Everything your B2B SaaS Company needs to know about Salesforce

A User's Guide to Accelerating Sales With a CRM

CloudKettle

Contents

CHAPTER 1

Does Your SaaS Company Need a CRM?

Not every organization needs a CRM, but they are particularly important for Software as a Service (SaaS) companies that have a B2B enterprise sales model. When deciding if you need a CRM, there are a few simple questions you can ask to determine if one is a worthy investment. If you answer yes to one or more of the following questions, your organization should probably invest in a CRM.

- Is your product available for purchase offline?
- Does your product have a sales-cycle that is longer than a week?
- Do you have a dedicated Sales team?
- Is your product a subscription based model?
- Does your product require customer support?

Offline Purchases

When considering if your company needs a CRM, think about what your sales process is going to be like. If you are selling a B2B enterprise tool that costs thousands or tens of thousands of dollars, there are some key points in your sales process that necessitate a CRM. Firstly, it's highly likely you'll have offline purchases - meaning at least some of your customers will be making the decision to buy based on conversations you've had with them, signing a contract, and receiving an invoice. In short, they won't be simply clicking a button and checking out online. A CRM, like Salesforce, helps facilitate the entire sales process, tracking your first touch point right up to the day the sale is won.

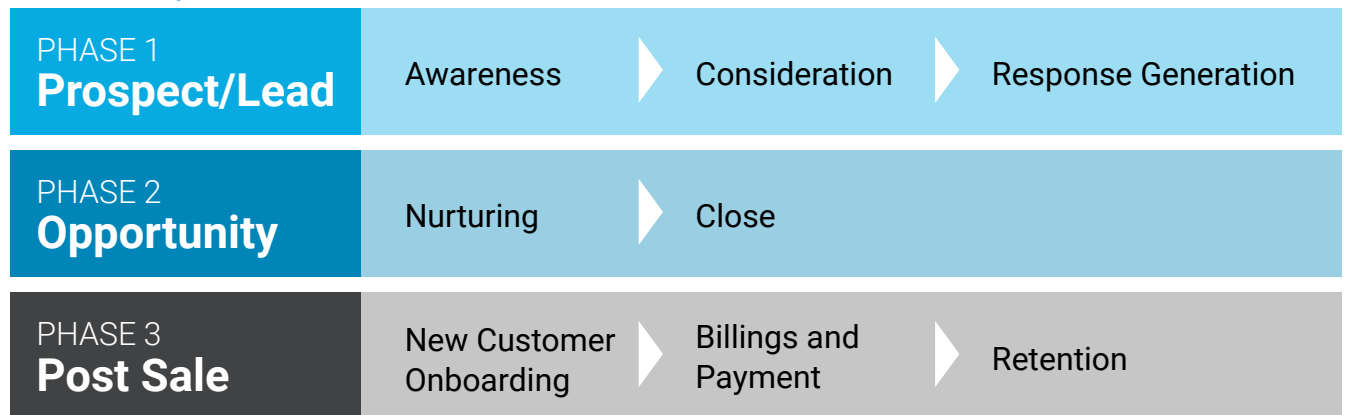## Complex Sales Cycle and Dedicated Sales Team

Software as a Service companies selling to enterprises often have in-house sales teams that work complex sales cycles. The customer lifecycle is significantly more complicated than we traditionally believed it to be 10, even 5 years ago. Customers investigate products months, or even a year before they are recognized in the traditional lifecycle.

It may take 6, even 18 months to close a deal and there might be dozens of phone calls and emails during that period involving multiple employees from both organizations. A CRM enables your Sales team to see those potential customers from their first touchpoint, cultivate a relationship with them, and gain a 360-degree view of their organization and needs.

Not to mention, it will also store all those interactions as part of a coherent system of record to ensure the opportunity moves through the sales funnel efficiently, client requests aren't forgotten, and in the end the contract represents what was originally agreed upon verbally. Once a company becomes a paying customer, Customer Success can use that record to implement what was agreed upon with Sales.

Sales Lifecycle

| PHASE 1 **Prospect/Lead**	Awareness ▶	Consideration ▶	Response Generation
PHASE 2 **Opportunity**	Nurturing ▶	Close	
PHASE 3 **Post Sale**	New Customer Onboarding ▶	Billings and Payment ▶	Retention

Subscription Based Model

Renewals, especially for SaaS organizations, can't be taken for granted. "Acceptable" churn for a SaaS company is 5% annually, more on that here (http://bit.ly/1mNzOS4). **Many companies think they're ok with a 5% monthly churn rate, even though that means they are losing about 46% of their customers every year.** That is not only a huge lost opportunity for revenue, but also a wasted investment of dollars spent on acquisition.

The CAC (Customer Acquisition Cost) invested by SaaS companies means renewals need to be treated with the same respect and gravity as sales. If your product is a subscription based model, ensuring renewals occur should always be top of mind.

5% Annual Churn Rate

| JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
SEP	OCT		
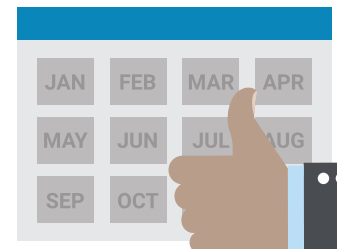
5% Monthly Churn Rate
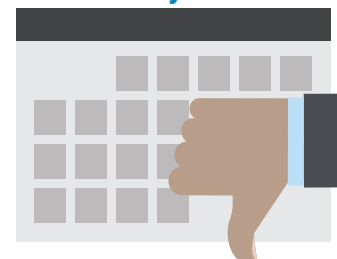
A CRM plays a huge role in facilitating the latter stages (service, support, retention, upselling, and renewals) of the sales cycle. Churn kills many SaaS companies. You may have a great product and a great team selling it, but if customers aren't sticking around, your company will fail. Having a Customer Success team that is actively onboarding and training new customers, as well as reviewing their use and success with the product is key to ensuring renewals occur.

Download our case study on SaaS Customer Success here (bit.ly/28Yu8aY).

CRM & Customer Success = Renewals

A CRM like Salesforce can integrate with your SaaS product, ensuring the data you have about your users, like how often they log in, what features they use and who is at risk of churning, is available in real time for your Customer Success team. A CRM allows your Customer Success team to proactively detect via workflows, notifications, and automated tasks, which accounts are at risk for abandonment. As a result, the Customer Success team can leverage all this information to maximize upsells and ensure renewals occur.
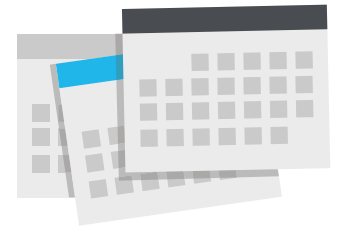
Renewals don't start 365 days after the sale. You need to warm the customers months before then.

CHAPTER 2

Why Do Startups In Particular Need a CRM?

The last chapter discussed reasons your SaaS organization should invest in a CRM. In over a decade of working both at and with fast growing startups, there are five common challenges we see startups face:

- Fast hiring and expansion means that silo'd data isn't accessible by new employees

- Investors expect data and founders have none

- No insight into how effective the Sales team (or in some cases salesperson) is

- Lack of data means no ability to make educated decisions

- Sophisticated Sales and Marketing hires expect a CRM and organizations do not have one

While all the reasons outlined in chapter one hold true for SaaS companies, the issues outlined above make investing in a CRM especially critical for startups.

The Founder Silo Dilemma

In the beginning, while founders are selling themselves, their company and their product, they are also rapidly learning about what the market needs. Which is great, because it helps startups avoid the pitfall of creating a perfect product that no one actually wants.

However, what can be a challenging byproduct of this is founders have immense amounts of information on early adopting clients as well as the market in general - but it's all trapped in their heads. This becomes problematic as a startup begins to gain traction and hire quickly; the information is stuck in the founder's head, leaving early employees no way of accessing it.

Using a CRM like Salesforce early on helps prevent this problem. Founders and employees automatically log emails (via a tool like SalesforceIQ Inbox) and documents like objection handling sheets and contracts are easily searchable by any employee. This means, when your startup begins to scale, new hires can quickly see every email and call that took place with a client (even ones that happened in the early days of the organization). Employees don't have to wait for a busy founder to run over each account with them in advance of a renewal or fill them in on a competitor's offerings.

In short, every new hire gets onboarded faster with immediate access to everything the company has already learned.

Keeping Investors Happy

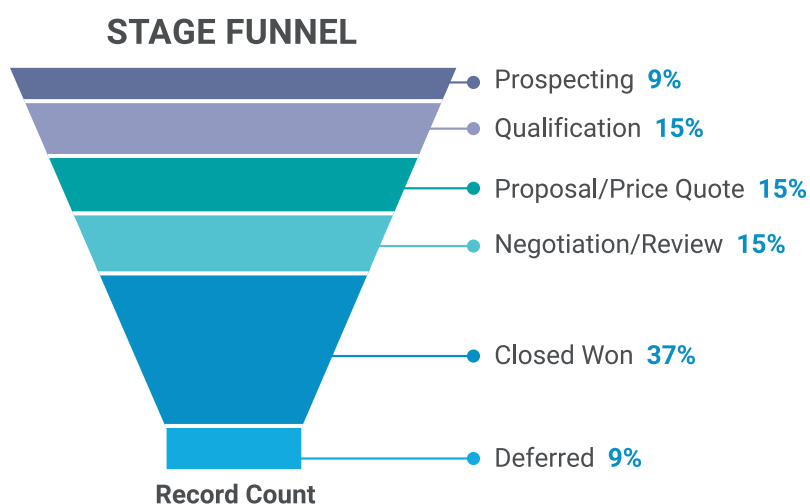An often overlooked reason to have a CRM is to help impress investors and keep them happy.

Investors who specialize in certain stages of the startup lifecycle are particularly focused on sales pipeline. Now that you have a product in market, they want to know how much pipeline is forecasted for the month, quarter, next fiscal year and so on. For most startups this can be agonizing information to produce. It simply isn't tracked and what is presented in pitch decks, and later in quarterly reviews, is a hilariously hockey-sticked revenue projection that can't be backed up and also obviously fails to take into account slow sales periods like summer vacations and December holidays.
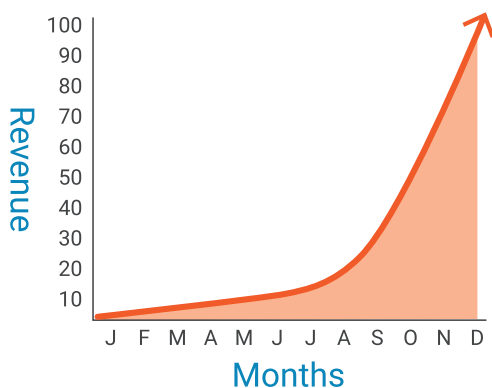
"Hockey stick" revenue projections fail to take slow sales periods (like holidays) into account.

Alternatively, an accurate pipeline report with an impressive funnel image can be run in Salesforce in just seconds. So quickly in fact, that we've seen pitch decks where the forecasted pipeline is timestamped "Pipeline Projection as of 8:10 am This Morning." It won't wow every investor, but it does impress some. Aside from the time-savings advantage, it demonstrates to investors that you are thinking into the future and have real metrics, not just a repeating formula in an Excel spreadsheet.

STAGE FUNNEL

Stage	%
Prospecting	**9%**
Qualification	**15%**
Proposal/Price Quote	**15%**
Negotiation/Review	**15%**
Closed Won	**37%**
Deferred	**9%**

Record Count

What is Sales Doing?

Startups often have trouble distinguishing between bad, good and great salespeople. Sales cycles might be a year long, especially for a nascent product, so they can't measure actual success in dollars won. In the months before a salesperson can be expected to hit quota, other factors have to be considered. How many calls and demos are they booking? How many proposals are being sent? How much pipeline are they building? It's having this information available at the touch of a button that can allow an early stage startup to recognize not only who their heroes are going to be, but also make informed and quick decisions about employees who are not going to make the cut.

Data Driven Decisions

Another challenge associated with not being able to measure actual success in sales, is early stage startups sometimes don't have accurate data to base their business decisions on. In the absence of revenue, fast growing companies need real-time access to information about sales performance, in order to make business decisions. A CRM, like Salesforce, helps better forecast revenue and cash flow. Founders can easily review forecasts and see if there is an impending crimp in expected pipeline. Noting this months in advance helps make decisions on when to/not to hire new employees, push to close a certain sale, and adjust pricing or make aggressive investments in marketing in order to increase the leads that the Sales team have to work.

Attracting Talent

The best Sales and Marketing people will not come work for a fast growing SaaS company with no plans to use a CRM. Every competent salesperson is already using a CRM at their current job, and knows firsthand the necessity of a CRM for sales enablement. Similarly, the best digital marketers know that tracking their performance and tying it back to sales is crucial to success and it takes a CRM and often a marketing automation platform to do that.

The best lead generation or salespeople you can hire already spend every day logged into a CRM. It is **the most important tool** they use to do their job.

You wouldn't hire a developer and not give them a laptop and you shouldn't hire a salesperson, marketer, or support/success team member without providing them a CRM license.

The best Sales and Marketing people will not come to work for a company that doesn't have a CRM

CHAPTER 3

How to Select a CRM

In the last few chapters, we've discussed why a CRM, like Salesforce, is a valuable investment for your SaaS company. If you're still with us, hopefully that means we've convinced you to invest. In any case, now we're going to talk about how you select a CRM.

Top 6 Considerations When Choosing a CRM:

1. Familiarity and Training of Staff

Do existing staff have experience using a specific CRM? Making people change the way they do their jobs everyday can be very challenging. Sometimes making that shift is more difficult than the actual implementation/migration to the platform itself. Consider which platform will be easiest for your employees to adopt.

2. Cost

Cost is a fairly straightforward consideration and often startups adopt a less sophisticated CRM and migrate to a platform like Salesforce as they begin to scale and have a bigger budget. However the cost of migrating from a legacy CRM to a new CRM can be high and is often underestimated. Here's why:

1. **Higher Implementation Costs:** adopting a CRM and allowing it to develop organically is much cheaper than having to build a complex system to match your existing CRM when you migrate to a new platform in the future.

2. **Migration Costs:** migrating data from your old CRM to the new can consume a significant amount of an employee's time or alternatively you'll have to pay an implementation partner to migrate your data for you.

3. **Decrease in Productivity:** you can expect a decrease in internal productivity for a minimum of two weeks following the roll out of your new CRM.

It's easy to understand why startups gravitate towards cheap/free CRM options. However, adopting a lower-end CRM can be expensive. It's important to examine the costs of your CRM in the context of the big picture. Salesforce for Startups has a program which can help bridge the gap and reduce your costs in the early days when resources are tight, more on that here (http://sforce.co/28XFI7O).

3. Scalability

Keep in mind that the longer you wait to roll out a tool like a CRM, the more difficult it will be to implement. As you grow, you'll have to retrain staff on software, change how you interface with customers, and continue to tweak the day-to-day process for your entire Sales team. Keeping that in mind, start early with a CRM solution and choose a CRM that can scale as you do.

4. Integrations

Taking an inventory of all the products that need to be integrated with your CRM can be a complex process. Not only does each individual tool need to integrate with your CRM, but all your tools as a whole have to be able to integrate with each other. The biggest mistake we see SaaS companies make is they evaluate integrations on an individual platform basis instead of as a whole.

Start by making a list of the platforms you're currently using that your CRM will need to integrate with. The downside of many free or cheap CRM options is that they only integrate with a limited number of tools. Because this is a complex consideration, chapter four tackles this in depth.

5. B2B vs B2C

CRMs are generally tailored to support a B2B business model. The complexity of the sales cycle for B2B models make CRMs far more essential for tracking leads and opportunities to sales completion. Depending on the size of your organization and the complexity of your sales cycle you may not need a CRM. If consumers are making a small, one-time online purchase, you may need more of an ecommerce plugin integrated with your product to capture customer information.

Every staff member you add makes the adoption of a CRM significantly harder.

6. Reporting

If you're a B2B SaaS company with a subscription based model, there are some specific reports that are essential to your business. If your pricing model includes renewals, you'll need a CRM that can calculate monthly recurring revenue (MRR), annual recurring revenue (ARR), and churn. You'll also need complex reporting capabilities surrounding your sales funnel. Long sale cycles and the lags in revenue mean a large focus on sales pipeline. It's crucial for fast growing SaaS companies to know, in real-time, how many opportunities are in the funnel, where opportunities are getting stuck, and which salespeople are closing the most deals. If you're a SaaS company your CRM must be able to produce the reports listed below.

Twelve Must-Have Reports

1. Opportunities you need to know about (closing soon, at risk of being lost etc)

2. Weekly activities by salesperson

3. Renewal dates by month

4. Customers not logging in or displaying other at risk behaviour

5. Average length of each opportunity stage

6. Booked revenue by month to be recognized (next 12 months)

7. Weighted forecast report

8. Opportunity pipeline broken out by new business, professional services, upselling and renewals

9. Customers that have not renewed with a renewal date in the next 30 days

10. Churned customers (renewal date has passed)

11. LTV (average broken out by type)

12. ARPU

Why We Often Recommend Salesforce

Often during these inventories, Salesforce comes out on top in every way but cost. While we understand the majority of startups are often most limited by cost, we'd argue that the upfront costs for Salesforce are small in comparison to the long-term benefits that this more mature product can offer.

Pros	Cons
• The largest feature set of any of the cloud CRM	• Can be complex and intimidating to configure
• Consistently the highest rated cloud CRM	• For the Enterprise package, the price can be high
• Largest user base and strong local expertise	• While community support is high, Salesforce support can be poor
• AppExchange allows for cost effective integrations with a wide range of tools	

CHAPTER 4

CRM Integrations

In the last chapter we gave a very brief overview of what to consider when looking at how your CRM will integrate with the other products in your technology stack.

Here's a quick recap:

- Start by making a list of the platforms you're currently using that your CRM will need to integrate with.

- The downside of many free or cheap CRM options is that they only integrate with a limited number of platforms.

- All the SaaS products that will be integrated with your CRM need to be evaluated as a whole and not in pieces.

- The custom objects in your Salesforce instance increase the complexity of integrating other SaaS tools with your CRM.

Custom Objects

First, let's tackle how you create custom objects in Salesforce. There are two ways custom objects are created in Salesforce. Most often when you see a custom object in Salesforce it's because you've deployed something within the AppExchange (aka you've installed an App and it's created custom objects for you). As an example, many Quote to Cash and Subscription Management/Payment systems will create custom objects. Alternatively, internally your Salesforce administrator may create custom objects to cover needs outside of what the native objects in Salesforce can fulfill. While Salesforce native objects do a good job of covering the majority of normal business needs, there may be things specific to your business that have to be customized.

Integrations

As we mentioned before, having custom objects increases the complexity of integrating other products with your CRM. In an ideal world, products or Apps that integrate with Salesforce only use native Salesforce objects. However, as we mentioned above, many complex integrations (like Quote to Cash solutions) create custom objects in Salesforce. A very common

example of this is the Product object. Some Quote to Cash platforms create their own custom Product object that replicates the functionality of native Salesforce Product object.

This can be an issue, if you have a Quote to Cash platform that uses a custom object called Product, then you install a payment processing platform that needs to talk to the native Product object in Salesforce. Those two platforms won't work in conjunction with each other. One platform will be calling home to the custom Product object and the other will call home to the native Product object. The overall result – no proper syncing of data between the CRM and two integrations.

Your Product

For software companies, having your own SaaS platform integrate with your CRM is especially helpful because it allows you to track things like product usage. For example, if synced, every time a user is created in your product, that information is populated in Salesforce as a contact. You might also track last login date, number of logins, subscription status and consumption information.

What to Keep in Mind When Talking to Your Sales Rep

When validating CRMs, ask the vendor's Sales representative to be specific about which version of the CRM you will need for the integrations you are planning. As an example, the Enterprise version of Salesforce is required for many third party integrations and for easy access to the API layer. That API access is a requirement if you want to link your product with Salesforce in the manner described above.

Cheap or Free Tools to Integrate with Salesforce

One of the reasons that Salesforce is such a great CRM is its robust app ecosystem. No other CRM has as much third-party support. There's a tool for almost everything you can think of, the majority of which can be easily integrated via the Salesforce AppExchange or one of Salesforce's 5 API methods. We've put together a list of the top ten free and low-cost tools that can help take your Salesforce implementation to the next level.

Salesforce Labs

Salesforce Labs is one of our favorite places to get free resources to improve Salesforce. It is a series of free apps on the Salesforce AppExchange built by passionate Salesforce employees. You can check them out here (http://sforce.co/28J7ROw).

Some of our favorites include Round Robin Record Assignments, the Agile Accelerator (if your organization uses an Agile Methodology) and the AppExchange Dashboard Pack. You can check them out here (http://sforce.co/18GVETL). This pack includes free dashboards and dozens of reports that will help you run your business better. We install it for every client we have so they have a better view into how Sales, Marketing, and Support are doing.

Link your Google Apps and Salesforce

If you are a fan of Salesforce, there is a good chance you are a "Cloud First" company and also use Google Apps like Docs. With a few clicks you can link Google Docs and Salesforce, allowing those always up-to-date sources of information to be at every salesperson's fingertips in the platform they already use every day. As an example, a salesperson could search for a competitor's name in Salesforce, while on a call with a client, and automatically pull up the competitive intelligence document another co-worker has in their Google Drive.

SalesforceIQ Inbox (Sales Cloud and Gmail)

Not to be confused with the beginner-tier CRM called SalesforceIQ, the Inbox connector is your integration between Salesforce and your Gmail account. It does the important tasks of populating your emails into Salesforce and displaying information from the CRM about who you are emailing in a Gmail sidebar. It also allows you to create leads, contacts and opportunities within Gmail, notifies you if you forget to follow up on something, and has a dynamic scheduling tool (our favourite feature). It is not free, but the amount of time it will save you every month is well worth the price.

Customer Support and Service

Online chat is one of the most overlooked lead generation and customer support tools that startups have at their disposal. You can generate qualified leads easily and reduce friction in how your prospects reach out to you. Can you afford to miss any opportunity to sell to customers in the moment – like when they are on your pricing page and have a question?

Most of the major Click to Chat platforms integrate with CRMs, but they can be expensive. However, the very reasonably priced Olark does a great job and begins at only $17 a month. It also integrates easily with whatever instant messenger programs your staff already use and they can automatically load chats into Salesforce as new leads.

Retaining customers with great service can seem hard, but there is software designed to help with that. Desk.com (owned by Salesforce) is an excellent solution and so low-cost that you are doing yourself a disservice if you aren't using it. Using a program like Desk.com can also be a cost savings. Seats are significantly cheaper than Salesforce seats, so every Support rep using Desk.com instead of a more expensive full CRM license saves dollars.
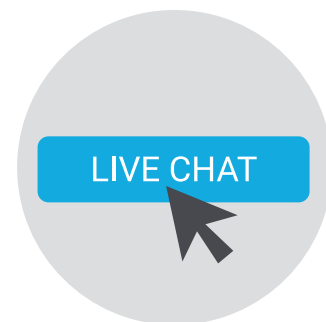
Data Integrity

Duplicate leads and contacts are a problem as old as CRMs. Even though it is critical for keeping your database neat and tidy, uploading or downloading data into Salesforce can be a pain. Try using Dataloader.io to import/export/delete data in large batches, something which many Salesforce admins have to do daily.

Salesforce also now has its own duplicate detection tool and reports that come free with their product, and for power users there are many other products that catch dupes. DupeCatcher is free and has a 4/5 star rating, check it out here (http://sforce.co/1nTMjMb).
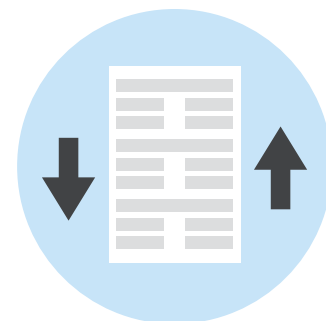
MailChimp

MailChimp is an email marketing service that allows you to create targeted campaigns and automate helpful follow-ups. Their "Forever Free" plan, which allows you to send 12,000 total emails a month to up to 2,000 subscribers, should be able to support your business. While not a full-featured Marketing Automation tool, the price is low and the Salesforce integration is well supported.

Trailhead

Salesforce Trailhead bills itself as "the fun way to learn Salesforce." Now ideas of what is fun and what is not vary, but this is the best training we have seen for Salesforce and it is free. There is always an upfront time investment for staff to learn how to use Salesforce and Trailhead helps with that by providing easily digestible tracks for Beginners, Admins and power users. We recommend at least one person in your organization takes the Admin Beginner trail and that all employees take the Learn CRM Essentials trail (http://sforce.co/1qirJNJ).

Internal Communications

Every Salesforce license comes with access to Chatter, an internal social network. Imagine the power of Slack, baked into your CRM; it is the most efficient way to communicate with staff. As an added bonus, you can add people who aren't Salesforce licensed users to Chatter at no cost – making it essentially a free internal communications tool. Many startups have employees who work remotely, and Chatter helps keep everyone in your organization connected. When used effectively, it makes collaboration between Sales and Marketing and relaying feedback from users to the product development team much easier. It also has document management that can be linked with Google Docs, Box or Dropbox. Having all that information taggable and easily searchable by any employee means every new hire gets onboarded faster and has immediate access to everything the company knows.

CHAPTER 5

Sales Enablement

After you have your CRM solution in place, the next piece of the puzzle is leveraging your CRM to enable sales. In this chapter we're going to explore marketing automation, creating workflows, drip campaigns, and a lead scoring framework.

Marketing Automation

Marketing automation is how you convert your website visitors into leads, your leads into customers and your customers into loyal brand advocates. In its most basic form, marketing automation involves creating rules to automate communications (generally email) and handle online form submissions. However, when used to its full potential, it is much more than just an email platform and should accelerate your Sales team's efforts.

Need to know more? Download our Marketing Automation eBook here (http://bit.ly/28IQEad).
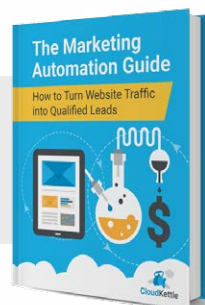
In addition to automated responses, marketing automation platforms perform a variety of operations behind the scenes to provide business intelligence. As soon as a potential customer fills out a form on your website, a marketing automation tool can check to see if they exist in your CRM and add them as a lead if they have not already been captured. Marketing automation can also try to verify the new email address against any social media profiles (adding that information to your CRM if it can), and check their IP to determine if their country, city, and state can be gleaned as well.

Sales Intelligence & Lead Scoring

As potential customers revisit your website or open emails, their profile in your CRM can be updated automatically and over time, a tool like Pardot gets a better picture of their interests and what products your organization

offers that may be best suited to them. Marketing automation can also calculate and pass a score to the CRM indicating how likely they might be to make a purchase. For example, certain actions, like visiting a pricing page, might signal that a lead is in "buying mode" and alert Sales to contact them. This process is called lead scoring.

Lead scoring is as much an art as a science, and goes hand in hand with using a CRM and marketing automation tool effectively. A lead score can be based on a lead's website activity, what they have downloaded, if they've been opening emails, the size of the company, annual revenue, what country they are based in – almost anything. Moreover, you can have your Sales team alerted via email if a lead returns to the site after a period of quiet time, so no opportunity is missed.

Why use Lead Scoring?

Eventually, you will grow to a point where your CRM will have more leads than your Sales team can work. A CRM is essential in prioritizing which leads your Sales team should work first based on likelihood to buy and velocity of sale. Salespeople often have a hard time prioritizing which sales or leads to work. Lead scoring and less reliance on "gut" means Sales can work the best leads first. This tremendously increases the productivity of your salespeople by eliminating time spent chasing leads that are unlikely to close. We'll talk more in the next chapter about BANT, an easy method for qualifying leads, which is a great starting point for many startups looking to adopt a lead qualification framework.

Support is Sales

One of the most common, and detrimental mistakes that SaaS companies make is to spend too much time chasing the early sale and not enough ensuring those customers stick around. In the first chapter we talked briefly about churn and how using a CRM can help increase renewals (and, in turn, decrease churn).

The reason we place so much emphasis on making sure those renewals occur, is because it can cost five times as much to acquire a new customer as it does to keep a current one. That's why you need a platform to ensure you handle support as well as you handle sales. A platform that will help you manage all your email, phone, social media and online
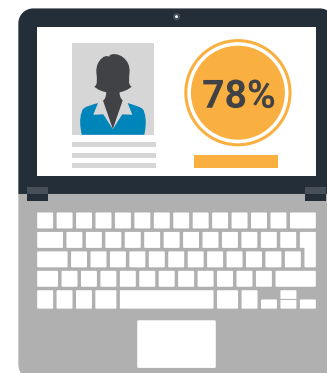
support requests – not only ensuring everyone is responded to in a timely manner, but also helping you spot what your customer's most common pain points are and fixing those issues.

Build a Culture of Support

If you have paying customers, here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Are we using a dedicated tool to work and track support tickets?

- Is there a formal process for onboarding and training new customers?

- Can the customer access support resources 24/7 (especially important if you sell outside your timezone)?

- Does the leadership team review the support tickets and stats every month?

Providing great support can seem expensive, but it doesn't have to be. In fact, if done right, it saves money by reducing the time and effort it takes to get a customer onboarded and cuts back on the amount of time the development team has to work on tickets.

Use a dedicated, cost effective support platform like Desk.com, Intercom, or Zendesk. They ensure you don't end up with forgotten tickets, you have full info on the client you're helping at your fingertips, and you know what previous cases they have had with you. They often also provide easy to manage, self-service knowledge bases for customers to access 24/7 and they allow you to track how your support efforts are going overall.

CHAPTER 6

BANT: A Lead Qualification Method

In the last chapter, we talked about marketing automation, and introduced lead scoring. The next step is lead qualification. In this section we'll take a look at the BANT method for qualifying leads, which we often recommend to fast growing SaaS companies. A widely used, generally accepted, and easy-to-understand method for qualifying leads, BANT was purportedly created by IBM.

BANT Methodology for Qualifying Leads

Once you have your leads scored and your Sales Development Representatives (SDRs) working the most promising ones, they still need a measurement in order to determine who gets passed on to Sales and who gets bounced out of the qualification funnel (hopefully to re-enter it via a Marketing Automation nurture campaign at a later date).

There needs to be an official "moment" when the SDR can hand a lead off to Sales as qualified (and be compensated for it). In Salesforce parlance, this would be when a lead is ready to be converted or when an opportunity is ready to be created. While there are many ways of doing this, BANT is the method we prefer for smaller or less experienced Sales teams.
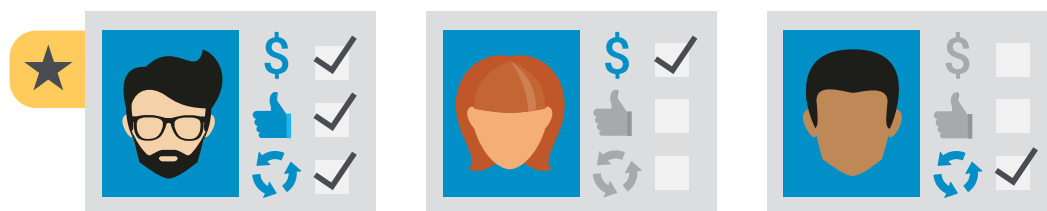
What does BANT stand for?

The acronym BANT stands for Budget, Authority, Need, and Timeline.

Budget	Do they have the ability to spend?
Authority	Do they have the authority to make the purchase?
Need	Does the lead have an urgent problem?
Timeline	Do we know a timeframe for when the decision and purchase will be made?

Why Use BANT?

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of different sales qualification methodologies to choose from. While many are excellent, most are also highly customized to the organizations they service. Which is great – if your organization is developed to the point of needing a customized lead qualification system. However, for smaller or less experienced Sales teams, BANT is an excellent foundation to use until your organization is able to develop one of its own.

BANT is great because it forces Sales, as well as Management and Marketing, to ask hard questions. Questions most people don't like to ask. It's also excellent because it helps determine where efforts (in terms of what leads and opportunities to work) should be focused. Which, in part, means organizations can more quickly weed out the tire kickers that are a drain on your resources. It is also easy to remember and to understand – important for a fast growing, green Sales team.

Eliminating Garbage Leads = More Realistic Pipeline

Steady use of BANT, or another well thought out lead qualification process, provides a more realistic pipeline and helps determine which salespeople are heroes and which are laggards. After all, if every lead being thrown over the fence from Marketing to Sales is qualified, there should be some consistency among salespeople on how many convert to sales. In short, it helps take away the complaint that Sales (or a particular salesperson) is getting garbage leads. Sales and Marketing (assuming Marketing oversees the lead generation team) hopefully have already agreed on a lead qualification methodology and that Marketing will provide Sales XX number of qualified leads a month. If Marketing lives up to their end of the bargain this helps reduce a lot of friction between these two departments.

Establishing that official "moment" when a lead is handed-off, and comping the lead generation team based on the BANT qualified leads they produce, forces Marketing to generate something better than just "leads." If, at the end of the day, Marketing's success is measured by qualified leads passed and the cost for each, Marketing is incented to generate, nurture and qualify higher quality leads. Something more than just a list that was bought at a trade show or online.

Ready to Get Started?

It isn't as simple as just saying "ok everyone – we are BANT now. Go BANT some stuff." First and foremost, Sales and Marketing need to agree that a BANT lead is a qualified lead ready for Sales and also on how many are going to be passed per month. Only after that agreement has been made is your organization is ready to implement BANT.

Implementing your CRM

Once you've selected your CRM of choice, you need to know, or at least be thinking about a couple of key things before you begin implementation. In order to harness the true power of your CRM it has to be configured and customized properly.

In many cases, your implementation should be done by a professional. A professional partner will want to know how your sales process works, where it needs help, and what the shiny new CRM is expected to improve. The issue for startups is that the answers to these questions are not always known. Even if they are known, they may change during the time it takes to implement a CRM. Even a four-week Salesforce implementation can be a lifetime for a startup. So what to do?

Prepare Before Engaging a Salesforce Implementation Partner

For your startup, some of the questions that follow might not be known, but even "best guesses" are helpful. The very process of the founder and executive team thinking about these things can have a positive effect and doing this will save you time and money once you begin your engagement. Try whiteboarding them as a team, then have someone put the answers in a shared Google doc where they can be refined over a few days.

Overall, document as much information as you can – don't worry, these aren't final answers or set in stone. Your instance of Salesforce should evolve with your sales process and team.

Questions to Ponder in Advance:

1. What roles will exist in the organization that will be using Salesforce (some examples below)?

   - Lead Generation
   - Sales Team Member
   - Sales Team Leader
   - Customer Support (possibly only accessing information via the customer support platform)
   - Customer Success
   - Executives
   - Finance and Accounting

2. Thinking about the team members above, roughly how many total Salesforce licenses might be needed in the next 6 months?

3. What platforms will Salesforce ideally be integrated with (some examples below)?

   - Customer Support, like Desk.com
   - Click to Chat, like Olark
   - Marketing automation, like Pardot or Hubspot
   - Your SaaS platform (so you can track and sync customer's last login date, registered users etc)

4. How is your core product packaged from a sales perspective. Is it sold by the seat, single company licenses, single implementations? If it is sold over a time period, is it monthly and/or annual?

5. Are sales generally one-offs or are renewals or upsells an anticipated part of the sales process?

6. What is the anticipated dollar value of an average sale and how long is it expected it might take to complete a sale?

7. Roughly how many products will be for sale and will there also be complementary services sold (implementation fees, professional services, service level contracts and support packages)?

8. Will products initially be sold in a single currency or will there be multiple currencies?

9. What is the "best guess" on what the sales and onboarding process will look like (example below)?

- Lead is pursued by Sales via cold calling and email
- Initial calls are used to qualify the lead (2-3)
- An online demo is scheduled and occurs
- Proposal is sent to customer and negotiated
- Contract is signed
- Product is provisioned
- Invoice is paid
- Product is pushed live (deal is complete)
- Customer Success trains new user

A lot to think about right? A good implementation partner will help you refine the answers to these questions, but if you are already thinking about them, they'll be able to more quickly begin building a scope of work and proposal for you. And getting things done faster is always a win for a startup.

CHAPTER 8

Salesforce Custom Reports for SaaS Companies

Once you've implemented Salesforce (or the CRM of your choosing), and it's been fully integrated and optimized, the next step is looking at how you can leverage reports. In chapter 3 you can find our list of top twelve must have reports for SaaS startups. In this chapter we're going to review how to create two of the custom reports that are included in that list and are slightly more complex to configure.

One we call "Opportunities You Need to Know About." We find this report is helpful in terms of what Opportunities should be top of mind with the executive team when they discuss pipeline health with the Sales reps (or salesperson as the case may be at a young company). The other, a "Weekly Activities" report, shows what type and how many activities team members have had over the past 7 days.

Salesforce Report:
Opportunities You Need to Know About

We originally created this report to track stuck Opportunities, but over time have added improvements, like including deals that are set to close in the coming week. This is a useful report for a weekly Sales coaching meeting, but also to quickly identify trends that the leadership team should be aware of.

It shows opportunities:

- That have been stuck too long in one stage

- That have been newly created this week and are closing in the current or next quarter

- That have been qualified, but still do not have products added (this one will depend on if your organization uses the Products feature of Salesforce)

- That are set to close this week

- That are still open, but have a close date in the past
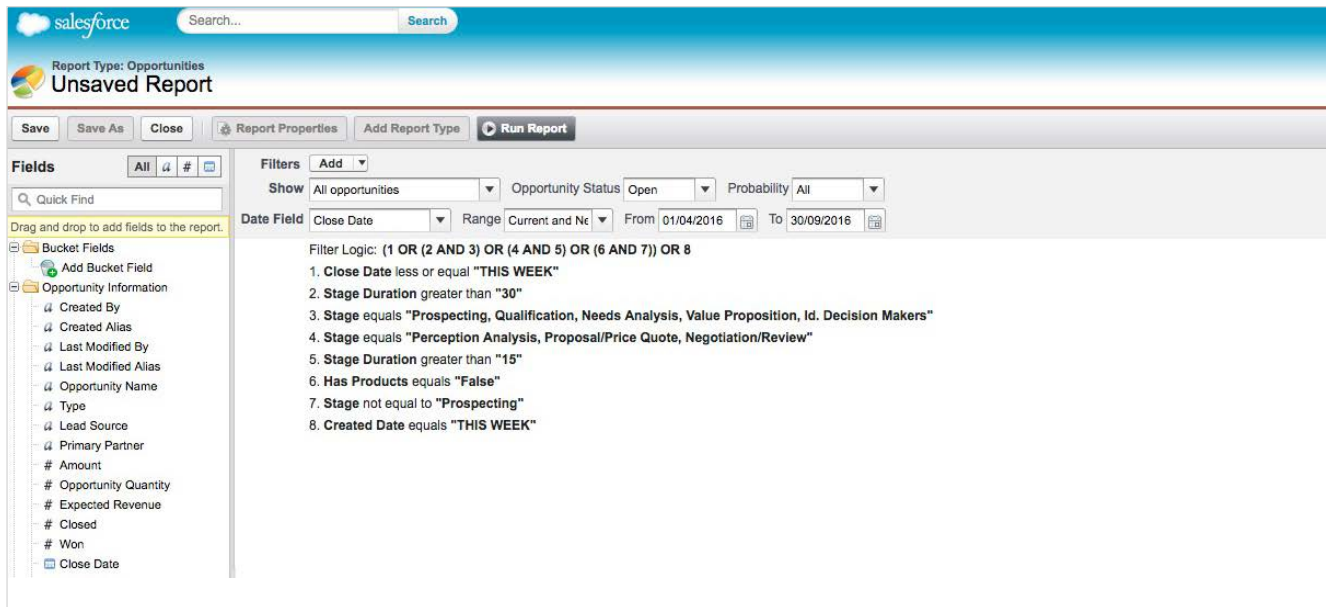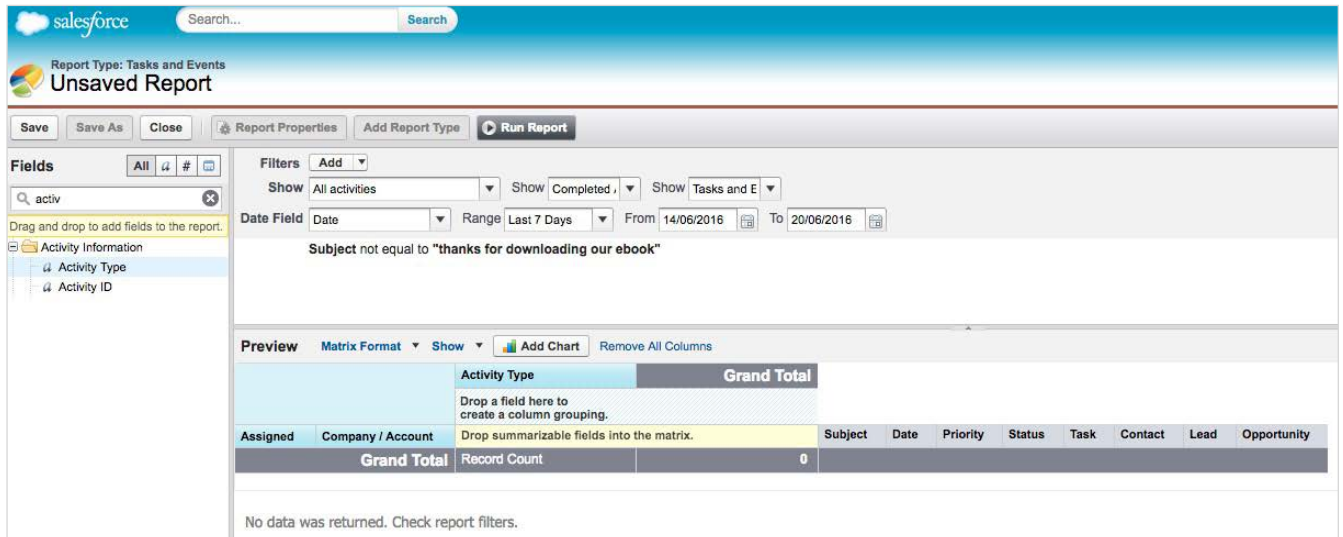
To create your report:

1. Go to **Reports**

2. Select **New Report** and in the Opportunities folder choose **Opportunities**, then click **Create**

3. Show All Opportunities with "Open" Status and Probability as "All"

4. Set Close Date to **Current and Next CQ**

5. Add Filters

    * Close date is less or equal to THIS WEEK

    * Stage Duration is greater than 30

    * Stage equals (choose your organization's low-level stages)

    * Stage equals (choose your organization's high level stages)

    * Stage Duration is greater than 15

    * Has products equals False

    * Stage equals (choose your organization's stages that indicate an Opportunity has not yet been fully qualified, for example "Prospecting")

    * Created Date equals THIS WEEK

    * Filter by 1 OR (2 AND 3) OR (4 AND 5) OR (6 AND 7) OR 8

6. Beside Preview, update the Report from Tabular Format to **Matrix Format**

7. Group information by Stage and Type

Salesforce Report:
Weekly Activities Report

Our second favorite report is the activities report. It shows activities (at a glance), by team member and (perhaps more importantly) by type. Often, one of the first reactions by founders to declining sales productivity is to mandate a set number of activities per week. The outcome from Sales is generally a bias in activity type towards emails and voicemails (easy and fast to complete by staff), which isn't always a positive. This report allows you to see not only who is actively making contact with customers, but also how. An employee sending dozens of emails a day is probably generating less value than one with a similar number of calls-connected and demos.

1. Go to **Reports**

2. Select **New Report** and in the Activities folder choose **Tasks and Events**, then click **Create**

3. Show All Activities and Show Completed Activities and Show Tasks and Events

4. Set Date Field to **Date** and range to **Last 7 Days**

5. Add Filters to remove by-products of Marketing Automation (usually by eliminating certain email subject lines)

6. In the Preview area, select **Matrix**

7. Drag Assigned and Company/Account into the left hand blue area. Then drag Activity type slightly to the right and above this.

8. Save

9. Add a chart and choose the horizontal bar option. Make the X-Axis the Record Count and the Y-Axis Assigned. Then Group by Activity Type.

10. Save again.

11. Run

For some more complex (but extremely useful) Salesforce hacks, check out this post by Matt Bertuzzi (http://bit.ly/SFhacks).

Wrap up

What is the Salesforce for Startups Program?

We mentioned the Salesforce for Startups program earlier in chapter three and as promised, we're going to give you a brief run down on the program. The description below is from *The SaaS Startup Founder's Guide*, published by Salesforce for Startups.

"Salesforce for Startups is a program designed to provide access to the Salesforce technology, tools, and expertise needed to become a customer- and community-focused company — and succeed. As a member, you gain access to a self-service website where you are able to discover products, track your progress, and inspire others by sharing your startup story with the Salesforce for Startups community."

To access the program, register at startups.salesforce.com using the referral code: **PFOCLDKTL**
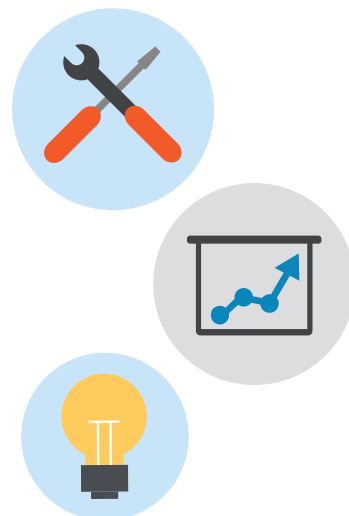
Conclusion

If you're a fast growing SaaS company with a B2B enterprise sales model, a CRM is much more than just a database of client information. If used properly it accelerates your Sales team's impact, streamlines Marketing's efforts, and enables Customer Success.

A CRM is the foundation for managing complex sales cycles, reducing churn, and empowering your Sales team to close deals faster. Keep your investors happy with real-time reporting and make data-driven decision to grow your business by investing in a CRM solution today.

Download our Salesforce Integrations: Top Tools List here.

Interested in knowing more about how organizations are using CRM's to acquire more qualified leads and close sales more quickly?

Call us or check us out online:

Cloud Kettle

Call us at 1-800-878-4756 ext 202
Find us on the web cloudkettle.com
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