
Online sales in 3 easy steps


Here is how to do it right



Introduction

Starting your very own business is never easy – but it's a wonderful adventure! You have an idea that's going to make the world a better place, and you had the guts to take the very first steps, but now you're really getting into it and realizing all the intricacies that need to be taken care of. Sure, it's all fun and excitement when you're brainstorming with your team about all the cool features your product will have, and the innovative ways you're going to show it to the world, but it's time to get serious!

We made this eBook to help you get through the sales part of business as painlessly as possible. You'll find three sections which cover methods on how to generate more meaningful appointments, how to increase online sales, as well as a bit on which trends in the sales world you can expect in 2023.

A background image showing a modern glass building with a curved facade, reflecting the sky and clouds. The building is composed of many rectangular glass panels held together by dark metal frames.

If you need more information or help about generating meaningful sales appointments and increasing online sales, don't hesitate to get in touch with us on info@nextpilots.com.

We will make sure to take you to success!

Keep on reading to find the table of contents and get informed on the different basic areas you need in order to run a successful business operation! »

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 Stop 1

Tips to Generate Meaningful Sales Appointments

If you have a promising sales agency and offer quality services, getting a meeting to end with a signature is easy. But how to get meetings? Of course, we're not talking about just any kind of meeting but the ones with prospects who will fit your standards and be a pleasure to work with. For that, we suggest vetting out lead generation channels rather than sweeping up anyone who will listen and filtering leads later.

So, here are some tips on how to do just that – book truly meaningful appointments.



Social selling

Social media is old news – there's nothing groundbreaking about it, and it has been extensively for all sorts of business-related purposes. On average, people spend about 147 minutes a day on social media, and industry professionals are no exception.

Social selling is a process that involves researching potential prospects, connecting with them on the platform of your choice, and interacting with them in multiple ways. As you've probably already assumed, the most popular platform for social selling is LinkedIn, although other platforms are being used more and more.

The one caveat here, however, is that there is no instant gratification – building trust with online groups and followers takes time. But those who end up making the call have already gotten the chance to see your value through the content you create and share, and they're already half-convinced.

The first step to getting started is to have your sales reps **optimize their profiles**.

Appearing knowledgeable and trustworthy through posts doesn't do much if, upon clicking on the profile, the client is met with little to no information. Show their expertise through their CVs, post amicable profile pictures, and don't be afraid to link other social media profiles as well. This gives the prospect a feeling that they got to know you personally, which is great for building trust.

Another important step is **staying active** constantly. On LinkedIn, you can join groups for industry professionals (or even based on personal interests) and join relevant forums. Sharing a non-LinkedIn post and adding your thoughts to it reassures the audience that you're actually reading up on trends and **continually educating yourself** rather than just recycling whatever LinkedIn's topic of the week is.

If you don't have that much time, you can make your presence known by liking and commenting on the posts you see. Keep in mind that comments like 'Looks great, Brad!' or 'Agreed!' make it obvious that you're writing just to get your name on people's screens.



Just like in real life, if you've got nothing valuable to add to the conversation, just give it a thumbs up and move on.



Be active in industry events

Since you're already active on social media, keep an eye out for announcements about upcoming relevant events. When someone's planning on hosting a workshop, webinar, or presentation, it's good to be on their radar from the get-go. If you're just starting out, making an appearance at these events makes people remember you – especially if you ask smart questions or make comments that add value to the conversation.



By being a speaker at an event, your leads get a preview of both what you're selling as well as an insight into you personally. Publicly speaking on industry trends and innovations really sets the tone that you're a true expert, confident and in-the-know. The speech or presentation should offer **an actionable takeaway**. If you've given your lead something worth their time, they'll leave wondering what else you could do for them.

When dealing with what is essentially selling yourself along with your services, **remember to make it all very marketable**. Your brand needs to be memorable and derive a response from the viewer – but first, it has to be seen by them. That's why we recommend investing in physical, printed ads if you're going to an in-person event. Make flyers or a banner and hand out your business cards; **give your leads something tangible to remember you by**. How many times have you added a phone number to your contacts list, only to go Who the heck is Brad? in about a week?



Make it easy with automation

Okay, now you've gathered some leads, but you also have to keep track and nurture all of them. If the client feels like you've forgotten about them, you've lost them. But, when you use a software solution that helps salespeople stay organized, that won't ever happen.

There are many sales platforms out there. So take some time to do research and find the best one (or you can even hire an IT team to build you a custom one!). On most of them, you can get notifications such as reminders to contact somebody and set up tasks for follow-ups with all the necessary information in the same tab.

Similarly, if you find a lead online, and are trying to guide them through your sales funnel, rest assured that they'll give up if you make things too complicated. **The best practice is to have a very visible link to your website and a clearly marked button** that gets them to book a meeting. Or, if you're going with social selling, you can even add in your bio that you're open to messages and emails for inquiries. Of course, make sure your address is clickable or can be copy-pasted so that a typo doesn't ruin your chances.

Making sure everything runs smoothly while the prospect is trying to reach you tells them two things:

You're available and easy to work with – they won't have any trouble contacting you during your cooperation.

They are important to you – replying quickly and never forgetting to follow up are the soft skills of the digital era and are what creates both an excellent first impression and trust.



Don't forget to stay human

Lately, we've been seeing more and more talk about H2H, or human-to-human marketing. Essentially the core idea here is that even when you're a business talking to a business, you're not two spectral entities interacting over the internet – you're two humans, sitting in their offices, reading each other's words and thoughts.

That is the kind of approach people want to see and the kind of attitude that builds **trust and leads**. Although we've emphasized the importance and usefulness of automation, spam will always be spam (and get deleted without even a glance), so personalize everything you send. If it's an email, go beyond just addressing them by their

name – **ask questions and ask for their opinion on matters**. If you're selling via LinkedIn, don't be afraid to go for the I've seen on your profile that... Having a conversation about their experiences or personal interests reminds people of talking to a friend and takes the pressure off the sales aspect of the conversation.



Getting leads to book an appointment is one of the most strenuous and frustrating tasks a salesperson must tackle, especially if they're looking for meaningful meetings. Just as you are looking for quality over quantity in your prospects, they are doing the same with you. Posting hundreds of random articles and regurgitated LinkedIn posts will only annoy the audience but posting something valuable (even if just once in a few weeks) will make them look forward to your posts. Having an audience – either virtual or seated in an auditorium while you give a presentation – is like having a bunch of people lined up at a shop window, waiting to see what's inside. Your job is to give them a sneak peek into what you're offering and invite them inside. That's how you get a meaningful sales meeting.

If you want to leave the sales to a highly skilled off-site team, NextPilots have your back! Book a free consultation, and we can work out the details.

▼ Stop 2

How to Increase Online Sales

COVID-19 has shaken up the business landscape considerably. Online shopping in the European market is expected to reach over \$570 billion by 2025. At a time when customers have a huge choice of products just a click away, it's becoming increasingly difficult to stand out from the competition and reach your ideal audience.

That's why we've compiled some of the best applicable tactics your team can use to increase your online sales.

Let's dive in and find out which practices work best for your business!



➤ 1. Define your buyer persona

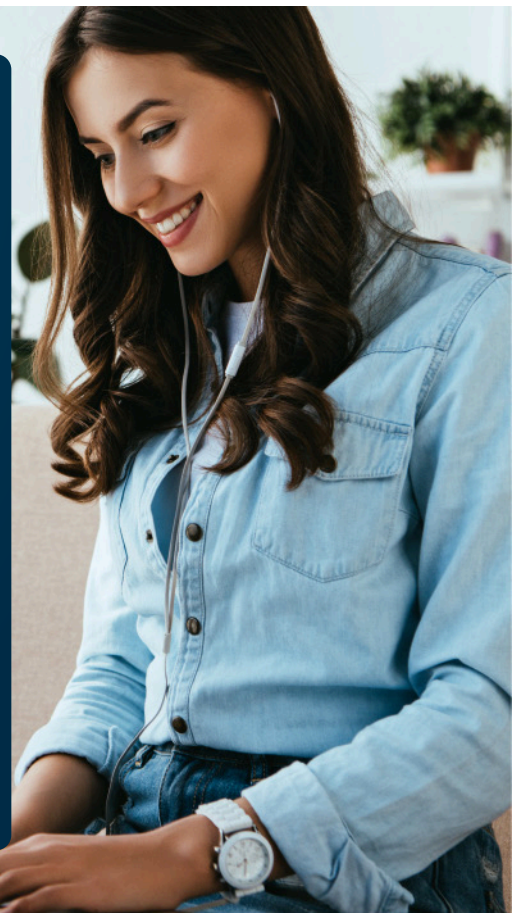
When customers come into your store, you tailor your tone and service to their age, gender, and general appearance. When selling online, you don't have the same advantage of meeting your customers face-to-face. That is why you should imagine them.

We can agree that nothing replaces a face-to-face conversation. But if you want to increase your online sales (and who doesn't?), the most useful technique is **to define your buyer persona**. Think about who your customer is and create a demographic profile that includes age, gender, marital status, education, and profession. This will help you learn more about your customer's personalities and figure out what tactics to use to appeal to them.

You should also consider what pain points and frustrations your ideal customer has that your product can fix and **what motivates them to buy** your product.

Now you're probably wondering, how can you find out all this data?

There are a couple of ways. If you already have a website, there is a very useful hack to create your buyer persona – **Google Analytics**. It's a tool that can help you identify buying patterns, and preferences and find information about your users' ages, gender, main interests, and the profiles that convert the most. In addition, you can conduct comprehensive market research that includes **surveys, interviews, and a general study** of the entire market landscape that will give you the data you need to increase your sales.



2. Determine your sales goals

According to one study, 61% of salespeople believe that clear expectations and goals are the No. 1 factor that determines productivity. When everyone on the team knows what they're supposed to accomplish and **the goals are communicated effectively**. It ensures that everyone is on the same page and working towards compatible goals.

Goal setting requires a strong connection between your sales and marketing teams, as they should be aligned with overall business goals. Setting and implementing

goals can help you continually determine what's working and what's not. It can help you **define realistic expectations, objectives, and KPIs** and align your efforts to achieve them.



When your sales team has unattainable or non-compliant goals, both the quality and quantity of sales efforts decrease. In addition, stretch goals are demotivating and can lead to excessive risk-taking.

3. Create and optimize landing pages

The success of online sales largely depends on landing pages. These pages determine whether a user will continue to navigate your site or leave immediately. While landing pages should be tailored to your business, the general rule is **the simpler and clearer the landing page, the more effective it's**.

To increase online sales, you should create a separate landing page for each of your main products, or if you have many products, create a page for each related product.

Here are some tips to help you optimize your landing page and increase the conversion rate:

- ✓ Create **a meaningful title** that grabs the visitor's attention and encourages them to read on
- ✓ Write **clear, compelling text** and use the keywords that your users use to search for you on Google
- ✓ **Include images** that relate to the message you want to convey
- ✓ **Use CTAs** that stand out visually from the rest of the information and are placed in a convenient location, so users don't have to scroll
- ✓ **Highlight** how your product or service will benefit potential customers create a sense of urgency that makes users act quickly



4. Utilize social selling

Social selling is the process of building and maintaining relationships with customers at every stage of the sales pipeline and funnel. To be successful with social selling, sales teams must take the time to intentionally and continuously engage with their prospects and buyers.

Considering that nearly half of the world's population is active on social media, social selling tactics are more important than ever. Social selling is essential to sales leaders who want to present their offerings better. It also allows them to build trusting relationships, increase their social credibility, and ultimately achieve their sales goals.

Using various social selling tools such as LinkedIn Sales Navigator, effective sales teams can have access to key decision makers, build meaningful social interactions, and present your brand as a trusted source for solving potential problems.

NextPilots has proven itself in business-to-business sales by creating awareness, building connections, and making meaningful appointments. The company offers different types of services that provide you with optimal pipeline management: data collection, expanding your network, and converting them into opportunities.

5. Use social proof to influence customer decisions

Adding reviews from your loyal clients can encourage would-be customers to interact with your company or choose you over your competitor. When selling online, people often turn to others who had experiences with the products for advice. These types of testimonials do not only lead to higher profits for businesses but also build credibility for the company.

In addition, **social proof helps companies build strong relationships** with their customers and generate more revenue than

they do with non-engaged customers. Therefore, don't forget to include the **"What our customers say"** section on your website, as well as to communicate it through social media.

Did you know that
68% of online shoppers are more likely to buy if the brand has positive reviews?

➤ 6. Ensure an effective follow-up procedure

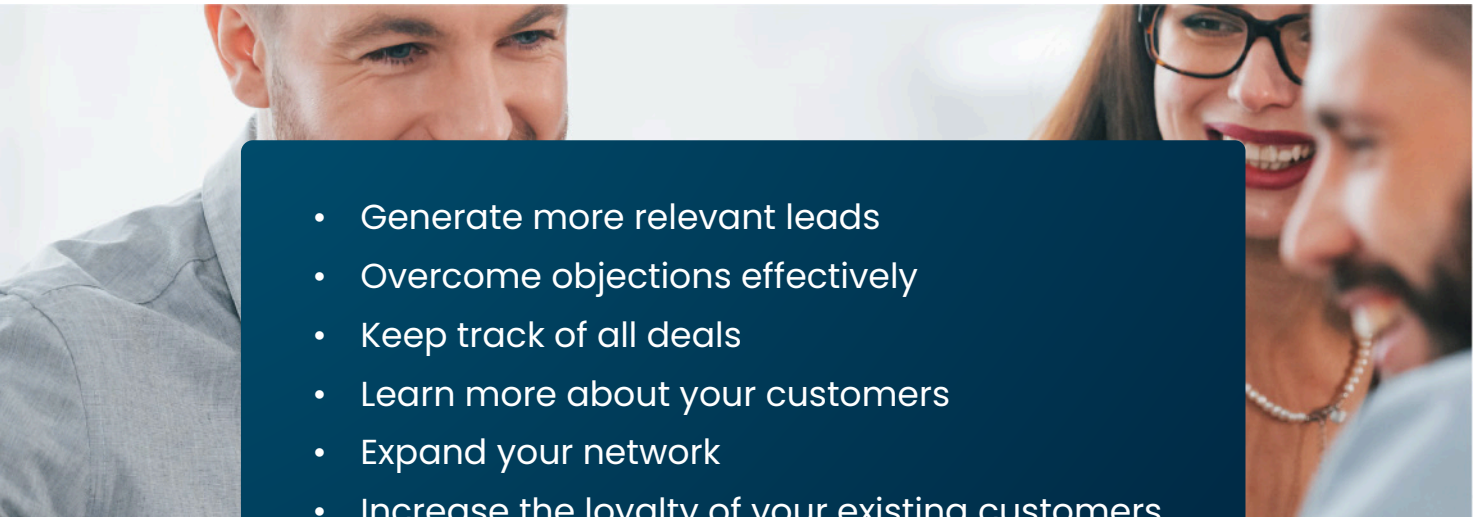
Where does the customer's journey end? When they finally buy your product or service? Afraid not!

Many businesses make the mistake of only thinking about getting the customer to buy the first time, not how to retain them. To increase online sales, improve customer retention, and get them to recommend your product to others, you should implement a thoughtful and useful follow-up process.

When someone places an order or buys your product, you should make sure they receive customer service information and links to relevant products that might interest them. Customers should be encouraged to leave reviews and feedback about their experience and encouraged to contact a real person with questions about their order. Maybe even be available to answer questions from other users who are considering a purchase.

➤ 7. Hire a sales agency

In today's online-driven world, your sales team plays a fundamental role in growing your business. When you hire a sales agency or build a sales team that works with the marketing department, you have the opportunity to:

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- Generate more relevant leads
 - Overcome objections effectively
 - Keep track of all deals
 - Learn more about your customers
 - Expand your network
 - Increase the loyalty of your existing customers
 - Increase revenue per customer
 - Reduce acquisition costs per customer

5 Promising Sales Trends for 2023

Since 2022 lasted about 15 minutes, it's already time to start preparing for 2023. Sales is a branch of business that has the biggest impact on revenue, so being ready to take on all the new trends should be a top priority.

We made a list of our top five sales trends that we will be on the lookout for and think you should too.

1. Value-based selling

The main principle of value-based selling is **putting the customer first** and showing them what they're getting from the deal. This trend is growing in popularity as the general public's response to the slew of ads that are being pelted at them from all corners. Everyone's grown tired of those strategies and people are now spending more time researching brands and companies rather than placing their trust in whatever's written in the ad.

Sales meetings will be oriented more **towards the prospect**. So, start by listening to them, asking questions, and, most importantly – being human. Don't shy away from making small talk and friendly banter before jumping into the pitch.

When you get to the point where you can do your pitch, make sure to point out how your product benefits them, whether they are saving time and money or getting a better deal than elsewhere. Don't try to sound like your product is the best in the world, but point out **how it can help them solve an issue**.

You could, for example, start by asking them open-ended and personalized questions about their company, such as How did you get the idea? or What was the biggest challenge you've faced so far? And once you've steered the conversation toward their pain points, you can then **offer them your solution**. The trick is to let it come naturally, just like it would when you're talking to a friend.

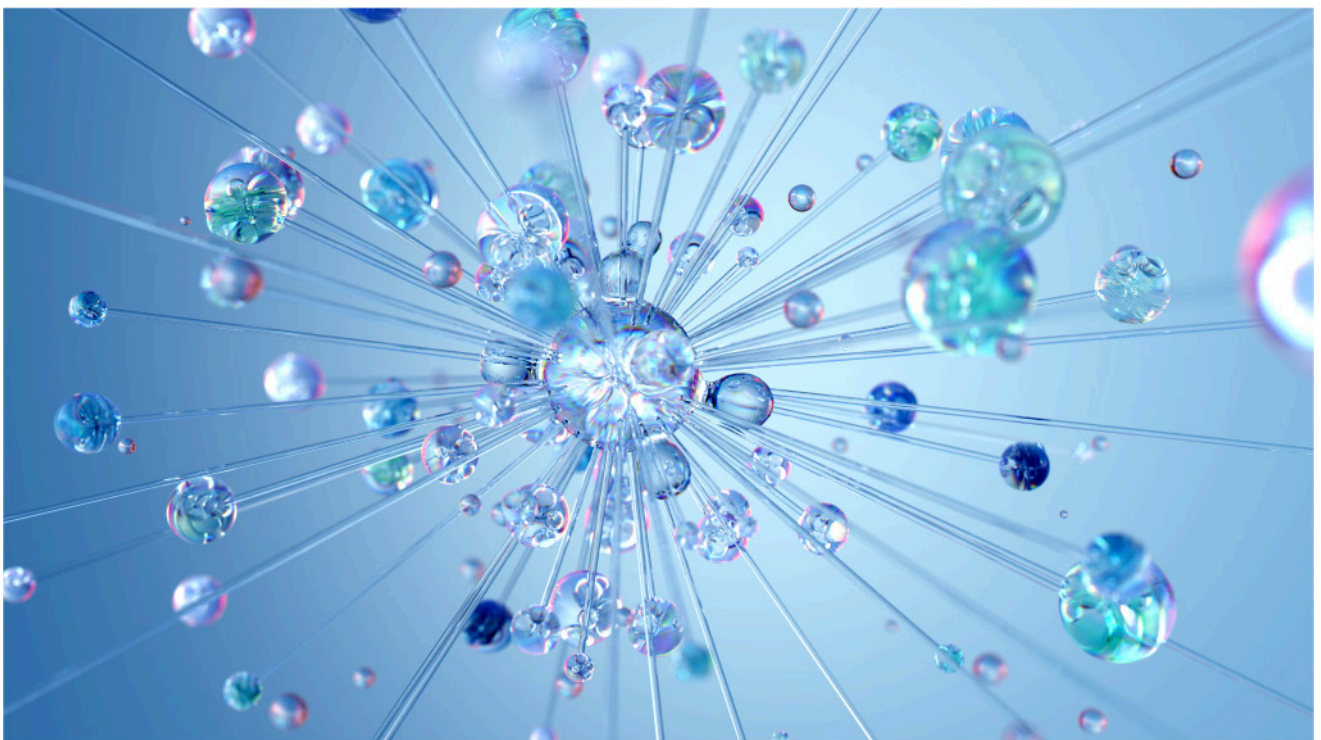
2. Using Artificial Intelligence in sales

AI isn't as new and revolutionary as it used to be, and more and more businesses are using it to their advantage in their sales efforts. Our question is: what are you waiting for? If you already have it integrated, great! If not, here are some practical applications that will help you boost your success:

Chatbots: Tired of answering inquiry mails? Can't keep up with the millions of appointments prospects are setting? Get a robot to do it for you! Chatbots are automated pop-ups that let website visitors talk to a virtual front desk, whilst notifying you.

Data gathering: Your computer can gather all the necessary information on potential prospects and present it to you comprehensively. This includes things like how much time they spend on your website on average, what they searched for, or if they're a returning customer. This allows you to learn about them and utilize the information to boost sales.

Boost productivity: By letting an AI take on menial tasks, you and your sales team can focus on more important things (like an extended coffee break).



3. Selling to Gen Z buyers

With the oldest members of Gen Z being 25 years old, it's high time you take them into consideration when advertising and selling. In fact, their spending power has been estimated at **around \$360 billion** and will only grow with more and more of them entering the workforce each year.

But how can you adjust your approach to fit a generation as specific as this one? The first thing you need to do is **include social media** and YouTube content in your strategies. With the kids 'always being on those darn phones', it's only logical that that's the best way to reach them.

However, this generation is also showing a growing interest in social issues. So, it would be smart **to point out all the ways your company is positively impacting the world** – that sells more than trying to look cool. For example, your strategy can include concrete data regarding your social responsibility. How much of the plastic in the product is recycled? How are you offsetting your carbon footprint? Try to slip things like that into the pitch – not only are you boosting the company's reputation but also showing that you personally care about the issues as well. And as you already know, people buy from people they agree with.

4. Customer Relationship Management

We already talked about how being human and friendly drives more sales than other outdated methods. Building and maintaining a relationship with your customers is crucial to making them feel heard and important. Therefore, they are more likely to go into business with you.

CRM software solutions are available to all looking to simplify the process. They allow you to track all interactions, safely store data, and facilitate communications. Before a meeting, you can pull up an overview of every bit of information you have on the specific prospect and **show them you listen closely and remember details about them**. Showing genuine interest is key and doesn't have to be difficult. Also, having reminders to do follow-ups will ensure you don't slip up and make the prospect feel like you've forgotten about them.

5. Outsourcing sales

Teams of sales professionals that fit your business needs may not be readily available in your area – so look elsewhere rather than settling for less.

With remote work being the new normal, everyone's used to it and has all the tools necessary for it to operate smoothly. External teams usually handle multiple clients simultaneously, so they're full of experience and new ideas. On top of that, you get to save money on the hiring process, office space, and equipment!



With 2023 approaching, it's time to start thinking about **how the new year will affect your business**. As a responsible business owner, you're looking to stay ahead of the curve and on top of all the emerging trends, such as value-based selling, AI, catering to Gen Z, CRM solutions, and outsourcing teams. So, with all this being said you must be ready to take it to the next level. **Taking it to the next level is just what NextPilots specializes in.**

Closing Statement

If you've read all that and are still here – congratulations! You're at least three steps closer to achieving all your sales goals. Armed with all the fresh information and broadened knowledge, you're a bit readier to take on the challenges of running your very own company.

You probably have a lot to do, so we'll keep this segment brief. If you feel like you're not just yet at the stage of building a whole in-house sales team within the company, then you're ready to start with outsourcing. We've already told you all about NextPilots and the things they can do to help you up your game, so if that's what seems like the next logical step for you, we're waiting for the call!

A dark blue background featuring two large, light blue geometric shapes on the left and right sides. These shapes are composed of several overlapping triangles and trapezoids, creating a complex, abstract pattern. In the center of this background, the text "LET'S GO" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

LET'S GO