

Crystal Capital Fund

Capital Fund Slashes Reporting Time, Improves Efficiency



CRYSTAL CAPITAL

Solution Overview

Website:

<http://www.crystalcapital.com>

Customer Size: 20 employees

Organization Profile

Established by a team of experienced financial professionals, Crystal Capital is an investment firm that provides capital for middle market companies across all industries.

Partner(s)

Harvest Solutions

Software and Services

Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0

Microsoft Office 2007

Microsoft SQL Server 2005

Vertical Industries

Commercial Finance

Country/Region

United States

**Introduction**

Crystal Capital Fund (CCF) personnel needed to enter customer data multiple times in several data locations, a process that was less efficient than the organization desired. Without centralized data, assembling reports was very labor-intensive. After adopting Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0 with Microsoft SQL Server 2005, CCF worked from an integrated database. The time needed to generate reports was reduced to a small fraction of what it had been, and the depth of management reporting increased.

Business Needs

Crystal Capital Fund (CCF), with headquarters in Boston and offices in Chicago; Los Angeles; and Stamford, Conn., provides debt and equity funding to middle-market companies in the United States and overseas. With records for a rapidly growing list of contacts, opportunities and investments, CCF had not established a central database for its customer-related data. For most clients, the same information had to be entered multiple times in files holding general customer organization and contact information and again in an Excel spreadsheet containing more detailed customer information. This duplicate-entry process was labor-intensive and not as efficient as the fund desired.

The firm did not have a way to sort and query the contents of its contact list efficiently or to link contacts with opportunities and accounts. Moreover, the firm's administrative staff was responsible for keeping the majority of the records for these several thousand customers and contacts up to date, which required contacting account executives and managing directors and then manually updating disparate storage locations, a very labor-intensive practice. Data was distributed through e-mailing spreadsheets, network file shares, offline folder synchronization and Microsoft Exchange folders; so all these sources needed to be examined to gather the most recent additions and changes for updating client files.

This decentralized system made optimizing portfolio management and business-development efforts difficult, and reporting on these activities was a tedious and labor-intensive process.

Crystal Capital Fund already had Microsoft Exchange Server running on a Windows Server 2003 network and now sought a way to integrate its data while leveraging its existing technology investment.

Solution

CCF determined that its best solution would be to integrate a combination of synergistic technologies, implementing Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0, Microsoft SQL Server 2005 and Microsoft Office 2003 and 2007.

Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0 provided a method for everyone in the organization to access one up-to-date version of customer information that now was stored on the Microsoft SQL Server. The technology tied together portfolio management, sales and customer service to furnish a holistic view from first contact forward, all in one location. It also enabled reports to be generated automatically from a common, integrated database and would provide the firm's management with better business intelligence for planning its portfolio management, marketing and sales efforts.

The fund chose Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Harvest Solutions, of Waltham, Mass., to participate with Crystal Capital Fund in a joint development effort that would keep the CCF team very involved in the design of the system while the technology partner focused on development. Harvest Solutions efficiently imported all the existing data into the Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0 system. Harvest Solutions also developed complex critical business reports using Microsoft Office Excel and SQL Reporting Services. Some of CCF's staff were using the system in just 40 days, and it was rolled out to the remainder of the staff 30 days later.

Benefits

With Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0, CCF staff members now are able to create their own reports, freeing up hours for administrative staff. The time required to generate reports has been cut dramatically, and the data in the reports is more integrated.

- Staff can see opportunities and accounts to which particular contacts are related and generate full information for the firm's marketing professionals.
- Sales personnel are empowered to retrieve data without having to contact administrative staff and can share ideas and experiences when e-mail alerts indicate new opportunities have been logged.
- The time required to generate a report has been slashed to just a small fraction of what it was previously.
- Portfolio management and tracking became more robust, allowing for industry concentration, borrower exposures, risk ratings and financial performance to be tracked in real time.
- Entering data has become easy and logical for CCF. All information is stored in one database, where it can be accessed easily for reporting across the entire firm.
- Since data is entered only once, keeping customer and contact information up to date is a much more efficient process.
- When customer information is updated in the database, all reports and views provide the same current information; so reporting and forecasting have become much more integrated.
- Business development now is considerably more effective since the sales force has a complete view of every customer and can better shape its marketing programs to needs and trends among its client base.
- Changes in policies or processes that are applied to the Microsoft CRM 3.0 system automatically are placed in force throughout the whole organization, since the system serves as the backbone for all customer-related operations.

“The efficiencies and process improvements resulting from our implementation of Microsoft Dynamics CRM have exceeded our expectations.”

Joshua Franklin
Director
Crystal Capital Fund