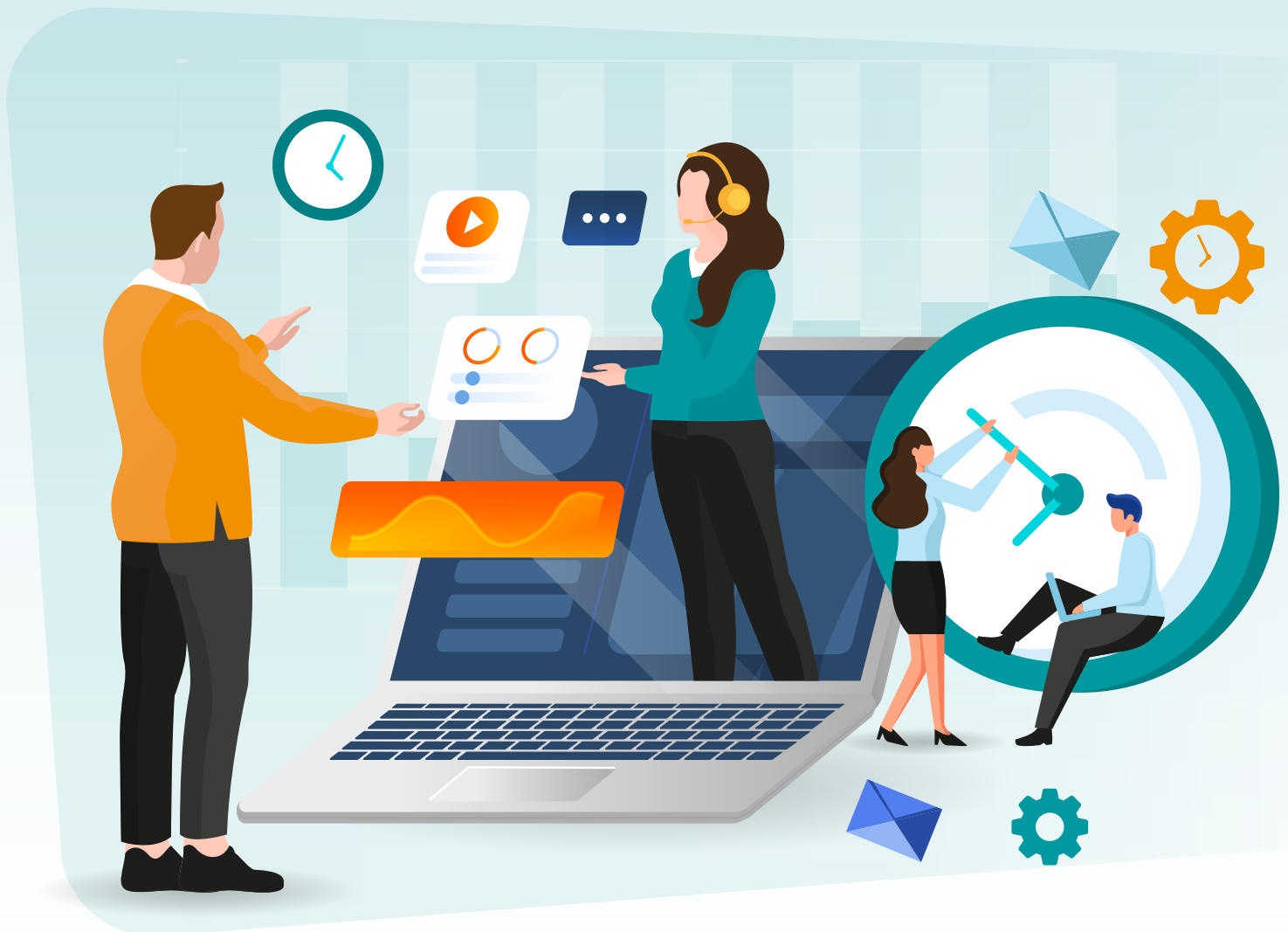
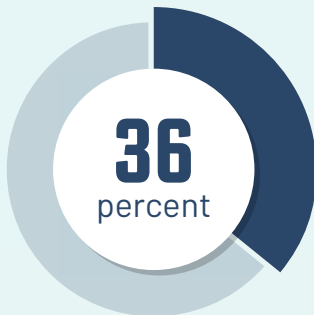


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SPEND MORE TIME SELLING WITH A VIRTUAL ASSISTANT



According to multiple studies, salespeople spend most of their time on non-sales tasks. Here are some of the figures on how much time sales pros spend selling:



XANT

Insidesales.com



Proudfoot

Proudfoot
Consulting Group



PACE
Time Study
Consulting

Pace
Productivity



Selling time of 11 to 36 percent is a broad spectrum, but what is clear is that salespeople spend less than half of their time selling. Insidesales.com (now Xant) surveyed 200 outside sales reps, and Proudfoot interviewed 800 executives in 19 countries. Pace Productivity's numbers come from a portable electronic time tracker worn by the salespeople and claims its data to be 94 percent accurate.

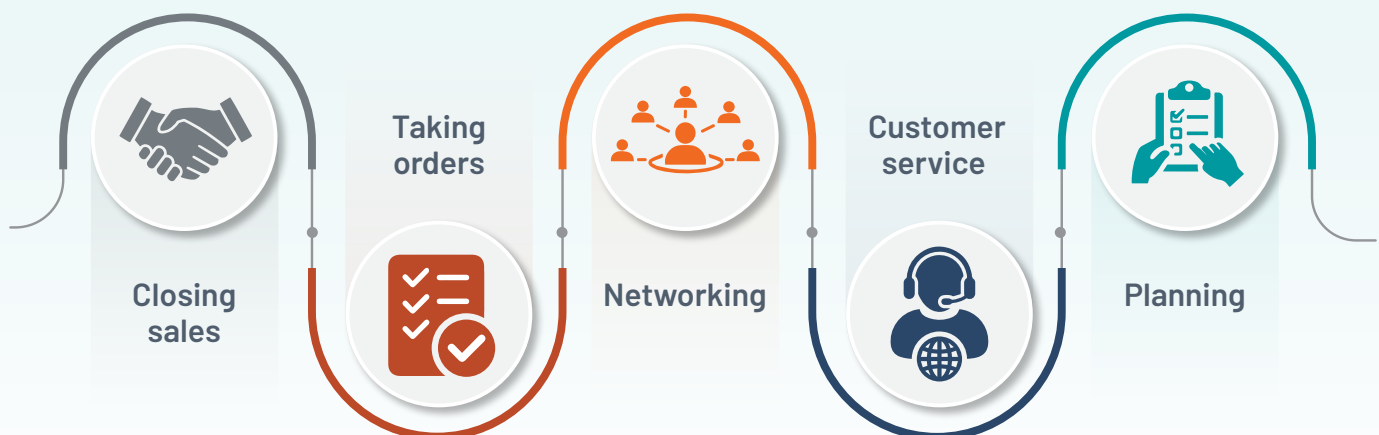
Where Does the Time Go?

Where does the time go? According to Pace, a salesperson's time allocation in a typical week looks like this:



How Sales people Want to Spend Their Time

Here's what Pace's subjects told the surveyors are the most valuable uses of their time.



Virtual Assistants to the Rescue

More and more sales leaders are leaning on virtual assistants (VAs) as a cost-effective way to tackle the admin tasks that take up so much of their time.

Admin and Paperwork

Virtual assistants can handle much of a salesperson's day-to-day administrative work. Admin tasks VAs commonly handle to give you those 7.3 hours a week back include:



Let's take prospecting as an example. More than **40 percent** of salespeople say prospecting is the most challenging part of their work. It can be tedious and time-consuming.

Prospecting is something easily delegated to VA once the qualification criteria are clearly defined. VAs can use your LinkedIn Sales Navigator, ZoomInfo, Apollo, or another contact database to build lists and/or complete lists with missing information.

All you have to do is give them criteria about the types of prospects you're looking for. You can give the VAs the following criteria for your search:



As you narrow your targeting, you can expand your **criteria to get more specific contacts.**

Then there are meetings. It takes **20-25 minutes and 10-12 emails** to schedule a business meeting. Multiply that across a week's worth of meetings, and it's at least a few hours. That's something a VA can take off your plate, including:



For business travel, it takes an average of 12 hours to plan and book a trip. A VA can handle that task using your travel preferences and loyalty accounts. In addition to trip planning, a VA can help you maximize the ROI of your business trips by scheduling as many meetings as possible. A VA can also help you save time by reaching out to your contacts in the city you're visiting and planning meetings in locations that are close together.

All you have to do is give your VA your travel itinerary, and they'll fill in the gaps with meeting nearby opportunities.

Document prep can also be time-consuming. A VA can update templated documents like;



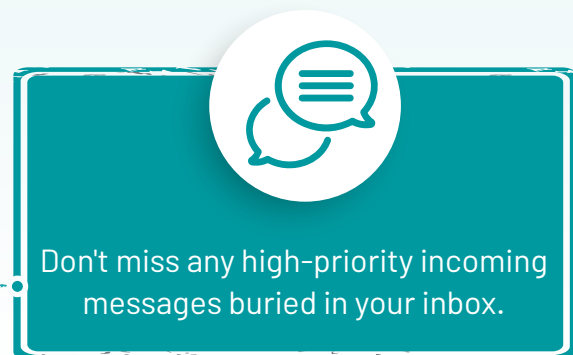
Anything that simply needs updated content cut and pasted into a template can be offloaded to a virtual assistant.

Email Management

According to Salesforce, it takes six to eight touches to make a sale, but 70 percent of salespeople stop at one. Why? Because it takes too much time and salespeople are pulled in too many directions. If you are already spending seven hours a week on email correspondence, multiplying your sales outreach eight-fold is quite a challenge.



Email outreach cadences will differ for each business, but you can delegate many of these routine emails to a virtual assistant. You can also give scripted follow-up emails and inbox management to a virtual assistant to make sure you:



Internal Communication

A VA can make routine internal calls like meeting confirmations and regular updates to share information, but not more sensitive calls like syncs with managers and direct reports. Those are the higher priority tasks you need more time to do.



CRM Management

Maintaining accurate customer data is critical to business success. That data is usually in a CRM, and companies that use a well-implemented CRM perform better, plain & simple.

- Customers spend 20-40 percent more with companies that use a CRM.
- Companies that use CRMs increase retention and customer satisfaction by 47 percent.
- Conversion rates rise by up to 300 percent for CRM users.
- The average ROI for a CRM is \$8.71 for every dollar spent on the platform.

But only **30 percent** of businesses have strong CRMs.

One of the biggest reasons CRMs don't live up to their potential is inconsistent data entry. Different users enter information differently, or the contact information is not updated regularly. When you don't know if a contact's information or status is accurate, you don't use it.

Once you define rules for contact information and the database is up to date, a VA can pull lists, complete missing data, confirm pipeline status, and enter new contacts as they come in. A VA can also generate lists, email campaigns, and process response data.

A virtual sales assistant can help you leverage your CRM by:

Inputting all of your contacts into your CRM and filling in additional information about them.



Keeping your data clean and up-to-date by changing statuses as needed, removing duplicate data, filling in missing information, etc.

Logging every call, email, and meeting, so you have a record of all of your interactions with leads.



Running reports and sending them to you, so you have access to the latest insights about your pipeline.

Once the data is entered, you can also track opportunities using your contact qualification criteria for:

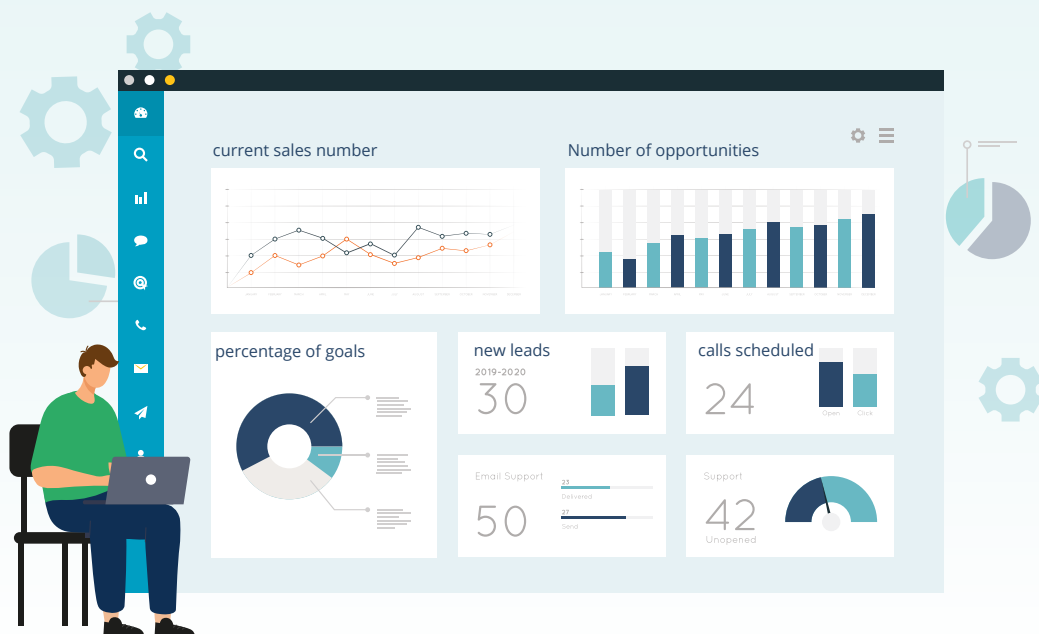


How to Hire a Virtual Assistant

There are several ways to engage a remote virtual assistant. There are three broad categories for hiring:



There are pros and cons for each model of hiring, and finding the right approach depends on your needs, your resources, and the amount of time and money you want to invest.



Hiring a Freelancer



Hiring a freelancer, especially overseas, is usually the least expensive route, and the dollar goes a long way in countries like India and the Philippines. U.S.-based freelancers will likely cost more, communication is sometimes easier, and depending on your arrangement and your need for synchronous work the time zones can be a plus. Hiring a freelancer is also the highest risk option in terms of quality control, reliability, and accountability as freelancers can have other priority clients or commitments that keep them from meeting deadlines. Sometimes freelancers just disappear. It's also the model with the most significant lift on you. You recruit, interview, hire, train, pay, and manage the virtual assistant. Most freelancers work from home offices and IT security can be a concern. Finally, finding a freelancer with experience using your sales tools—CRM, project management, etc. can be challenging.

Using a Contract Agency



Using a contract virtual assistant agency will usually get you a vetted virtual assistant with a validated resume and track record. As with a freelancer, performance management and training with a contract agency are up to you, and it really depends on how much time you can and want to invest in those responsibilities. Contractors can also have multiple clients unless you plan to engage the assistant 40 hours a week. There are several contract agencies with overseas and/or U.S.-based virtual assistants. This model will be a bit more expensive than hiring a freelancer directly, especially if the assistants are in the U.S. Most work in home offices with home computers and again, security can be a concern. As with freelancers, it could take longer to find a VA that knows your sales tools.

Managed Virtual Assistant Service



With a managed virtual assistant service, the service provider recruits, hires, trains, and manages the virtual assistants on your tools and processes. The assistants are full-time employees of the service provider. Many also train backup assistants to make sure you're always covered. Account managers monitor performance and client satisfaction and work with you to offload more and more processes to the assistant as they get to know your business. There's no direct management on your part. Most managed service providers use virtual assistants offshore, but instead of working from a home office, the assistants work in secure facilities with encrypted networks and company-owned computers. With this model, you are able to engage a virtual assistant in a few days with no management or training needed on your part.

About Freelance Marketplaces



You can also hire a virtual assistant through a freelance marketplace. This model is typically used for short-term projects, not ongoing relationships. That is starting to change. You have the same risks as with a freelancer, though the marketplace can mitigate some risks of poor quality and missed deadlines. These freelancers are often getting multiple projects from multiple clients, so consistent availability can also be a challenge.

Spend More Time Selling



Virtual assistants can help you free up more time to sell, and prevent you from paying yourself to do all of your own admin work. VAs can also streamline your sales processes to improve overall operational efficiency by keeping your CRM current, documenting all sales processes, and updating sales materials.

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About Prialto

Prialto provides managed virtual administrative assistants to executives, entrepreneurs, and businesses. Its virtual executive assistant services are curated and managed from its headquarters in Portland, Oregon, with creative insights from global staff in Asia & Central America.