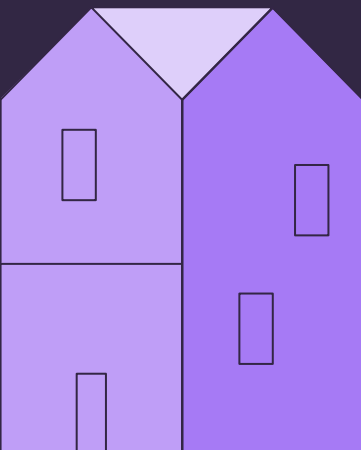
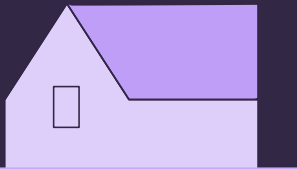
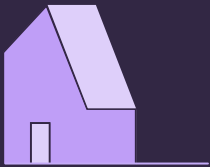


6 ways a CRM can help you in 2023



Your developments are forward-sold. And, demand continues to outstrip supply. You might be thinking that you don't need – or that you're too busy to get – a CRM.

But we're here to tell you why right now is the perfect time to invest in your first CRM – or a new one – and what a good CRM should help you do.

With wider pressures in the economy on the horizon – higher inflation, higher build costs, higher everything – the industry won't be immune to change and will be looking to cost-save. And, that's not to mention the end of Help to Buy.

Changing economic circumstances also dent consumer confidence - even if their own personal finances are relatively unaffected.

So, it might mean that buyers get a bit harder to come by in coming months. Or that they come from different buying groups – such as second and third steppers in lengthy, riskier chains – compared to what you've seen over the past two years.

Plus, with these changes coming to the buyer pool, sales teams will need support – to complete deals in a much more challenging market.

Either way, the right CRM helps you navigate the changing market. It should help you find new buying groups within your existing data and market to them specifically.

In our report, we look at 6 things you should be looking out for when you're choosing your first CRM.

| A good CRM should...

Free up time spent on admin so you can focus on bigger challenges and opportunities

Housebuilder sales teams told us they spend 60% of their time doing the legwork part of the transaction – chasing, manually updating statuses of plots across multiple pieces of software, communicating with buyers; the list goes on and on.

A lot of this time also requires a significant amount of face-time with the buyer, hand-holding them through the purchase process.

Many builders will accept this as just a fact of life – but a CRM can change that.

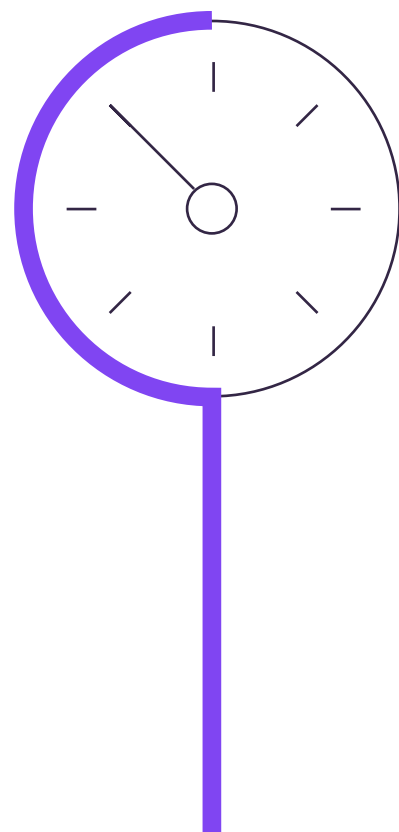
Having one consolidated, single source of truth for your development saves on duplication and time spent actually doing the admin.

Today's housebuilder CRMs shouldn't just provide efficiencies in terms of processing the transaction. It should start at the lead stage, connecting seamlessly with portals and giving you pre-qualified intelligence about your prospective buyer.

Automating the essential admin tasks allows sales teams to concentrate on strategies to deal with the changing housing market.

In Zoopla's CRM for housebuilders, the team is supported to do this with a unique Site Map tool, giving everyone visibility of the status of every plot at-a-glance.

This works both ways. It helps teams quickly understand prices-per-square-foot achieved for plots that have been solved, giving everyone a better understanding of expected revenue, as well as giving clarity on which plots need more of a sales push.



A good CRM should...

Help you segment your marketing as buying groups change

As economic challenges grow, our House Price Index Report suggests certain buyer types are likely to become more active, while others may get quieter.

Those who are likely to get more active:

- People looking to downsize to free up cash;
- Equity-rich, older buyers who are less impacted by economic challenges and are mortgage-free.

Those who could be less active:

- First-time buyers;
- Lower-income families;
- Upsizers.

The right CRM should allow you to focus your marketing for both.

For groups of buyers who may be less active in the market in 2023, you'll want tools like email based-nurture programmes that you can configure within your CRM. These will help you

connect future, planned developments with buyers who may be ready for them further down the line.

And, if you can continually test their engagement through a lead-scoring system at no extra cost – like you can in Zoopla's housebuilder CRM – that's all the better.

For those equity-rich buyers and downsizers, the same marketing tools in a good CRM can help you shift those last remaining plots and promote price reductions.

Inevitably, many homeowners will be thinking about streamlining their space, and whether they could free up cash moving somewhere smaller that needs less work.

But the downsizer market has more potential even than that.

In our recent Plot Twists podcast series, we also highlighted how today's downsizer is still looking for all the high-end features and space they would have previously been looking for in a bigger home – but just with one less bedroom.

So, using a CRM with those integrated marketing tools makes shouting about the spec of your homes so much easier in a competitive market.

| A good CRM should...

Let you manage marketing in-platform, across multiple channels

A more challenging economic climate means your marketing needs to work harder and more cost-effectively than ever.

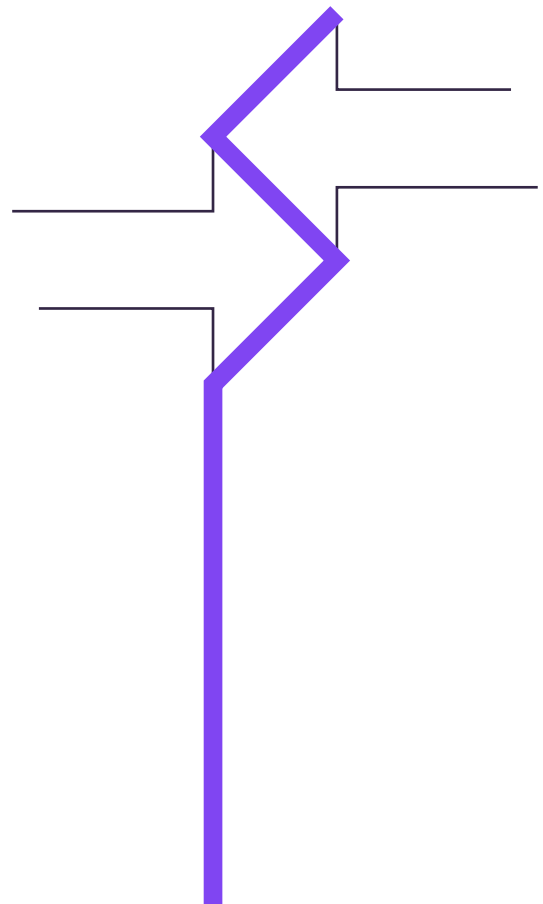
Channels like email and SMS - which balance effectiveness with affordability - are often the way to go.

There's nothing like email to drive regular engagement and returnability back to your development website. And with more sophisticated nurture-style journeys, a CRM can make sure those emails hit inboxes when your buyers are most likely to convert.

Meanwhile, SMS drives short, sharp action. So, it's the perfect way to get a message about the latest incentive or limited availability of plots out there to buying groups in a better position to react quickly.

With Zoopla's CRM for housebuilders, you can manage both email and SMS within the platform. That's everything from building the creative, through to send.

And most importantly, actionable reporting within the platform means you get better, quicker visibility of which messages are working – and which aren't.



| A good CRM should...

Make your sales team's job easier and integrate into your existing workflows and processes.

We've talked before about how a good CRM should make all your admin work more seamless and stress-free.

And while that's great for business efficiency, the benefits don't stop there.

The way we work has become one of the biggest, longest-lasting changes in society following the pandemic.

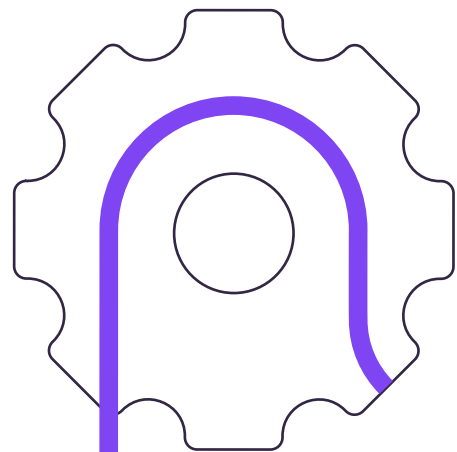
According to the ONS, 42% of the UK's workforce now 'mainly' works from home – and it's a trend that continues to grow, as people use flexible working patterns as a reason to continue to move further out from urban centres for more space.

This kind of behaviour means connected businesses are more important than ever.

A CRM means anyone in the business with a login can access what they need to know about the business anywhere, any time.

And all that seamless efficiency means happier workers.

Without being burdened by repetitive, time-consuming tasks, they're freed up to focus on the next big ideas that will help your business weather the economic storm, ready to grow when we come out the other side. And we don't need to tell you that happier staff are more likely to stay with your business, too.



| A good CRM should...

Give you visibility of buyer progression so you can flag and deal with risks earlier

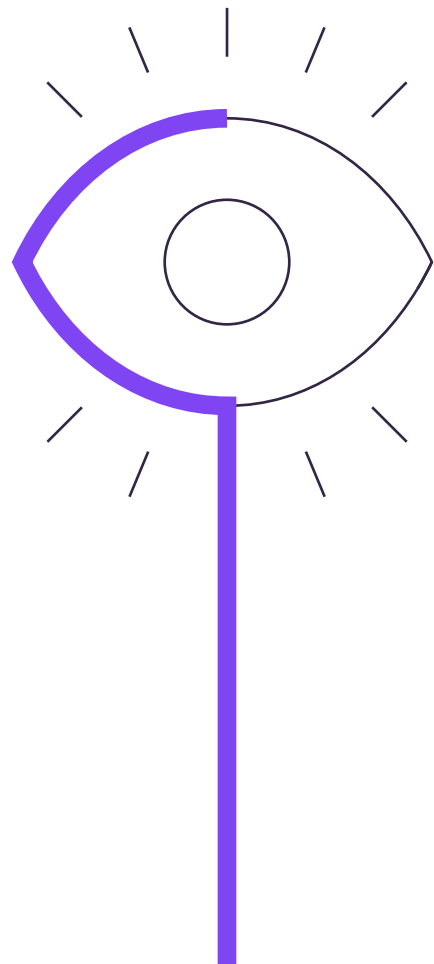
In the buoyant market that housebuilders have enjoyed over the past few years, the c word - cancellations – hasn't been too much of an issue.

And, like we mentioned earlier in this report, our research suggests that these types of problems shouldn't massively grow as we enter a more difficult period economically.

But even one cancellation means wasted effort and a loss of revenue estimated at £4,500. And as the economic climate gets a bit more unpredictable, it's wise to ensure you're set up to flag cancellation risks earlier in your processes, and nip problems in the bud.

With the Site Map tool we talked about earlier, this all contributes towards giving you a more predictable view of your income – and when you're going to get it.

As the market gets a bit less predictable, having the bedrock of a CRM that lets you see much further into the future means you can plan and react to the changing market more efficiently.



A good CRM should...

Help you comply with new regulations for housebuilders

2022 brought with it a growth in compliance demands for housebuilders.

The New Homes Ombudsman Service has been launched in response to consumer demands for more transparency, and to give housebuilders the ability to distinguish and verify what makes them a quality builder.

Sitting at the centre of the new regulation is the New Homes Quality Code (NHQC), which has ten guiding principles:

- Fairness
- Safety
- Quality
- Service
- Responsiveness
- Transparency
- Independence
- Inclusivity
- Security
- Compliance

While voluntary, lenders may stipulate it before they lend – and it's compulsory for builders participating in Help to Buy.

In particular, the NHQC gives buyers more opportunities to voice any concerns before, during and after their purchase – and if they aren't satisfied, their concerns can be escalated to the Ombudsman Service.

So how does this relate to CRMs?

The right CRM should be helping you with each of those principles:

- Enabling white-labelled, two-way communication with your buyers, your CRM helps you meet responsiveness, service and transparency principles
- Through anti-money laundering integrations (like the one you can add to Zoopla's CRM), you're supporting safety and security principles – for you and your buyers. It also helps create an inclusive, level playing field for your buyers
- A good CRM – and all the time-saving benefits it brings you – makes compliance, fairness and quality principles easier and less hassle to adhere to

Find out more about our CRM



Alex Rose

Director - New Homes

alex.rose@zoopla.co.uk