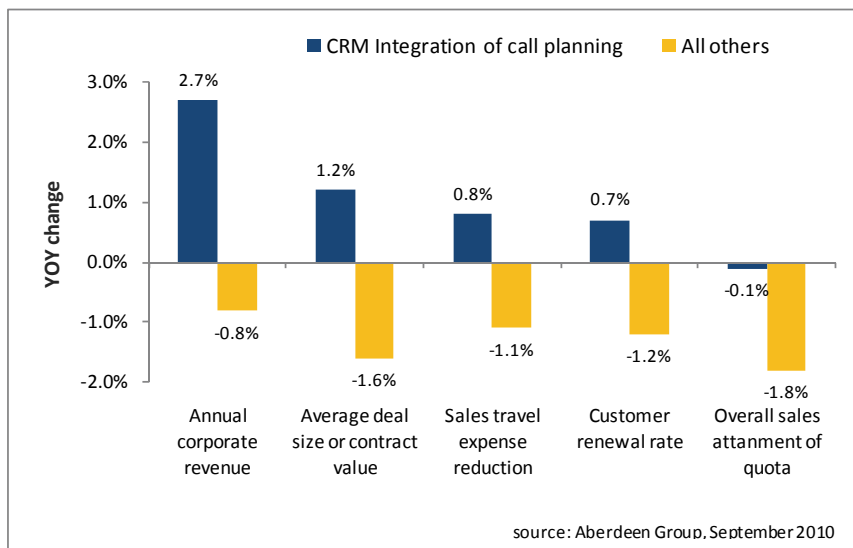


Empowering Sales Automation: The Integration of Sales Methodology and CRM Systems

Companies around the globe continue to make heavy investments in sales methodologies and CRM systems. Yet, research shows that both have been plagued by poor adoption—leaving few organizations with the ability to capitalize on their full potential. So, how do you increase adoption, while at the same time driving sales performance?



Integration

The integration of a sales methodology into CRM benefits a broad range of metrics that are key to performance in any selling organization. (Results Example: CRM integration of call planning—See chart) Research from Aberdeen Group found that industry-leading companies deploy this type of integration 83% more often than industry laggards. What’s the reason for this improved performance? Like anyone, a sales person assesses any new element of their job from a “what’s in it for me?” perspective. By integrating both methodology and process assistance into their CRM, it changes from an imposed management edict to something that they want to use, because it enables them to sell better, and avoid costly mistakes—impacting performance and quota achievement.

Re-Inventing the Wheel: Don’t Do It!

While the integration of Sales Methodology and CRM are important, many companies make a critical error in their approach. The temptation to save money by creating their own sales methodology and attempt to implement a homegrown CRM integration almost always leads to a more expensive long-term solution with inferior results. A study by Aberdeen found that companies that license sales training content or methodology from the outside showed 12% better team quota achievement and 23% better individual quota achievement than their counterparts that didn’t. Moreover, the ongoing cost of maintaining CRM customization code is vastly underestimated by IT departments, and prevents companies from taking advantage of the ongoing investment in both the intellectual property and technology that third-party vendors make.

Importance of Executive Sponsorship and Reinforcement Coaching

As with any investment you make in technology, it’s only as good as your organization’s ability to use it. Few sales people will adopt a new tool if it’s not supported by executive management, and if front line managers fail to actively coach the application of training concepts and best practices. In addition to improving overall sales performance, Aberdeen found that companies who implemented sales training integrated with CRM reduced sales turnover by 2.3% year-over-year. With an average replacement cost of \$30,420 and time-to-productivity of 5 months, this has a big impact on corporate performance over time.

The End Result—Peak Performance

Research shows that companies that have employed these practices consistently achieve higher win-rates, increased deal size, shorter sales cycles, and higher retention rates. Make sure you incorporate this approach in your sales effectiveness initiative to ensure good results over the long haul.