SOLUTION
- ☐ SugarCRM Professional
- ☐ Epicom Customization and Development Services
- ☐ Epicom Support Services
- ☐ Asterisk Integration

INDUSTRY
Shipping

ABOUT
uShip is the world's largest and most trusted transportation marketplace, primarily serving the freight, household goods, and vehicle shipping markets.

HEADQUARTERS
Austin, TX

ABOUT EPICOM
Epicom builds, supports and hosts high-performance web-based Customer Relationship Management systems. Our expertise is helping U.S. and overseas companies large and small improve their profits and outpace their competition.

Epicom has completed hundreds of successful CRM projects and is one of Sugar's leading North American Gold Partners. Our focus is on executing complex SugarCRM deployments, customizations and integrations.

512.481.9000
info@epicom.com

www.epicom.com

uShip Increases Operational Efficiency 20% With Its SugarCRM Customer Engagement Platform
Epicom Provides Asterisk and HelpSpot Integrations that Support Rapid Growth

uShip, the world's largest and most trusted transportation marketplace, chose SugarCRM as a customer engagement platform and turned to Sugar partner Epicom for implementation. uShip's Sugar solution, integrated with Asterisk and HelpSpot, has supported rapid growth and increased speed and efficiency by 20 percent in every area of the company's operations. Reporting is also faster—saving six to eight hours per week—while substantially reducing the workload of the analytics group, which previously had often been overwhelmed.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES
Fans of A&E's hit reality show, Shipping Wars, know who uShip is. It's the shipping marketplace used by the show, where six independent shippers bid to transport items that traditional carriers won't touch. "We basically help connect shippers of large, oversized items like furniture, vehicles, motorcycles, and pets, with service providers in an open, transparent marketplace," explains Dean Xeros, vice president of sales for uShip. "Everyone is feedback-rated. And we've seen significant growth, most of it fueled this past year with the airing of Shipping Wars."

Early on, uShip focused primarily on the consumer market, building a valuable partnership with eBay. But recently the company has shifted marketing gears to build up two segments of its commercial business, full truckload (FTL) and less-than-truckload (LTL). "We didn't really have any type of information infrastructure to handle our growth," Xeros continues. "We needed a centralized point of access for contact information—notes, call data, that sort of thing—especially before contacts became customers or as they were being onboarded."

Moreover, commercial accounts require longer-term management than retail customers and uShip needed a system that could accommodate both. "We used

> *"Sugar's made us 20 percent more efficient. For example, if a problem needed to be handled by customer service, it would take us a minute or two just to find the account. Now it's done instantaneously."*
>
> - Ken Blank, Retail Sales Manager
> uShip

a hodgepodge of tools," recalls Xeros. "GoogleDocs, Excel spreadsheets, internal systems, pen and paper. But with the velocity of transactions we were

starting to attract, we really needed a system to streamline our processes and become more efficient." In addition, uShip's LTL sales team would be field based, in contrast to the retail and FTL sales teams, which are in-house. All sales teams would be using the same platform.

THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Although uShip had earlier positive experience with Sugar Community Edition and Sugar partner Epicom, it had not led to implementing a comprehensive solution. When rapid growth demanded renewed attention to CRM, the company evaluated Salesforce and Microsoft Dynamics as well. "A big unknown for us was whether whatever solution we chose could take care of everything on our wish list," observes Xeros. "That included integration with Asterisk, our telephony system, our databases, the uship.com website, and our helpdesk application, HelpSpot." After aggressive due diligence, uShip chose SugarCRM and Epicom.

Since there was much to be done, the first order of business was determining the scope of work that could be handled with the available budget. "Atish Haria, who heads our analytics group, really took the bull by the horns here," Xeros notes. "Also Ken Blank on the retail side and Nathan Reid from commercial spent considerable time with the Epicom project managers to really describe our current processes and what we were looking for."

Using a phased approach, Epicom began developing a solution for commercial accounts. Phase two took on retail. The

Asterisk phone integration, which supports both groups, was the focus of phase three. "We have several partners we work with in retail—and each has a different number assigned to it," Blank clarifies. "When a call comes in, Sugar alerts us if the caller has an account with us and what number the call came in on—for example eBay. That really streamlines our process and makes us more efficient."

SUCCESS FACTORS

From onboarding new customers and managing hundreds of accounts with a single interface, to providing a superior customer experience and supporting rapid growth, Epicom's Sugar solution for uShip has brought increased speed and efficiency to every area of its operations. "It's made us 20 percent more efficient," Blank comments. "For example, if a problem needed to be handled by customer service, it would take us a minute or two just to find the account. Now it's done instantaneously." Reporting is also faster and better—saving six to eight hours per week—while substantially reducing the workload of the analytics group, which previously had often been overwhelmed. "We used to get requests almost every day," remarks Haria. "Now maybe it's once a week."

While uShip's growth has come from increased visibility, especially with the success of Shipping Wars, its ability to service that growth comes from Sugar. "Without the efficiency brought by Sugar, we would have had to hire additional staff to handle new accounts or the increase in service providers," Blank continues. "I can second that on the commercial

epicom

side," adds Reid. "Our business has really grown. Staying on top of it without Sugar would have been very difficult." Xeros contributes another interesting fact, which highlights the importance of the Asterisk integration, "Although the conversion rate for customers who interact directly with the ecommerce platform is strong, we're seeing that the customer conversion rate is pushed higher for customers the team talks to directly."

The entire uShip team credits Epicom for a large part of the Sugar solution's success. "I knew that early on, they were very good listeners," says Xeros. "There was never a feeling that what we were asking for was not possible or would cost a fortune." Reid concurs, "Epicom did just a fantastic job mapping my needs to either existing functionality or finding ways they could customize Sugar to match those needs."

"When our employees can see that with Sugar we're investing in their ability to be top performers, I think it sends a message about how important and critical their role is in the organization," concludes Xeros. "Also, we're hiring. And I know Sugar makes it easier to bring on a new employee. And that's a big plus as well."

ABOUT USHIP
uShip is the world's largest and most trusted transportation marketplace, primarily serving the freight, household goods and vehicle shipping markets. Consumers and businesses can compare and book upfront quotes, name their own price or receive auction-style bids from 300,000 customer-reviewed transportation service providers,

ranging from independent owner-operators to the largest freight carriers and brokers.

ABOUT EPICOM
Epicom customizes, supports and hosts high-performance web-based Customer Relationship Management systems. Our expertise is helping U.S. and overseas companies large and small improve their profits and outpace their competition. Epicom has completed hundreds of successful CRM projects and is one of Sugar's leading North American Gold Partners. Our focus is on consulting and executing complex SugarCRM deployments, customizations and integrations.

For more information, call 512-481-9000, email info@epicom.com, or visit our website at www.epicom.com.