Podcast Script: How Sugar Uses Sugar

Welcome to this 60-second Sugar snippet. My name is Susie Williams and today's topic is about how Sugar Uses Sugar to run our business.

It should come as no surprise that we at Sugar use Sugar to run Sugar. After all, what makes us any different from the thousands and thousands of happy Sugar installations out there in Sugarland? We're a growing company that needs CRM functionality like any other organization, or else we'd sink like a rock. Sound familiar?

So here are some insights regarding our use of Sugar here at Sugar.

First, did you know that Sugar runs the world's oldest Sugar implementation? We've been up and running since the first posted Sugar builds. It represents an exceptional test bed for release testing. In fact, prior to release, we'll upgrade our system so our internal users can test out new functionality and can identify potential upgrade issues. We run Sugar Internal as a hosted system using the same platform configuration as our Sugar On-Demand customers.

Since it is the primary platform that runs our business, all our business systems integrate with it. From our website to our ecommerce engine to our customer support portal, everything interfaces in one form or another with our own Sugar implementation. Overall, virtually everyone at Sugar uses Sugar regularly and most Sugar employees use it constantly.

Our sales teams are among the heaviest users of the system. Through the years we've tailored the system to meet our exact requirements, just as you undoubtedly do with your Sugar implementation. We have tons of leads, contacts, and accounts and a gazillion notes, activities and target records. It's worth noting that the basic out-of-the-box schema is used; we mainly extend certain tables for our requirements.

Then there's our Marketing team which is constantly cranking targeted campaigns using Campaign Management tools. Leads arising from campaigns are rolled into the lead nurturing process, converted to contacts, sold to as opportunities and tracked for win/loss reports. In this way, Sugar doesn't much differ from many other marketing and selling environments worldwide. We tuned our outbound email options to send chunks of 650 emails so as to not overwhelm our mail servers. The number 650 was derived after a brief trial and error process. We also schedule our campaigns to run at night.

Our Support team is in Sugar all day long primarily addressing Cases, as is our Engineering team, which primarily uses the bug tracker. Our Support Case portal and our Bug portal each expose information we use internally via the SOAP APIs so there are many more external users accessing our system at any given time.

Then there’s the Sugar management team and their penchant for reports. Reports, reports and more reports. What is it that these people do with all their reports? Oh, and charts and dashboards too.

Combine all the users and the *uses* of our internal implementation and you have a very complex CRM system: more complex than typically found in the Sugar install base, and even CRM installations as a whole, regardless of vendor. For this reason, Jacob, our CTO, loves tinkering with our system, discovering new ways to exact the utmost performance and scalability. He discusses this in his “CTO Series” forum posts you’ll find at http://forums.sugarcrm.com. He also posts articles regularly on the wiki at http://wiki.sugarcrm.com.

You may be asking, how many people does Sugar employ to run our internal implementation? And the answer is: One.

In upcoming podcasts we’ll discuss some best practices we implement internally. But for now, we say goodbye!