



# Salesforce App Cloud

## Review From A Customer

From IT Central Station, the leading review site for enterprise technology solutions.

---

## Review by a Real User

Verified by IT Central Station



President / COO / Chief Technology Advisor  
at DeKonsultere LLC

**Eric Dirst**

### VALUABLE FEATURES

Fast speed to delivery of new solutions; fits Agile development model; easy integration and mashup with other SaaS/PaaS offerings; combination of configuration and coding; easy to learn and get up-to-speed quickly for developers; no waiting for hardware & other environments to be ready; scales up immediately

### IMPROVEMENTS TO MY ORGANIZATION

We went from 1 or 2 CRM enhancement releases per year to a minimum of 8 per year by moving from on premise CRM to cloud CRM. Automation of process steps have saved us millions of dollars by removing manual steps/activities. We have reduced our average speed to respond to customers by >4000% through automated routing/workflow. Most importantly, our users actually love the system (how many times have you heard that?). We have also built custom applications on the platform for such things as faculty attendance tracking, HR compensation review and exception processing, and text based polling for use in meetings or classroom settings. These were all relatively small applications that never seemed to be "big enough" or "prioritized enough" to get IT resource dedication. However, with the ease of the salesforce platform, IT was able to quickly and cheaply build these applications. Without such a flexible and easy to configure/code platform, I'm not sure these would have gotten attention.

### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Hard to negotiate ability to scale down; integrations with back-office systems is still complex unless you have robust SOA platform already in place at your organization; doesn't fit for heavy graphics or multimedia apps; could benefit from other than per-user pricing; reporting tools are not great and you usually have to use a 3rd party reporting tool for any complex report or reports which also need to source data from outside your CRM (which many of ours do), and to get any historical data analysis (e.g. need data warehouse). Managing test and dev environments is certainly easier than on-premise, but there still are challenges synching changes between environments and synching data. Additionally you will have to negotiate for multiple "full data" environments if you have multiple parallel path releases going since salesforce usually only gives you one of these environments.



## **USE OF SOLUTION**

Since 2009

## **DEPLOYMENT ISSUES**

We did with reporting. We did not sufficiently test our reporting tools, built with a combination of salesforce and cognos reporting, and there were too many discrepancies in the numbers being reported such that we had to immediately put a tiger team together to address. This had nothing to do with the platform, and more to do with our process for adequately testing large scale reporting before rolling out to 4,000 people. Having said that, the reporting tools are still just ok. We usually end up extracting data out of salesforce to report on elsewhere, primarily because it's easier to extract salesforce data and merge with data from other systems as opposed to putting data from other systems into salesforce just for reporting. The good news is each year the reporting/analytic platform gets better.

## **STABILITY ISSUES**

Nope, it's been more stable than any on premise software we've ever had.

## **SCALABILITY ISSUES**

We did have issues when we originally launched, due to us exceeding certain API thresholds that exist by default by salesforce.com. The good news is they were able to increase them for us relatively quickly.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Customer Service: Solid. No issues. They really try and work with you to ensure you know how/where/why you are using or not using all aspects of the platform. No, of course, they do this level of reporting to you so that you use more, but it's still good data to inform where you have opportunity to better leverage what you are already paying for. Technical Support: Very good. As usual, if you run into anything serious, escalate quickly. They have channels for escalating, so use them. Don't let your technical teams try to solve themselves for too long.

## **PREVIOUS SOLUTIONS**

We previously used Oracle CRM on premise. We switched because we spent too much time applying patches and upgrades and regression testing such that we were unable to respond to changing business conditions and put in enhancements. Now we never deal with patches and upgrades and we only focus on enhancements.

## **INITIAL SETUP**

Much of it was straightforward, with the only complex areas being areas that we wanted to customize for items like inquiry routing (our rules were very complex) and analyzing how we wanted to configure the data best to allow us to also report they way we wanted to for operations, executive and historical comparison reporting. Thinking those concepts through was difficult and I'd suggest spending more time on those activities than anything else during design, and test your design concepts early so you can adjust if it turns out your assumptions don't work out the way you thought they would when you see real data being put through the system.



## Salesforce App Cloud

[Read 1 reviews of Salesforce App Cloud](#)

### **IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

We used Appirio as our implementation vendor. They did a solid job. As usual, with consulting, it's the strength of the team they field for you, so that is what you should evaluate the most.

### **ROI**

We have a case study on our implementation on salesforce.com website that you can read, under DeVry.

### **PRICING, SETUP COST AND LICENSING**

Negotiate HARD on ability to reduce licenses if business conditions dictate you have to shrink or divest yourself of divisions/departments. They won't want to do this, but that should not stop you for negotiating what's right for your business. If you desire, you can get them to agree to create custom types of licenses that are specific to the way you plan to use the platform or the tools (sfa, crm, marketing), so this might be worth exploring if you have unique business requirements that don't fit the standard pricing model.

### **OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED**

Yes, we also looked at RightNow Technologies, which was later bought by Oracle. We actually used RightNow and Oracle CRM, so we had experience with both.

### **OTHER ADVICE**

The hardest part of using the system is finding the technical resources to do the customization and configuration. I'd recommend getting going with a good contracting firm, but make sure you interview and lock in the resources. After that, I'd recommend you find internal business people who know your processes and happen to have a technical aptitude and get them trained up to be admins and developers. We did that and it worked out great...but be prepared to give them significant raises, promotions, and/or long term incentives to keep them with your company.

[Read 1 reviews of Salesforce App Cloud](#)