

SALESPERSON NETWORKING BEHAVIORS AND SALES PROSPECTING OUTCOMES:
ESSAYS ON THE ROLES OF MOTIVATION AND COMMUNICATIONS-MIX
SYNERGIES

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ABSTRACT

Scholars and practitioners alike recognize the importance of the front end of the sales funnel – identifying and qualifying leads for new business – in setting the stage for acquiring and retaining customers. Salespeople have an important role to play in lead generation and qualification by prospecting for new customers, but academic research on prospecting is limited and mostly out-of-date. Some scholars have suggested that sales networking has an important role to play in prospecting. I conceptualize *frontline networking behaviors* as social actions taken by salespeople across the organizational boundary. Through two independent essays, this dissertation investigates the role of frontline networking behaviors in driving sales prospecting outcomes. Using data from a large automobile insurance sales force, I find that the effects of frontline networking behaviors on prospecting outcomes are contingent on both the salesperson's motivation to network and the advertising received by the salesperson's prospects. Based on these findings, I develop managerially actionable implications for sales training and advertising mix allocations.