# Rest Your Weary Fingers
## Voice Activation Is Coming to A CRM Near You

**A future once at our fingertips now rests at the tips of our tongues.**

*By John Oechsle*

Voice activated technology doesn't just afford us fun tools for our private lives – this technology is playing an increasingly pivotal role in the professional world, too. And that extends to the small and midsized nonprofit space. Voice activation is now helping small and midsized organizations use customer relationship management (CRM) software with more speed and efficiency. This feature is becoming a game changer in a world where the tech-savviest players win.

Here's how your organization can, and should, use voice activation for CRM to its advantage.

## Alexa, help save me time

Voice-activated CRMs have become significant time-saving tools for professionals across the board. They help users interact with data in more targeted ways, meaning they can bypass irrelevant information and skip directly to the data they're seeking. A time-crunched worker can simply say: "Alexa, open Act! and retrieve John Smith's e-mail" rather than opening a CRM program on a computer and manually retrieving the information.

Speech-to-text software can be a real timesaver for data entry, too. Rather than the costly and monotonous task of manually inputting data, users can rely on software to submit information via speech. This saves hours. The average worker types 50-70 words per minute. Meanwhile, speech recognition programs can accommodate 120-140 words per minute with near-perfect accuracy. And if you're serious about saving time, forget texting. A Stanford study (hci.stanford.edu/research/speech) found speech recognition to be three times faster than texting.

## Alexa, help me adapt

Smaller organizations are often better positioned to test and integrate new technologies on the fly than enterprise-level companies that come with much longer approval, research, and implementation processes. Early-stage voice-activated CRMs consist of a basic integration with well-established

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virtual assistants such as Amazon Echo, Google Home, and Apple HomePod. Users can ease into this advancing technology by mastering the basic skills and continuing to learn as voice activation becomes more sophisticated.

As organizations begin relying more heavily on voice activation, they'll find there's no longer a need to bring up a full-blown CRM. Instead, they'll rely on spoken words to complete a task.

## Alexa, what's next?

The greatest advantages of voice-activated CRM technology are still to come. Base-level interaction tools will continue to pop up, and this technology is expected to become much more sophisticated within the next year-and-a-half.

It all translates into tremendous value for small and midsized organizations. Taking advantage of technological advances as they become available allows smaller organizations to adapt faster within their CRM plans, benefit from huge productivity gains, and experiment with less risk.

Soon, CRM users will be able to interact with e-mail, set up activities, and even receive recommendations on the next best donor interaction to initiate. They'll accomplish all this by simply verbalizing a sentence or two.

Keyboards aren't going anywhere . . . yet. But CRM voice activation is coming fast. Finding ways to have your organization take advantage of this new technology to drive better, more meaningful customer interactions can have a real impact on your organizational growth. So, drink a nice cup of tea with honey because you may need those pipes at the office tomorrow.

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