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Insights, analysis and commentary for business leaders



CEOs and sales leaders rate 'customer relationship' as key to sales performance, is this anything new?

Survey Summary of Sales and Marketing professionals

FENRIX
STRATEGIC MARKET LEADERSHIP



Welcome to our Issue on Sales Performance

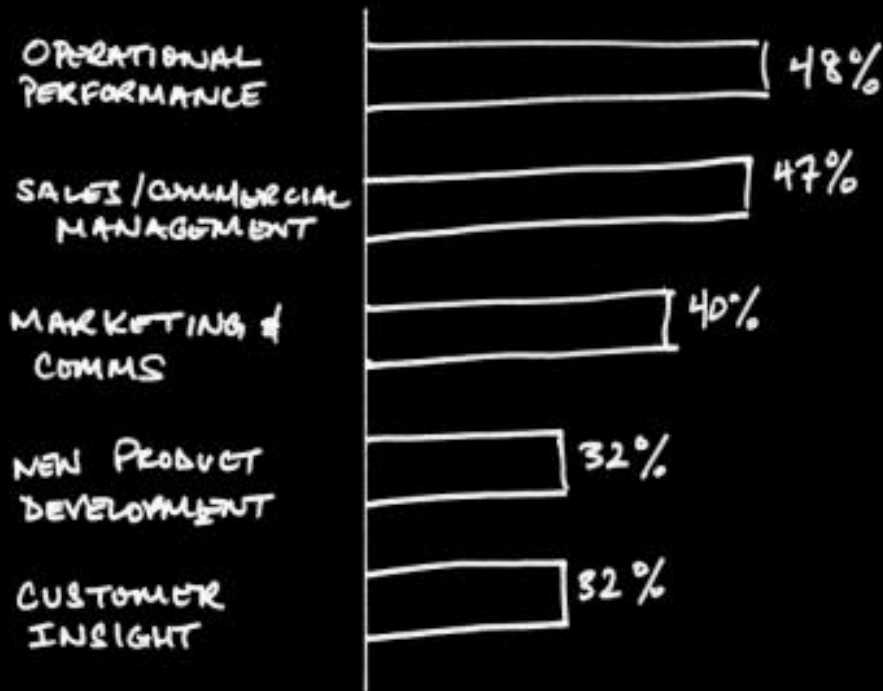
What do today's sales and marketing professionals consider the most important growth drivers for their businesses? How does operational performance rate compared to other factors?

Over the past month, Fenrix surveyed leading sales professionals from various sectors to find out what their priorities were. Some of the findings were surprising to us, as they revealed:

- managing operational performance is deemed critical for growth and is rated higher than customer insight, new product development or marcomms
- when it comes to sales management, maximising the potential of the sales team is crucial, whereas streamlining and optimising the sales processes appears to have limited importance
- if forced to choose between gaining customer insight (read surveys) and implementing commercial excellence, respondents opted for customer insight
- curiously sales incentives and their structure were perceived less important to most organisations surveyed, yet this is still a powerful way to drive the top line
- finally, when asked where their sales management could use the most help, relationship management came top of the list



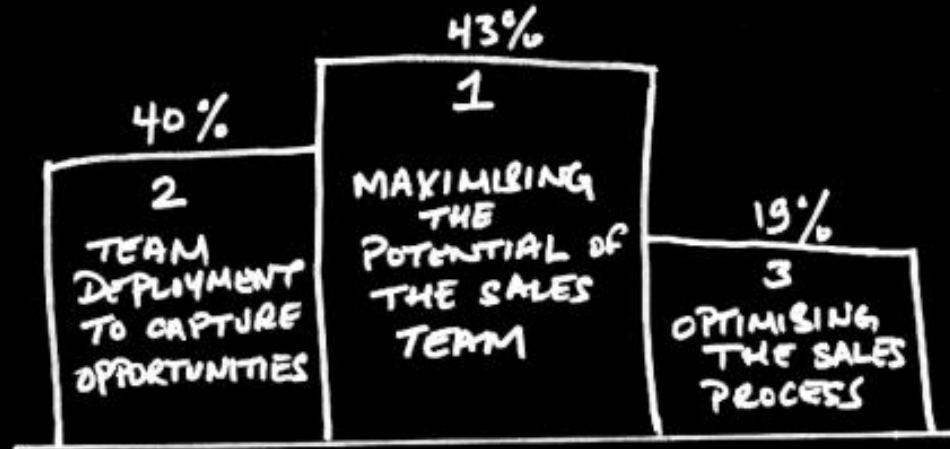
WHAT IS PERCEIVED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT
GROWTH DRIVER FOR YOUR BUSINESS?



Key Insights:

- Operational performance and commercial management were both almost equally important in terms of driving growth
- The operational aspects of marketing were deemed more important than new product development and customer insight
- These results highlight the focus on the operational rather than the strategic, yet managers are often quick to comment that they never spend enough time on innovation and customer feedback
- Some larger companies stated often that they already had access to customer insight from their marketing teams
- These findings reflect the '90s survey by Forbes where 5,000 US CEOs were asked to express if they preferred strategic excellence to operational excellence and over 70% voted for operational excellence

THE PODIUM OF SALES MANAGEMENT RANKINGS:



Key Insights:

- Maximising the potential of the sales team was voted as the number one criteria for driving sales performance - this is about individual performance as well as understanding where and how the team can grow the business
- Team deployment ranked second with sales leaders emphasising the importance of knowing how to deploy the team geographically against specific customer segments and with the right products
- Sales process was not particularly high on the agenda but many felt it necessary

ARE CUSTOMER INSIGHT & MARKETING SUPPORT ESSENTIAL BEFORE CARRYING OUT COMMERCIAL EXCELLENCE?



IF YOU HAD THE OPTION TO CARRY OUT EITHER A CUSTOMER SURVEY OR A SALES FORCE ANALYSIS, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

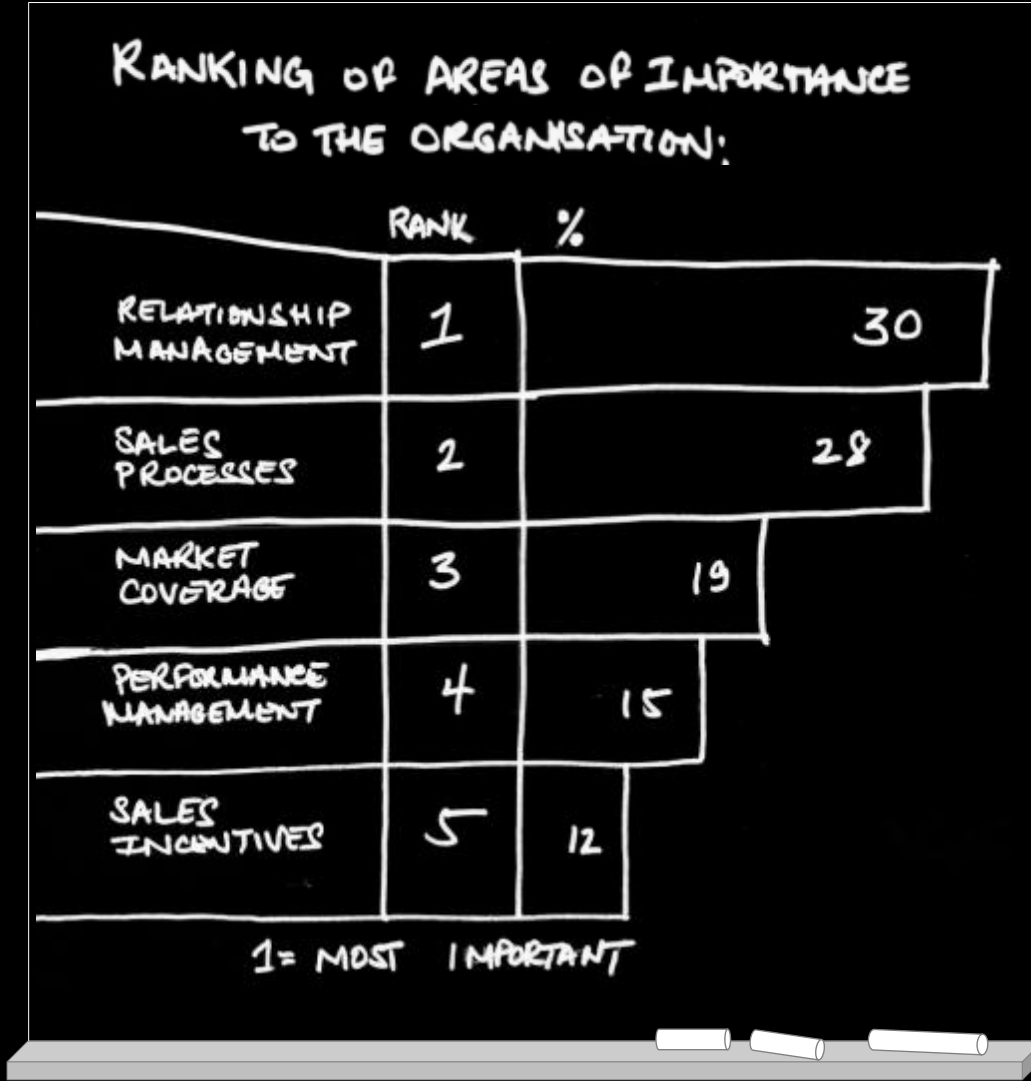


Key Insights:

- The experts have spoken: customer feedback and marketing support are essential before the focus can be shifted towards commercial excellence projects
- The reasons cited were predominantly about the importance of insights in defining requirements and getting knowledge of the market – client centricity is regarded as vital
- However, those respondents voting 'no' tended to be larger multi-nationals or corporations with large marketing teams and internal sales training capability
- In some instances, 'experience' was considered more important than customer feedback

Key Insights:

- If given the choice between customer surveys and sales force analysis, a large majority would choose customer feedback
- This result is mostly due to leaders feeling the need to understand customer preferences in order to best deploy their teams



Key Insights:

- Managing the client portfolio and relationships appears to be the most crucial area of sales management – and this emphasis gets more significant depending on the size of the company and its nature. Medium to big companies, but also start-ups tend to be more client relationship focused. This follows the common saying, "People buy from people."
- The high ranking of sales processes and CRM usage reflects how essential they are to sales directors and managers
- Surprisingly, incentives as intrinsic motivational factors for a sales force, are rarely seen as important as other sales management aspects; some sales directors commented on how they would like to get their sales teams to develop more of the 'killer instinct' but for some organisations, 'farming' is the norm for selling rather than 'hunting' new opportunities
- In the same way, performance management and the use of the right tools and metrics is seen as less crucial



Approach & Methodology

Sales and marketing professionals of prominent UK businesses were surveyed by Fenrix over the past month. The purpose was to gain insight into how they see their priorities in terms of sales management and areas as they relate to sales force effectiveness and commercial excellence.

Questions relied on ranking or rating preferences. We chose to present those options that were ranked or rated top or bottom of their priorities to highlight their views. Consequently the percentages will not add up to 100% (or more than in some instances), as they relate to % of respondents ranking that item.

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