



# Solving The Outbound Challenge

The work of a salesperson is harder today than ever before. Ready to solve the outbound challenge?



# Take A Dive Into The Outbound Solution

It's not your imagination – the work of a salesperson is harder today than ever before.

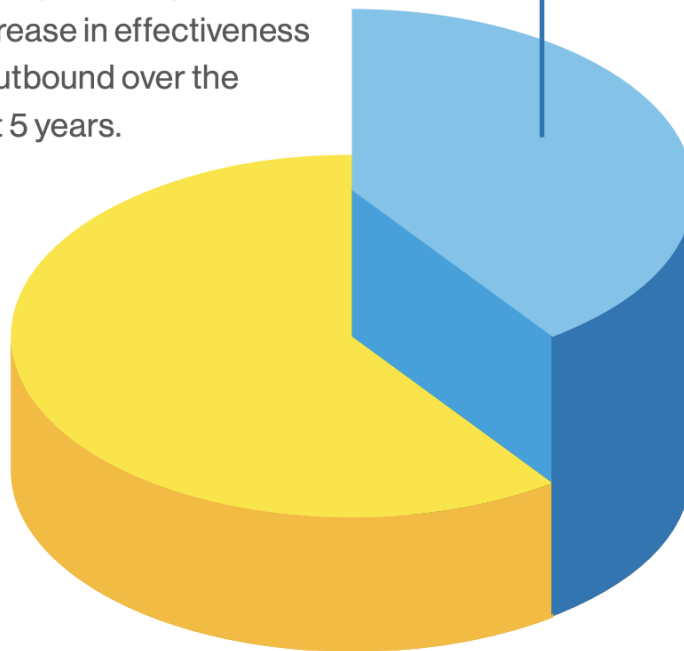
One survey of sales reps around the globe found that nearly 50% believed their jobs had become more challenging when compared to years prior.

“Gone are the days of a traditional, linear sales outcome,” Alyssa Merwyn wrote for HBR. “The rise of larger buying committees, higher stakes for customer retention, and more decision-maker turnover...is driving longer deal cycles, lower win rates, a weaker pipeline, and frustrated sellers and buyers.”

These difficulties are particularly easy to see with Outbound selling. In fact...

**40%**

of companies report a decrease in effectiveness of outbound over the past 5 years.



Despite these obstacles, sales people are still expected to hit quota month-after-month and quarter-after-quarter.

In this short guide, we'll cover the different factors making outbound more challenging but we're not going to spend much time despairing over it – instead we'll give you ways you can start making outbound work for your organization again by incorporating 3 specific activities into your sales workflows.



# Why Is Outbound Harder?

It's harder to be heard.

Getting a foot in the door with cold prospects is a challenge in and of itself. Take email for example. The average open rate for cold emails is 1 to 5%. What that stat assumes though, is that they see your message in the first place.

Even if a prospect is willing to have a conversation with you, changes in how ESPs (email service providers) process inbound messages has decreased the likelihood that your email will even **land** in their inbox.

And that's just email. Phones have a built-in spam detection now too. People are more likely than ever to ignore unknown numbers. Just getting your message in a position to be seen, never mind engaged with, is a feat in itself.





# Why Is Outbound Harder?

## It's harder to engage.

There are 30,000 SaaS solutions as of this writing. Thirty. Thousand. If each one was to get a seat in an arena, it would almost fill Harvard University's stadium here in Boston.

If we were to sum it up in one word though, it would be this: saturation. Day in and day out, each of us is getting calls and emails and DMs and ads thrown at us. What once stood out in the crowd is now used by every single sales team that can read a blog of "ten best ways to engage with prospects".

Even if your marketing strategy manages to catch the attention of your prospect, your product will need to be best in class to truly compete.

## It's harder to stay top of mind.

From the other side of the equation, your buyers are more educated on the market and solutions than ever before. Your prospects are spending less than 20% of the time actually meeting with suppliers.

The rest of that time is spent researching and discussing what they're looking for internally. With so much information at their fingertips, it might be that you're just one solution on a list of ten.

The combination of these obstacles has created an environment where it is more difficult than ever to create sales opportunities or even start a thoughtful campaign.

# 3 Strategies For Solving The Outbound Challenge

If you want to solve the rising challenge of outbound, focus on these three strategies.

1. Optimize Buyer/Market/Channel Fit
2. Accept the new normal
3. Double down on your strengths

Let's take a closer look at each of these strategies.



# 01.

## Optimize Buyer/Market/Channel Fit

Each campaign strategy comes down to three things: Your buyers, market, and channel mix. As much as we'd like, there is no one-size-fits-all universal approach because each of these three things will shift with every campaign.

With that disclaimer out of the way, if we were to outline a formula for outbound campaigns, it would look like this:

Outbound Campaign = Prospect data + channel + messaging + timing/  
synchronization

For instance, perhaps you target legacy, commodity SMBs (example: a family-owned retail store) and your ideal audience is primarily owners, presidents, and founders. Let's say you've done your research and found two things about this particular group of buyers:

- They **are** largely available through email, cold calling, and LinkedIn
- They **aren't** necessarily regulars to social media and utilize Facebook a few times a month.

With that in mind, even if you sink thousands of dollars into Facebook ads, you are unlikely to move the needle. Therefore, your strategy must acknowledge that LinkedIn, email, and cold calling should be the priority channels utilized. While you not only need to consider where your prospects 'live', you must also consider their experience within the market.

# 02.

## Accept The New Normal

From CRMs to sales engagement platforms (SEPs) to all sorts of automation, technological innovations have made outbound orchestration far easier and more effective. This rising tide of new tools has raised the stakes; in short - everyone has gotten better.

Having an SEP no longer gives an advantage – it's a requirement. In order to truly stand out, you have to find an edge.

It's not enough to load your prospects into a generic sequence and let it ride.

These days, all outbound campaigns should encompass the following attributes:

- **Prospect data** - Is your information about your prospects up to date? Are you certain you're reaching the right person for your offer?
- **Ideal channels** - Are you reaching out to them in the way they prefer?
- **Messaging** - Is your messaging dialed in so that you're talking about pain points that they're looking to fix, and how your value propositions alleviate them?
- **Timing/synchronization** - Are you reaching out to them at a comfortable cadence that isn't too frequent that they get annoyed? At the same time, are you reaching out to them frequently enough so that you stay top of mind?

# 03.

## Double Down On Your Edge

**As you evaluate your standing in our previously mentioned formula for better outbound (prospect data + channel + messaging + timing/synchronization), you need to find your edge.**

Dig deep into value individually and take stock of any weaknesses or strengths. While simplistic, this formula can offer a snapshot of how to balance your campaign.

For instance, if your channels are limited, you may be able to leverage an advantage in prospect data or messaging. Ultimately, the goal is to minimize the impact of your weaknesses, while maximizing the impact of your strengths.

Let's dive deeper into how.

# Minimize Limitations, Maximize Strengths

## Maximize Strengths

Your own personal edge is going to be something you have to do some navel gazing to figure out. As a team, you've got to have a clear, objective understanding of your team and brand's strengths and differentiators.

For instance, perhaps you've created a totally unique messaging strategy and your content writers are knowledgeable, clever, and innovative. You've seen what your competition is doing and you're confident that your approach will stand out in comparison. Therefore, messaging is your edge. Continue to focus on what you know works. At the same time, you can't rest on your laurels. You should also be A/B testing to iterate upon your edge.

For example, let's say you have limited prospect data. You can only access basic contact information to a broad pool of prospects and therefore may not be able to research them thoroughly, group them in any logical way. Recognize that this is a limitation and create a strategy to best work with that limitation. For instance, maybe you invest your energy in segmenting with the data you do have (like title or industry) to better specify your value proposition in your messaging.

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# Onward... And Outbound

Should time be any indication, outbound selling is not going to get any simpler. If you're feeling overwhelmed or at the very least, strapped for resources, using the right tools and strategies can help you reach your goals through an effective outbound strategy.

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