

**CUSTOMER**

Buffalo Sabres

**INDUSTRY**

NHL Team

**LOCATION**

Buffalo, New York

**Number of Locations**

One

**Number of Employees**

100

**SYSTEM**

Sage CRM

## Buffalo Sabres Fire Up Fans With Sage CRM

“The future starts now,” says the marketing slogan of the Buffalo Sabres, finishing one of the best seasons in the NHL team’s history. Sage CRM has brought the team success off the ice—as well by bringing their database systems into the future—by integrating numerous departments.

“We had a combination of proprietary systems, custom database applications and third party products throughout the organization,” says Tom Matheny, database marketing manager. “The lack of integration and functionality limited our ability to effectively grow and service our customer base.”

### Sage CRM Ties It Together

In 2004, the Buffalo Sabres implemented Sage CRM, an easy-to-use, feature-rich solution providing enterprise-wide access to vital customer information. The software has automated all aspects of customer relations management, from account services and season-ticket information, to ticket sales and processing.

“The greatest thing about Sage CRM is the way it ties everything together for us,”



Matheny says. “Sales, marketing, and our account services department all use the same information. Often our customers have requests that need to be handled by other departments. With Sage CRM, information can immediately be sent to a season ticket holder who is interested in sponsorship opportunities. We can then schedule the proper response, and attach a detailed history to the patron’s account. This has significantly streamlined our administration—and made our fans much happier.”

### Fantastic Follow-Up

The Sabres use Sage CRM to record all communications with fans. “With the

**CHALLENGE**

Combination of customer databases required multiple data entry, prevented strategic sales efforts, and produced errors

**SOLUTION**

Sage CRM for a totally integrated customer service, ticket sales, information and management system

**RESULTS**

Customer service administration time reduced by 20 percent; detailed activity and demographic reports boosted sales significantly

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—Tom Matheny  
Database Marketing Manager  
Buffalo Sabres

## ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE

Sage Software has been responding to the needs, challenges, and dreams of small and mid-sized businesses for over 25 years. With a complete range of business management solutions and services, Sage Software helps companies improve customer relationships, reduce costs, and automate and integrate a variety of operational activities. Its solutions support the specialty needs of a broad scope of industry segments, including manufacturing, distribution, construction, real estate, nonprofit, and professional services.



software, we create a viable community with our followers, including ongoing outreach efforts and follow-up programs after anyone attends an event. This strengthens cross-sell activities," Matheny explains.

"For instance, members with club-level seating have the opportunity to purchase tickets to other HSBC Arena events before they are offered to the general public. Members can choose to receive this information by fax or email, and their preference is stored in Sage CRM. This makes it easy to communicate with them quickly whenever we have a special offer."

## Marketing Campaigns

With Sage CRM, the Sabres create their own outbound marketing campaigns. The software generates targeted lists, such as former season ticket holders or concert patrons, and then tracks wave activity for different variations on the list and program contents. "Sage CRM adds a new level of professionalism to our direct mail, telemarketing and email campaigns," Matheny notes. "The detailed reports we generate with the software give us immediate results, so we can tweak a campaign for greater effectiveness. Our campaigns are at least 20 percent more successful due to Sage CRM."

## Insider News

The Sabres Insider club has grown to over 45,000 members this season. Insider members receive news, special offers and advanced information via email as well as exclusive content on the Sabres' webpage, [www.sabres.com](http://www.sabres.com). For example, Sabres Insiders were able to purchase tickets to the first round of the NHL playoffs before they went on sale to the general public. The list is managed in Sage CRM and gives the Sabres an effective way to get information into the hands of its fans quickly.

## Smarter Strategies

A customization of Sage CRM allows seamless integration with Tickets.com. Tickets.com processes orders and generates invoices for Sabres tickets, while Sage CRM handles all day-to-day operations and communications. Data on the specific transaction, account, and sales history is all downloaded directly from Tickets.com, then merged to avoid duplication, and stored in Sage CRM.

Diverse reports in Sage CRM help the Sabres strategize for the future. "We calculate demographics for each type of customer," Matheny says. "Our opportunity reports show exactly what percentage of returns each of our sales campaigns provide."

## Special Capabilities

The Sabres are very active in the community and always expanding the role that Sage CRM plays in those activities. The Key Attribute functionality offered in the software provides the functionality needed to manage attendees for special events, such as the Sabres Foundation's Aces and Blades annual fundraiser or their Street Hockey Festival. Similarly, the Sabres use Sage CRM to organize their SabreKidz Club for children under 12.

The Buffalo Sabres are unique, in that they have a large base of loyal fans across the border in Canada. "Sage CRM is flexible enough for dual-nationality programs," explains Matheny. "It helps us presort mailings to save on postage, and also meet Canadian postage requirements, which are different than those in the United States."

Matheny says Sage CRM is now an integral part of our business and we rely on the information it provides. "Our fans deserve the very best in customer service," he says, "and Sage CRM helps us give it to them."