



SMALL BUSINESS REPORT

# SALES INSIGHTS SURVEY 2021

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COMPILED BY ONEPAGECRM

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Although small business is the backbone of the world's economy and represents a whopping 60-70% of global employment, there is a limited number of studies that focus on their state of sales.

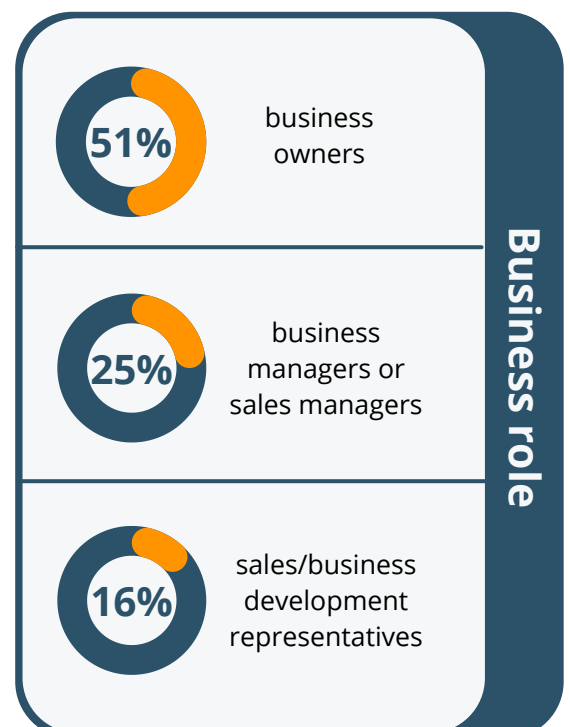
To better understand the sales trends and challenges in small businesses, OnePageCRM compiled results from the 2021 Sales Insights Survey.

The survey was running in December 2021 and collected responses from 108 sales professionals and business owners about their sales and business expectations, priorities, and challenges.

Although the majority of respondents are based in Europe (46%) and North America (44%), we believe that the results can be valuable to sales professionals and business owners in other regions as well.

The survey included responses from over 20 industries.

## Respondents profile



## Summary

These are the most important takeaways from the survey:

- 74% of small businesses expect their revenues to grow in 2022.
- The majority of respondents want to focus on improving communication with customers (80%) and/or increasing business with them (75%).
- 76% of small businesses believe referrals to be their best lead source.

# SALES AGENDA 2022



In this section, we will look into the top sales priorities in small businesses in 2022. We will also explore the top three skills that small business owners and sales professionals find important to develop this year.

Learn more about:

- Tips to improve your communication with customers and leads.
- Managing data in a growing business.
- Ways to ramp up online sales.

Growing a customer database is one of the most common ways to fuel business. However, taking care of your existing customers is no less important.

According to the survey results, in 2022 small businesses want to focus on already existing relationships by improving communication with customers (80%) and increasing business with them (75%).

61% of respondents struggle with lead qualification (see page 9). Therefore, it is not surprising that 65% want to focus on improving this process.

Only 32% of respondents want to prioritize using more data analytics technologies. While a data-driven approach in business is important, by adding new analytics tools, it is easy to fall into the trap of collecting and analyzing more data than needed.

## So what?

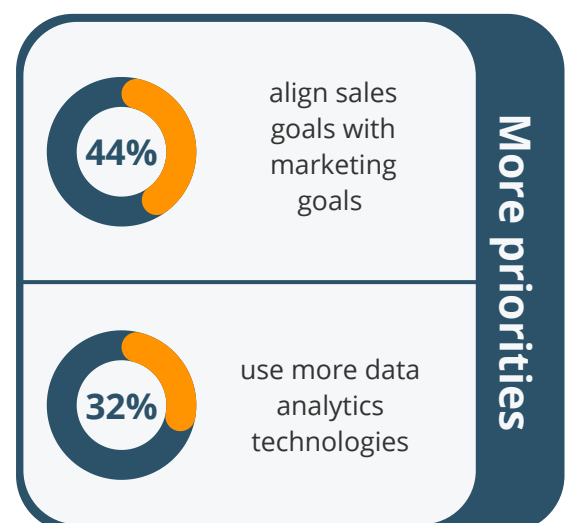
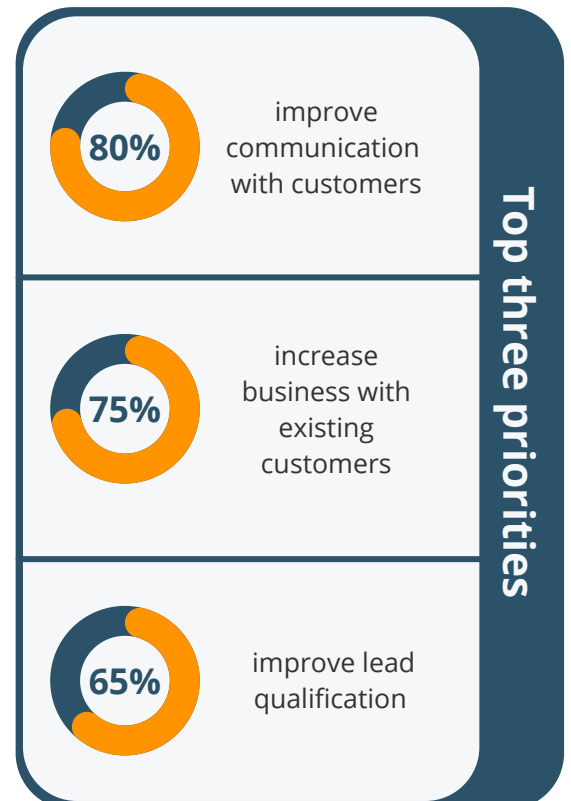
OnePageCRM has one of the most highly-rated customer support service.

That's why we reached out to our Customer Success team and collected here a few tips from them:

- Listen and ask pointed questions to better understand what problem your customer is trying to solve.
- Find a workaround if possible. If for some reason you are not able to help, try to find a way to solve the problem.
- Always follow up. If a customer reported an issue, do not forget to get back to them once the issue is fixed.
- Follow up even if there is no update to let them know that you are working on a fix.

## What are your top three priorities in 2022?

(multiple-choice question)



In this question, respondents were asked to choose the top three skills they want to improve in 2022. The majority (63%) want to work on their data analysis and management skills.

In the big data world, we need to make sure that businesses do not simply store data but can get actionable insights from it. And this is where data analysis and interpretation skills come especially handy.

Virtual selling did not make it to the top three but 52% of survey participants want to upskill their online selling game in 2022. With social e-commerce becoming a new norm, virtual selling is here to stay.

Interestingly, storytelling is the least popular skill among the respondents (37%) although it is believed to be a key success factor in selling.

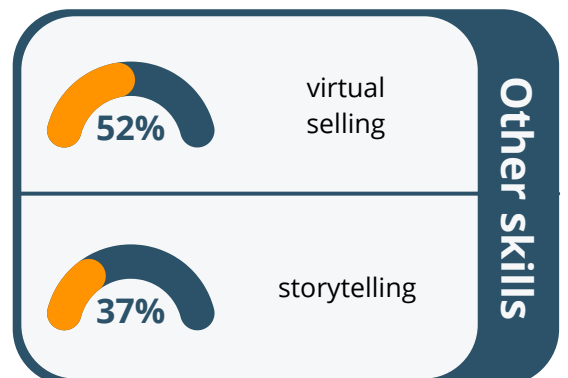
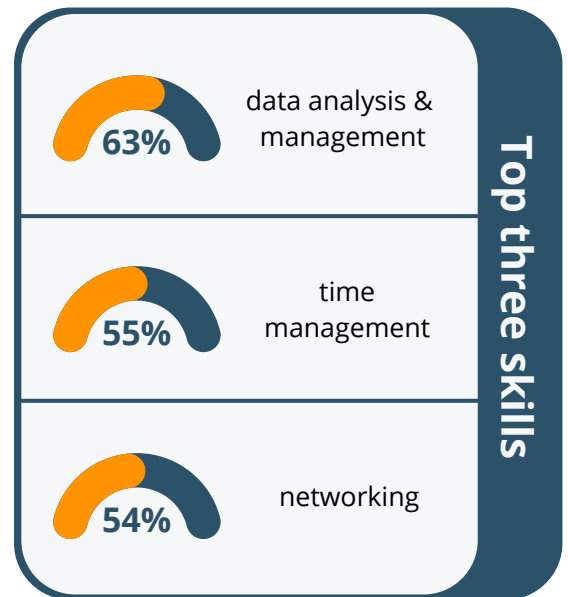
## So what?

Small businesses do not have as much data as large organizations. However, as the business is growing so will the amount of data:

- Introduce a structure for all your documents and files and stick to it. Even if you keep everything on Google Drive. It should be easy for everyone in the organization to find relevant information. A good structure will make it easier to transition to a more sophisticated tool when the time comes.
- Set guidelines for every process you have. You can explore new tools such as Nuclino or any other similar knowledge database to see if it can help keep everything well-documented.

## What are your top three skills to improve in 2022?

(multiple-choice question)



### OnePageCRM pro tip

Did you know that OnePageCRM integrates with several tools? By enabling these integrations, you can speed up your processes and rest assured that data between different systems is up-to-date and consistent.

For example, check out [this Sage integration](#) for creating professional-looking invoices straight from within your CRM.

Most survey respondents (74%) expect their revenues to increase in 2022 while only a small fraction of companies (around 2%) believe that their revenue will decline.

Most economists believe that 2022 will be another strong year in the U.S. where the economy will continue to recover from the slump of 2020.

Please note that the survey was run before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Therefore, respondents' expectations do not reflect recent economic changes in Europe.

Nevertheless, 2022 is still expected to be the year of small business with many new local businesses emerging around the world.

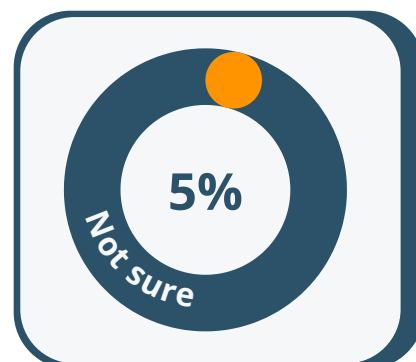
## So what?

While our lives become ever more digital, online revenues will gain momentum.

There are a few things you can explore to scale your online sales:

- Before scheduling a call with a prospect thoroughly research their business and the industry pain points. It will help you better explain how your product/service can help them.
- Make sure that your presentation leaves enough room for dialogue and questions. It needs to be about having a conversation and not simply pitching your services.

## What are your revenue expectations for 2022?



# WHAT MAKES YOUR **SALES ENGINE** PURR



In this section, we will look deeper into the daily sales challenges and ways to overcome them. We will also provide an answer to the "Where did the time go?" question and share some recommendations on how you can improve your sales performance.

Learn more about:

- Improving your lead qualification process.
- Ways to automate routine tasks.
- Tips on handling follow-ups.
- The power of referrals.
- Sales resources to up your game.

As if lead generation itself is not hard enough, businesses should try to generate as many high-quality leads as possible.

It takes time to find leads, reach out to them and store them in the CRM system. In other words, low-quality leads cost businesses money. That's why most of the survey participants want to focus on upgrading their lead management.

61% of survey respondents want to focus on improving their lead qualification and prospecting process while 42% plan to enhance their lead nurturing techniques.

40% of participants think that task prioritization will also be a handy skill in 2022. With so many opportunities and information noise, it has become vital to differentiate between what needs your immediate attention and what can wait.

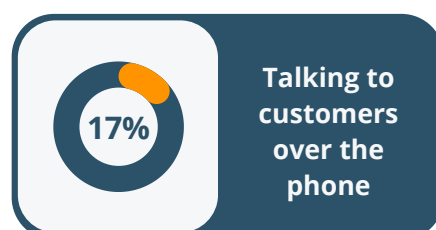
## So what?

Although there is no one-size-fits-all solution in lead qualification, you can start with small changes in your CRM:

- Use tags to track your leads' journey through the sales funnel. You can create tags for every stage and assign relevant points to each of them for better [lead scoring](#).
- [Automate tasks](#) to move your leads more efficiently through the sales pipeline. For example, each time a specific tag is added to a contact, request CRM to automatically change the contact status.
- [Build regular reports](#) in your CRM. Set monthly reviews to analyze this data and keep your lead qualification process up-to-date and relevant.

## What do you find most challenging in your daily work?

(multiple-choice question)



We also asked survey participants about how much time on average they spend on three sales activities every day.

Similar to other sales-related studies, this one revealed that the majority of time is spent on admin tasks that include updating notes, client details, etc.

35% of respondents spend 3-4 hours on admin tasks. Only 15% spend 3-4 hours on prospecting every day although 61% of respondents want to focus on improving their lead qualification and prospecting processes this year,

There is no recommended number of hours one needs to prospect daily but making sure that prospecting is part of your regular routine will help you stay focused and not let it slip through the cracks.

## So what?

While it is not possible to completely remove admin tasks from your daily agenda, you can leverage your CRM functionality to speed up some processes:

- Use the voice-to-text feature in your mobile CRM to quickly add new notes after calls or meetings.
- Save time on lead capturing. Most modern CRM solutions offer a variety of options to help you [effortlessly capture leads' contact information](#) and add it instantly to the database.
- Identify a [repetitive admin task that triggers another one](#). For example, when a deal is won, automatically set the contact's status to *Customer*.

## How much time do you spend on these three activities every day?



The majority of survey respondents (75%) track the win/conversion rate. This is one of the most popular metrics in business as it helps to measure profitability.

Sales metrics can be either big-picture (say, year-over-year growth) or very specific (for example, the number of deals lost to competition).

Depending on your industry, market size, current priorities, sales organization (and many other factors), you can decide what key performance indicators (KPIs) you need to track.

There needs to be a specific question that you are trying to answer by using each of the indicators.

## So what?

There are hundreds of KPIs that you can come up with. But should you? First, you need to determine your objectives of KPIs and then identify a cluster of KPIs that can help you track your progress.

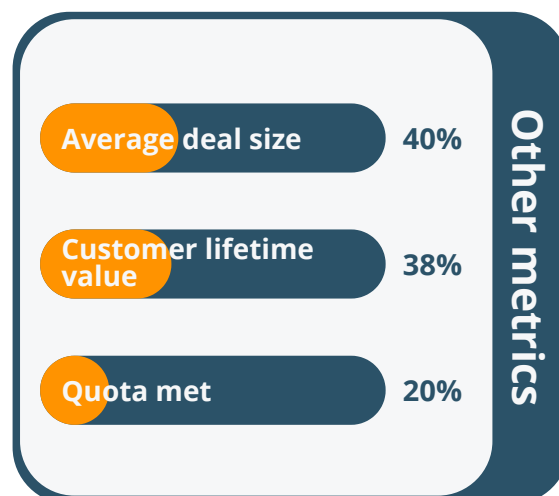
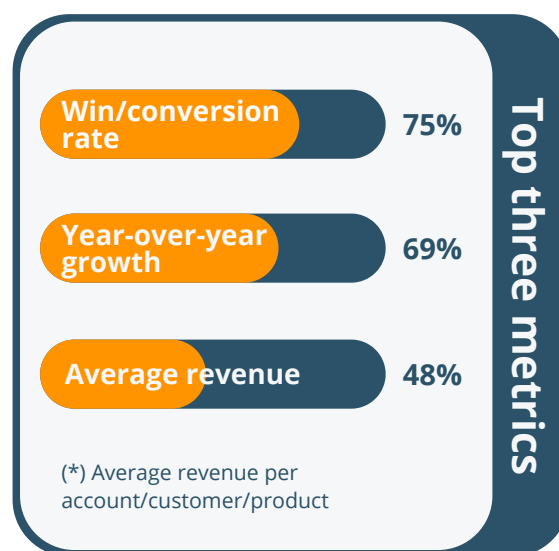
They can include:

- Sales activities (number of calls made, emails sent, VIP demos held, etc.).
- Lead generation metrics (percentage of high-quality leads, average response time, etc.).
- Pipeline metrics (number of prospects in the pipeline, the deal velocity, the value of all open/closed opportunities, etc.).

To stay focused, try to limit the number of KPIs to 2-3 per objective.

## What are your top three metrics for measuring sales performance?

(multiple-choice question)



There is no magic number of follow-ups that will work in every situation. After all, there is a thin line between persistence and stalking.

All 108 survey participants follow up at least once. While it is hard to decide how many follow-ups are too many, 44% of respondents take a balanced approach and follow up 2-3 times.

In December 2021, we ran a [similar poll on LinkedIn](#) in the Inside Sales Experts group and collected 195 responses from group members.

According to that poll's results, 4% do not follow up at all while the majority (55%) follow up more than 5 times. 41% of the poll respondents follow up 2-4 times.

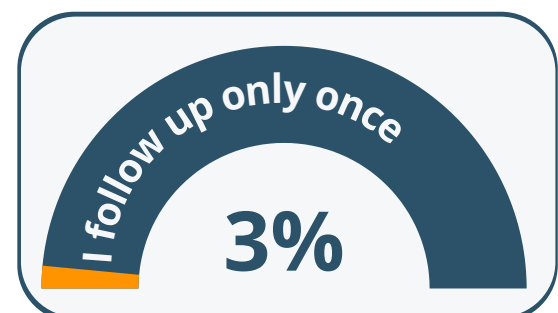
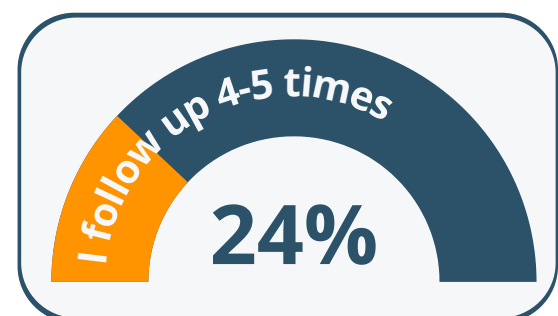
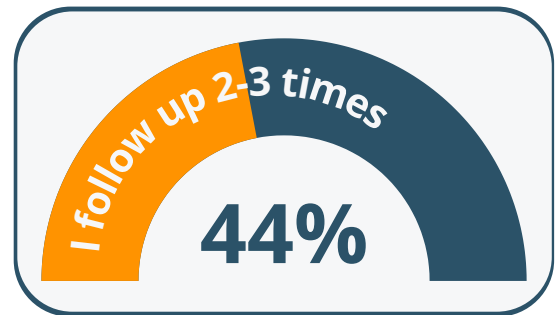
## So what?

[Various studies](#) suggest that 80% of sales require at least 5 follow-ups. So the real question should be "How do I follow up properly?".

There are a few things to keep in mind:

- Space out your follow-ups. Depending on the nature of your business, you might work with clients who have multiple stakeholders involved in the decision-making process. In other words, it will take time to hear back from them. So don't forget to factor this in.
- Include valuable free resources that address your clients' pain points and answer their questions. It can be a link to a blog post, research, or a landing page example.

### How many times do you follow up?



A couple of years ago, Forbes published an article where they called referrals [the most valuable form of marketing](#).

76% of survey participants agree that referrals (or word-of-mouth marketing) are their number one source for getting high-quality leads.

Along with networking (53%), referrals are included in the top tier because more than half of survey participants chose them as their top lead sources.

Interestingly, other lead sources reported by small businesses are all digital. They include website inquiries/visitors (49%), social media channels (30%), email or content marketing (25%), and online advertising (22%).

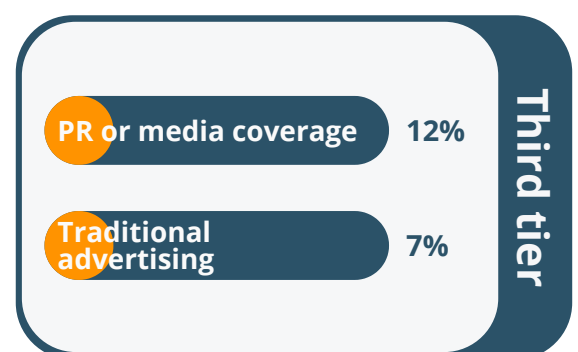
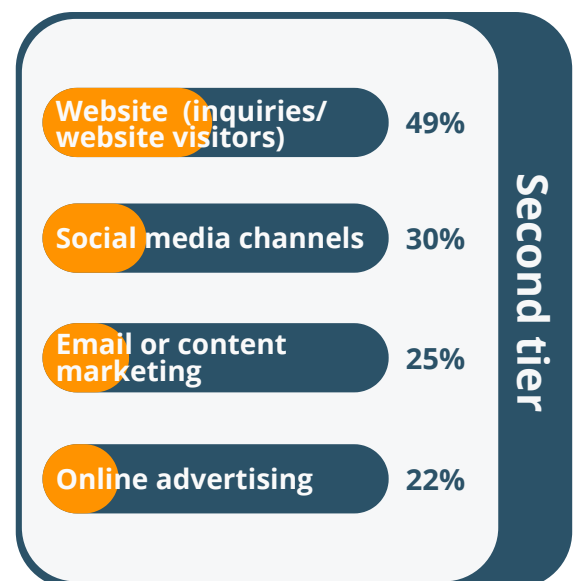
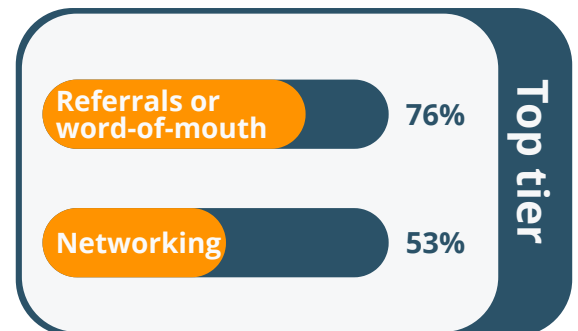
## So what?

Some respondents mentioned additional ideas that are listed below. They might also work for your business, so feel free to test them:

- Be proactive and reach out to prospects via various channels: cold calls, web search, SMS messages, etc. Find what works best for your business.
- Explore partnerships and collaboration opportunities with other businesses. It can be something not-so-obvious. For example, have you read about a [collaboration between Starbucks and Spotify](#)?
- Join a networking membership organization to build connections and learn from peers (for example, the Professional Business Networking Group).

## Where do you find your best leads?

(multiple-choice question)



Learning is a never-ending journey. Keeping on top of sales, business, and industry trends is an important part of our professional lives.

One of the best ways to educate oneself is to tap into the knowledge of others. 45% of survey participants join LinkedIn or Facebook discussions while 34% prefer to participate in webinars and Q&A sessions. These are examples of active learning where people exchange ideas with one another.

Newsletters, books, videos, webinar recordings, and blog posts are also popular sales resources for keeping up-to-date with recent developments and trends.

## So what?

There are several sales-related resources worth exploring:

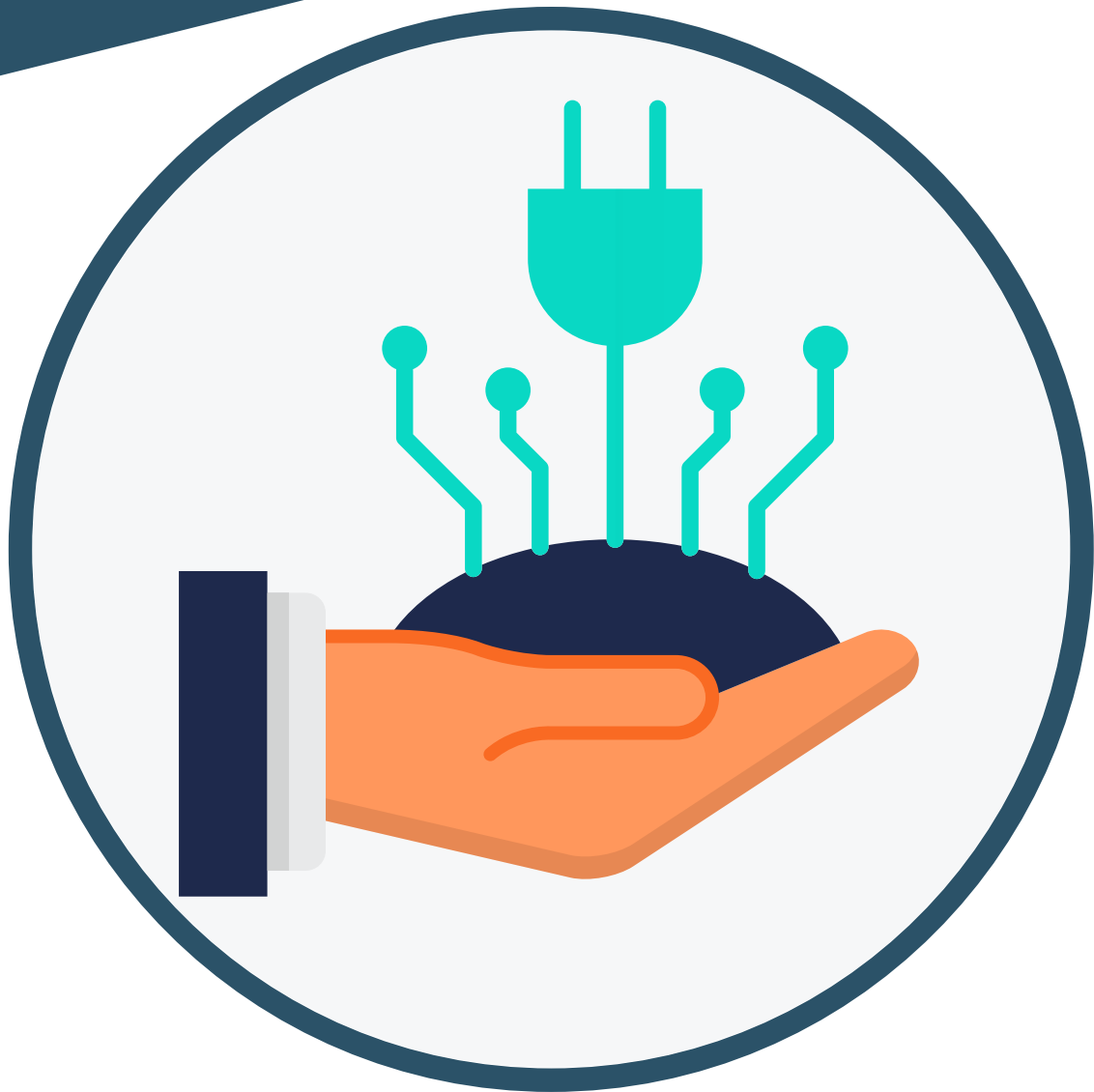
- [Salesty—Sales Best Practices LinkedIn group](#), a spam-free environment for sales-related discussions.
- [LinkedIn Sales Blog](#) combines insights from the LinkedIn sales community.
- [OnePageCRM newsletter](#), sales-related insights for small businesses delivered directly to your inbox.
- [A list of 47 sales-related books](#) to refresh your knowledge and upskill.

## How do you stay on top of sales trends?

(multiple-choice question)



# FUELING BUSINESS WITH TECHNOLOGY



In this section, we will cover what CRM features small businesses find most important, what their top three CRM comparison factors are, and what mobile apps sales professionals and small business owners use most often for work.

Learn more about:

- Making the most of your contact management.
- Simplifying your workflow and processes.
- Work-related mobile apps that are worth exploring.

In business, every customer interaction counts. At some point, a spreadsheet—even the most elaborate one—cannot do the job, and small businesses start looking for a CRM system that will meet their current needs.

87% of survey respondents believe that contact management is the most important aspect of CRM software.

56% of survey participants pay attention to whether CRM offers email integration. Pipeline management is also among the top three CRM features (51%).

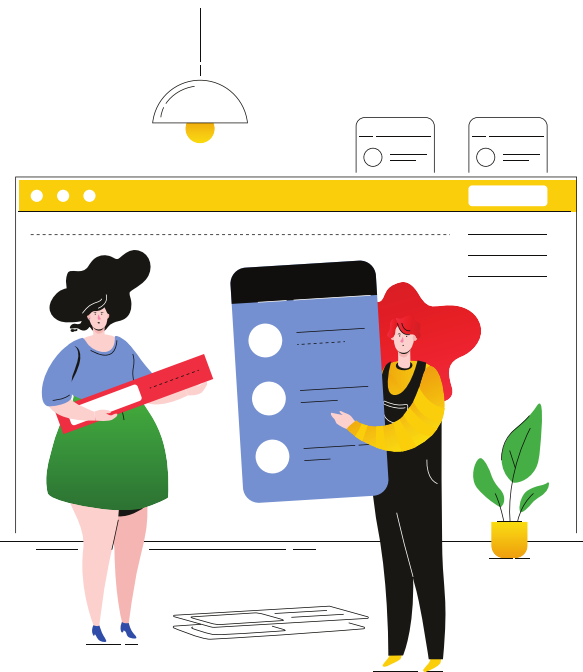
There are other features that did not make it to the top three: workflow automation (43%), analytics and reporting (26%), open email tracking (21%), quotes management (17%).

## So what?

A robust contact management system is a must for a successful business.

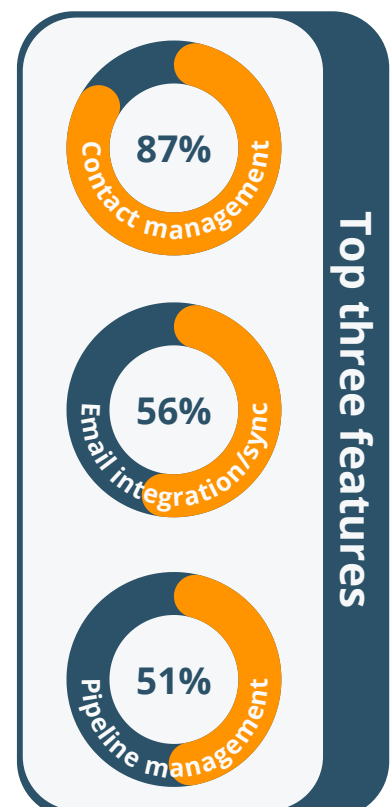
How do you make sure that you have a good process in place, even if a simple spreadsheet suffices for now?

- Assign specific actions to every contact. There is a reason why you added a contact to your database in the first place.
- Keep your data clean. If you create a webform to sync it with your CRM, make sure that you collect only relevant details. Avoid storing data that you do not need.



## What are the three most important CRM features?

(multiple-choice question)



Choosing a CRM solution is not a decision that should be taken light-heartedly. It is a serious commitment for business and will determine your sales and business processes for a long period of time.

Contrary to large organizations that have various departments, sub-departments, and sub-sub-departments, small businesses have a simpler structure and less complex processes. This makes it easier to focus on building relationships rather than managing a contact management system.

When it comes to comparing CRM systems, 86% of survey respondents pay attention to their ease of use. Price and customization options are also one of the top three comparison factors (86% and 36% respectively).



## What are your top three CRM comparison factors?

(multiple-choice question)

## So what?

How does one choose the best CRM system for their business?

- Determine your current business needs. What do you want to improve/achieve? If CRM has a wide pool of features and integrations, it does not always mean that it is the best solution for you right now.
- Make sure that there is a cultural fit (it was mentioned by one of the survey participants). If one of your core values is simplicity, do you want to use a complex CRM system?



41% of survey respondents are engaged in outside sales while 50% do a mix of both.

Therefore, it is not surprising that mobile CRM and a route planner are the top apps that are regularly used for work (66% and 60% respectively).

Task management tool also plays an important role in the everyday life of a sales professional and a business owner. 36% of survey participants regularly use one in their work.

Depending on what you regularly do, there are a few other apps that might help you perform tasks faster. For example, DocuSign is an app that you can use to electronically sign documents and agreements.

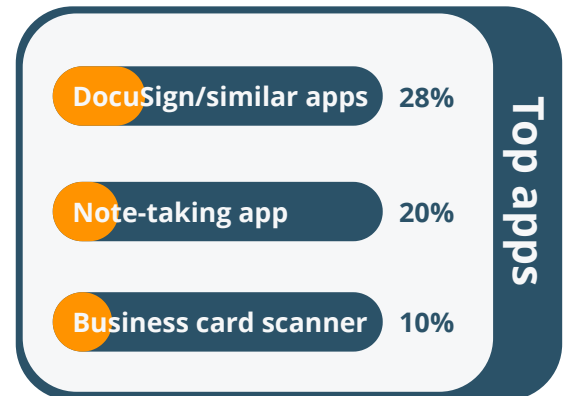
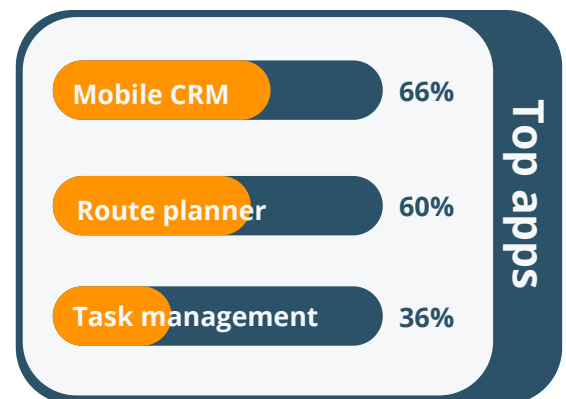
## So what?

Some respondents mentioned a few more mobile apps that you might also want to check out:

- Feedly or Protopage, an RSS reader.
- Microsoft OneNote, a multifunctional note-taking application.
- QuickBooks, accounting software for small businesses.
- Wrike, a project management tool.

## What mobile apps do you regularly use for work?

(multiple-choice question)



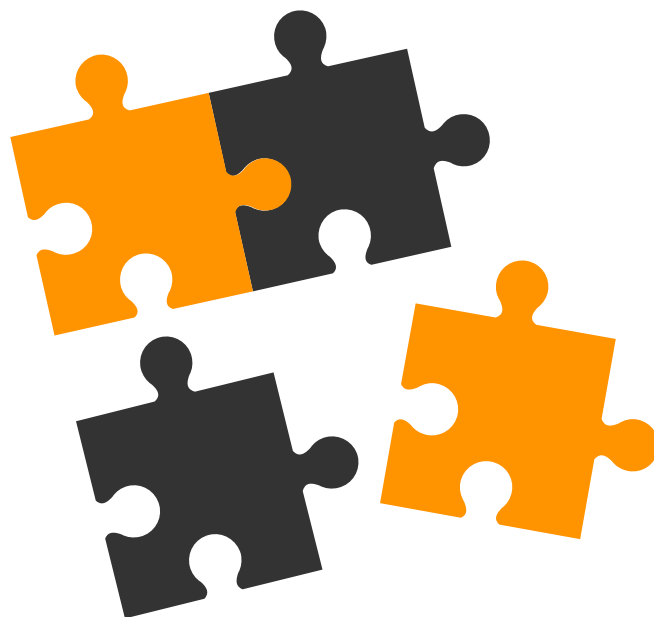
### OnePageCRM pro tip

OnePageCRM has [several mobile apps](#) that sync with your CRM account:

- The On the Road app, an AI-powered route planner with a built-in speed dialer.
- Business card scanner that automatically adds leads details to CRM.
- Mobile CRM.

There are several main insights from the survey results:

- The majority of small businesses (74%) expect their revenues to grow in 2022.
- Small businesses want to focus on improving communication with customers (80%) and/or increasing business with them (75%).
- 76% believe referrals to be their best lead source.
- 63% want to improve the way they analyze and manage data.
- 61% plan to focus on refining their prospecting and lead qualification process.
- 100% follow up at least once.



We are very grateful to everyone who took their time to complete the survey and share their experience and observations.

## About OnePageCRM

OnePageCRM is more than just another CRM system.

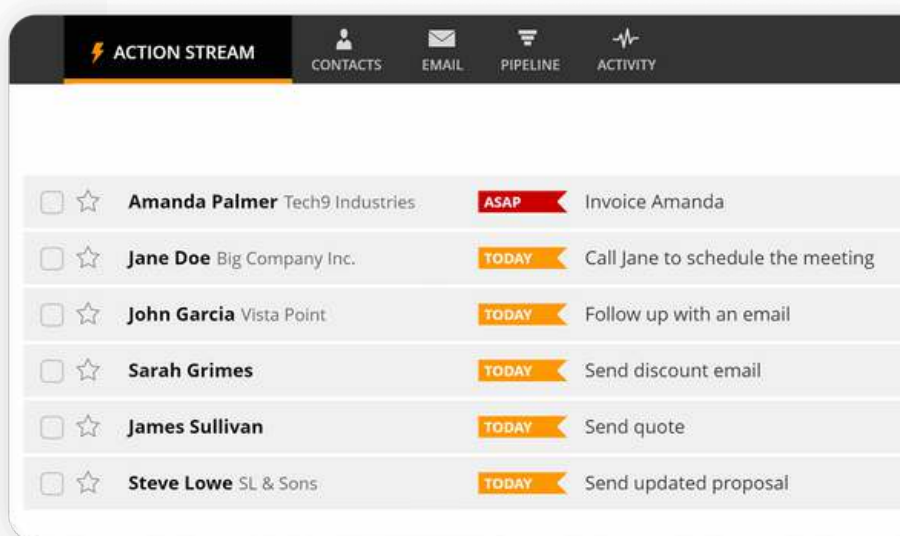
At its very heart, it has the Next Action sales method. It is a simple yet powerful principle: the more sales actions you make, the more you sell.

With OnePageCRM, you can focus on growing your business and creating long-lasting relationships with clients and prospects.

It is the only CRM system that transforms your database into an actionable to-do list with tasks assigned to every contact.

Try it now for free:

[www.onepagecrm.com](http://www.onepagecrm.com)



# Small Business Sales Insights Report 2021

