



GForces: Driving Sales in the Automotive Industry

The UK's most successful digital marketer for car dealerships relies on Sugar

Company Profile

Headquarters

Bearsted, Kent, UK

Founded

1999

Company Description

Focused on the automotive industry, GForces Web Management works with more of the UK's top 200 auto dealerships than any other firm. The company provides communications, planning, graphic and web design, copywriting, search engine optimization, pay per click advertising, coding, and multimedia development.

Website

www.gforces.co.uk

Solution

Sugar Professional™ On-Demand

Looking for cost savings over the company's Salesforce.com solution, GForces sales manager Chris Laird decided to try Sugar's free 30-day trial. He was also hoping to find a more flexible CRM solution than Salesforce that could be easily customized and included mobile capability, which Salesforce prices à la carte.

The Solution: Sugar Professional

After GForces' technical staff evaluated several options including Sage software, which provides the firm's accounting system, GForces chose SugarCRM®. "Once I had used the Sugar 30-day trial, I could see no benefit in staying with Salesforce," recalls Laird. "And Sugar worked out to be about a third of the price. It was a bit of a no brainer, really." The company was using Sugar within two weeks of purchase and had completely separated from Salesforce in a month. "It didn't take long at all, really," Laird says. "It was quite straightforward."

Since the company operates in a relatively small market, GForces imported all of the UK auto dealers into Sugar, making the information available to sales and sales support staff and company directors—approximately 50 users. "Our sales organization uses Sugar for prospecting over the course of the sales cycle, which can be quite long, and for managing accounts," explains Laird. "Our support team uses it for post sales account management. And the directors use it for reporting sales across the company."

While the sales cycle is long, GForces does an excellent job retaining acquired customers. Some of its customers have been with the company for more than nine years. "Each of our account managers handles 10 or 15 accounts," Laird continues. "And the managers maintain a very close relationship with those accounts, often contacting them daily because we're closely involved with their online marketing and advertising."

Although cost savings drove the search for a new CRM provider, mobile capabilities were important—and are becoming more so. Most of GForces sales personnel have the Sugar mobile app on their iPhones, which enables them to quickly check the backgrounds of dealer attendees at seminars and meetings. "We've got about 10 field sales people that work from their homes," Laird notes, "and they absolutely use Sugar's mobile capability on the road. In fact, one of the

"Once I had used the Sugar 30-day trial, I could see no benefit in staying with Salesforce. And Sugar worked out to be about a third of the price. It was a bit of a no brainer, really."

Chris Laird, Sales Manager, Gforces



SugarCRM

10050 N Wolfe Rd, SW2-130

Cupertino, CA 95014

Tel: +1 408.454.6900

Fax: +1 408-873.2872

info@sugarcrm.com

www.sugarcrm.com

field sales guys used Sugar when he was on the train, to learn about a dealer group when he overheard that he was sitting next to the company Managing Director. He was able to find out how big they were and what their inventory turnover was. All that information was in Sugar. When you just meet someone and already know everything about his company, it's pretty impressive."

Using Sugar Studio, GForces has also customized Sugar to closely fit its sales process. "We've added many fields and filters that are essential for our reporting," Laird says, "and for the way we want to explore opportunities and target customers. It's really quite well integrated with our business. That flexibility is something we'll use more in the future."

Business Benefits

For GForces, Sugar has made critical business information available in an instant, while enabling all the people who support an account to have access to the same information. "If someone wants to know how many Ford or Honda dealers we have, he can get it immediately," Laird comments. "When a new person joins an account team, he can jump straight into Sugar and learn exactly where we stand with that customer. Everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet. And if there's a problem, everyone knows."

The cost savings for GForces have also been substantial. When the company started with Salesforce in 2008, it purchased 20 subscriptions at annual cost of £20,000—or approximately \$35,000 U.S. at then-current exchange rates. In 2009, when it switched to Sugar, the firm's subscription cost plunged to \$6,800 for 15 users. "Our savings were massive," concludes Laird. "Just huge. From over \$1,700 per user to just a little over \$450 per user. And, I don't know how we could function without Sugar now."

About GForces

GForces is the leading web management company working with more of the UK's Top 200 auto dealers than any rival and has the experience, talent and technological expertise to turn your website into a key sales and lead generating tool. To support a successful online strategy, your website is just one part of your digital armory. As a mechanism for reaching the modern consumer your website must be found on search engines, look good and be easy to update. GForces Web Trinity assures the evolution and success of your website and online strategy by continually adapting to your modern car buyers' demands, getting your message in front of the right audience and converting that audience into sales opportunities and customers.