

CHAPTER

1

WHAT IS SOAR?

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SOAR is a contact formula created by Dialexis for reaching decision makers and high influencers on the telephone. SOAR stands for *Surge of Accelerating Revenue*. The SOAR program supports salespeople from any industry to make *fewer* net new business development dials while making a *higher* percentage of contacts and appointments.

SOAR evolved from extensive field research conducted by David and Marhnelle Hibbard, the Dialexis sales team, and the Dialexis training field team. A period of over 15 years was devoted to the development of the SOAR strategy. Making contact with decision makers and high influencers is a formidable task, one that required a multitude of approaches to find a successful solution. We were determined to develop a formula that would yield a contact rate that would revolutionize the way salespeople make contact over the phone.

As we tested various approaches over the years, one thing we focused on consistently was finding a solution that was ethical and instructional and that anyone could execute. Once we believed we had the formula, we tested the approach throughout the United States, Canada, central and eastern Europe. We received rave reviews from corporate leaders, sales managers, and salespeople alike. Organizations that experienced SOAR expressed amazement not only at how well the techniques worked, but were equally impressed at the measured ROI (Return on Investment) numbers that SOAR drove over such a short period. Through SOAR, senior sales professionals and rookies alike began to experience a new way of prospecting for net new business. Organizations implementing SOAR penetrated a multitude of blockades, ultimately making contact with up to 90 percent of every net dial. When combined with accountability, a measurable ROI in the range of 200 to 2,000 percent was achieved in as little as 12 weeks from program inception.

Today, organizations throughout the world, such as Vistage, CoStar, Oracle, Cisco, AT&T, AOL, Dell, Angels baseball, Morgan Stanley, Yahoo! and hundreds of smaller entrepreneurial firms have introduced SOAR to their sales force and have experienced the new way executive contact can be made using the telephone.

How SOAR Differentiates

Other sales training philosophies focus on *what to do once you get in*. We realized that the prevailing problem facing salespeople was *how to get in*. Salespeople needed a way to get past blockades and into the “exclusive club” of decision makers without making hundreds of calls. Various successful selling programs like Spin Selling, Sandler Selling, PSS, Solution Selling, and Strategic Selling are all top-notch, but they focus on what to do once a salesperson gets in. We decided that if we could solve the problem of *how to get in* that we could make a salesperson’s life easier, provide a better solution for driving net new business, and, at the same time, reduce attrition for corporations because salespeople would now have a method for making contact.

Here are the key advantages that SOAR provides:

- **Contact:** SOAR provides a quantifiable contact rate with decision makers and high influencers on up to 90 percent on every net dial to a new prospect. Again, other vendors focus on what to do once the salesperson gets in . . . SOAR is all about *how to get in*. The 90 percent contact rate statistic is the current number, and it is updated quarterly with actual numbers from live trainings.
- **ROI:** The program is measurable. Organizations have experienced a 200-2,000 percent ROI 12 weeks from program completion (the vast range from 200-2,000 percent is due to an organization’s or individual’s value statement, which we will address later.) Simply stated, when a client makes an investment with SOAR and executes on that investment, they can expect to receive from 200-2,000 percent ROI in 12 weeks!
- **Accountability:** With SOAR, managers and salespeople are accountable for results during the 12-week measurement period. Dialexis interfaces with the leaders involved in the program consistently on a schedule during this timeframe. Essentially, the coaching segment of SOAR allows Dialexis to stay with the client for the 12-week tracking period to ensure the program consistently demonstrates revenue surge and ROI.
- **Tactics and Mindset:** Dialexis understands that tactics matter, but also realizes the importance of mindset. As a result, Dialexis has

included a mindset component in all its training programs. It's not simply *how to do a something* that makes the difference, but *why*. The mindset segment sets up the individual to be open to a new way of approaching driving net new business using the SOAR formula.

- **Proof of Concept:** Dialexis teaches how to reach decision makers live on the telephone (or on the streets, which is an entirely different approach), then has the sales group make live calls in the class demonstrating they can execute the SOAR formula. In most instances, every single attendee dials live in front of the class with the instructor present and coaching. With Dialexis, once the instructor leaves, it is assured that the training works and attendees can execute what they learned.
- **Train the Trainer:** For the Fortune 500 companies or organizations with substantial number of salespeople, Dialexis has developed a train the trainer deliverable. Any corporate nominated individual wishing to be certified in the SOAR methodology can do so. This subsequently reduces the overall financial investment for the client and speeds up the delivery of the information to the field.
- **Reputation:** As we mentioned earlier, SOAR has demonstrated its effectiveness with a multitude of Fortune 500 organizations as well as many mid-size to smaller entrepreneurial firms.

ROI and Measurement

Let's take a look at one powerful example of SOAR's efficacy. Dialexis was retained by a Fortune 500 company in 2007 with a strong brand to provide SOAR training to a team of salespeople who were primarily compensated on commission. The client requested a pilot program to evaluate its potential to drive top line revenue through net new business. The candidates selected for the training varied from rookie to mid-level to highly-experienced. If the SOAR program was a success, the client would be to roll out the program throughout the United States. In pre-program discussions, the client agreed that ROI was critical in order to demonstrate to upper management that the investment in time and money was a wise one. The training was completed in three days in Southern California with key managers in attendance

and measured over a post 12-week period, as is standard with SOAR. All results were tracked and strictly validated by the client, while Dialexis coached and monitored.

Participants in the pilot program were measuring their SOAR dials using a contact management system maintained by the client. Through this system, they were able to validate that all SOAR dials (new business development calls) were tracked and authentic. The objective was to reach decision makers and C-level high influencers over the 12-week period. All metric results were turned over to the local sales managers and subsequently provided to Dialexis for statistical evaluation. Over the period of 12 weeks, all managers and the Dialexis team were on coaching/analysis calls, discussing results.

The final verified tabulated metrics are shown in the following overview. (See definition of key terms in the chart below). These are *real results*. Ask yourself, if you were to drive net new business like the examples in this study, where would your organization (and personal income) be? Where would you rank with your peers? Where would you be spending the next holiday vacation with your family? You may want to reread these metrics and remind yourself again that salespeople just like you created the results shown.

SOAR world stats	Contact												20% 30%	Projected revenue	Closed revenue	% Closed to proj. rev.
	100	40%	60%	46%	44%				88%							
Sales team	Dial goal	Gross dials	N/A	Net dials	DM	HI	Total	Contact rate %	% of goal	Total appt.	Appt. %					
Team 1	5208	4428	2408	2020	716	1030	1746	86%	85%	289	14%	\$875,000	\$346,000	39.5%		
Team 2	4678	3543	1695	1848	524	786	1310	71%	76%	228	12%	\$705,000	\$205,000	29.1%		
Total	9886	7971	4103	3868	1240	1816	3056	79%	81%	517	13%	\$1,580,000	\$551,000	34.9%		

Final 12 week gross ROI = 1867.86%
Final 12 week net ROI = 589.29%

Definitions

- **Dials:** Reflects the number of *gross* dials made in the program
- **N/A:** Reflects the non-applicable calls (such as wrong numbers, fax lines, etc.)
- **NET:** Reflects N/A's less dials or *net* dials
- **DM:** Reflects the % of decision maker contacts (against net dials)
- **HI:** Reflects the % of high influencer C-level contacts (against net dials)
- **Appt:** Reflects the % of appointments against net dials

Figure 1-1 Case Study: Fortune 500 Company Final 12-Week SOAR Total Results Net New Calls

Managers	Goal: 15 net dials	Gross dials	NA	Net dials	Contact DM	Contact HI	Total contacts	Appts. scheduled	Appts. completed	MRR pipeline	Annualized pipeline	Closed MRR	Closed annual \$
Manager		2063	913	1150	474	633	1107	196	136	\$40,004	\$480,048	\$1,973	\$23,676
Manager		3084	1524	1560	390	710	1100	318	293	\$41,178	\$494,136	\$14,483	\$173,796
Manager		2678	1174	1504	571	869	1440	158	100	\$25,462	\$305,542	\$4,514	\$54,168
Manager		2203	1140	1063	325	701	1026	159	122	\$33,187	\$398,244	\$14,699	\$176,388
Manager		2454	669	1785	608	807	1415	113	65	\$59,780	\$717,360	\$9,265	\$111,180
Totals	10,020	12,482	5,420	7,062	2,368	3,720	6,088	944	716	\$199,611	\$2,395,330	\$44,934	\$539,208
Client %			43%		33%	53%	86%	13%			↑		↑
SOAR U.S. stats %			↕ 40%		↕ 46%	↕ 44%	↕ 90%	↕ 20%+			↑		↑

12 week annualized gross ROI = 1697.36%

Assuming a 20% close rate on what is still in the pipeline; SOAR would provide an additional \$479,066 in annual bookings giving a total assumed gross ROI of 3294.25%

Definitions

- **Gross dials:** Each time a salesperson attempts to make a call
- **NA:** Reflects the non-applicable calls. (Dial doesn't count because of: 1. *Wrong number*, 2. *No answer*, 3. *Lost in technology, can't get back to operator*, 4. *Rode the bull 4 deep no one was in that day and the operator is becoming annoyed*, 5. *No one was in that day*).
- **NET:** The number of gross dials less N/A's
- **DM:** Decision makers C-level execs
- **HI:** High influencer (EAP) and other key influencers
- **Appointment scheduled:** Total number of appointments set with either DM or HI

Figure 1-2 SOAR 12-Week Tracking Results

SOAR results control group comparison

SAE performance with SOAR vs. SAE performance without SOAR
June 1–August 14, 2009

Non-SOAR closes – Outbound program rankings (control group)		SOAR closes – Outbound program rankings	
Account executive	MRR	Account executive	MRR
1 Rep D	\$4,015	1 Rep F	\$11,536
2 Rep V	\$3,628	2 Rep Q	\$8,265
3 Rep J	\$2,935	3 Rep M	\$7,426
4 Rep T	\$2,125	4 Rep M	\$3,720
5 Rep K	\$2,122	5 Rep L	\$3,163
6 Rep R	\$2,050	6 Rep L	\$2,107
7 Rep S	\$1,700	7 Rep P	\$2,105
8 Rep D	\$1,478	8 Rep A	\$2,100
9 Rep B	\$1,447	9 Rep R	\$1,704
10 Rep C	\$1,170	10 Rep L	\$1,037
11 M Rep	\$875	11 Rep J	\$1,000
12 Rep T	\$411	12 Rep P	\$302
13 Rep M	\$20	13 Rep R	\$269
14 Rep D	\$0	14 Rep S	\$200
Non SOAR total	(Per month) \$23,976	SOAR total	(Per month) \$44,934

SOAR™ increased annualized
closed revenue by
\$251,496 (+87.41%)

Figure 1-3 SOAR Results Control Group SAE

SOAR results comparison

SAE performance with SOAR vs. SAE performance without SOAR
June 1–August 14, 2009

Non-SOAR closes – Outbound program rankings (control group)	SOAR closes – Outbound program rankings
<p>Average deal size: \$359 Average days to close: 19.5</p>	<p>Average deal size: \$607 + 69% Average days to close: 9.4 – 51.79%</p>
<p>Key accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 1697.36% gross ROI on the initial SOAR investment 12 weeks from inception ▶ Time to close a transaction decreased by over 10 days (51.79% decrease) ▶ Average deal size increased by over \$248 (69% increase) ▶ Increased confidence to have C-level conversations ▶ SOAR team sold 87% more than a comparison non-SOAR team with more tenure 	

**SOAR increased annualized
closed revenue by
\$251,496 (+87.41%)**

Figure 1-4 Final Numbers & Results from SAE Control Group Study

What People Are Saying About SOAR

Sales Manager “First, let me say that this approach to calling was a first for me. I have been through numerous trainings over the years that all focused on what to say and do once you are engaged with the decision maker. None has focused on how to get to the decision maker. I know that our management team has sat thru hundreds of interviews where every candidate talks about their ability to get to the C-level decision makers and close deals—but few are truly doing this effectively. The SOAR program proved that getting to C-level decision makers is not as hard as we have made it out to be. The initial training session where we did live calls was the icing on the cake. We saw SOAR working on live calls in front of the reps peer groups over and over again. I will use this approach for the rest of my selling career. Thank You.”

VP of Sales “This was a real confidence builder for the reps. Now they have the confidence they can get the same results (or better) from calling current customers or non-customers. No hesitation on making non-customer calls now.”

Salesperson “I liked the aggressive call approach that helps you make the most out of your prospecting time. Although you make fewer dials, you are gathering the information you need and discover who the *right* decision maker is at the company.”

Salesperson “This course is an excellent source of inspiration for getting out and selling. I think it taught me more about what to do than anything else I’ve seen. I liked the tips, the interaction, the energy, and the overall lesson. I especially liked the emphasis on total self-improvement which I will carry over into all other facets of my life.”

(10 years of experience) “**SOAR** is a very objective and logical tool that all sales reps and non-sales reps could profit from. The experience was fun! Identifying the obstacles and having the tools to use to get through the defenses of the receptionist world is awesome.”

Eliminating the Old Way of Prospecting

Whether you’ve been in sales for 20 years or 2 weeks you’ve probably experienced someone telling you that the way to prospect on the telephone is based on “BTN + L” (By The Numbers + Luck). Essentially, what this tells salespeople is to just make lots of calls and they will eventually make contact and get an appointment, i.e., get lucky. (It’s considered to be a truth in sales that if you throw enough against the wall, something will stick.) The problem with the BTN + L approach is that it actually creates less interest in prospecting, promotes unethical performance, and, ultimately, more attrition. Salespeople already hate the task of prospecting; when someone says, “just make a lots of calls and you will eventually make contact” it should come as no surprise that salespeople avoid prospecting like the plague.

Another consequence of BTN + L is the proliferation of articles stating that calling cold doesn't work. The truth is that calling cold doesn't work the BTN + L way—but it *does* work the SOAR way. We're not saying that salespeople now love to prospect because of SOAR; we're just saying that demand generation is at least tolerable. As we said earlier, if a salesperson wants to reach ten contacts in a day, they will only have to dial approximately 12 times with SOAR. A method like BTN + L, on the other hand, requires a salesperson to dial often up to 100 times. That's a huge difference in the number of calls required to get a satisfactory result.

We recently talked to a former CEO, now in the recruiting business, who told us that he had made 60 net dials to make 6 contacts. When you do the math, this means he has a dial-to-contact rate of 10 percent. He was definitely using the BTN + L approach! If he had been using the SOAR formula, he would have made approximately 53 fewer net dials to get the same result. Looking at it from another perspective, if the former CEO made the same number of net dials (60), he would have made approximately 54 contacts. (See Glossary of Terms on *net* and *gross* dials at the back of the book).

Industries that SOAR

We are often asked, "where does SOAR fit best?" The answer is, with any industry or organization that has salespeople that are required to find net new business. Some of the industries who have invited SOAR into their firms are the commercial real estate industry, technology, gaming, building, hospitality, banking, finance, manufacturing, professional services, residential real estate, professional sports, direct marketing, and many additional industries. Organizations within these industries typically had a demand generation initiative or wanted to create a sales culture focused on driving net new business.

If a sales team has to find net new business, SOAR is a great partner. Of course, when it comes to business development there are

lots of ways to get the job done; we realize that prospecting by telephone using SOAR is just one way. We understand that networking, relationships, leads groups, club memberships, journals, street prospecting, social media, key account responsibility, etc. are all viable alternatives to picking up the telephone. It's simply a matter of preference. What's interesting is that demand generation by telephone is often overlooked since it's deemed archaic. Look on the Internet and you will find topics like "Eliminate cold calling," "How to generate warm leads," or "Telephone cold calling doesn't work." With the emergence of the Internet and technology, it seems that cold prospecting on the telephone is a lost art . . . but we know it's still a lethal strategy if done correctly.

Applying SOAR Outside the Sales Environment

The following are two true stories I used (Dave Hibbard) that prove SOAR is so effective it can be implemented in almost any situation.

One year, my wife and I were celebrating our anniversary and I decided to surprise her with a trip to Las Vegas to see a hot new show. Since it was going to be a special evening, I wanted to get the best seats I could at a particular casino. I asked a person in our organization to see what was possible. She found tickets at \$250 per seat, but the seats were average at best—not at all what I wanted. Since the best seating was in Section A, I suggested she ask about those seats. She did, and was told Section A was not available. Next, we called American Express; we had a special contact there and thought that they would surely have influence. They said they did not have seats in Section A. Instead, they offered seats for \$850. They were better than the \$250 seats, but still not in Section A! Section A was front and center and it seemed no one had access to those seats.

We concluded that Section A seats were held by the casino for those "special people" who were high rollers or connected to someone

powerful. I decided to use SOAR. Long story short, we ended up with seats in Row 5, Section A, a limo pick up at the Airport, a VIP room and VIP reservations at a favorite restaurant of the Casino's CEO—all for \$250! Incidentally, I didn't lie, bend the truth and say I was a big gambler, exaggerate or misrepresent myself in any way. The SOAR approach really can be used in any situation.

Here is an additional story. The air conditioner in our newly built one-year-old home stopped functioning, so I (Dave) called the contractor. He immediately sent the crew that originally installed the product. They looked it over and said the coils were salt damaged due to the ocean and would have to be replaced. I asked if the cost of replacing the coils was covered under warranty. They said yes. However, the labor wasn't covered. I pressed further. I didn't understand why I would have to pay for a labor charge. But all they said was that it was just how the manufacturer warranties the unit.

I decided to use SOAR to reach the manufacturer's executive group. It worked. After delivering a compelling value statement, I ended up with the installation of new coils and zero labor cost! I didn't get angry or misrepresent in any way. The key was reaching someone who had the power to make a decision and do the right thing. (In this case, the company was York and I am pleased to endorse them and their attitude when it comes to taking care of customers.)

The bottom line is that SOAR works for any salesperson wanting to make contact with decision makers or high influencers, and it works just as well for any individual who needs to make contact with someone at the top in order to obtain a desired result. If anyone wants to call any organization for any purpose, SOAR is a great way to make contact and get results.

SOAR is an unprecedented formula for getting through to a decision maker or someone of high influence 90 percent of every net new dial. (The typical percent for “getting in” on a net new call is 10-15 percent.) SOAR represents a compelling shift when it comes to making contact with decision makers.

Key points about SOAR:

- SOAR is a research-based formula for driving net new logos
- SOAR eliminates the “old way” of prospecting
- Most selling programs teach what to do once you’re in; SOAR instructs you how to get in
- SOAR is measureable with documented ROI on a corporation’s initial investment from 200 to 2,000 percent in 12 weeks
- SOAR is applicable to any industry, product line, sales experience level, or culture
- SOAR explodes a salesperson’s contact rate when making net new dials

