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## GET HIGH RETURN WITH FREE CRM: CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP SOFTWARE

CRM, or Customer Relationship Management Software, return on investment has not materialized. Interviews with companies that failed to deploy CRM effectively gleaned this:

1. CRM was rushed in as the "Next Best Thing."
2. Excessive license fees and implementation costs.
3. Endless implementation time lines.
4. Technology complex deployment.
5. Organizational upheaval.
6. Poor adoption rates.
7. No real collaboration or communication with channels.
8. Elusive payback.
9. No after installation reconsideration of goals.
10. Unnecessary customization, including replication of legacy systems.
11. CRM simply mirrors existing, inefficient business practices.
12. Organizations unable to conform to best practices.
13. Failure of management to ask "How do we want to run sales?"
14. Inexperienced trainers.
15. Too much focus on current IT rather than business problem.
16. Lack of executive sponsorship.
17. Systems are complex and hard to learn.
18. Companies are over optimistic when evaluating capabilities.
19. Training is in-effective.

Your personal favorite may not be on the list. But one thing these reasons tend to have in common is that they emphasize the "R" – return side of the equation. It's astonishing that no one states the obvious: A major reason CRM ROI has been so bad is due to the "I" being high to begin with and higher as the system is implemented, administered and maintained. This number is just way too big! Similarly, there is little attention that typical implementation takes months and that the cost of implementation services is often five or more times the cost of the software. Any one of these factors would be enough to cause misgivings about investing in an expensive CRM tool.

### Why Pay High CRM Fees

The suffering Companies are paying 65 USD to well over 100USD per user per month, and receive no value. High fees put high pressure on the organization to force progress which may take time. Professional open source businesses are deploying alternatives to high priced CRM. This low or no cost software model lets the organization breathe; to gain value, to improve the deployment methods, training and support, creating user value and user adoption.

Open source Community software is a strong alternative to high priced software. CRM offerings, with high functionality and none of the pricing pressure, can be had for Free of very low cost. Remarkably, there is a free lunch; the open versions offer in many cases better functionality, more flexibility and higher usability.

Smart companies, part of a vibrant open source community, offer value added services to ensure CRM success; extensive user training programs and strong user support structures. This training, for fee, is onsite, web based, video and hard copy documentation, this support structure is live chat, forums, phone, and wikis. Communities are built to share best practices and even private forums are built for single companies. In doing this, CRM companies are breaking the shackles of high software cost and quickly delivering best of breed, CRM functionality which can be had for FREE. No software expense. The open source community changes the math in the ROI equation. The return is high because the investment is low.

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