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CRM with Email Marketing Software for Small Businesses and Micro Enterprises focused on Developing, Tracking and Managing Key Relationships

Nick Carter
Founder & Chief Executive Officer

AddressTwo
www.AddressTwo.com

Contact:
Nick Carter
317-594-9550
info@addresstwo.com

Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine

"These pieces of information are crucial, and you can take all of it into your CRM"- Nick Carter

CEOCFO: ***Mr. Carter, what is AddressTwo®?***
Mr. Carter: Simply put, AddressTwo is a CRM software that is married to its own email marketing software. The purpose of our software is to serve small businesses and micro enterprises. For example, our CRM can give contact managers or task managers a reminder to follow up or to do an email newsletter. Those are all CRM functions. We do them in a very simple fashion for small teams.

CEOCFO: ***What are some of the challenges and special needs of a small business that you are able to help them conquer?***
Mr. Carter: Usually, the first challenge that comes up is when a solopreneur begins to grow and expands his team to other people that are either teaming up or owning some portion of the sales process. Let's say that I just hired someone to do my email marketing. During the week I have to meet the new prospect, and I have to have their business in a shoebox under my desk, and naturally I want that person getting my newsletter. I want that person getting my next update. Now, if you've hired an agency to handle your marketing (whether outsource or internal), they don't have access to that database anymore. That means that suddenly my cell phone or my Gmail is my CRM. But that's not really a solution, is it? Without a proper CRM, you're bound to make a mistake. It's like having two or more salespeople covering a similar territory and cold calling the same customers over and over again. To prevent things like that from happening, you need a centralized CRM database.

CEOCFO: ***How do you reach a solopreneur? How do you reach them for them to understand that they need AddressTwo or at least a CRM and perhaps not something like Office 365?***
Mr. Carter: Office 365 is fine! We actually use Outlook! I am a user of Outlook and of Excel. Those are office desktop tools. We also use Gmail. I personally use Gmail. Those are not competing products.
But even Gmail has its limitations. For example, you are not going to be able to use Gmail to share your customer database or information about your leads, the messages you exchanged, or even what their daughter's soccer team is. These pieces of information are crucial, and you can take all of it into your CRM database.
How we reach those customers is a very interesting challenge. Focusing on solopreneurs one of those niches that is an inch deep and a mile wide. There are solopreneurs in all kinds of enterprises; from B2B, to B2C and in every industry you can imagine. Therefore, it is more a matter of where those kinds of people congregate together. Therefore, we try to network well with Chambers of Commerce, the power circle groups if you will, and networking groups where solopreneurs

find their camaraderie. Although that's a lonely business, they usually end up joining organizations that are designed to support small business. Therefore, we reach out and build partnerships with those kinds of organizations.

CEOCFO: ***How do you help someone recognize what they can do with your CRM? How are you able, not only to provide the tools, but perhaps explain or encourage or make it something they should do and know they should do?***
Mr. Carter: We actually prefer to approach things from the opposite direction. We like to let people find out everything they can do on their own. When you are adopting a new CRM, you are adopting a new powerful tool that can transform the way you operate your business. CRM offers you the control you're probably not used to having, which can be a bit overwhelming, especially in the first few weeks. Because it offers a plethora of options to choose from, people sometimes throw in the towel even before they start. That's because they aren't properly trained.
That being said, we train all our new users using our simple, straightforward step-by-step program. We start off with simple but pivotal tasks, and then move on to more complex ones.

For example, we teach them to simply enter each new lead or prospect that they've met with, record a quick note about what they've talked about with person, and then schedule a follow up,

Then, within, say, seven days they are going to start receiving emails from our system that reminds them to follow up with that prospect. Simple, right? From there on, they have started to put in some of the basic building blocks. Having a database created, and having all those contacts in one place is pivotal. Then we can help them to uncover other tools that we can use to leverage that database.

It really is all about leveraging the power of your database. And the very first step for that is getting the data into the database, contacts, and getting historical records in there. Then we can move on to some more serious training.
As far as the timing goes, we do weekly trainings every Wednesday. We host a podcast. Troy Hanna, our director of client success, walks people through these basics and it starts over every month. The first week of every month we start with the basics, and he waits a whole week before he unveils the next steps. That is because we want people to be able to adopt this new tool in a way that is manageable and not overwhelming. It is just like joining a gym. A good trainer would never have an overweight person come into the gym and tell them they are going to be in perfect shape in a month. That is because they are going to be discouraged and never do it.

CEOCFO: ***How do you keep it both simple and somewhat customized?***
Mr. Carter: That is a big challenge. Because, as I already mentioned, when your target market is an inch deep and a mile wide, you end up with a mile wide of ideas for how this could be perfect. It is always perfect in someone else's perspective. Therefore, we have a little bit of a process of wading through the future requests and being able to weigh which ones are really going to apply to a broad user base. One of the things we have done is we re-versioned about three years ago; it was a major upgrade and a major overhaul. The reasons we did that is to give our users a more personalized version of CRM. That being said, we are now able to build custom features from any one user that will not impact our other users, even though this is a completely cloud based hosted solution. Therefore, that has allowed us to be able to respond sometimes with "Do you want one thousand on a page?"
First of all, just so you realize Lynn, one of the technical reasons that we do not do that is because it would actually overload dataflow from our server to your computer. Therefore, to load one thousand at a time may sound like something simple for you, but once we offer that option to our fifteen thousand users, we risk not being able to use the software for a while. That is just one thing to be aware of. However, we could create a custom view for you to be able to click this special button so that we know that you are not constantly loading it, but when you need it and you need access to it, you get that.

CEOCFO: ***Is there a particular type of business that uses your service more or would benefit more?***
Mr. Carter: Mainly B2B professional service providers, accounts, architects, lawyers; Business to Business mainly because our entire system is account centric, not just contact centric. That's one of the features that makes our software easy-to-use.
By "service providers", we simply refer to the businesses engaged in an outbound selling process. That being said, anything that is engaged to an outbound sales process is good for us. Insurance, real estate, really anything sales-related. We are not an order taking system. For example, with businesses related to ecommerce or retail, it is more of a numbers game. These businesses need a few thousand people through the door every day, and only a small percentage of those will buy. Therefore, they won't benefit from it too much. This is for someone who is trying to individually build relationships with a finite number of prospects.

CEOCFO: ***AddressTwo offers different levels of service. Would you touch on the different packages? Do people often move from the basic to the more comprehensive?***
Mr. Carter: In the beginning, we're talking about entering small and having small goals. The very first one is just having a CRM for a sales professional or sales professionals. It is only going to manage the sales process, but in doing so it will create the building blocks for a database that can be leveraged later on. It will only grow more powerful allowing you to do both mass email or bulk email marketing to the existing database. That means that email promotions, announcements, newsletters and other tasks that include click tracking, open tracking, bounce reporting, as well as unsubscribing -- are all built in.

One of the biggest challenges about email marketing that you can forget about is getting the database together. If I wanted to sign up for any kind of email broadcast system, the first thing I have to have is a opt-in email list. By engaging your CRM as your primary contact database you have it all right at your fingertips. You are ready to just click 'send' whenever you need to. That is the next step up.

Then the last thing that we do is engagement scoring, which is really the most advanced level of service. It is a matter of placing a piece of code, a tracking beacons on your actual website. By doing that, we can actually measure the levels of engagement that any of your contacts have when they receive your email, when they visit your website or when they navigate through your website. These little pieces of code are tracking everything on your website at all times, even if the visitors come back weeks or even months later.

CEOCFO: ***What has changed in your approach over time?***
Mr. Carter: We've come to realize that we cannot individually service every vertical. Early on, in the first couple of years of our business, we had many vertical plug-ins. We had the real estate plug-in. We had the insurance plug-in. We had a mortgage plug-in. Therefore, we as AddressTwo were servicing these different verticals and trying to develop adequate industry vertical features for those kinds of verticals.

About three years ago we had finished a re-versioning that allowed us to have customization, and another major part of that has been white labeling. Therefore, now instead of having the address to the insurance plug-in, for example, we have partnered with a white label customer to build something specific to their industry. They developed their own CRM under their own brand, under their own name, and they are responsible for all of the specific features that are industry specific and supporting the industry and going to market in the industry. We are really the CRM engine behind the scenes, but there is so much more that they can add into that system.

CEOCFO: ***Do many people turn to you having tried other CRMs?***
Mr. Carter: Tried? Yes. Adopted? No. Therefore, we do very few migrations. We find a lot of people that have come; especially with CRMs that are well known like Salesforce. Salesforce is huge and complicated for many business owners. It was originally developed with larger companies in mind but it consequently makes pretty hard to adopt. Therefore, we have seen a lot of "I have tried this, I have tried that, and none of it ever worked." The comparison to weight loss is actually really apropos. That is because most people who finally succeed in some way at achieving a healthy lifestyle; it was by no means their first attempt. They have to find something that fits them well.

CEOCFO: ***How is business these days?***
Mr. Carter: Great! We have consistently grown year after year. Over the last couple of years we have slowed down in growth and customer acquisition, and we were really focusing on the re-versioning of our software. This year we are growing by about twenty percent. That is really good for a ten year old company to still have that kind of pace in growth. With that in mind, I can only say that we are having a lot of fun!

CEOCFO: ***Why should people choose AddressTwo? Is there anything that people may miss when they first look at AddressTwo that they need to understand?***
Mr. Carter: I think that the fastest answer to that is that we are still a small business serving other small businesses. It is one thing for companies to say that they are focusing on small business as their target market, because they want to approach that industry. They want to tip the, what they call, the SMB industry or segment. However, we understand everything our small business clients are going through. That's because we are a small business ourselves. I am standing here in the back of the warehouse of our office. In the front there are five people at desks. We have got a few other remote employees, and that is us! We are a very small, unassuming company, and we get to know our customers. We love them, and they love us! That makes a world of difference when it comes to having a voice and actually knowing that there is someone who cares for you, and whom you can call rather than ending up in the hold queue.