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THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE PERFECT

SALESFORCE
FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Salesforce is currently an undoubtable leader in the CRM market, standing out among other options thanks to its high customizability, basically limitless integration opportunities, numerous apps and add-ons available and regularly released upgrades and innovations.

In fact, lots of large corporations from a vast array of industry domains have announced Salesforce as their preferred customer relationship management platform, including such giants as Google, T-Mobile, Vodafone, American Express, Toyota, and Adidas. According to a 2015 research by Mintigo, around three fourths of Salesforce customers have annual revenue between \$1M and \$50M.

Given such an enviable customer portfolio, it makes people wonder — **is Salesforce a good option for small local businesses and aspiring startups?** After all, as compared to large-scale organizations, small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) have completely different IT infrastructure, resources and needs. However, the CRM does serve all types of enterprises, whatever their origin, industry and number of employees are. Still, there are some considerations regarding the usage of the CRM system by small businesses.

The Good Salesforce for Small Business:

Why Is the CRM great for any SMB

Generally speaking, in its very essence Salesforce is **SMB-friendly**. The reason for that is that it is cloud-based, meaning that a company doesn't need to possess costly server architecture to use the platform and consequently hire staff for its upkeep and support. Everything you need to use the CRM is a PC, a laptop or simply a mobile device.

Speaking of mobile devices. Having a chance **to run a company from one's smartphone or tablet is great** regardless of which type of organization it is — SMB or large-scale. Salesforce provides its users with such opportunity through its apps for inbox, Marketing Cloud, Quip, app for admins, and others. Moreover, a large number of mobile apps developed by certified Salesforce partners is available through AppExchange.

Apart from the accessibility, another thing that makes the CRM great for all kinds of companies, including small and medium-sized ones, is **a fairly large amount of subscription plans and user licenses**. The large variety allows local businesses and startups to determine how much they will pay monthly depending on their budget requirements, the functionalities they require and the number of their business users.

The Bad Salesforce for SMB:

Issues to Consider

Still, there is a rising concern from the part of SMBs that their type of companies is not even close to Salesforce focus. Moreover, despite the fact that Salesforce once pioneered the SMB market with its CRM, today it is overflowed with alternatives aimed specifically at small and medium businesses. Why do SMEs around the world choose other options over Salesforce? Here are a few reasons:

Learning curve

Let's face it — the CRM addresses too wide a number of business needs to be that simple. Given its numerous clouds and countless features, a regular end user is simply overwhelmed with it all. Large organizations can easily solve this problem by hiring a consultant to provide user training or getting a highly qualified Salesforce admin on board. And as far as local businesses are concerned, that is barely an option for them of the additional costs.

User interface

Up until two years ago, Salesforce users had to deal with Classic UI, which was a very painful experience for many. Now, when Lightning Experience has been introduced, using Salesforce has become easier thanks to upgraded pages layouts and other great features. Still, the new interface takes time to get a handle on, and time is money.

Costs

Despite relatively cheap plans present, some SMB users soon realize that they need a very specific functionality available only for more advanced (and more pricey) editions. Or you might realize you need an integration or customization, which in turn results in more spendings.

The Perfect Salesforce: How to Transform Your Small Business with Salesforce

While others spend time wondering whether Salesforce is the best CRM for small business, you can actually turn it into one. Surely, customization and integration with your third-party business software is going to cost you something. However, the sums are not over the top if you **focus on what you really need**.

Great customer relationships at every stage of interaction are invaluable for any company, and local companies and small startups are no exception. Moreover, young companies rely heavily on word of mouth, and making each and every client satisfied with the purchase is key to successful growth. CRMs help companies communicate with prospective, current and returning customers efficiently, driving their satisfaction up, and Salesforce is a nice example of such systems. Over 20% of the CRM market is taken by it, with competitors lagging far behind, and this number speaks for itself. Therefore, **investing in CRM is hugely important and is worth its money**, of course if implemented wisely.

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