



act!™

Act! fills industrial hose firm's sales pipeline

Scott Hilton has been using Act! for over 25 years and whenever moving companies, Scott has introduced Act! into every one of them, which is why Act! has become an integral part of Hose and Rubber Supply.



HOSE & RUBBER SUPPLY

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Scott Hilton
President

Hydraulic hoses are the veins and arteries of large machinery. If they burst or leak, industrial plants quickly grind to a halt.

In high-cost sectors, break-downs can lead to very expensive delays. Hose and Rubber Supply makes sure that doesn't happen. With depots across five U.S. states, the company has provided quality products, expertise and industry experience to the oil and gas drilling sector for over 40 years. In that time, it has grown into a market leader, which company president

Scott Hilton says is due in large part to the structured sales approach he's been able to implement using Act!.

“Twenty-five years ago, I was made general manager of another distributor of industrial hoses,” says Scott. “The company had no outside sales force when I joined, but I knew we needed one. For a sales team to really work though, you need good planning and accountability systems in place. So, when one of the salesmen there told me about Act!, I thought we'd give it a go.”

The rest, as they say, is history. Within a few years, Scott had taken a sub-\$2 million company and virtually doubled its size.

Essential to business development

That company was the start of a relationship that's seen Scott introduce Act! into every company he's worked at ever since, including now Hose and Rubber Supply.

He's never thought about using a CRM other than Act!. "I haven't needed to," says Scott, "because it's always delivered results and done what I've asked it to."

Though salespeople sometimes think of a CRM as some kind of 'electronic ankle bracelet', as Scott puts it, that takes away their freedom, their initial scepticism quickly fades when they discover that instead of shackling them, Act! can actually improve their sales performance.

Currently, there are about 10,000 contacts in a central Act! database, which Scott oversees. Each of the company's 16 strong sales team has their own individual lists of around 500-600 contacts.

"Being able to grow Hose and Rubber Supply as fast as we have," says Scott, "is down to Act! giving us a sales structure that we've been able to build on. That's made it an essential element of our business development and planning process. But I also wanted a rear-view mirror that would let us see what went on in the past."

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Act! has delivered significant benefits

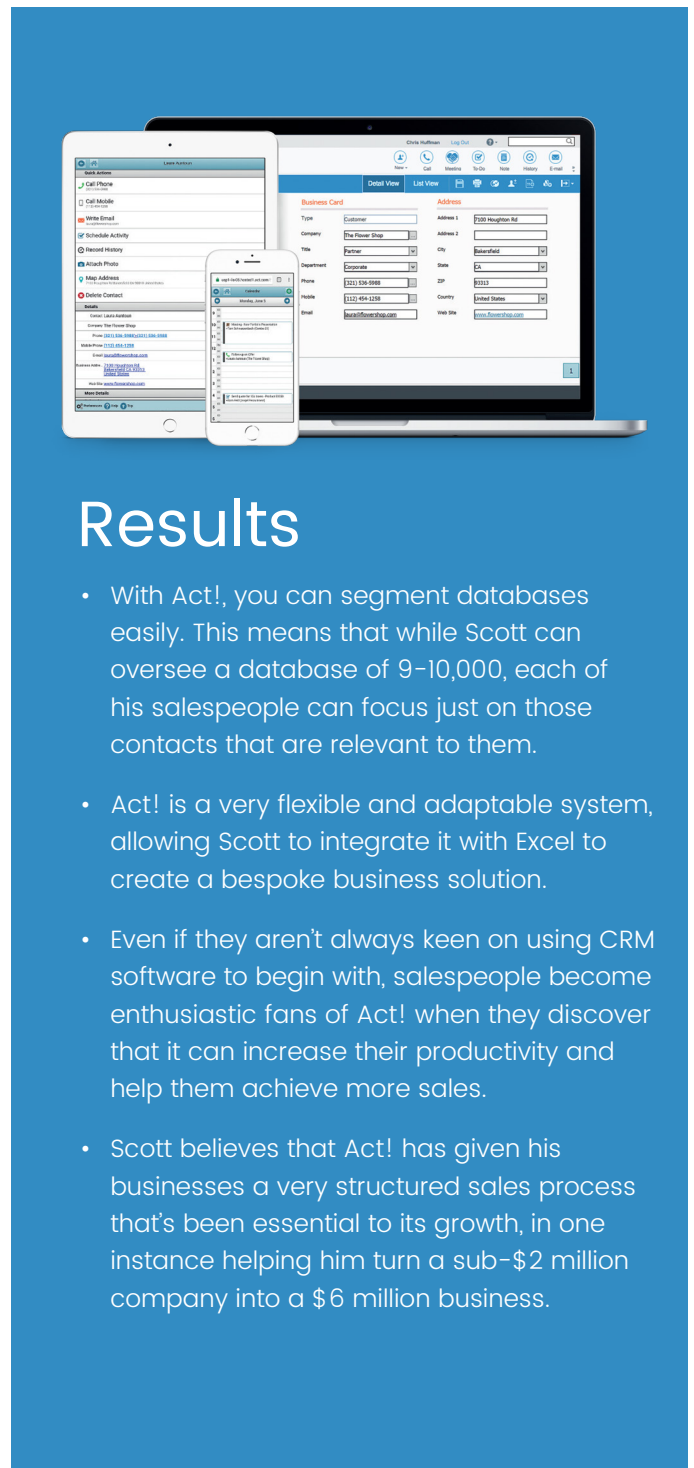
So, Scott engaged a third-party supplier to create a tailored software solution that integrated Act! with Excel. This enabled him to export reports from Act! to a spreadsheet, where data is colour coded to create a highly visual and detailed picture of sales activity over the previous month.

This very quickly flags up any areas that might need addressing before they become a real issue. It also shows where a salesperson might need to concentrate their efforts over the coming weeks.

"It's hard to put a figure on the impact Act! has had on our development," says Scott, "but it's been significant.

They say what you don't measure you can't manage, and that's very true. Act! lets us do exactly that, which has given us a structured sales plan. Without that, we wouldn't have achieved as much as we have or as quickly."

"I've never used anything other than Act!" says Scott, "and I suggest any business that wants to improve sales should give it a try. It's definitely worked for us."



Results

- With Act!, you can segment databases easily. This means that while Scott can oversee a database of 9-10,000, each of his salespeople can focus just on those contacts that are relevant to them.
- Act! is a very flexible and adaptable system, allowing Scott to integrate it with Excel to create a bespoke business solution.
- Even if they aren't always keen on using CRM software to begin with, salespeople become enthusiastic fans of Act! when they discover that it can increase their productivity and help them achieve more sales.
- Scott believes that Act! has given his businesses a very structured sales process that's been essential to its growth, in one instance helping him turn a sub-\$2 million company into a \$6 million business.

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