

## research brief

# using content to motivate a meeting

## summary

How many attempts do you need to motivate your prospects to take a meeting?

Some sales leaders are convinced that just a few will suffice. They believe that if someone's not interested in meeting immediately, there's no reason to waste time or effort.

But that thinking goes against popular industry data. Some sources state that you need at least six touches to win the opportunity.

So how many attempts is enough? What kind of content should you include in your cadences? And does the timing and order in which you send content affect your prospects' response?

Frank Pinder, Executive Vice President of Digital Transformation Services for Corporate Visions and B2B DecisionLabs, led this field trial study to learn the answers to these questions.

## key findings

- **Most meetings get booked later in the cadence.** While sellers might be tempted to give up after only a handful of emails and calls, exponentially more opportunities were created after six or more touches.
- **Send a video followed by an infographic.** When sellers sent a video first, followed by an infographic, they created significantly more opportunities.
- **Short content tends to perform better.** Overall, the shorter versions of the content performed better than the long versions in terms of engagement and opportunities.
- **Sales math doesn't always add up.** The losing test conditions led to more initial activity, but significantly fewer opportunities.

## about the study

This field trial was sent to nearly 1600 prospects as a “get a meeting” campaign to incentivize the recipients to take a meeting with a salesperson.

The cadence was partially automated and supported by a team of sales development representatives (SDRs). Neither the SDRs nor the prospects knew that the interactions were part of a controlled field trial.

## the cadence

Researchers used one cadence for the test, which included the exact same number and types of messages for every test condition. The messages throughout the cadence were written to get people interested in virtual selling training and to take a meeting with a sales rep.

### Get a meeting cadence

Step	Day	Step type
1	1	LinkedIn research
2	1	LinkedIn: Connection with note
3	3	Email #1
4	3	Call with voicemail
5	5	Call without voicemail
6	7	Email #2: First content asset
7	10	Call without voicemail
8	11	Call without voicemail
9	14	LinkedIn: Profile view
10	16	LinkedIn: Message or InMail
11	20	Email #3: Second content asset
12	25	Call without voicemail
13	30	Call with voicemail
14	31	Email #4

This cadence was designed to encourage a prospect to interact with the content assets and schedule a meeting with a salesperson.

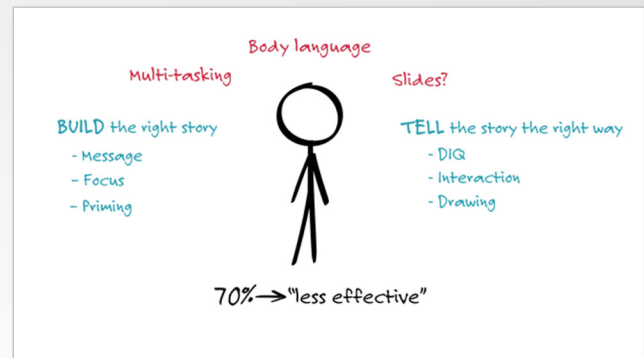
## the content

In steps six and 11 of the cadence, prospects received emails with one of four combinations of content assets.

- **The long video** lasted two minutes 40 seconds and contained more detailed information about the challenges of virtual selling and techniques to overcome those challenges.
- **The short video** lasted one minute 20 seconds and contained the same general information as the long video but less detail about each talking point.



Long video



Short video

- **The long infographic** contained 344 words and included the same information as the long video.
- **The short infographic** contained 256 words, including the same general information but less detail to describe each point.



Long infographic



Short infographic

## the test conditions

The messages in each step of the cadence were nearly identical. The only differences were the content assets offered via email in steps six and 11.

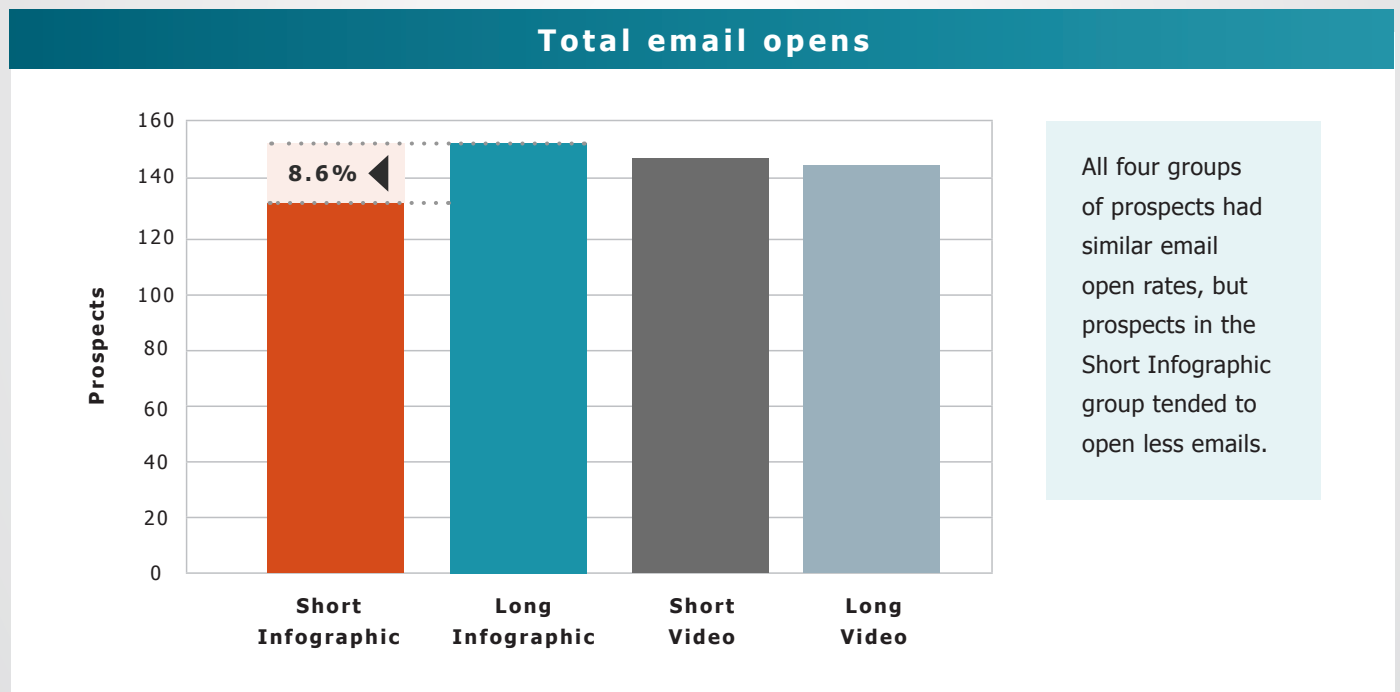
- The **Short Infographic** group received the short infographic first, then the short video.
- The **Long Infographic** group received the long infographic first, then the long video.
- The **Short Video** group received the short video first, then the short infographic.
- The **Long Video** group received the long video first, then the long infographic.

The videos were linked in the emails. The infographics were sent as PDF file attachments.

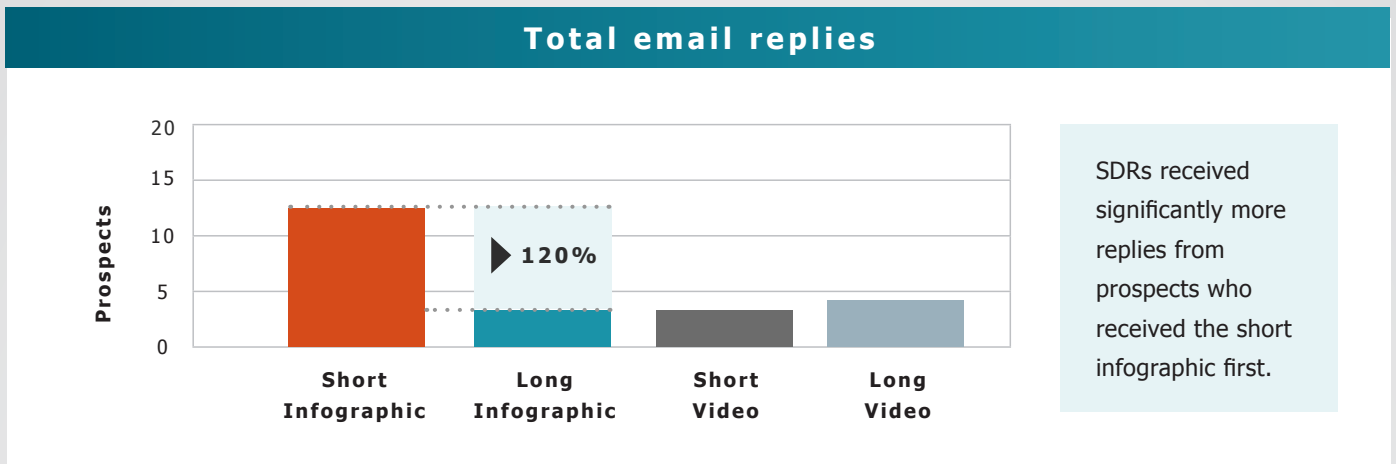
## the results

### engagement

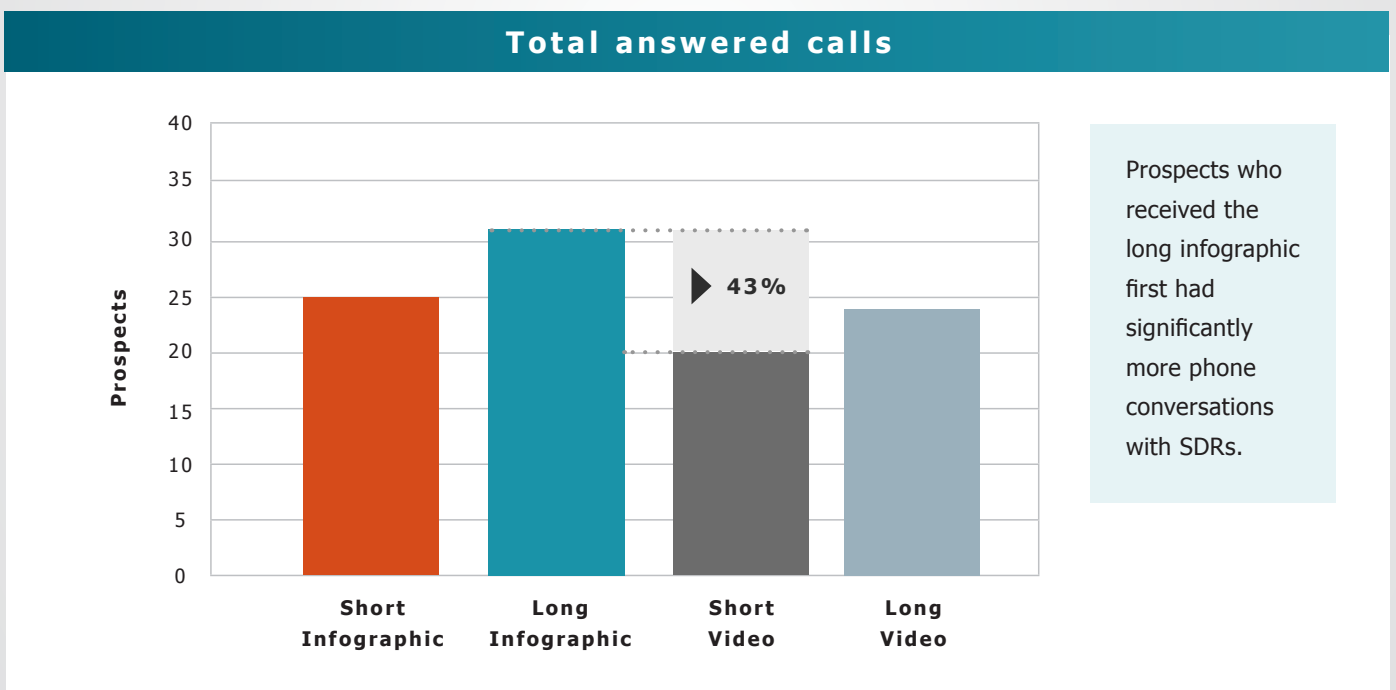
Email open rates were similar across all four groups, but response rates show a clear winner.



Even though the prospects who received the short infographic first opened fewer emails, their response rates were significantly higher.



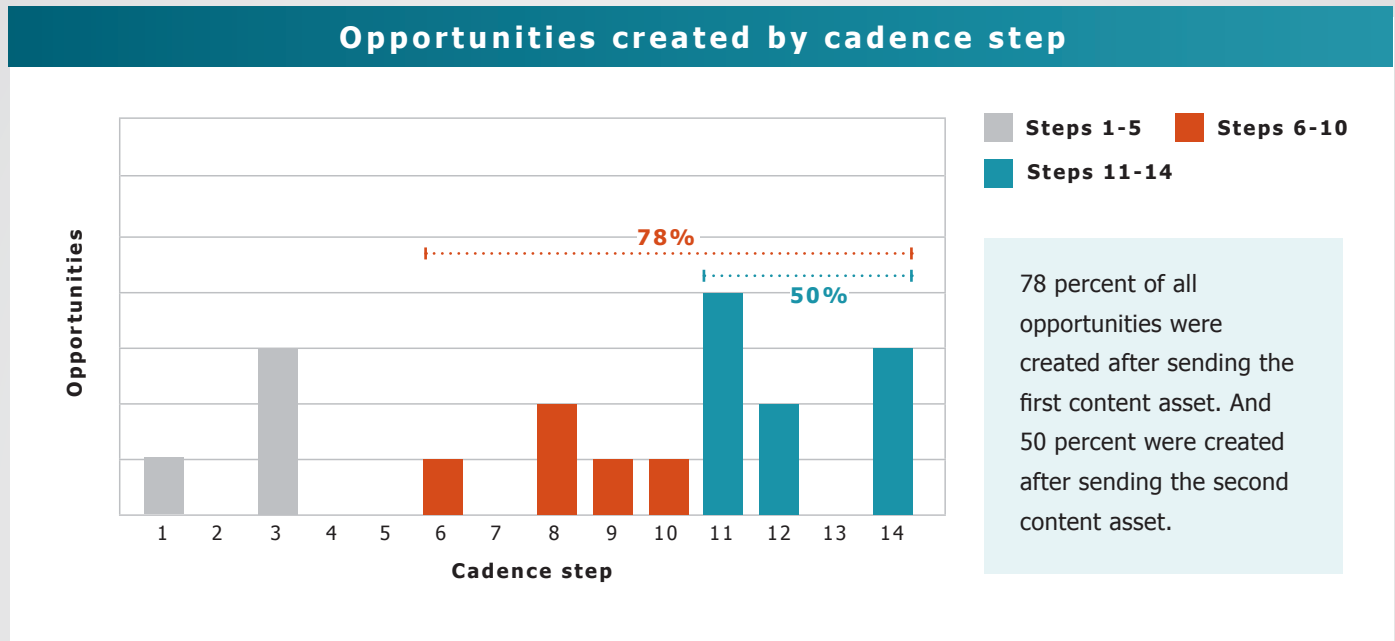
In addition to email engagement results, researchers noted that the prospects who received the long infographic first answered more calls than the other groups.



In general, the groups who received the infographic first appeared to be more engaged with the SDRs. Looking at this activity alone, you might think the infographic-first approach would lead to more meetings. But that wasn't the case.

## opportunities

One of the biggest findings from this field trial was that **3.5x more opportunities were created after the sixth touch**. Out of 18 total opportunities, 14 of them (78 percent) were created after step six, and nine of them (50 percent) were created after the step 11.



This data clearly shows that sellers can't give up after only a handful of emails and phone calls. Longer cadences, with more touches that include supporting content in later steps, perform exponentially better.

## which cadence led to the most opportunities?

Eighty three percent of all opportunities were created when a video was sent first. And the shorter versions of the content assets led to significantly more opportunities.

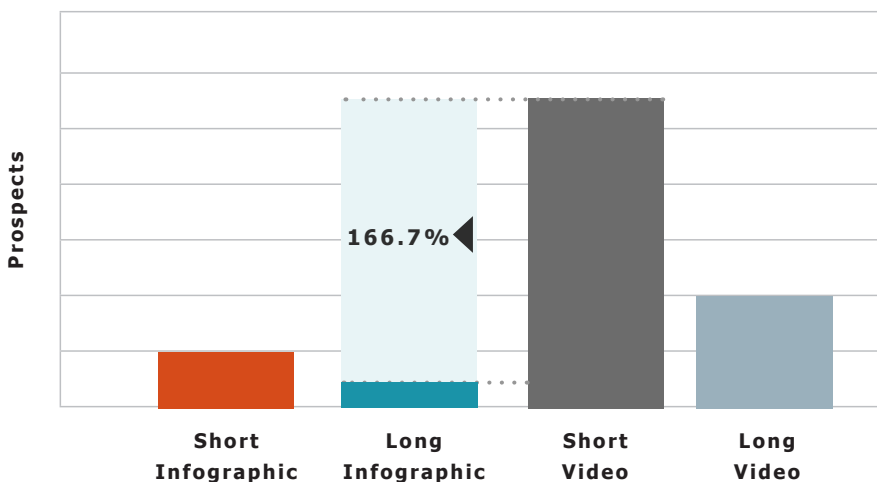
### Opportunities created

Step	Short Infographic	Long Infographic	Short Video	Long Video
1			5%	
2				
3	5%		12%	
4				
5				
6			5%	
7				
8		5%		5%
9				5%
10			5%	
11			22%	
12			15%	
13				
14	5%			11%

Eighty-three percent of all opportunities were created when a video was sent first.

Out of 18 total meetings, 11 of them (61 percent) resulted from prospects who received the short video first, followed by the short infographic.

### Opportunities created by group



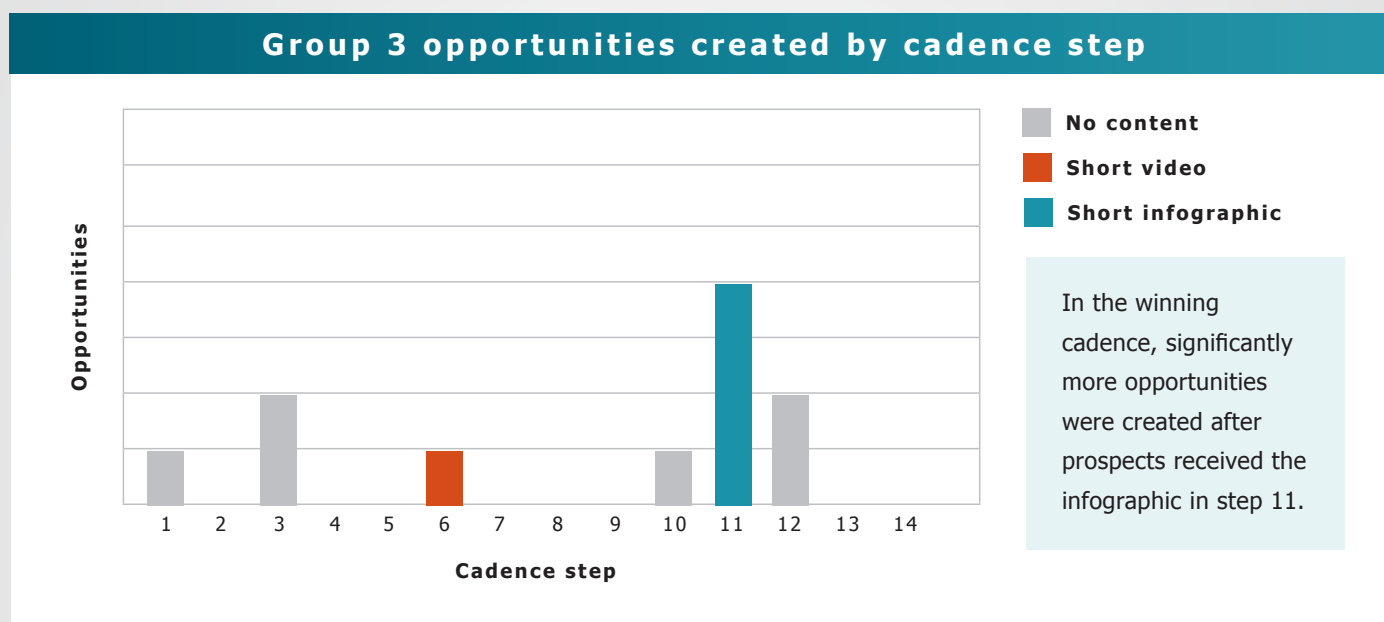
The Short Video group won significantly more opportunities than other groups.



Even though the Short Video group got fewer responses and fewer answered calls than any other test condition, those conversations led to significantly more opportunities.

These results go against the typical “sales math” that most organizations use. Your sellers can generate a lot of opens, clicks, and initial engagement, but more activity does not necessarily translate to more opportunities.

Notice, too, how each step in the winning cadence contributed to opportunities. The short video alone didn’t lead to a surge of interest. In fact, **six of the 11 opportunities were created after prospects received the infographic in step 11.**



What’s more, the winning Short Video group only received three total email replies. Meaning, most of the meetings resulted from conversations on LinkedIn and over the phone.

Taken together, this data further underscores the importance of a multi-channel approach, contacting prospects more often over an extended period of time, and sending shorter content in a specific order later in the cadence.



## conclusions

There's no shortage of content to include in your sales cadences. You can use any number of assets, including infographics, e-books, videos, and more.

The length of the content matters. But this field trial shows that the timing is essential. **Sending video and static content assets in a specific order later in the cadence can significantly impact your opportunity pipeline.**

It's also important to use a persistent, multi-channel approach when prospecting. You can deliver your content to your prospect's inbox, but it's just one of the hundreds of other emails they receive. To win their attention and interest, **you can't stop after only a few touches—most opportunities were created after six touches.**

There's no single step or channel that makes a cadence successful. The success lies in the precise choreography, the content you include, and the prescriptive and persistent touches on multiple platforms over time. Even with the same cadence, following identical steps, the content you choose to send (and when you send it) matters more than ever.

## lead researcher



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Frank Pinder is the Executive Vice President of Digital Transformation Services for Corporate Visions and B2B DecisionLabs. He has created a field testing methodology and framework that have improved inside sales teams' performance around the globe. Frank has extensive experience working with small and large organizations alike to provide top-notch testing environments directly linked to business growth and overall success.

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