

# SUCCESS STORY

# ACT!™

## ELI'S CHEESECAKE REALLY COOKS WITH ACT!™

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Sales team shares data on thousands of contacts
- ACT! enables the creation of contact groups to help manage relationships with prospects, customers, and suppliers
- Sales productivity toolset provides greater opportunity tracking and forecasting
- Integration with Outlook enables scheduling of meetings via the Internet
- Ever flexible, ACT! has advanced, continuing to meet needs and keep pace with the company's growth



### CUSTOMER SUMMARY

- Industry: Food service
- 200+ employees
- Annual growth more than 20% for the past 5 years
- 14,000 contact records
- Single, 36-MB database implemented by in-house technician shared by 5-member sales team
- Total database size: approximately 30 GB
- Full deployment only 120 days after pilot

**There's no better dessert than Eli's Cheesecake. But the sweetest secret behind the company's success is the great prospect, customer, and supplier relationships it maintains using Interact Commerce Corporation's ACT!.**

When long-time restaurateur and Chicagoan Eli Schulman founded Eli's – The Place for Steak restaurant, one of his marquee offerings was a superb cheesecake. It quickly became one of Chicago's favorite desserts. So popular, in fact, that Eli's began producing it for other restaurants and retail outlets across the country.

Eli's Cheesecake Company has now been a Chicago icon in its own right for more than 20 years. Since its 1980 debut at the first Taste of Chicago, Eli's Cheesecake has grown to become the largest specialty cheesecake company in the country. In both 1993 and 1997, Eli's Cheesecake was selected to participate in the presidential inaugural festivities and Eli's Cheesecake provided the cake for the First Lady's birthday bash in 1997. Today, the company makes more than 15,000 cheesecakes every day for sale to restaurants, supermarkets, and airlines. Eli's Cheesecakes are also available to the public via the company's thriving mail-order business and Web site [www.elicheesecake.com](http://www.elicheesecake.com).

Eli's Cheesecake now employs more than 200 associates, the company's growth has been dramatic,

and its headquarters, Eli's Cheesecake World, is a 62,000 square-foot state-of-the-art bakery, visitor center, and café.

### BUSINESS SKYROCKETS; SO DO CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

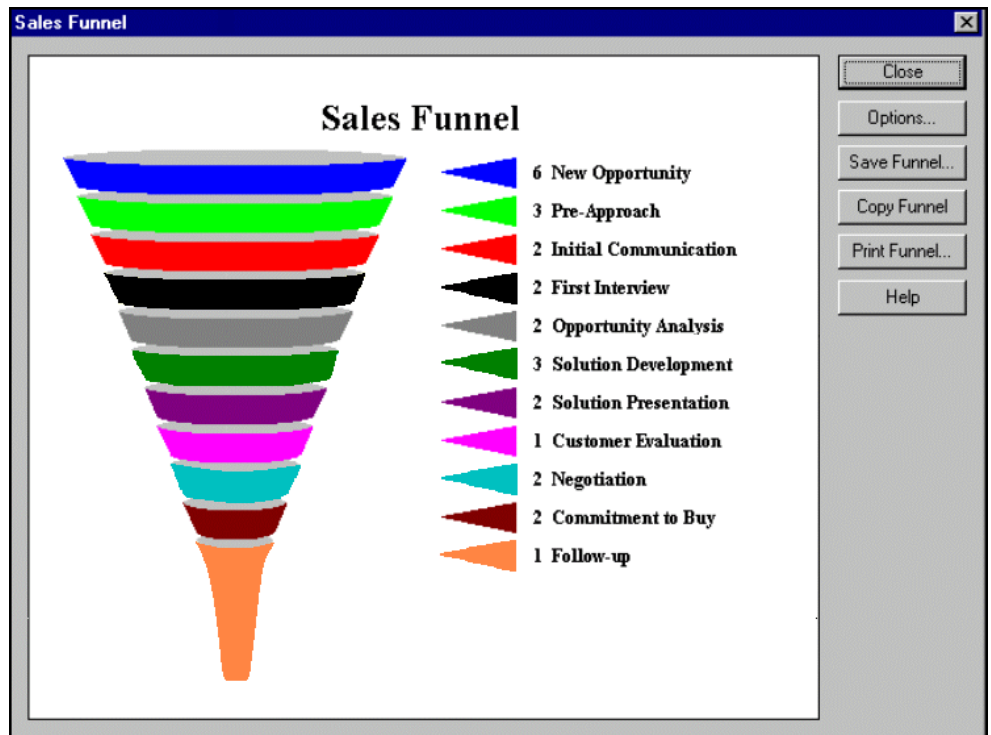
As the popularity of Eli's Cheesecake skyrocketed, Marc Schulman, president, CEO, and owner, began looking for a tool to help manage the company's rapidly expanding business relationships. Schulman wanted a contact management application that was easy to understand and use, and that would help him schedule and track customer activities and information. He also wanted a flexible contact manager that would evolve with his business and continue to improve.

Schulman selected ACT! from Interact Commerce Corporation. For almost six years now, he's relied on various versions of ACT! to manage these critical relationships.

Today, using ACT!, the company's sales team shares data on the nearly 14,000 contacts in its ACT! database. Once again, Schulman is pleased with the new features and enhancements.

"Each version is easier and more full-featured than the previous," he says. "Often, new versions of software either contain so many new features that they're no longer functional or they include only cosmetic changes that add little value. ACT!, however, just continues to get better by adding new, valuable features without sacrificing performance or usability."

Eli's Cheesecake uses ACT!'s Sales Funnel chart to graphically depict how many sales are in each stage of the sales process.



## SALES PRODUCTIVITY TOOLSET ESPECIALLY HELPFUL

According to Schulman, one of the most valuable new features in ACT! is its sales productivity toolset. With these tools, he forecasts and tracks sales opportunities, generating graphs that help him better manage the sales pipeline.

“We’re excited about the new sales cycle tool and its potential to help us define competitive opportunities,” says Schulman. “We believe it’s helping us focus on customers and our relationships with them. The sales tools give us a way to quickly see where we stand on our accounts through a variety of reports such as probability analyses, sales lists, and funnel reports. These are valuable capabilities that traditionally are available only as part of more expensive sales programs.

“In addition, I appreciate that ACT! offers a sales methodology developed with some of the best known sales

trainers around, Dale Carnegie Training, and with the flexibility to modify the methodology to better meet our specific needs.”

Another tool Schulman’s team uses extensively is the Group feature, which enables salespeople to categorize prospects, customers, and suppliers into different groups. This not only helps keep the database organized, it also makes it possible to quickly and easily take actions that affect every member of the group.

“With the expanded search features in ACT!, I can find just what I’m looking for by simply typing in any keyword – even a fax number or Web site address,” he says. “Now, nothing will ever get lost – even in a contact database as large as mine! All I have to do is enter information and I know I’ll be able to retrieve it later using a keyword.”

## INTEGRATION WITH OUTLOOK EASES MEETINGS

The improved integration with Microsoft Outlook also caught Schulman’s eye, especially its ability to share calendar information.

“With ACT!, I can schedule meetings over the Internet with other ACT! or Outlook users, which is very convenient,” says Schulman. “Businesses like ours can only benefit from such close cooperation between Interact Commerce and Microsoft.

“If you expect to grow, you need a contact manager that will grow with you,” Schulman concludes. “ACT! has been invaluable in helping me run this expanding business for the last six years. Each version improves on the last, and that kind of consistent improvement is exactly what will help Eli’s Cheesecake continue to succeed.”

Interact Commerce is the leading relationship management software provider for small, home, and mid-market businesses. Its easy-to-use products include mid-market customer relationship management (CRM) leader SalesLogix used by more than 3,000 businesses; and best-selling contact manager ACT! used by more than 3 million professionals and 10,000 corporations.

Its easy-to-use products implement fast for anytime, anywhere access to critical information. SalesLogix integrates with leading back-office software for a complete view of the customer. Distributed and sold in 60 countries worldwide, SalesLogix and ACT! dominate the high tech, real estate, financial services, manufacturing, marketing, and consulting industries. Interact Commerce is in Scottsdale, AZ ([www.interactcommerce.com](http://www.interactcommerce.com)).