

THE 2015 MARKET AWARDS



THE ELITE

CONCUR

Concur Agrees on Infer

Infer's predictive lead scoring helps Concur close more deals more quickly

THE CHALLENGE

Concur Technologies processes more than \$50 billion in travel and expense spending per year for more than 23,000 clients in 150 countries. The company, which is based in Bellevue, Wash., was purchased by SAP late last year for \$8.3 billion, making it the biggest acquisition to date for the German vendor of enterprise software.

Many analysts at the time said that Concur was overvalued, so the pressure was on for the company to perform. Revenue reached roughly \$700 million in 2014 and was expected to increase 28 percent this year.

"It was really about scaling our revenue," says Greg Forrest, director of marketing operations and demand central at Concur. "Our revenue goals are constantly increasing, and we realized our biggest growth opportunity would come from marketing."

Concur has been growing quickly. It has more than 27 million users worldwide, along with an expanding suite of integrated cloud-based travel and expense management solutions. Fortunately, it has seen the number and types of prospects increase exponentially and needed to more quickly and effectively score marketing leads as it scaled. Its marketing team had been using conventional lead scoring through Oracle

Eloqua, but the insight provided was very subjective and limited to internal data from Salesforce, Web forms, and a few other sources.

THE SOLUTION

In December Concur rolled out Infer's predictive lead scoring in its small and mid-sized business unit in the United States and Canada. The United States accounts for 84 percent of the company's annual revenue, so it was not a small-scale deployment.

The Infer solution helps Concur identify and prioritize the marketing-qualified leads that are most likely to convert to closed deals. It pulls in thousands of external signals, going well beyond what most organizations track in their basic CRM and marketing automation tools.

Infer's approach combines external qualification/fit data, such as whether a company has relevant job postings or a credible Web domain, with interest data, including Web site, email, and event activity, to create two-dimensional lead scoring.



Greg Forrest,
director of marketing
operations and demand
central at Concur

Each lead is then automatically given a rating, which sales and marketing teams can use for strategic account planning, demand-generation optimization, and cross-selling initiatives.

By adding predictive scoring, Concur has found 5,000 previously unidentified marketing-qualified leads in its databases, which led to dramatic increases in its run rate. The marketing team tripled the number of leads it converted to closed deals and increased conversion rates by 150 percent, from 0.8 percent to 2 percent. In addition, by using the scores to identify cross-selling opportunities, the company boosted closed deals for new solutions by 76 percent.

“We’re finding leads a lot quicker and getting them into the pipeline a lot faster,” Forrest states proudly, “and we’re closing at a much higher rate.”

Based on the results Concur has seen in the first six months, the company is expanding the Infer solution to its cross-selling and upselling activities, account scoring, and direct marketing. Those moves “are in motion now,” Forrest says. “We’re also looking to add it to sales opportunity scoring.” Once all that is completed, Concur will likely extend the solution beyond the SMB business unit and to other countries.

Concur tried out several other systems for about a year before finalizing a deal with Infer. Once it gave the company serious consideration, it “looked too attractive” not to roll out, Forrest recalls.

“The way Infer is able to connect the data and provide it in simple, numerical scores fits nicely into our operations,” he adds.

According to Forrest, Concur runs 14 different scoring systems across all of its worldwide operations, and “Infer relieved a lot of the strain we were having on our other systems.”

“It’s just a really good, stable tool for us,” he concludes.

—Leonard Klie

real results

- Five thousand marketing-qualified leads were uncovered in its database, leading to a dramatic run-rate increase.
- The number of leads converted to closed deals tripled.
- Conversion rates increased by 150 percent, from 0.8 percent to 2 percent.
- Closed deals for new solutions were boosted by 76 percent.