

MarketSphere Prospers in a Challenging Economy with Unified CRM On Demand Solution

The Challenge

MarketSphere was founded in 2002 with a simple vision: To be the most respected business advisor in the markets it serves. Today, it is realizing that vision with a talented team of more than 250 consultants who help clients improve business performance, leverage technology, and increase market share through advisory, technology, marketing, and customer services. Today, the Kansas City-based MarketSphere maintains 11 offices around the country and serves clients ranging from middle market to Fortune 500 companies.

The firm's scorching growth in the first few years set a high performance bar for MarketSphere, but it's managed to maintain a healthy momentum even through the recent recession—thanks in part to a unified sales and marketing solution from Oracle that is helping the firm prime its sales pipeline and better target prospects for marketing events nationwide. Before adopting the unified system, however, the firm was facing a less certain sales outlook, as each practice area pursued deals independently using a mix of personal spreadsheets and standalone CRM systems. "We didn't have a firmwide picture of what the future held for us," said Carl Yost, group managing partner and SVP of strategic accounts at MarketSphere.

The Solution

In late 2008, MarketSphere decided to retire its legacy sales-management applications, including five instances of an on-demand CRM application that individual practice areas had subscribed to separately. After a rigorous vendor-review process, MarketSphere chose Oracle CRM On Demand as the firm's new standard for sales and opportunity management, rolling it out to about 90 users around the country. As luck would have it, MarketSphere made the move to Oracle CRM On Demand just as the global recession began to take the wind out of the economy's sails.

Company executives say the enterprisewide visibility and discipline provided by the Oracle solution has helped MarketSphere not only survive the downturn, but actually flourish. Closed deals are up three times since last year, and the pipeline contains five times as many promising deals. "If it weren't for this tool, there's no way we would have made some of the decisions we made," Yost said. "Oracle CRM On Demand drove a significant amount of visibility into our pipeline and deal flow." What's more, managers are leveraging the system to tie marketing events to lead generation, helping the firm become smarter about how it spends marketing dollars. Key benefits include:

- Ensured consistent and efficient sales processes across the organization
- Gained enterprisewide visibility into sales pipeline
- Minimized IT resources needed to maintain and upgrade CRM application
- Improved team productivity with immediate access to data



HEADQUARTERS:	Kansas City, MO
FOUNDED:	2002
INDUSTRY:	Professional Services
EMPLOYEES:	250

HIGHLIGHTS:

Goal

Establish an integrated CRM platform to boost sales and marketing productivity and performance.

Solutions

- Oracle CRM On Demand

Results

- Three-fold increase in deals closed over previous year
- Five-fold increase in deals in pipeline
- Improved decision making with better visibility into sales and marketing activities
- Improved sales strategy with detailed reporting

"Making a commitment to Oracle CRM On Demand as our universal platform has enforced a discipline to our sales process and dramatically improved performance. It was an absolute savior during the economic downturn."

CARL YOST, GROUP MANAGING PARTNER
AND SENIOR VP OF STRATEGIC ACCOUNTS