

Role of Customer Engagement in the Aged Care Industry



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All About the Future and Present of Australian Aged Care Industry

The Australian aged care landscape is undergoing significant changes. All quarters of aged care institutions, whether they are small or large service providers, profit or non-profit organisations are experiencing changes, be it in ways they offer care or the way they conclude their administrative tasks. At the core of these changes lie different reasons such as exponential increase in ageing population, changing requirements of seniors and their expectations with the industry.

The Commonwealth government is gradually shifting to consumer directed care. In this model, elderly will be offered with flexibilities and easy accessibility when it comes to choosing care packages. The current framework encourages the aged care institutions to become customer focused. It can be easily said that these changes are driving innovation, improving level of care offered and reducing costs.



A survey by STARIN states that Australia will need 76,000 residential aged care facilities which is roughly more than 100 per month.

Proliferation of technology in medical and healthcare sector has improved life expectancy of people to a large level. Increasing number of baby boomers will soon outpace the number of skilled carers, making the situation worse for the aged care industry. These statistics indicate that aged care institutes must devise methods to offer enhanced experiences to the aged, while surviving unique challenges and tight economic situations.



The frequent and rapid changes in technology has brought a wave of relief for the aged care industry. The technological advancements are proving beneficial in several ways; enabling seniors lead a healthy life and helping carers to monitor and offer enhanced and timely care.



CRM

Less paperwork and better management of documents with software solutions.

Improved administration along with ease of accessibility of an individual information



Video Calling

Easy connectivity with friends/family members establishes an amicable atmosphere

Regular interactions between carers and seniors gives insights about elderly's preferences



Artificial Intelligence

Deep insights of the present behaviour and future requirements of the seniors

Customised care plans and strategies to suit the changing demands of the elderly



Virtual Reality

Goggles for entertaining and soothing seniors during treatment procedure

Create a virtual world where seniors can have delightful experiences as part of palliative care



Wearables

Monitor biometrics, movement, activity levels and current location of the seniors to ensure their health and safety

3D Sensors for determining falls and crashes in progress and trigger wearable airbags to avoid serious injuries

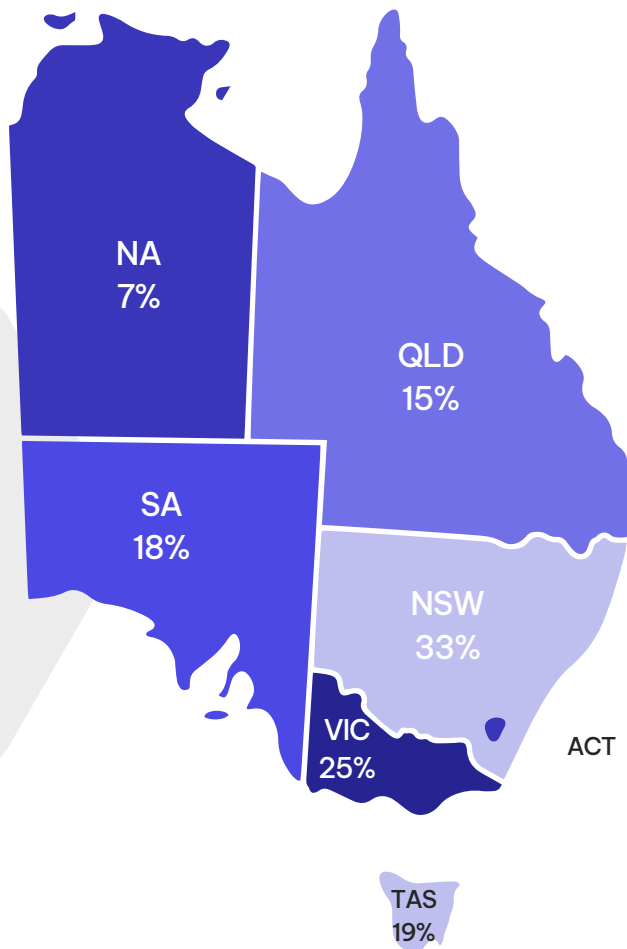


Augmented Reality

Educate seniors regarding the best care and treatment available for immediate assistance during emergencies

Generate alerts and notify carer or family members during emergencies or safety hazards

Demographic View of Seniors Settled All Over Australia



Industry Report

There has been a constant increase in the number of people inclined to receive care at the comfort of their own house. The Intergenerational Report released by Treasury in 2015, states that number of people crossing the mark of 65 years will increase exponentially between 2014-15 and 2054-55. These numbers again signal for increasing demand of aged care services and appropriate accommodation facilities.

A report by the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare, states that



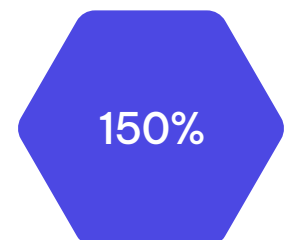
Australians were accessing residential care facilities in 2016-17.

The number is expected to increase to



By **2050**, states a report released by the Parliament of Australia

The number of Australians receiving aged care will increase by



Over the next 40 years

Challenges Faced by Aged Care Industry

The gradual changes certainly call for improved and timely aged care services. Changing government policies, lack of skilled staff and financial stability are some of the prominent challenges pertaining to the aged care sector. Let's dig deeper to understand these challenges:

Changing Government Policies

With elderly people looking for superior care services, government entities are constantly changing the functioning rules and norms of aged care organisations. For instance, to ensure that standard care is offered, government has made the auditing and regulatory rules strict. The latest reforms introduced in 2017 had four different levels in home care packages. As the name home care package suggests, it enables elderly people to have the choice and flexibility of receiving care at the comfort of their homes. The first level is for people with basic care needs and the fourth level is for those who require more attention and care.

To suit these changing policies, aged care organisations should aim at modifying recruiting or working strategies and invest in technologies that take them away from traditional and tedious working methods

Lack of Skilled Staff

A survey by McCrindle states that there were ten aged care workers per retired couple in 2010 which will reduce to only five workers per retired couple by 2050. The population of the aged is gradually multiplying and on the hinderside the number of carers leaving the industry is rising. Constantly increasing workload and stress, less time offered for delivering adequate care to the elderly, dissatisfaction from remuneration and fewer opportunities for career development are prominent reasons for skilled nurses to quit their jobs. The Commonwealth government aims at developing programmes and standardised training packages to assist people in taking jobs at the aged care sector. These strategies and reforms are making the aged care industry a lucrative career option and is improving the condition of the sector as well.



Evolving Demands of Baby Boomers

Born in the period from the end of World War II till around the mid-1960's, which was considered as a period of prosperity for developing countries like Australia, "Baby Boomers" constituted to be a major part of the population. The Australian population grew on average by 2.2% per year as compared to 0.9% population growth in the decades preceding the war. One of the greatest challenges the Australian government is facing right now is the increase in the ageing population and as a result, there are high rates of chronic ailments and an upsurge in responsibility on the health system.

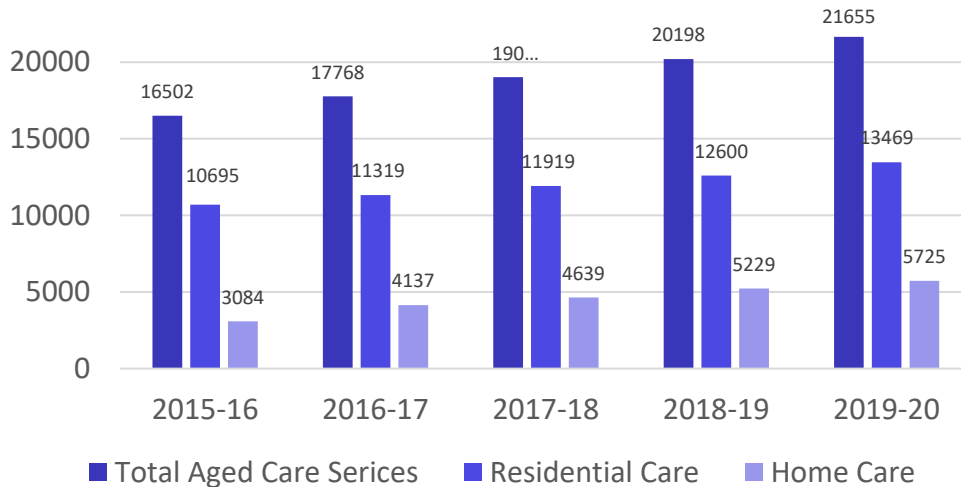
The Baby Boomers are a very interesting demographic. Unlike the generation that preceded them, they are breaking the stereotypes of aging as they start to enter aged care. They are independent and have defined a culture of attaining the right care needed for them and are adamant on receiving them. They are now ready to make the giant leap into retirement and have the alignment of finances to fund their retirement. Therefore, the measures that were taken by the aged care providers should be modified to accommodate the expectations of the new generation of baby boomers and offer the correct support to them.

Recent funding changes in 2017 aims at offering the people of Australia greater choice and control over the care they wish to receive as they get older

Financial Stability

The Australian government in 2018-19 budget announced that the number of home care packages offered will increase by 14,000 that is near to A\$1.6 billion over the period of four years. According to reports released by Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA), the amount allocated is not enough since 100,000 Australians are awaiting approval on home care packages. The cash crunch situation is somewhat acting as a hurdle when it comes to hiring skilled staff. Absence of adequate capital also stop organisations from investing in high end tools and technologies that might help carers deliver superior care quality. Previously, the funding was managed by equally the consumers and government. However, the funding scenario is now more consumer driven. Since now the financial aspect is in more control of the consumers themselves, they have more choices and flexibilities and can become the sole driver of their aged care decision. However, people are more inclined to aging at their homes and hence we can see there is a significant rise in the funds anticipated towards home care in the table mentioned below.

Budget dedicated for aged care over years:



How CRM will be Beneficial for Aged Care Industry

Initially, systems like spreadsheets, diaries, sticky notes and notepads were used for keeping record of the number of elderly people in an institution, managing their needs, preferences and more. The rise in the number of the elderly has made it difficult for carers to manage records manually. Here is when CRM (Customer Relationship Management) comes into the picture.

There are many perks of a properly implemented CRM solution - improved occupancy rates, proper execution of marketing campaigns, enhanced customer retention and efficient management of administrative activities are some of them.



Resource Management

With an intuitive CRM solution in place, the aged care institutions have the resources to keep track of the carers' working hours. Furthermore, the use of CRM allows the carers to enter and monitor the data against the service that is being provided to the elderly. The system can be used to see the availability of the carers and as a result, assigning tasks to them becomes easier.



Automation of Multiple Processes

Integration of biometric attendance system with CRM solution enables aged care institutions to automate administrative and human resource management activities. With proper segmentation of carer's attendance and services offered, aged care service providers can streamline the payroll process. Furthermore, customer history and other specific requirements of any senior can be entered in the CRM solution. Therefore, in case a new carer is assigned to an elderly, they can have a quick glance at the customer history and offer custom tailored services to the aged.



Advanced Reporting

The aged care service providers can keep a quick check on all the required information in a concise manner. The report prepared based on parameters such as services delivered, customer history, demographics, attendance and more enables key persons to have a quick look at the facts and make data driven decision whenever required. The reports prepared on the basis of new enrolments can be used for formulating strategies which drive business.



Customer Centric Approach

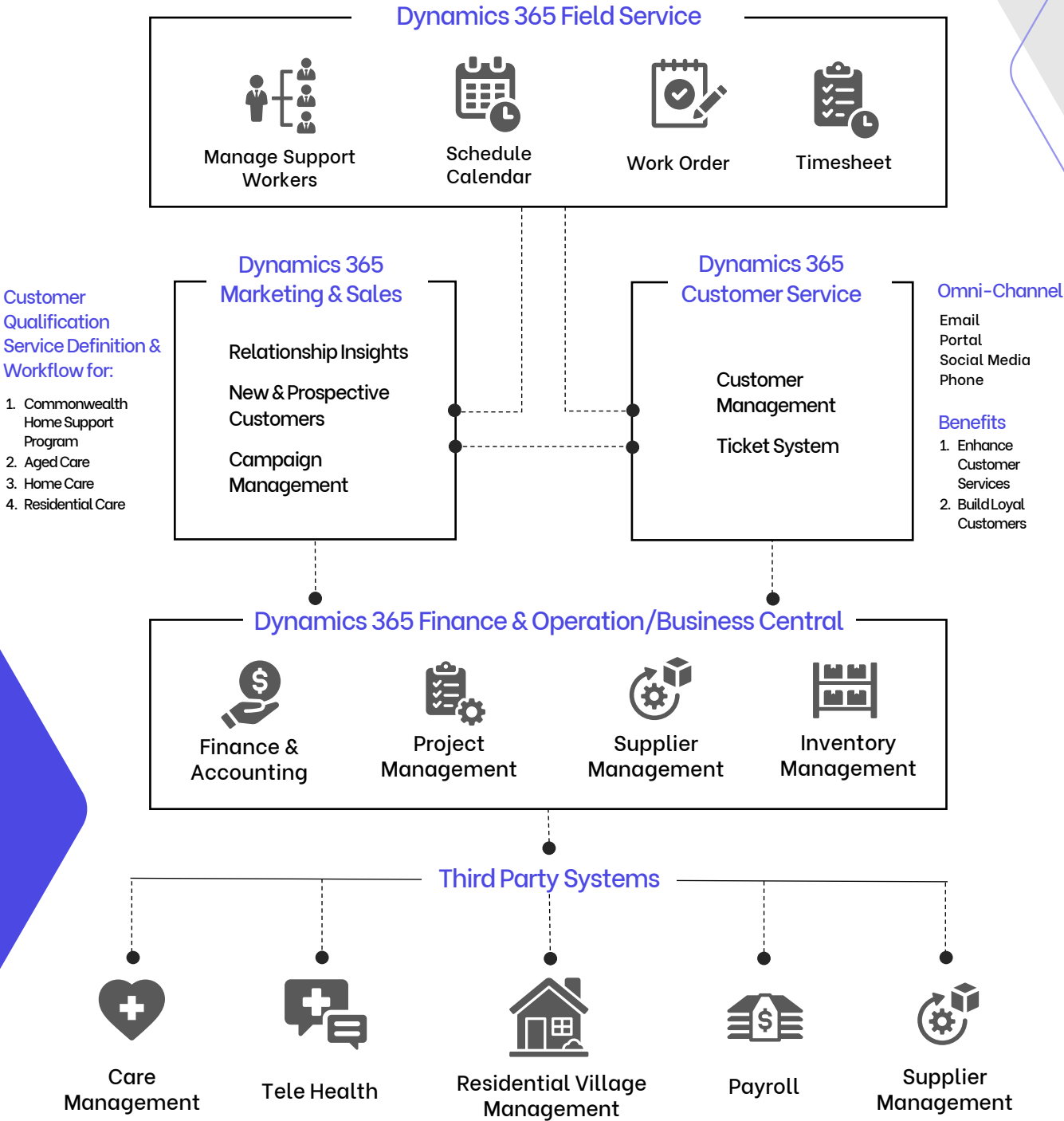
With frequent change in the market trends and complex scenarios of the industry, it is becoming difficult for the aged care institutions to predict future needs of the customers. CRM, a perfect source of market intelligence, enables the aged care service providers to study the response of customers and carers on various services. The same insights can be used to collate and identify services and facilities that are widely sought after and increase their revenue generation opportunities.



Deliver Enhanced Services

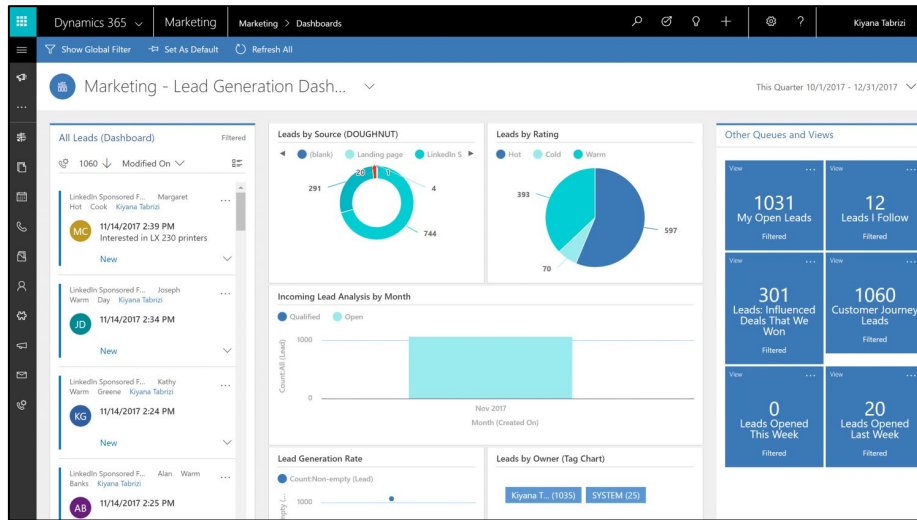
It is true that acquiring a new customer is a lot more difficult than retaining the existing ones. In an industry like aged care, the stakes of acquiring new customers are relatively high since there are many players in the market. Therefore, offering upgraded and effective services becomes vital for institutes to remain competitive in this sector. A powerful and customised CRM solution simplifies management of multiple workflows and supports carers to offer qualitative services. The CRM can be tailored to send notifications and alerts in case of any issue.

Use of Microsoft Dynamics 365 in Aged Care Industry



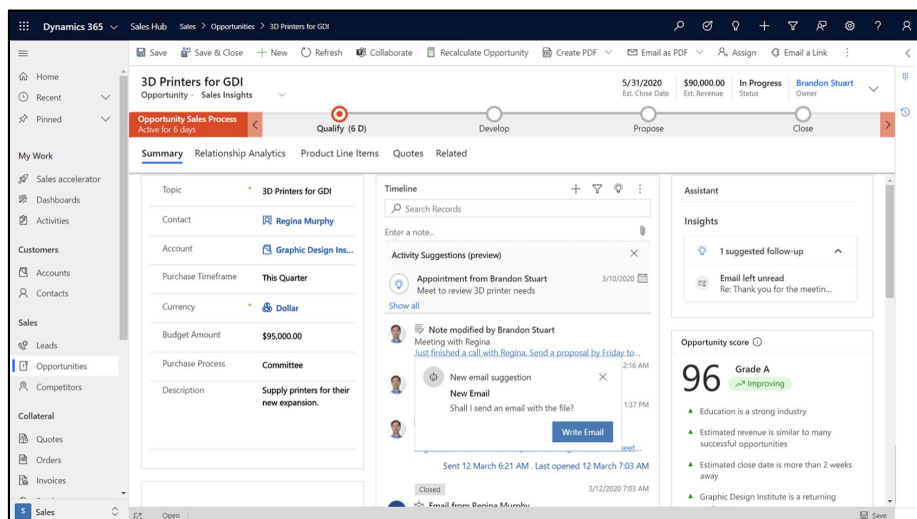
Marketing module of Microsoft Dynamics 365 enables marketing executives to

- Accuracy synchronise different email campaigns run on multiple channels and track ROI
- Prepare customisable templates that highlights the requirements of their target audiences
- Offer personalised experiences with targeted email campaigns and boost customer engagement



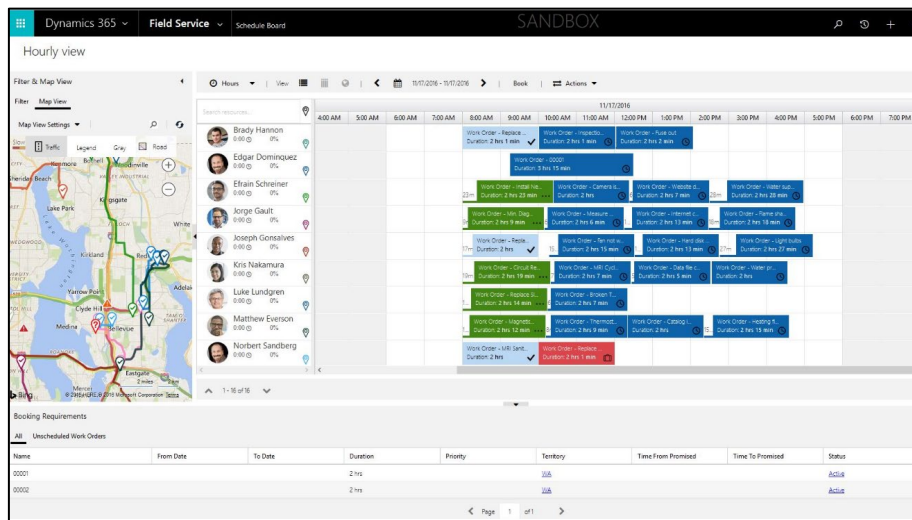
Sales module of Microsoft Dynamics 365 allows sales professionals to

- Have a close look at the sales performance from intuitive analytics dashboards
- Manage new and existing leads and formulate future strategies
- Access emails from the same dashboard and gain insights on all the conversations and customer records



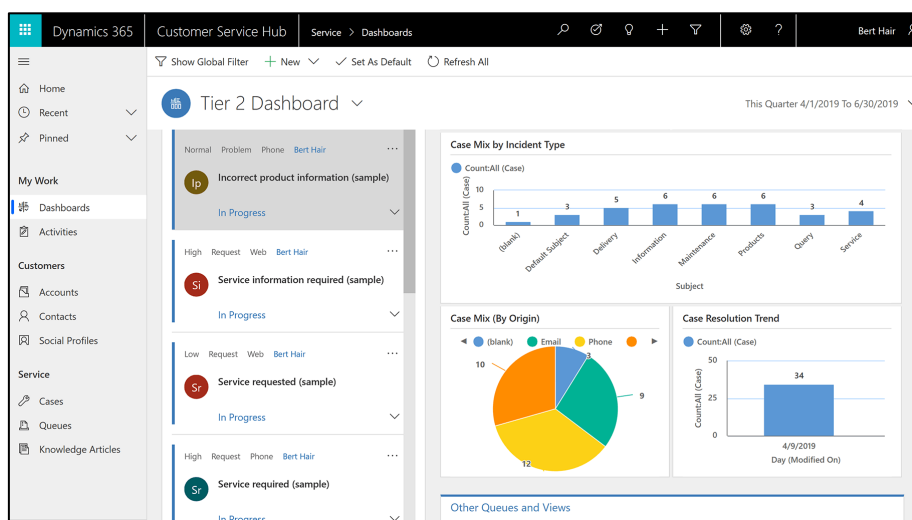
Field Service module of Microsoft Dynamics 365 aid service providers to

- Utilise resources according to their expertise and ensure standard quality services.
- Closely monitor carer's attendance with user-friendly rostering facility.
- Communicate care packages delivered over smartphones to their mobile workforce



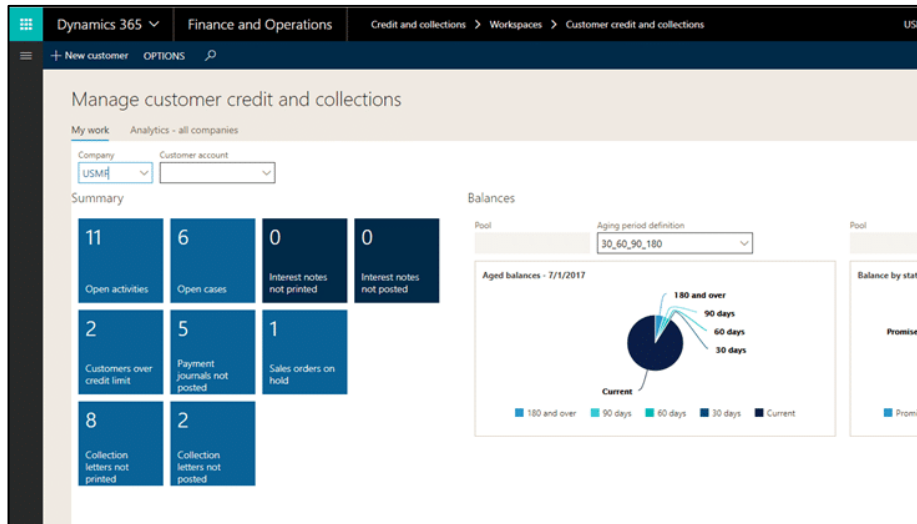
Customer Service module of Microsoft Dynamics 365 assist customer care executives in

- Adding value to every interaction by tailoring personalised experience with a quick insight of specific requirements/feedbacks.
- Delivering consistent experience on multiple channels
- Resolving issues accurately with predictive analytics



Finance and Operation module of Microsoft Dynamics 365 empowers accounting professionals to

- Minimise operational costs across multiple branches with different features such as budget planning and budget control.
- Take data driven decisions by analysing budgets and tax regulations from the same dashboard.
- Access all the related data from the same screen and prepare accurate invoices



A Peep in the Future

The ageing population in Australia have a greater choice and control over the care they would like to receive as they age. Looking at the current trends and the way technology is enhancing every working method in the aged care industry, the whole landscape is changing at a rapid pace.

Residential care services are gradually gaining preference. Latest technologies such as wearables, face recognition, virtual reality and more are constantly empowering seniors to be independent and reducing dependency on the carers. Aged care service providers must gear up to provide schemes and packages that guarantee personalised attention and efficient services at the comfort of one's home at optimal costs.

The evolving demands of seniors and present competition in the aged care sector is making this industry an exciting playground where service providers will have to play wisely and smartly with the tool called technology.



About Exigo Tech

Exigo Tech is an Australian grown technology solutions provider, specializing in Cloud and Network Infrastructure and Application solutions for SME and enterprise clients. Our constant effort to make sure, how can technology and its innovations help businesses enable them to grow. Our consultative and product agnostic approach has always helped in providing the right solution for our clients and partners.

Adhering to its vision of “technology made simple”, the company is staffed with highly skilled professionals who understand the nitty-gritties of evolving technologies. The company’s dynamic workforce keeps adding more technologies and skills into its portfolio to enable businesses overcome challenges and function at maximum operational efficiencies. Exigo Tech truly understands the importance of customer experience and hence follows a customized approach for each client depending on the business size and type of industrial vertical.

Exigo Tech’s experienced workforce closely associates itself with the clients, understand their requirements and puts technology at the heart of every project to deliver exceptional outcomes. Our service portfolio is wide and branches in to different sectors such as IT infrastructure, cloud hosted solutions, enterprise mobility solutions, process automation, digital transformation, backup and disaster recovery and IT managed services.

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