

## OPTIMIZING YOUR CRM INITIATIVE WITH SIEBEL 8

The Latest Addition to Siebel's Market-Leading CRM Architecture Delivers Sophisticated Tools to Ensure More Intelligent Customer Interactions and Increased Business Outcomes

By Satish Ramanan  
Principal Consultant  
Innoveer Solutions, Inc.

If your organization relies on Siebel Systems' powerful e-business suite, then you probably already realize the benefits of Siebel 8, the latest version of the company's customer relationship management (CRM) software application. Siebel 8 delivers even greater functionality, including advanced order-management capabilities, embedded analytics, and an even richer set of industry-specific applications. These and a host of other new and upgraded features offer Siebel users sophisticated tools to conduct more intelligent customer interactions, while delivering enhanced management of pricing and promotions.

For organizations still apprehensive about upgrading to Siebel 8, the latest enhancements offer a host of bottom line benefits, including increased revenues, reduced operating costs, and enhanced customer loyalty. Still uncertain about whether upgrading is worth the effort? Let us examine some of the factors that may change your point of view.

## MANY REWARDS

From Siebel 8's Web-based environment — aligning it with the latest in forward-looking enterprise software architectures — to its industry applications and enhanced integration capabilities, the rewards of upgrading are many and varied. Siebel 8 delivers business value for everyone within your organization — from your executives to your end-users to your IT staff.

Your executives, for instance, will appreciate the system's lowered total cost of ownership (TCO), due in no small part to Siebel's move to the Web-based architecture, and they will also appreciate lower maintenance fees from Siebel and Oracle, thereby further improving the overall TCO equation. Siebel has also incorporated dozens of enhancements to better and more easily mold the product to your organization's specific goals and practices.

For your IT staff, Siebel 8's new pre-built adapters — developed with industry-standard tools — ease integration with other systems, greatly simplifying this often formidable task. The software also offers a new data model allowing single sign-on and other enhancements, including streamlined management capabilities. On top of those benefits, Siebel 8 simplifies customization, maintenance, and upgrades, and offers functionality in numerous other areas, such as logging of system events — significantly improving the ability to debug problems. And your IT department will find it can administer your Siebel solution on a broader spectrum of hardware and software platforms than ever before.

Siebel 8's ease of deployment and roll out of additional functionality is perhaps the most appreciated benefit to IT and end users because it permits faster rollout of functionality within Siebel. IT is also able to take advantage of a great resource pool with the numerous certified Siebel developers available. This is particularly true when comparing Siebel 8.x qualified resource availability to Siebel 6.x trained resources.

Your end users will appreciate Siebel 8's significantly streamlined navigational features. These make the user interface more intuitive with easier navigation — reducing the number of clicks they will need to go from “here to there” and saving them (and your organization) time and money. These include

## OPTIMIZING YOUR CRM INITIATIVE WITH SIEBEL 8

The Latest Addition to Siebel's Market-Leading CRM Architecture Delivers Sophisticated Tools to Ensure More Intelligent Customer Interactions and Increased Business Outcomes



several new menus that offer users access to productivity applications — such as Microsoft Word and Excel — directly within the Siebel environment. This then allows users to quickly import and export data between the various applications, a significant productivity gain. Moreover, Siebel 8's performance boost is sure to increase overall user satisfaction.

## A 'MUST DO' UPGRADE

Without question, the upgrade to Siebel 8 will require an investment, but one that will most likely involve a measurable return. The newest release includes some significant infrastructure changes to Siebel's Web-based architecture detailed later in this white paper. You will also spend valuable time and effort assessing organizational factors — end-user acceptance, training of the new solution, executive buy-in, and the like — associated with such a comprehensive upgrade. Additionally, you will need to complete testing to ensure the security and cost-effective operation of your upgraded Siebel solution.

As we have noted in the past, Siebel 8 is somewhat of a “must do” upgrade for enterprises that rely on their Siebel system as part of their corporate strategy. For one thing, Siebel Chairman, Tom Siebel, has said that Siebel 8 will remain the company's flagship offering “for the foreseeable future.” His guarantee ensures Siebel customers that the substantial investments they make in Siebel 8 will provide that all-important long-term return on investment (ROI) corporate executives now demand from technology initiatives.

In addition, not only will support costs increase for Siebel 6, but Siebel, like most software vendors, will most likely not fix new bugs discovered in version 6. This could be a significant issue should a Siebel 6 solution crash, leaving your call center and technical service agents without access to critical customer information.

All of this having been said, we still suspect that you have heard horror stories about how painful and disruptive upgrading a Siebel solution can be. It does not have to be that way, however.

Certainly, if you have not upgraded to Siebel 8 from the 6.x suite, you will face a number of challenges. These include making a wide range of choices and decisions during the process and planning to ensure a successful upgrade. Rebuilding the screens your users view when accessing the system, selecting the underlying hardware and software platforms and applications, and making decisions about interface modifications and data migration are just a few of the other tasks at hand. Needless to say, the costs of upgrading to Siebel 8 can add up.

Rather than focusing on the negative, however, Innoveer Solutions believes that Siebel users should look at upgrading to Siebel 8 as an opportunity to revitalize their CRM initiatives. By upgrading, they not only have the chance to enhance the functionality and performance of their Siebel solutions, but they can also increase overall end-user adoption.

For those enterprises considering upgrading to Siebel 8, Innoveer believes that Oracle Corporation's purchase of Siebel Systems adds to the many rewards already mentioned thus far. We believe that Oracle

## OPTIMIZING YOUR CRM INITIATIVE WITH SIEBEL 8

The Latest Addition to Siebel's Market-Leading CRM Architecture Delivers Sophisticated Tools to Ensure More Intelligent Customer Interactions and Increased Business Outcomes



## MORE EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS

will ultimately utilize any and all best practices embedded within Siebel 8 in its Fusion product set. Siebel Systems and Oracle Corporation will continue to have a fully supported upgrade path to interim Siebel releases, patches, and ultimately, the Fusion product — for those that are on the latest release, which is currently Siebel 8.

Organizations should also view the upgrade as an opportunity to integrate the best practices built within the Siebel solution into their own environments. Siebel 8 ships with 23 industry-specific versions tailored to the unique requirements and processes of those industries, and an upgrade is an ideal time to take advantage of those features. These Industry Applications provide the most comprehensive, out-of-the-box functionality mapped to support the business processes of major industries, including financial services, communications, energy, life sciences, consumer goods, retail, apparel, high technology, automotive, chemical, the public sector, and travel and hospitality.

The latest version, Siebel 8, eases many of the upgrade planning and deployment challenges we mentioned earlier. When upgrading, Siebel's product development personnel focused on driving costs out of installation, configuration, integration, and operations, while ensuring faster, easier, and less costly software implementation and maintenance. The cumulative result is a 39 percent reduction in overall total cost of ownership (TCO) when compared to previous Siebel releases.

Siebel designed version 8 to maximize sales, service, marketing, and overall operational effectiveness. Among the key enhancements in this area: The software delivers improved customer insight by optimizing sales execution and increasing collaborative selling. For service representatives, the new version helps improve service delivery and increases customer retention by directing a significant number of call center tasks to the Web. It also targets contract renewals and provides a real-time understanding of customer contractual commitments and penalties.

The reasons for upgrading go well beyond that scope, of course. For instance, Siebel's new embedded analytics solution incorporates pre-built, industry-specific reports based on best practice analyses. It integrates data from multiple enterprise sources and converts it into key insight that allows executives, managers, and front line knowledge workers to make decisions that dramatically improve execution of crucial business decisions. The analytics component also ships with a data warehouse that transforms data from Siebel and other sources into actionable decisions.

In addition, Siebel's Customer Order Management suite of applications improves the quote-to-cash process by allowing users to create relevant offers and promotions that target specific customers or customer segments. The product offers complete business process support tools, including options that enhance product, pricing, and catalog management, as well as ensure delivery of better quoting and order lifecycle management capabilities.

These features offer sales and service personnel new functionality in several important areas. They can use them, as an example, to dynamically present logical cross- and up-sell opportunities at the

## OPTIMIZING YOUR CRM INITIATIVE WITH SIEBEL 8

The Latest Addition to Siebel's Market-Leading CRM Architecture Delivers Sophisticated Tools to Ensure More Intelligent Customer Interactions and Increased Business Outcomes



point of customer interaction. They can also help sales personnel develop optimal per-customer and per-customer-segment pricing structures, adding to bottom line results.

Among the other key enhancements and new features that Siebel 8 offers is a composite application framework that offers enterprises the tools to better integrate existing technology investments with Siebel 8 applications. This framework meets the best practices of the service-oriented architecture (SOA) by delivering adaptable and reusable business objects, services, and processes. By moving to a SOA-based architecture, Siebel 8 bolsters an enterprise's ability to reuse out-of-the-box Siebel Customer Order Management components within customized applications.

The enhanced service applications within Siebel 8 offers customer service agents the right tools to reduce the cost of customer service, improve service delivery, and increase customer retention. These applications provide a closed-loop, multichannel service solution that off-loads many call center tasks to the Web. This off-loading allows enterprises to provide choice and convenience to customers, while at the same time reducing the costs of providing those services. This means that service organizations can lower service-delivery costs, create new revenue opportunities, and improve customer satisfaction.

Siebel 8 also provides sales and service organizations with a single, complete view of all customer assets and prior contacts, and ensures that this information is available to customer-facing employees at the point of customer interaction. This real-time knowledge offers sales and service personnel better insight into their customers. It also allows them to use the information to assess customer needs faster and provide relevant information, products, or services in a more timely fashion.

## NEW PRICING TOOLS

Siebel 8 delivers new out-of-the-box functionality that greatly enhances and simplifies pricing, eligibility, compatibility, promotions, and catalog syndication operations. The new version of Siebel's order management application extends your ability to easily create, validate, and manage customer quotes and orders across multiple channels and enterprise systems.

Among the new and upgraded sales-process features Siebel 8 supports are a set of dynamic product selection and pricing options. The product selection feature offers sales personnel the tools to easily browse, select, and configure complex products, such as those sold by technology manufacturers. In addition to providing more intelligent product search tools, it simplifies catalog-browsing, while also delivering templates for commonly purchased products. This greatly reduces the number of screens, mouse clicks, and other manual tasks when navigating the system to create orders.

The dynamic pricing option equips sales personnel with flexible methods to model pricing rules based on a wide range of parameters, including customer buying histories and trends. This can help ensure the consistency of your pricing structure across multiple sales channels. The feature also supports pricing in a wide range of currencies, including the ability to enter multiple currencies within a single order. These allow sales personnel to quickly and confidently create quotes and orders. And with Siebel

## OPTIMIZING YOUR CRM INITIATIVE WITH SIEBEL 8

The Latest Addition to Siebel's Market-Leading CRM Architecture Delivers Sophisticated Tools to Ensure More Intelligent Customer Interactions and Increased Business Outcomes



8, marketing managers can create and send relevant up- and cross-sell messages to sales agents — offering them key information required to close sales more quickly and with less effort.

We could go on and on, but the point should be clear. Feature-by-feature, Siebel 8 significantly advances the state of the art in enterprise-class CRM suites.

## **BENEFITS, BENEFITS**

The bottom line — yes, the costs of upgrading to Siebel 8 can add up, but when you analyze the benefits, you will discover that they significantly outweigh the expenses. Enterprises that rely on Siebel's CRM solution should look at the upgrade not only as a chance to add functionality and strengthen their systems, but also as an opportunity to upgrade and strengthen their entire customer management program and processes, as well as resulting business outcomes.

## **ABOUT INNOVEER SOLUTIONS**

INNOVEER SOLUTIONS, an award-winning customer strategy and solutions consultancy, provides advanced customer management services to healthcare and high-technology companies, among others, in the areas of planning and strategy, technology implementation, and optimization. The company's deep industry knowledge, broad technical skills, and Multishore methodology enable organizations to address their critical customer-facing issues and achieve an integrated view of all customer information. With an exclusive focus on customer management since 1998, Innoveer has worked with more than 300 organizations to increase their overall business growth, improve internal efficiency, and enhance the customer experience.

### **OPTIMIZING YOUR CRM INITIATIVE WITH SIEBEL 8**

The Latest Addition to Siebel's Market-Leading CRM Architecture Delivers Sophisticated Tools to Ensure More Intelligent Customer Interactions and Increased Business Outcomes

