

How Slack helps close deals in a tough economy



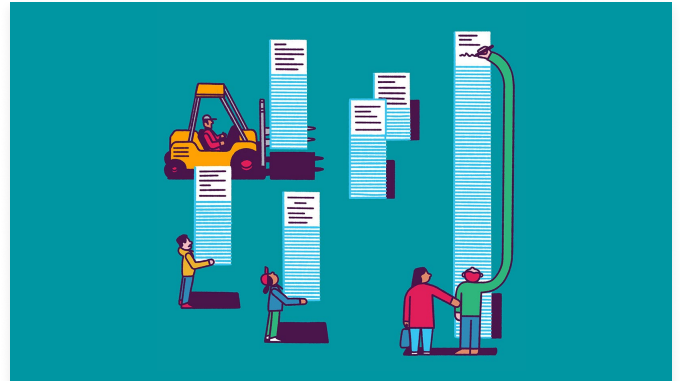
Learn how our enterprise sales reps close deals faster with Slack

In our current economy, it's hard to close an enterprise deal. Not only are companies more tentative about making purchases, they want bigger discounts, require more approvals and expect top-notch service. All of this is leading to **longer sales cycles** across the IT industry.

"Customers are slowing down their cycles and taking a bigger microscope to every purchase," says **Jack Gibbs**, an account executive for large enterprise customers at Slack. "There's more scrutiny behind every investment, more people weighing in on smaller line items. Ultimately, there are more buyers involved in making a purchase decision."

Meanwhile, as purse strings tighten, sales teams have less budget for the type of relationship-building activities traditionally used to help close deals.

It's a buyer's market, and sellers need to pivot. To help sales teams, we gathered best practices from some of our top enterprise sales reps for closing deals and nurturing customer relationships in a challenging market.



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Having a text relationship with a customer used to be the gold standard in sales. Powerful technology like Slack Connect has elevated this standard to the next level.



Reggie Marable
Head of Sales, Communications, Media and Technology, Slack

ACT LIKE A PARTNER, NOT A SALESPERSON

No one likes being sold to. And as every good salesperson knows, before any pitching happens it's important to earn a prospect's trust by providing value. Often this requires asking insightful questions or sharing relevant resources, whether it's best practices or quick connections to internal subject matter experts.

For our sales teams, one of the most effective ways to develop this rapport is by communicating with customers and prospects in a **Slack Connect channel**. Slack Connect removes the formality of email and the friction of text by gathering the most relevant people and data in a single channel.

Here's how it works: First, a sales rep invites a prospect or customer to a Slack Connect channel. Once the invite is accepted and admin approved, both sides can start exchanging messages, files and **clips**, or jump into a **huddle** for a quick real-time chat, all from within the channel.

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When you use Slack Connect to communicate with prospects, you've built a deeper relationship that makes you more of a partner or peer.



Jack Gibbs
Account Executive for Large Enterprises, Slack

“When you use Slack Connect to communicate with prospects, you’ve built a deeper relationship that makes you more of a partner or peer—an extended member of their team,” Gibbs says. “You’re having a dialogue. You’re trying to problem solve together. You’re not sitting around waiting for an email to give you permission to suggest something.”

For example, if the customer asks about a super technical security issue, Gibbs can loop in a security engineer to join the conversation with a quick @mention. When it’s time to close a deal, he’ll add necessary stakeholders to the channel. All along the way, people can come in and out of the channel to see the entire history of the business relationship by scrolling back through previous discussions and decisions.

“There are so many people and teams on both sides involved in closing an enterprise deal. Slack Connect makes this cross-functional work, the various workstreams, and the herding of cats much easier and faster,” Gibbs says.

What might’ve taken days or weeks to achieve through emails and scheduled meetings can now be done within a day. In fact, our customers see a 60% faster¹ response time with their customers through Slack Connect.

Get more ROI from Slack by using our Sales Cloud and Slack solution

Salesforce **Sales Cloud** has long been used as the quintessential CRM software for years. Powered by Salesforce Customer 360 and available early next year, our **Sales Cloud and Slack solution** will bring together critical insights and scalable automation with the people who can act on them.

The new solution will empower teams to add to their company’s bottom line by:

- Driving sales productivity with automated workflows and alerts, as well as invaluable best practices
- Eliminating data, process and communication silos to accelerate sales deals
- Engaging team members to work together quickly and easily across the organization to move business forward

USE EMOJI TO SHOW SOME PERSONALITY

Traditional sales teams often shy away from **emoji** with their customers. At Slack, we use them profusely.

“During the close process, we have to touch base with the customer a lot,” says **Elin Hollis**, a senior account executive for large enterprises at Slack. “People are much more responsive through Slack because it’s less formal and more conversational. Emoji add emotional nuance and help lower the stakes to these messages.”

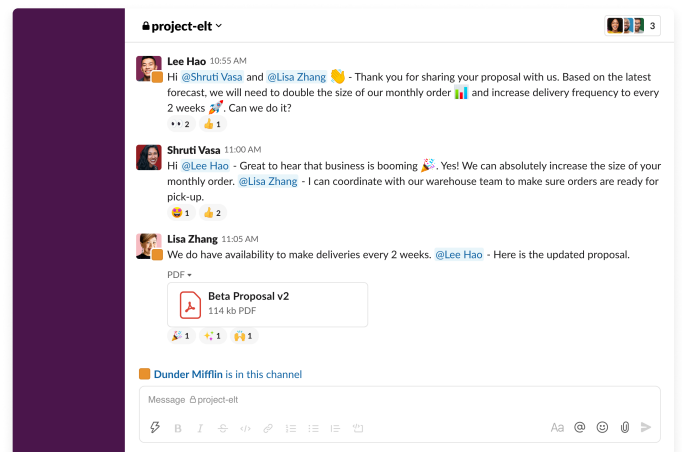
For example, instead of sending your prospect the umpteenth “just checking in” email (you know the one), reps can type out a friendly 🙌 emoji and a gentle nudge.

“Your customer wants to get a deal done, but they also have other work to do. They’re not as motivated as you are to go through all the hoops to finalize all the steps of a partnership,” Hollis says. “Messaging in Slack is more personalized and a lighter touch than email. With a 🙌 emoji and quick message, you can politely but effectively remind them in Slack to check in with procurement or legal.”

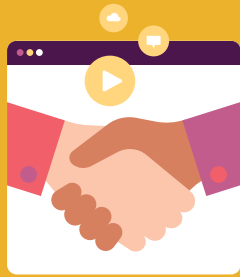
Our sales team also uses emoji reactions to accelerate decision-making in channels. For instance, reps use ✅ to indicate when a task or issue has been resolved, and 🙋 to indicate that they’re looking at something. This removes some of the mental load from an otherwise high-stakes process.

Hollis also delights her customers with **custom emoji**, featuring their headshot with an animated background.

“We have a tradition at Slack where if you close a deal or do something really special, we make you a custom emoji with your picture and label it a ‘wow’ emoji. We make them for our customers too. It is a unique and personalized way to say ‘thank you’ for their partnership.”



¹ Claims and figures based on specific teams using Slack Connect at their companies. Results may vary at your organization.



7 effective ways we run sales with Slack

In our current economy, it's essential to shorten the sales cycle. Learn how.

Close deals faster →

MAKE IT EASIER FOR APPROVERS TO SAY 'YES'

Like buying a house, enterprise sales contracts require numerous rounds of **approvals** before being presented to the buyer. Typically, contracts need to be approved by legal, finance, engineers and sales managers, who are likely juggling multiple deals from all their reports.

What often bogs down this convoluted approval process is each approver needs to find and absorb all the context associated with each deal. Typically, reps toggle between multiple applications to gather this information, and spend precious time repeating the same information to different people.

At Slack, our sales team partnered with our business technology team to create the approvals bot for deals that saves a significant amount of time as it automates parts of the approval process. Hollis calls Slack's custom bot "the MVP of closing deals." Slack's sales team saw 70% faster approval cycles as a result.

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Our custom approvals bot is the MVP of closing deals.



Elin Hollis
Senior Account Executive for Large Enterprises,
Slack

Here's how it works: When a rep is ready to send a new contract through the approval pipeline, they simply press "submit for Slack approval" in Salesforce. The approvals bot then automatically creates a virtual deal room in Slack,

pulling in account information from Salesforce with the necessary approvers. One by one, the bot notifies each person when it's their turn to review the terms of the contract. Approvers can review past decisions in channel, saving time and ensuring that everyone is on the same page.

ApprovalsBot - Deals APP 2:51 PM
@Sara is requesting approval for Acme Corp. - Plus - ELA - 2020-10-30

👍 Approvals Required:

👉 Proposed Structure:

Close Date:	2020-10-30
ACV (Churn):	\$10,000
Billings:	\$90,000
Total Contract Value (TCV)	\$180,000
Subscription Term:	24
Max Implied Discount:	10%
Payment Terms:	Net 45
Payment Frequency:	Standard

👉 Asks & Justification:

- 2 year renewal with discounts contingent upon "early" signature. Renewal due on 10/31 and they have agreed to sign by 10/9.
- Net 45 payment terms in line with prior year
- Publicity included

👉 Quote Lines:

Plus plan x 500 seats with implied discount **10%**

Time kills deals, as the saying goes. Automating approvals in Slack is just one of the many powerful ways sales teams can **build automations** on the Slack platform to dramatically reduce their time to close.

CLOSE ENTERPRISE DEALS WITH TEAM SELLING

Even in strong economic times, it takes a village to close an enterprise deal. During a downturn, that village needs to move much faster or risk losing a deal altogether. This requires swiftly creating alignment on both sides, and getting contracts through long approval chains.

With Slack as your digital HQ for sales, reps can close deals faster and differentiate customer relationships by acting more, well, human.