Catapult Systems

Catapult helps American Campus Communities Streamline Sales Processes

Microsoft Dynamics solution increases efficiencies throughout the organization

American Campus Communities (ACC), a developer and manager of on-campus student housing, was growing quickly, creating internal communications challenges. An influx of new properties and company acquisitions meant many additional people needed access to customer and historical project data..

At the time, account information was manually entered into Excel spreadsheets, which were stored on individuals' hard drives. This method of data collection lacked consistency and the necessary level of detail for other departments and was inaccessible when employees were traveling. The information in spreadsheets also had to be manually consolidated for senior management reports.

ACC's business development teams, which work with universities to manage and create on-campus student housing, required a more efficient approach to manage their opportunity flow. They wanted multiple teams to have the ability to drill down into any client, prospect or project, at any time in order to improve their efficiency.

As an initial solution to centralizing sales information, ACC began using an online customer relationship management system (CRM). However, employees found it inflexible and its lack of integration with ACC's back-end systems made reporting difficult. The company also realized that their unique business requirements necessitated a more customized solution.

Microsoft Dynamics CRM was a natural fit for their environment, as it would integrate easily with their other back-end systems. Catapult Systems had served as ACC's long-time solutions partner, and as a Microsoft expert, they were a perfect fit to help asses and implement a new CRM solution.

How Catapult Systems Helped

Catapult Systems met with ACC's key business stakeholders to examine the existing sales processes, tools and documents and detailed the desired new processes and system specifications. They discovered that ACC's unique business requirements for multiple relationships would demand customization to the CRM solution, making it imperative to clearly define the leads, contacts, accounts and markets, and the relationships between them.

The ACC business solution implemented by Catapult Systems is a customized Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution based on Microsoft Windows Server, Microsoft SQL Server and Microsoft Outlook. The business development team now enters all contact information for lead tracking and pipeline forecasts directly into the new CRM system.

The company is now able to collect valuable historical information regarding projects, contractors, architects and cost. Additionally, the business solution enables ACC to track critical management and sales data that had been unavailable previously, such as lead generation sources, sales cycles, marketing return on investment, and competitive win/loss analysis. Management and staff from multiple departments can now easily access this vital business information at any time. The new CRM solution is integrated into ACC's other back-end business systems, allowing the company to easily create impactful reports from historically non-integrated data sources. The reports are distributed to ACC management and key decision makers through ACC's intranet using Microsoft's SharePoint and Outlook integration.

Catapult Systems ensured that the project had a successful launch by developing all necessary training documentation and by providing administrative and user training sessions.

> " We have developed a real partnership with Catapult. They have worked to understand our business, which saves us time and money by eliminating the need to constantly explain our business's unique requirements. "

Jorge de Cardenas
Sr. VP of Information Technology,
American Campus Communities

Results

"At the end of the day, CRM is a success if it helps us win more deals. We have seen the value," said de Cardenas. The company has seen many other benefits to streamlining their sales processes, including:

- The efficiency level of the business development team has risen dramatically, allowing the team to respond to a greater number of RFP's.

- Improved access to information has made business processes more fluid and increased knowledge across the company.

- Duplication of work activities and manual data consolidation has been eliminated.

- Detailed custom reports can be quickly and easily generated to provide management with a more complete and accurate business picture.

- The solution has been so well received that system usage has been expanded to additional teams within ACC.

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How can we help you?
1-800-528-6248   info@CatapultSystems.com