

A computer monitor with a grey frame and a white screen. The screen displays the chapter title and subtitle. The monitor is on a grey stand.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# LEADS MANAGEMENT

Selecting the right software

**T**he Online Sales Program is not complete without the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Once you receive more than 25 leads per month, this becomes a necessity. Here is Wikipedia's definition of a CRM:

**Customer relationship management (CRM)** encompasses the capabilities, methodologies and technologies that support an enterprise in managing customer relationships. The general purpose of CRM is to enable organizations to better manage

## BROWSERS TO BUYERS

their customers through the introduction of reliable systems, processes and procedures.

So basically, a CRM is a tool used to capture customer data, categorize, prioritize, track and communicate.

Do not rely on generic off-the-shelf software or basic office software to handle your leads. You will need to incorporate an industry specific CRM for your leads management. There are quite a few available, which I will review, that are specifically for homebuilders. They come ready to capture your leads from a variety of sources, including your website and third-party referral sites such as Move.com, Newhomesource.com, Homes.com and more.

### How Much?

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These systems usually have a monthly fee associated with them as well as the initial set-up fee. Many start at \$500 per month and go up, depending on the number of users and/or communities involved. This does not include the custom development of a CRM, but if you are at that stage, just rip this chapter out of the book because you must know what you're doing.

### Your Options

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There are countless customer relation management (CRM) tools on the market. I will list the systems that are specific to homebuilders and that have a proven track record. Keep in mind, as with most technology providers, the quality, capabilities and customer service can change over time. At the time this was published, these are systems that I have researched and would recommend (not in any particular order).

<b>BeHomeWise</b>	<a href="http://www.behomewise.com">www.behomewise.com</a>
<b>Lasso</b>	<a href="http://www.lassodatasystems.com">www.lassodatasystems.com</a>
<b>Lead Velocity</b>	<a href="http://www.customervelocity.com">www.customervelocity.com</a>
<b>Liquid Advertising</b>	<a href="http://www.liquidad.com">www.liquidad.com</a>
<b>Open Leads</b>	<a href="http://www.openleads.com">www.openleads.com</a>
<b>Pivotal</b>	<a href="http://www.pivotal.com">www.pivotal.com</a>

## What Your CRM Should Do

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So far, there is not one system that will do everything; but there are certain features that are necessities and there are extras that would be nice to have.

### Must-Have Features:

✓ **Automatically import leads from the website and portals.**

Eliminating the manual data entry is a key timesaver. This is like hiring one-third of a person. I remember my first two months on the job. I used an off-the-shelf, PC-based CRM to manage my contacts. At first, it was not an issue to enter the leads. I was excited that so many people wanted information and that I had so many opportunities. Fast-forward a month. I would cringe when an e-mail arrived. Why? I knew that one e-mail required me to manually enter the customer's information, set up a schedule, send an e-mail, set the next response and so on. One contact would require up to eight steps for a follow-up. Multiply that times 100! Not to mention what it took for me to respond remotely. With that volume, it was nearly impossible!

Entering leads into a system manually is a time-and-labor-intensive process that wears on a salesperson's soul. Eventually, as more leads come in from successful online marketing, they will take longer to enter into the system and responses will not be timely. Without the speedy