# 6 Reasons to Upgrade from ACT! to Online CRM

**Real Time Access Anywhere**

Sales people that travel frequently or even work from home or remote offices use ACT on their own computer and only "synch" with the company ACT database occasionally due to the time required and technical challenges.

Online CRM allows all users to access complete, up to date information from anywhere, in real time. All that is required is an Internet connection. New information about leads, key accounts, proposals etc. is instantly accessible to everyone on the team.

**Instantaneous Collaboration enables Customer Service**

ACT allows users to input proposals, meeting notes and follow up reminders for themselves. However, difficulties in "syncing" make that information available to other ACT users only after sporadic delays.

With Online CRM, proposals sent to customers, notes about client meetings and new leads are easily available to all users as soon as they're entered. This encourages users to enter more information more frequently. Most important is that others on the team can use the online CRM to immediately retrieve customer information, proposals, etc. This enables the online CRM to enable more proactive customer service. When customers' request information, others on the team can respond immediately without waiting to talk to the sales person who had the last contact with the customer because the needed information is in the online CRM.

**Security and Protection of Customer Information**

Your customer information is a strategic asset to your business. ACT stores this information directly sales people's computers and company servers. The ACT database file is not encrypted or secure. Anyone with access to the computer's files can accidentally delete or damage the files or maliciously copy or delete the information. A sales person can easily copy the ACT database and take it with them before leaving to work for a competitor.

Using Online CRM, all valuable customer information is stored on secure servers managed by professionals that maintain high standards for security and restricted access such as SSL encryption, daily backups and state of the art protections against viruses and malicious attacks.

**Low Cost of Maintenance**

ACT is software installed on company computers and servers.  Company employees are required to maintain that software and protect the computer and its data from damage and loss.  Often an upgrade to Windows or the purchase of a new computer requires an upgrade to ACT.  When multiple users are connecting to a central ACT database or syncing databases, these continuously disrupt operations and require company personnel to invest time fixing problems.  Of course, ACT software upgrades can be expensive not to mention the cost of upgrading hardware and other systems to maintain compatibility and performance.

Online CRMs are provided as a service that is accessed over the Internet from any computer.  The only requirement is an Internet connection.  All software upgrades are installed by the online CRM vendor at no additional charge.  Security and backup systems are included and maintained by the online CRM vendor.  Company users spend more time using the online CRM and serving customers and less time with computer and software issues.

**Partnership with Experts**

Without significant additional investment in premium support or local ACT consultants, getting even basic technical support for ACT can be time consuming and difficult.  Companies frequently have questions not only about the basic use of ACT but, the best practices in managing sales and sharing customer information.  The lack of easy access to experienced experts greatly inhibits ACT's value to the company.

Online CRM vendors generally include Support Service Level commitments in their basic included services.  Basic software technical support is more easily accessible and regularly scheduled web based training courses are common.   In addition, online CRM vendors often provide training, ebooks and whitepapers in marketing and sales best practices and strategies as an added value to their subscribers.

**State of the Art Marketing Capabilities**

ACT enables limited email marketing to customers entered into the ACT database.  However, as these emails are sent via company mail servers, limitations on the amount of email sent and difficulty with reliable delivery to the customer, avoiding spam filters, etc. limit the effectiveness and value of these capabilities.

Online CRM enables larger scale email marketing that include managed delivery technology as well as tracking of opens and clicks.  Online CRM often allows automated capture and response to leads via the company website.