

SugarCRM: Sixty Second Sugar Snippets

Podcast Script: Outsiders take of the Week for Nov 12, 2008

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Hello and welcome to this sixty second Sugar Snippet, the inaugural CRM Outsiders Take of the Week podcast. I am Martin Schneider, director of product marketing at SugarCRM and co-author of the CRM Outsiders blog located at <http://www.crmoutsiders.com>. On the blog, myself and associate Colin Beasty take a daily look at what we feel are the hot topics in the CRM world, and in the greater IT universe at large. We thought up this podcast as a way to distill some of the buzz we are seeing week to week, since the CRM market moves so fast these days.

I hope you enjoy the podcasts, and come away with a laugh and a little bit of insight into the world of commercial open source applications and beyond.

So, for my initial podcast, I wanted to tackle a topic I've discussed at length on my blog, but has recently come up a lot in vendor press releases and in the tech media in general. It is this notion of "social CRM" or "CRM 2.0" that many press and analysts are saying is the next sliced bread of CRM.

The idea behind social CRM is essentially the marriage of external web data and communication platforms and your traditional CRM data set. The amalgam of structured account, contact and lead data in a CRM system and unstructured data from the web can aid sales people in uncovering potential relationships that lead to meetings, marketers can get creative with market segmenting and personalization initiatives, and customer support agents can utilize all sorts of data and communication channels like chat, SMS text and Twitter to reach and service customers through non-traditional support channels.

Some argue that CRM is fine as it is. But the fact is, that regardless of your business model – B2B or B2C – your prospects, customers and partners are online and utilizing these social media tools to network and transact. Think of it, there are more people on facebook alone than the populations of France and the United Kingdom combined!

Of course, which web properties and what data you use is up for debate, and a matter of personal choice. I blogged last week about facebook vs LinkedIn as a first step for CRM 2.0 integration. But ultimately, I think the business benefit should drive your decisions. And of course, as with any system in your organization, it is best to monitor activity and usage when it comes to business process.

But as I said, the people you want to reach are out on the web, networking away on these various social media properties. Do you want your competitors to reach them first? SugarCRM is making a lot of great

tools available in our upcoming 5.2 release to easily enable the use of these social and business data providers, and make it easier to reach customers and prospects in ways we never thought possible.

It's an ever-changing world out there, make sure you have a great CRM system that can help you change as quickly as the times.

And that, my friends, is the Outsiders Take of the Week.

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