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# How to Sell Management on a New CRM Solution

Customer relationship management, or CRM, solutions can help small and midsize companies manage the myriad ways they interact with customers, from marketing to new and potential customers to improving their customer support. Current CRM solutions have incorporated new social and collaboration technologies that make it easier to connect with customers. They're also available through cloud-based services and on-demand to make CRM more affordable and effective for smaller businesses.

Companies of all sizes rely on CRM to capture new customers and retain current ones, which is often reason enough to invest in the technology. Use this checklist of additional reasons to sell management on a new CRM system:

**1. Connect with customers through social media.**

Choosing a social CRM application lets you apply the many-to-many model of social communications to interactions with customers. This offering can help you build a community Web site for customer forums, a company blog and more.

**2. Create personalized marketing.**

Social CRM also lets you target your marketing efforts more closely to what groups of customers — or even individual contacts — are actually interested in for a personalized experience. A social CRM offering can give you insight into a particular contact's social media activity, including blog posts, tweets, and Facebook profile.

**3. Collaborate with customers directly.**

Social CRM also lets you "crowdsource" ideas from customers — they can give you immediate feedback on your products as well share their ideas for product enhancements and even new products.

**4. Take CRM with you.**

Many CRM vendors now offer mobile apps for iPhones and iPads, BlackBerry phones, and Windows Mobile and Android-based devices. These apps give road warriors up-to-the minute customer and product information as well as enable them to use social CRM tools.

**5. Support customers in real time.**

The rise of social media has changed customers' expectations: They want to be supported in real time through blogs, chat windows and Twitter feeds. New CRM offerings let you meet these expectations with real-time support.

**6. Integrate CRM with other business processes.**

New CRM solutions offer tighter integration with critical applications, including business intelligence, e-commerce, enterprise resource planning (ERP), and Voice over IP (VoIP) software. Some cloud-based offerings also integrate with other Web-based applications; for instance, Salesforce.com can integrate with Google Apps and Google AdWords.

**7. Provide a better user experience.**

Many CRM vendors have made their solutions' user interfaces more intuitive and easier to use. Some are customizable, others have wizards, but most are far easier and efficient to use than older offerings.

**8. See a tangible ROI through increased sales.**

A CRM system can improve your bottom line through targeted marketing, cross-selling and up-selling to existing customers. It can also help the sales team manage leads more effectively to find new customers more quickly. With sales and forecast data in hand, you can make accurate, fast decisions about inventory, discounts and future services.

**About Inside CRM**

Inside CRM is an industry leader in research and education for marketing and sales professionals. The site provides in-depth resource tools that CRM decision makers have come to rely on to get the right information on CRM products and services for their business. By being an independent third-party analyst community, Inside CRM is a trusted source for SMB and enterprise companies, buyers, and influencers alike. The Inside CRM content team has been recognized with more than 25 industry and editorial awards. Inside CRM also routinely taps industry experts for their insight and contributions. In addition, Inside CRM has community features and tools that sales professionals return to again and again, such as product reviews, community-rated top stories, message boards and more.