

# How CRM Can Turn Your Accounting System Into a Marketing Asset...

**In most businesses** there tends to be a dividing line between the sales department and the accounting department. Sometimes, the line is more like a wall. But now, with tools like Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, sales and accounting can collaborate to everybody's benefit.

**The simple truth is that both** organizations have similar but different customer data. The sales department is charged with the responsibility of getting new sales and managing existing customer accounts (and renewals). The accounting group, as a rule, is responsible for credit, billing, order processing and pricing (or costing). In effect they are looking at different sides of the same customer relationship.

**But what could happen** if both sales and accounting had access to the same information? Integrating the two sides yields a number of possible improvements. For example, using customer credit history as a means of more tightly targeting sales efforts and offers with the more credit-worthy customers -- can increase sales campaign ROI while it simultaneously reduces the collection costs. Other benefits might include using customer data to better optimize pricing, costing



# CRM TIPS!

By Rick Bellefond, President, RB Data Services - TIP #14

or purchasing opportunities. Also, passing prospective sales information into the accounting process before the sales closes can shorten the new customer startup time by eliminating duplicate data entry or pre-authorization of credit. Information flowing the other way, such as supplying information about order and stock levels back into the sales process can speed the sales cycle while making inventory management easier and less expensive. This is particularly true in companies where the sales process is transaction-centered around commodity, short sales-cycle products.

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**But whatever the situation, the first key issue** is first not to consider the sales and accounting or ERP processes as separate – they are a continuum. The second key issue is not to look at CRM as a utility only for sales force automation. The real benefits of CRM lie in integrating it with both customer-facing and back-office tasks to make sure that your entire organization becomes a customer-facing organization. In the end, sales, accounting, order processing, inventory, or manufacturing is all about the customer.

RB Data Services is fully certified to sell and support Microsoft CRM, GoldMine Corporate/Premium/Enterprise Editions, and SalesLogix.

**Grow Your Business Through Better Customer Relationship Management – Stay Informed!**

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