

# Effective Customer Relationship Management through e-CRM

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*In recent years CRM has made significant strides world over as an effective aid to serve customers. There may be hardly any organisation which in some way or the other is not using CRM philosophy. CRM received fillip with the advent of internet and related web enabled technologies. As companies make the transition from a product-only focus to a customer focus, CRM emerges as a technology that brings customers closer to organizations to retrieve information online. Customer Relationship Management is no longer considered a business trend, but an industry standard that is required to secure and maintain competitive advantage. CRM, when correctly and effectively utilized, results in increased profitability and greater customer loyalty, two key needs for any organization. In view of considerable research and developments in web enabled CRM area during last two decades it becomes necessary to take stock of emerging technologies and identify emerging opportunities and bottlenecks in implementation. In this paper it is attempted to review developments in e-CRM that facilitates online service to customers. Apart from review of technology related developments, the study focuses on identification of thrust areas resulting benefits and implementation strategies.*

**Key Words:** *Customer Relationship Management, e-CRM, Customer Relationship Path, Implementation Strategies*

## Introduction

Over the last ten years, many companies and organizations have implemented CRM (Customer Relationship Management) systems. In most cases, these systems were designed to support call center and e-mail channels, and more recently Internet and Mobile channels. An increasing number of companies are considering implementing e-CRM systems to satisfy the growing expectation of customer service. e-CRM systems have unique characteristics that support customer-business interactions that are linked to internal business processes and systems across different areas for operational and analytical purposes.

Although, originally, the term e-CRM was viewed as a form of CRM that focused on eBusiness channels (Romana and Fjermestad, 2001) or CRM-

applications that use ASP/SaaS (Application Service Provisioning/ Software as a Service) approaches (Pan and Lee, 2003), recently a broader view seems to have emerged (Jukic, Jukic, Meamber and Nezelek, 2003). e-CRM refers to a kind of CRM that is channel independent in the sense that it uses one, company-wide set of data and one set of business rules to manage customer interaction via any channel at any time. In practice, web technologies are used in most cases for process management and to provide representatives with information and functionality.

Freeland (2003) asserts that the internet is a channel that will continue to increase in customer relationship management and utilization for all companies both now and in the future. The Internet is terminology which includes all of the following:

“email, world wide web, chat rooms, e-forums,” blogs, and so forth (Kennedy, 2006, p. 59). The internet can provide an overall better and more consistent customer experience, and also allows for increasing data collection and better customer personalization experiences. This, in turn, all lead to increased profitability from customers and greater customer loyalty (Freeland, 2003). The research of Hamid and Kassim (2004) determines that “click-and-mortar companies show a higher percentage of using the Internet technology for CRM compared to pure dotcom companies. There is a positive impact on the utilization of Internet technology on CRM” (p. 103).

Hamid and Kassim (2004) further determine through their research that customer loyalty, while partially impacted by the internet, also is determined by a combination on online experience with things such as the quality of after sales service. Furthermore Hamid and Kassim (2004) found that the internet is currently most being used by companies “primarily for providing corporate information in order to build brand identity” (p. 107). Therefore they are “providing corporate information rather than [using the internet] for other strategic purposes” (Hamid and Kassim, 2004, p. 107). This research supports the claim that there is still ample room for companies to embrace broader CRM initiatives including a more customer-focused and useful online presence.

Kennedy (2006) defines customer relationship management as being “about identifying a company's best customers and maximizing the value from them by satisfying and retaining them” (p.58). There are those on both sides of the fence who argue for and against CRM, but the research remains consistent that a properly implemented, company-wide CRM initiative will truly save

company money, increase revenue, and grow customer loyalty. Competitive times such as these, and a future to only grow more competitive in the commercial industry, require competitive advantages to give companies a leading edge.

Kennedy (2006) asserts in her research that e-CRM is “the proverbial double edged sword, presenting both opportunities and challenges for companies considering its adoption and implementation” (p. 58). Kennedy (2006) furthermore notes that the internet can provide a platform for e-CRM initiatives that will help companies to develop and better manage customer relationships and improve and facilitate customer supplier relationships, as well. Along with the internet's ability to facilitate an increase in customer loyalty, some companies who go above and beyond institute a specific customer loyalty program.

### **Electronic Customer Relationship Management (e-CRM)**

In the opinion of (Smith and Chaffey 2005, 259) there is nothing new since good marketers have been taking care of their customers for many decades now. What is new is the lack of CRM in the fast moving online world:

1. A world where customer expectations are often higher than those of the offline world.
2. A world where customers` raised expectations is regularly crushed by successful offline companies.
3. A world where customer e-mails are left unanswered for days.
4. A world where immediate responses are expected but often times are not delivered.
5. A world where satisfying customers is simply not enough to keep them.

6. A world of consolidating relationships...where surfers visit fewer sites but spend longer with them.

The researcher agreed with Smith and Chaffey that Customer Relationship Management is very important in today's business in order to accelerate good relationship between the organisation and her customers and to create satisfying scene for customers in daily business transactions.

The emergence of e-commerce has changed many aspects of existing businesses hence companies need the ability to track and manage internet-based e-commerce events. Companies have to maintain consistency across all interaction channels and across all areas of company customers interacts with. Many organizations are considering adopting the concept of Electronic Customer Relationship Management (e-CRM) (Pan & Lee 2003).

Pan *et al.* (2003) wrote that e-CRM provides the ability to capture, integrate, and distribute data gained at the organization's Website throughout the enterprise.

Pavithira (2010) argued that e-CRM can be defined as activities to manage customer relationships by using the internet, web browsers or other electronic touch points. He said e-CRM has become a requirement for survival, not just a competitive advantage.

Wan (2009, 273) said examples of e-CRM include frequently asked questions (FAQ's), chat, e-mail, mobile, sales force management and customer database.

e-CRM allows customers to access company services from more and more places, since the internet access points are increasing day by day (Pavithira 2010).

## **Difference between CRM and e-CRM**

Differences between CRM and e-CRM are subtle, but important. They concern the underlying technology and its interfaces with users and other systems. Pourasghar (2007, 16) did not think there are differences between CRM and e-CRM. He said considering the strategic perspective, no differences between CRM and E-CRM exist as both concepts have the overall goal of an increased Customer Lifetime Value, and aim to increase customer retention and decrease service costs but the process level, he said several distinctions between the two concepts become observable. He mentioned further that while conventional communication processes are often time delayed, e-CRM allows organizations to always operate in real-time and more than that interactions with customers are transparent so that organizations are able to draw conclusions on customer behavior and measure the success of activities. Unlike conventional CRM processes, e-CRM processes imply high automation of interaction.

The application programs in CRM are written with back-end operations in mind; the emphasis is on data collection and the optimality of interface with the user's PC (client). Web-enabling CRM application involves downloading applets to the client – a time consuming process. (Chandra & Strickland 2004, 3-4).

According to (Pan *et al.* 2003) e-CRM expands the traditional CRM techniques by integrating technologies of new electronic channels. e-CRM solution supports marketing, sales and service and with the advancement of Web-based technology, market dynamics are driving companies to adopt e-CRM (Refer Table 1 and 2).

**Table 1: The differences between CRM and e-CRM**

	<b>Customer Data</b>	<b>Analysis of Customer Characteristics</b>	<b>Customer Service</b>
<b>CRM</b>	Data Warehouse Customer Information Transaction History Production Information	Transaction Analysis Customer Profile Past Transaction History	Target Marketing Static Service One-way Service Time and Space Limits
	Web House Customer Information Transaction History Products Information Click Stream Contents Information	Transaction Analysis Customer Profile Past Transaction History Activity Analysis Exploratory Activities (Navigation, shopping cart, shopping pattern, etc)	1-to-1 Marketing Real Time Service Two-way Service At any time From Anywhere

**(Source: Communications of the ACM (Pan & Lee 2003))**

e-CRM cannot be separated from CRM, it needs to be integrated and seamlessly. However, many organizations do have specific e-CRM initiatives or staff responsible for e-CRM. Both CRM and e-CRM are not just about technology and databases, it is not just a process or a way of doing things, it requires, in fact, a complete customer culture (Chaffey, Chadwick, Mayer & Johnston 2009, 340).

**Table 2: Technological differences between CRM and e-CRM**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>CRM</b>	<b>e-CRM</b>
Customer Contacts	Customer contact usually initiated through traditional means of retail store, telephone, or fax.	In addition to telephone, contact also initiated through the Internet, e-mail, wireless, mobile and PDA technologies.
System Interface	Works with the back-end applications through ERP systems	Designed for front-end applications, which in turn interface with backend applications through ERP systems, data warehouses, and data marts.
System Overhead (client computers)	Web-enabled applications require a PC client to download various applets and applications. These applications and applets would have to be rewritten for different platforms.	No such requirement; the browser is the customer's portal to e-CRM.
Customization and Personalization of Information	Different audiences require different views and types of information. Personalized views for different audiences are not possible. Individual customization requires programming changes.	Highly individualized "dynamic" and personalized views based on purchases and preferences are possible. Each audience individually customizes the views.
System Focus	System is designed around products and job functions (for internal use). Web-enabled applications are designed around one department or business unit.	System is designed around the customer's needs (for external use). Enterprise wide portals are designed and are not limited to a department or business unit.
System Maintenance and Modification	Implementation is longer and management is costly because the system is situated at various and on several servers.	Reduced time and cost. System implementation and expansion can be managed in one location and on one server.

**(Source: Issues in Information Systems)**

According to Chaffey, Chadwick, Mayer and Johnston the researcher agreed that e-CRM is more than technology. It requires socio-cultural efforts on the part of the company to make it a reality. Also, every worker in different department of a company should be saturated with e-CRM policy and culture. If it is done this way the company will have e-CRM system that makes impact on her customers and bring in consistent profit through customers retainability and continual patronage.

### **e-CRM through e-Commerce Web Portal**

According to (Chaffey and Smith 2008, 369) relationships can get stale unless you work hard at it. This means your website needs to be updated and kept fresh and tailored – your offerings need to be more attractive than the competition.

In defining the scope of e-CRM, three different levels can be distinguished: This includes the minimum necessary services such as website effectiveness and responsiveness as well as order fulfillment.

These services include order tracking, product configuration and customization as well as security/trust. These are extra services such as online auctions, online training and education. (Pavithira 2010).

Trust is an important factor to consider when thinking of electronic customer relationship management. For any meaningful business transaction to take place, trust must exist between the company and her customers. If a customer try to patronize a company for the first time and discovered that she is not trustworthy that will be the end of her patronage to that company. There must be tools of trust, sign of trust and reality of trust in a company if e-CRM will be effective.

Pavithira *et al.* (2010), “the rise of internet and e-

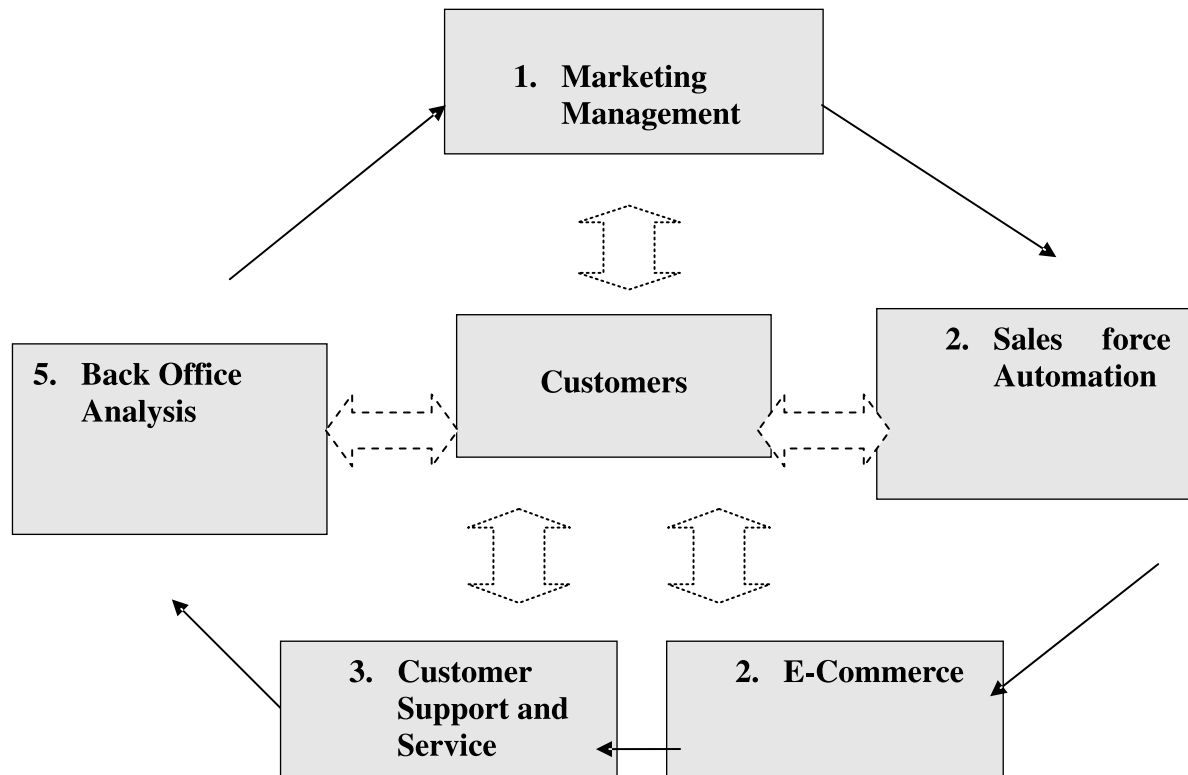
CRM has boosted the options for self-service activities. CRM activities are mainly of two different types. Reactive service is where the customer has a problem and contacts the company. Proactive service is where the manager has decided not to wait for the customer to contact the firm, but to be aggressive to contact the customer himself in order to establish a dialogue and solve problems.”

### **e-CRM through the Customer Lifecycle**

Today companies are being confronted by an increasingly sophisticated customer universe, which expects and demands a higher level of immediate service across multiple access channels. Customers feel that customer service should occur via the channel of communication that they specify to be communicated, or at least the channel through which contact with a company was initiated. Customers not only want to shop and get customer service through multiple communication channels, such as the telephone, web chat, electronic mail, and the web, they desire the ability to move seamlessly from one medium to another.

e-CRM enables to serves customers online and covers areas like content management, product and pricing models, customer service support, problem resolution and automated response agents and campaign management functions. In order for a company to provide unified customer communications at different customer interface points, it should be kept in mind that online customers can relate with a company through several channels. In view of multi-point contact with customers, e-CRM implementation requires organisations to have several devices and technologies in place such as e-mail inbound/outbound support, chat/browser control, voice-over internet protocol (VoIP), multi-language support; messaging, work-flow and web measurement devices.

e-CRM embraces the front-office business functions of sales, marketing and customer service, and supports the back-office business and analysis operations spanning these functions, all in a web-centric fashion (Talisma, 2001). Fig. 1 illustrates how e-CRM functionality supports each of the five business components of marketing, sales, customer service and support, e-commerce and the electronic processes in the back-office analysis.



**Figure 1 : e-CRM through the Customer Lifecycle**

### e-CRM Technology

An e-CRM system is to be accessible to customers including company users and administrators from all access support points, round-the-clock on a 24/7 basis (Technosoft, 2003 p. 1). The e-CRM system should provide access to customers through a variety of touch points namely web self-help, e-mail, web forms, chat, VoIP, fax, phone, wireless and face-to-face contact. It should also provide access to system users through various client systems such as personal computers, mobile phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs).

The e-CRM system needs to support integration

with customer interactions taking place in web based media, such as e-mail and web forms including those from traditional channels such as telephone. Given that interfacing with customers is fundamental to e-CRM, the system must also have facilities to maintain a complete organised history of a customer's contacts with a company, regardless of the communication channel used. Ideally, an e-CRM solution should feature three-tier architecture to provide scalability, offer flexibility and simplify maintenance (Technosoft, 2003 p. 1). An open architecture is necessary to allow e-CRM solutions to be extended and integrated with external systems on all three levels,

or tiers. The three tiers are listed below:

**Presentation tier.** The 'presentation tier' includes interfaces for various types of access methods from both the customer and client user or administers point-of-view. Depending on available technology and its accessibility provision there is to be flexibility to access Local Area Network (LAN), Wide Area Network (WAN) , wireless, portal and remote access via the Internet and offline connectivity (Technosoft, 2003, p.1).

**Business logic tier.** This tier consists of the core application logic, the accompanying objects and services.

**Data tier.** This tier should comprise of a full-function database management system which could be software such as Microsoft SQL Server or Oracle.

**Security.** Although it was not originally included as a tier, the author of this study is of the opinion that Information Security Architecture (ISA) should feature as a separate tier within the e-CRM architecture.

### **Benefits of e-CRM**

Most organizations invest huge sums in defining and automating their core business processes. No doubt, they have benefited by standardizing the processes, yet there are several areas which remain unresolved where e-CRM can play effective role. The following benefits can be realized with proper e-CRM implementation:

- 1. Increased customer loyalty.** An effective e-CRM system enables a company to communicate with its customers using a single and consistent voice, regardless of the communication channel. This is because with e-CRM software, everyone in an organization has access to the same transaction history and information about the customer. Information captured by an e-CRM system helps a company to identify the actual costs of winning and retaining individual customers.
- 2. More effective marketing.** Having detailed customer information from an e-CRM system allows a company to predict the kind of products that a customer is likely to buy as well as the timing of purchases. In the short to medium term, this information helps an organization create more effective and focused marketing/ sales campaigns designed to attract the desired customer audience (www.epiphany.com). e-CRM allows for more targeted campaigns and tracking of campaign effectiveness. Customer data can be analyzed from multiple perspectives to discover which elements of a marketing campaign had the greatest impact on sales and profitability, for example (Greenberg 2001).
- 3. Improved customer service and support.** An e-CRM system provides a single repository of customer information. This enables a company to serve customer needs quickly and efficiently at all potential contact points, eliminating the customer's frustrating and time-consuming "hunt" for help (www.epiphany.com). e-CRM-enabling technologies include search engines, live help, e-mail management, news feeds/ content management and multi-language support.
- 4. Greater efficiency and cost reduction.** Automating customer data mining saves valuable human resources. Integrating customer data into a single database allows marketing teams, sales forces, and other departments within a company to share information and work toward common corporate objectives using the same underlying statistics (www.epiphany.com). Examples of

this are identifying unproductive/ underutilized resources, closer tracking of costs, better forecasting for the pipeline and setting realistic project metrics and measurements to quantify return on investment

## Barriers to e-CRM

According to (Kincaid 2003, 66-67), adding the internet to our CRM efforts makes lots of sense but it is not necessarily clear sailing ahead. Pricewaterhouse Coopers LLP said the top three concerns would need to be addressed to persuade those not currently using the internet to participate in e-commerce: They are privacy, security, and ease of use. Below Table (Table 3) lists the objections

most often cited by customers as reasons they do not shop online and gives some strategies for counteracting them.

The three major barriers to adoption of e-CRM mentioned by Kincaid in his book are supported by the researcher but other factors like illiteracy and complacency can be a contributive barrier to customer's adoption of e-CRM. We have different customers with different behavioral pattern and to really discover individual differences in order to make electronic customers relationship management work, there will be need for a company to embrace responsive e-CRM methodology by moving closer to their customers in order to identify their needs.

**Table 3: Barriers to Customer Adoption of the Internet**

Barrier	Customer Concern	Strategies	Comments
Customer Confidence While many customers are eager to shop online, many are not	The processes seem unfamiliar and confusing.	Design and build your e-CRM systems so they are simple, helpful, and friendly. Understand and prepare for what automation does well and where it is weak.	Look for ways to mimic the best of your company's offline interactions with your customers, while eliminating disconnects and bottlenecks.
	No real person is there to answer questions. We may treat our computers as if they are real people, but they are not. So we cannot prepare for all possible questions a customer might have.	Weave in human contact where possible, such as a call center direct link from your web site.	How complicated are your products or your online processes?
	Interactions can be cold and unfriendly.	Make your key managers visit your web site and act like customers for a day.	This will teach them what your customers go through and ensure that you get the funding that you need to build an effective e-CRM program.
Customer Trust Customers don't trust us with their data, especially online.	Openness of the Internet makes it appear hard to secure data.	Do not ask for more information than you really need. Build relationships over time and get more information as you build trust.	If you require too much information, customers will fill in garbage. How many customers named Mickey Mouse (or worse) are in your database?
	Internet privacy issues sell more newspapers than credit card piracy or stories about what is right. Customers perceive that there is no safe place online.	Be open about what data you collect and why you need it. Be clear and simple in your expectations. Say it loud and often.	Give customers good reasons (benefits) to share their data with you, and use it for their benefit in the future.
	Customers do not understand what the real dangers are, and they do not have consistent expectations.	Use consistent terms and language. Join privacy education consortia and privacy seal programs.	Help educate your customers so they can understand what should concern them and what to look for.
Legislation Some legislation threatens the internet's ability to grow as a medium for transacting business.	Legislation may limit the information that can be collected online and how it can be used.	Make your Privacy and Security policies part of your customer loyalty and relationship-management program.	Use your privacy policy to support your brand image and build trust.

Source: (Kincaid 2003, 66-67)



## Implementation Strategies for e-CRM

Once a company has identified the need for e-CRM, it has to plan for implementation for which following aspects need to be taken into account.

**1. Developing customer-focused business strategies.** The objective of this step is not to try to change the customer to the company's goals but to listen to the customer and try to create opportunities beneficial to both. It is important to offer customers what they are currently demanding and anticipate what they are likely to demand in the future. This can be achieved by providing a variety of existing access channels for customers, such as e-mail, telephone and fax, and by preparing to provide for future access channels such as wireless communication.

**2. Retooling business functions.** Starting to do business via e-CRM requires disruptive organizational change in order to determine which departments/functions are truly servicing the customer and which ones are only adding to overhead. After identifying and reducing surplus manpower, administrative time and cost should come down. A major factor here is that the changes needed during an e-CRM implementation will only be possible with buy-in from the top levels of management and with company-wide accountability of all stakeholders. Positive organizational change will not simply materialize on its own. It is the responsibility of senior management to ensure that all employees understand the need of the changes, how the new structure will benefit from them, and how it will enhance their ability to serve their customers better.

**3. Work process re-engineering.** Departmental role and responsibility changes from restructuring business functions will

needs adopting new work processes. Choices here are to take the traditional step-wise approach or an integrated one towards improving work efficiency. Under the step-wise approach, departments are treated as separate efficiency entities. This rarely produces good results because the goals of each department can become too parochial, and departments tend to compete internally for their own benefit at the expense of what's best for the company.

**4. Technology choices.** The focus here is to consider the company's industry, the company's position within its industry, which e-CRM implementations are good candidates for the company in particular. Criteria for technology selections includes scalability of software, tool set flexibility for customization, stability of the existing e-CRM application code, compatibility of e-CRM application with legacy and Internet systems, level of technical support available during and after implementation, upgradable support, availability of additional modules and security.

**5. Training and implementation.** This thrust area is apparently the most important one in e-CRM implementation effort. Depending on the number of users, training times will vary from company to company. Training of employees should occur before the new e-CRM system has been implemented to ensure a seamless transition for customers. Examples of training include sending users to training facilities at considerable cost or bringing in an on-site consultant. Anyone who requires access to the system should receive full, appropriate and timely training. Training should be an ongoing, managed activity as systems must continuously change and evolve. All training and tools used should be thoroughly documented for existing, new and future employees. Without proper documentation, e-CRM system may not work.

A firm should plan to spend about 5-7 per cent of its total e-CRM implementation on training (Patton, 2001b).

### **Difficulties Commonly Encountered during Implementation**

In an attempt to quickly implement e-CRM, too many companies start spending huge sums before developing a comprehensive e-CRM strategy. The following list outlines potential pitfalls with e-CRM implementation process often encounters and needs to be overcome.

1. Mismatch between a company and the vendor's CRM software. Every effort must be made to find a vendor whose product is flexible enough to emulate the company's best practices and does not force the company to adopt the vendor's best practices. Realistically, no single software solution will handle all e-CRM needs equally well. Therefore, each company should select the solution that best handles the critical customer-facing functions and maintains robust links to the existing ERP system.
2. A poor understanding of the company's business processes. Each of the business processes should be reviewed, analyzed and documented before shopping for a vendor.
3. e-CRM implementations that take more than 90 days have a high failure rate. A company should be skeptical about implementations that are considerably longer than the 90 days.
4. Vendor stability should be a criteria used in selection. Financial stability of the vendor needs to be checked to assess whether or not it is likely to be able to survive a softening economy.
5. Rejection by end users is always a possibility when business functions are restructured. If

the new processes required for a successful e-CRM implementation are not developed with the knowledge, help and acceptance of the employees who will be relied upon to use them, the project may fail.

6. Size of project. Some e-CRM implementations have failed because their initial scope was too broad. The risk associated with a failed pilot is much lower than for a full rollout, and it gives your company the opportunity to evaluate the positives and negatives of the pilot as one plans for a larger-scale implementation.

Unfortunately, avoiding these 'pitfalls' is, in many cases, easier said than done. Often this is because sales and marketing teams are reluctant to adopt the new, automated CRM systems.

### **Future Trends in Multi-Channel Approaches in e-CRM**

The future is wide open for companies to adopt multi-channel approaches to customer relationship management. The research of Warrington, Gangstad, Feinberg and de Ruyter (2007) asserts that "multi-channel retailers that utilize an e-CRM approach stand to benefit in multiple arenas by providing targeted customer service as well as gaining operational and competitive advantages" (p.57). For example, Freeland (2003) asserts that technologies such as PDA's, mobile phones, and other wireless technologies have not yet been as fully embraced as they can be in assisting to maintain the customer relationship. Some companies, however, have embraced text messaging to reach out to and keep their customers informed of deals, info, and trends to assist in developing customer loyalty and satisfaction.

The current trend for marketing is to include multichannel communications across many platforms all for the same message. For example,

television is no long a passive experience. Customers of cable companies and those who watch specific shows can participate through text messaging. Many shows today allow customers to text in and possibly have their message displayed on the television in real time. They furthermore can blog about what they are seeing on the television on the show's website, and there interact with other customers who watch the same shows. This utilization of different channels to create an overarching customer experience is truly the future of multi-channel CRM marketing and customer relationship development. Kennedy (2006) asserts that mobile technologies are safe, reliable, automatable, and are able to be customized and personalized with little additional cost. Warrington, et al, (2004) assert that "if retailers are offering shoppers multiple channel options now, it is expected that pressure will increase for all retailers to do so in the future" (p. 64). It remains valuable for a company to utilize multiple channels because research has proven that multi-channel shoppers spend more money than those who utilize simply one channel (Warrington, et al, 2004). One company who has excelled in utilizing multiple channels to assist with developing a strong customer relationship marketing program is Amazon.com.

### **Concluding Remarks**

e-CRM has evoked considerable interest about its effectiveness and risks amongst many organizations and researchers. e-CRM remains a priority for organizations, even as economic conditions cause IT budgets to be scrutinized. This paper has shown how e-CRM can add to traditional marketing concepts. e-CRM is not here to change the marketing but instead to enhance it. This paper examines problems that can accompany an e-CRM implementation and how to avoid them. In addition, critical issues have been identified that companies need to consider while starting e-CRM

implementation. In addition, customer-centric and corporate benefits of implementing an e-CRM solution have been reviewed with the understanding that e-CRM efforts will only succeed when organizations make their customers win.

When companies understand customer buying behavior they can avail cost savings and increased customer loyalty. Identifying products customers want is the first step of product mix expansion, new product launches and product differentiation. e-CRM can successfully implement new products, launch new marketing campaigns, and satisfy customer needs and wants. To be successful e-CRM requires that organizations allocate sufficient resources for building customer relationships and continuously evaluating e-CRM initiatives.

The evaluation and benefits realization mechanisms can expedite the organizational learning process and help make e-CRM work to the benefits of all customers and external partners, whether viewed from a narrow buyer/seller perspective or a broader supply chain perspective. E-CRM is an essential tool for any organization's high performance and depends on worker's effectiveness more than their efficiency. By doing so, companies can engage their customers in an ongoing knowledge exchange in which the company can learn more about market and customer needs and work to develop and deliver the products and services that can exceed the customers' expectations and leap ahead of market trends.

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