



Dollars & Sense

Implementing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Strategy in Yellow Pages

10/05/2006 - By [Lester Garnett](#), Janac Strategic Solutions Inc.

Yellow Pages publishers pride themselves in the ability to maintain their positions against their counterparts in the competitive advertising media. As the industry grows the challenge will increase as members of the advertising community chase so few annual advertising dollars. The only way to survive is to differentiate oneself in the marketplace, and to strive by creating a sustainable competitive advantage to increase sales, market share and retain your most profitable customers.

One way companies face this challenge is by turning to Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions to help achieve this highly competitive advantage. CRM is a corporate strategy that engages the capabilities, methodologies and technologies of an enterprise to create, manage and maintain lasting relationships with its customers. It is not a technology itself, but a holistic approach in an organization's attitude that focuses on a 360 degree view of its customers. The purpose is to better manage customers through the introduction of reliable systems and processes (CRM tools) that are integrated end-to-end across marketing, sales and customer service; having information in one place to be accessed by all.

Providing the sales teams with this important tool will enable them to increase sales and retain their customers. By adopting a CRM strategy, you can leverage valuable information from daily contacts with your customers. This facilitates the ability to gain insights to your customers' needs and then applying that insight to develop customer strategies that result in a positive bottom-line impact on your organization.

CRM in the Yellow Pages industry offers publishers a competitive advantage in four areas: pricing, up-selling and cross-selling, development of new tailored products and costs reduction. CRM solutions are delivered through various vendors on the web. It is important to partner with a vendor that understands and specializes in your industry and provides workable solutions tailored to accomplish your goals. It is also important that you select a CRM solution that can be accessed 24 hours a day by your Team, so they serve the customer promptly and efficiently. A hosted web-based CRM system is convenient, easy to use and reduces waiting time, thus making your sales reps more productive and efficient.

Most companies are successful in reaping significant benefits of deployed hosted web-based CRM systems that yield immediate results and demonstrates a positive ROI. Hosted systems require zero infrastructure investment, are quickly deployable and provide quick access to information.

Some important principles for successful web-based CRM

1. Voice of Customers:

Every sales person knows one of their most important responsibilities is to listen to the customers – for both explicit and implicit messages. Explicit messages are clear requests for addressing specific needs. Implicit messages can be found in patterns of queries or word

usage that provides clues to the astute salespersons about their clients' interests and needs. CRM provides the tool to give attention to both types of messages.

2. Give customers what they want:

Once you know what a customer wants – you can respond. CRM provides a clear message to the salesperson and across all departments so that you can respond decisively to the customer's needs.

3. Make it easy to use and easy to find information:

It is important to provide a highly intuitive search tool and look-ups that pinpoint the answer in the least number of steps. Make it user friendly for the sales team and they will use it. CRM provides the insights for the salesperson to provide the best solution to their customers.

4. Integrate all communication channels:

Leverage the knowledge base across all channels and departments. Customers have unique needs and communicate differently via all channels. CRM provides access to all customers' touch points.

5. High quality of information throughout the system:

Analytics and diagrams can be very helpful to provide fast views of key performance indicators to help you see where you are going. CRM provides up-to-date and real-time analysis of campaigns and customers' satisfaction.

6. The Pareto's Rule: 80/20 rule:

If we respond to the 20% base of the customers, which are the high valued customers, then the 80% base is sufficiently served by insight gained through those experiences. Concentration of your most valued customers will provide the holistic approach to all your customers. CRM utilizes this principle to help you manage your business to make a difference, and to reach your goals.

7. Find out what the customers think:

You can't improve performance if you can't measure or assess that performance. Analytics of performances and meeting customer needs will quickly give insights of what need to be done. CRM provides the mechanism to assess your performance and measure customer retention to ensure that you are on the right track.

8. Consider a hosted system solution:

Many successful companies are taking advantage of hosted on demand solutions to eliminate capital costs and ongoing infrastructure management costs. Hosted solutions accelerate time-to-result and offload the demands from IT department. It offers advantages when it comes to performance, reliability, scalability and security. CRM is a strategy that encompasses the total customer experience.

9. Get experience with your system.

Partnering with knowledgeable companies, like **Janac Strategic Solutions Inc.** and **Alauras Software Inc.**, will help apply the best practices to your company's CRM initiatives and optimize the total CRM processes. AlaurasCRM was developed by industry professionals to meet this single need.

These principles can make your CRM initiative a high ROI success.

Benefits:

Experience has proven that companies benefit in numerous ways – from a web-based CRM initiative:

- Reduced costs through time management efficiency
- Faster service and increased satisfaction – access any time
- Scalable to meet demands – adjust for unforeseen events as well as planned events
- Re-allocation of staff to High-Value Customers – increase staff productivity and assignment to high priority opportunities.
- Responsive, automated and competitive advantages – 24/7, 365 days accessibility.

AlaurasCRM

Fortunately, there is an effective, easy to implement CRM solution for companies that want to be responsive and have a competitive advantage. Alauras is the industry's most complete CRM solution developed by YP industry leader for Yellow Pages Publishers to assist sales forces in increasing sales revenues, retaining customers and gaining a competitive advantage. It is a hosted system that is accessed via the Internet, giving complete access to customer information anytime and anywhere. This tool enables companies to leverage the knowledge base, track incidents and have email capabilities, all serving the companies effort to gain a true and up-to-date 360 degree view of their customers to ensure consistent understandings and high quality of service experience.

AlaurasCRM uses the Internet to effectively provide the tools for your sales team and streamline all operations enterprise-wise. The insights to existing customers, prospects and other businesses will reap quantifiable benefits without extensive up-front investment in content development and additional IT infrastructure.

Current AlaurasCRM customers:

- Are up and running in a few weeks of purchase order
- Increase overall productivity immediately
- Immediate customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Differentiate themselves from the competition

Companies that want to retain customers, reduce costs and achieve a competitive advantage in the market place must have web-based solution in their CRM initiative.

About AlaurasCRM.

If you would like more information on CRM in your business, a first hand view and demo of AlaurasCRM solution, and to see how our customers are using it, call us at **Janac Strategic Solutions Inc.** 905-773-5619 or email to info@janac-solutions.com.