

## CRM for Small Businesses: A Beginner's Guide

This white paper will answer common questions that arise when small businesses are faced with the challenge of selecting an affordable, yet functional CRM solution.

The white paper will start by providing a high-level overview of CRM. Next, it will compare three popular CRM solutions specifically designed for small, but growing companies including the **Salesforce.com** Contact Manager Edition™, the **SugarCRM** Express Edition™ and the **intelecrm** Basic Edition™.

The comparison takes into account deployment options, total cost of ownership, number of users, customization options, core functionality, customer support options and the additional features offered by each vendor.

We will conclude with the next steps a small businesses can take in order to learn more about CRM systems and the options that exist on the market today.

### What is CRM? A high-level overview

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is the process a company uses to organize and keep track of all customer information and interactions. The concept follows a customer-centric approach to business, which means the client is at the center of everything.

A successful CRM process requires and provides a constant flow of information related to each interaction a customer has with an organization. Marketing, Sales, and Customer Support are the three principle areas in which a CRM strategy comes into play.

The amount of organization and data needed to keep customers on center stage in a growing company cannot effectively be handled through spreadsheets, email applications, or other "band-aid" tools.

From the moment a marketing department finds possible sales leads to the process of supporting current customers and everything in between - a good CRM application supports the entire process needed to put the customer first.

Generally at an early stage during its growth, a small company will require an all-encompassing CRM software solution to effectively keep track of escalating activities related to customer interactions.

Some argue that successful entrepreneurs must implement a CRM system before the first sale is even made. Everyone agrees that embracing the concept of CRM from the earliest stage possible prevents problems down the line and well positions a developing organization to handle future growth.

### Three Popular CRM Software Solution Providers: Salesforce.com, SugarCRM, Intelstream

**Salesforce.com** is perhaps the most popular CRM on the market today. The company brings in over one billion dollars in annual revenue and has thousands of employees. **Salesforce.com** offers four editions of its CRM software, all of which are hosted on-demand through the up and coming cloud compute infrastructure. There is no doubt that **Salesforce.com** pioneered the CRM software as a service model and remains one of the biggest players in the industry.



## But is the biggest always the best?

**SugarCRM** was founded in 2004 by a group of three software entrepreneurs who were determined to develop an open source CRM platform. The company has had a great deal of success and is recognized for providing a product that can be fully customized due to its unlocked code source and public license. **SugarCRM** was among the first to develop the “commercial open source” concept, which means that although the software code is open, key features are only available through a paid license agreement.

**Intelstream** was founded in part by former employees of **SugarCRM** who intended to meet a growing demand for open source CRM consulting. The company started with customizing and implementing **SugarCRM** solutions according to the specific needs of its clients. By listening to the practical demands of its clients, Intelstream further developed the **SugarCRM** platform to include new functionality that meets real-world business requirements.

**intelecrm™** is the result of listening to what clients expressed was missing from traditional CRM applications. The application is specifically designed for growing small and medium sized businesses. **intelecrm™** follows a unique pricing model that charges clients for the amount of records and data used, rather than by the number of company users. It is powered by the **SugarCRM** platform, therefore the software architecture is widely known and has proven reliability.

## Deployment options

Deployment – in this case how software is installed or delivered to an end user – is an important consideration that is often misunderstood by first time CRM buyers.

All editions of the CRM applications considered in this white paper are accessed through a web-browser and can be deployed in two ways:

### 1) On-Premise

An on-premise CRM is hosted on a company's Local Area Network (LAN). This deployment option requires installation by an advanced IT professional. Access to the application in this case is restricted to users who are connected to the LAN. Generally speaking, it is complicated to access an On-premise CRM system remotely. Very large organizations with hundreds of users tend to deploy on-premise in order to meet their more sophisticated requirements.

### 2) On-Demand

An on-demand CRM, or CRM in the Cloud, is hosted by the CRM application provider or a third-party such as the Amazon Elastic Cloud Compute (Amazon EC2™). On-demand CRM applications require nothing more than an Internet connection and a web-browser. As there is no software to install, On-demand CRM applications can be implemented quickly and inexpensively without involvement of an IT professional. This form of deployment is becoming increasingly popular for small and medium sized businesses.

All editions of the CRM applications considered in this white paper are delivered entirely on-demand.



## Total cost of ownership and number of users

Like most traditional CRM application providers, **Salesforce.com** charges their subscribers according to user count. The Contact Manager Edition costs \$9 per user per month, however the maximum number of users allowed at this service level is restricted to two. Organizations requiring more than two users must elect a higher edition. The next available option carries a monthly price tag of \$35 per user per month, with a maximum of five users.

The **SugarCRM** Express Edition is \$1,199 annually for up to five users. This equates to roughly \$20 per user per month if indeed a company uses the full five-user counts. It is important to note that the Express Edition does not support more than five users. Organizations that require more than five users must elect a higher edition based on a per-user structure.

More often than not companies require more users than they can realistically afford to purchase. It is extremely common for CRM buyers, especially small businesses, to find themselves in the difficult position of having to pick and choose who in the organization should or should not be granted a login to the CRM.

An effective CRM strategy can only be accomplished when everyone has access to the system. The very notion of CRM requires universal cooperation and user adoption across all job functions that deal with the customer, from the receptionist to the CEO. Experience has proven that restriction only results in scattered information, confusion, and minimal opportunity for real team cooperation.

The **intelecrm™** pricing model does not consider user count as a factor. Whether a company has one or 500 users, the overall price remain the same. Intelstream believes that as a company's sales activity increases, businesses can afford to invest more in their CRM system. Pricing is therefore determined by the number of records stored and the amount of data used by each client. This is one of the primary reasons why **intelecrm™** is ideal for small businesses that plan to grow.

The **intelecrm** Basic Edition has a flat rate of \$20 per month. Unlike **Salesforce.com** and **SugarCRM**, Intelstream does not place user limits on any of its editions.

## Customization options

The ability to customize a CRM is highly important to any business that does not quite fit the standard mold. Organizations have varied business processes and with growth, new functionalities are needed as well as the ability to integrate systems often becomes necessary. Intelstream recommends CRM buyers to look closely at the flexibility of the applications they are considering. The number one factor in determining the extent to which software can be customized lies in the amount of access developers are given to the software code.

<sup>1</sup> **Salesforce.com** prices listed are valid at the time of publication and were acquired from the following link: <http://www.Salesforce.com/crm/editions-pricing.jsp>

<sup>2</sup> **SugarCRM** prices listed are valid at the time of publication and were acquired from the following link: <https://www.SugarCRM.com/sugarshop/product.php?productid=629>



The **Salesforce.com** platform is a proprietary model. Access to the application's core code is not available. The company does offer "unlimited customizations" at its highest service level. However priced at \$250 per user per month, this option is highly restrictive and unrealistic for small businesses.

Although some **SugarCRM** editions are open source, it is important to note that the Sugar Express Edition uses a commercial proprietary license. This means that there is no code-level access or access when deployed in the **SugarCRM** on-demand environment. However, when deployed by a partner outside of the **SugarCRM** on-demand environment, the code is accessible and can be customized.

The **intelecrm™** studio tool grants the administrator users access to layout modifications and the ability to create and modify custom fields. The Intelstream team can also customize specific instances of **intelecrm** for its clients. Similar to Sugar, Intelstream grants qualified partners code-level access. Customizations are permitted across all editions and are very economical compared to the fees charged by most CRM application providers.


## Core Functionality

The **Salesforce.com** Contact Manager Edition limits core functionality to its namesake "Contact Management". Important modules such as: Leads, Accounts, and Opportunities are not available at this service level. This renders the application incomplete as a customer relationship management tool.

The **SugarCRM** Express Edition offers a more complete package by including core CRM functionality that compares to the **intelecrm** Basic Edition. Both applications provide full Sales Force Automation, modules to support customer workflow, and marketing automation, which includes email marketing.

## Additional Features Offered by **intelecrm**

**intelecrm** stands out by offering additional value to its users through unique features that are exclusive to the application. These include the following:

<p><b>Zip Code Radius Search</b></p> 	<p><b>Description</b> Enables users to quickly locate contacts, leads, or businesses that are within a specified distance from the target zip code.</p> <p><b>Benefits</b> This functionality can be used for event management, sales territory planning, business trips, and much more. Users are able to search the database using location as a key filter.</p> <p><b>Advantage</b> Very few if any CRM systems include this function.</p>
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## Password Strength



### Description

Password requirements follow a strong criterion, minimizing security risks. Administrators have the ability to schedule and reset passwords system wide or for individual users.

### Benefits

Your CRM is like a safety deposit box containing your company's most important data that is only as strong as its weakest password. Security breaches can be swiftly avoided through this ironclad tool.

### Advantage

The company's in-house team of software engineers developed this Intelstream feature.

## Star Rater



### Description

Enables users to create a simple visualization rating Leads, Contacts, and Account records according to quality or importance.

### Benefits

Easily rate records and filter results according to rankings.

### Advantage

Although this is a common function across many CRM systems, it is often only available in premium subscriptions. Intelstream offers this functionality as a basic feature in all editions.

## Tag Cloud Browsing



### Description

Manage tagging within a hierarchy structure.

### Benefits

Yet another powerful way to browse data. Users are empowered with an additional method to query and categorize data.

### Advantage

Unlike other tagging implementations, intelcrm takes a structured approach by providing Administrators the ability to design hierarchies and create tag cloud settings. This creates another dimension for data segmentation while maintaining and controlling corporate policy.



## Support

**Salesforce.com Contact Manager Edition** comes with the company's basic support plan, which includes access to an online support portal.

**SugarCRM Express Edition** comes with three email support cases per year with additional support cases available at an additional cost.

All editions of **intelecrm** come with unlimited email support at no cost. Intelstream believes its clients should have full access to the company's support technicians so that issues can be resolved quickly without the consideration of budget restraints.

## Salesforce.com, SugarCRM, and Intelstream Offerings Compared:

	Salesforce.com	SugarCRM	Intelstream
	Contact Manager	Sugar Express	intelecrm Basic
<b>Sales Force Automation</b>			
Leads		X	X
Contacts	X	X	X
Opportunities		X	X
Accounts		X	X
Activities	X	X	X
<b>Customer Service and Support</b>			
Case Management		X	X
Bug Tracker		X	X
Email Management		X	X
Web to lead form		X	X
<b>Collaboration</b>			
Activity Management		X	X
Shared Calendar		X	X
Employee Directory		X	X
Case Management		X	X
Project Management		X	X
Microsoft Office Plugin Available	X	X	X



**Marketing Automation**

Campaign Management	X	X
Mass Email Marketing	X	X
Capture Website Leads	X	X

**Extended Features**

RSS Feeds	X	X
Password Strength Tool		X
Phone Number Auto Formatter		X
Star Rater		X
Tag Cloud Browsing		X
Zip Code Radius Search		X

**Desktop and Mobile Solutions**

Mobile / Wireless Access Available		X
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**Customization Options**

Unlimited Customizations Possible	X	X
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**Pricing and Deployment Options**

User limit	2	5	Unlimited
Annual cost for 2 users	\$216	\$1199	\$240

**Next steps you can take to learn more about CRM**

**Schedule a Free Discovery Workshop with one of our Senior CRM Consultants.**

During the workshop, we'll get to know you and your business needs and determine together how a CRM solution can work specifically for your needs. To learn more contact our sales department directly at 1-800-391-4055.

**Attend a Live Webinar**

Intelstream offers regularly scheduled webinars that address common CRM questions. Visit [www.intelstream.net](http://www.intelstream.net) and click on the Intelstream University tab to sign up.

**Try intelcrm™ Out For Yourself**

We know you'll probably want to get your feet wet on your own a bit. That's why we offer a free monthly trial that let's you see for yourself if intelcrm™ is a good match for you. Visit [www.intelstream.net/intelcrm](http://www.intelstream.net/intelcrm) to get started on your free trial.

