SAGE CRM SALESLOGIX

Customer Relationship Management

Integration for a Customer-Centric View

How to successfully integrate front- and back-office applications in your small- or medium-sized business

March 2006

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Abstract

Today's small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) see a need for automating their front-office sales and customer relationship management (CRM) tools to their back-office accounting and financial systems. The most recent trend for meeting this need within customer-centric organizations is front-to-back-office integration. The goal of integration is to provide a complete view of all customer interactions in order to make more insightful business decisions.

This white paper provides a valuable list of factors for executive management, IT decision makers, and sales professionals to consider when planning a successful integration project. The paper also addresses the latest developments in software technology that can impact your organization; a project overview of a typical integration initiative using Sage Software products as an example; and the capabilities, benefits, and return on investment that an integrated front- and back-office solution can provide for your organization.

Customer-Centric Integration Defined

In order for CRM to work effectively, individual departments within the organization must communicate and have access to centralized customer information. Each department who contributes to the customer's total experience performs different daily tasks that can be categorized as one of the following:

- back-office
- front-office

Each department collects customer information at different stages of customer interaction. Traditionally, departments performing front-office tasks use dissimilar tools to manage customer information than those departments performing back-office tasks. For example, sales, marketing, and support staffs use applications that support customer-facing processes, such as marketing to prospects, tracking sales opportunities, and handling customer service and technical support inquiries. On the other hand, back-office staff use applications that support non-customer-facing processes, such as managing customer and vendor histories, processing orders, storing financial records, and reporting sales requires.

Therefore, the goal of integrating the front and back office is to deliver native, best-of-breed product functionality to each department, while providing access to critical customer and business information across the entire organization. When executed properly, integration results in increased productivity and efficiency across all departments, enhanced customer satisfaction and, ultimately, greater profitability.

For clarification, integration, as discussed in this white paper, is defined as sharing customer information across organizational divisions or boundaries with a primary focus on sales and customer-facing departments interfacing with the accounting and operations delivery departments.

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The Situation at Hand

In the SMB market segment, as a business grows and its technology needs and sophistication levels increase, individual departments begin to purchase business software solutions to accommodate their changing requirements and to manage growth. A variety of factors come in to play when SMBs make software purchases, including price sensitivity, ease of use, flexibility, and customization capabilities.

Silos of Information

As these departmental solutions are put into place and additional personnel are hired, SMBs often experience changes in inter-departmental communications. Data silos arise as a result of varying systems, and communications with customers often become more difficult.

Typically within a small business, employees sit in close proximity to one another. As a result, customer interactions that occur inside the department are easy to share. However, maintaining that intimate level of customer knowledge as the organization grows may require accessing data in a different software system or contacting a person in a different department. Information that was once freely shared is now contained in multiple business systems that do not communicate with one another—causing the firm to farm the data using spreadsheets and other data gathering tools to construct a complete customer picture.

Thus, when a small organization expands, it is faced with the need to implement systems and processes that will not only accommodate its growth, but also enable it to offer the same level of customer intimacy, knowledge, and service it provided customers when it was a small business.

Economics and Expectations

Small- and medium-sized businesses are quite often challenged to do more with less. They are required to maximize previous investments in technology to boost performance. In addition, they must measure the return on investment of their CRM and ERP projects. And, what about the customers? While technology has advanced the way organizations conduct business, it has also elevated customer expectations. Customers expect organizations to offer, build, deliver, and in particular, service and support the products they sell, or else they will look into alternative vendors.

To eliminate data silos and keep up with customer expectations, businesses are integrating applications that contain vital customer information to create a single, customer centric view across the entire organization. And, rather than starting over with new technology, they are keeping their existing systems and adding only new software solutions that facilitate their growth and integration.

Before considering integration, organizations should set their corporate priorities and be very clear about what they want—a single, central, and accurate view of each customer. It is critical that executive buy-in to this vision is achieved prior to tackling the next steps.

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Organizational Orientation and the Players

Realizing the end goal of a unified customer view requires an understanding of the inter-organizational dynamics, including departmental perceptions, departmental functions and processes, and departmental software requirements.

Departmental Perceptions

One way to consider the tasks of an organization's front- and back-office departments is to use a check-and-balance system. Departments that make up the front and back office have opposing views and needs, and depending upon an individual's departmental affiliation, opinions regarding the usefulness, worth, or capabilities of each department can be less than stellar. This is an important phenomenon for organizations to recognize when considering integrating data from these departments. Consider these viewpoints:

- If you're a back-office or accounting team member, you may view the sales and customer-facing roles as "tell the customer what they want to hear," because when they don't follow procedure, you're the one who has to clean up the mess, right? The back-office perspective team member perspective is often to themselves as the team that enables the front-office sales professionals to do their jobs. They manage the score and keep everybody honest.
- If you are a front-office or sales organization team member, have you ever called the back-office team "Sales Prevention"? Members of the sales department view sales as sustaining the company; if there are no sales, there is no company. Processes implemented by other departments, according to their view, just serve to get in the way of giving the customer what they want.

Are these viewpoints exaggerations or have you heard similar views? The purpose of these examples is to simply point out the fact that these departments think and work differently and that poor and infrequent communication between these teams may ultimately affect customer satisfaction.

Departmental Functions and Processes

Customer satisfaction is the ultimate goal of an integrated front- and back-office solution. To punctuate this point, you can apply two parallel concepts from the manufacturing sector. Those familiar with manufacturing processes would recognize quality control methods such as the Japanese "kanban" (a moving container/bin that houses the parts on an assembly line) or "big C" (external customers) and "little c" (internal customers).

In the software automation world, integration concepts are very similar to those used in the manufacturing process. The underlying concept of these quality control methods is to understand the input and output of a department's function and to appreciate how other departments (little c) need the information or product they create. Further, the information is available from a single source (or bin) and is taken and replaced as needed to complete the product or, in the case of customer centricity, acquire, retain, and up-sell customers.

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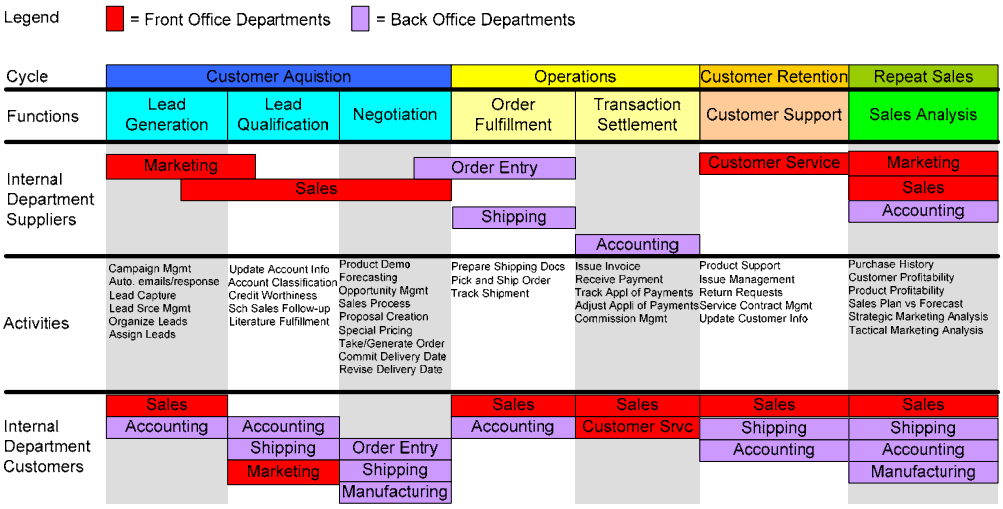
The following figure is a simplified representation of an organization's functional roles—a map of the departments that supply the information, some activities that could be performed, and the internal customers of their work or output. There is a realization that not all small- or medium-sized businesses conform to this departmental structure; however, most of these functions exist in an operational business.

Figure 1: The Customer Chain



Integrating the front- and back-office systems helps streamline workflow and communication. Information is entered into the system once, eliminating double entry and increasing productivity, but not circumventing checks and balances.

How often do sales or support staff get asked for shipment status information? Or, what if they take an order only to find out that the customer is on credit hold and the order cannot be fulfilled? Through integration, employees have the ability to view and analyze complete customer data, which allows them to respond faster, make more informed business decisions, and provide higher levels of customer service.

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Departmental Software Requirements

Departmental perceptions and ownership of tasks becomes clear when considering what each department values in their software solution for performing their daily tasks and customer interactions.

Table 1: Solution Requirements

Front-Office (Sales) Solution Requirements	***Back–Office (Operational) Solution Requirements***
The sales vice president is usually the key sponsor of a CRM front-office initiative. The pains that drive CRM purchase decisions are typically the need for sales processes and pipeline management. Standard application requirements include ease of use and customization capabilities to support a firm's unique and evolving processes. In addition, it must support the field sales organization with the data they need in a disconnected, untethered fashion.	Accountants and other back-office staff are accustomed to software that is designed to be a system of record. While it may be easy to use, accuracy in recording the state of the business is the primary requirement. Accountants often view CRM as a way of streamlining the collection of sales transactions and are wary about allowing any access to, or creation of, data that will jeopardize system integrity.
• Highly customizable application in which rules can be defined by the organization or individual teams • Easy-to-use solution with tools tailored to garner end-user acceptance and adoption because daily use is not mandatory, but desired • Sales order capture, so that sales people can enter orders themselves without learning a different system • Pipeline forecasting tools for better visibility into sales results and financial impact • Visibility of customer and inventory related information through the CRM system • A productivity tool with multiple access points including support for disconnected laptops, for use in the field	• Rules-based solution • Users are required to use products so the user interface (UI) can be imposed upon them • Concerns about sales accessing or changing data in the accounting system, including adding new customers to the accounting system and setting or changing credit limits • Concerns about how orders will get into the back-office system • Concerns about who wins if an order is priced out incorrectly by sales • A system of record for the organization

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Planning and Project Elements

Develop a Plan and Obtain Buy-In

After you've evaluated the organization's departments and processes, the next step is to build and execute an implementation plan. This plan should encompass the organization's current and planned software systems, the budget for the project, and the implementation requirements to automate departmental processes.

The integration project itself is not as much about technology as it is about the people, processes, structure, and information that are involved. To encourage a cultural shift in thinking and conducting business, key factors such as change management, personnel involvement, and clear and frequent communications become necessary. It is important to allay any potential reluctance about how changes will affect employees' day-to-day duties. If the vision is set and people are involved early, it is likely the benefits will be understood sooner and the project will progress faster.

During the planning process, consider contracting with a systems integration company that understands both your company's operations and your systems, and one that is locally available to implement and support your organization throughout the project. Working with integration experts is an excellent way to fast track the execution of your front-to-back-office integration project.

In addition, keep in mind that although a large portion of the integration project will involve a cross-departmental team of influences, there should be one overall project owner within the organization—someone who can be held accountable for project completion. This project *champion* will need to invoke consensus across the various project constituents on key project elements. After you identify this person, there are many technical and process steps to consider. Expect the integration project to be dynamic because business drivers change, as do the needs and desires of the organization.

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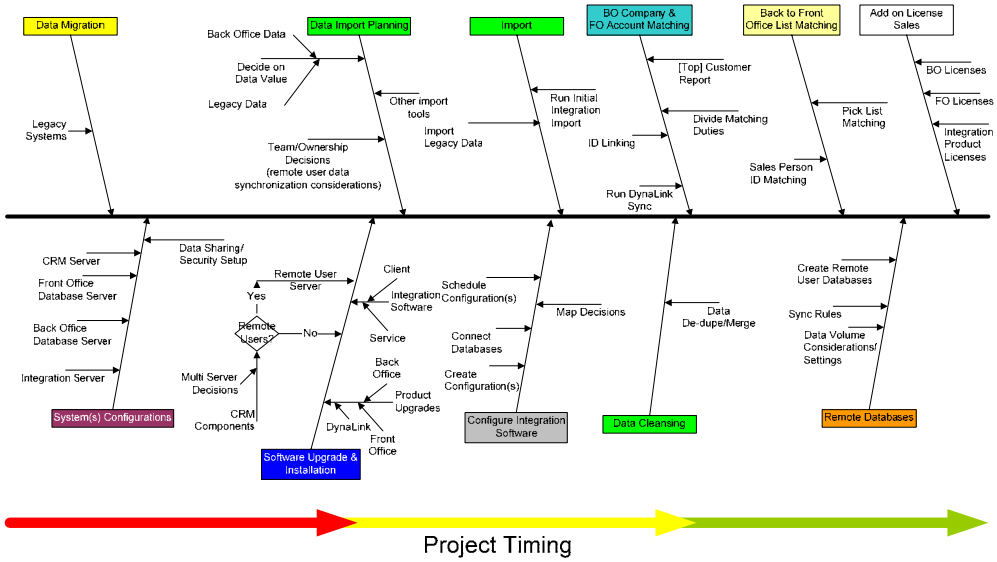
Project Elements and Timeline

The following figure provides a timeline for front-to-back-office suggested practices. The remaining part of this section provides a description for each stage included in the timeline.

Figure 2: Project Timeline



1. Data Migration

As in any new or existing software implementation, handling pre-existing data can provide challenges. When considering whether to join front- and back-office systems, remember to weigh the value of the data against the amount of work that will be required to cleanse and merge the information with the newly implemented systems. It is important to consider the existing data early in the project and compare the information for reliability and accuracy. Evaluating this information early will provide clear insight to decisions needed during the actual data import steps.

2. System Configurations

System sizing and server configurations are difficult to calculate due to the number of possibilities. As a general rule, it is suggested that the integration service be installed on a computer that meets the recommended requirements and is separate from the front- and back-office database servers, as well as separate from the CRM remote user synchronization servers.

3. Software Upgrade and Installation

Upgrading existing software systems is very important to the overall success of the front-to-back-office implementation in order to be compatible with new software.

Installing new software is one of the easiest tasks of the front-to-back-office implementation process. After you have made the system configuration decisions, you must carefully follow the installation documentation for all applications involved in the integration.

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4. Data Import Planning

The purpose of the Data Import Planning stage is to prepare for successful data import by planning the sequence of events. As the back-to-front-office implementation process continues, the dependency of previous steps becomes more important to the success of the overall project. These steps include:

Step 1: Review the decisions made during the Data Migration stage related to the data value and scope of work.

Step 2: Arrive at a consensus regarding the value and accuracy of the data to determine the sequence for importing.

As discussed in this document, the back-office data is extremely accurate and contains customer financial information. This is usually the data set to start with when considering a new implementation of a front-office system.

Step 3: As needed, prepare additional data imports to load pre-existing systems data.

Step 4: If you require a remote implementation, front-office users should receive synchronized data as part of the implementation. Consider the impact of the new data and identify plans to assign teams and ownership schemes using territory management tools to designate appropriate data ownership rules.

5. Integration Services Configuration

To configure the integration services and establish connections between the front- and back-office systems, use the configuration tools that are part of the integration software you have selected or that are already contained within your accounting or CRM software. The next section reviews integration software deployment methods to assist in the software selection process.

During this stage, another practice to consider is creating a naming convention for the configurations. Because there are many variations to creating multiple configurations with multiple schedules, you need to set a standard for how you can quickly identify which front-office account is connected to which back-office company, as well as the mode and scheduled run time.

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6. Front-Office Application Data Import

The process of actually importing data is completed in two phases. The order in which you execute the stages depends upon the decisions made in the Data Import Planning stage.

Phase 1: Import the data that you determined to be the most valuable or accurate. If the back-office information is the first data set, execute an initial integration import. If another pre-existing data set is deemed the most valuable data, import this data first using the data import tool of choice. It is recommended that you perform some method of data validation prior to moving to Phase 2.

Phase 2: Import the secondary data set after the data validation of Phase 1 is complete.

7. Data Cleansing

After the data has been consolidated into the front-office product, it is possible that the newly integrated system contains duplicate data. The presence of duplicates depends upon the sophistication level of the import tools used.

Regardless of the import tools used, the Data Cleansing stage is critical to starting the implementation with a valid data set. Taking the time to use de-duplication tools will increase the success of the overall implementation.

8. Front-Office Account and Back-Office Company Matching

Until this point, the back-office company information and the front-office account information may not have been associated, thus preventing the connection between appropriate data in each system. This stage of the implementation associates accounts in the front office to the matching company in the back office. To create this link between the front-office account and the back-office customer, certain cross reference information must be populated. For example, the CRM application will need to know the accounting company code and/or the customer ID number from the back-office application in order to link the two accounts. This stage is only required during implementation; as new accounts are created in the future, the front- or back-office applications will automatically be linked.

9. Front-to-Back-Office List Matching

Data lists shared between the front- and back-office systems must match in order to support a congruent flow of information between both systems. Each system may have special logic or rules associated with the values. An example where matching data lists become important is during a sales order—the sales person code and the shipping methods must match. If they do not match, during the order validation process in the back-office, the order or quote will not be processed.

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10. Field Based Remote User Databases

If the implementation supports remote or field-based front-office users, you must pay special attention to account ownership in order to ensure these users have proper access to the accounts they manage.

If teams and ownership were assigned during the Data Import Planning stage, there may be no further action needed. If they were not assigned, this is the time to look at tools needed to designate territory ownership in the front-office and further investigate each user's synchronization settings.

It is difficult to predict remote user transaction volume because each company runs its business differently. Plan ahead and set expectations for initial and follow-up remote user synchronization sessions.

Further, to avoid synchronization delays, do not create a remote user's offline database until after all the initial imports, synchronizations, and front-office accounts and back-office customers are complete.

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Evaluating and Selecting a Deployment Method

At this stage, with the situation defined, the needs apparent, and an execution plan in the works, the IT questions begin. This section reviews the more technical qualifications and requirements to consider when implementing a customer-centric integration project.

Technology Measuring Stick – How to Evaluate Approaches

There are multiple technology approaches available for integrating software systems. The approach you choose will depend on many factors. Some of the most common considerations are listed in the following table.

Table 2: Evaluation Details to Consider

Consideration	*Common Questions to Ask*
Scalability	How much data and processing can the approach accommodate?
Future Resilient and Self-Realizing	Does the method allow the integration components to discover new functions as they are added? Does it provide a basis for intelligent and dynamic functionality adjustments? Will it make maintainance and upgrades easier?
Generic	Does the integration method support a true gateway for other solutions/products to use the framework?
Development Knowledge	How much does the development staff need to know about the integrating product(s) programming interfaces? Is your team responsible for creating parts of the integration components?
Transactional Integrity	Is the transactional integrity maintained? If so, how? How will that affect the integrating products technical support functions? Will product support for the integrated product be dropped because of the integration modifications?
Maintenance	Is a new team required to manage this product?
Technical Support	What does the Applications Support team need to know about the integrating product(s)? Do you need to have the domain knowledge?
Installation/Configuration	What are the modifications that must happen to the integrating products? What components/modules are required with the integrating product? How do you know if they are installed?
Licensing Costs	What are the licensing requirements? Is there a developer's license required to perform configurations? What are the costs and who will provide these licenses?
Flexibility	How flexible is the data mapping? Can additional fields be added, removed or remapped?
Data or User Interface (UI)	Many aspects of integration involve data movement and the user interface is handled separately. Are the UI and data movement components tightly coupled? How seamless does the integration feel?
Out of the Box Integrations	Does this type of architecture support pre-built, ready to deploy integrations that require minimal configuration or development work?
Advanced Configuration Possibilities	Does this type of architecture allow for customizations, multi-server and multi-database configurations?

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Architecture Options and Comparisons

The following figures illustrate three architectural approaches to performing integration: Point-to-Point, Customizable Point-to-Point, and Multi-Point.

Figure 3: Point-to-Point

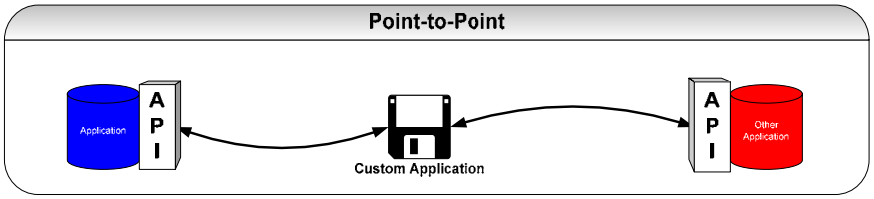


Figure 4: Customizable Point-to-Point

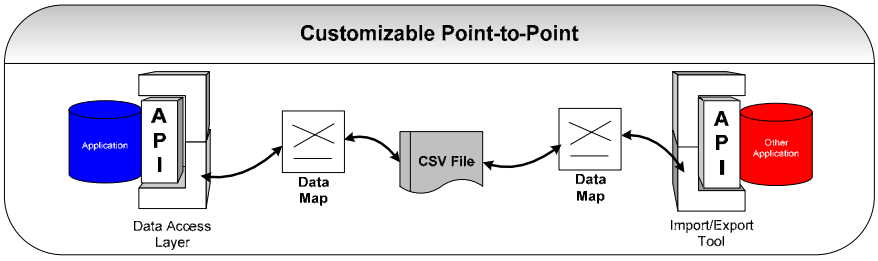
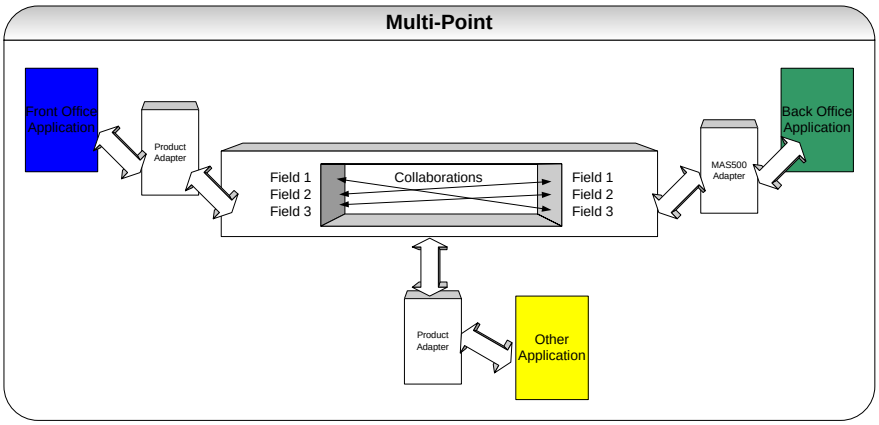


Figure 5: Multi-Point



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The considerations for each approach are included in the following table.

Table 3: Considerations by Architectural Approach

Method	*Point-to-Point*	*Customizable Point-to-Point*	*Multi-Point*
Considerations	**Comments**	**Comments**	**Comments**
Scalability	Low.	Moderate.	Extremely high. Limited only by the restrictions in the selected accounting or CRM products.
Future Resilient and Self-realizing	Typically not capable.	Data mapping allows the addition of new data fields and new functions can be coded.	High.
Generic	Typically not designed this way.	Open, customizable mapping allow for this.	The structural components make this highly generic and put the specialization at the driver level.
Development Knowledge	This solution masks the need for the integration project owner to know complex details about the front- and back-office products.	This solution allows for pre-built integrations, minimizing the development knowledge needed by the project owner about the front- and back-office products. However, as soon as customizations are required, significant knowledge of the data and import or export tools is needed.	This solution masks the need for the integration project owner to know complex details about the front- and back-office products.
Transactional Integrity	Without high levels of product knowledge from the manufacturer, this approach could violate the transactional integrity of both systems.	Excellent—it uses natively supported tools from the software manufacturers.	High integrity maintained because each of the adapters are knowledgeable about each application's rules.
Maintenance	Minimal.	Minimal.	Minimal.
Technical Support	This approach requires significant knowledge of both sides of the integration and excellent knowledge of all products involved.	This approach requires significant knowledge of both sides of the integration and excellent knowledge of all products involved.	Simplifies the learning curve and number of new products required to learn.
Installation/Configuration	Installation is typically simpler than other approaches.	Requires additional products to install and configure connectivity information.	Installation can be challenging depending on the use of self-configuration.
Licensing Costs	Special licensing may be required for both products.	Requires Import/Export module purchases.	May require additional licenses from each integrating product.
Flexibility	Low.	Good.	Good.

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Method	*Point-to-Point*	*Customizable Point-to-Point*	*Multi-Point*
Considerations	**Comments**	**Comments**	**Comments**
Data or User Interface	The user interface is disconnected from the data integration requests.	The user interface is disconnected from the data integration requests.	The data movement and user interface can be tightly coupled in this model. A function request may be sent through the framework and the driver renders the user interface.
Out of the Box Integrations	Yes, usually the only way this is deployed.	Yes.	Sometimes.
Advanced Configuration Possibilities	No, configuration is fixed.	Yes, multiple servers and databases.	Yes, advanced in these capabilities.
Deployment Situations/Uses	Typically used in fixed product integration situations that are allowed to make minor modifications.	Deployable for a wider range of applications because of its flexibility.	Deployed where more scalable needs are required.

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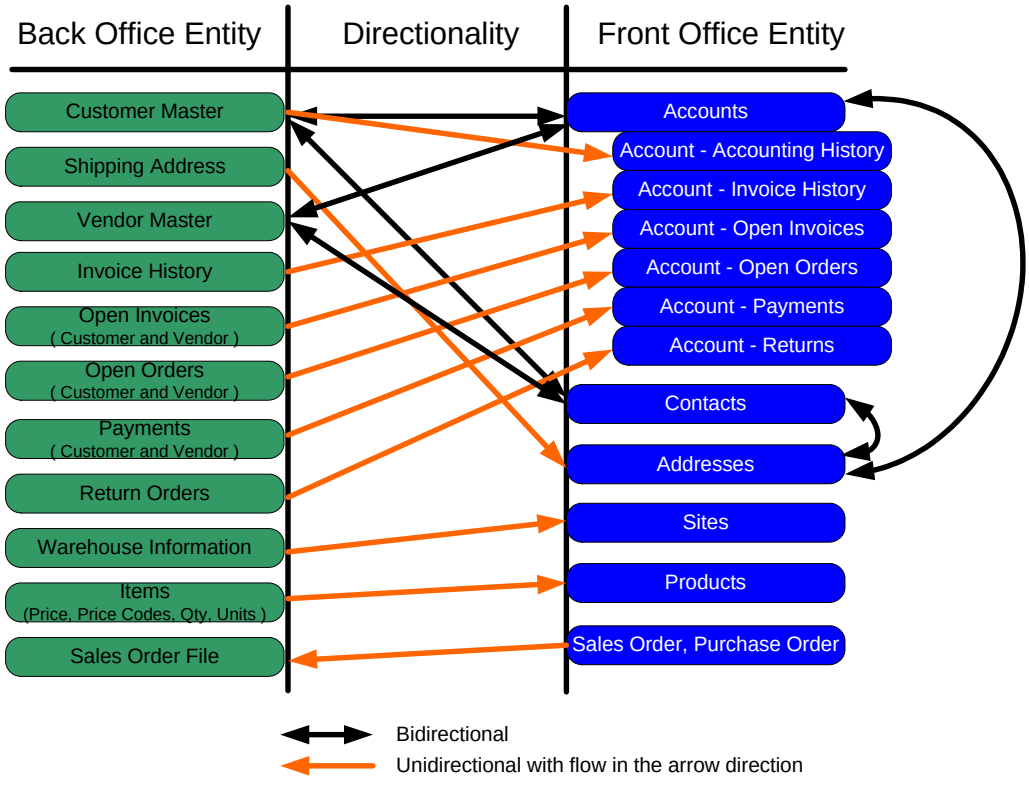
Tangible Integration Benefits

Information Exchange Between Systems

Integrated systems enable access to a wealth of information. The following figure is a representation of some of the data entities that exist in the front- and back-office systems.

- The directionality column indicates the entity relationship and the information flow.
- The color coded arrow differentiates the bidirectional (both systems allow updates) and the unidirectional (one system is the originator and the other is a receiver) relationships. There may be other conditions placed upon the relationships to determine which system overrides when there is a data conflict, and these conditions will vary from system to system.

Figure 6: Data Entities



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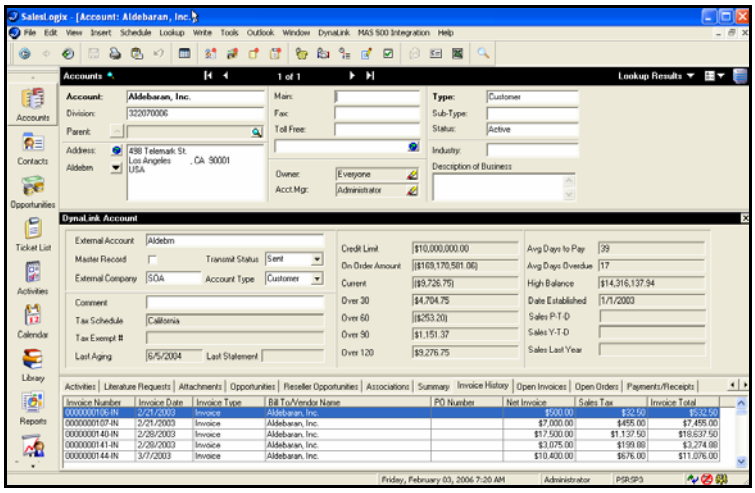
A Complete Customer View from the CRM Application

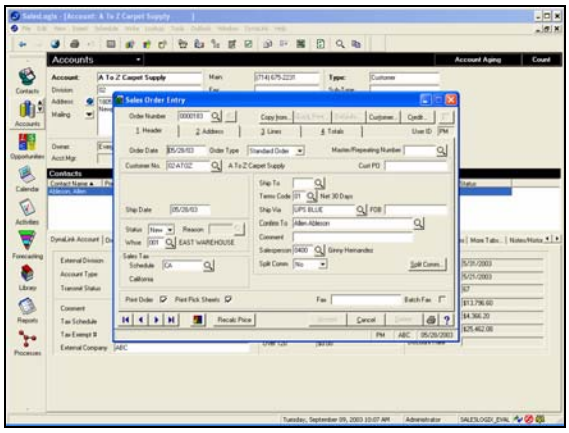
How does it look when the front- and back-office system is working together? Ultimately, the solution should look and feel like the familiar, native application. The following figure shows a screen shot of Sage CRM SalesLogix, the leading CRM application from Sage Software. The interface displays customer accounting information including receivables, aging, credit limit, sales year-to-date (YTD), as well as other back-office data *within* the front-office application. By selecting the appropriate tab in the user interface, front-office users can view invoice history, sales history, payment history, and other important back office related customer information.

Figure 7: Customer Information in Sage CRM SalesLogix



Taking it one step further, there are situations where it may make sense to enable a front-office user to directly access the accounting system. These situations may include running a customer inquiry or placing an order directly into the back-office system. With the front-office account and the back-office company information linked together, users are able to click a button from the account record in their front-office CRM solution to open the back-office screen that displays the correlating customer information.

Figure 8: Sage MAS 90 Rendered with Sage CRM SalesLogix



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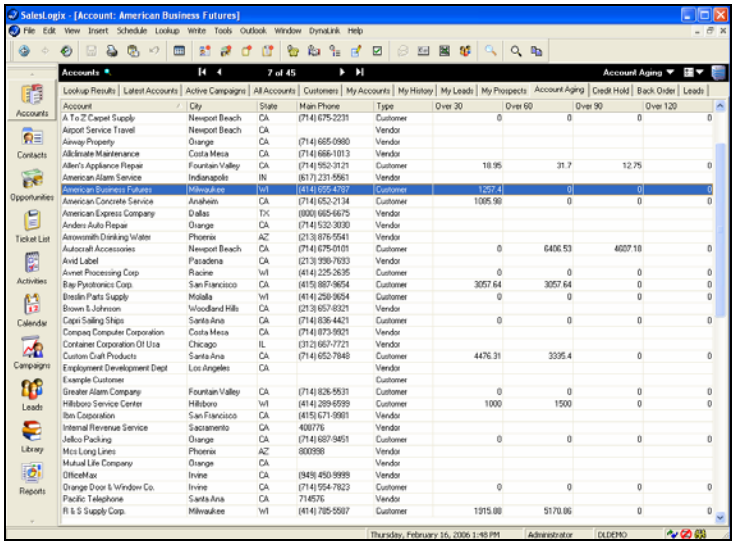
Extended Functionality in the Front-Office CRM Application – 1+1=3

In review, front-office systems are historically flexible and customizable. Back-office systems are typically designed around strict rules to maintain data integrity. With an integrated system, the flexible front-office now includes an extended set of business information to create a composite application with a value greater than the sum of its parts.

Figure 9: Example of an Integrated System



Although the information views discussed below may not be specific product components of a particular integration suite or application, they are the results of applying the inherent functionalities derived from integrating the front- and back-office. Organizations that maximize this integration reap the rewards of excellent insight for their businesses. Take a look at some of the extended functionality that you can derive from an integrated solution.

- **Top Customer List:** View a list of the top customers by simply creating a group of customers, and including and sorting the year-to-date (YTD) sales field.
- **Customer Accounts Receivable Aging List:** View accounts that are due and the associated collection aging.
- **Credit Hold List:** View customers on credit hold.
- **Unprocessed Orders List:** Orders correlate with dollars. A click of the button provides a list of unprocessed orders.
- **Collections Letters:** Use mail merge capabilities to send customers friendly reminder notices that their accounts are past due and record the events to CRM history.
- **Buying Trends:** Define criteria and manipulate the information in Microsoft Excel.

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Return on Investment

The price of integration software solutions ranges from as low as a few hundred dollars to upward of $100,000. Additionally, there will be implementation and project-associated costs. Knowing this, CRM vendors in the small- and medium-sized business space are pricing their products to compete for small- and medium-sized company budgets.

While it is difficult to outline specific expected return on investment (ROI) due to countless factors that influence costs, timing, and the capabilities of the final solution, consider these guideline when looking for contributing factors for ROI calculations.

Table 4: Factors Influencing Return on Investment.

Customer-Centric Integration Savings Influencers	*Customer-Centric Integration Cost Influencers*
Customer Management, Attrition, and Loyalty To consider gains in this category, you need a baseline number to understand the organization's customer management costs (CMC). Using this value, you may compute calculations to understand customer profitability. Applying these numbers against a customer attrition rate will yield a value. Conversely, this process may reveal a savings by approaching unprofitable customers with options to drive them into profitability or save CMC dollars by no longer servicing these customers.	**Data Conditions** The number of systems and the data consolidation requirements will affect service or internal costs.
Labor Savings One of the largest benefits to implementing a customer-centric integration solution is the potential labor savings. Consider the cost savings that could occur by reducing the double-entry time across two or more departments (not to mention the accuracy gains). An example would be sales reports that are prepared by a sales person, but later modified by the sales manager and/or the sales vice president.	**Hardware Updates and Acquisitions** Does the current hardware in your organization meet the requirements? It may be necessary to add or update machines and equipment.
Customer Base Sales Opportunities Providing great customer care can turn into a profitable business practice. Knowing your customer base more intimately may enable your organization to increase revenue with current customers. Assign value to the cross-sell and up-sell opportunities and use that as part of the ROI justification.	**Software Updates and Acquisitions** This figure includes the cost of the actual software and updates to existing applications and operating systems (if they are not up to specifications).
	Out-of-the-Box Capabilities The scope of integration can increase the overall length and cost of the project. Solutions designed to solve challenges for small and medium-sized companies are available that offer working, out-of-the-box integrations. Extending these pre-built solutions will increase costs.

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Conclusion

Successful customer-centric integration is achievable and affordable for small- and medium-sized businesses. The key to this success is keeping the customer's experience with your organization at the forefront during the evaluation, planning, and integration phases. In addition, along the way, it's important to show internal constituents the win-factor for them to garner support.

Customer-centric integration represents unique benefits for the entire organization, as well as its customers.

Sales wins by:

- **Having** unprecedented levels of visibility into the order and invoice processes.
- **Having** up-to-date product information, pricing, discounting, and inventory available when quoting or taking orders. (No need to wait for accounting to call you back with product information or the latest pricing.)
- **Knowing** the account credit status, terms, and account balance before creating an order.
- **Knowing** the invoice, payment, outstanding balance, and aging information to provide more complete customer service.
- **Using** past product purchasing information to plan future marketing campaigns.
- **Using** the front-office tools to identify and focus on unprocessed sales orders or customers with excessive past due balances.
- **Using** front-office process tools to follow up with customers after they purchase.

Accounting wins by:

- **Maintaining** control over the order entry process so that salespeople can generate accurate and complete orders.
- **Controlling** product pricing and/or discounting.
- **Reducing** the time spent answering questions from sales or generating reports because the teams have accounting information available at their fingertips.
- **Reducing** duplicate work in re-keying orders.
- **Reducing** customer maintenance activities.

Overall, everyone wins with front-to-back-office, customer-centric integration because orders move to accounting more quickly, customers receive products sooner, the company gets paid faster, salespeople receive commission checks earlier, employees are more satisfied with their jobs, and clients receive higher levels of customer service.

The time is right to identify integration as a key corporate initiative, merge your data silos, and start reaping the rewards of the synergistic capabilities that a customer-centric, integrated business can offer.

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