

PRODUCT EVALUATION

Info-Tech Advisor Premium - Evaluate



About this research note:

Product Evaluation notes provide an analysis of the market position of a specific product and its vendor through an in-depth exploration of their relative capabilities.

Customer Relationship Management: SageCRM

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SageCRM is Sage Software's medium level CRM offering. It is positioned between the entry level ACT! product and the more robust Sage SalesLogix. The application contains a broad set of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) features that most small enterprises will value, has flexible deployment options, and is relatively easy to use and configure.

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Executive Summary

The Info-Tech Research Group recently completed a comparison of five market-leading Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions. Each solution was targeted specifically towards small enterprises. One of the evaluated products was SageCRM. The evaluation examined specific strengths and weaknesses to determine to what degree the product would make a good choice for a small enterprise implementing CRM.

This research note outlines several key points, including:

- » SageCRM's position in the spectrum of CRM offerings.
- » A description of the SageCRM solution.
- » SageCRM's product strengths and challenges.

SageCRM is a solid suite of small enterprise CRM tools that provide good value for the price. It integrates well with Sage ERP and supports Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) to enable small call center operations. An on-demand version is also available, but only supports a subset of features compared to the on-premises product.

Market Overview

The CRM suite market peaked immediately before the dot com “crash” of 2000/2001. These suites were focused on large enterprises and were typically too expensive and complex for small enterprises. The subsequent downturn in enterprise technology spending and the growing perception of large CRM project failure created a meltdown in the CRM market and drove significant market consolidation.

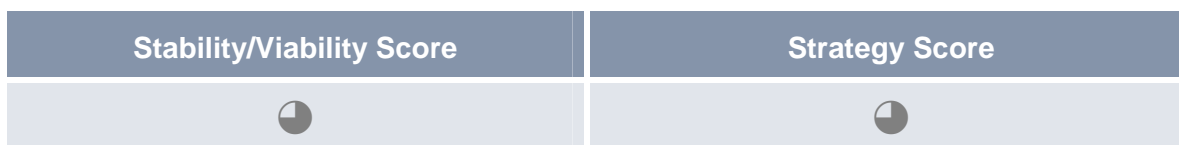
The demand for traditional CRM software is growing once again. This trend is led by strong demand among small enterprises, mid-market firms, and steady economic growth.

Emerging market trends are changing the delivery options and functional capabilities of CRM software, are impacting vendor evaluation criteria and the CRM software selection process, and making CRM more affordable for small enterprises. These trends include:

- » The emergence of the Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) delivery model, successfully demonstrated by Salesforce.com.
- » The emergence of commercial open source CRM, especially SugarCRM.
- » The collapse of traditional software development cycle times, driven by enhancements in collaborative development pioneered by the Open Source Software (OSS) movement.
- » Emerging models for rapid integration of software services into enterprise applications, such as those commonly referred to as “Web 2.0.”

Vendor Index

This index rates the overall stability/viability of SageCRM, as well as its ability to execute its corporate strategy and effectively compete in the small enterprise CRM Market.





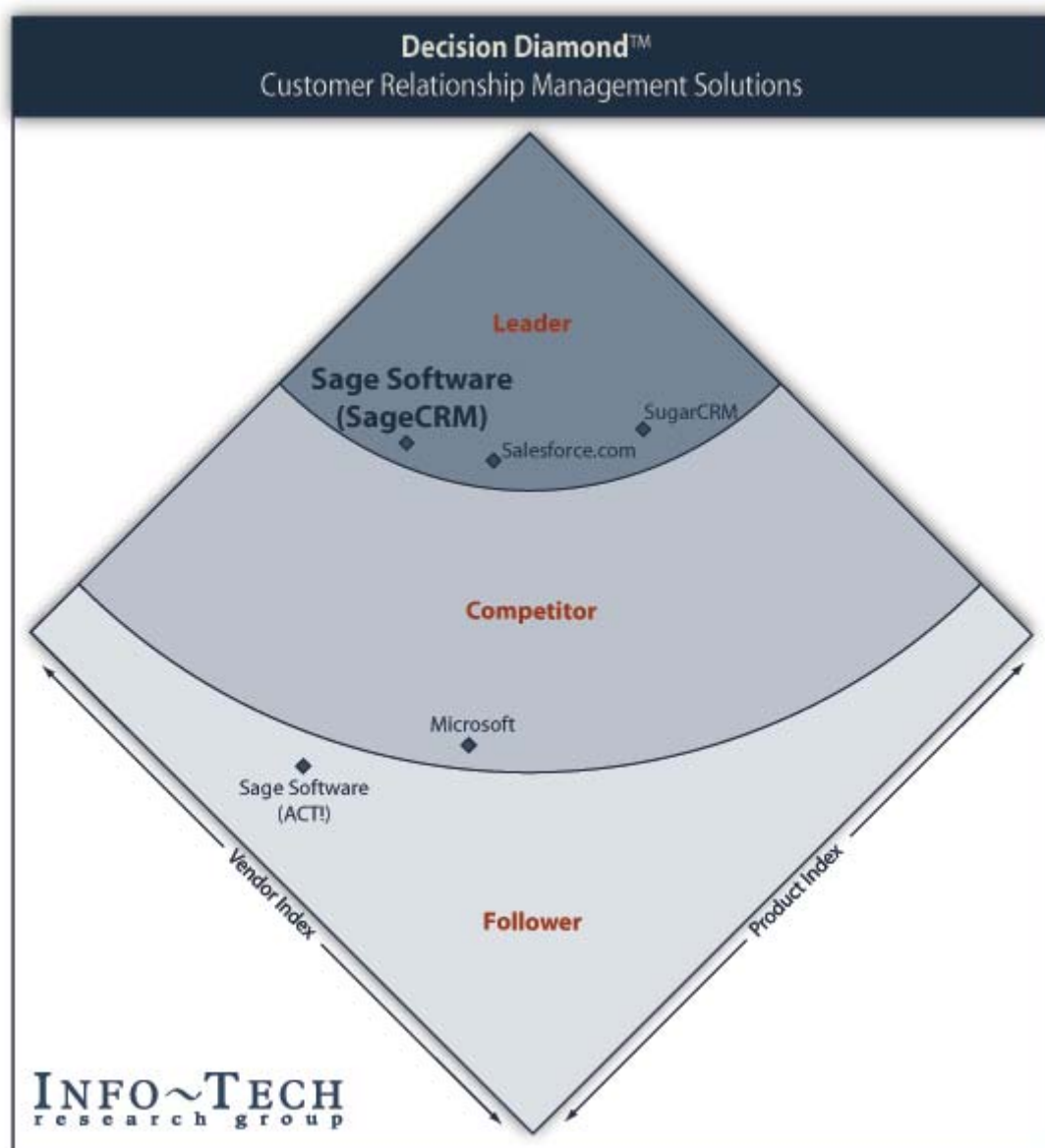
Product Index

This index rates the ability of SageCRM to accurately meet the business and technology needs of small enterprises through its understanding of product features and positioning.

Pricing	Ease of Use	Features	Support	Architecture

Decision Diamond Comparison

SageCRM placed in the Leader Zone in the recently completed ITA Premium SE “Customer Relationship Management Solutions for Small Enterprises” Product Comparison. The product fared above average in the Vendor Index and average in the Product Index.





Product Highlights

SageCRM is the “middle child” of the Sage Software line of CRM applications, between ACT! at the entry level and SalesLogix at the high end. Sage Software has consolidated its CRM products under a single General Manager. Sage Software has started executing a cohesive CRM strategy across the company, to complement and leverage the company’s broad portfolio of small enterprise and mid-market business applications. This strategy is in contrast to Info-Tech Research Group’s evaluation of competitors who have broad small enterprise business application portfolios and a CRM suite.

SageCRM is a client server set of standard CRM functions across sales, marketing, and service process domains. The user interface is a Web browser, complete with disconnected offline functionality available for mobile users on-the-go. The standard product is available through Sage Software channel partners, most of which also sell other Sage products. An on-demand version is available as SageCRM.com, but it does not provide all of the features of the main product.

Particular strengths of SageCRM include:

- » a flexible and customizable end-user dashboard,
- » a customizable self-service training and coaching feature for users,
- » a graphical territory management feature that requires no IT involvement in territory realignment.

Info-Tech Research Group would have liked to have seen an on-demand option that is not only perfectly on par with the standard product, but also leverages the software-as-a-service paradigm to provide additional flexibility and innovation, as Salesforce.com has done.

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Good core set of small enterprise CRM tools.» Good dashboard feature not common to small enterprise CRM.» Fresh, easy to use interface will appeal to business users.» Strong reliance on zero-coding customization allows the business unit to rely less on IT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» On demand version feature set is a smaller subset of the standard version.» No vertical solutions or vertical process library.



Bottom Line

SageCRM is Sage Software's medium level CRM offering. It is positioned between the entry level ACT! product and the more robust Sage SalesLogix. The application contains a broad set of CRM features that most small enterprises will value, has flexible deployment options, and is relatively easy to use and configure.

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