

The Ultimate Guide to why slow user adoption affects 49% of CRM projects



Low adoption rates and general indifference can kill your CRM project – here's how to combat that problem.



The Ultimate Guide to: why slow user adoption affects 49% of CRM projects

Low adoption rates and general indifference can kill your CRM project – here's how to combat that problem.

A CRM system is only as useful, or valuable, as the data stored in it. Customer Relationship Management principles rely on capturing details of every customer interaction to build up a comprehensive, accurate profile of clients and their purchasing habits. This is where many businesses go wrong when deploying a CRM system.

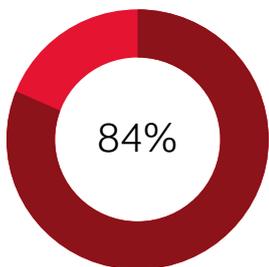


It's not just a "sales" thing

CRM adoption (or replacement) is often driven by the Sales team who quickly realise that they need CRM to:

- Keep track of new leads.
- Record details of upcoming opportunities.
- Use historical data to identify new trends and opportunities, or chances for value-add sales.

Each reason provides a compelling business case in itself for the Sales team. Indeed, 84% of businesses choose to implement a CRM system specifically to improve sales.



[84% of businesses choose to implement CRM to help improve sales.](#)

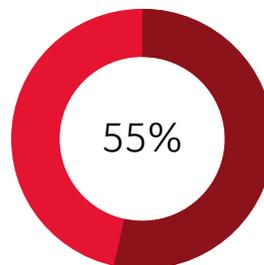
Where the benefits for CRM are only ever considered in light of the Sales team's needs, or their involvement in a deployment project is left until the later stages, other business units will assume that:

- Their input is unnecessary and that they have no part to play in capturing customer data or using CRM software.
- Any benefits their department realise will be incidental or minimal at best.

Little wonder then that [49% of businesses report slow user adoption as one of the many challenges they face to project success](#). The same research indicates that a further 15% of businesses have problems implementing the organisational change required to align with new ways of working.

Prioritising the Sales team presents all kinds of potential issues for the CRM project team. From simple political push-back against the project, to outright interdepartmental war, the way in which CRM projects are announced and managed will play a major factor in how long it takes for the system to begin generating a return on investment.

[68% of project managers anticipate scepticism over CRM as being a major challenge](#) when presenting a business case, by far the most significant - and common - concern. Such concerns seem to be well-justified too, because the same research indicates that more than half of businesses using CRM report user satisfaction rates of average or lower.



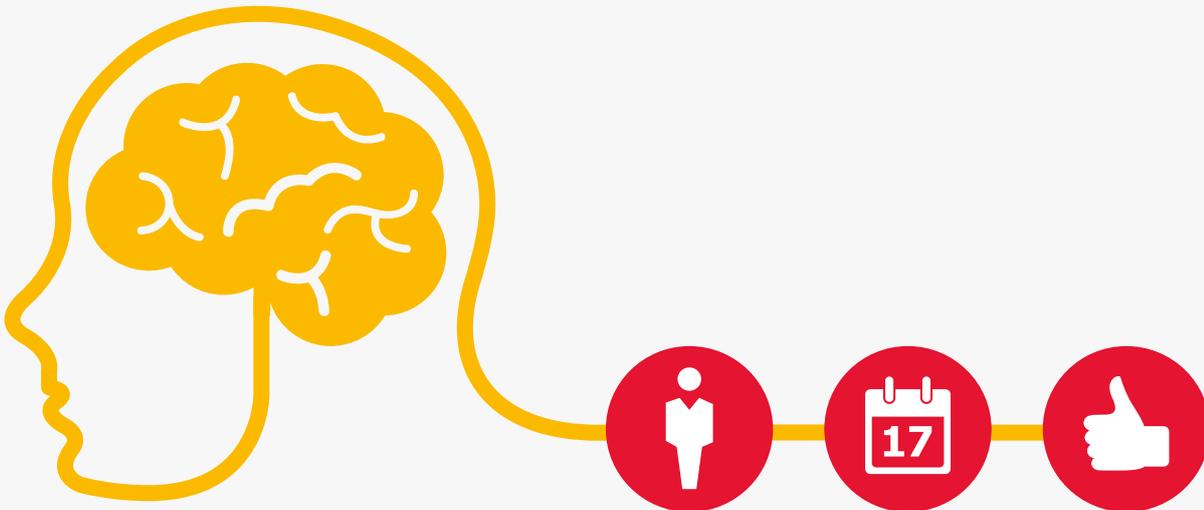
[55% of businesses report lower than average CRM user satisfaction rates.](#)

CRM is everyone's job

Client-facing or not, every employee plays an important part in delivering the high quality of service that customers demand. Every customer-related activity has a value and creates data –

data that needs to be captured in the company CRM system. Everyone has a part to play as soon as CRM goes live; a slow user adoption rate is unacceptable.

“The customer database is the backbone of your relationship with the customer. Think about it as your brain. It is where you store your knowledge about the customer, use it to sell and service him and anticipate his needs. The more you collect in the customer database, the better you can fit your solution to his needs and the higher the likelihood of doing business with the customer.

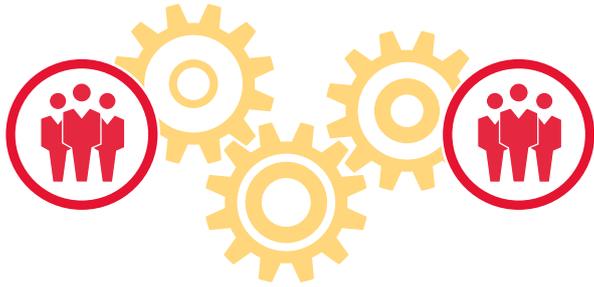


To drive better experience, the customer database should serve as a repository of information shared by everyone in the organisation. So no matter where the customer calls within the organisation, everyone is fully informed and the customer does not need to repeat his issue (major dissatisfaction factor). Additionally, the more information you collect about your customer (e.g., birthdays) the more personalised their experience will be. The more personalisation you can factor into the experience, the more loyal your customer will become.”

[Lior Arussy](#), President of Customer Experience Specialist Strativity Group.

Marketing

The CRM system plays a vital role in the relationship between the Marketing and Sales teams, one which is often fraught.



By using CRM to capture leads, the Marketing team can help ensure they are kept warm and escalated to the Sales team for conversion at the right moment.

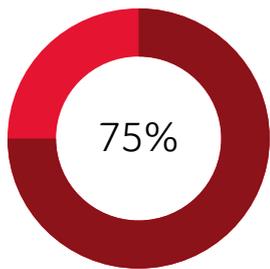
But why would the Marketing team want to help Sales in this way? When using CRM, lead qualification rules can be formalised and automated, helping to kill accusations that the Marketing team is passing on poor quality leads. Responsibilities are clearly delineated when the CRM rules are designed and implemented, ending any disputes about lead quality before they begin.

As the CRM system is populated, the Marketing team will be able to mine the data - looking for insights and trends that can be used to inform future marketing campaigns. When applied correctly, these insights will help improve campaign success rates.



Service and support

Once a lead has been converted and the sale closed, most future contact will be via the service and support department. The relationship between your business and the client needs to be maintained after the handover from sales to service, not restarted from scratch. In doing so, customers receive a better all-round experience without the frustration of constantly sharing the same basic information at every interaction with your business.



[of consumers say they have spent more with a company because of a history of positive customer service experiences.](#)

But again, the benefits of feeding service call data into the CRM system are realised by Sales and service.

- The service team can quickly identify common problems and trends that affect multiple customers, feeding this information back to product development or training to better improve customer service.
- Where gaps are identified, the sales team can sell product upgrades, additional training or other add-ons that improve the customer's experience and help raise company turnover.

As before, the true benefits for the sales team are only realised if they too are involved in CRM data capture.



Finance

In very few cases would it be advisable to place accounts data in a CRM system, but it does make good business sense to link basic data between Finance and Sales.



By being able to view customer relationships individually and as a whole, the Finance department can also see contextual value information that goes beyond the black-and-white sales figures like:

- The customer accounts that cost more to manage than they generate.
- Product lines that are cost-ineffective over the longer term.

Although the balance sheet will always be king, CRM can provide additional context that will help to better plan resource and budget allocation.

The Sales team can also be informed of low-value accounts and account types, so that they can be avoided in future sales efforts, or resources diverted to trying to attract higher value clients.

Securing buy-in

The key to preventing CRM project failure, or slow system uptake, is to secure buy-in from key stakeholders in every business unit at the early stages of project planning.



“Survey respondents say the number one reason for the success of strategic initiatives at their organisation is leadership buy-in and support. Nevertheless, only half of those surveyed say that strategy implementation as a whole receives appropriate C-suite attention. Moreover, 28% admit that individual projects to implement strategy do not typically obtain the necessary senior-level sponsorship. Such a lapse in leadership inevitably decreases the ability to implement strategy.”

[Why good strategies fail: Lessons for the C-suite](#) - The Economist Intelligence Unit.

Almost without fail, slow CRM adoption rates are caused by corporate cultural issues, including a failure to understand the wider benefits of adopting such systems and strategies for departments outside sales. Worse still, where CRM is not integrated into wider business strategy, “enforcing” uptake is almost impossible, leading to the perception of project failure.

To improve adoption rates and ultimate project success:



Involve department heads in the project planning and product selection processes.



Outline the expected benefits outside sales of using CRM.



Encourage stakeholders to become CRM advocates who can explain the benefits of customer relationship management to their respective departments.



Ensure buy-in at board level to provide the political clout required to push adoption rates up.



Already have a CRM in place? Learn more about exactly where the system is failing to deliver by downloading your free copy of the Report: **what people really think about CRM.**

[Learn more](#)