

Salesforce.com Underpins Growth Strategy at Commodore



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— Jelmer Gulmans
Project Manager

Industry

Technology / Media Entertainment

Geographies

Benelux, France, UK, Germany

Challenge

- ❑ Tackle reliance on different systems used to manage customer relationships, including spreadsheets and Microsoft Office
- ❑ Unify pockets of customer information scattered across the business
- ❑ Avoid slow, complex and expensive IT infrastructure projects
- ❑ Enable easier sharing of information among international sales operations

Solution

Digital media products, content and services provider Commodore deployed Salesforce SFA, Service & Support and The AppExchange as part of a multi-tenant CRM solution to 50 users in three countries.

Results

- ❑ Helped the company close lucrative new business opportunities
- ❑ Enabled team to chose, implement, customize and train 15 users in only two weeks
- ❑ Provided powerful opportunity management, account management, forecasting and reporting
- ❑ Delivered tight integration with Microsoft Office and Outlook Edition, ensuring users work more productively in these critical applications
- ❑ Allowed new contacts from the website to be automatically populated straight into Salesforce
- ❑ Customized the system in hours to meet its unique needs
- ❑ The AppExchange opens the door to a wealth of valuable app opportunities

Dynamic young start-up Commodore was growing fast, and quickly realized that the informal systems it was relying on to manage customer relationships would soon not keep up with its rapid growth. Determined not to be drawn into deploying a complex, time-consuming on-premise CRM system, Commodore turned to salesforce.com. The flexible, multi-tenant system was deployed in just two weeks, has been customized quickly and effectively to meet the company’s diverse needs and—most importantly of all—is playing an important role in closing lucrative new business opportunities.

Developing business—not an IT system

Digital media products, content and services provider Commodore is a young company, formed in 2005 following a series of investment initiatives. Setting up a company is a significant undertaking in every respect—and one of the most important decisions surrounds the system which manages customer relationships. In its formative months, Commodore’s offices relied on a mixed set of different systems, including spreadsheets and Microsoft Office, to target, manage and support customers. This fragmented and disconnected set of systems undermined the company’s ability to effectively manage relationships with channel partners and customers who market the digital media solutions, since key information was tucked away in different parts of the organization.

CRM Manager Jelmer Gulmans joined Commodore from Accenture and his experience at the global consulting organization convinced him that a nimble, hosted multi-tenant CRM system was infinitely preferable to an on-premise CRM system. “The great thing about salesforce.com is that there’s no software to deploy, support and maintain,” he says. “There is no up-front capital investment, it is quick and easy to implement and very easy to use. For a dynamic young company, it’s important that we focus on generating new business—not being bogged down in managing a complex IT system. Better still, Salesforce grows with us: it’s equally ideal for a small number of users and an enterprise business.”

The opportunity to deploy Salesforce quickly in multiple locations was not lost on the Commodore team. In fact, the system was chosen, implemented, customized and 15 users trained in only two weeks. “We were attending a big consumer electronics event in Berlin and wanted the system live there so we could capture leads. It was incredibly quick and easy to set-up users and they were up-to-speed very rapidly. With some new IT systems you experience a ‘valley of despair’ with users unwilling to adopt a new system. Not with Salesforce though. The users really liked it from day one.”

Single, unified view of each customer relationship

Scroll forward to today and 50 sales, marketing and management users are live in multiple sites, including two in The Netherlands, China and France. The UK and Germany will come on stream in the New Year. Providing a single, unified view of each and every customer relationship, Salesforce SFA delivers powerful opportunity management, account management, forecasting and reporting. Users also benefit from tight integration with Microsoft Office and Outlook, ensuring they work more productively in these critical applications. The recent addition of the web to leads functionality also means that new contacts derived from the website are automatically populated straight into Salesforce.

Gulmans and his team have produced a roadmap of how they want to develop Salesforce in the coming months, and one of the foremost priorities has been to customize the system to meet the company’s unique needs using Apex. “We’ve added fields, workflow, tabs and records that reflect our unique sales pattern—and it’s very straightforward to do,” he explains. “For example, we conduct co-operative advertising campaigns with retailers and Salesforce has been adapted to manage these campaigns, using drop-down boxes, timelines and other workflows which help the different teams work together. Once you have the requirements ready for the customization, it only takes a couple of hours of iterative prototyping to get the solution you need. It’s another example of how Salesforce lets us get on with business—not get in the way of business, but support it.”

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In addition to customizing the system, Commodore has also taken advantage of the rich set of applications functionality available on The AppExchange. The company has deployed the free ‘Procurement’ application from salesforce.com to standardize purchase requests, streamline purchasing processes, and gather data to support requests for preferred pricing from vendors. It is also using the ‘Print Anything’ module, which delivers a fully customizable printable view of any records in Salesforce. “This additional functionality is great. You test drive it and click to download. Next, we’ll be adding a further app which scans business cards we pick up at events straight into Salesforce,” he says.

The overriding issue is that Salesforce is helping Commodore to generate business. Gulmans says, “We accumulated a large number of sales leads at the Berlin event. We were able to drop these into the system as sales leads and they were automatically assigned to a Commodore sales representative. We were then able to track the follow-up on these leads, examine the exact status at any point in time and report on the overall lead generation success of the event. A considerable number of leads were closed after the event—and Salesforce had an important role to play in achieving this.”

Commodore—like the services it offers—is growing rapidly as the company forges new partnerships and acquires companies with complementary operations. For example, the acquisition of Lyzia Digital Media Solutions (the leading music download platform in the Benelux) substantially enhanced Commodore’s entertainment catalog. Next, Commodore acquired the Phillar group to add their professional sales staff, partner channels and sourcing capabilities. Here again, Salesforce proved its worth. “We integrated Salesforce straight into one of these new organizations in only two weeks. If we had been relying on an on-premise CRM system, we’d still be sitting here scratching our heads working out the IT architecture,” says Gulmans.

For More Information

Contact your account executive to learn how we can help you accelerate your CRM success.

The Americas
The Landmark @ One Market Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105
United States of America
1-800-NO-SOFTWARE
www.salesforce.com

Japan
Ebisu Business Tower 18F
1-19-19 Ebisu, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo, 150-0013
Japan
+81-3-5793-8301
www.salesforce.com/jp

Asia/Pacific
Suntec Tower Two
9 Tamasek Tower
Singapore, 038989
+65-6302-5700
www.salesforce.com/au

Europe, Middle East & Africa
Ch. de la Dent d’Oche 1B
1024 Ecublens
Switzerland
+353-1-2723-500
www.salesforce.com

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