



# Salesforce Negotiation Guide

## Get the Most from Your Purchase or Renewal Negotiation

Joining the ranks of Microsoft, Oracle and SAP, the Salesforce software estate has become more complex and, as a result, increasingly difficult to manage. It's especially challenging at renewal time. The vendor's divide-and-conquer strategy makes it hard for customers to have a clear picture of what they own across different business units, what's actually being used, and if they're paying a fair price. To achieve a world-class Salesforce renewal outcome, customers need a negotiation strategy that harnesses buy-side leverage from multiple angles.

## Relationships



*Engage your leadership early and often*

Having an executive sponsor on your team that is engaged in the process as well as multi-faceted relationships with Salesforce will always drive the best outcomes.

Relationships are critically important for developing an effective negotiation strategy. NPI clients who emphasize building relationships with key individuals outside of the Salesforce sales organization are able to drive the best outcomes in their renewal negotiations. In addition, Salesforce values titles; having sponsorship and support from your leaders is a critical success factor.

## Internal Alignment



*Identify and manage Salesforce boosters*

**Salesforce is good at engendering loyalty among your employees. Identify these individuals early and get them on your buying team so they don't unwittingly undermine your negotiations.**

The Salesforce playbook includes developing individual connections with your internal stakeholders involved in vendor management or influencing buying decisions. Alignment and collaboration between IT, the business units, and procurement is essential for successfully blocking Salesforce from exploiting the gaps that sometimes exist between these teams.

## Tone



*Avoid putting anything in writing that you wouldn't want published*

**The use of expletives, threatening language, insults, etc. should be avoided at all costs. Focus on collaborative language, especially if Salesforce is not doing the same.**

Some NPI clients believe that taking a tough stance is the way to drive results in negotiations. Because Salesforce sales activities are often segregated from the rest of Salesforce operations, when issues are escalated, executives at Salesforce will be given the emails and communications with the client. NPI recommends a professional and collaborative tone with firm resolve.

## Salesforce Moves First



*Ask for quotes on Salesforce order forms early*

Rather than accepting a spreadsheet that isn't branded and often contains incomplete information, begin by asking for an "as is" quote on a formal Salesforce order form. This gives a baseline upon which to build the negotiations.

Salesforce sales strategy is built around driving growth from customers, often disconnected from customer needs and what fits best into their business model or strategy. NPI recommends that you ask Salesforce to present their initial proposal prior to sharing any information about your demand estimates. This helps you establish a baseline for the negotiations.

## Prepare for Escalation



*Preparing your executives for escalation*

Don't wait to engage your executive leadership. Have a plan and socialize it early to get buy-in and support from your leadership. NPI recommends executives in the IT organization (Senior VP, CIO/CTO, etc.) for this effort.

One of the greatest sources of leverage in a Salesforce negotiation is the ability to escalate to individuals outside of the sales organization at Salesforce. Escalation can come in two forms: direct contact by the procurement and negotiating team; or outreach from a senior leader in your company to a senior leader at Salesforce. In most cases, the latter is the most effective.

## Unify/Centralize



*How to counter the multiple salesperson argument*

Salesforce will initially resist trying to consolidate disparate purchases through a single representative. NPI has observed that Salesforce is open to providing customers with a single point of contact, usually with the other sales reps (for other products) working through that primary rep.

Salesforce customers may have multiple sales representatives by product, region, and/or business unit. Customers often have agreements that end on different dates throughout the year. NPI clients have the best outcomes when they co-term all agreements and force Salesforce to negotiate at one time through a single point of contact.

## Understand Issues



*What constitutes an issue?*

Do support issues need to be escalated in order to be resolved? Are there long-standing open issues that Salesforce promised to investigate, but has not resolved? Are there specific industry requirements that Salesforce hasn't addressed (Data Security, SLAs, etc.)?

Salesforce is relentlessly focused on adding more products or increasing total spend. Almost all NPI clients report challenges with Salesforce support and the need to escalate issues regularly. Many NPI clients fail to take advantage of this during the negotiations with Salesforce. Coming to the table with details on outstanding issues can improve leverage and counter pressure to grow the account.

## Establish Priorities

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*Link strategic asks to key themes*

NPI has observed that clients who are able to achieve the best outcomes in their negotiations with Salesforce link their strategic asks to key themes in their messaging. In addition, executive participation can also help drive better responses from Salesforce as it relates to strategic asks.

Include strategic asks during renewal negotiations with Salesforce. NPI recommends that they be used to build additional leverage, achieve specific goals related to the vendor relationship, or be used to set the tone of the negotiations. Involve your leadership when developing strategic asks to drive the best outcomes.

NPI has analyzed more than **\$2B** in enterprise Salesforce spend and delivers an average of **15 to 40% savings**.

NPI helps you streamline your Salesforce renewal process and eliminate blind spots that lead to long-term overspending.

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To learn more about how NPI can help you achieve a world-class outcome on your next Salesforce purchase or renewal, [contact us](#).



NPI is an IT procurement advisory company that helps businesses identify and eliminate overspending on IT purchases. We deliver transaction-level price benchmark analysis, license optimization advice and vendor-specific negotiation intel that enables IT buying teams to drive measurable savings.

NPI analyzes billions of dollars in spend each year for clients spanning all industries that invest heavily in IT. NPI also offers software license audit, divestiture IT asset assignment and telecom carrier agreement optimization services.