Relationals

Triple Creek Associates

Selling Relationships

How an innovative mentoring solutions provider is using Relationals CRM to streamline sales processes and drive their business

Customer:
Triple Creek Associates

Challenge:
Needed CRM sales infrastructure for their growing business

Customer Base:
80 Accounts

Sales Reps:
3

Implementation Date:
June, 2006

Features in Use:
- Lead and Account Management
- Filtering for Targeting
- Call Logging
- Reports and Performance Analytics
- Email and Telesales Campaigns
- Automatic Call Assignment Calendaring
- Web-to-Lead Features
- Activity Monitoring

Finding good employees is challenging, but retaining them or developing stars and leaders can be a difficult task – even for the largest Fortune 500 organizations with the best benefits. According to industry figures, turnover rates are conservatively estimated at 15% and replacing someone that leaves can cost up to 140% of their salary. For a company of 10,000 employees, it can amount to millions lost every year.

Many of these organizations are sustaining their employee base by creating mentoring programs to help employees feel they are actively engaged within the team and business. Those bonds have proven success in retention and also improving diversity within these organizations. Let's face it: even the hardest day at the office never seems so bad if you can get guidance or share concerns with someone who's been there.

Mentor Matchmaking

Since its inception in 1994, Triple Creek Associates has helped businesses craft and customize leadership development solutions with companies like Eli Lilly, Edward Jones, LexisNexis and Monsanto. In 2000, Triple Creek pioneered the first web-based mentoring solution winning awards and clients such as Dow Chemical, Sun Microsystems, the United States Air Force, and Motorola. This delivery model also enabled the company to break into a slew of new markets because they could now offer their best practices to customers without major customization needs.

A Need to Grow

With over 80 clients, a considerable upside to their sales funnel, a goal to double revenue, and very little sales collaboration infrastructure in place, Randy Emelo, the President of Triple Creek, set out to re-build the company's sales team. As part of this effort, it was also time to replace an antiquated contact management database with a more process-integrated CRM solution. After evaluating offerings from a number of vendors, Triple Creek settled on Relationals.

"We needed all the aspects of CRM: organizing our contacts, accounts, priorities, and reporting back our sales pipeline and forecast," states Emelo. "On top of all that functionality, Relationals also provided an easy-to-use interface, campaign workflow, and unmatched support."

The sales team at Triple Creek Associates use Relationals to collaborate and manage their operations that's focused on selling leadership development solutions to the world's largest organizations

"The integrated email campaign functions in Relationals automate this process around a highly successful inbound strategy"

Integrated Sales Process

One of the company's most successful programs is their free newsletter campaign, which reaches 22,000 subscribers. "Triple Creek has a consult-to-sell philosophy where we believe that by giving valuable information and research to our subscribers, we can drive their continuing interest in our services," says Jay Connors, VP of Business Development at Triple Creek. "The integrated email campaign functions in Relationals automate this process around a highly successful inbound strategy."

Once calls do come in, the sales team is able to painlessly log calls using Relationals. "The call logging feature in Relationals is very robust," says Connors. "You can feed in a lot of information very quickly and was another key reason why we had decided on Relationals."

These call logs are also critical to identifying where accounts are in the pipeline. Triple Creek's sales cycles can last anywhere from 25 days to 2 or 3 years, depending on who the client is, what their needs are, and the levels of executive buy-in required. Relationals helps keep track of these accounts, maintain a 360° view of account activities, and provides strong workflow around the selling cycle.

Both Triple Creek reps and executives monitor their sales progress with Relationals reports that provide real time bookings, pipeline forecasts, and sales activity monitoring. "We're very happy with this ability because it means less time collecting the data and building the reports manually whenever we have a need to know," says Connors. "And because activity reports let me know that our reps are using Relationals, I know that the data I'm getting is believable."

Once a deal is signed, Triple Creek's client services group takes over and they use Relationals' account data to maintain engagements. This can include contract details organized in Relationals and setting up renewal reminders. "In the past, we'd probably have used file folders and email," explains Connors. "Now the transition is pretty seamless and very pro-active."

Efficiency Enables Strategy

With three sales reps working accounts, one of Triple Creek's biggest challenges is around prioritization. Because they have such a wide landscape of potential clients, there's a lot of latitude for each rep to take and set their own goals. But they also need to be strategic.

"Even with the most qualified salespeople – and I believe ours are – they wouldn't be as efficient without Relationals. We can really collaborate on specific accounts because we're operating from a common knowledge-base," explains Connors. "I can provide both strategic vision and historic insight during our 1-on-1 meetings, and use that time to coach, rather than go over status reports."

"In some ways, our sales team has taken to mentoring internally," adds Emelo. "By consolidating and coordinating marketing and sales efforts, Relationals enables that kind of collaborative environment."

Build vs. Buy

When asked about why a company that itself has created a web-based relationship solution didn't build a CRM, Connors replied: "We really wanted to focus on our core, which was developing mentoring programs. We could have spent the effort and expense to create something like Relationals, but in the end we have a business to run."

"We were up and running in one day. With our unique sales model, Relationals was able to accommodate our custom needs quickly as well. It was a welcome change from other implementations and very, very simple to use from the start."

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