Features that drive basic differences between Salesforce and other CRM tools is the fact that it is a startup that is built with a purpose of customer relation as a major focus in the industry. On one hand while large corporations such as Oracle and Sap benefit from an integrated suite of products, Salesforce benefits from covering customer relationships from all sides with aggressive acquisition of AI based startups.

Three tech giants of CRM industry define CRM as

Salesforce, “Customer relationship management (CRM) is a technology for managing all your company’s relationships and interactions with customers and potential customers. The goal is simple: Improve business relationships. A CRM system helps companies stay connected to customers, streamline processes, and improve profitability.” [1]

SAP, “CRM stands for Customer Relationship Management. With a CRM system, you can automate and integrate your customer-facing activities: sales, marketing, customer service, and e-commerce. Best-in-class CRM software also offers tools for customer analytics, personalization, social media, collaboration, and more.” [2]

Oracle, “Customer relationship management (CRM) is the practice of using tools, technology, and processes to gather and analyze customer data and then using that information to create a better customer experience. Essentially, CRM is the combination of data and action, brought together to create stronger relationships with customers and ultimately to improve business performance.” [3]

Clear from the choice of words on how three companies look at CRM. While salesforce focuses on CRM only Sap and Oracle also extend over to analytics, collaboration, and overall business performance. Salesforce, Oracle, and SAP are powerful CRMs and mature companies that offer the typical CRM features — sales force automation, pipeline management, and SaaS or cloud access. They help sales reps and managers alike streamline their workflows and track leads to improve sales processes.

Salesforce is an industry giant. As of 2018, it singlehandedly owned 30 percent of the CRM market share [4]. For many businesses, this CRM-specialized company offers the best product. That being said, it had a higher rate of users replacing it for a different system than any other CRM named in one 2018 buyer’s survey [5]. Because it is so large and so feature-packed, SMBs may find that Salesforce comes with too many bells and whistles that they would rather not pay for. Its position is also anything but set in stone — plenty of other CRMs are gaining power and popularity that make them better choices for some organizations. SAP and Oracle are the biggest names in business software with solutions for computing, inventory management, ERP, process integration, transportation management, business intelligence and more. Because of their diverse experience, some modules have a leg up over Salesforce with its singular focus. In other more CRM-specific categories, they fall short in comparison. Various suites all integrate seamlessly, so it is an ideal choice for large organizations that already use or want to use other business software.

Contact management is a crucial feature of CRM software. It offers a contact database for clients and leads so your sales reps can easily track them along the sales pipeline process. Users can track interactions like emails and calls, schedule appointments, and create task lists to keep organized within a single interface. This function also offers case management features and collaborative access to everything previously listed. Oracle CX Cloud Suite provides an exceptional contact management database. It comes with pre-built cross-referencing functionality that helps maintain unique data records, reducing the chances of human error or multiple profiles for the same client. Salesforce CRM (also known as the Sales Cloud) provides comprehensive contact management features as well. Users can easily create and manage contacts, monitor duplicates, as well as track client profiles and accounts. With SAP CRM, customers can quickly and easily leverage enterprise-grade email marketing capabilities. This includes sophisticated campaign management and cross-channel marketing to attract viewers from a range of sources. Their high-volume delivery and advanced targeting offer wide scope as well as in-depth personalization. Salesforce’s additional resources and step-by-step marketing campaign builders put it a step above SAP for batch email marketing capabilities. Comparing Oracle CRM vs Salesforce, both provide excellent contact management features.

Moving to analytics and reporting features which are now a standard function in many other kinds of business software. In CRM, this involves mostly sales data and customer behavior information. Users can track sales status and visualize a prospect’s journey through the sales pipeline in convenient graphs and charts that make the information digestible by even the least experienced. Oracle’s Cloud Suite provides an advanced and predictive analytics tool that allows users to view historical data, compare product performance and forecast sales. The solution offers real-time visibility into sales performance and other key metrics, such as regional sales performance, territorial sales, sales pipeline, etc., through an interactive dashboard. Oracle CX also enables users to integrate different marketing channels on one common platform for ease of access. Salesforce provides advanced business intelligence and reporting capabilities via Einstein analytics. The platform helps users analyze trends, check performance, and create a smart and interactive dashboard on relevant KPIs. Users can manage opportunities right from the lead to deal stage, as well as analyze sales patterns and purchase behavior of contacts. This allows users to forecast sales and revenue, then organize their sales team accordingly. Salesforce’s paid add-on QlikView delivers business intelligence advantages with ease of use and minimal or no reliance on IT for near real-time analytics. Using QlikView, Salesforce.com customers can drive higher levels of sales efficiency and effectiveness by measuring pipeline trends throughout the sales cycle. By analyzing customer and lead data, users can plan and track marketing campaigns to determine strategies for improvement. With acquisition of Tableau, it is expected that Salesforce will provide these features with easy to use drag and drop features. Unlike Salesforce, SAP does not specialize in only CRM. It incorporates capabilities from SAP’s BI system BusinessObjects like KPI reporting. It can be used directly in SAP CRM without having to use a separate BI system, but this limits its comprehensiveness in some cases.

As a future strategy, all three of them have been actively acquiring startups in the domain of data, artificial intelligence, and cloud services. Indeed, this competition began way back in 2006, when Oracle took over Seibel to compete with Salesforce.

I won’t be surprised about the outcome of this Salesforce vs Oracle Cloud CX vs SAP CRM comparison. Salesforce dominates the CRM field for a reason, and it scores slightly higher than Oracle and SAP. That being said, no single CRM solution is a perfect fit for every business. Many small and mid-sized businesses may find that Salesforce is too sprawling and expensive for their needs, and others may not like its interface. Customers need to keep an open mind and focus on matching their needs to the CRM solution that best meets rather than relying on brand names or market clout. That being said, it’s not all roses in the world of Salesforce. According to one 2018 survey of CRM buyers, four percent of the 500 companies interviewed were downsizing their CRM [5]— most of them from Salesforce to something less over-featured and over-priced.

Resources :

[1] <https://www.salesforce.com/crm/what-is-crm/>

[2] <https://www.sap.com/products/what-is-crm.html>

[3] <https://www.oracle.com/applications/customer-experience/what-is-crm.html>

[4] <https://www.datanyze.com/market-share/customer-relationship-management--33/salesforce>

[5] <https://www.selecthub.com/customer-relationship-management/crm-features-functionality-list/#survey>