

Integrated sales CRM in ERP: A critical differentiator for printers and manufacturers

Issued by [QuickEasy Software](#)

9 Nov 2023

For manufacturing and printing, the adage "time is money" is more relevant than ever. With the pace of business accelerating, companies are under increasing pressure to streamline their operations, enhance customer interactions, and accelerate their production processes. However, you can have the slickest business operations in place, but if there are no sales, there is no business.



Enter [sales CRM \(Customer Relationship Management\)](#) — a business tool to help companies streamline the complexity of sales interactions and customer relations. There are many prominent sales CRM platforms in today's marketplace: [Monday.com](#), [Salesforce](#), [Zoho](#), to name a few.

However, standalone sales CRM platforms often hit a wall, particularly when it comes to the nuanced, high-velocity transactional sales processes inherent to the printing and manufacturing sectors.

The solution? A robust [ERP \(Enterprise Resource Planning\) system for manufacturing, with integrated Sales CRM functionality](#). Let's delve into how such a system can transform your company's sales.



First, Let's understand the sales processes and sales velocities in manufacturing and printing

The sales journey in [manufacturing and printing](#) can vary drastically. On one end, you have high-velocity transactional sales — a sprint that takes you from enquiry to quote in the blink of an eye, perfect for simpler, standardised products. On the other, you embark on a marathon, navigating through stages of enquiry, contact, qualification, meetings, demos, and quotes. This slower velocity sales process is a dance of patience and precision, commonly associated with bespoke, high-value products that necessitate a consultative selling approach.

What is sales velocity?

Sales velocity is a measure of how fast a company makes money through its sales efforts. It's influenced by four main factors:

- **Number of opportunities:** The number of deals in the pipeline.
- **Average deal value:** The average size of each deal.
- **Win rate:** The percentage of deals that are won.
- **Length of sales cycle:** The average time it takes to close a deal.



Your sales CRM platform should support you in each of these factors.

High-velocity sales process

High-velocity transactional B2B sales typically involve simpler products or services that require less customisation and have a shorter sales cycle. This type of sales process is often characterised by:

- **Quick enquiry response:** Prospects often reach out through digital channels or direct inquiries, and sales teams aim to respond quickly.
- **Streamlined quote generation:** When printing or manufacturing ERP is used, price structures are usually standardised, which allows for rapid generation of quotes and estimates.
- **Limited interaction:** There might be minimal interaction between the salesperson and the potential customer, sometimes limited to online chats, emails, or a brief phone call.
- **Fast decision-making:** The purchasing decision is generally made quickly, often because the investment is lower or the product is easier to understand.

Low-velocity sales process

In contrast, slower velocity B2B sales are common for complex, high-value products or services that require a more consultative selling approach. This type of sales process often includes several stages:

- **Enquiry:** Initial contact is made by the prospect, often seeking detailed information.
- **Contact:** Sales representatives establish communication to understand the prospect's needs better.
- **Qualify:** The sales team assesses whether the prospect has the potential to become a customer (i.e. whether they have the budget, authority, need, and timeline).
- **Meeting:** This might involve multiple meetings, including initial calls, discovery sessions, and further discussions to explore the prospect's challenges and goals.
- **Demo:** For complex products, a demonstration or a detailed presentation is often necessary to showcase the product's capabilities and how it addresses the prospect's needs.
- **Quote/Proposal:** Crafting a detailed quote or proposal is usually a more involved process, potentially requiring input from various departments like sales, technical teams, and sometimes legal.
- **Negotiation:** There's often a back-and-forth between the buyer and seller to agree on terms, prices, and conditions.
- **Close:** The final stage where the deal is formalised, contracts are signed, and the sale is completed.

Understanding and optimising sales velocity is crucial for businesses. High-velocity sales models focus on maximising the number of opportunities and streamlining the sales cycle, while slower velocity models might focus more on increasing the average deal value and win rate through personalised engagement. Each model requires different strategies and tools for effective management.

The power of sales CRM functionality

Sales CRM is the linchpin to manage these diverse sales processes with efficacy. It meticulously tracks every interaction, provides valuable insights into customer behaviours, and streamlines communication.

Moreover, it offers a clear visualisation of the sales pipeline, a vital tool for anticipating revenue and pinpointing areas needing attention. Yet, not all Sales CRM platforms are cut from the same cloth.

The shortcomings of standalone sales CRM platforms

While standalone sales CRM systems are competent in their domain, they often stumble when confronted with high-velocity transactional sales. Their Achilles' heel? A limited view of the customer's complete interaction with the company and an inability to adapt swiftly to the rapid pace of such transactions. They might excel in tracking the traditional, slow velocity sales process but falter when the race demands speed and agility.

The value of ERP with integrated sales CRM

This is where an ERP system with integrated Sales CRM functionality becomes a beacon of hope. Such a system not only manages the internal gears of manufacturing and printing operations but also offers a comprehensive, panoramic view of customer interactions. It unifies the data silos, allowing businesses to navigate both high and slow velocity sales processes with equal prowess.

QuickEasy ERP: Tailored for printers and manufacturers

QuickEasy ERP is no new-comer to the local printing, [signage](#), and [South African manufacturing](#) scene. As a noteworthy local contender against the imported big brands in ERP, [QuickEasy is built from the ground up for the unique landscape of printers and manufacturers](#).

It doesn't just add sales CRM functionality as an afterthought; it embeds it into the very fabric of its system.

Along with fast, accurate estimating, production dashboards, supplier management, [stock control](#), [digitised deliveries](#)], and [full-house accounting](#), you get:

- **Heatmaps of your customer interactions** for optimised sales forecasting and relationship-building
- **Pipeline management** for sales reps and sales managers
- **Lead tracking and follow-up** notes and notifications
- **Focus on sales actions** and assign to team members
- **Full ticketing and customer support** integration for added customer relations management
- **Attrition and leads lost** reports to understand your customers' reasons for not converting
- **And so much more.**

This means manufacturers and printers can manage their sales pipeline, customer interactions, and even complex transactions, all within a system that also oversees production, inventory, and financials.

Integrated sales CRM functionality in ERP systems like [QuickEasy ERP](#) is not just an incremental improvement; it's a transformative leap for printers and manufacturers. By bridging the gap between sales processes, customer relationship management, and operational functionalities, these systems empower businesses to navigate the complexities of their sales landscape with unprecedented agility and insight. In an era where every second counts, having a comprehensive, integrated ERP system is no longer a luxury; it's an indispensable tool for staying competitive in the relentless race of business.

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