

# CIO APPLICATIONS

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## Company:

West Coast Consulting Group

## Key Person:

Benafsha Irani  
Managing Partner

## Description:

Provides solutions and services to aid clients in the implementation of the Salesforce platform

## Website:

[westcoastconsulting.com](http://westcoastconsulting.com)

## Top 25 Salesforce Solution Providers - 2019

**B**usiness marketing strategies have been evolving at a significant pace in the past few years considering the swift market changes. One of the most prolific changes has been customer expectations. 80 percent of customers now believe that the experiences they get from a brand across all touchpoints are equally important as its product and services. Today's business landscape is completely driven by savvy customers as they are empowered with more options, more offers, and more access to information.

As such, choosing a solution that focuses on the customer is a must. Salesforce, providers of the world's leading customer relationship management (CRM) platform, know how to put customers first, and the company has used that knowledge to construct solutions that make it possible for businesses to build positive customer experiences across every channel. Salesforce makes it easy to pair customers with the products and services that will keep them coming back. With special offers tailored to individuals, offered across mobile, social media, and more, Salesforce helps businesses show their clients just how important they are. Additionally, Salesforce gives employees the tools they need to be successful. With data-driven, real-time product insights, service representatives can establish rewarding customer relationships quickly. Likewise, management and training tools help ensure that employees are productive and effective—assisting shoppers and promoting company interests on all fronts.

To assist CIOs maneuver in the right direction while adopting Salesforce solutions, a distinguished panel of CEOs, CIOs, VCs, and analysts along with the CIO Applications editorial board has selected the leading Salesforce solution providers. The companies featured here demonstrate an ability to develop innovative techniques combined with outstanding customer service.

In our selection, we looked at the vendor's capability to fulfill the burning need for cost-effective and flexible solutions that will add value in implementing Salesforce solutions.

We present to you "Top 25 Salesforce Solution Providers – 2019."

# West Coast Consulting Group

## Delivering Innovation in Salesforce Implementation



**BENAFSHA IRANI,**  
MANAGING PARTNER

**“**When digital transformation is done right, it is like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly; but when done wrong, all you have is a really fast caterpillar.” This quote by George Westerman—principal research scientist of the MIT Sloan Initiative on the Digital Economy—perfectly sums up the current scenario of digital transformation in organizations across all markets. The rise in the demand for digitization has resulted in the emergence and development of digital solutions that aid companies in transitioning from their legacy processes to more advanced systems. Among the plethora of these tech-based products, Salesforce has been a perpetual presence in the realms of enterprise cloud computing and customer relationship management (CRM) since its inception in the late 90s. However, the multitude of organizations that utilize Salesforce’s comprehensive services still struggle to obtain the desired organizational benefits due to the inefficient implementation of the platform. With their partnership with Salesforce, San Francisco-based West Coast Consulting Group leverages

in-depth business experience and technical knowledge to provide effective implementation services and cloud solutions that boost the efficiency and transform the business processes of their client organizations.

In an interview with CIO Applications, Benafsha Irani, managing partner of West Coast Consulting Group, discusses the company’s inception, growth, and future in the fields of Salesforce implementation and digital transformation.

### **Can you give us an overview of your company?**

As a group of consultants from KPMG, Deloitte, and Accenture, we founded West Coast Consulting Group in 2004, with the goal to bring innovative technology from Silicon Valley to commercial customers. One morning we stood outside our office in downtown San Francisco and saw the branding for Mark Benioff’s new CRM platform. We got our first meeting with Salesforce and proceeded to become one of the first consulting partners. We attended “lunch and learn” events for Salesforce at the Palace Hotel and gained valuable experience implementing our first CRM systems. West Coast Consulting Group’s partnership with Salesforce predates the AppExchange and we were among the first 500 consultants certified on Salesforce.

### **What are some of the pain points that West Coast Consulting Group addresses?**

Initially, Salesforce was deployed by smaller organizations with less complexity in their structure and processes. Soon, however, more organizations from process-intensive markets started adopting Salesforce, leading to challenges in the implementation of the platform.

For instance, to implement Salesforce in a healthcare environment requires a deep understanding of industry best practices and processes. Companies with complex workflows or extensive databases require a significant amount of time and expertise to implement a CRM system successfully.

This is where the deep industry experience of our consultants enables us to perform a thorough business process analysis, followed by our unique agile deployment methodology. With hundreds of successful implementations under our belt, we take the time to understand our customer’s business strategies before we implement highly customized Cloud solutions in an efficient manner. Over time, we found our sweet spot in digital transformation scenarios like these:

1. A company has deployed Salesforce but their CRM has not been integrated with their ERP or their business operations.
2. The customer has Salesforce but still uses Excel and other tools outside of the CRM.
3. The business has outgrown their initial implementation and needs to update their CRM.
4. A pre-IPO company, which needs to implement new processes and structures in a cost-effective way.

### **Please elaborate on your Salesforce solutions.**

In order to help organizations that are in need of a highly customized solution, but want to save time and resources to implement industry best practices, West Coast Consulting Group has developed Salesforce accelerators. These accelerators provide a jump-start for organizations, to boost the time to successful deployment.

We provide Salesforce accelerators for a number of industries, including



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home care, healthcare, collections, high tech, and solar energy, to integrate the different industry-specific functions and enable organizations to rapidly deploy business solutions in the cloud.

In addition, we offer an accelerator solution centered on data, to assist companies integrate Salesforce with other backend systems. In one particular case, we designed and offered a unique functionality that allowed a customer to surface records in real time, eliminating the need to replicate files from the Salesforce platform onto their database. This allowed the customer to avoid storage complications and enhance efficiency.

### **Could you give us a case study where you helped a client overcome a specific challenge?**

Highlighting the impact of our services is our collaboration with First Databank (FDB), a leading provider of pharmaceutical data context-relevant products and services. The company was rapidly expanding through mergers and acquisitions, and their previous CRM system was no longer able to support their dynamic subscription business model. Additionally, FDB had many complex requirements in their marketing, sales, relationship management, and customer care group that their CRM was challenged to fulfill.

Owing to our deep expertise in the platform and a strong background in bringing large, siloed organizational teams to work together, we were able to help them transition their CRM to Salesforce. The implementation of Salesforce included complex functionality analysis across all departments, well-defined complex integration between Salesforce and critical product and organizational aspects, functional training, and rollout across the entire organization.

FDB's new system complies with current company processes and seamlessly supports the subscription business model. The sales team can now quote complex products and eliminate the use of Excel spreadsheets. In addition, the Salesforce CRM system provides management with detailed reports and dashboards to get a real-time view of the business across sales, marketing, finance, and customer care.

### **How does West Coast Consulting Group envision the next 12-18 months?**

From a geographical growth standpoint, West Coast Consulting Group is planning to expand into the Boston area to better serve clients on the East Coast.

Currently, we are working on AI development including using IBM Watson with Cloud-based CRM and backend systems such as their ERP and integrating customer solutions with Google Apps. Further, West Coast Consulting Group's efforts are focused on incorporating artificial intelligence to increase the efficiency of our Work Order-related Accelerator. Our expansion is primarily focused on the technological side, building accelerators that integrate AI, data mining, and integration capabilities to enhance our ability to aid our clients with their implementation, CRM, and other cloud computing needs.

West Coast Consulting Group's mission is to help companies get more value from their Salesforce investment and to build systems that are accepted and used by their employees. In order to achieve this, we are continually innovating to develop unique functionalities and prepare our customers for the future needs of the specific markets they serve. **CA**