

Artificial intelligence replacing the art of traditional selling

[Technology](#), [Artificial Intelligence](#)



Is selling a dying art? AI replacing the traditional selling.

What is it about Artificial Intelligence that is so appealing?

Why is that everyone keeps talking about it?

What does it mean and how is it different from Automation, Machine learning and Deep learning?

How will all the industries today, integrate and align themselves with it?

A few often pondered questions in the world today as we witness the advent of a new era that will soon change our lives. Artificial Intelligence or AI, are basically machines that can perform several tasks that map closely to the characteristics of a human being. Functions such as planning, recognizing images and objects, understanding languages, problem solving and critical thinking are a few examples of it. Whereas, Machine learning refers to a subset of AI. It is the way the machines are trained to perform the above mentioned tasks with set of algorithms and yet allowing the algorithm to take new form every time and in accordance to the need. Under the topic of achieving machine learning, one of the ways is Deep Learning. Deep learning tries to mimic the working of an actual human brain with the help of algorithms termed as “ Artificial Neural Networks”. These networks learn specific functions and are divided into several complex layers. Since there are multiple layers, a “ depth” is created. Automation in reference means a set of pre-set rules written for automatic control.

The businesses around the world are in preparation for this Ex Machina and are gearing up to get their systems revolutionized. One such industry that leads and is often tensed by this new set of innovation and game change is the sales industry and the sales force. The big question asked today is will AI completely replace the art of traditional selling? Not really. So the right question to be asked is Which parts of traditional selling will be bidding adieu and will be replaced with the better counterparts? The answer to this is the jobs or tasks which are mundane and redundant in nature and the ones which require intensive human intervention. To get into the depth of this very point, let us take a deeper look into a daily tasks of a salesperson.

As it can be clearly inferred, the amount of time being spent on actual revenue making activities is lesser than what it needs to be. The same results are also concluded by an article published on the Forbes website stating that sales rep spend less than 36 percent of their time in actual selling. Realization has hit the industry hard and corrective measures are being constantly taken with the help of AI. Few companies have already started implementing AI for their marketing and sales department and as a result sales margin and sales pipeline has improved drastically. Subtract the time that a Sales person has to collect and research leads on, plan the conversation and the anxiety before placing the call and imagine the reincarnation of sales calls when all the data is planned and presented before their eyes which is accurate up to the last minute transaction done by the customer. Reimagine the kind of strong customer relationships can be built over these calls. Selling when combined with Artificial intelligence would

only mean individuals with supercharged abilities to hyperpersonalise (undivided attention only given to closing the deals and customer trust building).

Recently, Gong. io a startup under leadership of CEO Amit Bendov, received a \$6 million series A funding. Gong. io is a cloud-based artificial intelligence software that helps to improve performance and provide transparency to sales reps and helps them to close deals in a better way. It analyses all the calls, goes over millions of seconds of call details and identifies the topic of each conversation and hence directs the sales reps to improve their playbook and sales pitch. The conversation patterns make a difference not only for the employees by being time efficient but for customers as well, as it leads to a more personalized experience and selling cannot happen without the human touch. Gong can be applied to various industries and can transform call centers, job interviews, customer support, recruitment and of course marketing. As Amit Bendov rightly said, “ It is a massive market opportunity”. A lot of other tools are coming up for example Wordsmith, Quill and Oracle sales cloud. The web space for ecommerce kind of selling has already found a new roof, the Ad Placement strategies are being directly exchanged debarring human intervention completely. Alexa, Siri and Cortana are prime examples of AI selling itself to the customers and helping them achieve an easier lifestyle. Chat bots are now integral part of any website.

If these reasons aren't convincing enough, let us take a look at Frey's and Osborne's scientific analysis about the probability that which traditional sales occupations will be replaced in the upcoming years. ³ This means individuals

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would get better opportunities to portray their skills at a higher level. They get better at their jobs and complement the technology they work with. Artificial intelligence would reinvent selling as a profession in contrast to the questions being raised today. The salesforce would eliminate their top challenges of manual data entry and sales report prediction as part a of their day-to-day activities and several industries would want to be at par with this. Let industry unlearn, learn and relearn.

References:

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