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Don’t leave anything to chance when your Sales department goes digital.

Eight digital best practices for sales professionals.

What does it take to "go digital" in sales?

Industry experts predict that successful businesses will soon become 100% digital for all transactions. Sales organisations that leverage digital technology close more deals faster, improve the customer experience, and gain clear competitive advantages.

Sales professionals are most effective when they're equipped with the best tools. A mobile-enabled electronic workflow is becoming essential to optimise efficiency and provide teams with true flexibility.

This best practices paper outlines eight important ways that sales teams can make meaningful progress in their digital transformations.

1. Look for paperless opportunities in core tasks.

Many sales leaders who have achieved the greatest digital efficiencies began the journey with small initiatives. A good place to start is to review customer touchpoints to determine which tasks would most benefit from digital transactions. In a recent survey, sales leaders identified the most common ways in which their teams are reducing paper-based processes using digital documents, electronic signatures and cloud-based file management. Here are examples of traditional paper-based tasks that can be made more efficient with digital capabilities.

Client-facing sales - NDAs, contracts, T&Cs, POs, financing, licensing agreements, and end-user agreements.

Sales operations - Order authorisations, T&E policies, deal split requests, compensation agreements, and event registrations.

Partner and channel sales - Partner and reseller agreements, distribution agreements, channel partner scorecards, and referral agreements.

Account management - SOWs, MSAs, contract renewals, corrective action reports, benefits reviews, and account change requests.

2. Engage your team to identify revenue friction points.

Up to 50% of a sales rep's time is spent on administrative tasks associated with closing, processing and fulfilling orders.

Removing paperwork from day-to-day tasks allows for a greater focus on customer-facing sales and strategic relationship-building.

By talking with your sales team, you will quickly identify the most time-consuming tasks that can be improved through digital processes. Using simple calculations of time saved per task multiplied against the hourly value of sales time, you can prioritise the best digital process opportunities.

Sales organisation successes in digital transformation.

World Financial Group estimates $3.7 million in savings.

World Financial Group's 20,000 licensed field agents were losing 6,000 hours handling paperwork each month.

A solution was needed to automate this process so efficiency gains could meet growth goals, give agents more time to service policyholder needs, and create a better agent-carrier experience.

With DocuSign eSignature, World Financial Group is now seeing 80% reductions for in-field completion time—a reduction from 30 to just 5 minutes per document—and expects this innovation to yield five-year productivity gains of $3.7 million.

Salesforce.com cuts average closing time from two days to closing 71% of deals in 1 hour.

Managing client information for more than 100,000 customers, Salesforce. com was looking to scale business and increase efficiency, using the same level of resources. By standardising on DocuSign eSignature within their sales process, Salesforce.com cut deal close time from an average of two days down to 90% of deals closing in 1 day, and 71% of deals closing in 1 hour. And 50% of contracts now "autoconvert" with no touch at all.

3. Increase visibility into your sales funnel.

Businesses rely heavily on sales forecasts to make decisions about budgets and growth strategies. According to Forbes.com, the key to good sales forecasting is making sure your pipeline process addresses all key milestones.

The execution phase of contracts is a milestone frequently clouded with procedural uncertainty, especially for complex agreements requiring multiple signers.

Adopting electronic signature technology can give you clearer visibility into the status of deals nearing completion, letting you see who has – and has not – signed critical paperwork at each step of the process. This lets you more accurately gauge your sales funnel and provide reliable revenue forecasts to your C-level executives.

4. Use digital technology to improve team retention.

Top salespeople are always in demand, with skills easily portable from one company to the next. In a study about retaining and motivating top talent, Entrepreneur.com cites a lack of modern tools enabling salespeople to do their jobs effectively as one of the key causes of sales team turnover.

Sales & Marketing Management magazine recommends adopting digital technologies to help improve rep onboarding and provide clearer insights into rep performance. Better tools also enhance your team's customer service capabilities.

A recent survey conducted by Deloitte revealed that the most digitally mature companies enjoy 13% more revenue and 50% more profit than companies lagging in adoption of digital processes.

5. Fully embrace mobile technology and workflows.

Fast reaction time is crucial in high-service environments. Equipping your sales teams with the best technology to do their jobs helps boost overall efficiency and effectiveness. A mobile-enabled digital workflow is essential to flexibility and on-the-go responsiveness.

With the travel-intensive nature of sales, enabling your team to complete agreements from virtually any mobile device, almost anywhere in the world, helps ensure that salespeople can stay on top of all opportunities as they arise.

The practice of providing mobile-enabled high-touch client experiences, coupled with the value-add of doing business anytime, can help your team outperform the competition.

Survey reveals common digital requirements across sales functions.

Directors, Sales Operations
Drivers for Going Digital:
Sales process automation, faster closing, and enabling salespeople to access all contracts and status in one location.

Key Requirements for Digital Solutions:
Ease of integration with other systems currently in use, intuitive for signers and salespeople, recognised brand, and mobile support.

Initial Focus for Going Digital:
Sales contracts and team's HR documents.

Directors, Bids & Proposals
Drivers for Going Digital:
Proactive sales enablement and being a resource for the entire company.

Key Requirements for Digital Solutions:
Secure, clear ROI, cost-effectiveness, and ease of use.

Initial Focus for Going Digital:
Internal signoffs and external purchase agreements

Account Managers
Drivers for Going Digital:
Customer expectations for managing forms electronically rather than paper processes requiring notary services.

Key Requirements for Digital Solutions:
Cost-effective, complete support and training, and easy to learn.

Initial Focus for Going Digital:
Contracts and client account management forms.

6. Understand geographic standards and regulations.

It's a reality of today's economy for sales teams and customers to be located around the world. This creates challenges in managing document execution given strict national and international security laws and standards.

You'll need to be certain that your signature processes are legally binding, and comply with laws such as:

The Electronic Transactions Acts in the Commonwealth, States and Territories of Australia

U.S. federal ESIGN Act and UETA

EU Regulation No 910/2014 on electronic identification and trust services

Further, you'll want to know that your electronic signature provider demonstrates compliance with leading privacy regulations and security standards such as:

The Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act)

EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

ISO/IEC 27001 Information Security Management

It is important for teams to align with client processes and technologies. As an example, electronic signatures are rapidly becoming the de facto standard in corporate transactions. Using this technology can help your firm more effectively conduct business.

7. Collaborate with your IT and legal departments.

It's important to make sure that tools for streamlining sales processes are also optimising your existing CRM investments.

By integrating new technologies with existing systems, companies can easily automate tasks like customer account setup and kicking off related internal

The environment matters: employees care about going green.

According to Time Magazine, studies show that generations born after the normalisation of recycling don't want to work for companies known for polluting practices. Similarly, in-depth studies by the staffing firm Adecco USA reveal satisfaction-based benefits that companies gain from more efficient digital practices.

33%
of workers are more inclined to work for a green company.

52%
of workers wish their company was more environmentally friendly.

In a ForestEthics report on the benefits of paper reduction in corporate settings, experts note the use of paper has negative effects beyond business process inefficiencies.

Specifically, each of the steps involved in creating paper – wood extraction, processing, transportation and disposal – has a profound negative environmental impact.

When candidates and employees are evaluating the social benefits of working for your company, going green via electronic signatures could be a deciding factor in your favor.

8. Learn from best practices in consumer services.

Inc.com recently highlighted a study revealing that a 5% increase in customer retention can boost profits by 75%.

The transactional experiences we have in our daily lives – online shopping, communication and support – are setting a new bar for expectations in professional services. Trends in the consumer realm that are fueling digitisation include:

Increasing prevalence of mobile technologies

Demand for instant access to information

Stringent identity and authentication standards

Look for ways to mimic consumer services best practices. As an example, reducing the number of clicks required to sign and store documents, and providing automatic "you are here" progress tracking will mirror the customer-friendly aspects of e-commerce transactions.

For sales organisations looking to make a successful transition to digital, DocuSign can help accelerate the sales cycle, reduce the time sales reps spend on paperwork and deliver a better customer experience. For more information call 1 800 255 982 or visit DocuSign **solutions** for sales.

About DocuSign

DocuSign helps organisations connect and automate how they prepare, sign, act-on and manage agreements. As part of the DocuSign Agreement Cloud, DocuSign offers eSignature - the world's #1 way to sign electronically on practically any device, from almost anywhere, at any time. Today, more than 475,000 customers and hundreds of millions of users in over 180 countries use DocuSign to agree better.

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