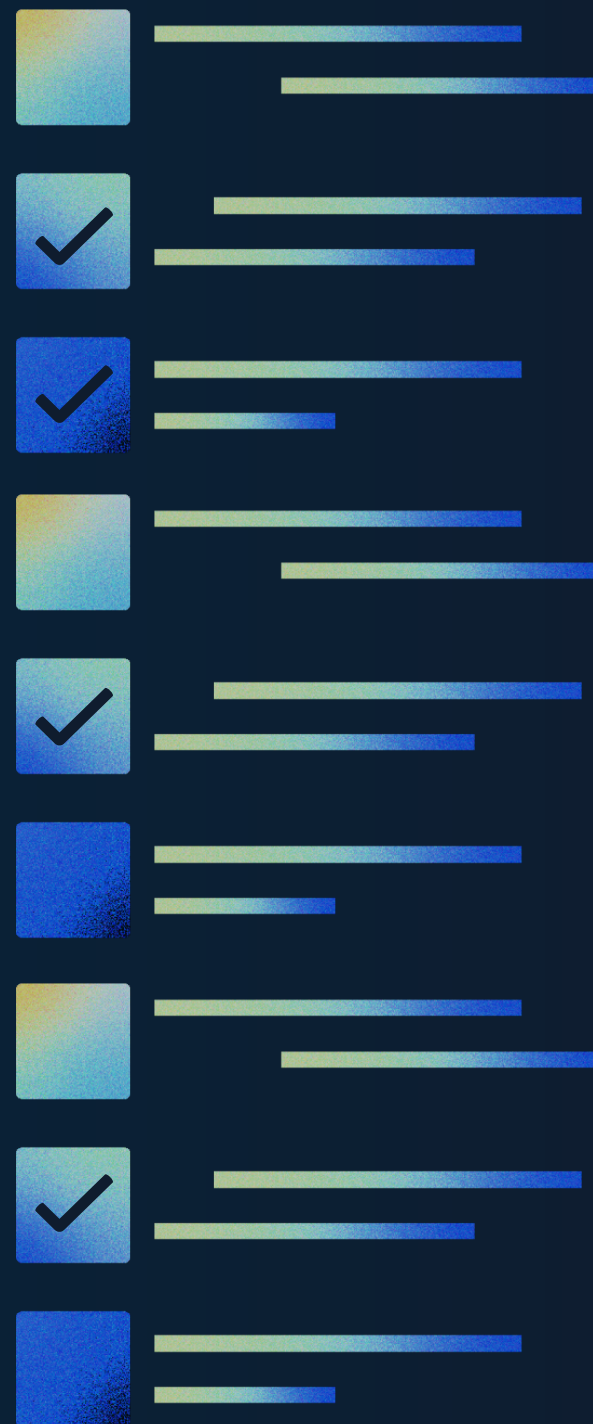




AN EVALUATION TOOL FROM AFFINITY

# The investment banker's guide to evaluating customer relationship management platforms

How to choose a CRM purpose-built  
for closing more mandates



“ Today’s data is not just quantitative—it’s information about people.”



# The evolution of the investment banking CRM

In a slower, smaller investment banking marketplace, traditional CRM platforms and [spreadsheets were once enough](#) for tracking, managing, and closing mandates. Now, business networks number in the tens of thousands, industry news is accessible 24/7, stock markets are global and operate around the clock, and company hiring trends are as carefully tracked as cashflow. This data is not just quantitative—it’s information about people, and it has to be evaluated, not just tabulated.

Manually managing huge volumes of information also introduces other complications: data is logged inconsistently, sometimes incorrectly, and, most often, in disparate locations inaccessible to other team members. When data is unavailable or becomes unreliable, deal teams are less likely to use manual CRM tools. No one wants to spend time on a system that makes their work more difficult, so the data becomes even less useful.

Tech-forward firms are meeting this challenge by adopting a new generation of CRM platforms that build on the elements of spreadsheets and CRMs that made the previous generation so successful and fill in gaps where they were not.

## Why change your CRM if what you've got is working well enough?

The ideal CRM grows more powerful with use: the more that people utilize the platform, the more valuable it becomes, but the inverse is also true. A lack of adoption diminishes the quality of the data, fewer and fewer users trust it, and the project is abandoned; this is a failure of the specific technology, not technology in general. The fact is that digital technology is a competitive differentiator for investment banking firms.

Because existing tools have been the norm for so long—and firms continue to successfully close deals—many have never explored newer, superior solutions to add to their tech stack.

Whether you're currently using Microsoft Excel, Salesforce, or something in between, this guide is designed to help you choose a more appropriate alternative—a purpose-built investment banking CRM solution.

### Read on to understand the benefits that a CRM offers investment banks and learn:




- How to efficiently evaluate a CRM
- Which CRM platforms are available in the investment banking market
- What features leading investment banking firms look for in a CRM
- How to make the CRM deployment process easy, get your workgroup to speed quickly, and encourage teamwide adoption

**See page 15 for a full evaluation checklist →**



# Best investment banking CRM solutions on the market today

So you can focus on building relationships and making deals, we've put together an at-a-glance comparison chart to review the features and capabilities of five of the top CRMs for investment banking.

	MADEMARKET		 DealCloud <small>An Intapp Company</small>		
Relationship intelligence			○		●
Automated data capture					●
Data enrichment		○	○	○	●
Centralized, single source of truth for your data	○	○	○	○	●
Simple, efficient deployment				○	●
Intuitive user interface				○	●
Collaboration and communication tools	○	○	○	○	●
Built-in business intelligence		○	○		●
Pipeline management	○	○	○	○	●
Open API		○	○	○	●
Stringent security protocol certifications		○	○	○	●
Additional, non-CRM products		○	○	○	
Enterprise-wide solution		○	○		●
Mobile app		○	○	○	●



“Optimize your current workflows rather than relearning how to do your job with new technology”

# Key CRM features & capabilities investment bankers need

With so many CRM solutions on the market with such a wide array of capabilities, it can be difficult to identify which features will have the most direct impact on your business. The following features map directly to the way investment banking teams work:

- Relationship intelligence
- Automated data capture
- Data enrichment
- Centralized, single source of truth
- Simple and efficient deployment
- Intuitive user interface
- Streamlined collaboration and communication tools
- Built-in business intelligence
- Pipeline management
- Open API and software integrations
- Security and privacy controls

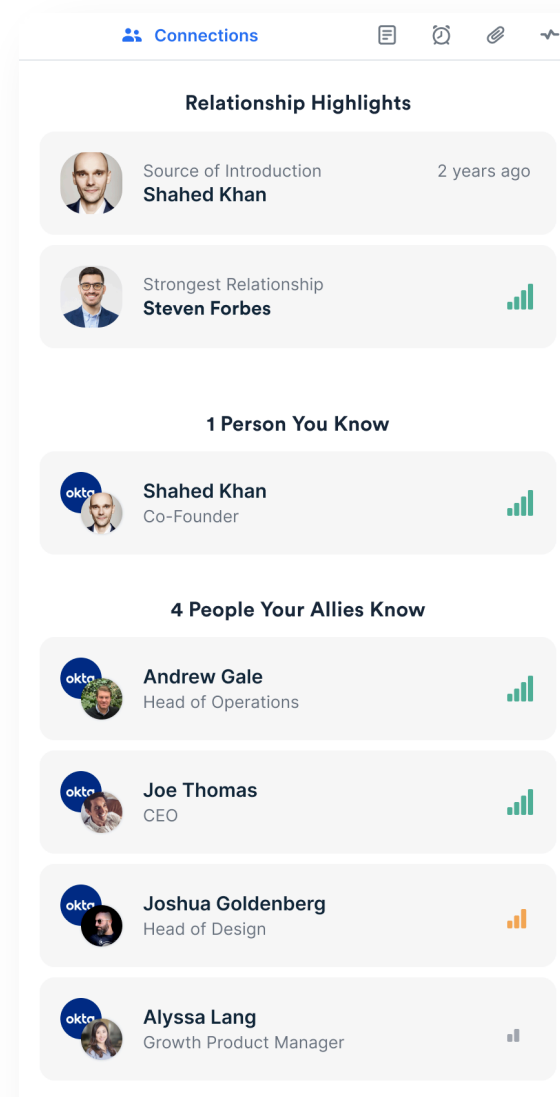


## Relationship intelligence

CRM platforms equipped with relationship intelligence ingest your team's contact and mandate information and turn it into insights that inform successful business decisions. The team's knowledge is curated and enriched before it's presented, surfacing information on how well your teammates know their contacts and providing access to expanded datasets through external data partners.

**Relationship intelligence is the insight into your team's collective professional network, business relationships, and client interactions that help you find, manage, and close mandates.**

The “intelligence” in the new era of intelligent CRM platforms makes firms even better at their area of expertise. With this information at hand, teams can minimize cold calls to unlikely deals and instead focus business development efforts on opportunities with warmer introduction paths that are more likely to close.



## Syncing

Emails ✓

Phone numbers ✓

Files

Calendars

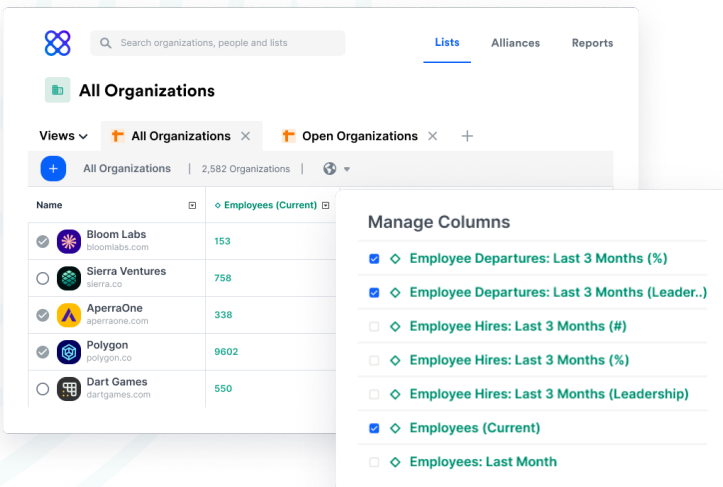
## Automated data capture

Your team's "data exhaust"—contact and activity information stored in emails, calendar invites, and meetings that is often overlooked and discarded—is an invaluable source of information and insights that directly impacts your ability to manage your business relationships.

Automatically capturing this information ensures each and every contact is documented in your CRM while assuring the accuracy of that data. When your team trusts the data in their CRM, they're more likely to use it, and they remain focused on building relationships and closing opportunities rather than manually entering data.

## Data enrichment

Your team can make better-informed decisions and ask more pertinent questions by enriching your own data with external datasets. Intelligent CRMs provide both proprietary datasets and partner with industry-leading data vendors to help reduce the cost of third-party data providers and the time your team spends on research.

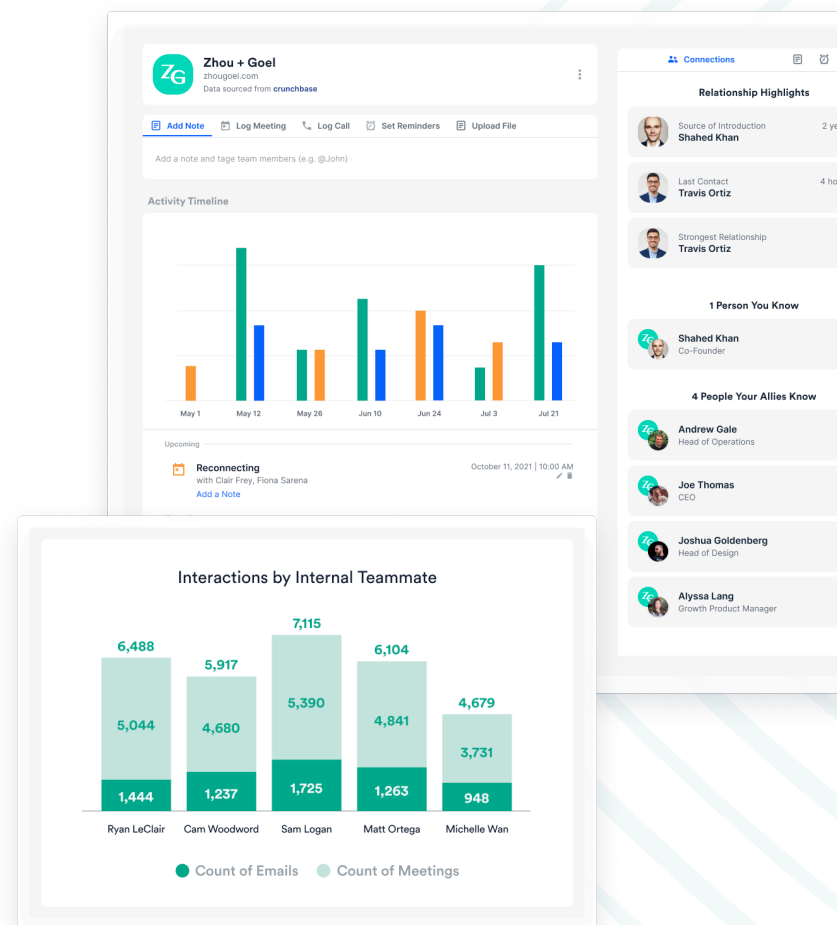


## Centralized, single source of truth

Centralizing contact and pipeline data in a single source of truth eliminates data silos and enables workgroup-wide information sharing to improve collaboration and complementary work. Efficiently view mandate statuses, analyze team performance, and gain insights into business operations all in one platform to make improvements to the business development process.

## Simple and efficient deployment

Platform deployment should be frictionless. While some legacy CRM solutions can take months to properly launch and integrate into your business, intelligent CRM platforms decrease your time to value by being up and running quickly—sometimes in just a few days.





“ If no one uses the new platform, then its power—and your investment in it —goes to waste.”



## Intuitive user interface

A new set of tools can be intimidating and slow your team down until you're over the learning curve. But facilitating teamwide adoption is imperative: if no one uses the new platform, then its power—and your investment in it—goes to waste. Choose a CRM that is user-friendly, accessible, and doesn't require weeks (or months) of training to use.

## Streamlined collaboration and communication tools

Leading-edge CRM platforms provide detailed communication records and activity timelines that depict the entire history of your team's relationship to each contact in your network in easy-to-read visualizations. Shared note fields, automated reminders, and easily searchable, comprehensive communication records all make it straightforward to surface and act on important information instantly.

## Built-in business intelligence

Built-in business intelligence allows you to compile your contact and mandate data into bespoke client reports, internal status reports, and analytics dashboards. With this capability, raw data turns into insights that showcase the sales and marketing narrative you tell your prospects—and you can track, manage, and review KPIs to improve your project pipeline by monitoring your team's performance goals.

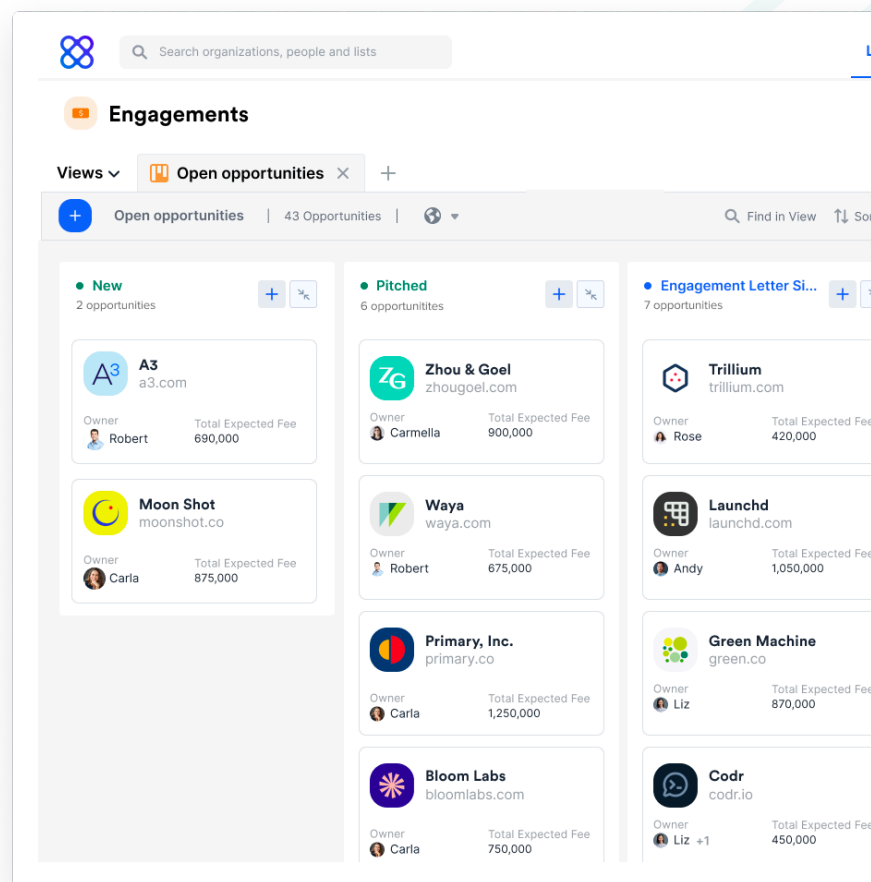
## Pipeline management

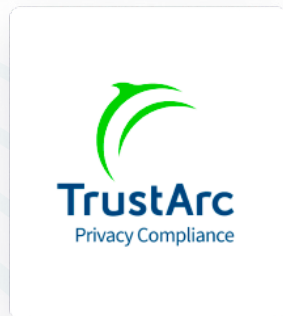
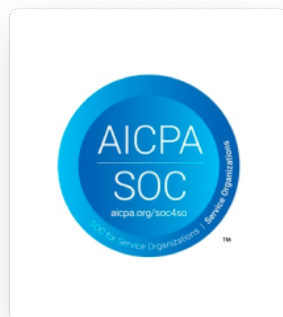
An investment banking CRM should enable you to visualize your most complex opportunity pipelines to build repeatable mandate execution processes. The ability to graphically depict and manage your mandate pipeline alongside your contacts lets team members see every opportunity in each stage of the mandate lifecycle and drill down into related contacts to surface new opportunities.

## Open API and software integrations

Your CRM platform should be the hub of your tech stack and connect to anything from your email provider to your file management tools. Connecting complementary systems smooths the transfer and sharing of information and streamlines how you work.

This also extends to additional applications like a Chrome extension for use with social media platforms or an Outlook Add-In so your CRM data (and your relationship intelligence) is accessible wherever you're communicating with your contacts.





## Security and privacy controls

You manage high volumes of sensitive, valuable contact information alongside proprietary financial data. To protect that data, leading CRM platforms comply with the highest-level security protocols available—including SOC2 Type II and CCPA—in order to keep your data safe, while also remaining in harmony with GDPR.

They also provide custom privacy settings to filter your “data exhaust” and prevent the most sensitive details from being captured. And easy-to-use, granular privacy controls limit who can view the details of a meeting or access a file.



# Leading investment banking CRM software

## DealCloud by Intapp

Intapp positions its DealCloud platform as “not just a CRM,” but as “all-inclusive financial services software” that spans marketing, pipeline management, fundraising, and business development. This wide range of functionality makes the platform customizable and scalable, but this customization can be time-consuming and expensive.

While Intapp has been moving customers to the cloud, its solution started as an on-premise offering, which may prove limiting compared to cloud-native platforms, including faster development process and automation, ease of management, reduced costs, greater scalability, and improved reliability. If you’re looking for a platform that is more than a CRM, and you’re willing to spend the time and money to hire development support and dedicate team members to keeping your data well-maintained, DealCloud can be a powerful tool.

## MadeMarket

MadeMarket was founded by former finance professionals; it is a lightweight CRM designed with financial professionals in mind, but its feature set for investment banking teams is fairly insubstantial.

MadeMarket’s most popular features include workflow management and customization options for business development and transaction execution, secure workspaces for all transactions, and a milestone chart for setting and visualizing sales goals.

Much like other longstanding CRMs, adding, updating, and managing contacts must be handled manually. Firms using MadeMarket are dependent on external reporting tools and the platform lacks common security and compliance requirements, such as GDPR and ISO certifications.



## Salesforce

Salesforce is the juggernaut of the transactional sales CRM space and has direct integrations or add-ons for any technology in the investment banking tech stack. With the right time and resources, limitless customization is a powerful asset.

Because of this complexity though, firms that depend on Salesforce often have internal operations members, costly outside consultants, or entire teams dedicated to Salesforce maintenance and training.

Salesforce was designed for traditional, linear sales processes, and onboarding is a long, complex process. The platform also lacks a key feature for investment banking firms: relationship intelligence. The Salesforce product ecosystem is a boon to large sales organizations, but a lack of relationship insights separates it from more purpose-built CRM solutions for investment banks.

## HubSpot

If Salesforce is known as the leader of traditional sales CRM platforms, HubSpot is similarly well-known for its website hosting and marketing automation solutions. HubSpot's CRM works seamlessly with its suite of marketing solutions to create alignment between the workflows of deal teams, customer success teams, and marketing teams.

While its sales and customer success features are powerful independently, HubSpot CRM is most effective as an ecosystem for client and customer marketing. Investment banking teams that need to track, understand, and leverage key relationships over time will find a plethora of features unrelated to their workflows.

HubSpot offers its basic CRM for free, which can be a good place to start for new firms or small teams, but investment banking teams interested in scaling their mandate pipeline and network will quickly find limitations in HubSpot's inbound marketing and sales-focused approach to deal management.



## Affinity

Affinity is a relationship intelligence CRM purpose-built for investment banks. With real-time automated data capture, data enrichment, and AI-driven relationship intelligence, it's designed to work the way investment bankers do: with long-term, relationship-driven dealmaking and business development optimization at the forefront.

**Here are a few key reasons leading investment banking firms choose Affinity:**

- AI-driven relationship scoring that leads to warmer introductions by measuring the volume and type of connections between your team and your contacts.
- Data captured automatically from your email and calendar ensures your records are comprehensive, accurate, and accessible. It also frees your team from the drudgery of manual data entry, giving them more time to handle mandate-related work.
- Enriched datasets provided by Affinity's proprietary algorithms—as well as leading investment data providers including Pitchbook and Crunchbase—help you make more informed decisions.
- Automatic custom reminders and comprehensive activity records mean you never lose track of a connection in your network.
- Easy-to-share, in-depth reporting and analytics showcase the sales and marketing narrative you tell your prospects.
- An agile, uncomplicated, but sophisticated platform is quick to implement, easy to use, and fosters widespread adoption.
- Built-in compliance with the highest-level data security protocols, including SOC2 Type II, GDPR, and CCPA, provides the reassurance you and your clients want.



**Find out how Affinity can do all that and more for your investment banking team.**

[Learn More →](#)



# CRM evaluation checklist



## Relationship intelligence

Gain insights into your team's collective business connections and client interactions that help you find, manage, and close more mandates.



## Automated data capture

Record your "data exhaust" and free your team from the drudgery of manual data entry.



## Data enrichment

Enrich your CRM with proprietary first-party and external partner datasets and make more informed decisions about your prospective deals.



## Centralized, single source of truth for your data

Unify your contact and mandate data to make it easily shareable and readily accessible.



## Simple, efficient deployment

Launch your CRM rapidly—store, access, and act on your data today, not months from now.



## Intuitive user interface

Simplify your workflows with a user interface that's quick to learn.



## Collaboration and communication tools

Break down data silos with efficient knowledge-sharing to do complementary—rather than overlapping—work.



## Built-in business intelligence

Use native analytics and reporting dashboards to visualize, evaluate, and improve your business development processes.



## Pipeline management

Track, organize, and tailor your mandate pipeline management to align with how you prefer to work.



## Open API

Customize your software experience by integrating your most-used tools with your CRM platform.



## Stringent security protocol certifications

Protect your client and mandate data on a platform that meets certification against stringent global standards such as GDPR and SOC 2 Type II.



## Additional, non-CRM products

Expand your tech stack with a larger software suite and connect cross-functionally with customer success, marketing, or traditional sales teams.



## Enterprise-wide solution

Scale your business with a CRM that grows along with you.



## Mobile app

Access your data anywhere with a CRM mobile application so you never miss out on an important opportunity.







# Choose a CRM platform purpose-built for investment bankers

Contact us at [info@affinity.co](mailto:info@affinity.co)