

# More Than Just Software Costs: A Look at the Total Cost of Ownership of HubSpot vs Salesforce.

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# Executive Summary

Aptitude 8 sponsored this research after talking with CFO's and CIO's throughout 2022 about their priorities when it came to CRM projects. We wanted to help provide clarity on the cost of different CRM platforms beyond just the software pricing itself. We know that when executives are evaluating CRMs they know that the decision encompasses the entire solution, which is encompassed by Services, Software, and the internal lift to implement and support the technology.

We surveyed 332 sales and marketing professionals working for mid-size organizations (with 100 - 1000 employees) who use either HubSpot or Salesforce as their CRM solution. 94% of these individuals reported having insight into the implementation process of their CRM tool and 88% reported that their CRM tool was implemented within the last two years. This gives us a current and relevant perspective on what contributes to the successful implementation, management, and utilization of a CRM solution, and how the cost of ownership varies between HubSpot and Salesforce.

We hope you enjoy this research!



**HubSpot vs Salesforce.** Look for this graphic throughout the report to see how HubSpot and Salesforce compare.

## What are we evaluating?

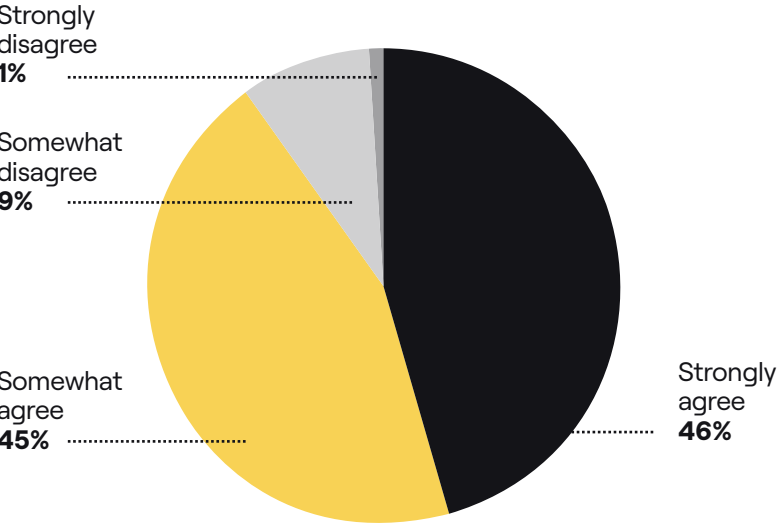
In the research that follows we will be closely examining the various elements that contribute to the total cost of ownership of HubSpot versus Salesforce including:

- ✓ Implementation costs  
(training, outsourced resources, etc)
- ✓ Management and support costs  
(internal and external resources used)
- ✓ Software costs  
(including additional tools needed)
- ✓ Use of the tool  
(Ability to gain actionable insight)

# Key Takeaways

From cost and time dedicated to implementation to the importance and ability of having a full view of the customer, we covered a lot of ground with this research. Here are some important highlights from the research that follows to get you started.

## The overall cost of our CRM and integrated sales/marketing technology is worth the price we pay. (All respondents)



**Hubspot requires fewer internal resources to manage it.** 63% of Hubspot users report that 3 or fewer people support their CRM and sales/marketing tools as a core part of their job, compared to 55% of Salesforce user reporting the same.

**Having a full view of customer data is extremely important, and HubSpot users have greater access to one.** 42% of HubSpot users say it is extremely easy to get a comprehensive view of customer data using their CRM and sales/marketing tech, compared to 35% of Salesforce users.

**HubSpot users are also more satisfied with the overall implementation process of their current CRM.** Over half (51%) of HubSpot users report being extremely satisfied with their implementation compared to 37% of Salesforce users reporting being extremely satisfied.

**Nearly half of all respondents (46%) feel that their marketing and sales technology costs are worth it, but HubSpot users feel more strongly.** 50% of HubSpot users strongly agree that the costs of their CRM is worth the price they pay compared to 41% of Salesforce users.

## Introduction

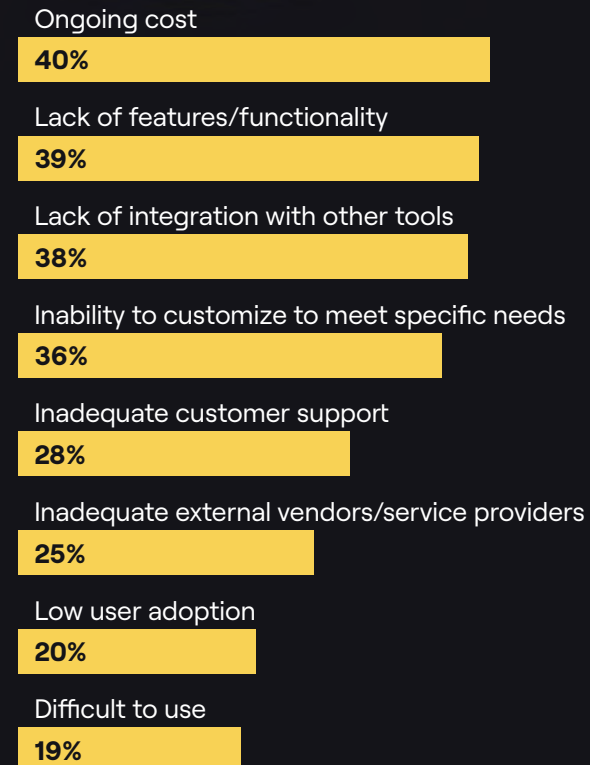
# CRM is a Priority (and if it isn't, it should be).

The majority of organizations are actively evaluating the effectiveness of their sales and marketing technology and report that changes will likely be made in the coming year. In fact, two-thirds (66%) of executives say they have plans to add, remove, or replace elements of their current CRM or sales and marketing technology stack in the year ahead.

**66%** of executives surveyed have plans to add, remove, or replace components of their current CRM or sales/marketing technology in the coming year.

Organizations are making these updates with the goal of reducing ongoing costs and improving functionality and integration with adjacent technology in mind. The ongoing cost of CRM solutions and associated technology is listed as the top factor driving plans to update this technology next year according to 40% of those surveyed. Lack of features and functionality as well as lack of integrations, and inability to customize are also top reasons for prioritizing change.

## What are the top factors driving the decision to add, remove, or replace any part of your CRM or sales/marketing technology?





## Introduction

# The cost of doing nothing.

About one-quarter (24%) of all sales and marketing professionals surveyed report that they have no plans to update their tech stack next year. With over half (53%) of those surveyed reporting that their CRM could be more effective at helping to achieve their strategic goals, we have to wonder, how much does it actually cost to keep a tool that isn't right for you?

Throughout this report, you will find data that helps to answer this question and others as we examine the total cost of ownership of this technology, from implementation to management and utilization.

**88%** of those surveyed agree that they would be more likely to switch to a new CRM if it was guaranteed to not be a “pain in the ass.”



## 1.0 Implementation Costs

# An effective CRM starts with the implementation.

Our research indicates that a smooth implementation contributes greatly to how effective your CRM can be. An 83% majority of those who had the most satisfaction with the implementation of the CRM report that their solution is extremely effective at helping them to achieve strategic goals. This can be compared to the group who was less satisfied with how their implementation went: Only 22% of those surveyed who weren't completely satisfied with the implementation of their CRM report that their tool is extremely effective.

Those who are **most satisfied** with their CRM implementation are significantly more likely to report that their CRM is highly effective.

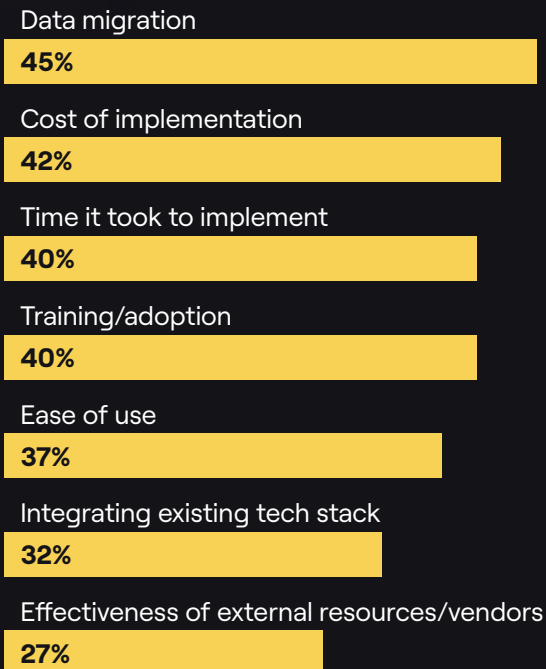


**HubSpot users are more satisfied** with the overall implementation process of their current CRM. Over half (51%) of HubSpot users surveyed report being extremely satisfied with the overall implementation process they experienced compared to 37% of Salesforce users reporting being extremely satisfied.

## Implementation challenges

As sales and marketing teams implement their CRM, data migration is the most commonly reported struggle they face according to 45% of those surveyed. The cost of implementation, training, and adoption, and the time it took to implement all rank high on the list as well.

### What were the top challenges encountered during the implementation of your current CRM tool?



## 1.1 Implementation Costs

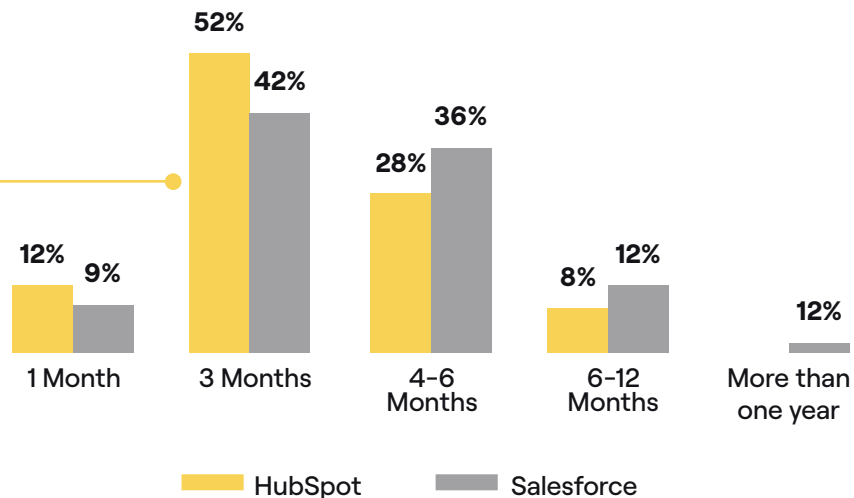
# Time it takes to implement.

Effectively integrating a new tool into your sales and marketing processes takes time and most organizations can't afford a long, drawn-out implementation process. Overall, 43% of sales and marketing professionals surveyed reported an implementation process that took four months or longer, but when comparing the timelines of those who implemented HubSpot to those who implemented Salesforce, we see variation.



Our research indicates that **HubSpot takes less time to implement than Salesforce**. The majority of HubSpot users report spending 3 months or less implementing their CRM solution. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of HubSpot users report that it took 3 months or less to implement their current CRM solution compared to just 51% of Salesforce users.

### Approximately how many months did it take to implement your current CRM tool?



Your implementation process should include the following steps to ensure an effective implementation that empowers users to hit the ground running:

1. Map out the structure of your current CRM
2. Translate your existing data to work within your new tool
3. Migrate your fields
4. Implement and automate operational workflows
5. Import your data
6. Test end-user acceptance
7. Go live with a Beta group first
8. Get sign-off from the Beta group and go live
9. Training and launch support
10. Ongoing refinement and optimization



## 1.2 Implementation Costs

# Cost of resources dedicated to implementation.

How many internal employees do organizations use to implement their CRM? What do costs associated with external service providers look like? When it comes to internal and external resources needed to implement your software, not all CRMs are created equal.

Implementation costs are sometimes referred to as hidden costs, but this research helps to make those costs transparent to you. It is critical to include implementation costs in your budget so that you have the proper funding to complete your CRM implementation on your desired schedule.



**Implementing HubSpot requires fewer internal resources.** A 62% majority of HubSpot users report that 3 or fewer internal employees were dedicated to implementing their CRM, compared to 52% of Salesforce users.

## HubSpot users report being more satisfied with the external vendors they worked with to implement their solution.

According to our research, the cost of external vendors/resources that were required to implement HubSpot and Salesforce are similar, but we found that **HubSpot users report greater satisfaction with the vendors that they used during implementation.** Nearly half (47%) of HubSpot users report being extremely satisfied with the service providers or contractors they worked with to implement their CRM solution, compared to just one-third (32%) of Salesforce users.

### Avoid choosing the wrong vendor. Ask yourself the following questions when considering who to work with:

- Does your company have the right CRM tools to use to implement?
- What reviews does that vendor have?
- How long has the vendor been in practice?
- How does the pricing work for the vendor and what is included?
- Is the vendor flexible enough to customize what the customer needs?
- Will your company outgrow the vendor?

## 2.0 Software Costs

# How much are companies spending on CRM software and adjacent technology?

Overall, about two-thirds (65%) of those surveyed are spending between \$2,000 and \$10,000 monthly on CRM and integrated sales, marketing, and service software. These costs were reportedly similar for HubSpot users and Salesforce users alike.

### Approximately how much does your organization spend on CRM and integrated sales, marketing, and service software per month?

	HubSpot	Salesforce
Less than \$2,000/month (\$24K/year)	14%	10%
\$2,001 - \$5,000/month (\$24K - \$60K/year)	27%	31%
\$5,001 - \$10,000/month (\$60K - \$120K/year)	35%	38%
\$10,001 - \$20,000/month (\$120K - \$240K/year)	21%	18%
\$20,001 - \$30,000/month (\$200K - \$360K/year)	2%	3%
More than \$30,000/month (\$360k/year)	1%	0%

#### Common pricing structures include...

- **Renewal fees:** These will usually be the same as your initial software cost and occur once per year.
- **Additional licenses/users:** Unless negotiated as part of the initial contract, expect to pay for additional users.



While monthly software costs that organizations spend on CRM and integrated sales, marketing, and service software are similar according to both HubSpot and Salesforce users, **HubSpot users are more likely to feel that the costs associated with their sales and marketing technology are worth it.** 50% of HubSpot users strongly agree that the overall cost of their CRM and integrated sales/marketing technology is worth the price they pay compared to 41% of Salesforce users.

### 3.0 Management and Support Costs

# Ongoing cost of internal resources to support CRM solutions.

Overall, the vast majority (98%) of those surveyed have at least one paid employee working on the support of their CRM and associated technology as a core part of their job.

Common support tasks include training staff on using the CRM, data cleansing, creating documentation, integrating other software, fixing bugs, customization, and more. Factors such as the number of users of your CRM, the complexity of your martech stack, and the complexity of your marketing/sales process will influence your management and support costs.



#### Companies with HubSpot require fewer internal resources to manage their solution.

63% of HubSpot users report that 3 or fewer people support their CRM and sales/marketing tools as a core part of their job. Nearly half (45%) of Salesforce users report that 4 or more people at their organization support their CRM and sales/Martech stack as a core part of their job.

## How many internal employees support your CRM and sales/marketing tools as a core part of their job?





### 3.1 Management and Support Costs

## Cost of external resources

The support costs that organizations spend on service providers or contractors to support their CRM and sales/marketing tools are reportedly similar regardless of which CRM tool is used.

**Approximately how much does your organization spend monthly on service providers or contractors to support your CRM and sales/marketing tools?**

	HubSpot	Salesforce
None - we use only in-house resources	5%	9%
Less than \$5,000/month (\$60K/year)	13%	16%
\$5,001 - \$7,500/month (\$60K - \$90K/year)	38%	31%
\$7,501 - \$10,000/month (\$90K - \$120K/year)	38%	37%
More than \$10,000/month (\$120K/year)	6%	7%



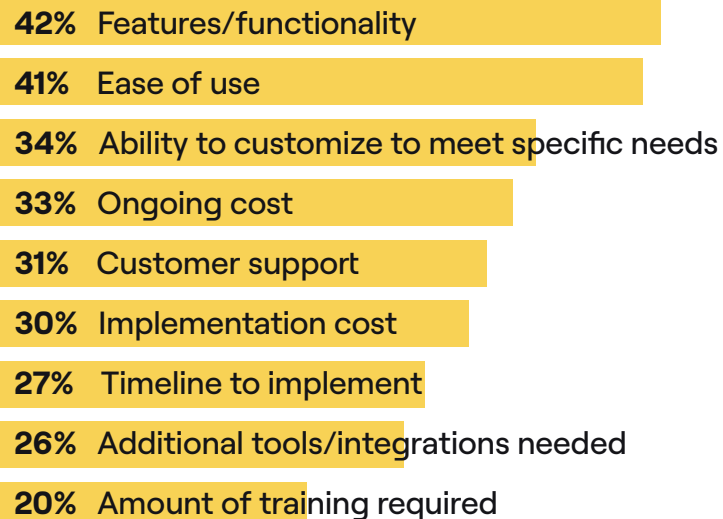
## 4.0 Ability to Use Your Technology

# Features and customization

The extent of the use of a CRM solution is a critical consideration when it comes to the overall cost of ownership. When evaluating potential new technology, companies not only need to ensure that the features and functionality align with their specific needs, but also that these tools will be adopted by end-users.

When evaluating new solutions, sales and marketing professionals report that their top priorities will be features and functionality, ease of use, and ability to customize. (Nearly as important are ongoing costs, customer support, and implementation costs).

### What are (or would be) top priorities when evaluating a potential new CRM solution?



## 4.1 Ability to Use Your Technology

# Ease of use and adoption

According to over half (54%) of those surveyed, ease of use is the most important factor to consider when evaluating the effectiveness of their current CRM. Technology that is easy, or even enjoyable, to use enhances the processes of onboarding, adoption, and training.

But 40% of those surveyed who had insight into the implementation of their current CRM tool reported that adoption/training was a top challenge encountered during the process.



**Salesforce users are more likely to report that low user adoption is a driving factor behind their decision to add, remove, or replace components of their tech stack next year.** (24% of Salesforce users reported this vs 17% of HubSpot users).

For **40%** of those surveyed, adoption was a top challenge of implementation.

There are a variety of ways to increase user adoption:

- **Select a CRM advocate.** Find one or multiple people in your organization to advocate for your CRM regularly. Look for previous users, power users, or those with success stories. Your advocates can create guidelines, send tips on using the tool, facilitate work groups, and more.
- **Invest in training employees.** Show that you want employees to succeed by setting aside time to train your employees. Make sure your administrator and CRM advocate can answer user questions thoroughly and promptly.
- **Incentivize adoption.** Reward use with prizes like gift cards, time off, etc. Make it fun and show your staff how important it is to use all the CRM features that are available to them.

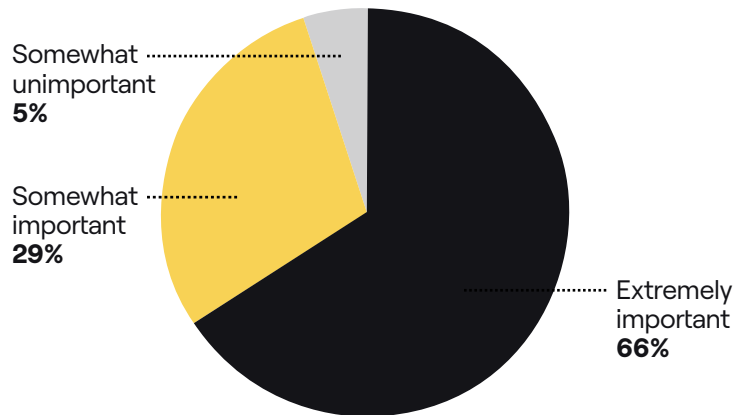


## 4.2 Ability to Use Your Technology

# Accurate and usable data across teams

95% of those surveyed say that having access to a comprehensive view of prospect and customer data across teams is important, but only 39% report that it is extremely easy to get a comprehensive view of prospect and customer data using their current CRM and sales/marketing tech stack.

**Rate the importance of having access to a comprehensive view of prospect and customer data across teams.**



**HubSpot users are more likely to trust the accuracy of the data coming from their CRM, sales, and marketing technology.** 55% of HubSpot users say that they have full trust in their data while only 44% of Salesforce users can say the same.

Only **39%** of sales and marketing professionals feel that their current tech stack makes it extremely easy to get a full view of customer data.



**HubSpot users find it easier to get a full view of data.** 42% of HubSpot users say it is extremely easy to get a comprehensive view of prospect and customer data using their current CRM, sales, and marketing tech stack, compared to 35% of Salesforce users.

## 5.0 Cost and Benefit Analysis

# Summary of Findings

The cost of a CRM goes well beyond the monthly or annual software costs. It is important to consider what goes in to the implementation, management, and utilization of the tool and adjacent technology. Not only are organizations that use HubSpot spending considerably less on implementing their tool, they are also dedicating fewer costly resources to the management of it and getting more useful data from it. Below is a quick roundup of what we discovered in this research.



### Implementation

Implementation cost considerations include how long it takes to implement as well as dedicated resources. HubSpot not only takes less time to implement but also requires less internal resources to carry out implementation than Salesforce. The cost of external vendors used to implement was similar between the two.



### Management & Support

HubSpot typically requires fewer internal employees to manage than Salesforce. While HubSpot and Salesforce users report similar costs associated with external vendors used to manage their CRM, HubSpot users are more satisfied with those they work with.



### Software

While pricing structures vary, HubSpot and Salesforce users report similar spend on their CRM and associated technology. Interestingly, HubSpot users feel more strongly than Salesforce users that these software costs are worth the price they pay.



### Utilization

The overwhelming majority of sales and marketing professionals surveyed agree that having access to a comprehensive view of prospect and customer data across teams is important. HubSpot users find it easier to gain a full view of customer data and they are more likely to trust the data that comes from their CRM.

## 5.1 Cost and Benefit Analysis

# Next steps

Considering that your CRM software is one of the most important tools in your martech stack, using this cost and benefits analysis a key to maximizing your company's growth potential.

[Use this tool](#) to plan your next steps and to inform your leadership team on why you are making a specific recommendation.

**95%** of those surveyed agree that they would be more likely to switch to a new CRM if they could see ROI within the first year.



**HubSpot users are significantly more likely than Salesforce users to describe their CRM as highly effective.** 57% of HubSpot users find their CRM to be extremely effective vs 36% of Salesforce users.



# Participants and Methodology

**N = 332 Sales and Marketing Professionals**

## **CRM Tool**

HubSpot	52%
Salesforce	48%

## **Primary Role**

CEO / Partner / Executive	31%
VP / Director	32%
Manager	35%
Individual Contributor / Non-Management Professional	2%

## **Number of Employees**

101 - 500 employees	53%
501 - 1000 employees	47%

## Methodology

With a custom online questionnaire, we surveyed 332 sales and marketing professionals who represent companies with 100 - 1000 employees across a variety of roles and industries. The consumers self-identified as using either HubSpot or Salesforce as their Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution. The survey was fielded during the month of December 2022.



# About the Research Partners



Aptitude 8 helps companies Implement, Integrate, and Optimize the HubSpot platform. As HubSpot has moved from a tool to a platform, businesses have found themselves needing a true consulting partner to help them build solutions on HubSpot. With the largest technical consulting team of any HubSpot partner, Aptitude 8 helps companies like Uber Freight, SXSW, Formstack, and even HubSpot themselves deliver the buying experiences their customers demand. Interested in making adjustments to your tech stack? [Discuss your CRM options with Aptitude 8 here.](#)



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