**CRM FEATURES**

1. Workflow automation

CRM software can make your life easier by automating your workflow. Look for software that lets you set up custom rules and comes with sales force automation to help you and your team be more productive.

1. Customization

No two businesses are the same, so the best CRM software can cater to your business’s unique needs. Some CRM solutions let you choose which features to include in your package, and some also allow you to customize basic areas, such as with the abilities to add contact fields, choose which data to show on your dashboard and create custom reports. You can also customize with extensions, plugins and other add-ons to expand your software’s capabilities.

1. Third-party integration

Connecting your CRM software to other solutions you already use can save you tons of time and money. Most CRM programs offer third-party software integrations; the key is choosing one that’s compatible with the software you use and easy to implement.

1. Customer service

CRM software can help you acquire and retain customers by providing excellent customer service.

1. Employee tracking

CRM software is a great way to track employee activity and performance. Choose software that gives employees their own accounts where they can individually track their hours, tasks, meetings, sales numbers, goals and other items.

1. Social media

A CRM with built-in social media monitoring features can save your marketing team time, because they won’t have to switch platforms to perform the essential task of monitoring your company’s social media.

1. Lead management

A lead management feature will help you to identify your leads and the actions they’ve taken along the sales cycle. Through the lead management process, you’ll be able to score your leads and, if needed, filter them off to a different member of your team to turn select leads into customers.

1. Real-time data

Starting in 2017, real-time data became the main driver for CRM systems, according to CMSWire. As noted in the article, CRMs can pull real-time data from devices, applications and even appliances.

1. CRM analytics

CRM analytics, also known as customer analytics, offer insight into customer data. This data is important because it can help you make better decisions about the types of products, services, marketing and overall communications you distribute to your customers.

1. Reporting

Reporting is the feature that brings the results of your sales and marketing efforts all together, and it comes standard with all the CRMs we’ve researched.

1. Sales forecasting

A CRM with this feature predicts your future sales based on data from your current pipeline. You may need to alter your marketing plan based on the sales forecast. For example, if you thought your toy store was going to sell a lot of girls’ dolls during Christmas but learned through sales forecasting that building blocks are more popular, you can cater your campaigns accordingly. Sales forecasting can also anticipate market changes to mitigate your business risks.

1. Email

Tracking emails through a traditional inbox can get overwhelming and confusing. Livewire noted that, as of 2015, the average office worker received 121 emails. It’s important for every single sales email to be received and addressed in a timely fashion to increase the probability of generating revenue.