

CRM Platforms Buyers Guide

Software Provider and Product Assessment

**SOFTWARE
PROVIDER
REPORT**

***ISG** Research

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Key Takeaways – CRM Platforms

CRM platforms have become a strategic priority as enterprises address complex buying journeys, omnichannel engagement and pressure to balance growth with profitability. Fragmented legacy environments limit visibility, slow AI adoption and constrain coordination across expanding subscription, partner and digital commerce models. Organizations are prioritizing unified platform decisions to standardize processes, improve data quality and align revenue teams around shared operational workflows.

Software Provider Summary

The ISG Buyers Guide™ for CRM Platforms evaluates 12 software providers offering products that support marketing automation, sales force automation, customer service, AI and analytics, workflow automation and configure, price, quote functionality. The research ranked the top three overall leaders as Salesforce, Oracle and HubSpot. Providers were classified using weighted performance in Product Experience and Customer Experience for ISG quadrant placement. HubSpot, Microsoft, Oracle, Salesforce, Veeva and Zoho were rated Exemplary, with SAP rated Innovative. Infor was rated as Assurance, and BUSINESSNEXT, Odoo, Oracle NetSuite and Sage were rated as Merit.

Product Experience

Product Experience, representing 80% of the evaluation, focuses on Capability (15%) and Platform (65%), including adaptability, manageability, reliability and usability. Oracle, Salesforce and HubSpot achieved the highest performance as Leaders in this category, supported by broad functional coverage across CRM analytics, marketing, sales and service and a robust, flexible platform foundation that emphasizes governance, scalability and integration. Leaders demonstrated enterprise-grade platform capabilities across varied roles and contexts.

Customer Experience

Customer Experience, representing 20% of the evaluation, focuses on validation and TCO/ROI. Salesforce, HubSpot and Oracle were the Leaders in this category, demonstrating strong customer advocacy and a clear investment in successful outcomes. Providers with lower performance often lacked publicly available customer validation or failed to demonstrate structured ROI measurement and proactive lifecycle engagement.

Strategic Recommendations

Enterprises should evaluate CRM platforms as unified architectural foundations that integrate data, workflow and AI across revenue functions. Assessments must prioritize platform resilience, integration maturity and governance to reduce customization risk and enable long-term adaptability. Executive alignment across revenue, operations and IT is critical to standardize processes and drive sustained adoption.



CRM Platforms

CRM platforms have become a strategic priority as enterprises confront complex buying journeys, omnichannel engagement and pressure to balance growth with profitability. Many organizations are reassessing fragmented legacy sales force automation and point solutions, which limit visibility and slow AI adoption. As revenue models expand to include subscription, partner and digital commerce channels, enterprises are prioritizing platform-level CRM

decisions to standardize processes and improve coordination across teams.



As revenue models expand, enterprises are prioritizing platform-level CRM decisions to standardize processes and improve coordination across teams.

ISG Research defines CRM platforms as enterprise software that centralizes and operationalizes customer data and interactions across marketing, sales, commerce, partner management and service within a unified architecture. These platforms function as both systems of record and systems of execution, embedding workflow and analytics to coordinate engagement. CRM platforms provide consistent visibility into accounts, opportunities and service history, supporting improved forecasting and tighter alignment between revenue operations and financial objectives.

Enterprises need CRM platforms that reduce manual effort, strengthen data quality and enable collaboration without excessive customization. Platforms should

integrate capabilities such as configure, price, quote and unified workflows that span departments and channels. Embedded analytics and AI must translate insight into guided or automated action within defined governance controls, while low-code configuration enables adaptability without creating technical debt. Adoption remains a persistent challenge and requires executive sponsorship and clear process ownership.

When evaluating CRM platforms, enterprises should assess data architecture, integration maturity and the provider's AI roadmap alongside functional breadth. Successful initiatives align revenue leadership, operations and IT around standardized processes and measurable outcomes, positioning CRM as a strategic coordination layer rather than a standalone tool. Organizations that simplify legacy complexity and prioritize governance will be better positioned to drive sustainable revenue performance.

The 2026 ISG Buyers Guide™ for CRM Platforms evaluates software providers across key capability areas, including marketing automation, sales force automation, customer service, AI and analytics, workflow automation and configure, price, quote functionality. This research evaluates the following software providers: BUSINESSNEXT, HubSpot, Infor, Microsoft, Odoo, Oracle, Oracle NetSuite, Sage, Salesforce, SAP, Veeva and Zoho.



The Findings – CRM Platforms

The software providers and products evaluated in this research offer product and customer experiences, but not every feature is equally valuable to every enterprise or is needed to support the relevant business processes and use cases. Moreover, having too many product capabilities may be a negative factor for an enterprise if it introduces unnecessary complexity. Nonetheless, you may decide that a more comprehensive set of capabilities is important and meets your enterprise’s requirements.

An effective customer relationship with a software provider is vital to the success of any investment. The overall customer experience and the full lifecycle of engagement play a key role in ensuring satisfaction and long-term success. Providers with dedicated customer leadership, such as chief customer officers, tend to invest more deeply in these relationships and prioritize customer outcomes in line with TCO and ROI expectations. It is equally important that this commitment to customer success is evident throughout the provider’s website, the buying process and the customer journey.

Overall Scoring of Software Providers Across Categories

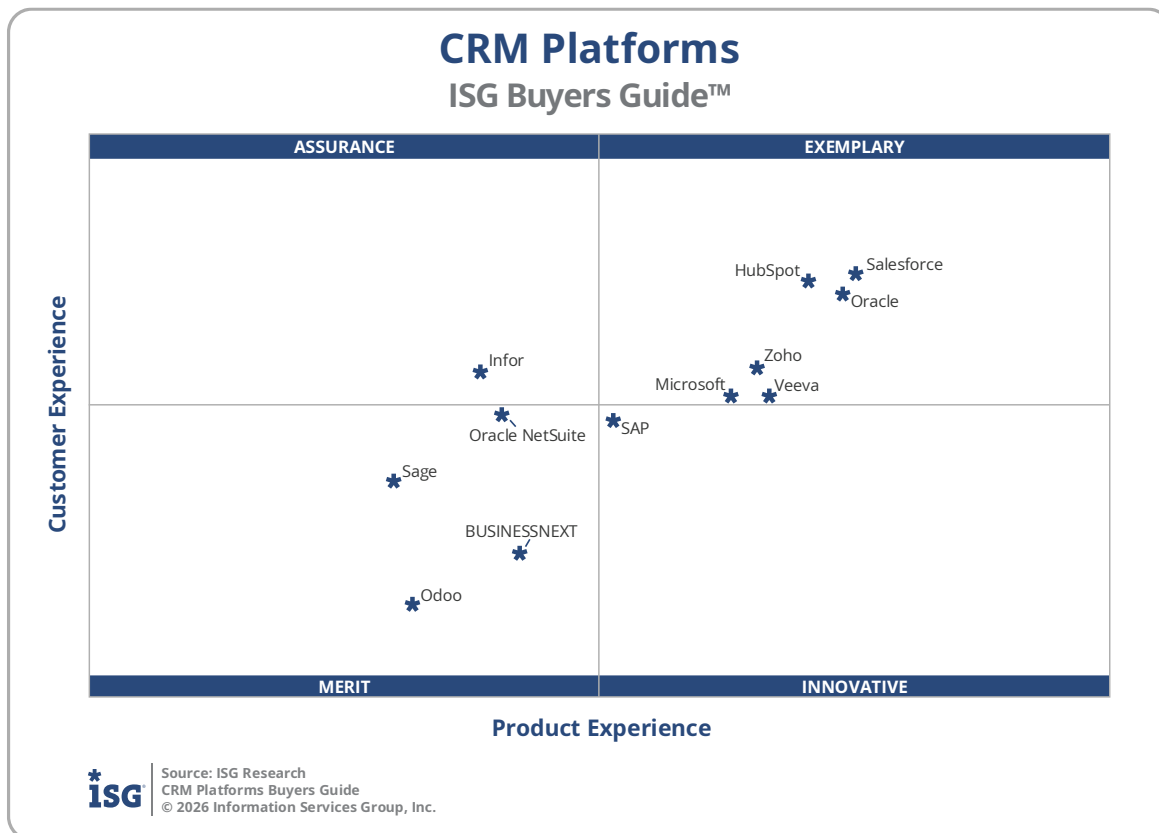
The research finds Salesforce atop the list, followed by Oracle and HubSpot. Providers that place in the top three of a category earn the designation of Leader. Salesforce and Oracle have done so in five categories, HubSpot in four and Microsoft in one category.

The quadrant chart below presents ratings for Product Experience and Customer Experience on the x- and y-axes, respectively, to visually classify software providers. Those providers whose Product Experience has above-median weighted performance on the axis, in aggregate across the two product categories, place farther to the right. The performance and weighting for the Customer Experience category determine placement on the vertical axis. In short, software providers that place closer to the upper-right on this chart performed better than those closer to the lower-left.

The research categorizes and rates software providers into one of four categories: Assurance, Exemplary, Merit or Innovative. Placement represents the software providers’ weighted performance in meeting the requirements of product and customer experience.

CRM Platforms Overall			
Providers	Grade	Performance	
Salesforce	A-	Leader	84.2%
Oracle	A-	Leader	82.4%
HubSpot	B++	Leader	81.1%
Microsoft	B++		76.8%
Zoho	B+		74.8%
Veeva	B+		73.6%
SAP	B+		71.6%
Oracle NetSuite	B		66.8%
BUSINESSNEXT	B-		60.2%
Sage	B-		57.5%
Odoo	C++		55.9%
Infor	C++		55.4%

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Exemplary: This rating (upper right) represents those that performed above median in Product and Customer Experience requirements. The providers rated Exemplary are: HubSpot, Microsoft, Oracle, Salesforce, Veeva and Zoho.

Innovative: This rating (lower right) represents those that performed above median in Product Experience but not in Customer Experience. The provider rated Innovative is: SAP.

Assurance: This rating (upper left) represents those that performed above median in Customer Experience but not in Product Experience. The provider rated Assurance is Infor.

Merit: This rating (lower left) represents those that did not surpass the median in Customer or Product Experience. The providers rated Merit are: BUSINESSNEXT, Odoo, Oracle NetSuite and Sage.

We advise enterprises to use this research as a supplement to their own evaluations, recognizing that ratings or rankings do not solely represent a provider's value nor indicate universal suitability of a set of products.



Product Experience

The process of researching products to address an enterprise’s needs should be comprehensive, evaluating specific capabilities and the underlying platform of the product. Our evaluation of the Product Experience examines the lifecycle of onboarding, configuration, operations, usage and maintenance. Too often, provider assessments focus on market execution and future vision rather than the full product.

Product Experience accounted for 80% (four-fifths) of the rating based on the underlying weighted performance. The category weighting was 15% for Capability and 65% for Platform. Oracle, Salesforce and HubSpot were designated Product Experience Leaders.

CRM Platforms
Product Experience

Providers	Grade	Performance
Oracle	B++	Leader 63.8%
Salesforce	B++	Leader 63.8%
HubSpot	B++	Leader 62.1%
Veeva	B+	59.6%
Zoho	B+	59.0%
Microsoft	B+	58.0%
SAP	B	53.7%
BUSINESSNEXT	B-	49.9%
Oracle NetSuite	B-	49.4%
Infor	B-	48.7%
Odoo	B-	45.2%
Sage	C++	44.2%

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Capability of the Product

The Capability criteria assess the products and features across a broad range of CRM platform capabilities that support CRM analytics, customer service, marketing, sales and sales engagement.

ISG Research evaluated more than 60 different function points in 10 sections to assess the full scope of CRM platform capabilities. The research weights Capability at 15% of the overall rating. Salesforce, Microsoft and Oracle are the Leaders in this category.

The Capability evaluation for CRM platforms provides a framework for enterprises. Software providers with greater breadth and depth and that support the full set of needs fared better.

CRM Platforms
Capability

Providers	Grade	Performance
Salesforce	A	Leader 91.8%
Microsoft	A	Leader 90.2%
Oracle	A-	Leader 86.8%
HubSpot	A-	84.3%
SAP	A-	83.8%
Oracle NetSuite	B+	74.1%
Zoho	B+	74.0%
Veeva	B+	71.7%
Odoo	B-	60.9%
BUSINESSNEXT	B-	58.1%
Sage	B-	57.8%
Infor	D-	21.6%

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Platform of the Product

The Platform category evaluates the underlying requirements of a platform and examines how well a software product meets enterprise needs across business and IT. It measures how effectively the product can be managed, configured and integrated into enterprise environments; how efficiently it can be governed and secured; how reliably it performs and scales; and how intuitively it supports users across varied roles and skill levels. The Platform category in the ISG Buyers Guide examines specific requirements for adaptability, manageability, reliability and usability.

The grading of the underlying platform focuses on a software product’s overall robustness and the flexibility of a provider’s software foundation. Adaptability measures a product’s ability to be customized and integrated across systems and data, while manageability focuses on governance, security and compliance. Reliability considers performance and scalability across environments, and usability assesses how intuitive and accessible the product is through design, AI use and ongoing provider investment.

ISG Research evaluated 16 function points in five sections to assess the full scope of platform capabilities. The research weights Platform at 65% of the overall rating. Oracle, Salesforce and HubSpot are the Leaders in this category.

Platform is an essential evaluation category as it indicates the strength and resilience of a software provider’s product architecture. A well-designed platform ensures secure and compliant operations, dependable scalability and uptime, and a unified, intuitive experience for a range of usage personas. It also reflects the provider’s capacity to support deployment models while maintaining flexibility to meet enterprise demands.

CRM Platforms
Platform

Providers	Grade	Performance
Oracle	B++	Leader 78.1%
Salesforce	B++	Leader 76.9%
HubSpot	B++	Leader 76.1%
Veeva	B++	75.1%
Zoho	B+	73.6%
Infor	B+	69.9%
Microsoft	B	68.5%
BUSINESSNEXT	B	63.4%
SAP	B	63.3%
Oracle NetSuite	B-	58.9%
Odoo	C++	55.4%
Sage	C++	54.6%

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Software providers that performed best in the Platform category have support for the breadth and depth of needs across business and IT, supporting adaptability, manageability, reliability and usability. Providers with lower performance were challenged in one or more of these areas or did not demonstrate a cohesive, enterprise-grade approach. The underlying platform for a software provider’s products is essential in any evaluation.



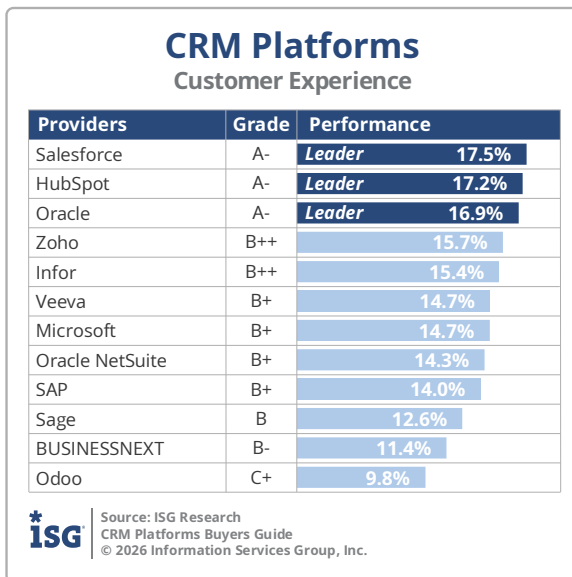
Customer Experience

The importance of a customer relationship with a software provider is essential to the actual success of the products and technology. The evaluation of the Customer Experience and the entire lifecycle an enterprise has with its software provider is critical to ensuring satisfaction with that provider. The ISG Buyers Guide examines a software provider’s customer commitment, viability, customer success, sales and onboarding, product roadmap and partner and support services. The customer experience category also examines TCO/ROI and how well a software provider demonstrates the product’s overall value, costs and benefits, including the tools and resources to evaluate these factors.

The research results in Customer Experience account for 20% (one-fifth) of the full 100% index, and represent the underlying provider validation and TCO/ROI requirements as they relate to the framework of commitment and value to the software provider-customer relationship.

The software providers that ranked the highest in the Customer Experience category are Salesforce, HubSpot and Oracle. These category leaders best communicate commitment and dedication to customer needs.

Software providers that did not perform well in this category did not provide sufficient information to demonstrate success or articulate a commitment to customer experience. Partnering with a software provider requires continuous investment, so a holistic evaluation must include examination of the customer experience by providers.





Software Provider Inclusion – CRM Platforms

For inclusion in the ISG Buyers Guide™ for CRM Platforms in 2026, a software provider must be in good standing financially and ethically, have at least \$70 million in annual or projected revenue verified using independent sources, sell products and provide support on at least two continents and have at least 100 customers. The principal source of the relevant business unit's revenue must be software-related, and there must have been at least one major software release in the past 12 months.

To be evaluated, the software provider must offer products that include the following capabilities: centralization and operationalization of customer data and interactions across marketing, sales, commerce, partner management and service within a unified architecture; platforms that function as both systems of record and systems of execution.

The research is designed to be independent of the specifics of software provider packaging and pricing. To represent the real-world environment in which businesses operate, we include providers that offer suites or packages of products that may include relevant individual modules or applications. If a software provider is actively marketing, selling and developing a product for the general market and it is reflected on the provider's website that the product is within the scope of the research, that provider is automatically evaluated for inclusion.

All software providers that offer relevant products and meet the inclusion requirements were invited to participate in the evaluation process at no cost to them.

Software providers that meet our inclusion criteria but did not completely participate in our Buyers Guide were assessed solely on publicly available information. As this could have a significant impact on classification and ratings, we recommend additional scrutiny when evaluating those providers.



Products Evaluated

Provider	Product Names	Version	Release Month/Year
BUSINESSNEXT	CRMNEXT (BUSINESSNEXT CRM)	NA	February 2026
HubSpot	HubSpot CRM	NA	February 2026
Infor	Infor CRM	Infor CRM SLX Version 10	January 2026
Microsoft	Dynamics 365 Sales	2025 release wave 2	October 2025
Odoo	Odoo CRM	19.1	January 2026
Oracle	Oracle Sales (Fusion Cloud CX)	26A quarterly update	February 2026
Oracle NetSuite	NetSuite CRM	NetSuite 2026.1	February 2026
Sage	Sage CRM	Sage CRM 2025 R2	January 2026
Salesforce	Agentforce Sales Agentforce Service Data 360	Spring '26 Release	February 2026
SAP	SAP Sales Cloud (SAP Cloud for Customer)	Release 2602	February 2026
Veeva	Veeva Vault CRM	Veeva CRM 25R3.0	December 2025
Zoho	Zoho CRM	NA	January 2026



Salesforce

Company and Product Profile

Agentforce Sales, Agentforce Service, Data 360; v. Spring '26 Release, released February 2026
“Salesforce helps organizations of any size become Agentic Enterprises — integrating humans, agents, apps, and data on a trusted, unified platform to unlock unprecedented growth and innovation.” - Salesforce

Summary

Our analysis classified Salesforce as Exemplary, receiving an overall grade of A- with an 84.2% performance. Salesforce's best grouped results came in Customer Experience with an 87.4% performance and an A- grade. In Product Experience, Salesforce received an A- grade with an 83.3% performance. Salesforce was designated a Leader in all categories.

Strengths

Salesforce's CRM platform is distinguished by its highly extensible and scalable architecture, enabling organizations to build, customize, and integrate applications across a unified environment. The platform's metadata-driven design supports rapid configuration and continuous innovation without requiring extensive rework, making it well-suited for large, complex enterprise environments.

Salesforce also demonstrates strong platform innovation, particularly through embedded AI and automation capabilities (e.g., Einstein and Agentforce), which support intelligent workflows, predictive insights and increasing levels of autonomous execution. These capabilities enhance both developer productivity and end-user effectiveness.

From an operational perspective, the platform provides robust governance, security and compliance features, supporting enterprise-grade requirements across industries. Its global infrastructure and continuous delivery model further enable scalability and reliability.

Challenges

The Product Experience evaluation identified opportunities for improvement in managing platform complexity, particularly in highly customized and heavily integrated environments, as well as in optimizing cost transparency across a broad and evolving licensing model.

In Customer Experience, Salesforce could benefit from further simplifying adoption and ongoing platform management, including enabling organizations to more easily realize value from advanced capabilities such as AI, automation and low-code development without requiring significant specialized expertise.

CRM Platforms		
Salesforce		
Exemplary Provider		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	Leader 84.2%	A-
Product	Leader 83.3%	A-
Capability	Leader 91.8%	A
Platform	Leader 76.9%	B++
Customer	Leader 87.4%	A-

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Buyers Guide Overview

ISG Research has conducted market research for over two decades across vertical industries, business applications, AI and IT. We have designed the ISG Buyers Guide to provide a balanced perspective on software providers and products, rooted in an understanding of business and IT requirements. Utilizing our research methodology and decades of experience, our Buyers Guide is an effective tool for assessing and selecting software providers and



ISG Research has designed the Buyers Guide to provide a balanced perspective on software providers, rooted in an understanding of business and IT requirements.

products. The findings of this research provide a comprehensive approach to rating software providers and rank their ability to meet specific product and customer experience requirements.

This ISG Buyers Guide is the distillation of continuous market and product research. It is an assessment of how well software providers' offerings address enterprises' requirements. The Value Index methodology is structured to support a request for information (RFI) for a request for proposal (RFP) process by incorporating all criteria needed to evaluate, select, utilize and maintain relationships with software providers. The ISG Buyers Guide evaluates customer experience and the product experience across capability and platform.

The structure of the research reflects our understanding that the effective evaluation of software providers and products involves far more than just examining product features, potential revenue or customers generated from a provider's marketing and sales efforts. It can ensure the best long-term relationship and value achieved from a resource and financial investment. We believe it is important to take a comprehensive, research-based approach, since making the wrong choice of software can raise the total cost of ownership, lower the return on investment and hamper an enterprise's ability to reach its potential. In addition, this approach can reduce the project's development and deployment time and eliminate the risk of relying on opinions or historical biases.

ISG Research believes that an objective review of existing and potential new software providers and products is a critical strategy for the adoption and implementation of enterprise software. An enterprise's review should include an analysis of both what is possible and what is relevant. We urge enterprises to conduct a thorough evaluation, and we offer this ISG Buyers Guide as both the results of our in-depth analysis of these providers and as an evaluation methodology.



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