



EOS RESEARCH REPORT
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2027 Sales Outlook

What the data says about outbound calls,
discovery, demos, and the path to a real
buying decision



Executive Summary

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Start with an ordinary SDR day.

Bridge Group's 2025 study of 351 B2B companies found that the median SDR completed 112 activities a day: 44 phone calls, 41 emails, 19 LinkedIn activities, and 8 texts or other touches. Yet all of that visible activity produced only 4.1 quality conversations per day on average. That gap is one of the most useful ways to understand outbound sales. The working day may be filled with calls, emails, tasks, sequences, follow-ups, and CRM activity, but the scarce commercial event is still the moment when an actual buyer is present, listening, and willing to continue a conversation.

Gong's analysis of more than 300 million cold calls shows how sharply performance begins to separate even before the conversation develops. The average rep connected on 5.4% of dials, while top-quartile callers connected on 13.3%. Once a conversation began, the average rep converted 4.6% of those conversations into meetings, compared with 16.7% for the top quartile. These advantages compound. Gong's own illustration shows roughly 2 meetings from 800 monthly dials for the average rep versus 18 for a top-quartile rep. A weak outbound result can therefore come from two very different places: too few genuine opportunities to speak with buyers, or poor conversion once those opportunities appear.

The reach problem extends beyond rep skill. Cognism reported a 13.3% answered rate across its 2025 SDR cold calls, almost identical to the 14.4% answered rate on its warmer AE calls. Orum's research across more than one billion dials shows why answer rates can vary so widely. Connection rates change with seniority, job function, number quality, prior pickup history, list composition, and dialing method. In one broad cut of its data, individual contributors averaged around 5.3%, managers 4.9%, VPs 3.8%, and C-suite contacts about 4.0%, while selected functions and high-propensity numbers performed materially better. The salesperson's opportunity to sell is therefore shaped well before the opening line: by who is being called, how good the contact data is, and how intelligently the calling system is built.

Once somebody answers, the problem changes from reach to attention. Cognism's average SDR call lasted about 2 minutes. Orum reports that calls producing meetings lasted roughly 6 minutes, while calls that did not produce meetings were under a minute on average. Gong's earlier analysis of 90,380 connected outbound calls found successful calls averaging 5 minutes 50 seconds, compared with 3 minutes 14 seconds for unsuccessful calls. The common pattern is that strong cold calls keep earning time. The prospect continues because the conversation remains relevant enough to justify another minute.

The data also shows why sales stages should not share one universal conversation benchmark. Gong's cold-call work found successful calls at roughly 55% seller talk and 45% buyer talk, which suits a situation in which the seller must quickly create context and justify the interruption. Discovery behaves differently. Cognism's 2025 AE data showed an average seller talk share of 47.3%, with its strongest interactivity clustered around 45-55% seller talk. Product demos shift again. Gong's demo analysis found successful demos at 65% seller talk and 35% buyer talk, while unsuccessful demos were almost identical at 66% and 34%. The important difference was the

rhythm of the exchange: successful demos had 21% more speaker switches per minute. The buyer kept returning to the conversation.

Questions follow the same pattern. Cognism's AEs averaged 40.5 questions per hour, and question rate was positively correlated with interactivity. Gong's more recent analysis of 326,000 calls found that won calls contained about 15-16 questions, while lost calls contained around 20. Together, these findings point toward a more useful understanding of discovery. Questions help create interaction, but the purpose of the question is the information it produces. A strong discovery conversation gives the buyer enough room to explain the situation in a way that changes what the seller understands and does next.

Meeting data shows why the funnel should continue past the calendar invite. Cognism recorded 39,679 booked meetings and 34,336 held meetings in its 2025 dataset, reporting an average held rate of 85.94%. Growth Cab's field study of 1,380 B2B meetings found a lower overall took-place rate of 69.6%, but its most useful result was the effect of delay. Meetings scheduled within two days took place 85.4% of the time; when the meeting sat more than 30 days into the future, the rate fell to 58.5%. The distance between the initial conversation and the next meeting therefore carries information about the strength and durability of the buyer's commitment.

At the AE stage, current conversation data points toward balanced dialogue, meaningful buyer narratives, disciplined seller explanations, and clear progression. Cognism's 110 AEs averaged an 8.15/10 interactivity score, a longest AE monologue of 86.5 seconds, and a longest buyer segment of 95.3 seconds. Interactivity deteriorated sharply once seller monologues moved beyond roughly 90 seconds. Gong's demo research reaches a related conclusion: successful demos were not simply shorter or quieter. They contained more interaction, shorter uninterrupted stretches of seller speech, and more time devoted to what would happen next. Winning demos spent 12.7% more time on next steps.

The final stage extends beyond the conversation itself. Gong's analysis of 1.8 million new-business opportunities closed in 2024 found that 77% involved multiple buyer contacts, winning deals had twice as many buyer contacts as unsuccessful deals, and strategic enterprise opportunities averaged 17 contacts. Larger B2B decisions are collective. A good call or demo becomes commercially meaningful when it creates movement inside the account and brings the seller closer to the group that can actually make the decision.

Taken together, the data shows outbound selling as a sequence of connected stages. Activity creates opportunities to reach people. Reach creates opportunities to hold attention. Attention creates meetings. Meetings create opportunities to understand the buyer. Discovery creates the conditions for a relevant demo. A good demo creates a concrete next step. A serious opportunity begins to spread through the buying group. The useful benchmark changes at each stage because the job being performed changes with it.