ZOOM0018_Tr3 Using a purpose-built CRM system

SPEAKERS
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Hello, and welcome to Unleashed. I'm your host will Bachman. In today's episode, I'm going to talk about how independent consultants can set up and use a paid CRM system. Now in the last episode, I talked about how to set up and use a spreadsheet as your CRM system. So this episode is geared towards folks that perhaps have used the spreadsheet for a while and are thinking about now upgrading to use an actual paid CRM system or just jumping right to that. So a spreadsheet is actually a great place to start as a CRM system. It can, it's number one, it's free. And number two, using a spreadsheet for a while will help sensitize you to what features of a paid system you would like to have. And it's also the first step you would do anyways, because anytime you're going to set up a spread CRM system, you're probably going to want to upload your contacts at a minimum, and you're probably going to want to upload your past projects that you've done. So it's a good first step anyway, to start, you know, get a spreadsheet going. So let me talk about why you might want to think about upgrading to a paid CRM system. Why is that better than using a spreadsheet, let me give a few reasons. Number one, you can add documents in a CRM system typically. So for a given individual, person. And again, we recommend you do listen to the previous episode, I'm going to try to avoid repeating myself too much. The main three parts of a CRM system would be contact contacts, which are people, obviously, companies and opportunities. So you can add documents, you can add documents to a an opportunity. So here's the proposal I submitted to accompany you could attach here is our master service agreement with this company, you can attach documents to an individual person. So if they're potential subcontractors, you could attach their resume, if their potential if they're clients, you could attach other sorts of documents. So it's nice to be able to attach actual documents and more than one, you can number two, we can add notes from discussions. So in a spreadsheet, you can do a lot of the stuff for a serum, but it's difficult to have it as be as a relational database and have multiple things where in a CRM system, each discussion you have with the person, you can add the notes. So that's pretty nice. Okay, and a CRM we talked about, you can have, you know, a contacts, companies and opportunities, go through some of those. For the Contacts tab, I talked in the last episode about all the different fields that you might want to think about for an individual person, right for in contacts. In addition to some of those in a in a CRM system, you could also attach a photo. And if you're, you know, certain types of systems, will certain types of serums will allow you to import a LinkedIn profile. So you can just go to the LinkedIn profile, and probably use a Chrome extension to import that profile into your CRM system. And usually that will pull in, not, it might not pull in all their information, some are limited, but it would probably pull in their name, their photo, their title, their current company, their headline, their location. So it's nice having the photo, just being able to see people if you're a visual person like me. So of course, other information in your CRM system that you'd want to have on your context would be name,

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title, employer, title, employer, education, location of the person, that is nice to have, because if you're visiting San Diego, you could look up all the people you know, in San Diego and reach out to them, you certainly want to have their link for their LinkedIn URL. And you can create other custom fields. We talked about this in the last episode, you might want to track whether someone is subscribed to your newsletter, any gifts you've ever sent the person or if you've received gifts from them, you could track it, who introduced you to that person. And in the last episode talking about other sorts of things you might track. Importantly, a big advantage versus a just using a spreadsheet is many CRM systems will sync with your email. So on your contact, if you have their email address attached to that contact, many CRM systems will sync with your email. So within the CRM system, you can see all your emails back and forth to that contact. Now, you could say well, I can just look at my email for that. Yes, that's true. On the other hand, if that person has, say, multiple email addresses, you have their personal email, you have their email from their past job, their email from their current job, then all of those emails would be synced and available to see on their profile, and that's pretty nice. Next, let's talk about opportunities. So when you're looking at a contact, the nice thing about a serum system is you could see all of the project opportunities that are associated with an individual that's a little bit harder to do in a spreadsheet to have that nice relational back and forth. So you look at a contact, you can see all the opportunities. And for some people may be, you know, years ago, they were a consultant, and they were your subcontract on a project. And now they've taken a job somewhere, now they're your client. So they could have both opportunities, where you were staffing them on your projects and opportunities where you know, you are, where you're the where they're the client. So you could see all of those, and if they won, or lost, etc. And let's see, under tags, so you could also tag typically, any one of the three contacts, opportunities or projects with an industry tag or a functional tag, or if a certain certain opportunity requires a certain particular skill set, you can have discrete defined tags. A particular advantage, particular advantage of using a CRM system is tasks. Now, in a spreadsheet, you can certainly have a column for name of a task or define the task and a column for the date. But it's certainly I think, much nicer and a better user experience to have a serum system where you can add a tag and attach it either to a contact, call this person, you know, two months from now, or added attacks to a project. So you can say I need to submit the proposal for this or I need to follow up on this one in a week. So then you can see all of your tasks in one place, right, and maybe extend them or mark them as done. The other nice thing about uncle for opportunities, I think they're a little bit easier to manage. If you're a visual person like me, it's nice being able to often have a tile view where you can have maybe columns for the status, and you can move a project from one column to the next. So you can drag it over from identified opportunity over to the completed context discussion column is somewhat visually satisfying to move these tiles around. If you're like me, now, you could certainly be using a spreadsheet and just change the drop down. But I think it's nice to visually see stuff moving around. We talked about stages in the last episode, that's an important one that I'll repeat here, because in case you didn't listen, the last one, this system I got from David de fields have added a little bit to it. So for the stages of opportunities, most CRM systems will let you customize the names of the different stages that probably have some out of the box, here are stages that I suggest you consider using. So the first stage would be identified opportunity. So where you have maybe it's come in to you as a call or text or email, and you're aware of it, but you haven't yet had the discussion identified opportunity. You move it over next to completed context discussion after you spoke with the client. And you understand you've had a discovery call, you've had a context discussion, you know what it's about, the third stage would be submitted a proposal. Okay, so now you've submitted your proposal you're waiting to hear, or maybe

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you're going back and forth on contract terms, and so forth. But that's the submitted proposal stage. The next would be either moves to last sadface, or one active. So if you win the project, I like to move it to one active, keep it there until the project is completed, and then move it to one completed. And if you whether you move it to last or one active, a nice thing about a CRM system is it'll have these automated pop ups. So you move it over to last. And it should pop up and ask you what was the last reason or if you move it to one active, what was the one reason and then you could have other stages. So for example, you could have a stage holding pattern or on hold. So that's when you've gotten into it, you've completed context discussion, maybe you submitted a proposal and the client says, Oh, this has been de prioritized or something else came up, we're going to push this out to the third quarter, the fourth quarter. So you put it in a holding pattern, because you don't want to forget about it. You want to remind yourself six months from now to follow up and see if they are in fact going to do the project. But you don't want to clogging up your other more immediate stages. You could also have something like identified future opportunity where you it's sort of in a discussion, you haven't submitted a proposal, you have not had a completed context discussion, because it's just on the horizon. You're having a discussion, the clients that yeah, you know, at some point, we should talk this summer, we may want to do XYZ. You can make a note of that. And then that reminds you to follow up about it. You can also attach documents to an opportunity in some CRM systems. The opportunities will be like a list but they can also show up at the tile so it's nice to be able to move them around Right. We talked about tracking opportunities. So you could talk to opportunities on both contacts, as well as on project opportunities, and then reports. So as an independent consultant, some people would be into this, some people may not be so much, you have an intuitive sense of what you're doing. But over time, you could track the kinds of, you know, how many projects did you lose? What was the percent on them and so forth. Looking at the loss reasons, maybe that gives you some insight into, there are certain projects that I should just not bother, you know, spending time on, because I tend not to get those. Look at the projects that you want, what were the reasons why. And if you're tracking things in your CRM system, like how many LinkedIn connection request did you send, how many got accepted, you could look at any sort of metric like that anything that's logged in the system, you can typically create some custom report for. And those can be helpful. Even a report looking at show me all the projects that we lost over the past two years, look at those, that could be a good reminder of clients to follow up with and reach out, because even though you didn't one, you got close enough that they were open to getting a proposal from you. So those are some advantages of having a CRM system. One that I haven't mentioned, since I'm focused on independent consultants is that you can add other users typically. So as your firm grows, if you want to bring on an executive assistant or other professionals to grow your firm, usually CRM systems are set up to have multiple people. Now with a spreadsheet, you could of course, use a Google sheet and share access to that. But then it's, it's a little harder to keep track of. Whereas with a CRM system, you can typically control access, you could, you know, prevent other people from deleting stuff, so that only you can delete things. You can merge records if if you have to accidentally two people who are the same. And it's nice having multiple users, maybe someone's an administrator for you, and can help do some of the more administrative work. So a lot of advantages of upgrading to a SAM system, I'm not going to recommend any one particular system. A lot of we surveyed members of Umbrex and Veritux. A lot of people use Pipedrive. That's a popular system. Other ones are some people use our Insightly. And I would recommend though, that you probably start with a spreadsheet, get a sense of how you are going to be using the system. And then look at demos of several of the ones. Now if you look at the resource we have at umbrex.com/resources. We profile, several different CRM systems that have been used by our members, they we asked them which CRM system that use. So we have profiles of several different systems. Pipedrive was the most popular, but there are other good ones out there. So take a look at those and then definitely watch the demos, too, before you just select one right and don't decide just on the price. Definitely the functionality and just getting a feel for it. And the aesthetics of the system are going to have different appeals to different people. So I hope this was helpful. And I include that link in the show notes for how to get the resources that I mentioned.

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