

Title:

CRM Essentials For Small Business

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458

Summary:

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Every CRM system is built on the contact database. In fact it's key to the entire system. The contact database allows for the entry of information on customers and prospects. It also allows for the maintenance of this information. This will include basics such as name, address...

Keywords:**Article Body:**

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Every CRM system is built on the contact database. In fact it's key to the entire system. The contact database allows for the entry of information on customers and prospects. It also allows for the maintenance of this information. This will include basics such as name, address, phone, and email address.

If you sell to larger customers such as other companies where you have many contacts you will want your CRM software to have to the ability to manage contacts in groups related to one customer. So for example ABC Company might have Joe, Sam, Sally, and Molly all attached to it. This allows you to easily change information for the entire group.

You will want to closely examine the reporting capability. If you put all that information into the system you want to be able to retrieve it in a format that is usable to you. Some systems come with canned reports that you may or may not be able to edit to meet your personal needs. Some also come with a module called a report writer that allows you to design your own custom reports.

A good CRM package will have good analytical ability. This will allow you to

analyze the data you have collected to help answer a host of questions such as:

1. Which customer provides the highest profitability?
2. How long does it take for them to commit?
3. Which products do they purchase?
4. Which customers are loyal?
5. Which sales associates have the best sales conversion rate?
6. Are new customers more profitable?
7. What products don't move?
8. Where is more staffing needed?
9. How many calls does it take to convert a lead to a sale

That's just a small example of what type of information you'll be able to analyze.

For small business price is also an issue. You don't want to go so cheap that you get a package that isn't adequate or that you spend more time fiddling with then actually using it for what it was designed.

Then again you won't have the budget to go really big. You'll want to do your research but first you need to determine exactly what your priorities are. Then you can start to price compare too.

So to summarize:

1. Determine what it is you want the software to do.
2. Set your budget.
3. Do your research.
4. Start to compare products online.
5. Make your decision.
6. Make your purchase/

One thing is for certain if your small business is going to be profitable and successful you need CRM.