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CRM TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

A guide for management



At the heart of virtually all businesses lies a desire for growth.

And business leaders know there are two fundamental ways to achieve it: increasing revenues and reducing costs. Whether this is accomplished by winning new customers, finding new ways to deliver more value to existing customers, or improving efficiency and productivity, it's crucial to have good visibility of what's happening in the business – and effective control over the key ways to improve performance.

More and more businesses understand the crucial role that CRM can play in driving growth and supporting business success. Let's highlight how.



**GROW
REVENUE**



**IMPROVE
CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE**



**REDUCE
OPERATIONAL
COSTS**



**IMPROVE
DECISION
MAKING**



STAY COMPETITIVE *and create growth*



To grow your business, you must deliver value to your customers and give them a reason to purchase from you instead of the competition. And you can't do that without getting to know them and taking the time to understand their needs.

You must think deeply about what will set your company apart and how you will secure brand loyalty. You need to anticipate trends and stay ahead of the curve – thinking outside the box and give your customers what they need.

It may be that in your sector, the best strategy for competitive differentiation is to focus on a specific segment or niche, developing a deep knowledge of that segment and tailoring your services to meet its very particular needs. Whether or not you choose to specialise in this way, over time you must improve your products and services based on the direct and meaningful dialogue you have with your customers.

All of this requires the in-depth knowledge and laser focus that CRM can deliver, by helping you track and segment information about your customers and your market, and record all interactions. All this invaluable information is stored in a single, easily accessed place, making it easier for you to turn raw data into the kind of valuable business intelligence that will help you grow.





GIVE YOUR CUSTOMERS

an excellent experience

Your customers are better informed and more spoilt for choice than they've ever been – so business has had to become more customer-centric. A top priority must be managing engagement and communication with this discerning and demanding audience.

Your customers want to ensure they're fully informed before committing to any purchases – much more than they used to be. You must think about these broad changes in consumer habits and adapt your strategy and spending accordingly. CRM can help by tracking trends and analysing data to help you make informed decisions for now and for the future.

The experience you offer customers is one of your clearest opportunities to differentiate your company. Ensuring that your customers' experience is consistently excellent – whoever they engage with and for whatever reason – and that it's enjoyable and memorable for all the right reasons, is arguably your best way to generate loyalty.

Post-sales, your customer service must be exceptional. Every customer must feel as though they're receiving special treatment just because of who they are. If they feel valued, they will value you in return, they will remember you, and they will recommend you.

CRM helps you provide this level of experience by ensuring that everyone across your business has access to a single source of definitive information about each customer, from initial marketing activity, through sales and customer service, to finance and order processing and other back-office functions. It connects your processes, helping them to flow seamlessly; it puts the right information in the hands of the right people at the right time, helping to make every engagement with the customer optimal. Finally, it offers a clear view of the cost to your business of servicing your customers, helping you refine your service in ways that maximise profitability but still keep your customers satisfied.



IMPROVING

agility, efficiency and effectiveness

It's all very well having a great product but if your company is not agile or efficient enough to deliver it then your business could fail. CRM gives you that agility and efficiency throughout your activities across marketing, sales and customer service.



MARKETING

CRM gives you the tools you need to execute your marketing strategy and measure the return on your marketing investment, whatever the channels. It helps with customer profiling and targeting, gathering business intelligence, and running email campaigns and events. It enables you to prioritise your marketing resource effectively, ensuring your sales teams follow up the leads most likely to convert. You're better able to manage your marketing services suppliers from design and print, to events contractors and so on – because all the relevant information about them and transactions are in one place. It helps you to deliver campaigns on time by making it easier to manage your marketing team's day-to-day workload. And it captures key information such as campaign return on investment, lead volumes by source, lead conversion, using dashboards and reports to put real-time information at your fingertips. Every interaction with a prospect furthers your business intelligence as you capture knowledge, map relationships, segment your data, and tailor your communication to improve the overall customer experience.





SALES

CRM helps you capture the knowledge you need to improve sales prospecting. It helps you manage opportunities better, driving up conversion rates and helping your sales team share best practice. It generates reports and dashboards that improve your insight into your sales pipeline and performance, helping you refine your sales process and helping you optimise each sales cycle. You can deliver professional quotations in minutes and your sales teams can forecast more effectively. You can turn quotes into orders with a single click and track the status of orders as they are fulfilled and invoiced.

CRM will help you build a strategy for nurturing existing customers and identify new opportunities. It will automate some of the lower-value interactions, freeing up your sales and account teams to focus on higher value interactions that generate more value. It will enable you to segment your customer base, tiering them in a way that helps you focus on those that will yield the best results. CRM will automatically notify account managers when contracts and subscriptions are up for renewal, helping to prevent any nasty surprises at renewal time.

And you can use CRM to track sales and improve performance of your sales teams. You can get quite granular and look at every stage of the process. How active is each sales rep? Are leads followed up and within what timeframe? How many meetings, emails and calls are taking place? By using CRM, you can pinpoint the precise development needs of each of your salespeople, and so focus training and coaching – maximising the return from all the time and money invested in training and significantly enhancing the abilities of your salesforce.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

CRM puts the information your customer service teams need in one place, helping them to track and manage support tickets and manage cases. They'll get better at spotting common problems and recurring issues, giving them the insights they need to tackle problems at their source, which saves your business money and improves customer satisfaction. You'll also be able to use your CRM platform to host online self-service, posting solutions to common problems for customers to quickly and easily find their own solutions. This makes for more than just a happier customer – it frees up your service team to concentrate on higher value activities, which is more stimulating and satisfying work for them. Over time, CRM builds an increasingly detailed picture of agent skills and knowledge, enabling the automatic routing of cases to the agent best qualified to resolve them. And it does all this in a multi-channel environment, so cases and learnings are shared between web, phone, email and chat, giving the customer a consistent experience regardless of the channel they prefer.

Another productivity boost comes from the availability of mobile and cloud-based CRM, which enables and reinforces collaboration throughout your entire business around the customer. Information is accessible anytime, anywhere from any device, for optimal business operations.



A top-down view of a desk with a calculator, a coffee cup, and a notebook. The calculator is a light-colored, multi-line display model. The coffee cup is a simple, light-colored mug. The notebook is open, showing a page with text and a small blue graphic. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

Reduce COST

The third point on the business growth triangle – alongside increasing revenues and improving efficiency – is reducing cost. Is it really possible to grow your business without spending more money? Beyond this, can you even cut costs and still grow? And won't the addition of CRM just add to your cost burden as well as your workload?

Reducing costs in your business and creating processes that will save you money doesn't have to take a lot of time or even a lot of effort. In many cases, it's about making smarter choices when deciding where to invest. CRM can be a real enabler.

We've already highlighted some of the ways CRM saves you money – through automation, simplifying processes, and freeing up your staff to spend time focusing on what will deliver the greatest value. But there are numerous other ways CRM can save you money. You'll be able to dispense with any redundant legacy systems – and the costs associated with them. The detailed view it gives you of individual customers and their purchasing history can lower your production costs by helping you to predict demand more accurately, so you can only produce what you know there will be demand for. Use it properly and your CRM will also cut admin costs – including stationery, travel and reporting.

Acquiring new customers can be expensive – and there's no guarantee that you'll achieve a good return on your marketing investment – but as CRM improves your customer experience, your customer satisfaction will also climb. Then your customers themselves can turn into a marketing asset as volumes of referrals and word-of-mouth advocacy grow.





BETTER *decision making*

By tracking KPIs, performance, stages of the sales cycle, qualified-out opportunities and more, CRM gathers the sort of information that helps you analyse your customers' behaviour and decision-making processes in-depth, all of which feeds into better, more informed decision-making.

When you have the power to interrogate data from across the business, glean patterns and trends or identify issues, you obtain insights that drive innovative thinking.

As managers, part of your focus must be beyond the here and now, with longer-term strategies, considering how to secure the future of your business.

A strategic plan with key long-term objectives serves as a framework for making decisions. Putting together a strategic plan can provide the insight needed to keep a company on track by setting goals and measuring accomplishments. CRM can feed into this strategic planning and support its execution. It can also help you define where this strategic direction should be based on historical data.

The way CRM supports decision-making is best summed up by one of our clients, Nathan Aspin, Managing Director of Aspin, which make sales order processing apps. He says: "It allows me to understand what is working well and what needs attention. This helps me focus my time on what matters, where my input is required and where I can add value. I get a clear view on quotes, and so am able to confidently forecast what is coming in and can plan resource more accurately. My business has become more predictable. I make informed decisions and I can prioritise better. I'm back in control."





TAKE CONTROL *of your business*

More and more business leaders understand the benefits of CRM and an increasing number of them are implementing it to get more control over their businesses. When we recently [surveyed UK SMEs](#), 70% already used CRM – and more than 60% of those who didn't were planning to roll it out at some point in the near future.

Most CRM users cite contact management, opportunity management, sales analytics and forecasting, lead generation, workflow management and customer service as the primary functions of the system.

There's also broad agreement on the principal benefits of CRM:

66% said improving the productivity of customer-facing employees

62% said enhanced customer experience

49% said reducing operational costs

It's abundantly clear: modern businesses need CRM to flourish – even to survive. CRM gives you visibility of your business, it allows you to take control over it like never before, and that gives you more power over your own destiny.

