



How to Build a High Performing Sales Team using your Phone System



Better Business Communications

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If there is one common thing about all sales teams, it's that they are judged on their results. Everything is OK when the team hits target. It's when they don't hit target that the analysis becomes more in depth.

There are any number of questions which you might be asking yourself.
Why are our numbers down this month? Can we get marketing to generate more leads? Are we pricing correctly? Why is one of my team selling more than others?

There is one question which finding the answer to might help.
How can I help my team to perform better?

Power Of The Phone

The fact that you're reading this guide, means like most other businesses, your company probably sells over the phone. With 1 in 9 people working in sales, it's a core business activity that demands attention. Despite the advances in eCommerce, many buyers still expect and demand a phone conversation with a real person before buying.

The phone therefore remains one of the most effective components of your sales toolkit and chances are, you're probably not getting the most value out of it. Aside from a face to face meeting, a phone call is perhaps the best method of communication for a sales person with a prospect.

A trend in sales has emerged in recent years where there is an over reliance on email despite most buyers preferring a real conversation. Conversations are where buyers learn, make assumptions, build trust, and ultimately take decisions about a potential purchase. These kinds of interactions happen with much more depth in a conversation than through an email. This added value for buyer and seller is why the phone is still your most powerful sales tool. This short ebook is going to show you how optimising your phone service can help your team increase their sales and hit their targets.

First Impressions Matter - Connecting The Caller

Your marketing team will use a selection of your business phone numbers in their advertising. The numbers might appear on your website, in Google Adwords placements, business cards or maybe in the newspaper.

When someone sees the number and calls in looking for more information about your company, the first person that answers the call should be part of your sales team. Don't expect someone who is interested in your product or service to wait on hold or be transferred through multiple departments. They should be talking to a salesperson immediately who can best help with their inquiry.



First impressions matter. There's no better way to frustrate your potential customer than make them wait to have a sales conversation.

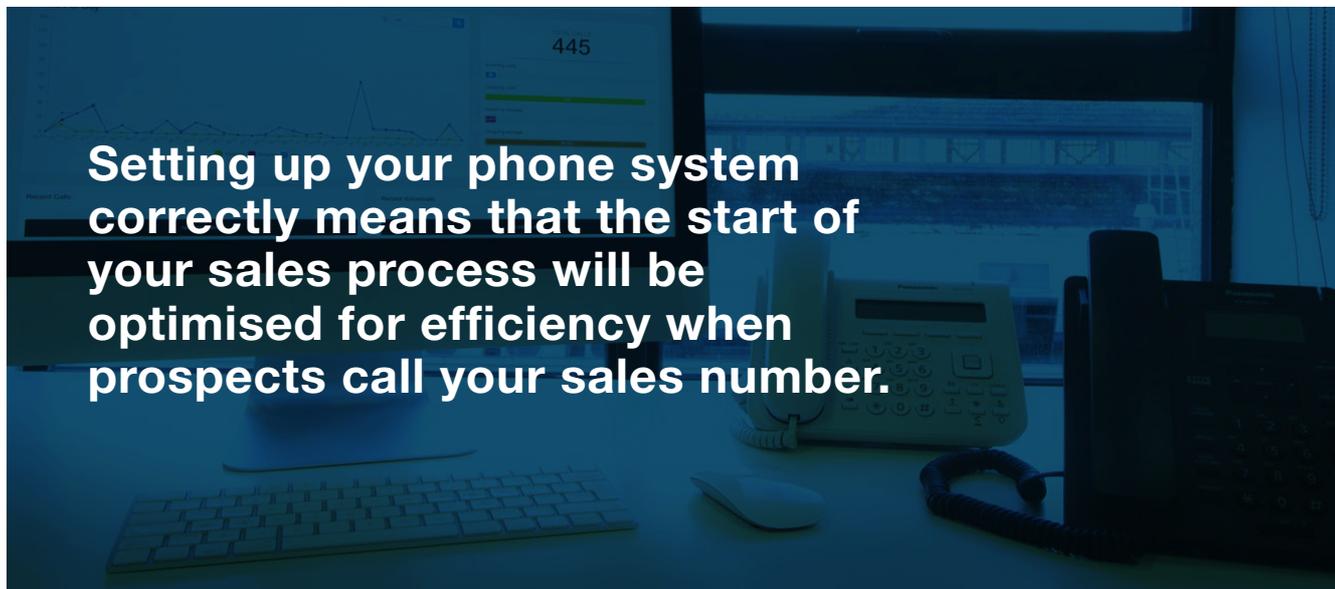
By setting up ring groups on your phone system, you can have all of your sales agents' desk phones ring simultaneously when a sales number is called. Ring groups also allow you to specify which employees' devices ring and in what order when a certain number is called.

Firstly, this means the interested prospect will be talking to a member of sales immediately and secondly the call is more likely to be answered if each team member's phone is ringing. If everyone is busy, the ring group can then be redirected to the team leader, a senior sales manager, or another department to look after the inquiry. Failing that, you can always divert to mobiles or if there's nobody around to take the call, send them to a voicemail.

Furthermore, if you have specific salespeople for different products, industries or businesses size such as enterprise, you can set up ring groups to call the necessary team or representative. This is known as skills based routing.

In addition to the numbers which your marketing team use in adverts, your company probably has a general number or a 'main line'. Use a virtual receptionist, also known as an auto attendant to outline the options available to the caller such as sales, support, accounts etc.

Always have a professionally recorded greeting to make your business sound good from the first time your customer calls you. The sales option from the list should be directed to the sales team ring group you have set up.



Performance Improvement Through Feedback

Every successful high performance sports team succeeds thanks in part to supportive coaching, a high degree of self awareness, and a focus on continual self improvement. Taking the ingredients of high performance sport and applying to sales management can benefit from adopting a similar approach.

Does your leadership team rely on a set it and forget it approach to the management of your sales team? Critically analysing past performance, and coaching in the moment are two fundamental ways to improve sales performance. So how can your small business do this?

Call recording allows you to capture sales conversations to discover where sales opportunities have been lost and won. These are the key points in the sales process where engagements between your company and the buyer reveal a series of qualitative insights into what they're interested in and real time feedback on your service.

Using call recording for training is not a new idea. Large call centres train new starters for weeks using recordings of sales calls before they are let anywhere close to their own phone. Typically they've been the only type of customer that could afford this technology. Now this is changing thanks to companies like Blueface who make call recording available to SME's for a low monthly fee without any equipment purchase. The question is, could you make use of it in your business to continually develop your talent?

Perhaps you have regular sales team meetings or one to one sessions with a sales person. Listening to a selection of their conversations allows the team leader to provide feedback. They can reinforce and encourage positive aspects of a conversation and offer constructive criticisms on certain issues to help them develop.

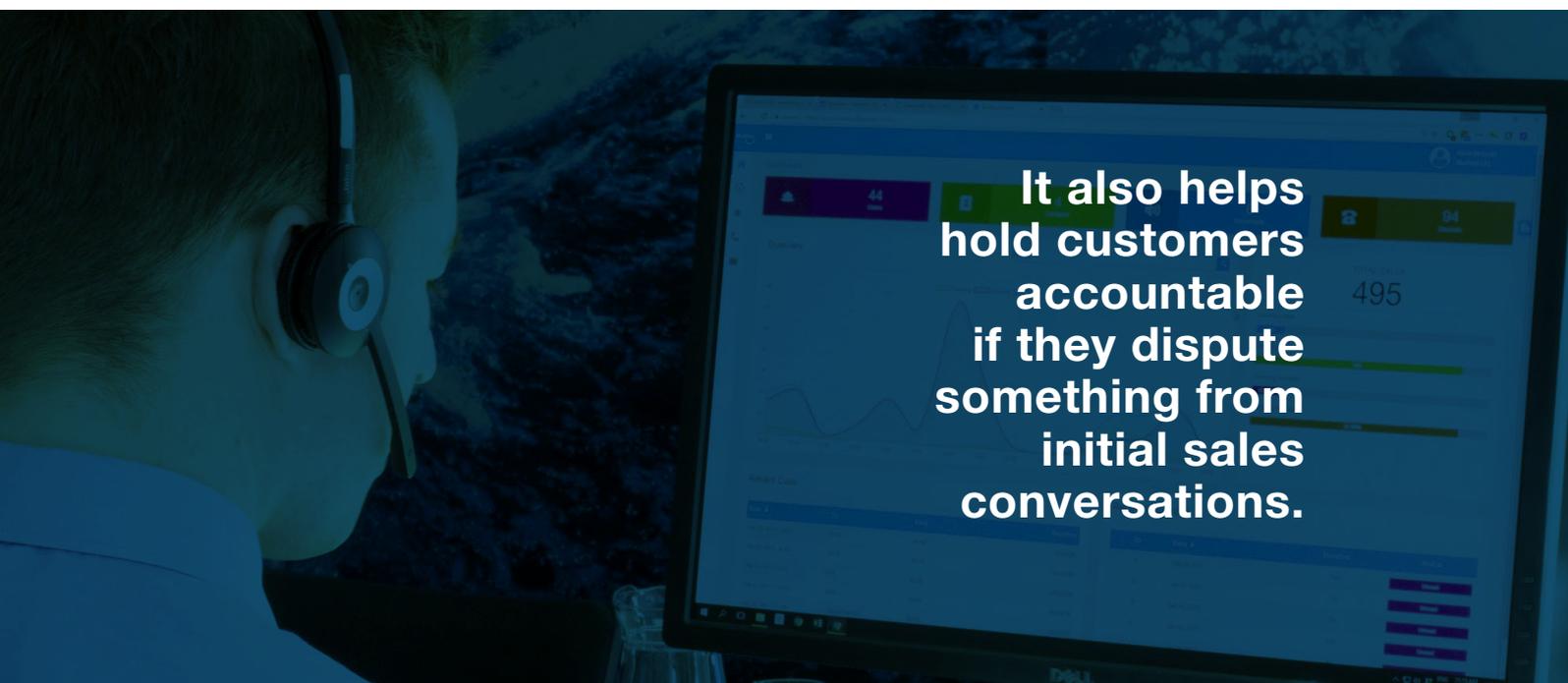
A team member might struggle with one particular type of customer, or to communicate the benefits of a particular feature the business offers. The use of call recordings allows these issues to be pinpointed and resolved.

Selling over the phone is part science and part art. There are a variety of areas that analysis of call recordings can uncover that salespeople aren't immediately aware of when in the midst of a free flowing conversation. The tone of voice, pace of conversation, vocabulary used, percentage share of conversation, and a number of other items can all be analysed after the conversation to help improve your sales team's performance.

In addition, if a salesperson needs to double check something from the notes they took during the call, they just have to play the recording. It's possible to misinterpret or completely forget a point of emphasis over the course of a sales call. Rather than getting back in touch with the customer or prospect to confirm details (which might not give off a good impression), they can focus on the action points which came out of the conversation and progress the opportunity.

Improve Accountability

Sales teams live and die by their sales numbers. However, knowing that their phone calls are being recorded and call statistics are being monitored holds them accountable for their performance. This helps sales teams behave to the best of their abilities knowing that all conversations need to be handled professionally and limits the risk of overselling or promising anything unrealistic.



It also helps hold customers accountable if they dispute something from initial sales conversations.

Reach Multiple Decision Makers

Some of your sales opportunities might involve talking to more than one decision maker from the organisation you're selling to. Most decisions are not made in isolation by a single person and typically rely on the input of several people within a company. At Blueface, it's regular for our sales process to involve a business owner or CEO as well as someone on the management team such as the Head of Operations or IT.

If a face to face meeting isn't feasible, the next best solution is a conference call. It allows you to schedule one conversation with the key stakeholders or influencers of the deal wherever their location. This helps accomplish a number of things.

It allows for you to answer all questions from each of the stakeholders at one time, hopefully cutting down on the amount of follow up and the number of back and forth communications to progress the opportunity.

In addition, it also means that all parties will have the same information communicated to them as well as the opportunity to clarify different points. This stops any points your employee has mentioned on the call not being accurately represented by a prospect to their colleagues if they misunderstood the details.

Providing each employee with their own conference room and PIN is now possible with cloud phone systems, making this option always available for your employees at no extra charge.

This allows your team to offer a reliable communication method for larger deals with multiple decision makers.

Get Insight Into Your Team's Activity

Your phone system should provide you with a wealth of data on the phone habits of your team. Measuring the call activity that correlates with sales is ultimately what you want to incentivise and manage your sales team for.

Your call reporting or call history should allow you to see data for specific teams. Perhaps you have different sales teams for different products or different business sizes. You will be able to see different reports for those teams or even for an individual user.

Depending on your sales process setup you may require certain call benchmarks to be hit, and in depth call reporting will keep you on top of that. As a sales team leader would you need to talk to your marketing colleagues if the number of incoming phone enquiries has dropped off in the last two weeks?

You may also be able to correlate your call reports with your other information. For example, does your best enterprise salesperson also have the longest average time spent on a call? Or how do call trends change for specific employees from month to month?



Every business is different, but understanding how your sales people interact over the phone could provide insights into their performance, and if there is any room for improvement.

Sell Internationally

Which markets does your sales team have responsibility for? Are they based in London but take enquiries from the U.S. and Australia?

Hosted phone systems allow for this through the provision of international numbers. Interested parties throughout the world can call into your centralised sales team using local numbers and not be charged for an international call.

If your company is expanding, using international numbers which redirect to your existing sales team means you don't have to commit to large office investment before you are ready but more importantly for your salespeople, it increases the number of opportunities or leads they should receive.

Sales agents can also be assigned a virtual phone number for each country they have responsibility for. When they need to make a call to a prospect in that country, they can select which of their numbers will display on their caller ID. This seems like a small detail but culturally it makes a significant difference to the person they are trying to reach.



**How skeptical are you
of answering calls from
different countries
showing up on your
phone?**

Sell On The Go

Sometimes, your salespeople may need to meet a client or prospect face to face, or perhaps they are out of the office for the day working from home. Cloud phone systems allow for real time number redirection through an online account.

This means that your salesperson's direct dial can be set to call their mobile or home phone at the click of a button when they are out of office. They can always stay available to prospects who are looking for advice or seeking to clarify details about your service or company.

Your office phone system can also optimise the work processes of your field sales agents, who by description will be selling on the go or remotely as part of their daily routine. Your agents have multiple devices, or perhaps require a desk phone in your headquarters for when they are in-office.

A voicemail to email feature sends messages which they have received from any device to a centralised voicemail box and notifies them via their email inbox. They can then listen to those voice messages from their inbox without access to the original device which generated the message. This helps your team stay on top of their communications.

Softphones, also known as soft clients, are software applications installed on general purpose devices such as PCs or mobile devices to act as a virtual phone. They use internet access to make and receive calls.

By using softphones on a mobile device, a field sales agent can stay connected to an organisation's communications system. A team leader will be able to see an employee's call reports and call history as well as having the call recordings centrally archived. The field representative will be able to use the conferencing feature if they need to and have access to features such as internal transfers, voicemail to email or have multiple contact numbers depending on business processes.

In niche cases they would be able to use their softphone when they are crossing borders with international dial plans and numbers to give off a local impression and reduce international call rates.

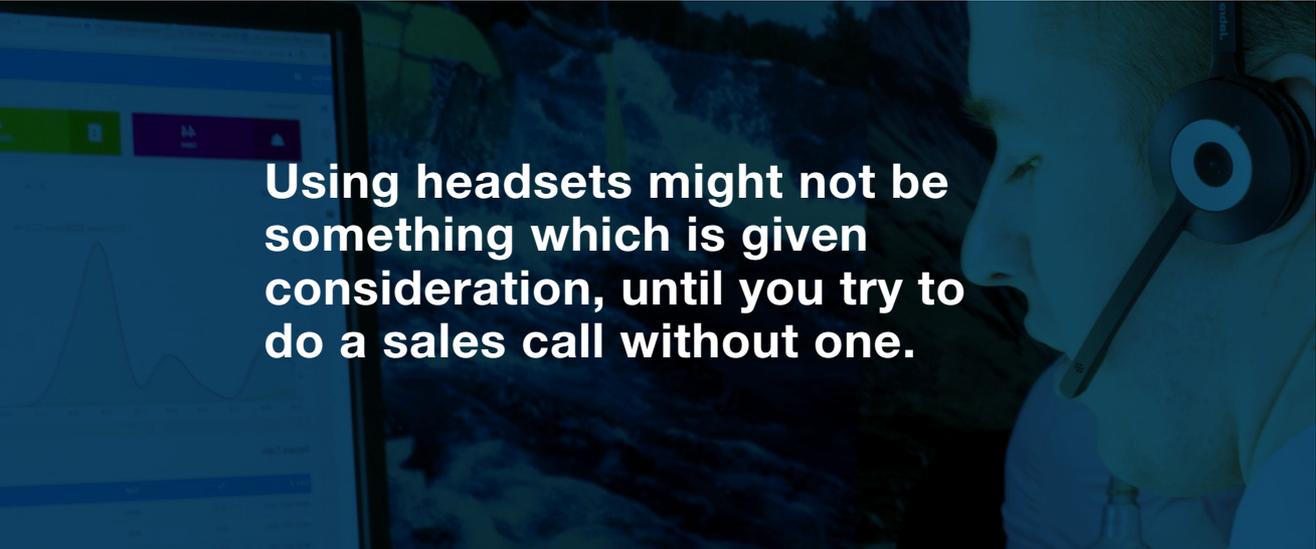
Put Your Headsets On

Just as important as the phone system is the device your employees use to answer or make sales calls. Everyone has experienced awkwardly holding a phone with their shoulder whilst trying to take notes. There is a better way to talk to people.

By using headsets connected to your desk phone your team can conduct sales calls with their hands free and the ability to use their laptops, PCs or tablets to assist with the call. In settings such as the insurance industry, sales representatives are required to fill out quote forms on their system. Doing this without a headset would be almost unfeasible, and it would be a terrible experience for the caller.

While on a call, your team may need to use their CRM account to add call notes, access specific feature or technical documentation to answer a question from the prospect or prepare a quote for them to send immediately once they hang up. Headsets make doing this practical.

Wireless headsets allow people to walk around while on a call within a certain range. For sales people in specific situations who may need to access information in different locations, they could be essential.

A person wearing a headset is shown in profile, looking at a computer monitor. The monitor displays a line graph and some data points. The scene is dimly lit, with a blue tint. The text is overlaid on the image in white.

Using headsets might not be something which is given consideration, until you try to do a sales call without one.

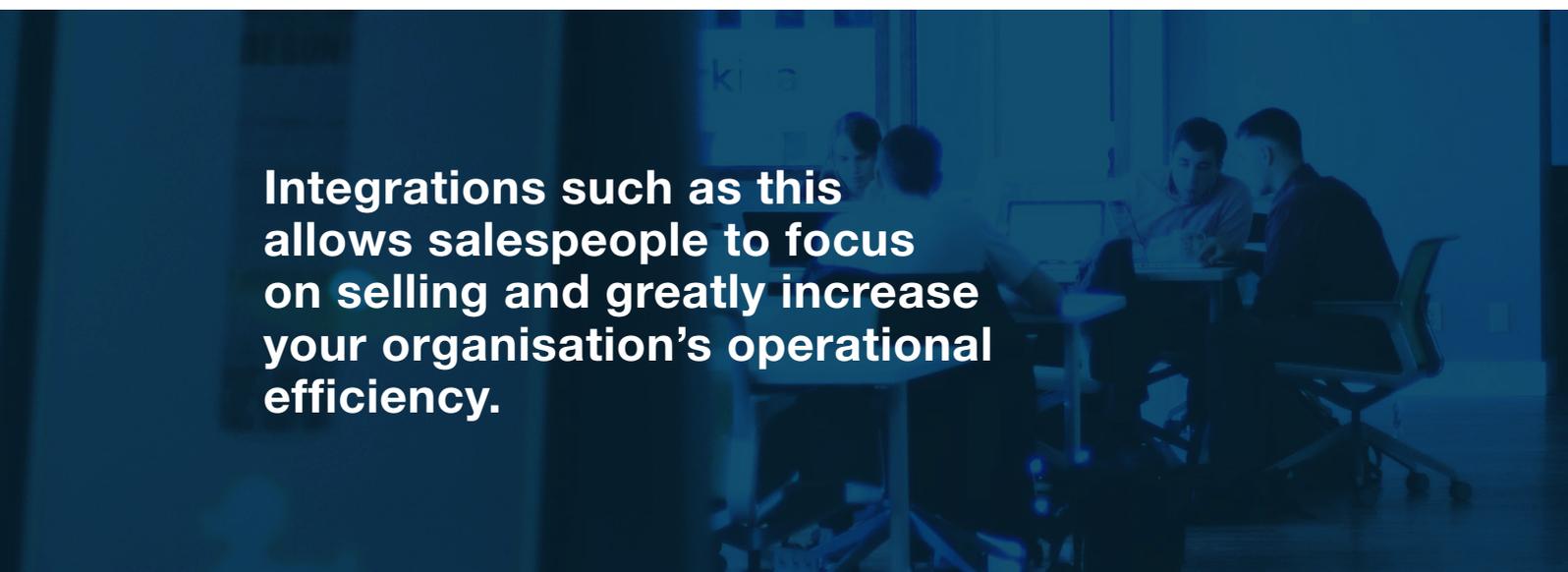
Automate With An API

One of the best ways to enable and support your sales team is to give them more selling time and less admin time. They would probably be grateful to have more time to spend educating and discussing solutions with customers, or to send proposals, or even to schedule and attend meetings.

Cutting down on the amount of manual processes present in your entire sales and marketing process will achieve this, and fortunately your phone system can help.

Online phone systems such as Blueface provide APIs (application programming interfaces). This allows you to integrate your phone system with some of the other software your team uses, like your CRM.

By integrating your phone system with your CRM you are able to automatically log call records into the notes for prospective customers in your CRM. This saves your salespeople time from manually doing this after each call.



Integrations such as this allows salespeople to focus on selling and greatly increase your organisation's operational efficiency.

Promote Your Business And Services With On Hold Messaging

You don't want to have someone who is interested in your business placed on hold, but if they have to be you should take the chance to educate them about your business.

Rather than subjecting them to the traditional boring on hold music, play some customer on hold music / messaging about any upcoming events your organisation is involved with, news or other helpful information for your callers. You could also mention any recent award wins your company may have.

When your employee gets back to the call, the caller now has a better understanding of your business and may look at it in a more favourable light depending on the messaging used.

You can also use on hold messaging as a cross selling or upselling tool when you have released a new product or service, or perhaps new features for your service. This may warm a lead as they are interested in that feature or realise they have a need in that area.

Summary

You want your salespeople to do what they do best, **sell**. This means removing or improving any manual or inefficient processes which get in the way of that. In addition, continuous development of your team members and a better understanding of the full sales process will help supercharge your sales team for better performance. A **hosted phone system** provides all of the tools needed to help.

Talk to Blueface.

The End

Who are we?

Blueface is a leading Unified Communications-as-a-Service Provider to Businesses, Enterprises and Carriers. Founded in 2004, Blueface's proprietary cloud voice platform services over 20,000 Business customers globally of all sizes ranging from SME's through to Large Multinational Enterprises.

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