

The Airgas logo is displayed in a white rounded rectangle. It features the word "Airgas" in a bold, teal, sans-serif font, with a registered trademark symbol (®) to its upper right.

an Air Liquide company

The BZSOS logo is a yellow circle containing the letters "BZ" in a large, bold, black font. To the right of "BZ" is "SOS" in a smaller, black font. Below "BZSOS" is the text "SALES OPERATING SYSTEM™" in a smaller, black font.

# Case Study

How Airgas Systemized Sales Execution, Improved CRM Adoption, and Built a Forecast They Can Trust with BZSOS



Airgas, an Air Liquide company, is one of the largest suppliers of industrial, medical, and specialty gases in the United States. The company manufactures and distributes products ranging from welding gases like argon to medical gases like oxygen and nitrous oxide. Airgas also supplies safety equipment, welding supplies, and other industrial hardgoods to more than **one million customers through 1,400 locations, 18,000 employees, 3,500 sellers and nearly 500 sales leaders**, from District Managers to Vice Presidents.

With a large, distributed sales organization operating across multiple regions, Airgas relies on its sellers and frontline managers to drive both **new business growth and expansion within existing accounts.**



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“We had a ton of different sales trainings,” said Tracy Pfeffer, VP of Commercial Operations.

“But we didn’t have anything focused on our leaders and how they coach or how the process actually gets executed.”

## The Challenge

Training existed. Execution didn’t scale.

Like many large sales organizations, Airgas had invested heavily in sales training over the years, including Sandler, Challenger and Methods in Motion.

But something was missing.

“We had a ton of different sales trainings,” said Tracy Pfeffer, VP of Commercial Operations. “But we didn’t have anything focused on our leaders and how they coach or how the process actually gets executed.”

Airgas initially partnered with Blind Zebra for two very specific reasons:

- To **coach sales leaders on how to coach their teams**
- To **improve adoption and usage of Salesforce across the organization**

At the time, challenges included:

- Inconsistent sales execution across regions
- Low or inconsistent CRM adoption
- Pipelines filled with stalled or outdated opportunities
- Limited visibility into true sales activity
- Forecasts that were difficult to trust

“We would see opportunities that everyone else knew weren’t going anywhere,” said Andy Somerville, Area VP. “But they would stay in the system.”

The result: **activity without clarity, and data without trust.**



“It’s not asking people to do anything crazy,” Pfeffer said. “It’s bringing them back to the basics, but in a structured way.”

## The Solution

### Systemized Sales Execution

Airgas implemented the Blind Zebra Sales Operating System (BZSOS) to bring structure, consistency, and visibility to how sales gets done.

BZSOS is not software. It’s not traditional sales training.

It’s a **system for executing sales. Consistently.**

“It’s a structure. A pathway to enhance what sellers are already doing,” said Brenda Bobsein, VP of Sales and Marketing.

Rather than teaching sellers what to say, BZSOS focuses on:

- How to **manage opportunities**
- How to **prioritize time and effort**
- How to **execute consistently**
- How to **create visibility into activity and progress**

“It’s not asking people to do anything crazy,” Pfeffer said. “It’s bringing them back to the basics, but in a structured way.”

## From Training to Execution

One of the biggest differences Airgas experienced was the shift away from one-time training events to a system that lives inside the daily workflow.



“I want the facts,” Somerville said. “And now we’re getting them.”

“This isn’t something you learn and put on a shelf,” Bobsein said. “It becomes part of how you sell every day.”

That shift is what enabled one of the most important outcomes: Accountability by Process, Not Nagging

Instead of managers chasing updates or pushing sellers for activity, the system itself creates visibility.

- Are opportunities moving?
- Are next steps scheduled?
- Is the data current?

Those answers are no longer subjective.

“I want the facts,” Somerville said. “And now we’re getting them.”

## CRM Adoption, Without Forcing It

One of Airgas’ original goals was improving Salesforce adoption.

What they found was that BZSOS didn’t require enforcement. It made CRM usage **a natural byproduct of execution.**



95.5% of overdue Salesforce opportunities were cleaned up



“They have a structured way of making sure their pipeline is getting cleaned up and updated,” Bobsein said. “It’s actual data we can rely on.”

Because BZSOS tools (defined as a mini-checklists or processes) require:

- Clear next steps
- Scheduled follow-ups
- Defined opportunity movement

...the CRM becomes the **source of truth by necessity, not compliance.**

“They have a structured way of making sure their pipeline is getting cleaned up and updated,” Bobsein said. “It’s actual data we can rely on.”

In one region, the impact was immediate.

Using the BZSOS **CRM Clean-Up tool:**

- **95.5% of overdue Salesforce opportunities were cleaned up**
- **228 future activities were scheduled and attached to those opportunities**

Instead of a static pipeline, the CRM became a **living system of active deals and real next steps.**



**228 future activities were scheduled and attached to those opportunities**



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“If you see more people, you’re going to sell more,” Pfeffer said.

## Measurable Results

Since implementing BZSOS, Airgas has seen meaningful improvements across sales activity, pipeline quality, and revenue performance.

### Sales Activity Increased

- **Face-to-face meetings nearly doubled**
- Sellers are seeing more qualified prospects
- Activity is more intentional and proactive

“If you see more people, you’re going to sell more,” Pfeffer said.

### Contract Signings Increased

- **Product Sales Agreements (PSAs) increased by nearly 50%**

“That’s huge for us,” Pfeffer said.

### New Business Growth Improved

With less time spent on stalled deals, sellers are finding and closing more new opportunities.

“Their bandwidth to get in front of more customers is better,” Somerville said.



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“You can compare two cities - one using it and one not - and you can see the difference.”

## Pipeline Quality Improved

Sellers are no longer holding onto deals out of hope.

They are evaluating opportunities more objectively and moving on faster when needed.

“It’s much more real now,” Somerville said.

## Forecast You Can Fully and Finally Trust

Cleaner pipelines and better activity data have led to one of the most important outcomes:

### Trustworthy forecasts.

“We can trust what’s in Salesforce more,” Pfeffer said.

Even with only a portion of regions using BZSOS, the difference is clear.

“You can compare two cities - one using it and one not - and you can see the difference,” she said.

## Real Execution. Real Wins.

Beyond the metrics, the biggest proof of impact comes from how sellers are executing in the field.



“Our teams are excited to be part of it,” Bobsein said. “That’s something I haven’t seen before.”

### Stacking Tools to Win Bigger Deals

One Airgas seller closed a **7-year agreement worth \$541K annually** by combining multiple BZSOS tools:

- **Mutual Timeline Agreement**
- **Q4 Deal Accelerator**

By creating shared expectations and urgency with the customer, the seller was able to move a long-cycle opportunity to close with clarity and alignment.

### Speed to Meeting

Another seller described how a simple, structured approach changed their results almost instantly:

“Plain, simple, short. Sent it over, followed it with a calendar invite, and it was accepted on the spot 20 minutes later. I had a meeting for the next week. I’d been beating around the bush for 2 months - and it was just that easy the whole time.”



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“I was surprised how quickly experienced sellers adopted it,” Somerville said. “They realized it made them better.”

## Cultural Impact

### Higher Engagement

Unlike traditional training programs, BZSOS generated enthusiasm across the organization.

“Our teams are excited to be part of it,” Bobsein said.

“That’s something I haven’t seen before.”

### Adoption Across Experience Levels

Even veteran sellers embraced the system.

“I was surprised how quickly experienced sellers adopted it,” Somerville said. “They realized it made them better.”

### Stronger Coaching Culture

Because the system creates visibility into execution, managers can coach more effectively.

Instead of vague deal discussions, conversations are grounded in:

- Activity
- Progress
- Data



“If I could do it again, I would have done it sooner,” Pfeffer said. “Within months, we were already seeing movement.”

## The Moment It Clicked

### Higher Engagement

For Pfeffer, the turning point came immediately after the first training sessions.

Feedback came from every type of employee:

- New hires
- Veterans
- Quiet contributors
- Vocal leaders

“That was the best training I’ve ever had,” they said.

“That’s when I knew we had something,” she said.

## Why Airgas Would Do It Again

Looking back, the only regret is waiting.

“If I could do it again, I would have done it sooner,” Pfeffer said. “Within months, we were already seeing movement.”



**2X more customer meetings  
and a 50% increase in contract  
signings**



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“It’s not teaching people how to sell,” Bobsein said. “It’s giving them a better way to do what they already do.”

## Conclusion

For Airgas, BZSOS delivered something that traditional sales training and software alone could not:

### **A system for how sales actually gets done.**

The impact:

- Nearly **2× more customer meetings**
- Nearly **50% increase in contract signings**
- Dramatically **improved CRM data quality**
- Stronger **sales accountability**
- More effective **manager coaching**
- **A forecast leadership can trust**

And perhaps most importantly:

It gave Airgas a way to scale success across teams.

“It’s not teaching people how to sell,” Bobsein said. “It’s giving them a better way to do what they already do.”