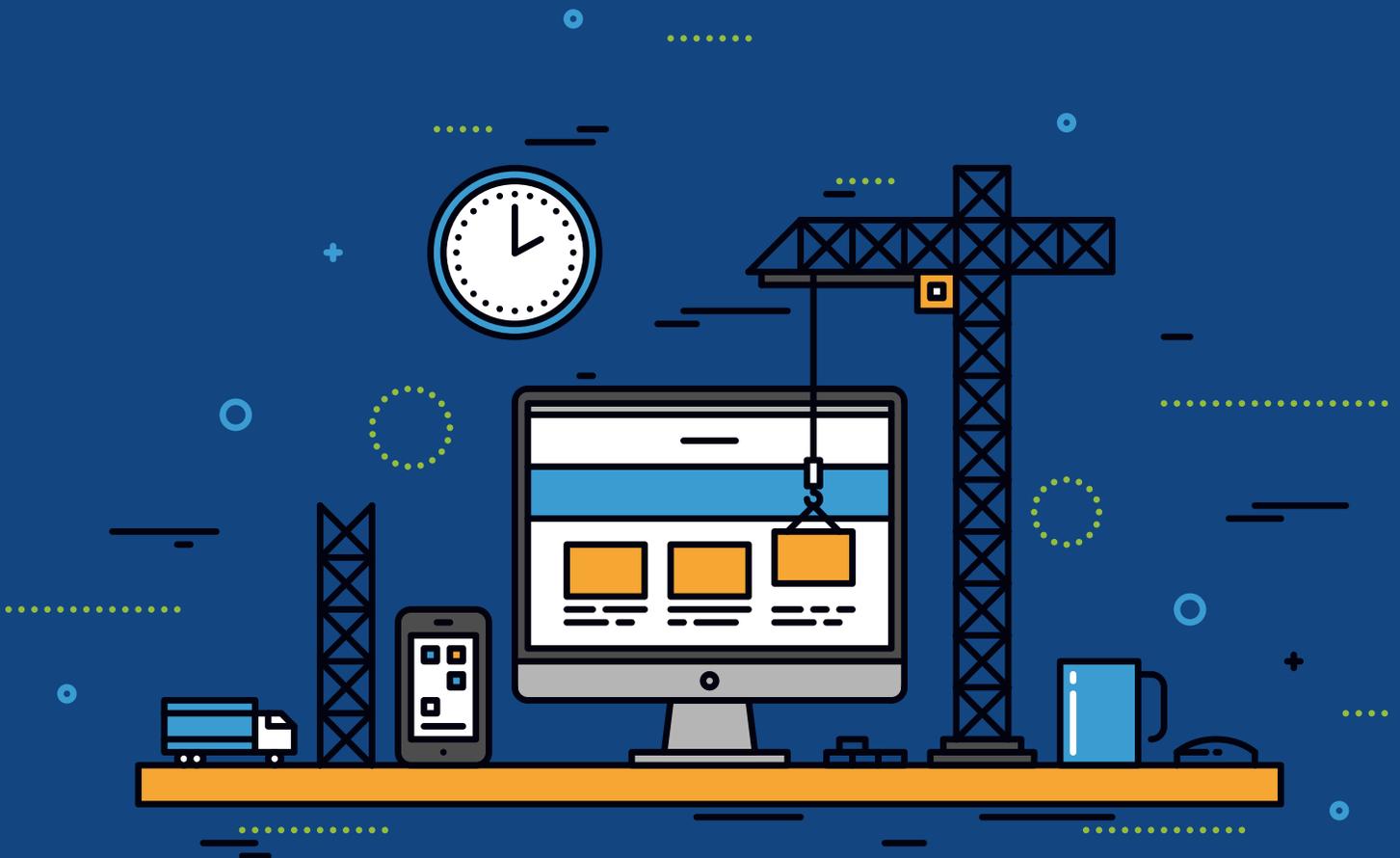


How to Choose a CRM for a **Construction** **Business**



Where you need to be with your CRM.

Imagine you can see everything about a job in one place.

You might be working at your office desk, traveling between meetings or be standing right in the middle of a job site. At that moment, you'll feel like you're in the know about what your team is accomplishing. You'll also be aware of the important details about your sales pipeline so you could make sound business decisions on the spot without any second guessing. Only customer relationship management (CRM) software gets you to that point. You're organized and informed and that means you're winning more construction jobs and expanding the business.

In the fast-paced world that the most successful construction industry professionals thrive in, CRM software has become critical to keeping up with the competition and to making an impact on the bottom line. That's because relationships are everything in this industry.

The question becomes which CRM software will work best for your business. The truth is, there are many choices out there but very few are built with contractors and small and midsize businesses in mind.

In this ebook, we'll help you choose a CRM designed for the construction industry.

We'll also include helpful tips that will enable you to evaluate just what you need to ensure your sales team is as productive as possible.





What is a CRM exactly?

Let's start with defining a CRM.

It means customer relationship management. It's sales pipeline management software that offers a way to manage contacts, manage a sales process, and gain valuable insight into your entire client base.

Businesses across all industries are catching on to how CRMs can transform their bottom line.

Top analyst firm [Gartner](#) predicts that the CRM market will be worth over \$40 billion this year alone.

Business leaders understand the need for software that maintains and organizes relationships with individual people. With the right CRM software, your sales teams can meet the needs and wants of clients in a timely way. That's how the best business relationships are built, how trust is formed, and how sales grow.

A CRM Capable of Results You Want.

Even in a very simple form, all businesses practice CRM concepts.

In the past, sales teams would jot notes on Rolodex cards including contact information and the tasks they had accomplished that day. Later, spreadsheets stored on hard drives took over.

No one can argue that client data is the most precious data a company has. Yet many companies are still keeping this information on Excel spreadsheets, Word documents, or clumsy notes. This precious data ends up being hard to find, difficult to manage, and frustrating to decipher. As a result, data isn't used the way it should be. These siloed troves of client information become useless, failing to garner the incredible insight they should.

Today, most CRM software is built in the cloud which means it's accessible from any device with an Internet connection. This keeps businesses competitive because professionals can always be in the know, even on the go. In today's Internet of Things (IoT) world, there's even more data to consider for business transactions including data from websites, social media, apps and so on.

As more administrative tasks are automated through cloud-based software, information can be shared quickly and efficiently. The most efficient CRMs are:

- **Cloud based**
- **Easy-to-use**
- **Automating tasks**
- **Centralizing, tracking and analyzing data**

The industry has evolved over the past decade. In fact, a [Software Advice study](#) found that in 2008, 88 percent of CRMs were on-premise systems meaning companies were relying on a network of on-site hardware and software systems. Times have changed as most SMB companies choose cloud-based CRM software for its price point, convenience, and features. Today, nearly 90 percent of CRM systems are powered by the cloud.

What does this mean for the construction industry? As the industry becomes more competitive, a CRM continues to prove to be vital software tool to offer insights that help companies stay connected to their customers.

A Vertical or Horizontal CRM?

There are two kinds of CRMs you can choose from including industry specific vertical CRMs and horizontal CRMs.

First, let's take a look at vertical CRMs.

Vertical CRMs

Vertical CRMs that are specifically marketed to construction firms are designed to feature the most common construction industry business processes.

This typically means that the software is set up with construction industry terms and may support other customizations

based on architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) or construction industry requirements.

The downsides fall on small to midsize businesses in these industries. The first downside is price point. The costs of vertical CRMs trend much higher than horizontal CRMs.



According to [Inc.](#), because vertical CRMs are geared towards a niche with lower volume, they end up costing more whether they are purchased as a stand alone product or bought to be added onto your current CRM system. Secondly, your team may miss out on the flexibility that CRMs made for more than one industry offers.

Vertical CRMs may not be as customizable and they can be too niche or too process-specific for businesses. Vertical CRM companies often have fewer technical and training resources, smaller communities, and they often don't have the support of a trained Customer Care or Customer Success team to support any integration or support issues should they come up.

SMBs must consider if a CRM can integrate with productive, cloud-based software such as Gmail, Outlook, Excel or Mailchimp. Vertical CRMs, based on many of the reasons we just mentioned, may not fit the bill here.

Then, there's another risk to you.

Consider what you might do if your vertical CRM company simply closes or disappears from the market?

Finally, vertical CRMs can be much more complex meaning they simply won't be adopted or used. We'll explain more why that is a universal problem — not just targeted at AEC or construction businesses.

Horizontal CRMs — Sales CRMs

Ask yourself, why are you researching CRMs at this very moment. If you're investing in a CRM to boost the bottom line, get your sales in order, and your sales pipeline in check then you need a sales CRM.

Within the sales CRM world are horizontal CRMs which are the opposite of vertical CRMs. Horizontal CRMs are designed to meet the core requirements of any standard business. These standard businesses could be construction, manufacturing, logistics, distribution, finance to professional business services and the list goes on.

When construction industry professionals choose horizontal CRMs over vertical CRMs, they value the following:

- **Low purchase cost**
- **Extensive customization**
- **Flexibility of crafting a feature-rich system**
- **Integrations**
- **Sales focused features**
- **Adaptability, ability to use the product**

Why is “adoptable” important for a CRM?

Let’s stress that last proofpoint. Adoptable is important if you want your sales teams to actually use your CRM. Let’s delve into this important concept.

While a CRM is technically software, it is much more than that. It’s a philosophy. Using it means taking on a strategy that builds excellent customer relationships that matter in the construction industry.

Work life without a CRM can be a messy one. In this day and age, no one has time to shuffle through Excel spreadsheets, Smartsheets, Word documents, or other types of folders and files.

A common struggle companies face is actually adopting CRM technology into the daily sales process. Usage

levels are determined by so many factors ranging from navigation, system settings and more. However, cloud-based CRM systems have changed the market.

According to [CRM Magazine](#), companies on the low end of adoption are experiencing adoption rates at about 24 percent. On the high end, CRM adoption rates are as high as 90 percent. Meanwhile, average CRM adoption rates stand at 47 percent.

The two most important factors that help companies in the onboarding process include technical capabilities and customer support. This is where horizontal sales CRMs have many strengths for construction companies.

CRMs must have features that sales teams want to use and learn. If your team is using it, naturally they’ll close more bids.

Do your CRM finalists feature any of the following?

- **Custom fields**
- **Reporting**
- **Companies, People, and Deals**
- **Tasks**
- **Pipeline visibility**
- **A leading mobile app**
- **Customer management**
- **Account management**
- **Popular SMB integrations such as Google, Excel, Outlook, and Mailchimp**

Those features mean nothing if your sales teams won't use the CRM. Introducing a CRM that is easy to use and learn with reliable, U.S.-based, free support (via phone, live chat or email) is key.

Finally, choosing a CRM with a high-adoption rate is essential. When CRMs have too many features, features simply won't be used and that means they are probably not needed anyway. Any company wants to see productivity from a software solution as quickly as possible. That's possible when a CRM system is highly customizable and — should you need help — there's world-class Customer Care support waiting to assist you. If you need Customer Success training to quicken your pace, it will be an option, too.

Make the Right CRM Choice

Like any wrong software decision, a bad CRM system implementation is a waste of money and time.

Unlike large enterprises, SMBs (no matter what industry) cannot afford to lose precious money or time. A complex sales CRM or a complex construction focused CRM will only make it difficult for a sales team to sell. This trickles down the company and affects your customer experience. Remember, you are investing in a CRM to better serve and sell to your customers' needs. Those customer relationships keep your construction business going, moving up, and thriving.

Construction companies will not move ahead if they use outdated techniques, like pen and paper or spreadsheets or even outdated on-premise CRMs. If more is expected from your sales teams, then a CRM that they can actually use is the winning choice. Each sales employee at your construction company will play a role to help you achieve greater company efficiency and maintain the most valuable asset your company owns: **customer relationships**.



Construction Industry CRM Success Stories

Read more about how construction businesses are changing the game with the right sales CRM:

Reno Renovations

Reno Renovations sales have grown by 10 percent year over year. PipelineDeals provides a critical push to follow up on bids that have been submitted and helps the Reno Renovations sales team stay on top of long-term client relationships. [READ MORE](#)

“ We’re really happy with PipelineDeals. We’ve recommended it other contractors. It’s our daily pulse. — *Jillian Shuttleworth, Manager*

Bay Area Underpinning

Bay Area Underpinning boosted sales by 20 percent by using PipelineDeals and strengthened customer relationships. [READ MORE](#)



A David Creation

With the “right amount of CRM” this painting contractor continues to build a profitable business and recommends PipelineDeals to his clients. [READ MORE](#)

“ It is relatively simple to plug in a sales lead and follow the sales lead from start to finish. It’s simple for sales people, and simple for me. — *David Chism, Owner*

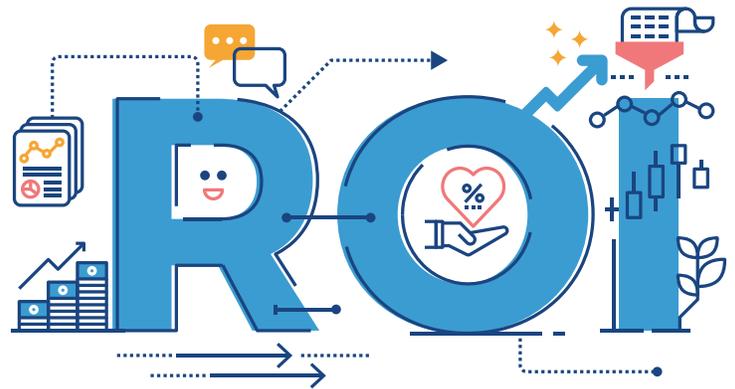
15 Statistics That Will Motivate You to Invest in CRM Software

CRM on the Rise

- The CRM industry estimated to be a \$40 billion industry and growing. *(Gartner)*

CRM ROI

- The ROI on CRM is \$5 to every \$1 invested. *(Baseline)*
- The ROI on CRM can add up to as much as 245%. *(Forrester)*
- CRM has one of the highest growth rates of all software industries, with year-over-year growth estimated at 27%. *(IBM)*



CRM for SMB

- 60% of small businesses use a CRM for email marketing. *(MarketingCharts.com)*
- Conversion rates can improve by up to 300% with a CRM. *(Cloudswave)*
- Average purchase value can improve by up to 40% with a CRM. *(Cloudswave)*
- Lead cost lowers 23% when a CRM is in use. *(Cloudswave)*

CRM for Better Customer Relationships

- Customer service can improve by 47% with CRM. *(Capterra)*
- 75% of consumers have stopped doing business with a company following a bad experience. *(Ovum)*
- Leads that start in a CRM system convert 47% of the time. *(Annuitas Group)*
- 74% of businesses using CRM report better customer relationships *(Software Advice)*
- 82% of customers leave because they think you do not care about them. *(The Rockefeller Corporation)*
- The best way to create customer loyalty is to provide exceptional customer service. *(ClickFox)*
- The average CRM adoption rate is less than 50%. *(Gartner)* Specifically, adoption rates stand at 76% for Salesforce *(Salesforce)* and 90% for PipelineDeals. *(PipelineDeals)*



To learn more about PipelineDeals and how it can benefit your business, **contact us** by filling out this form or by calling us (866) 702-7303. You can also **request a free demo**.

We'd love to show you around.

www.pipelinedeals.com

