



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

**CUSTOMER**

Big River Telephone

**AUTHORIZED RESELLER**

Strategic Sales Systems, Inc.  
 1215 Fern Ridge Parkway  
 Saint Louis, MO 63141  
 Phone: 636-394-0856  
 www.sssworld.com

**INDUSTRY**

Telecommunications

**LOCATION**

Cape Girardeau, Missouri

**Number of Locations**

Five

**Number of Employees**

50

**SYSTEM**

Sage CRM SalesLogix  
 Sage MAS 90

**Additional Solutions**

- Sage CRM SalesLogix KnowledgeSync
- Sage CRM SalesLogix for Pocket PC

## Big River Telephone Uses Sage CRM SalesLogix To Make Clear Connections With Customers

Since its inception more than twenty years ago, Big River Telephone Company has executed several strategic acquisitions to become one of the largest locally owned carriers in the Midwest. Rapid expansion benefited the company financially, but operationally it presented a fair share of obstacles. Big River Telephone had outgrown its manual processes and was struggling to integrate areas of business that had been hastily connected during periods of vigorous growth.

To keep its large customer base loyal (in the notoriously competitive telecommunications industry), Big River Telephone decided that it must integrate its back-office and customer-facing functions, and gain centralized control over both areas.

### A Focused Implementation and Customization Phase

Working side-by-side with its Sage CRM SalesLogix business partner, Strategic Sales Systems, Big River examined several leading CRM solutions, ultimately selecting Sage CRM SalesLogix.

“We looked at other software, but only Sage CRM SalesLogix met our needs,”



said Kevin Cantwell, President, Big River Telephone Company.

Strategic Sales Systems led the implementation process, installing Sage CRM SalesLogix suite and integrating it with Microsoft Outlook and Sage MAS 90 ERP in only 90 days. After the initial implementation, Big River’s developers were able to take over and further customize the solution, as a result of the partner’s expert guidance.

Now, Sage CRM SalesLogix resides at the core of Big River Telephone’s business. From sales opportunity management to ongoing customer support and targeted retention marketing, Big River utilizes the solution’s broad functionality to handle all stages of customer relationship management.

**CHALLENGE**

Rapid growth caused Big River Telephone to outgrow its manual processes and suffer disconnects between back-office and customer-facing processes.

**SOLUTION**

An integrated Sage CRM SalesLogix and Sage MAS 90 solution that connected sales, customer support, and back-office functions.

**RESULTS**

A 2005 Gartner CRM Excellence Award, a 2005 Technology ROI Award, and expanded service capacity while maintaining a 98.6% rating for excellence in customer service.



Your business in mind.

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but only Sage CRM SalesLogix  
met our needs."*

—Kevin Cantwell,  
President,  
Big River Telephone Company

## ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE

Sage Software has been responding to the needs, challenges, and dreams of small and mid-sized businesses for over 25 years. With a complete range of business management solutions and services, Sage Software helps companies improve customer relationships, reduce costs, and automate and integrate a variety of operational activities. Its solutions support the specialty needs of a broad scope of industry segments, including manufacturing, distribution, construction, real estate, nonprofit, and professional services.



## Improved Productivity, Customer Service, and Reporting

The new solution has enabled Big River to vastly improve employee productivity and effectiveness. For example, before the implementation, Big River needed six customer service representatives to cover its support lines. Now, using Sage CRM SalesLogix, five representatives perform the same work, but with fewer customer complaints and faster resolution times.

As Cantwell described, "Because Sage CRM SalesLogix delivers up-to-the-minute information, the customer service experience turns out positive, even if there's a perceived 'negative' reason for the call. We know the exact status of that person's account and how to help them."

During an outage last year, Big River took advantage of Sage CRM SalesLogix Support to perform critical damage control. They used the solution to e-mail 300 inconvenienced customers and explain the situation, even providing updates every 15 minutes. Once the problem had been resolved, support reps called each customer personally. As a result of these swift and primarily automated efforts, Big River Telephone managed the crisis without losing a single customer.

Big River also utilizes Sage CRM SalesLogix reporting to keep managers ahead of potential problems. The company had Strategic Sales Systems create customized reports to show, for example, how many tickets are open and the top five customer issues of the day, as well as sales and marketing reports that list current opportunities, probability of close, lead sources, competitive losses, and more. Company-wide, reports are delivered automatically using Sage CRM SalesLogix KnowledgeSync, which has eliminated the need for daily management meetings.

## Reaping Rewards & Awards

Since launching its CRM initiative, Big River Telephone has continued its rapid growth,

but now with centralized control over its people and processes.

"We were servicing 3,500 local lines with 42 employees," said Cantwell. "Now, thanks to Sage CRM SalesLogix, we service 15,000 local lines with 50 employees."

Even with service and staff expansions, 98.6% of Big River's customers rated the service as "excellent" or above. This is an especially strong statistic for the telecommunications industry, in which the average rating for excellent customer service is 70%.

Big River's achievements and extraordinary teamwork with Strategic Sales Systems have not gone unnoticed. The company received a 2005 Gartner CRM Excellence Award, an extraordinary honor given annually to two companies (one large enterprise and one small-to-mid-sized business). Big River won in the small-to-mid-sized category.

The company also won a 2005 Technology ROI Award (chosen by Nucleus Research and TechTarget's *CIO Decisions* magazine). Technology ROI Awards are given to ten companies whose deployments of IT solutions have produced positive bottom-line financial and business results for their organizations and customers.

"The implementation of our customer support system has allowed us to exceed our customers' needs and this award validates our work," Cantwell commented on the Technology ROI Award. "Not only did we have CIOs from across the country review our efforts but we also have other telecommunications companies visit our operations to see how we have implemented technology to continue our growth and meet the expanding needs of our customers."

Sean Mohan, president, Strategic Sales Systems, commented: "Our partnership stands out as an example of how working closely with a business partner can greatly increase the potential for success!"