Manufacturing's
sweet spot

Why manufacturers are turning to SugarCRM's Industrial Grade CRM Platform in their quest for business transformation

I n a world where manufacturers operate under the urgent imperative to organize data, boost customer relationships and continually drive growth, the right Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system can open the door to peak efficiency. With an optimized CRM solution, manufacturers can evaluate all the touchpoints on a customer journey, determine how to optimize their experience, and create a consistent cadence of sales, marketing, and service activity to unify the value chain.

But while today's high-growth midmarket manufacturers understand that winning is about streamlining supply chain operations, they lack the in-house technical expertise and support of larger companies. This can make finding and harnessing the right CRM system a challenge.

Enter SugarCRM. A software platform that provides leading technology in the sales automation, marketing automation, and customer service fields. SugarCRM delivers a single platform that unites marketing, sales, and service teams, allowing access to unified data, processes, and KPIs for all customer interactions, empowering both employees, customers and the business alike.
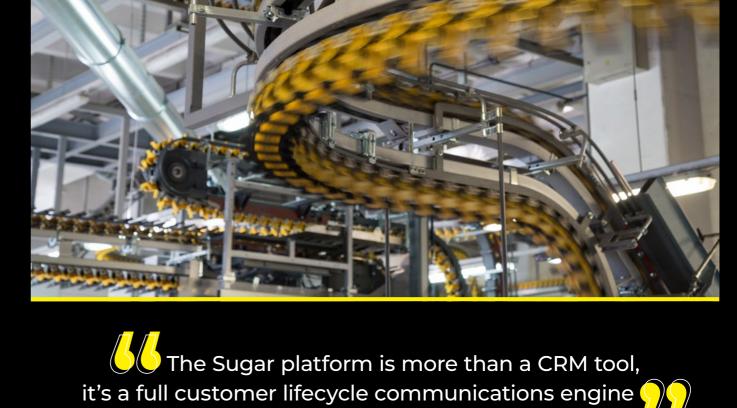
▶ **Craig Charlton, CEO**

What's more, SugarCRM understands manufacturing. Thanks to 20 years' experience and 1000+ customers, it can help innovate, identify new ways to drive growth and gain a competitive edge. In fact, calling it 'CRM' is too basic, as Craig Charlton, CEO, asserts: "The Sugar platform is more than a CRM tool, it's a full customer lifecycle communications engine. The cloud-based platform is infused with artificial intelligence (AI) to augment and automate day-to-day processes making the hard things easier for customer engagement teams. Sugar has made significant investments to bring the SugarPredict AI engine to its full platform portfolio, pioneering pre-configured, out-of-the-box AI to drive value from day one."

SugarPredict AI capabilities include sentiment analysis designed to supercharge every sales and service interaction with the power of knowing each customer/prospect's emotional state and intent.

"Additional innovations include verticalized capabilities, notably to support the robust and complex customer engagement needs of manufacturers," Charlton emphasizes. "Sugar is an industrial-grade

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CRM that automates anything, accelerates everything, and anticipates what's next. The flexible and powerful platform does the work to power modern marketing, sales, and service for manufacturers."

SugarCRM provides manufacturers with more than a platform, its interoperability helps leverage old and new technologies to aggregate data to speed insights to action.

Bridging the gap between front office and back office is critical for manufacturing companies. That's why SugarCRM has integrations with a variety of leading ERP solutions and strategic partnerships with ERP vendors such as SYSPRO that have a strong footprint in manufacturing. "In general, a CRM helps you grow your business while an ERP helps you manage that growth in a cost-effective way. By mapping data seamlessly

between CRM and ERP platforms, companies gain a 360-degree view of business. Manufacturers are benefitting from Sugar's dedication to supporting deeper ERP and CRM data integration that helps monetize data and identify untapped opportunities to drive revenue growth. That puts an end to data silos and helps accelerate lead to cash by generating proposals and quotes with accurate configurations and up-to-date pricing to close deals faster, for example."

With AI-driven insights, teams also have the ability to discover hidden up-sell, cross-sell, link-sell and switch-sell products and services more effectively to increase wallet share with existing customers. This, in addition to mapping supply and demand to maximize revenue and profitability by optimizing production planning and inventory based on

real-time sales forecasts.

Sugar is also at the forefront of enabling manufacturers to leverage Generative AI in a very practical manner. "For years, the industry has been talking about how a 360-degree view of the customer is key, but up until now that meant going through hundreds of interaction records, which is not practical. Our Generative AI allows customers to distill and consume that information very quickly, so they can understand the relationship as it stands, and it can help them determine what to do next."

When it comes to visibility, James Frampton, SugarCRM Senior Vice President and General Manager International, was surprised that so many companies are still not able to achieve a 360-degree view of the customer. "We sometimes take it for granted that everyone does this and does it well. It's not just about sales, but also aligning customer service and marketing so there is a full circle of communication across a business."

He continues with further insights gained from working with manufacturers to relieve their pain points. "Manufacturers all have very similar issues and objectives," he reveals. "They typically experience longer sales cycles and 'high touch' customer engagement, and, therefore, focus on long-term customer relationships versus individual transactions. The ability to systematically manage and develop accounts strategically is important, so differentiating with service excellence and improving customer retention with value-added offers and detecting churn risks early is critical. This is where CRM adds tremendous value.

"In addition, manufacturers want data to go beyond forecasting – to access the insights they need to track their business. They also

highly prize integration. That is why so many are finding SugarCRM ticks all their boxes, as it allows for models to be built joining the dots of relationships, aligning communication across the business, and ensuring the flow of data will help each individual user based on their role within the business."

"The manufacturing sector continues embracing the new wave of digital transformation," Charlton adds. "Yet, there's still tremendous room for improvement to get better organized around production, distribution, supply chain, and other key parts of the business. This may be why many are adopting new advancing technologies to enhance and automate traditional business models and processes to drive revenue growth and customer retention. The Sugar platform is helping manufacturers turn transformation investments into revenue.

"The mid-market is a very pragmatic sector. They don't have the tolerance for multi-year, multi-million-dollar projects where you must build yourself from the ground up. They want applications that work out-of-the-box, a value that Sugar delivers."

Charlton and Frampton are persuasive in their passion for the multiple benefits of SugarCRM and draw on real-world customer examples to reinforce their message. Starting with Creative Foam Corporation, a leader in customized engineering solutions for the transportation, healthcare, consumer, and industrial markets, we hear from James McAlister, Marketing and Sales Analytics Manager. He explains that it implemented Sugar as an all-in-one CRM and advanced sales automation platform. Enhanced forecasting and analytics enable the company to maintain a strong sales pipeline,

> **The manufacturing sector continues embracing the new wave of digital transformation**

> ❝ Mature industrial customers and industries need a platform to conform to them and to do so cost-effectively ❞

drive improved conversion rates, while understanding run rates for its engineering and manufacturing programs spanning multi-year project lifecycles. The Sugar platform integrates seamlessly with Creative Foam's Plex ERP platform, providing a single source of truth for all customer data.

"Sugar Sell gives us the 360-degree view we need to focus on delivering for our customers while keeping a strategic focus on the future of the business and competitive market," he elaborates. "We've tracked metrics year-over-year from implementation to the first quarter of fiscal year 2024, and we're projecting 30 percent higher sales. While larger macro-economic trends have had an impact here, we do see Sugar as a key factor in our success due to increased visibility and focus and a richer understanding of where opportunities are coming in from a customer and location perspective.

"Additionally, our dollar content per vehicle has increased 14 percent. Our sales pipeline has grown 42 percent since implementation, and we exceeded sales goal by 44 percent in FY23," he adds.

Moving into the electronic marine

equipment market, we find another SugarCRM customer - Marine Instruments, the world's leading manufacturer of tuna satellite buoys. Having experienced steady growth over the years, the firm operates in over 30 countries and is part of Grupoarbulu, a group of nine companies specializing in global marine technology solutions.

Before Sugar, the company was handling customer data in a decentralized way and storing information in isolated silos. The absence of an internal system to share customer data in real-time was taking a toll on the firm's growth potential.

Marine Instruments implemented Sugar's customer service platform and now has access to customer portfolios through a unified interface and benefits from a smooth information flow between its different divisions. As a result, all teams now rely on a centralized structure that offers better visibility. Meanwhile, the exchange of information in real-time allows sales executives to approach customers proactively and take advantage of possible synergies.

Sugar enables Marine Instruments to better monitor internal processes, improve Service Level Agreement (SLA) management and simplify business planning for the short-, medium- and long-term.

The differing market sectors of foam and marine electronics referenced above also work to demonstrate Sugar's understanding that the essence of a company lies in its individuality – the unique processes, values, and approaches that set it apart from competitors.

As Charlton states: "Our platform is designed not to overwrite these unique elements but to embrace and enhance them. We believe in adapting to your business, not

the other way around. This philosophy allows our clients to maintain and emphasize their distinctive qualities, ensuring that they don't just blend into the market but stand out."

Sugar also provides a marketplace full of add-ons and integrations that can get manufacturers where they want to be quickly. "Our approach has led to numerous success stories where businesses such as BackCountry have leveraged Sugar not just as a tool, but as an extension of its unique business identity, driving growth and enhancing customer relationships."

As we go forward into 2024, the industrial manufacturing sector is facing multiple challenges, including complex B2B supply chains, sales reps operating via multiple channels and the continuing imperative to run in a disciplined, low-margin, high-efficiency manner. "This market needs and wants its CRM platform to reflect its processes," Charlton emphasizes. "Mature industrial customers and industries need a platform to conform to them and to do so cost-effectively.

"That is what we are providing at

SugarCRM. We are continuously improving the software, leveraging our experience and dedication to the extraordinary benefits of generative AI, machine learning, advanced analytics, automation capabilities, and more – all to help manufacturers turn transformation investments into revenue."

SugarCRM is not just a tool – it's a partner that understands and effortlessly executes requests. In fact, Charlton believes the world of CRM is on the cusp of a major shift, where complex processes give way to straightforward, intuitive interactions. SugarCRM represents a significant leap forward, boosting productivity, enhancing decision-making, and improving outcomes. ∎

To get a demonstration of how SugarCRM can help you access information, gather inspiration, and communicate with customers and prospects in their own language, visit

sugarcrm.com/uk/request-demo/