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### The Evolving Nature of the Inside and Outside Sales Relationship: Cooperation and Conflict

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# **The Evolving Nature of the Inside and Outside Sales Relationship: Cooperation and Conflict**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Firms are increasingly turning to inside sales, salespeople working from a single or virtual location versus traveling to customers, because of the significant costs savings and improvements in communications technology. As a result, there is growing interaction between the inside and outside sales organizations. Through a series of interviews with inside and outside sale representatives, this research explores the evolving relationship between the two. The results of the interviews show that the sales responsibilities for inside and outside sales vary significantly across firms. Additionally, the research finds that personal relationships play a critical role in the success of the inside and outside sales relationship while overlapping goals and responsibilities can lead to conflict. Finally, the research shows that COVID-19 has changed the outside sales role so that it is taking on components of the inside sale function, such as virtual versus face-to-face meetings.*

## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

Zori Perkins is a May 2021 graduate of Kennesaw State University and currently works in Digital Marketing for IBM.

Claire Durant is a senior Finance major at Kennesaw State University with an expected graduation date of December 2021.

Stefan Sleep is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at Kennesaw State University. His research focus is on marketing strategy with an emphasis on sales, intra-organizational relationships, and marketing's use of data.