

FIVE
CUTTING EDGE
Software Solutions
To Grow Your Small
BUSINESS



CAPTERRA

Your business is on the upswing: you've just passed your first big sales milestone, customers are increasing and word about your product is spreading. You want to continue growing your business. In fact, you want to grow your business faster than ever.

At Capterra, connecting software buyers and vendors allows us to talk to thousands of small businesses just like yours every month. We'd like to share some of what we've learned in that process.

Your collection of software probably already includes the basics like accounting, CRM and payroll solutions. What you likely don't have are the following five types of software that can help your business rapidly expand, and help you keep up with the growth.

Content Management Software

You probably have a website and have hopefully gotten a small taste of what it can do to expose you to new business opportunities. Most likely, you have just reached the tip of the iceberg. As you expand, you'll want your website to be able to do new things, more things or the same things, but better. Content management software makes all of these "things" easy to implement. It allows

for organized, smooth uploading and tweaking of website content with little to no HTML knowledge. Want to add video, forums, polls and news feeds? Need to update your pictures or staff information? Want to keep track of documents and blog posts? The easiest way to do all of this and keep your website fresh is by using a content management system.

At Captterra, we've found that the best way to increase the number of visitors who become qualified leads and customers is to constantly tweak, update and analyze your website to improve your user experience. With content management software you can streamline these activities by automating many of them and by easily keeping track of all your adjustments and additions.

Lead management software helps to organize and track all these factors so that nothing slips between the cracks

Email Marketing Software

By now you should have some method of collecting email addresses from leads, customers and visitors to your website. If not, start asking for email addresses from visitors who access a demo, order a product, request information or download a white paper. Email marketing software can help you take these visitors, and convert them into leads and customers. What better way to grow your client base than by reaching out to someone who already trusts you enough to give

you their email address?

The same goes for prospects that you meet at tradeshows, networking events, seminars or any other place where you are in a position to gather email addresses. The more email addresses you can collect from potential clients, the more lead cultivation you can perform by inviting them to events, announcing new products or initiatives, or sharing case studies of your current clients – all via email.

If you want to easily run and track an email campaign, get data on opens, bounce-backs, unsubscribes and contact lists, email marketing software can help. Managing a campaign manually is tedious and time consuming, and leaves you open to errors.

Lead Management Software

Now that you've used your website and email marketing campaigns to generate tons of leads, you need to manage those leads. Which leads are ripe for becoming customers and should be contacted by a sales rep? Which ones are early on in the buying cycle and need to be nurtured and not forgotten? Which campaigns generate the most qualified leads for sales? Lead management software helps to organize and track all these factors so that nothing slips between the

cracks and you don't lose any potential customers through inattention or inaction. Lead management software can play a crucial role in the process of cultivating your leads and turning them into sales, which will in turn play an important part in growing your customer base.

Social Networking Software

Your website doesn't have to be a one-way flow of information from you to your customers. In fact, it probably shouldn't be.

Your website doesn't have to be a one-way flow of information from you to your customers. In fact, it probably shouldn't be. Customers and prospects are bursting with ideas, comments, complaints and praise that can be extremely useful in evaluating your own products or services and, hopefully, improving them. As you grow, you might also find that some of these ideas can lead you into new product lines and other opportunities for expansion. What's a good way to engage with your user community and tap into that boundless source of advice and ideas? Allow them to engage with each other, of course! Social networking software, aside from letting everyone in the office "poke" each other over the internal intranet, can help you set up a customized network for your target market. For example, if you sell widgets, create a social network for people interested in widgets. Widget users, designers, producers and others can then talk about what widgets they like and why, they can create groups centered around a call for more green widgets or fewer blue ones, and they can seek (and give) advice on how to best manufacture and use widgets.

Survey Software

Every growing company needs quantifiable data on customer preferences, market tendencies or user reactions to new products. This type of information can be easily gathered through the use of survey software. Want to find out whether that great idea you had for powering your product with hamster wheels would be attractive to your customers? Simply send them a survey and ask! Want to publish a press release about how 9 out of 10 widget users prefer hamster wheel power to traditionally generated electricity in their widgets? Send your users a survey and get the data

that proves it! Surveys not only allow you to quickly evaluate the needs and desires of your customer base (and integrate those desires into an improved product), they also provide great information to bring outside attention to your product or service. If you can not only say that your product is offering consumers what they really want, but also show it, odds are high that you'll be able to increase visibility. Survey software makes creating, sending and evaluating surveys easy. It can help you create custom groups for sending questions to, measure the number and rate of responses and

analyze the data.



Capterra is the premier online guide connecting buyers and sellers of business software. Software buyers have free access to a comprehensive and interactive database of solutions to find and compare all kinds of software for their organizations. Software companies get listed for free and can upgrade to paid listings in order to drive web traffic and generate sales leads. Visit us at www.capterra.com!

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