

MAXIMIZE THE VALUE OF ON-DEMAND CRM WITH ON-DEMAND REPORTING

Improve the Effectiveness of Salesforce.com Customer Relationship Management with Reporting and Analytics Delivered as a Service

AUDIENCE:

This paper is intended for all levels of business users and IT professionals using or evaluating Salesforce.com CRM, on-demand CRM solutions, or on-demand reporting and business intelligence solutions.

"CRM applications provide an enormously flexible and powerful technology for capturing and storing data. However, data is not all that useful; what sales reps and their managers need is actionable information. What converts data to information is analysis. That is, someone or something has to look at the data, analyze and interpret its meaning(s), and then provide recommendations based on this...A critical challenge for the organization [is] equipping their sales team with reporting tools that provide insight into their key metrics, as well as a method of quickly and securely sharing this information amongst managers and colleagues. Eliminating as many bottlenecks in the CRM cycle via intelligent sales management analytics must be a primary focus of any success-minded sales organization."

CSO Insights
2007 Sales Performance Study
On-Demand Versus On-Premise CRM:
Are There Performance Differences?

Introduction

Industry analyst Gartner Inc. predicts that the software-as-a-service (SaaS) market will grow seven times faster than on-premise software during the next three years and that by 2011, 25% of new business software will be delivered as a service.¹ IDC research shows that worldwide spending on SaaS stood at \$4.2 billion in 2004 and is expected to reach \$10.7 billion by 2009, representing a compound annual growth rate of 21%.

After years of relatively stagnant growth, organizations of all sizes are now starting to embrace and rapidly adopt the SaaS model for business applications. With no software or hardware to buy, install, maintain, or upgrade, the popularity of SaaS—also known as on-demand—is growing steadily as organizations are increasingly being asked to do more with less, in a shorter period of time.

The undisputed poster child for the SaaS movement is on-demand customer relationship management (CRM) leader, Salesforce.com. The proliferation of on-demand CRM, stemming from the success of Salesforce.com, has not only increased the usage of CRM within organizations but has also created an overabundance of data from customer contact information, past purchases, current opportunities, call reporting, appointments, and other data points.

Raw data is not, however, fundamentally useful. What key stakeholders—including sales, sales management, marketing, finance, and executives—increasingly demand is information, delivered in precise, accurate, and understandable terms. A mid-2006 Gartner survey of CIOs with CRM investments found that the number one application business area targeted for spending in 2007 was performance management, BI, and analytic tools to transform their transactional data into information that would help run the business better.² A 2007 sales performance study by CSO Insights revealed that almost 65% of CRM users plan to enhance their CRM applications with sales process integration and sales management analytics.

With their CRM solution installed, the crucial next step for Salesforce.com users is to put in place the ability to obtain truly actionable, timely information.

Business Intelligence Defined

Business intelligence (BI) software is designed to enable organizations to transform data into useful and meaningful information that can be shared with those who need it to make more informed decisions.

BI solutions, whether on-demand or on-premise, enable organizations to better understand, analyze, and even predict what's occurring in their company. Authorized users, from inside or outside the corporate firewall, can gain insight into what's working—and perhaps more importantly—into what is not working so they can take corrective action immediately.

"We share a vision with Business Objects of making business information and applications available on demand to anyone, anywhere in the world. Business Objects has a strong tradition of simplifying business intelligence and providing powerful, easy-to-use BI solutions. Our continued partnership brings the power and ease of Crystal Reports, the industry standard in reporting, to the entire on-demand Salesforce.com community."

Marc Benioff
Chairman and CEO
Salesforce.com

Using BI, users can recognize opportunities as well as problems and potential issues. They can monitor important business processes on a continuous basis to better understand how activities are interrelated and gain deeper insights that result in improved decision-making.

Standard Reporting within Salesforce.com

Salesforce.com provides an easy-to-use reporting wizard to enable business users to create custom reports from Salesforce.com data, as well as dashboards to monitor critical metrics from across sales, marketing, service, and other departments. For some customers, the built-in Salesforce.com reporting tools are sufficient to meet their needs.

For companies with more complex reporting requirements, however, or those looking for greater robustness, formatting, and flexibility—including the ability to combine data from a wide variety of sources and see an integrated, up-to-date, and 360-degree view—a myriad of on-demand BI options are now available to supplement and enhance Salesforce.com's core on-demand CRM offering.

Salesforce.com customers are then faced with a bewildering array of third party reporting and analytic options, add-ons, and tools, all purporting to be the best, or even the only, BI solution for Salesforce.com users. With so many choices, how do you select the right one for your organization?

What to Look for in an On-Demand Reporting Tool

When selecting an on-demand reporting solution, it's important to review many factors in addition to specific product features. Issues to consider include vendor experience, reputation, and stability, plus functions such as ease-of-use, ease-of-implementation and administration, scalability, user interface options, and how well it integrates into your company's existing and future platform environment. Among the most important of these are:

- **Proven reliability and stability** – Select a vendor with a proven track record, extensive experience with organizations of all sizes, and a history of successful growth both in revenues and capabilities. Choose a vendor that's large enough to retain its independence and is likely to survive in an increasingly competitive market. Your organization will likely grow and expand. Pick a vendor who will be there to support your organization in the future, however and whenever you need it.
- **Performance reliability** – Because companies continuously rely on their BI solutions to make both strategic and tactical decisions, the service must be available 24x7. Carefully review the SaaS vendor's uptime performance records, service delivery infrastructure capabilities, hosting company relationships, and service level agreements (SLAs).
- **Security** – Given the sensitive nature of the data and analysis captured by a business intelligence application, it is critical that companies carefully examine the security measures that the on-demand solution vendors have adopted to protect their proprietary information. Encryption and other technical safeguards should be in place, as well as SAS 70 certification to assure that the vendor has the proper policies and procedures to protect its customers' valuable data.

RapidAdvance, a direct provider of Cash Advance Services for small and mid-sized businesses, and a Salesforce.com customer, was experiencing fragmented communications, inefficiencies due to manual reporting, data inaccuracy and errors in analysis. Using Crystal Reports and crystalreports.com, an in-house business analyst with no previous IT experience was able to automate meaningful BI in days and created over 200 reports within just 3 weeks. Users view their reports via a crystalreports.com tab within their existing Salesforce.com account.

Within the tool, you should also be able to specify permissions and user profiles to ensure that users receive only the reports relevant to their needs.

- **Strength in partners** – A vendor with strong partner network—both in software vendors and consultants—will prove invaluable. A BI vendor that actively encourages partnerships is likely to have little problem integrating its technology with your current and future software environments. Vendors with a strong base of consulting partners make it easier to find outside expertise should your organization have special requirements down the line.
- **Scalability/flexible pricing model** – One key advantage of on-demand solutions is that they can be adopted in an incremental fashion. This permits companies to test SaaS solutions in pilot situations, or add new users or application modules on an 'as needed' basis. The on-demand application should be able to accommodate an increasing number of users to grow with a company's needs and offer flexible monthly subscription pricing to fit your budget requirements.
- **The ability to access and integrate a wide variety of disparate data sources** – Studies have shown that as users experience the benefits of BI, BI use increases within the organization. Although many companies initially run reports against individual systems like Salesforce.com, it's likely that, over time, your organization will deploy BI against additional systems and databases or that you will need to access data from several sources to see the total picture. Ensure that the BI vendor you choose is able to work with a wide variety of data sources.
- **The ability to leverage your existing investments** – Do you have any current reporting solutions in place? Most applications ship with basic reporting functionality based on Crystal Reports technology. Look into what you have in-house today and leverage what you may already have.
- **Breadth of solutions** – While you may only require certain reporting functionality to start, it is likely that your organization will want broader and deeper analytical capabilities such as query and analysis, dashboards, and scorecards, information management, and performance management solutions in the future as your company grows and your systems and requirements mature. Select a vendor that can support all your needs now and in the future.

Enhanced Reporting and Business Intelligence for Salesforce.com

Together, Business Objects and Salesforce.com hold a strong, collaborative technology partnership along with a shared vision of making business information and applications easily available on demand to anyone, anywhere in the world.

Working with Salesforce.com, Business Objects has been able to pinpoint the functionality and capabilities most desired by Salesforce.com customers in order to deliver crystalreports.com for Salesforce.com.

The crystalreports.com for Salesforce.com solution was designed to address the unique needs, and solve specific pains, of Salesforce.com users. The solution contains two components:

National University of Health Sciences (NUHS), a premier institution for health science education, couldn't access the critical business information they needed to make informed decisions and remain competitive. Using the free trial of crystalreports.com, within 10 minutes, a business user was able to learn the service and had one report hosted. Now, NUHS has eliminated information silos and everyone is looking at the same information on crystalreports.com. The ability to share Crystal Reports on the web dramatically improved their visibility into their operations information.

crystalreports.com: Deep Integration with Salesforce.com for Simplified Reporting

With crystalreports.com for Salesforce.com, customers can view, refresh, share, and schedule reports directly inside Salesforce.com, without having to leave the familiar environment or log in to another system. Authorized users simply click on the tab marked "crystalreports.com" within the Salesforce.com interface for immediate access to their reports.

Customers can also view Crystal reports created with Salesforce.com data alongside Crystal reports based on other data sources. By bringing all Crystal reports—regardless of the data source—into crystalreports.com, customers can conduct side-by-side comparisons and gain more holistic insight into their overall performance.

Crystal Reports Report Pack for Salesforce.com

The Crystal Reports Report Pack for Salesforce.com brings the power and flexibility of the world's most popular reporting solution to Salesforce.com data. The Report Pack includes Crystal Reports, the world standard for enterprise reporting, the Crystal Reports Driver to connect to the Salesforce.com API, and 21 pre-built sample reports designed specifically for Salesforce.com.

Customers can design Crystal reports that draw on any Salesforce.com data as well as access pre-built reports including:

- Pipeline forecasting
- Sales by geography
- Campaign generation
- Lead generation segmentation
- Campaign performance

This advanced reporting solution enables Salesforce.com users to easily:

- Create highly formatted, feature-rich reports
- Design interactive, drilldown reports
- Create custom joins between multiple tables
- Combine Salesforce.com data with other data
- Generate report archives and histories

Examples of other advanced reports that can be created include 'Accounts with and without opportunities', 'Cross-selling opportunities' where products from two distinct product families can be displayed, 'Contacts owned by inactive users', and 'Lead reports including all leads (open and converted)'.

The crystalreports.com for Salesforce.com solution is available now via the Salesforce.com AppExchange.

Conclusion

Until recently, web-based access to report sharing and distribution has been available only to organizations with the IT infrastructure required to support such solutions. For small and mid-sized organizations with limited resources, the alternative has been to deliver static reports via email or hard copy, processes that are both time-consuming and lead to conflicting data.

Building on the success of Salesforce.com, the new breed of on-demand reporting solutions, such as crystalreports.com, has empowered organizations of all sizes with the ability to easily and quickly share actionable information with employees, partners, and any others who may need it. Organizations can also reduce expenditures on software and hardware, shorten deployment cycles, and optimize existing IT investments.

The basic premise for on-demand CRM success holds true for on-demand reporting: quick implementation time, less reliance on IT, cost-effective, and simple to use. And on-demand reporting carries all the benefits of its client/server predecessor; that is to get the right information into the hands of the right people at the right time, thus allowing organizations to better understand, analyze, and affect what's occurring in their company.

Improving the overall quality of your company's decision-making process results in an improvement in the overall effectiveness of your business. Reporting will help your organization make better decisions, and on-demand reporting allows you to accomplish this task in a fast, cost-effective, and easy-to use manner.

¹Gartner paper G00144023. "Predicts 2007: Software as a Service Provides a Viable Deliver Model." November 13, 2006.

²Gartner presentation, Midsize Enterprise Summit 2007. "Driving the Customer-Centric Enterprise." Scott Nelson, May 14, 2007.