

ACT! by Sage 2010 and Social CRM – Part 2

Discovering New Opportunities with Social Media and ACT! 2010

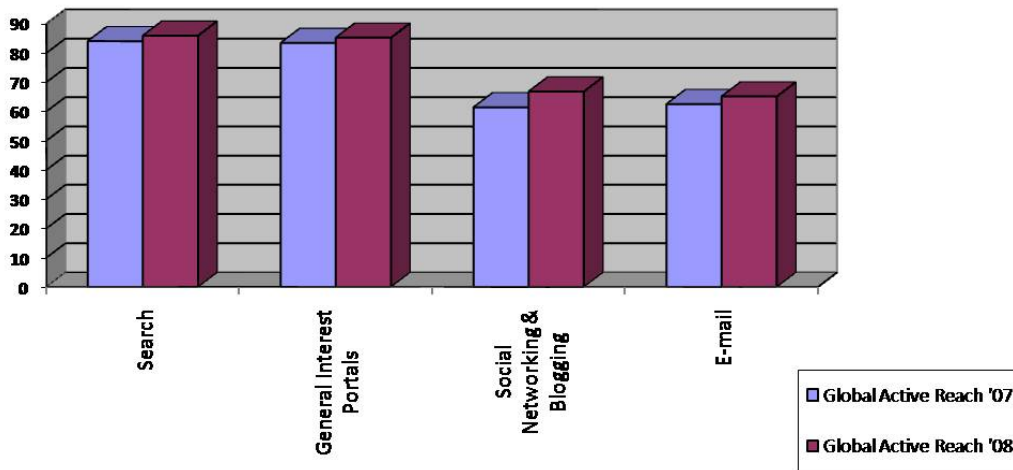


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Introduction

Social Media is increasingly making its way into everyday life. It seems that social sites like Twitter™, Facebook, and a host of others are referenced in television commercials, in e-mails, and on just about every Web site you visit. The number of users on these social networks is staggering, and participation is growing rapidly. Social networking and blogging is now the top third online activity ahead of e-mail.



Global Comparison of Internet Activity¹

Even though social media began as peer-to-peer communication forums, many businesses are harnessing the power of social media to engage with their customers, and are using social media as a more credible way to promote and market their services.

ACT! by Sage 2010, which debuted in September 2009, combines the #1 selling contact and customer management solution with social media tools that provide a practical way to use social media to build stronger relationships with your contacts.

This whitepaper is Part 2 of our ACT! and Social Media series and will explore the benefits of using social media to engage with your customers, and demonstrate how ACT! 2010 can make it easier to find new prospects, learn about their needs, and grow those relationships. For more information about getting started with social media, please refer to Part 1 of our whitepaper series, Connecting with Your Customers: A Guide to Social Media, which provides a general overview and description of social media and step by step guidelines for how to get started.

Using Social Media to Engage With Your Customers

Social networks are well established as virtual meeting places for friends and family to stay in touch and share personal experiences. Because of this, you may wonder if there is a business use and be hesitant to tap into social media for fear of treading on “personal” space. Social Media can be highly relevant to you and provide many options for you to be further involved with your contacts. Social media participants often welcome messages from businesses because they are choosing to belong to particular Groups or “Fanbooks”. This means you not only have a direct line of communication with them, they self subscribe and actually welcome it. This is in direct contrast to traditional forms of sales and marketing where cold calls and direct

“This new version, with its sleeker interface and new web features, is probably a must-have upgrade for existing users, and is sure to attract new users...”

4 out of 5 Stars!
PC Magazine

¹ Nielson Online, Global Index, March 2009

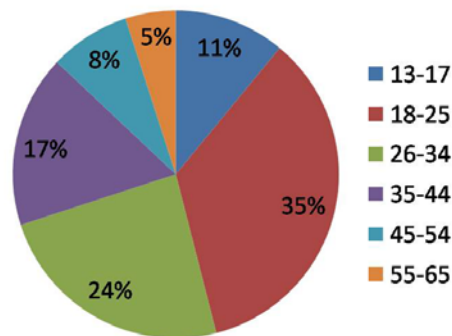
mail campaigns are often seen as intrusions. It also means you can save money on traditional forms of marketing, and shift more time to engaging with your customers, and building awareness for your business through social media.

Some of the primary reasons why social media can be a valuable business benefit:

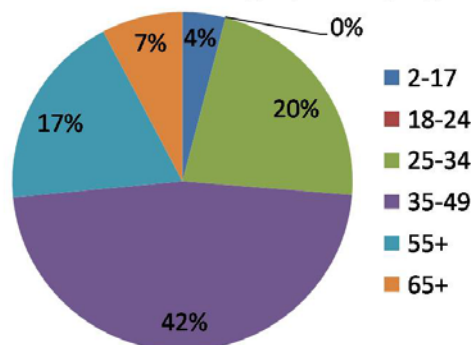
1. Your customers are using it
2. Cost effective way to reach customers and build awareness
3. Enables genuine customer insight

1 – Your customers are using it

Over 300 million people are using social networks. Chances are, some of those participants are your customers or your prospects. Currently, 75% of online adults aged 18-24 have a profile on a social network site², but since March 2009, the fastest growing demographic of social media participants are people aged 26-54. For example, as of March 2009, there are 27.7 million Facebook users aged 26-54 – this is more than those in the category of 18-25³. And as of March 2009, the largest age group on Twitter was not college students or teens, but adults from the ages of 35-49⁴. This means that today's labor force and decision makers with budgetary responsibilities are becoming engaged in social media.



Facebook Demographics by Age Group³



Twitter Demographics by Age Group⁴

2 Lenhard, A. Pew internet project data memo [adult social networking]. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved from http://pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Adult_social_networking_data_memo_FINAL.pdf

3 Inside Facebook.com, March 2009

4 Nielson Online, March 19, 2009 6:01AM

Customer engagement is the key to keeping your products and brands in front of potential customers. If you know your customers are reading a particular publication or attending a particular event, you would want to find a way to be present, and try and engage with them about your products and services. The same is true for social networks. Your customers are out there connecting, maybe even talking about you. Social networks offer your business an opportunity to observe candid customer views and gauge public perception about their products or offerings, and engage through those same networks to realize change in those factors.

2 – Cost-effective way to reach customers and build awareness

As marketing budgets get tighter, traditional marketing activities such as advertising, direct mail campaigns, and trade shows do not have the ROI they once did. Social media allows you to distribute content direct to customers, quickly and cost effectively. According to the Social Media Marketing Industry Report, 81% of marketers believed that their social media efforts have increased exposure for their business, and organizations engaged in social media saw a rise in their search engine rankings, generating more leads.⁵

By blogging and publishing online profiles, you can increase visibility and generate awareness for your products and services. This information is multiplied when customers propagate that information onto their extended social media networks. This type of viral marketing is desired because peer-to-peer communication is perceived to be more relevant, authentic and credible than brand-to-consumer messages.⁶ By communicating with customers in a personalized manner, you have the opportunity to turn existing customers into powerful advocates.

“A brand is what people say about you when you’re not in the room”

–Jeff Bezos, Chairman, Amazon⁷

3 – Enables genuine customer insight

Before social media, customer information was typically manually entered in software programs or spreadsheets, and was updated as interactions revealed new information. In today’s world, the customer is updating information about themselves all the time. You no longer need to wait until you have a 1-1 interaction with your customers to learn more about them. It is being updated all around you. The key is finding and organizing the relevant information in a format that allows you to make sense of it, and then use it to enhance your sales and marketing efforts.

“Social media is a great, vast source of information, and what’s different about it and what’s relevant is that information finds you”

– Larry Ritter; Senior Vice President and General Manager.⁸

Social media allows businesses to acquire information from a variety of sources, and about a variety of different subject matter beyond traditional Internet search. By combining all social interactions and unique profile information inside a Customer Management system, you gain a complete picture of your customers to develop richer interactions and more specialized offers. How else are you going to know that your best customer just went on a vacation to Mexico, or that they are a die-hard Dodgers fan? This gives you an edge over your competition as it helps you identify common interests, and makes your sales and marketing touch points more personal.

Besides up to date information about your prospects and customers, social media also provides

5 “Social Media Marketing Report”,
WhitePaperSource.com, March 2009
Michael A. Stelzner, “Social Media
Marketing Report”,
WhitePaperSource.com, March 2009

6 “Defining Social Media in the Banking
Sector” Kristin Moyer, Gartner, 5
February 2009

7 Source: Bloomberg news. Published:
http://images.businessweek.com/ss/06/06/new_tech_leaders/source/6.htm

8 Ritter, Larry, “Social Media Maturity
Model: Information Wants to Find You”
blog post, Destination CRM, 16 June
2009.

a way for you to receive authentic feedback about their own company. When you interact with a customer, social rules regarding politeness, conflict avoidance and emotional investment can obscure the true sentiments of a customer. Social networks allow genuine feedback from customers in forums and mediums which allow you to act as the consumer of that information without interaction barriers. Therefore, social forums reduce communication barriers when people find similar others to support their ideas, which essentially brings out more open and frank interaction and provides a rich source of vital information that a business can tap into.

Benefits of Integrating Social Media With ACT! 2010

When engaging customers in social networks, it's important to understand the full context of the relationship your business has with your customer. Responding to a customer post on a social networking site is good, but responding to their post with the context of recent phone calls, communications, and e-mail marketing campaigns show that a business has real interest in providing customized service to each customer. ACT! puts the customer in the center of your interaction strategy and for over 20 years, ACT! has allowed you to capture key aspects of your contact relationships—from e-mails, documents, meetings, and notes—ACT! keeps it all in one place for instant insight about your customers.



"ACT! 2010 is a quantum (social) leap over previous editions and other contact managers that I've seen and adds functionality that is close to placing it competitively with simpler CRM systems, including a social dashboard (for the want of a better term)...VERY impressive."

Paul Greenberg – CRM at Speed of Light

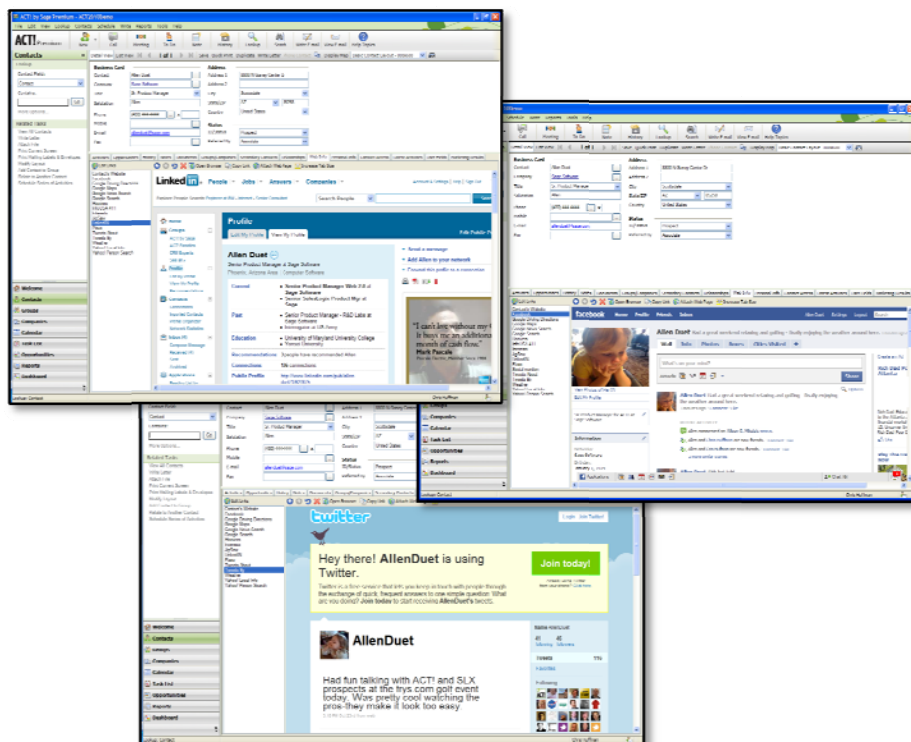
Social media has been seamlessly integrated inside ACT! 2010. This allows you to combine your rich history of customer interactions with online social networking data, providing context for customer engagements. As a result, ACT! 2010 enables you to be more effective in sales and marketing conversations with your customers.

Prospecting and finding new customers

Typical lead generation activities start with only a contact name, company name, and maybe a phone number. Either you purchased a list, received a tip from a friend, or met someone at an event. Armed with this limited (and impersonal) information, having a meaningful interaction with a prospect would be a challenge, even for the most seasoned sales professional. With ACT! 2010, you can fill in the blanks using the capabilities of the Web Info tab so that you can understand more about that contact.

ACT! 2010 aggregates information from the Web quickly and easily so you don't have to try to do it all manually. Using the Web info links on the Company record, you can conclude what industry their business is in, how financial viable they are, and any recent news postings. From the Company view in ACT!, you can quickly determine that a prospect is in the aviation industry, their business is selling at a \$50 stock price, and according to recent news postings they are up for an acquisition. In a matter of seconds, you've been able to efficiently use information on the Internet to augment the limited data set that you have—all within ACT!. You can even attach links to those sites back into ACT! for future reference later.

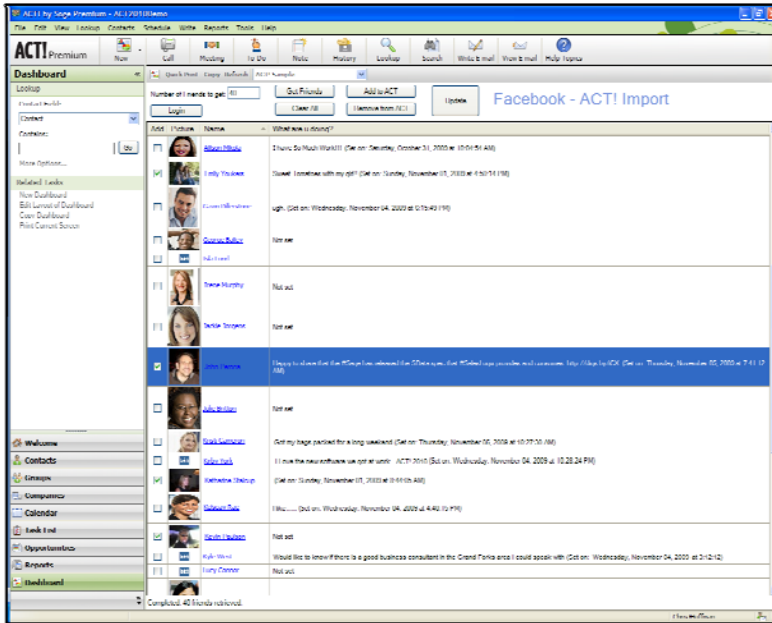
For a given contact name, you can search for the prospect using a variety of social networks such as Plaxo, LinkedIn®, and Facebook, and connect with them so you can continue to track their updates.



"The Web Info tab is great and VERY beneficial to a sales team needing to get background information about a potential client. Great idea!"

- ACT! Customer¹⁰

ACT! 2010 also harnesses the capabilities of social communities for the purposes of prospecting. LinkedIn Groups and Fan Pages are great ways to identify prospects that may not be in your database. You can easily establish a presence on these communities around a topic that is relevant to your business and watch as you attract new followers wanting to engage in dialogue with you. As new fans join your Facebook Fanpage, you can import them into ACT!⁹. Now these Friends are your ACT! contacts and key profile information is captured into ACT!. Because they are in ACT!, all the sales and marketing features are available for use with these contacts. And now that you have imported them from Facebook, you can quickly update contact information from their online profile whenever they make a change.



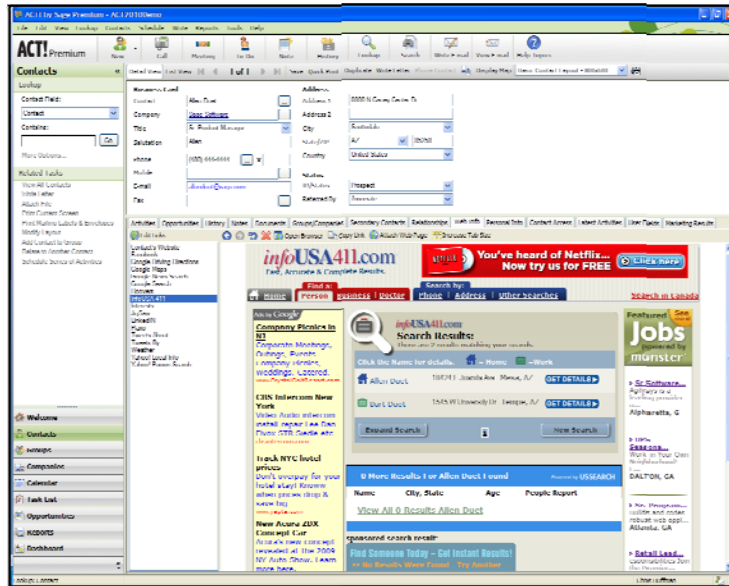
Using the Facebook Import control from ACT! DevNet lets you import your Facebook friends into an ACT! database

The capabilities for prospecting are endless. You can take any Web address or online membership site and add it to ACT! 2010. Now each time you go to a particular contact or company, you can quickly lookup relevant information using those sites. For example, if you are member of HooversTM or InfoUSA®, you can easily add it to the Web Info tab. Now when you click on ABC Company, you can receive more specific information about that company helping you quickly qualify them.

“ACT! is more intuitive ... and better integrated with social networking tools that ...have business value...”

Nucleus Research

⁹ Requires installation of Facebook Import control from ACT! DevNet



Custom URLs can be added and parameters can be sent from Contact and Company views to find even more information about a given prospect

Building better relationships

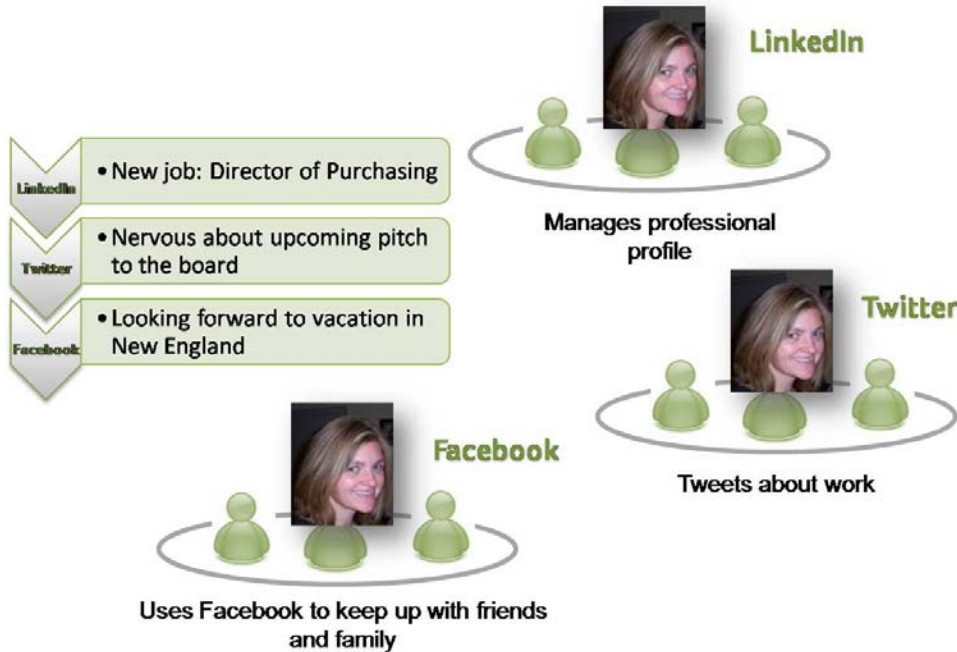
Many businesses have a core customer base and develop a close relationship with these customers through time and frequency of interaction. Keeping those customers happy and loyal are important as they represent a real investment for a business and a key asset. ACT! 2010 helps a business gain visibility to relevant posts and updates from your customers and prospects and take action to further extend your relationship.

Let's look at an example of using ACT! 2010 in a typical relationship development scenario leveraging Social networking: You have an upcoming meeting with a loyal, long time customer. Looking at your rich history of interaction with Betty via e-mail, phone calls, in person conversations (all available in a single view in ACT! 2010) you have a complete view of your interactions. However, now with ACT! 2010, the Web Info tab feature reveals additional details about Betty. Via LinkedIn, you can see she has been promoted to the manager position at her organization, scanning her Facebook profile you can see she's getting ready for a business trip to New England, and in Twitter you can see Betty is nervous about a new project she is heading up. With this information, you can extend your relationship with Betty by congratulating her on her promotion and giving her some restaurant tips in the New England area. In the end a profitable, close client just got closer with minimal business investment.

ACT! and Social Media in Action

Here at Sage, the ACT! team has used social media to help generate leads, drive traffic, and build relationships; here's a quick snapshot of some of our successes:

- By monitoring ACT! conversation on social media sites, we have found some influential bloggers we have invited to guest blog for us.
- We have discovered and connected with ACT! Enthusiasts, and we are nurturing these relationships.
- We have seen ACT! endorsements on Twitter going out to 500+ followers at a time!
- Our first eStore sale of ACT! 2010 came from Larry Ritter's blog!
- The social media networks have surpassed Google™ in driving traffic to our ACT! Online Community.



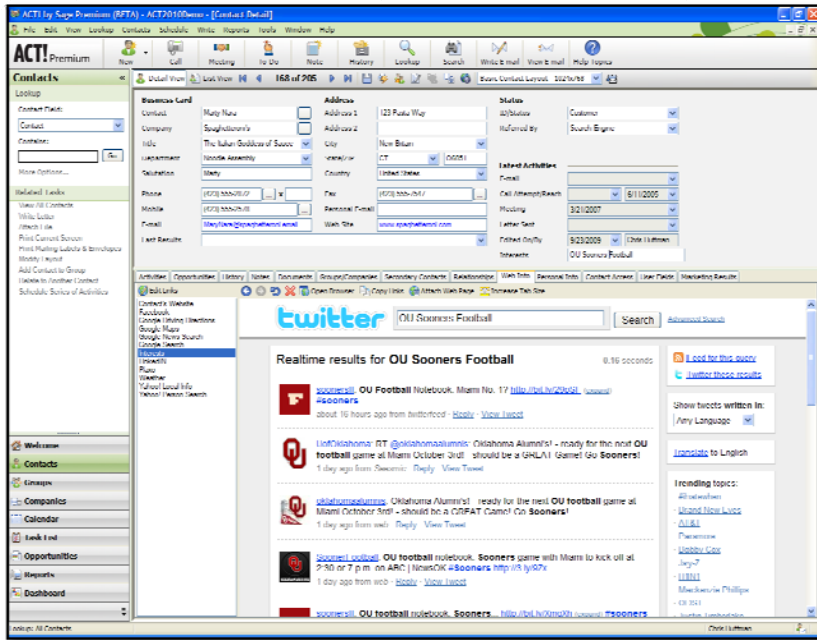
Using ACT! 2010 Web Information tab, you can view information from a mixture of social networks and see a complete view of relationship details

ACT! 2010 also enables you to nurture your existing relationships by contributing content that is relevant and interesting to your customers. Within the Web Info tab you can visit your customers' Twitter profile, follow your customers on Twitter so you can track their conversations, and reply to their questions quickly without ever leaving ACT!. You may even create Twitter alerts using services to send you e-mail alerts for whenever specific keywords appear on Twitter so you can keep track of important conversations that are of interest to you. When these alerts are delivered to your Inbox, you can tie them back to a customer's ACT! record by reviewing those conversations inside the Web Info tab and saving them as contact histories for future reference. You can then use the new Twitter plug-in to easily post customer testimonials, promotions, and product updates, all within Contact record, so your communication with them is relevant and personal.

Finally, ACT! 2010 helps you develop deeper relationships by searching on topics that are of interest to your customers. As you deal with hundreds of customers, it's hard to keep track of all their interests let alone stay current on those topics. ACT! has always made it easy to track information that is relevant to your contacts but now you can dynamically search on that information. For example, your customer Marty is a huge football fan (OU Sooners to be exact). You can capture that information by adding a field in ACT! and storing that information there. Next you can a custom URL for Twitter Topic search to view tweets about this topic to "study up" on what others are saying about this topic. Now the next time you talk to Marty, you can quickly view the Twitter Topic Search to automatically view latest tweets about OU Football.

"The Web Info tab is absolutely great! This makes ACT! so much more than it was. This allows me to keep better track of my customers and prospects and have more to talk about."

- ACT! Customer¹⁰

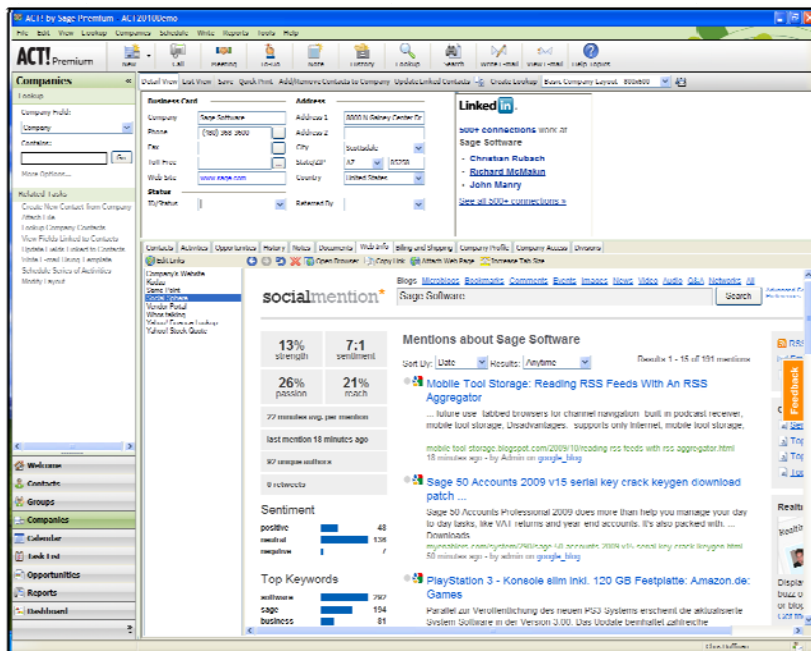


Perform dynamic searches on information that is important to contact; using a Twitter Topic Search on Contact Interest field, you can quickly view related tweets about that topic

Gaining business efficiency through social media tools

Apart from finding customer and prospect information, you can also find latest industry headlines and news that affects your business. We tend to think of ACT! as storing only contact information. But if you tracked information on your competitors, you can use the Web Info tab to view real time information about your competitors. For example, you can set up a company record as a competitor and add integration to some of the popular sites specializing in searching social networks. These sites like Social Mention and SamePoint™ allows you to search on specific criteria per competitor instead of just the company name to fine tune what you information you are seeking. Now everyone on your team has the capability to instantly view company news, their blogs, and tweets about that company. Now everyone has consistent information without relying on people to stumble on this information.

ACT! by Sage



"I love this new tab. So far it's my favorite new feature in a long time. I've been using ACT! for over 12 years now and this is a major improvement. I tried it on my own record first and loved it right away."

- ACT! Customer¹⁰

Summary

As a sales professional or business owner, you know that effective customer engagement and relationship development are vital to acquiring and retaining customers. Social networks and online forums provide a unique opportunity to extend relationships and communicate with wider audiences. A good customer engagement strategy includes being able to reach out to customer communities via the tools of their choosing, and having the full relationship context available when you engage with customers in this way.

ACT! 2010 makes it easy for you to do just that. As the solution so many sales professionals and business owners have relied on for years to manage every contact relationship detail, it's the natural place to manage each contact's social media profile as well. With easy-to-use tools that are integrated right into your contact and company records, you can leverage low-cost, up-to-date customer insight from social media right at the moment of need, helping you build stronger relationships. The power of ACT! integrated with social media tools provides you with a distinct advantage in managing customer relationships effectively that will help you get and stay on top of your business.

¹⁰ Quote was received during ACT! 2010 beta testing period. Customer was given an incentive to participate in beta testing.

For further exploration

- ACT! And Social Media Whitepaper Series Part 1 – Connecting with Your Customers: A Guide to Social Media
- Recorded Webcast: Discovering New Opportunities with Social Media and ACT! 2010!
- Building Relationships with the ACT! 2010 Web Info Tab:

<http://community.act.com/sage/board/message?board.id=news&message.id=48#M48>

- Facebook Dashboard component:

http://community.act.com/sage/board/message?board.id=ADN_Downloads&thread.id=235



Check out the ACT! profile on
your favorite social site!

Become a friend, fan, or follower
today:

Facebook

(www.act.com/facebook)

Twitter

(www.act.com/twitter)

LinkedIn

(www.act.com/linkedin)

YouTube

(www.act.com/youtube)

Plaxo

(www.act.com/plaxo)

MySpace

(www.act.com/myspace)

Important Note: Review ACT! system requirements at www.act.com/2010systreq. You must purchase one license of ACT! per user. Scalability varies based on hardware, size, and usage of your database. **Compatibility:** Due to new functionality available in ACT! 2010, we strongly recommend contacting your add-on product provider to confirm compatibility. Using versions of the add-on product that have not been confirmed compatible by the vendor may result in features behaving differently or not appearing within ACT! 2010. Visit www.actsolutions.com or contact your add-on product provider to help determine compatibility.



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About ACT!

ACT! by Sage is the #1 selling contact and customer manager in the world with 2.8 million users. It's designed so you can organize all the details of your customer relationships in one place for a complete view of the people you do business with. Improve your marketing effectiveness to attract new customers and get more from existing relationships. And, take action on your most qualified sales leads with total visibility and control of your pipeline. Because ACT! is easy to learn and use, you can be more productive right away. Continue working with your existing business solutions, like Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, and Lotus Notes, because they integrate with ACT!.

About Sage CRM Solutions

Sage CRM Solutions is a portfolio of market-leading applications consisting of ACT! by Sage, Sage CRM, and Sage SalesLogix. Over 63,500 organizations and 3.1 million users worldwide rely on Sage CRM Solutions to develop profitable, long-term business relationships.