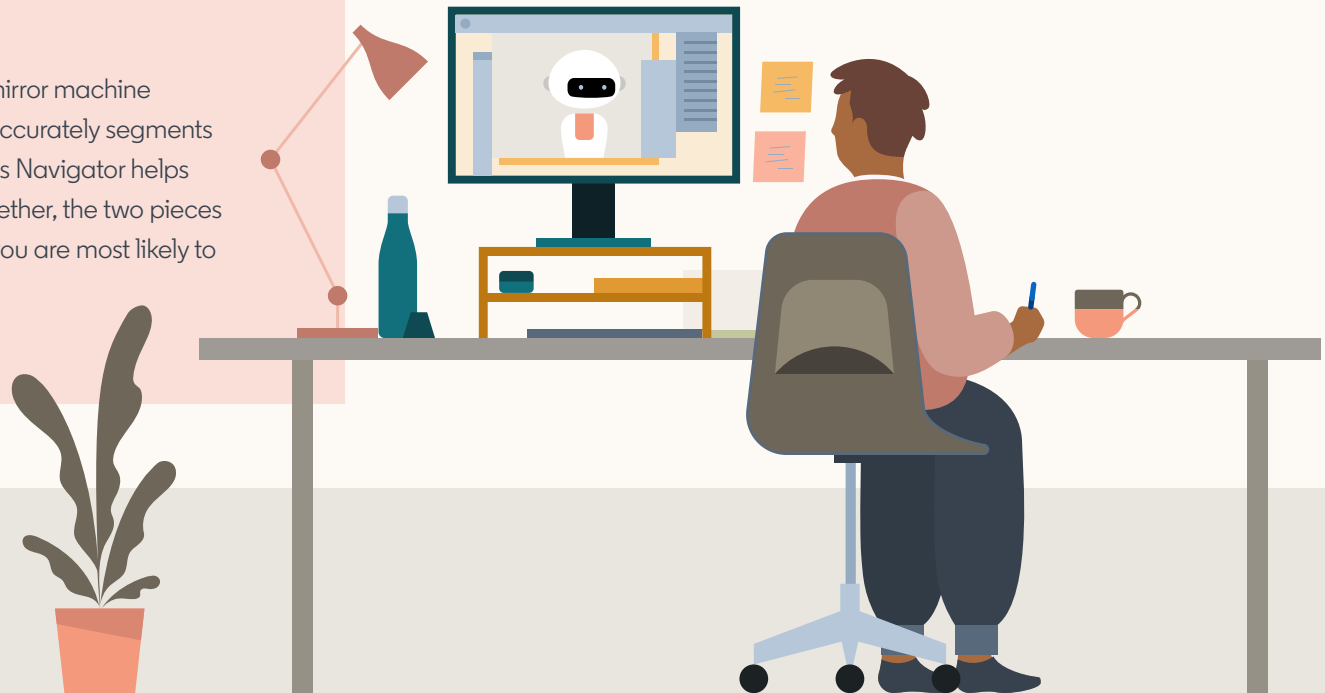
# Getting a clearer picture of each lead

Data analysis brings insights to your CRM. Sales intelligence makes sure those insights are ordered, easy to digest and deliver the most helpful information. In sales, buyer intelligence goes beyond surfacing leads and instead fills in the missing pieces about each lead. It consolidates information about each lead's experience and interests into insightful profiles, helping sales teams to better qualify leads and make thoughtful connections, without having to do the time-consuming dig around for information.

We have designed Sales Navigator and Sales Insights to mirror machine learning's data-capture capabilities. While Sales Insights accurately segments businesses to give sales leaders a clearer account list, Sales Navigator helps individuals get a clearer picture of each lead. Working together, the two pieces of tech highlight the companies and individual prospects you are most likely to have success with.




**of sales people say 'listening' has the biggest impact on conversions**[5]



[5] *Salesforce, 2022, The State of Sales Report*

## Making every interaction more effective

Sales Navigator users enjoying 17% higher win rates when saving leads[6]

The sales process is an opportunity to show prospects not only what you can do but how you do it. As a rule of thumb, sales journeys tend to have around eight touchpoints, from phone calls to emails. Each one allows you to show clients that you can work in a way that aligns with them. To mirror prospects' way of working, you need to understand more about their preferences – but these details aren't often made public.

Sales intelligence software can help you uncover more about the way your prospects interact and connect with others. With smart sales tech integrated into your CRM, you can glean insights on your prospects' interactions, helping you to decipher what has and hasn't been effective in the past. Armed with this knowledge, you can take the most strategic action at any point in the sales process to direct prospects further down the funnel.

Sales Navigator gives you this high level of information on your sales journey. When you save leads, you can set up alerts to notify you about their engagement with any contact you make, enabling you to decipher the warmest touchpoint. Our research shows that this kind of information makes a big impact on your success rate, with Sales Navigator users enjoying 17% higher win rates when saving leads.

[6] *LinkedIn, 2022, From sales prospecting to closing deals, do it all with Sales Navigator.*

# Sharing the most impactful content

Content plays an important role in the sales journey. It demonstrates your expertise and can show prospects that you understand their pain points and how to solve them. Though given that 93% of B2B marketers say they use LinkedIn for organic social marketing, there is a lot of noise to cut through to reach your audience.

One key feature of sales or buyer intelligence solutions is the ability to learn more about your prospects. Similarly, smart sales tech can help you discover which content is most relevant to your prospects. LinkedIn Sales Navigator tracks your saved leads' interactions on LinkedIn to analyse which topics are piquing your connections' interest so that you can share the content you know will be useful and effective at developing the relationship. It can also enable you to track your prospects' interactions with the content you send directly, enabling you to tailor your follow-up response.

**of B2B marketers say they use LinkedIn for organic social marketing**[7]

[7] *Hootsuite, 2022, 37 LinkedIn Statistics You Need To Know In 2022*

## Nurturing existing relationships

A salesperson is a multi-tasker, jumping from email to email and prospect to prospect while also staying on top of existing client relationships. Successfully building the relationship over time requires being proactive to anticipate clients' needs. And proactivity requires timeliness.

When the aim is to reach out to clients at the right time, having a tool that sends you alerts is invaluable. Sales intelligence has the power to do that, and we incorporated the alerts function into LinkedIn Sales Navigator to reflect this high level of capability. The tool constantly monitors your existing relationships and alerts you to changes that might signify a chance for an upsell or where an adjustment to your service is needed.

# The ultimate sidekicks to selling success

We are only just beginning to realise the capabilities that AI, automation and machine learning bring and the impact they can have on sales journeys. So far, sales intelligence software is proving its ability to automate mundane tasks, conduct research, analyse extensive data sets and identify changes even more quickly and precisely than humans can. Taking these tasks off desks means sellers are freed up to focus on building relationships and closing deals.

The human brain, on the other hand, still exceeds AI in its ability to comprehend nuance and draw conclusions from minute details.

So, when sales teams can combine their emotional intelligence with the analytical prowess of machine learning, they will optimise their strategy to enjoy more success with less effort.

When sales teams turn to sales intelligence for support, it is crucial that the tools are delivering the right insights at the right time.

With LinkedIn Sales Navigator and Sales Insights, which gather data from 810 million users and 58 million companies,[8] sellers can approach potential leads and existing connections with confidence in the quality of their information. Learn more.

LinkedIn Sales Insights

**Find out more about LinkedIn Sales Insights**

Watch our short demo

LinkedIn Sales Navigator

**Find out more about LinkedIn Sales Navigator**

Arrange a demo or start your free trial

[8] *LinkedIn, 2022, LinkedIn's Economic Graph*