

Best Practices

Integration of CRM and QuickBooks

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Introduction

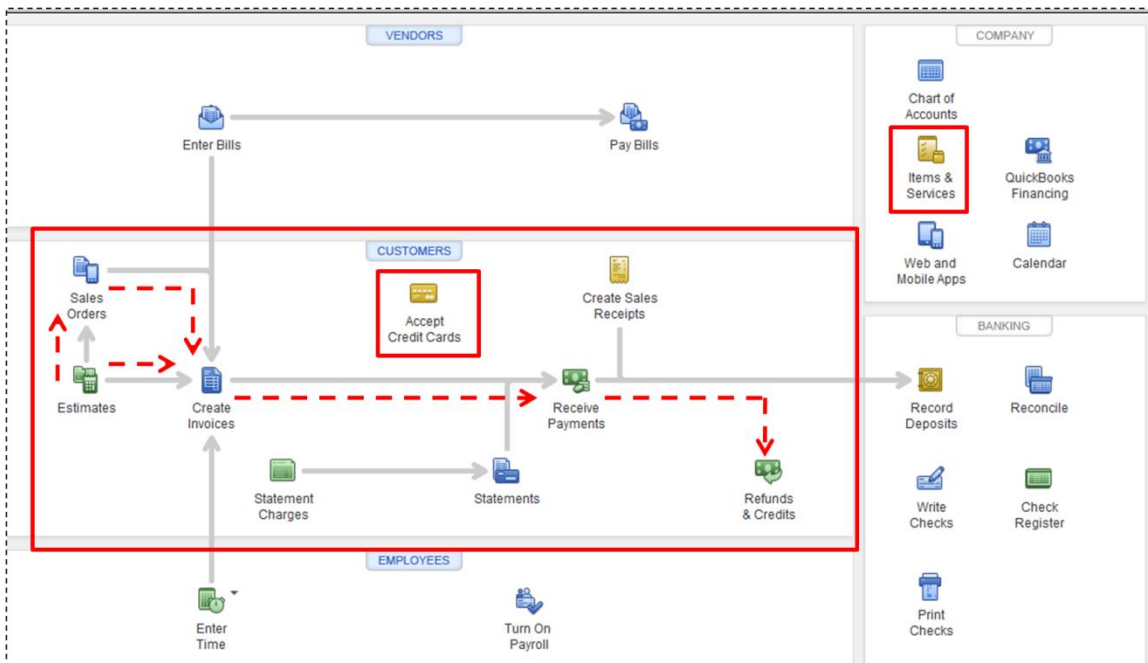
Introduction

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is mainly used to help an organization to manage its interactions with customers. CRM uses technology to manage, computerize and synchronize various departments like sales, marketing, customer service, technical support etc. Salesforce.com and Microsoft CRM are the commonly used CRMs in many of the organizations.

QuickBooks is an Accounting Software used to record & process accounting transactions like Accounts payable, Accounts receivable, Billing, Inventory, Purchase order, Sales Order etc.

In CRM/ERP world generally there is **Order to Cash process**. When the order is created, it must go through a cycle of invoicing, payment request and receiving payment. When Opportunities are closed, Estimates or Orders are created. Estimates usually represent an Opportunity.

Best practices in integration of CRM and QuickBooks is explained considering Salesforce as an example for CRM. Generally in Salesforce, process flow starts with the sales teams involvement in creation of **Accounts, Contacts** and then **Opportunities**. Flow in Salesforce completes when the product is sold and then an **invoice** needs to be sent. Customer makes the payment as per the received invoice. Accounts team receives the payment and updates the invoice as paid. This flow is shown in the below picture of QuickBooks Home page. Accounts Team which uses QuickBooks may have to update the invoice and other details manually in Salesforce & QuickBooks, if these two are not integrated.



Purpose of Integration

Integration of CRM with QuickBooks must act as common platform to Salesforce (or any other CRM) and QuickBooks users. This integration is essential to achieve the following benefits.

- **Reduce Double Data Entry**

Re-entering the same data in QuickBooks which is already in Salesforce or vice versa may lead to lot of confusion if there is any difference in data. Integration reduces double data entry hence provides smooth process flow among sales and Accounts team.

- **Reduce Manual Entry**

Manual entry of data to QuickBooks from Salesforce or vice versa, would require an additional human resource to work on this. Integration reduces manual entry thereby reducing the human involvement.

- **Reduce Human Error**

It is observed that Manual entry usually leads to human error. Human error is unavoidable in manual entry. Integration ensures that these human errors are avoided.

- **Save Time**

Double Data and Manual Entry is time consuming. As integration reduces Double Data and Manual Entry, time required for synchronization reduces significantly.

Purpose of Integration:

Best Practice

It is evident that integration leads to multiple benefits. It is also necessary that right practice is followed to make this integration process successful and beneficial. The steps involved for the best practice for integration of CRM with QuickBooks is explained in the following topics.

- Record the Requirement
- Define Master Data
- Data Flow Triggers
- Design and Data Mapping
- Testing and Validation
- Pre-Go Live
- Go-Live
- Data Migration into Salesforce

Best Practice

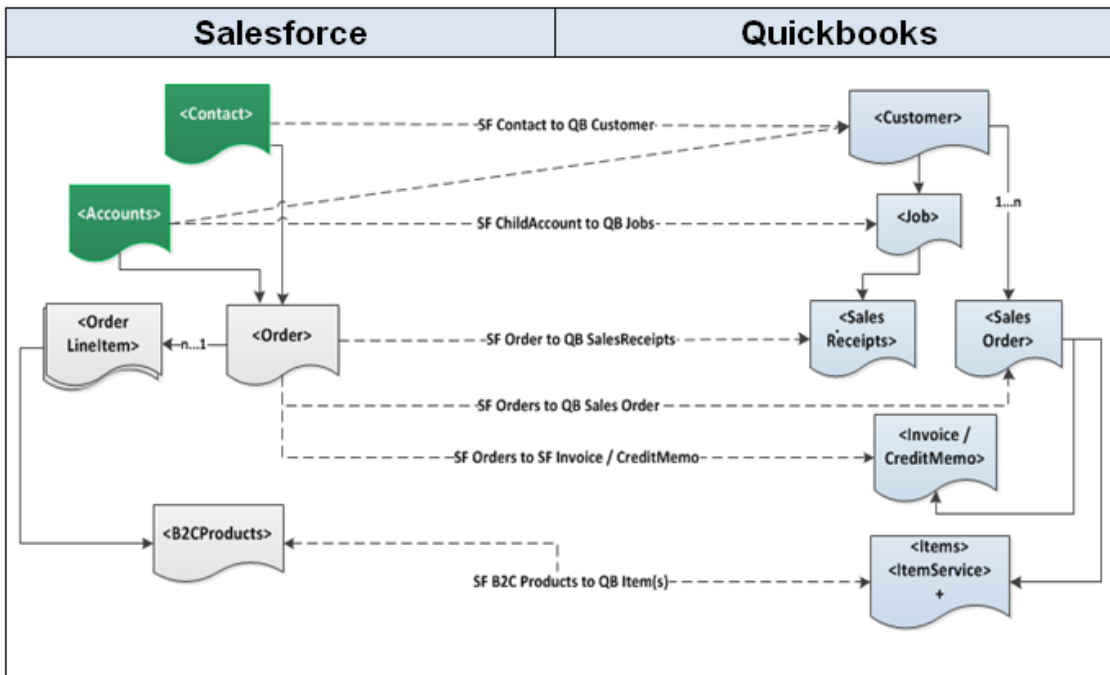
Record the Requirement

- **Purpose and Goal Definition**

Purpose and Goal of the integration must be defined and the same must be written down to ensure that integration does not deviate from the original requirement. If there is a change in requirement, purpose and goal of the integration must be changed accordingly.

- **Flow Chart for Integration**

A picture is worth a thousand words. Flow chart as shown below can be used to explain integration data flow. Flow chart must show the detailed data flow from Salesforce to QuickBooks and vice versa. Flow chart must provide the details like standard object, custom object, object to object data flow, Unidirectional or Bidirectional flow etc.



- **Easy to Understand**

Documentation of requirements must be easily understandable, so that a person not familiar with the business can also easily understand the need & process. The below table describes the symbols used in Flow Chart and makes this data flow self explanatory.

	Standard Salesforce Objects
	Custom Salesforce Objects
	Quickbooks Entities
1..n	One-to-many relationship
n..1	Many-to-one relationship
1..1	One-to-One relationship
SF	Salesforce
QB	Quickbooks

Record the Requirement

Define Master Data

Master Data must be defined to decide the direction of data flow. Master Data can be either Salesforce or QuickBooks. Customer Master Data and Product Master Data can be defined as explained below.

- **Customer Master**

- Most companies prefer to have Salesforce as Master Data.
- If the integration is from QuickBooks to Salesforce unidirectionally, then QuickBooks must be Master Data.
- If 3rd party eCommerce apps are involved, then again it is preferred that QuickBooks is Master Data.

- **Product Master Data**

Generally, we come across two types of firms namely Service based firms and the Firms with inventory. Master Data selection varies for these two types of firms as mentioned below.

- **Service based Firms:** In case of Service based firms, Salesforce is preferred Master Data. These firms tend to create more service items related to services performed. This is best done and managed in Salesforce.
- **Firms with Inventory:** Firms that have inventory are likely to have warehouse integration or inventory management. These are also linked with SKU # or item # and also related to vendor item #. These are best managed in QuickBooks. So QuickBooks must be the Master Data.

Data Flow Triggers

Dumping all the customers into QuickBooks may inflate QuickBooks. Hence only the required customers must be pushed. It is good to move only the customers who have transactions. Triggers are very important in moving the required specific data from one system to the other.

- Records (Customers or Items) should be pushed only if there is a valid “accounting transaction” like Sales Order or Invoice.
- Generally, for most of the companies, It is not advisable to integrate Estimate. Salesforce is a better place to quote and manage opportunities.
- Decide “when” a transaction must flow in QuickBooks. Salesforce provides many ways to manage the workflow like Stage “Closed Won” will create Sales Order in QuickBooks for manufacturing firms whereas for Service based firms “Closed Won” will create Invoice.
- Identify which triggers can be built using Salesforce workflow or Apex (customizations in case of complex workflow).

Design and Data Mapping

The following guidelines can be referred to design and map the data flow for integration.

- Most of the CRMs are customizable and in order to have successful integration, CRM must be customized based on QuickBooks settings.
- The structure of “1 to many” relationships of Transactions (Sales Order or Invoice) to their line items should be maintained in Salesforce.
- Use a Spreadsheet to document the mapping and get it reviewed with Accounting team.
- Create a field on each Salesforce object to indicate that the record was created or touched by the integration implementation of Salesforce and QuickBooks.
- Integration must also facilitate additional customization for future changes.
- Field format used in Salesforce and QuickBooks must be compatible for integration.
- Destination Limitations plays vital role while integrating: One of the examples for destination limitation is Text limitations Salesforce field allows text of 255 characters whereas QuickBooks “Item Name” allows only 31 characters. While integrating from Salesforce to QuickBooks, QuickBooks “Item Name” can take only the first 31 characters of text in Salesforce field. Similarly QuickBooks “Customer Name” can take only the first 41 characters of text in Salesforce field. Such limitations must be taken into consideration while mapping.

Testing and validations

Testing and validation is essential to confirm that integration is working as per the requirement. The following guidelines must be referred to test and validate integration.

- Create User acceptance Test Cases which cover all the use case scenarios with your integration requirements (put link to the UAT document).
- Test and validate in Sandbox before moving into production. This is the Best practice for any integration.
- Test for volume and load to verify impact of any Apex developed (reaching governance limits) or QuickBooks performance limits.

Testing and validations

Pre-Go Live

Before going live, get the latest version of QuickBooks from your production and test against the latest snapshot of your Salesforce instance.

Go Live

The below guidelines must be followed to Go-Live.

- Create a backup of your QuickBooks file.
- While performing QuickBooks to Salesforce, take a download of Objects touched in the integration using Data Loader.
- Implement the integration, and validate. Best time to do this is downtime.
- Check and validate transaction and data flow.

Pre-Go Live

Go Live

Data Migration into Salesforce

Pushing the old or existing data from QuickBooks to Salesforce is termed as Data Migration. During Migration the below guidelines must be followed.

- While performing QuickBooks to Salesforce, take a download of Objects touched in the integration using Data Loader.
- Make sure each object in the migration has a field defined and mapped to indicate that the record has been pushed during migration. This will help in identifying issues, to delete and to reprocess the data import.

Data Migration into Salesforce

Follow up Task

A regular follow up is required to ensure that all the best practices are incorporated during integration. In order to achieve this the following steps can be referred as guidelines for integration.

- Define your Project and Goals.
- Identify your internal team from CRM and Accounting.
- Document your Requirements.
- Engage DBSync team to assist in reviewing your business process.
- Design your process, and create Maps using mapping spreadsheet.
- Identify and mitigate Risk.
- Register an account with DBSync.
- Setup the process in DBSync.
- Create a User Acceptance Test Document.
- Plan the dates for Test Completion and Go-Live.

Ideally Process of integration must involve the following mapping to simplify the process.

- **SF Account to QB Customer.**
- **SF Product to QB Item.**
- **SF Opportunity to QB Transaction.**
- **One to one relationship for SF Opportunity to QB Transaction integration.**
- **One to many relationship for SF Account to Opportunity.**