Inside Sales Organizational Strategy and Structure

In the second part of an ongoing series, BCG partnered with the American Association of Inside Sales Professionals to examine the role of inside sales teams in companies’ commercial organizations. We surveyed C-suite-level business leaders at Fortune 500 companies. The key insight? Inside sales is an untapped resource at many organizations, but leading sales functions are capitalizing on this resource—particularly at tech companies with more flexible ways of operating. Our survey yielded five key findings.

1. Companies are starting to give inside sales a larger role and more autonomy.

2. Inside sales teams are evolving beyond their traditional role. In addition to supporting the field sales force, they are gaining a stronger mandate to generate revenue independently. This is especially true of tech companies and those using a subscription-based business model.

3. The share of revenue attributable to the inside sales channel is expected to increase over the next three years, even as it decreases for field sales.

4. Rather than serving only small customers—as in the past—inside sales now plays a significant role in servicing companies’ biggest and most important accounts.

5. Most inside sales leaders believe that they could do more if they had the opportunity.