

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS IN CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM) -

A Successful CRM Implementation Project in a Service Company

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Plagiarism Statement

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Table of Contents

Abstract 9
Chapter 1: Introduction 10
1.1 Background 10
1.2 What is a CRM? 12
1.3 CRM Components 16
1.3.1 Customer 16
1.3.2 Relationship 17
1.3.3 Management 17
1.4 CRM Functions 17
1.5 Benefits of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) 18
1.5.1 Development of Strong Life Time Relationships with Customers 18
1.5.2 Cost reduction 19
1.5.3 Better customer service 19
1.5.4 Increased customer satisfaction 20
1.5.5 Better customer retention 20
1.5.6 More repeat business 20
1.5.7 Simplified Marketing and Targeting 20
1.5.8 Staff Resistance 21
1.6 Research Objectives and Questions 21
Chapter 2: Research Methodology 24
2.1 Introduction 24
2.2 Research Methodology and Data Analysis 25
2.3 Proposed research approach 27
2.4 Interview as a data collection technique 27
2.5 Data Analysis 28
2.6 Validity and Reliability 28
Chapter 3: Literature review 30
Chapter 4: Implementation of the CRM 35
Implementation[10] 35
Chapter 5: Learning from Failure 38
Recommended key steps 38
Chapter 6: Discussion and Interpretation of Findings 40

The Importance of Customer Segmentation 48
Chapter 7: Conclusion 49
Chapter 8: Future research 51
List of Figures 52
Glossary of Terms 52
Bibliography 54
Appendix 60

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Abstract

This research paper examines the strategic role of a CRM application in an organization and analyze the success factors of CRM implementation[10] in firm.

The purpose of this study is to find the **critical success factors** of customer relationship management implementation[10] from a Customer Service Company in Cyprus. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to collect the needed data. The interviews were written or recorded then transcribed and analyzed by implying content analysis method. The results have reflected that the main success factors such as training employees, top management commitment and the desired organizational culture have been determined that impacts the project significantly and intensely toward obtaining the desired results. The case study illustrates that CRM is a complex and holistic concept, organized around business processes and the integration of information technologies. Commitment of the top management and the influence of a leadership[4] style in a teams are very critical in order to motivate employees to follow organizations goals. The study, as mentioned before, highlights that implementing CRM requires effective [2] leadership[4], sourcing, targeting and evaluation strategies.

Keywords: Customer Relationship Management (CRM), effective [2], efficient, Relationship Marketing, Strategic Planning , customer relationship management implementation[10], customer focus, process approach, quality, customer information, communication, leadership

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Many organizations faced a hard competition in the market they compete so the identify even more the importance to create strong relationships with customers. Businesses are in a constant race of maximizing their profitability[11] by keeping the current customers but also to gain or poach new ones, competing for customers on a globalized market like never before. CRM is aimed for building strong long term relationships that add value by increasing customer satisfaction and allow company to keep customers in order to coming back repeatedly. It aims is to help organizations build one to one , personalized customer relationships in such a way that both the organizations and the client get the most out of the exchange, providing both parties with long term benefits.

The reasons and motivation for conducting the research work at this university were to introduce the CRM capabilities for customer service companies and their benefits a company. Based on my 14 years' experience in the field of IT and especially in CRM systems, I would like to spread out the risks (visible or invisible) of CRM implementation[10] in an organization. The main aspect of this research as is the head topic, is to present the critical success factors for implementing a CRM application system, based on the company selected for the research.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has risen to the agenda of many organizations who want to set in action their marketing[8] and sales strategies. Customer Relationship Management applications can be viewed as information systems that enable organizations to realize a customer focus[6].

As mentioned above nowadays organizations realized in the business market, management that customers are the central part of a business and that a company's success depends on effectively managing relationships with them. So, one of the initial goals that management has its employees to achieve is based on a saying such as "the customers are always right", "do whatever it takes to deliver your promise" or something similar. All objectives are decided to one crucial goal that is to make customers satisfy because they are the ones who keep the business run. (ThuyUyen, et

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al., 2007, pp. 102-115) In the previous years, many companies did not realize that client's relationship with company is a crucial factor of success and often uncared for their customers with the result that many of these customers did not come back. Top management must provide tools to the front end users in order to track customers' communications[9] and requirement with the firms and allow employees to store all the useful data around customer profile, needs and wants. (Gefen & Ridings, 2002, pp. 47-69)

CRM can be interpreted as a process of digitizing a staff's knowledge about his or her customers. This is because in a usual business process, customer relation staff would normally be required to remember their clients' requirements, behaviors, tastes, preferences, etc. In real meaning, CRM focuses on building long-standing and sustainable customer relationships that adds value for both the customer and the organization. (Daft, 2003).

CRM system is frequently incorporated with other decision support systems across all functional areas, such as (ERP) Enterprise Recourse Planning system, (EIS) Executive Information Systems, (SCM) Supply Chain Management System, and Product Life-Cycle Management Systems. By doing so, organizations can produce better management information in terms of planning, acquiring, and controlling across all channels and thus have greater products and services that direct to larger revenues and larger profits. CRM systems can also assist organizations increase their abilities to interact with their customers. This not only leads[11] to improved quality[7] but will improve the speed response to customer's needs (Anderson, 2006)

By itself, CRM makes a required tool for business because it distinguishes an organization from its competitors with the knowledge resources about product ideas and the ability to identify and find solutions to customer's issues. CRM can cut down the distance between customers and the organization, contributing to organizational success through customer loyalty, greater service, better data gathering, and organizational learning. Some have argued that customer satisfaction and loyalty is a science; however, Phelon (2004) takes it up a level by saying that "customer leverage is an art." (Phelon, 2004)

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1.2 What is a CRM?

Customer Relationship Management is a holistic strategic approach to managing customer relationships to increase shareholder value. CRM stands for Customer Relationship Management. Is a designed and structured process to collect and store data into the database, mainly related to customers - but also can keep data for partners and others – to grasp features of customers, and to apply those qualities in by using specific marketing[8] activities. (Payne, 2012) (Swift, 2001)

Dr Philip Kotler, the Marketing[8] Guru in his earlier definition he mentioned that "Marketing[8] is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others." He also defined Customer Relationship Management (CRM) as "the overall process of building and maintaining profitable customer relationships by delivering superior customer value and satisfaction." (Kotler, et al., 2012)

Based on Siebel (one of the leaders in the CRM area) state that CRM is "Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a way to identify, acquire, and retain customers, a business' greatest asset. Is an integrated approach to identifying, acquiring, and retaining customers? By enabling companies to deal with and coordinate customer interactions across several channels, departments, line of businesses and geographies. CRM helps organizations maximize the value of every customer interaction and drive superior corporate performance. Research has shown that companies that create satisfied, loyal customers have more repeat business, lower customer-acquisition costs, and stronger brand value—all of which translates into better financial performance". (Siebel, 2013) (Shrivastava, 2012)

"The purpose of a business is to create and keep a customer." (Sturdy, 2012, p. 167)

This succinct truth from Peter Drucker in *The Practice of Management* (1954) is a apt and insightful definition of CRM (Customer Relationship Management). But a lot has changed. CRM now involves technology, software, inbound and outbound marketing[8],

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lead[11] acquisition, databases, multiple touch points, multi-channel marketing[8], enterprise solutions and social media. (Drucker, 1993)

A business-oriented definition commonly accepted from Gartner Inc. (Gartner, Inc. is the world's leading information technology research and advisory company. Deliver the technology-related insight necessary for clients to make the right decisions (Gartner, 2015)) is as described below:

CRM is a business strategy [5] that maximizes profitability[11], revenue and customer satisfaction by organizing around customer segment, fostering behavior that satisfies customers and implementing customer – centric processes. To achieve the long – term value of CRM, enterprises must understand that it is a strategy[5] involving the whole business and thus should be approached at an enterprise level.

It is very important to realized and understand that CRM is a combination both a **business approach**, in order to improve management of customer operations decision making and also a **collection of technologies** for the automation of those operations. This is a critical distinction that many people unfortunately failed to understand. For those who accept and treat CRM primarily technologically wised, they focused only on a secondary aspect and unknowingly reduced the importance of strategic value it can deliver. (Bligh & Turk, 2004)

By itself, CRM is a vital tool for business because it distinguishes and organization from its competitors with the knowledge resources for product ideas and the ability to resolve on time customer issues. CRM can minimize the distance between customers and the firm, contributing to organizational success and give a competitive advantage among competitors, through loyalty, extent personalized service, quality[7] data gathering and organizational learning.

It is well known that as customer's expectations from a company, as their needs are answered, then company's achievement is the long and profitable relationship created. This promotes customers to be loyal and undoubtedly will influence positively on company's profitability[11] in a long run. Finally, companies that are able to successful implement CRM can compete effectively and efficiently within the industry and in a

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strong competitive environment. The table below summarized CRM definitions and explanations from different researchers:

Table1: CRM Definitions

Author	Year	Definition
Blattberg & Deighton	1993	CRM approach is based on positive relationships with customers to increase customer loyalty. (Blattberg. & Deighton, 1996, p. 136)
Wyner	1999	CRM is a business strategy that increases volume of transaction, revenue and customer satisfaction. (Wyner, 1999, pp. 39-41)
Pepper & Rogers	1999	CRM that is created to have a mutual relationship between seller and the buyer. (Peppers & Rogers, 2002)
Goldenberg	2000	CRM is a one to one approach that tries to have the most information regarding customers. (Goldenberg, 2000)
Bose	2001	CRM increases customer value, also it can be used to motivate valuable customers to remain loyal. (Bose, 2002, pp. 89-97)
Swift	2001	CRM is an approach to understanding and influencing customer behavior by meaningful communications[9] to increase customer retention, loyalty and profitability. (Swift, 2001)
Xu	2002	CRM is an idea about how a company can keep most profitable customers by increasing the value of interaction. (Xu, et al., 2002, pp. 442-452)

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

The Table 2 below present the definition of CRM from 20 vendors, compete in the IT industry:

Table 2: Definition of CRM from IT vendors/experts

Vendor	Definition
Siebel	A way to identify, acquire, and retain customers, a business' greatest asset. (smallbizcrm.com, 2015)
Microsoft	An application used to automate sales and marketing[8] functions and to manage sales and service activities in an organization (Microsoft, 2015)
CRM Forecast	A business strategy directed to understand, anticipate and respond to the needs of an enterprise's current and potential customers in order to grow the relationship value. (crmforecast, 2015)
CIO	A strategy used to learn more about customers' needs and behaviors in order to develop stronger relationships with them. (CIO, 2007)
Martin Walsh	A comprehensive business model for increasing revenues and profits by focusing on customers.
Jennifer Carnie, Customer Systems	The belief that customers should feel like a VIP every time they communicate with your company (smallbizcrm.com, 2015)
James Wong, Avidian Technologies	A business process of understanding, collecting and managing all of the information in a business environment relating to a customer. The goal of CRM is to more effectively communicate with customers and improve customer relationships over time. (smallbizcrm.com, 2015)
Complete CRM Solution	The processes, software, and systems that help an enterprise manage its relationships with prospects, customers, distribution channels, call centers, and suppliers. (smallbizcrm.com, 2015)

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Bluesoft	A person you have dealings with on a professional basis. A relationship as how you interact with someone, your view of them, their view of you and how this affects the way you deal with each other. Being in control of your customer relationships, defining them, steering them in the direction you decide. (Bluesoft, 2015)
MondoCRM	A combination of software and a customized software process to help companies gain a competitive advantage in either sales, marketing[8] or customer service. (Mondocrm, 2015)

1.3 CRM Components

CRM consists of three basic components:

- ✓ Customer
- ✓ Relationship
- ✓ Management.

(Roberts-Witt & L, 2000, pp. 6-22)

1.3.1 Customer

CRM is well known that is customer centric. Customer is business' greatest asset. If no customer exist then there will be no profit for the firm. But a good customer, who provides more profit with less resource, is always scarce because customers are knowledgeable and the competition is huge. CRM through its technology can store and offer the skills to distinguish and manage customers. CRM give a holistic view of each customer in real time. (Wyner, 1999, pp. 39-41)

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

1.3.2 Relationship

Companies build strong relationships with customers with continuous communication[9] and interaction. This success is due to the CRM functionalities that help the employees of company to store all the data needed for a customer profile and also through the follow up functionalities offered by a CRM system, make the employee act on time for any issues about the client. (Wyner, 1999, pp. 39-41) (Tsaklagkanos, 2001, pp. 65-99)

1.3.3 Management

CRM is not an application only for marketing department. It involves continuous improvement in organization culture and processes. The commitment of the Management and their involvement in order to communicate the right business process and company's goals, to the frontline employees/ users of CRM is critical and absolutely necessary. CRM required a comprehensive change in the organization and its people (Wyner, 1999, pp. 39-41) Management must be aware that the organization can take advantage of using CRM functionalities, but keeping in mind that CRM is not about just technology but more about quality[7] service and improvement.

1.4 CRM Functions

CRM application cover all the stages of the clients or leads[11]. Also cover sales cycle from order through delivery to after sales service. CRM also manage the online ordering, e-mail campaigns, knowledge bases that can be used to generate customer profiles, and personalize service, the generation of auto response to e-mail, and also auto help if necessary. As per (Rowley, 2002, pp. 500-511) the below is the list of all the functions that applied in a CRM application:

- ✓ E-Commerce
- ✓ Channel automation software
- ✓ Guided selling and buying
- ✓ Product configuration

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

- ✓ Collaborative commerce software
- ✓ Online Storefront
- ✓ Multi-channel customer management
- ✓ E-service
- ✓ E-mail response management
- ✓ Fulfilment software
- ✓ Order management
- ✓ Electronic agents
- ✓ Catalogue management
- ✓ Content management
- ✓ E-customer
- ✓ Self –service

1.5 Benefits of Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Implementing a customer relationship management (CRM) solution might involve considerable time and expense. However, there are many potential benefits. Any organization can take advantage and get great benefits from a successful CRM implementation[10]. CRM is a way to drive marketing[8] processes into closing sale, it's a way to do business. The analysis below, describe the benefits that a CRM can give: (Peck, et al., 1999)

1.5.1 Development of Strong Life Time Relationships with Customers

The most important benefit of the CRM implementation[10] is the development of strong relationships with customers which can lead to:

- Improved sales cycle and add more possibilities to forecasting sales due to anticipating client's needs and wants.
- Organizations record customer requirements and can easily identify clients need.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

- Cross- selling and up-selling of other services and products by highlighting and suggesting alternatives or enhancements.
- The organization can easily identify through CRM the profitable customers from the one that are not profitable to the company and then can make strategic decisions.
- Organization can increase its reputation among the market and industry, when satisfying customer's needs and retention. And this can easily be processed through CRM of course when the processes are set down and be followed by the employees.
- By establishing strong relationship with customers, the value from the customers can be increased and at the same time the cost of the company associated with supporting and service can be reduced. This increase the overall efficiency of the organization
- Company focus on the most profitable customers and dealing with the unprofitable customers with other less costing effective [2] methods.

1.5.2 Cost reduction

The new way of gaining customers is like a business partner. This is very helpful for companies that the CRM enable customers to make their own data or order entry into the system and store data into the database. With this functionality, less customer staff is needed. Also customers are empowered to find the information they need in order to make their final decision to buy.

1.5.3 Better customer service

CRM enables to store information about customer profile but also customer's requirements. This enable organizations to understand in depth customer's needs and wants so they can provide tailor made customer service solutions. These improvements lead to more sales because customers are more likely to be repeat buyers if they receive a quality[7] product and exceptional service. They are also more likely to suggest those products and services to friends and family. Through a CRM

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

system, customer service representatives have detailed information on their customers readily available so that they can adapt their approaches as needed.

The information related to the interactions to the customers is centralized, so the customer support department can really benefit from this because they have all the information they needed at their fingertips. No need to ask the customer for infinity times and no need to estimate. And mostly the customer can do this on their own because the CRM system is more and more able to expect the need of the customer. The experience got to the customer is greatly enhanced.

1.5.4 Increased customer satisfaction

If the customer feels that he is the most important part of the team instead of just a topic for marketing[8] and sales, customer service is better and the needs are predictable.

1.5.5 Better customer retention

If a Customer Relationship Management system can help to fascinate customers then it can be said that this will increase customer loyalty, and the customers will come back to buy again and again which produce customer retention.

1.5.6 More repeat business

If the customers are pleased then we can repeat business. Initially customers are in a doubt of mind, if the service is good and if the customer is pleased he turns into loyal advocate to the business.

1.5.7 Simplified Marketing and Targeting

CRM makes a wide range of data available to employees, managers and directors. This information allows them to target their actual market (customers) specific consumers with marketing[8] that is based on their buying behaviors. The ability to target so precisely ensures that customers get the products and services they want and need in a timely fashion. The data can also help companies determine which types of offers customers respond best to. Equipping your sales team with these

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

details can help them creatively and strategically pitch new product offers to customers, which can increase sales. (smallbusiness.chron, 2015)

1.5.8 Staff Resistance

Employees might not see the immediate advantages in using a CRM system in their day to day work. That's why, top management and process owners might have to communicate the importance of storing data in CRM and follow the correct processes within the system. From offering interactive training to providing the sales and customer service teams with real, live case studies that show the benefits of CRM, business owners and managers can demonstrate the features of the system and adequately outline how it will benefit customers, daily work flow, employees and the business overall.

1.6 Research Objectives and Questions

In order to approach the main success factors of CRM implementation[10] from a company that is customer centric the questions below have been prepared for Team A, which include managerial staff that their whole department using the CRM for their day to day work but also for business decisions and their beliefs for the overall functionality of the systems regarding their expectations:

Research Question 1: What does CRM mean to your organizations?
Research Question 2: Is CRM the right solution for your organization?

Research Question 3: What are your goals when it comes to customer request?

Research Question 4: What are the criteria that define good customer service?

Research Question 5: What do you think are the reasons for failure to deliver good customer service?

Research Question 6: Describe how you maintain the quality of work of your employees.

Research Question 7: What criticisms do you get regarding your company's CRM?

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Research Question 8: What are the common difficulties when adopting a CRM initiative?

Research Question 9: Overall, how would you evaluate or rate your company's CRM?

Research Question 10: What are the critical success factors for the implementation of the CRM?

The Team B consist of the I.T Manager of the company that was involved from the beginning to the analysis and implementation of the CRM application to the company. The questions below are for Team B:

Research Question 1: Did you have a previous experience with CRM systems?

Research Question 2: Did you attend any training regarding the CRM implemented at your company?

Research Question 3: Did you prepare a strategic plan in order to active the successful implementation of the CRM?

Research Question 4: How would you describe the "change" from the site of the user? Did you face a positive or negative reaction?

Research Question 5: Does management allow a budget for upgrades and new releases?

Research Question 6: What are the critical success factors for the implementation of the CRM ?

Finally the Team C, consists of the front end users of the customer registration and administration stuff within the system. The questions for this group are the following:

Research Question 1: How easy is your CRM software to use?

Research Question 2: Do you believe that is the right tool of data mining?

Research Question 3: Did you face any implementation issues?

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Research Question 4: Do you feel comfortable with the training that you had attended? Does the IT Department supports you with all the issues any time you need them?

Research Question 5: How would you rate the effectiveness of company's CRM?

Research Question 6: Do you have a clear methodology and steps within the systems?

Research Question 7: What are the critical success factors for the implementation of the CRM?

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Chapter 2: Research Methodology

2.1 Introduction

Traditionally, the maintenance of relations with customers was mainly based on registering transactions and launching simple queries to the databases storing the information on the transactions and generating simple statistics. Now, having access to robust communications[9] facilities such as the Internet and business intelligence and analytical tools (e.g. data warehousing, OLAP, data mining, web mining) a company can maintain a progressive relationship with a customer across the customer's lifetime. Today, the company can monitor, follow and analyze a range of customer actions and events over time, using the information and knowledge from operational CRM systems, and it can combine this information with the knowledge kept in other enterprise systems, mainly from knowledge management systems (Wiig, 1999). All the above must be well strategize from top management and directors in order to succeed in implementing CRM Application into the organization. A research from others company's success stories must be considered but also must be aware of any possible failures.

Customer relationship management[1] application system include three key components:

- customer,
- relationship
- Management

According to (Grey & Jongbok , 2001, pp. 8-10), CRM can be viewed as the following triangular figure:

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

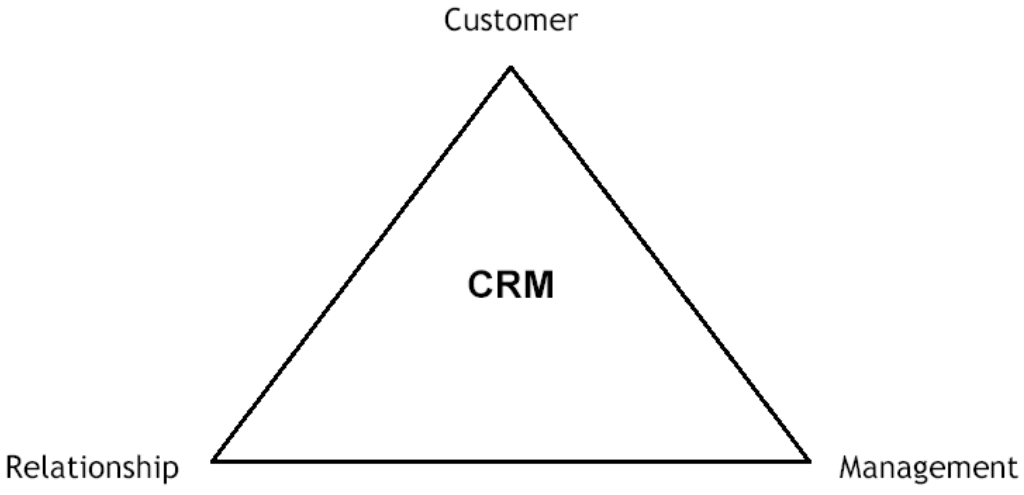


Figure 1. Components of CRM

Source: (Grey & Jongbok , 2001, pp. 8-10)

2.2 Research Methodology and Data Analysis

The analysis of the data gathered went through two main stages. The first stage was to collect the data from the interviewees and the second stage is to transcribe the data collected from all the interviewees chosen and produce detailed write-ups for each case.

The selected "key" questions below , produce the results that will help the researchers to consider for any future research regarding the success factors of the implementation[10]of a CRM application system:

Regarding the Key Question 1:

What are the critical success factors of CRM initiatives?

The answers received from the sales, resulted in the emergence of some critical success factors, such as:

- Senior Management Support
- Business Plan and Vision
- Change Management in small steps

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

- Collaboration within the departments
- Clear User Privileges of Data within the System
- Training & Support for End-users
- End Users' Acceptance of Change
- Degree of Analysis and Customer Segmentation
- Language
- Internet Presence

The first four factors are the most important critical success factors for CRM initiative success.

Regarding the Key Question 2:

What are the common difficulties when adopting a CRM initiative?

The highlighted points for this questions are:

- Resistance to Change
- Human Errors in Data Entry to the System
- Privileges and confidentiality of the Data Entry
- Vendor reliability

Regarding the Key Question 3:

What does CRM mean to your organizations?

The answer received is the below:

Is a strategy[5] for managing all company's relationships and interactions with leads[11] or existing customers? It helps to improve company's profitability[11] by using all the set of activities (registration of clients, follow ups, record customers' needs and wants, forecast etc).

CRM refer to practices, strategies and technologies that the company use to manage and analyze customer interactions and data throughout the customer lifecycle, with the goal of improving business relationships with customers, assisting in customer retention and driving sales growth.

It also help the improvement of the marketing[8] strategies, for the marketing[8] campaigns in order to target the market and analyze the reaction of clients.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Regarding the Key Question 4:

Is CRM the right solution for your organization?

Absolutely "Yes it is"! I Couldn't imagine to work without it. It increase sales and marketing[8] efficiency and effectiveness. It is very powerful and drive optimization of business intelligence, social insights, campaign management, and many other key customer relationship matters.

2.3 Proposed research approach

For any research approach, there are two methods to be used. That is qualitative approach and quantitative approach. It is clear that for this research the qualitative method has been used. For this research, it does not need quantitative data, because the results of the research would not be measurable with specific numbers and calculations.

This research focuses on investigation of the current status of the CRM application in Customer Service Company and to identify what are the critical success factors that help to successfully implement the CRM to the company.

In qualitative research methodology, there are three methods to be used: study, interview and survey. Compared the three methods, the interview method has been selected and the reasons are the following:

- Interviews are more personalized form of research and can talk face to face with the interviewees.
- Professional approach, since the conversation will be with the responsible – key persons – and not to the anonymous public.

2.4 Interview as a data collection technique

The purpose of the interview is to extract the expert's knowledge, more specifically, it is a process that the interviewer plans the interview with an organized manner to obtain particular information which the interviewer intends to know (Myers & Newman, 2007, pp. 2-26)

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

For the purpose of this thesis, five key people has been selected for the interview. These people hold the following positions within the company:

- I.T Applications consultant
- I.T Analyst
- Sales Manager
- Sales Administration User 1
- Sales Administration User 1

The preferred location has been selected for the interview, is the conference room, so as to be a quiet place without any disruptions.

Duration of the interview: Each interview will last for 30 minutes to 45 minutes.

The actual procedure is that the interviewer will explain in depth the purpose of the interview and more details will be explained, like the format, the duration and the confidentiality for the conversation.

The structure of the interview questions has been selected in order to achieve the critical success factors of CRM implemented in the Customer Service Company.

2.5 Data Analysis

The data collected from 2 hierarchical level within the company. Managerial positions – Sales Manager & IT Manager – and front end user – sales administration staff and others. The reason of this segmentation was designed, is because in general, Managers have an overall approach but also front end users can explain and discuss things in more detail. The data collected and interpreted in a framework designed in order to extract the key points of this study.

2.6 Validity and Reliability

An important aspect of each research study is validity, as per (Yin, 2003, p. 13). **Validity** is the extent to which a concept, conclusion or measurement is well-founded and corresponds accurately to the real case examined in every research.

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In order to conduct this research paper and build validity and reliability, a series of theories, definitions and research results , have been selected primarily from scholarly journals, books, international conference proceedings and in some cases some electronic accurate destinations on the website. All these theories selected, reflect with validity and reliability the general view of CRM systems and the implementation[10].

This research study get its resources from "key persons" selected with reliability within a company that will help to produce an accurate and valid conclusion. This will help other companies that are looking to increase their customer service efficiency and as a result their profitability[11] and not only, by implement a CRM Application System to their company by follow the best practices of a successful implementation[10].

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Chapter 3: Literature review

According to (Light, 2001) in Proceedings of the 9th European Conference on Information Systems, the CRM evolved from business processes such as relationship marketing [3] and the increased emphasis on improved customer retention through the effective [2] management of customer relationships. Relationship Marketing [3] as per (Tsaklagkanos, 2001, pp. 65-100) is a part of customer relationship management (CRM)[1] that focuses on customer loyalty and long-term customer engagement rather than shorter-term goals like customer acquisition and individual sales. The main aspect of relationship marketing [3] (or customer relationship marketing) is to create strong, even emotional, customer connections to a brand that can lead to ongoing business that can generate sales. Relationship marketing [3] methods stands in contrast to the more traditional marketing[8] approach, which focuses on increasing the number of individual sales.



Figure 2: Customer Relationship Management

Source: http://searchcrm.techtarget.com/definition/relationship-marketing

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CRM is a highly fragmented environment and has come to mean different things to different people (McKie, 2000). Customer Relationship Management [1] demonstrated from Bull (2003) as a complex combination of business and technological determinants. (Bull, 2003, pp. 592-602). Another extended approach of Customer Relationship management [1] as per (Strauss, et al., 2003, pp. 243-251) describes it as a holistic process of acquiring, retaining and growing consumers. Finally (Jagdish , et al., 2000, pp. 28-30) refer to CRM as a philosophy, a comprehensive strategy[5] and the process of acquiring, retaining and partnering with selective consumers to create superior value for the company and the consumer.

Another definition from (Kincaid, 2003, p. 41) is that CRM is the strategic use of information, processes, technology, and people to manage the customer's relationship with your company (marketing[8], sales, services, and support) across the whole customer life cycle. Ramaseshan,, et al., 2006, pp. 195-207 described operationally CRM as the process for achieving a continuing dialogue with customers, across all available touch points, through differentially tailored treatment, based on the expected response from each customer to available marketing[8] initiatives, such that the contribution from each customer to overall profitability[11] of the company is maximized. According to (Chao, et al., 2007, pp. 459-463) CRM has been identified as one of the greatest technological contributions to companies in the 21st century and this technology surged into the market rapidly. More and more companies are supposed to apply CRM to improve efficiency of operation and gain competitive advantage.

As a combination of people, processes and technology (Chen & Popovich, 2003, p. 672) described CRM, that seeks to understand a company's customers and it is an integrated approach to managing relationships by focusing on customer retention and relationship development

A research case analysis consist of 202 CRM implemented projects found that only 30.7% of the organizations "said" that they had achieved improvements in the way they sell to and service customers (Dickie, 2000).

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Seven out of 10 customer relationship management (CRM) [1] initiatives will fail over the next 18 months, and a combination of unclear business goals and increased project complexity means that most companies will not achieve any return on investment for such projects, warned analyst Giga. (Giga, 2001, p. 27) The Giga survey showed that 75 % of IT directors have no clear, measurable business objectives for CRM projects. Although 55 per cent have plans to measure CRM benefits, only 33 per cent have the systems in place to do so.

Some 55 per cent of US companies, and 45 per cent of those in Europe, view CRM as a global initiative rather than a local project.

Not only does this increase the risk of technical problems, it can bury projects in organizational politics, according to Erin Kinikin, a research analyst at Giga. "The risk is that companies will simply go for a lowest common denominator approach, and not make the most of CRM's long-term potential," she said.

Most companies are aware of potential problems with CRM, but are looking for a simple solution. Three quarters of IT directors admit they are looking for 'safer' software products to ease the complexity of CRM.

But this approach fails to address the root of the problem, explained Kinikin. "If you don't measure results and buy an expensive CRM package, you are bound to fail. You won't have evidence that the system returned benefits greater than the cost," she said.

The best insurance against high CRM failure rates is clear goals, well-defined projects, customer focused[6] processes and an upfront agreement on measurement tools.

Giga advised companies to define a vision and then implement CRM in small projects each of which should be carefully monitored. (Computing, 2001)

Moreover, a recent and broader survey estimates that 70 per cent of companies will ultimately fail (Giga, 2001, p.p27). The Giga survey revealed that: companies generally underestimate the complexities of CRM, lack clear business objectives and tend to invest inadequately in the provision of CRM software. While the findings by Giga highlight a fairly gloomy scenario, it is clear that not all organizations are facing failure.

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According to Gartner Group, a research and advisory firm 55% of all CRM projects don't produce results. Also consider this: According to Bain's 2001 survey of management tools, which tracks corporate use of and satisfaction with management techniques, CRM ranked in the bottom three for satisfaction out of 25 popular tools. In fact, according to last year's survey of 451 senior executives, one in every five users reported that their CRM initiatives not only had failed to deliver profitable growth but also had damaged long-standing customer relationships. One manufacturer retailer, for instance, invested $30 million in a CRM solution in 1999 only to scrap the entire project in early 2001. The company abandoned the project because customers had become increasingly irritated instead of loyal, as did the employees trying to deal with them. And while the company was struggling with CRM deployment, its rivals steadily moved into stronger market positions. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

CRM initiatives fail quite often and researchers trying to answer this by analyzing customer-loyalty initiatives, both successful and unsuccessful, at more than 200 companies in a wide range of industries. The research suggests that one reason CRM backfires is that most executives simply don't understand what they are implementing, let alone how much it costs or how long it will take. More specifically, the research shows that many executives stumble into one or more of four pitfalls while trying to implement CRM. Each of these pitfalls is a consequence of a single flawed assumption—that CRM is a software tool that will manage customer relationships for you. It isn't. CRM is the bundling of customer strategy [5] and processes, supported by the relevant software, for the purpose of improving customer loyalty and, eventually, corporate profitability[11]. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

Most of the CRM systems often integrated with other decision support systems across all functional areas of the organization, such as enterprise resource planning system (ERP), executive information systems, supply chain management systems, and product life-cycle management systems. Organizations are able to create better management information in terms of planning, acquiring, and controlling across all channels, have superior products and services which leads to larger revenues and profits, and improves quality[7] and the rapid response to customers' needs (Anderson, 2006). Girishankar,

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2000 suggests an adoption of a holistic approach to the organizations that places CRM at the heart of the organization with customer orientated business processes and the integration of CRM systems.

Rowley, 2002 argues with Harvey that 80 % of CRM implementations[10] fail, she reports the skepticism among academics about the viability of interpreting customer data in such a way that it generates useful insights into customer behavior. (Bolton, 2004, pp. 44-51) agrees with these arguments, stating that many of the early CRM implementations[10] seem to have failed.

Curry & Kholou, 2004 present a tool for self – evaluation which can be used by organizations in order to evaluate their use of CRM. Three organizations have made CRM central to their business, but their business line, prioritizing and management of it, is different. They have in common a successful corporate prioritizing of the marriage of the organization activities and customer needs. All three organizations acquired and retained the valued customers' revenue stream for as long as possible, which is the ultimate aim, over time but have done so in a variety of ways.

Zineldin, 2006, pp. 430-437 proposed a research model (5Qs) to measure satisfaction and loyalty, in order to examine and develop a better understanding between quality[7], CRM and customer loyalty which might lead to companies' competitiveness. The study confirms that the impact of CRM on customer loyalty is real and so are the problems for certain organizations in terms for successful implementation[10]. Satisfied customers are not always loyal customers, they can repeat orders, and also buy from competitors in the future. The relative value of the product and services in respect of the price must be taken into consideration when evaluate customer satisfaction. Organizations should move towards the application of customer value management, methodologies and tools.

The recapitulation of different definitions of CRM shows, that there is no widely accepted definition of CRM, although it is a vital business tool in order to satisfy and meet customer needs and wants. By doing that, company's profitability[11] will rise.

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Chapter 4: Implementation of the CRM

Implementation[10]

CRM can be implemented in any type of organizations, any size or amount of goods or even any line of business; both within SME's or big enterprises that value the quality[7] of customer's service, customer loyalty.

As per Darrell, et al., 2002 published in Harvard Business Review, each organization that implement CRM application is responsible to evaluate the results by avoiding the following four pitfalls.

Peril 1: Implementing CRM before Creating a Customer Strategy

It is vital before implementing CRM application to any type of business, firstly to establish customer strategy[5]. Effective [2] customer relationship management [1] is based on good old-fashioned segmentation analysis. Moreover, it is designed to achieve specific marketing[8] goals. Technology that affects customers must always be streamlined with management processes and strategy[5] if it is to work. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

As mentioned above, for the success of a CRM application, organizations at the very early steps, need to create a **customer strategy[5]**. By figuring out which customers (profile) they prefer to build relationships with and which they don't. Every customer has different needs and wants as well as different current and potential value to each company. Consequently, customer database should be divided into groups, ranging from the most profitable, with whom you should broaden and deepen relationships, to the least profitable, whom the company may wish not to communicate or serve at all. Segmenting will help clarify the appropriate response: Invest to win back or grow profitable relationships; manage costs to make lower-margin segments worthwhile; or divest unattractive segments. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

Peril 2: Rolling Out CRM before Changing Your Organization to Match

By installing CRM application before creating a customer-focused organization is perhaps the most dangerous mistake. If a company wants to develop better relationships with its more profitable customers, it needs to first recondition the key business processes regarding customers, from customer service to placement of an order. Having

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a strategy[5] is not enough: A CRM rollout will succeed only after the organization and its processes—job descriptions, performance measures, compensation systems, training programs, and so on—have been restructured in order to better meet customers' needs.

An evaluation of existing departmental, product, or geographic structures is essential. Also the internal departmental structure may needed before the implementation[10] of the CRM application. And that's because CRM is not affecting only customer's processes, but also affect employees. However, most of the times, managers often do not see the need for changes to internal structures and systems before investing in CRM technology. But that's a wrong approach; According to a survey conducted recently by on-line resource center CRM Forum, when asked what went wrong with their CRM projects, 4% of the managers cited software problems, 1% said they received bad advice, but 87% pinned the failure of their CRM programs on the lack of adequate change management. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

Peril 3: Assuming that More CRM Technology Is Better

Organizations does not need a huge investment for a CRM application. Customer relationships can be controllable and be managed in many ways and the goals of CRM could be accomplished without a huge investment in technology. An example is to motivate employees to be more aware of customer needs, and serve their requires with a professional and friendly way in order to create strong relationship and later on to drive them into sale. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

Peril 4: Stalking, Not Wooing, Customers

Unfortunately, managers using CRM, with the wrong way. They often end up trying to build relationships with the wrong customers, or trying to build relationships with the right customers the wrong way.

Relationships are two-way streets. You may want to strengthen more relationships with affluent customers, but do they want them with you? Fail to build relationships with customers who value them, and you are bound to lose these people to a competitor. Try to build relationships with disinterested customers, and you will be perceived as a stalker, annoying potential customers and turning them into vociferous critics. That is

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what most loyalty programs seem to lapse into, as any hapless customer who has registered with a CRM-equipped retailer will tell you. Just because managers can contact customers doesn't mean they should; it depends on the customer strategy[5], not the CRM program. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

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Chapter 5: Learning from Failure

Even if you've been unsuccessful at implementing CRM, there's hope: Companies do recover from their failures. CRM project is a cross-functional undertaking. The software would never sell itself to employees and would not automatically generate the organizational changes required. For the organizations who believe the above, the program simply will fail. Leadership[4] style and top management commitment is needed for the success of the CRM application in any organization.

Successful CRM depends more on strategy[5] than on the amount you spend on technology. Strategy[5] is about allocating scarce resources to create competitive advantage and superior performance. The only way you can make CRM work is by taking the time to calculate your customer strategy[5], which helps employees understand where they are going and why, and to align your business processes before implementing the technology. (Darrell, et al., 2002)

Finally, an organization also need to effectively lead and manage change, showing CRM support teams how to achieve their goals through new processes. Employees must be familiar with the tools necessary to succeed. Indeed, while technology is a powerful facilitator in the process of customer relationship management [1], that's all it is—a facilitator. And the moment companies forget that, CRM will turn into a tool that, instead of building loyalty, does just the opposite.

In order to have a successful CRM implementation[10], management must make sure that they have done research in both the industry's best practices (benchmarking) and the adaptation capability to their organization in the new application.

Recommended key steps

The following are the recommended key steps to a successful CRM strategy[5] (Crocket & Reed, 2003):

- **Strategic context.** The organization should understand how CRM fits into the context of the company's overall business strategy[5].

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- **Capabilities assessment**. The assessment is to be done to confirm the company's current CRM capabilities.
- **Business case development**. The company needs a good reason to implement CRM other than new technology fever.
- **Implementation**[10] **plan creation**. Create and execute a plan, which clearly defines how to achieve the goal and execute it.

Lipka, 2006 p.p 95 – 100 describes twelve step process for rolling out CRM where each phase builds up on previous phases:Align your attitude; Define your products and services; Define products/service and ownership; Define customer ownership; Know and study your customer; Manage your channels; Define your process; Integrate your channels; Think value proposition; Measure results from the customer's perspective; Think investment; Refine and improve;

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Chapter 6: Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

According to the completion of interviews for the company examined, the managerial stuff believe that the CRM Application selected is absolutely the best solution for organization's need related with customer service and forecasting. CRM help the company to increase sales and the marketing [8] efficiency and effectiveness. As per Sales Manager "It is very powerful and drive optimization of business intelligence, social insights, campaign management, and many other key customer relationship matters". Also company's profitability[11] has been increased by using the processes designed within the CRM Application and of course by using the analysis of data given to the top management and Directors in order to make business strategy[5]. By using the CRM, the marketing[8] strategies have been improved because can easily target the market and analyze the reaction of clients. A rate 9 out of 10 has been given from the Sales Manager, for the evaluation of company's CRM implementation[10]. He believes that there are still some areas of improvement.

It very critical factor to set straight forward procedures into the CRM and be sure that the front end users are aware of these procedures and can understand each one very well.

The management set important criteria in order to provide good customer service by using the CRM. Answer on time, professialism style when replying to customer's request and lifetime follow up the prospective clients are some of the criteria as mentioned above. If the users will not follow the procedures step by step within the CRM then unhappy client and unprofessional company's profile will comes out to the market.

In order to ensure the "Quality" [7] of work, within the system, a head of the department has to communicate and make sure that they understand, the expectations of each employees (user in CRM) regarding the system entry and the steps follow into the system. "The quality[7] of work is examined by the results – business intelligence reports – given to the management very often.

Most of the other departments and also Directors and Top Management rely on systems data. This is a positive criticism for the software. All business and strategy[5] decision made regarding the data exported from the system.

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The common difficulties for this company to adopt CRM initiatives are:

- Resistance to change
- Human Errors in Data Entry to the System
- Privileges and confidentiality of the Data Entry
- Vendor Reliability

The support of an IT team within the company in order to examine user request, analyze them and design the procedures within the system is crucial. I.T team is the first group that must come into a training for the overall CRM project. Technically but also in detail for the processes in the application. I.T team is the first team that should treat itself like a front end user, just to examine application's difficulties, friendliness and other issues. If they fill comfortable with all these then it is the time to train actual users.

From a technical side – network and database setup – is very important as mentioned from the I.T Manager , to create two database environments within the infrastructure of the organization. A test environment for the CRM and also the live environment. Every change for the CRM Application, must be designed and tested before go Live. This will minimize and avoid possible disruptions and problems to the live environment and the users they work on it.

The IT department trained the end users and ensure that the procedures within the system work successfully from user's site. Any issue came up during the implementation[10] phase and also in any other time, it was a matter of time for the IT department to examine it and find a solution.

The Directors are more than positive every time a new upgrade released from the system, to approve a budget for the upgrade. That's because they believe that the quality[7]of their work followed in CRM is very accurate.

The Critical Success Factors exported from this research company are listed below. Each of this Factors will be discussed further:

- **Senior Management Support**

As I indicated the role of senior management support is critical for the success or even the failure of IT project. As it is not always clear what is meant by saying "Top management support", I will discuss this factor further. Financially and politically support decisions must follow with the commitment of the top management in each

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company and is the key to IT project success. Any possible lack of senior management commitment, poses a huge risk for the success of IT project. In order to ensure that the management 100% engage and provide commitment to any level of support needed for IT project success must be clarify and clear the below topics:

- ✓ Senior Management must understand their role as a key stakeholder of the stakeholders

- ✓ Usually the top management are the owner of the project and are the responsible project managers. This count as a great advantage for the success of the project as the force is from top to down pull.

- ✓ All projects have their own Risks: visible but also there are some invisible. Senior management play a large role in reducing the risks and contributing to the project success.

If top level support is strong everyone knows it within the organization. Without top level support the project may never be approved, or if it is approved at all it may take forever for it to get through the process. Without senior management support, cooperation from other departments may be impossible to obtain, and the commitment from team members will lack enthusiasm. In other words, there will be a lack of commitment by the organization at large.

So, before an IT project start, the senior management commitment and support must be explored carefully.

- **Business Plan and Vision**

It is crucial for the organization to set a clear vision, business goals and expectations and this vision must be communicated to all stakeholders for the success of the Project implementation[10]. A business (Project) plan must be prepared for the CRM project. A business plan is very critical and should specify benefits. Also must include resources, any type of cost, possible risks, and of course the time frame until the completion. As mentioned above, the project also needs a clear vision to be specified and guide the

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

CRM Implementation[10]. Vision and Mission of the Project should set measurable goals and targets.

- **Change Management in small steps**

This is the way of effective[2] change management. Change management is generally known as a complex process in every organization and that's why must be a deviation of the change in a small steps in order to meet the success. This complex process varies from company to company according to each individual organization's needs.

As per (Kirke, 2012), here are 5 fundamental steps which need to be part of any effective [2] change management program. These steps form the foundation for managing change. The steps below provide insight into how to manage change effectively:

Step 1 – Build the Case for Change

The first step in any change management program is to establish the case for change. This provides the foundation for the whole change process. You know when you have done this successfully when team members can explain why they, and you, are implementing the changes.

Step 2 – Share the Vision and Values

Once you have established why change is necessary, the next stage is to communicate the vision for the future. What will the organization look like once the changes are implemented? How will things be improved? What are the positive benefits for the organization, team, individuals and customers?

Creating a set of values and sharing these in the early stages of the change process will help to prepare people for the impact of the change and make dealing with challenges and setbacks less problematic in the later stages.

Step 3 – Resources and Information

Change management programs need to be adequately resourced and effectively project managed in order to achieve their objectives. Resources include people, finance,

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facilities, IT, MI and many other elements. Change fails when these things have not been considered and change is not prioritized effectively or given the commitment it requires.

Step 4 – Management and Leadership Capability

Ensuring that managers and leaders possess the capability to manage change is crucial. It is important to consider the specific skills and behaviors which will be required from managers and leaders in order to direct and drive the change through the organization. Attending a good change management training course will equip people with the essential skills to implement and manage change well.

Step 5 – Communication[9]

Good communication[9] throughout every stage of the change process is vital to keep everyone informed and motivation levels high. The extent to which the change is effectively communicated will have a direct bearing on whether it succeeds or fails. Inevitably, change will involve delivering some difficult messages and these need to be communicated in an empathetic and supportive way.

Following these 5 fundamental steps will dramatically help companies to increase the chances of shaping and implementing change management program successfully.

CRM implementation[10] and setup, is a kind of "change" in the ways and processes of sales and marketing[8] departments. New processes and a new approach is designed within the system and employees / users of the system must be aware of this. By following the above steps as described, the change within the departments affected from the CRM implementation[10] will run smoothly and users can easily adopt all the changes and new way of working.

- **Collaboration within the departments**

Teamwork and Collaboration within the departments is very important success factor. Collaborating in the workplace allows businesses to complete important projects and initiatives in a more efficient manner. With multiple individuals or departments involved, work can be distributed more evenly and efficiently to those who have the

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time and expertise. Instead of one or two individuals working on something for months, a team of six or eight individuals could each take a small specialized part and accomplish the entire thing in a week. Teamwork and collaboration within the departments can increase Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention – Working with others in a meaningful way helps employees feel good about what they do. When you can share your 'wins' with other people, you often build a sense of team. Employees are more likely to stay at a job or company longer when they have strong bonds with others around them and feel they are a part of something important.

In our case examined, the collaboration within different departments can help the success of the CRM implementation[10] process.

- **Clear User Privileges of Data within the System**

Privilege is defined as the level of authority over a computer system for a specified group (e.g sales administration group) or an individual user in the system. A privilege is a permission to perform an action. Those privileges are mostly granted from the IT team after the instructions of the top management. This must be defined from the management and clearly communicate it into IT team in order to perform in action.

- **Training & Support for End-users**

Properly educating users on new software is critical for IT departments that want to improve information security, comply with regulations and increase the return on their software investment. But in order to make front end users feel comfortable and confident with the new system, a well-structured training is a critical success factor for implementation[10].

The main pressure for the IT instructors, at the training time is on to get users comfortable and productive on new application systems, thanks to a corporate emphasis on information security, compliance and return on investment to justify costly hardware and software rollouts. As a result, a good training program can count as a competitive advantage, but management isn't always sold on the business benefits of effective tech training.

The training in order to be effective [2], it's not enough for the instructor to have mastery of the material. The trainer must be able to connect with the audience and present

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information in an interactive and engaging manner. It is generally known that IT professionals aren't famous for their communication[9] soft management skills.

- **End Users' Acceptance of Change**

End Users' Acceptance of Change can be verified through User Acceptance Testing (UAT) method, which is critical, as it is the safe way to reduce or eliminate future change requests, which increase project costs. UAT is an effective [2] process with a high rate of return for those who take the time to implement and follow its discipline. For companies that leave this step behind from the software development life cycle, then those organization is missing a great opportunity to improve project success.

- **Degree of Analysis and Customer Segmentation**

  Customer segmentation is the practice of dividing a company's customers into groups relevant to company's needs. The goal of segmenting customers is to decide how to relate to customers in each segment in order to maximize the value of each customer to the business.

  The Table below summarized the Critical Success Factors as retrieved from this research analysis:

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Critical Success Factor of a CRM implementation process in Customer Service Company	
	1. Senior Management Support
	2. Change Management in small steps **Step 1 – Build the Case for Change** **Step 2 – Share the Vision and Values** **Step 3 – Resources and Information** **Step 4 – Management and Leadership Capability** **Step 5 – Communication**[9]
	3. Collaboration within the departments
	4. Clear User Privileges of Data within the System
	5. Training & Support for End-users
	6. End Users' Acceptance of Change
	7. Degree of Analysis and Customer Segmentation

Table 3: Critical Success Factors exported from the current research paper

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

The Importance of Customer Segmentation

Customer segmentation has the potential to allow marketers to address each customer in the most effective [2] way. Using the large amount of data available on customers (and potential customers), a customer segmentation analysis allows marketers to identify discrete groups of customers with a high degree of accuracy based on demographic, behavioral and other indicators.

The Customer segmentation exercise will help the marketing[8] to easily target their market.to meet marketer's goal for maximizing the value from each customer (revenue and/or profit). So it is critical for them to know in advance how any particular marketing[8] action will influence the customer. Ideally, such "action-centric" customer segmentation will not focus on the short-term value of a marketing action, but rather the long-term customer lifetime value impact that such a marketing[8] action will have. Thus, it is necessary to group, or segment, customers according to their customer life time value. (Optimove.com, 2015)

- **Internet Presence**

An internet presence today is a MUST, and no longer an option for any type of organization. A CRM (Customer Relationship Management) [1] application system and project is a complex thing. It is a multi-dimensional puzzle requiring experience, discipline, professionalism and the capability to think "out of the box".

Any organization implement a CRM application, must also be aware of the benefits can earn from an online presence and strategize the connectivity of the CRM with Company's profile in the web. Customer traffic will increased immediately and at the same time will save time if will be decided that the clients will make their registration and fill in the data needed by their own.

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Chapter 7: Conclusion

CRM system is not "just another tool of information technology." If applied suitably, CRM applications can contribute exceptional economic value to the company as well as competitive advantage. Implementing CRM systems can increase an organization's techniques to improve customer service and profitability[11]. However, not all organizations who implement CRM have been successful. In order to have a successful Implementation[10] of CRM, organizations should consider the some critical success factors and benchmark other organizations who implement CRM with great success. First of all they must evaluate how CRM fits into their overall business strategy[5], evaluate its current CRM capabilities, and have a business reason for implementing CRM Application System. When they make the decision to buy, then the next step is to create a project plan and execute it.

Despite the fact that the literature review above, show a high percentage of failure to the implementation[10] of CRM Systems, this company's case study examined, analytical and empirical results shown a great success to the CRM implementation[10]. Any problems and issues appeared from the beginning of the CRM implementation[10] in the company, resolved successfully with the IT support and also with the involvement of the top management if it was necessary. This case study was conducted because of the relative lack of CRM empirical studies, especially in this business sector. The case study identified and analyzed some of the approaches and theories relating to CRM and CRM project implementation[10].

The goal of this research is to contribute to the larger successfulness in any organization that is preparing to implement a CRM software Application. Must be aware of any possible problems they will face but also to learn from this existing case the best practices and best approach in order to succeed.

When changes in the company occur, 100 % support and commitment from the top management is critically important; Senior management support is important for the users; Makin changes in a small steps in order to give time to the users to adapt; Training until the user fill comfortable with all those procedures; Additionally IT

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Support and involvement is also a critical success factor; Finally effective [2] leadership[4] style for motivation is also very important key to the success;

Analytical CRM allows to the company to improve relationships with customers, better informing of employees, and better strategic decisions. This case is a study of CRM implementation[10], from which other companies could learn. It is an interesting case of what are the matters to be careful about before, during and after the CRM implementation[10] and what changes are necessary for it. If the organizational culture supports changes, company has more chances to successfully implement CRM system. The implementation[10] approach needs to be carefully strategized and planned, with appropriate emphasis on user adoption strategies. Future research should be directed to investigate positive approach on the way to improve process of CRM implementation[10] and not to failures in CRM implementation[10].

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Chapter 8: Future research

This study has tried to provide some insight regarding the Critical Success Factors of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) [1] system in a customer service company. Of course there are many areas that can be investigated further and possible future researchers can continue in this field.

Possible future study can be completed for further study on the performance of a CRM and how this can be evaluated. Another suggestion for future study can me created regarding the ROI (Return of Investment) a company has if a CRM application implemented successfully in an organization. Customer satisfaction before and after the CRM implementation[10] can be created as is a great field of investigation

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

List of Figures

Table1: CRM Definitions

Table 2: Definition of CRM from IT vendors/experts

Table 3: Critical Success Factors exported from the current research paper

Figure 1: Components of CRM

Figure 2: Customer Relationship Management[1]

Glossary of Terms

The table below explains important definitions related to the study:

1.	**Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**	Customer relationship management (CRM) is an approach to managing a company's interaction with current and future customers. It often involves using technology to organize, automate, and synchronize sales, marketing, customer service, and technical support.
2.	**Effective**	(Drucker, 1993)
3.	**Relationship Marketing**	*Relationship marketing* is a facet of customer *relationship* management (CRM) that focuses on customer loyalty and long-term customer engagement rather than shorter-term goals like customer acquisition and individual sales.
4.	**Leadership**	The ability of a company's management to make sound decisions and inspire others to perform well.
5.	**Strategic Planning**	**Strategic planning** is an organization's process of defining its **strategy**, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this **strategy**. It may also extend to control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of the **strategy**.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

6.	**Customer focus**	**Customer focus** is an essential part of any successful business. And that **focus** has to be integral to the culture of the business, not bolted on. Defining that culture is a key step in bringing it to life.
7.	**Quality**	Degree of excellence of something
8.	**Marketing**	**Marketing** is a form of communication between you and your customers with the goal of selling your product or service to them. Communicating the value of your product or service is a key aspect of **marketing**. (Tsaklagkanos, 2001, pp. 25-49)
9.	**Communication**	**Strategic communication** can mean either **communicating** a concept, a process, or data that satisfies a long term **strategic** goal of an organization by allowing facilitation of advanced planning.
10.	**Implementation**	In an information technology (IT) context, software or hardware implementation encompasses all the post-sale processes involved in something operating properly in its environment, including analyzing requirements, installation, configuration, customization, running, testing, systems integrations, user training, delivery and making necessary changes. The word "deployment" is sometimes used to mean the same thing.
11.	**Profitability**	Profitability is simply the capacity to make a profit, and a profit is what is left over from income earned after you have deducted all costs and expenses related to earning the income.
12.	**Lead**	A lead represents any person or organization that a company might have the potential to do business with.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

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[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Appendix

Questions & Answers for each Team:

Team A: Sales Manager

Research Question 1: What does CRM mean to your organizations?

Is a strategy for managing all company's relationships and interactions with leads or existing customers. It helps to improve company's profitability by using all the set of activities (registration of clients, follow ups, record customers' needs and wants, forecast etc.).

CRM refer to practices, strategies and technologies that the company use to manage and analyze customer interactions and data throughout the customer lifecycle, with the goal of improving business relationships with customers, assisting in customer retention and driving sales growth.

It also help the improvement of the marketing strategies, for the marketing campaigns in order to target the market and analyze the reaction of clients.

Research Question 2: Is CRM the right solution for your organization?

Absolutely "Yes it is"! I couldn't imagine to work without it. It increase sales and marketing efficiency and effectiveness. It is very powerful and drive optimization of business intelligence, social insights, campaign management, and many other key customer relationship matters.

Research Question 3: What are your goals when it comes to customer request?

We have set straight forward procedures within the system (CRM) and front end users are aware of these. Those procedures are starting from day1 that a lead (prospective client) request information about our products or general info for the company. Later on other procedures have streamlined for the allocation of the customer to a specific sales person that will contact personally with the client and later on a follow up procedure in order to finally drive into closing a sales contract.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Research Question 4: What are the criteria that define good customer service?

Our company's criteria, in order to serve customer needs are:

- Answer on time
- Professional, polite why not a friendly reply to customer's requests.
- Never forget a prospect client, we keep in touch with them at a certain time

Research Question 5: What do you think are the reasons for failure to deliver good customer service?

If we don't follow the correct procedures in the CRM, in order to follow up and contact with the client, then the request of the client will not completed. As a result of an unhappy client.

Research Question 6: Describe how you maintain the quality of work (within the CRM) of your employees.

As a head of the department, I have make sure that employees understand what is expected of them, not only in the work that they do, but in their behavior and in other areas of the system entry. The quality of work is examined by the results (business intelligence reports) I receive from the system very often.

Research Question 7: What criticisms do you get regarding your company's CRM?

Positive criticisms only. Most of the other departments (accounts, architects, administration) are rely to the system and ask for information. Also the directors and top management getting all their business decisions from the statistical reports they receive from the CRM application.

Research Question 8: What are the common difficulties when adopting a CRM initiative?

The highlighted points for this questions are:

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

- Resistance to Change
- Human Errors in Data Entry to the System
- Privileges and confidentiality of the Data Entry
- Vendor reliability

Research Question 9: Overall, how would you evaluate or rate your company's CRM?

9 from 10. And that because there are still some area of improvement within the system procedures.

Research Question 10: What are the critical success factors for the implementation of the CRM?

- Senior Management Support
- Business Plan and Vision
- Change Management in small steps
- Collaboration within the departments
- Clear User Privileges of Data within the System
- Training & Support for End-users
- End Users' Acceptance of Change
- Degree of Analysis and Customer Segmentation
- Language
- Internet Presence

The first four factors are the most important critical success factors for CRM initiative success.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Team B: I.T Application Consultant / I.T Analyst

Research Question 1: Did you have a previous experience with CRM systems?

Actually no it was the first time involved in a CRM project implementation. But it wasn't difficult to catch up and understand how it works. Also the vendor's support play a significant role at the beginning to make the IT team feel comfortable with CRM tools in order to later on support the project and user needs.

Research Question 2: Did you attend to any training regarding the CRM implemented at your company?

Yes the first stage before the implementation was the training to the I.T team and process owner (IT Manager) we had training on the general plan (high level) of the CRM system and how it was going to be used from the company. Every single procedure has been designed to the system in order to present to the end users a friendly interface. Also the IT team attend to a training of how to design reports and business intelligence templates for the needs of sales & marketing cycle.

Research Question 3: Did you prepare a strategic plan in order to the success implementation of the CRM?

CRM systems are not something static, they evolve along with business. What we did firstly was to understand the nature of our business and understand the challenges that our personnel have every day while interacting with our customers. From this understanding we identified the ``journey`` that a potential customer takes.

From the ``journey`` that a customer takes we then tried to adapt our business processes and software to adapt from the industry's best practices (benchmarking). We definitely had the top managements support and guidance in order to streamline each process, systemically and business wise.

It is very critical for IT to create two environments for the CRM Application. The "Testing environment" and the "Live Environment". Each process or change before designed and go live, must first be tested and then go Live. This is very helpful and avoid conflicts and possible disruptions to the Live System. It helps the procedures to implement smoothly.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Research Question 4: How would you describe the "change" from the site of the user? Did you face a positive or negative reaction?

At the beginning even before the analysis started some stakeholders had negative reactions. They had an old system that they knew and had the knowledge to use it. The transition between the old and new system was radical and at some point the top management had to interfere and enforce the company's decision in order for a lagging process to change or a software process change in order to accommodate the culture of the company and smooth the transition.

Research Question 5: Does the management allow a budget for upgrades and new releases?

The management rely on CRM and trust the info stored into this Application. Is more than positive every time there is a new upgrade to release a budget for this reason.

Team C: Sales Administration User 1 / Sales Administration User 2

Research Question 1: How easy is your CRM software to use?

The software is easy if you have the right training. Some tools are a bit confusing. We always need the support of the IT for all the new reports that the other departments and management request.

Research Question 2: Do you believe that is the right tool of data mining?

If you have the data in a correct order we can export the information we need to do our job. The procedures are straight forward within the system and the data entry is a very easy process.

Research Question 3: Did you face any implementation issues?

At the beginning there was some implementation issues, but it was a matter of time for the support team to investigate and find the right solution within the CRM.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)

Research Question 4: Do you feel comfortable with the training that you had attended? Does the IT support help you with all the issues any time you need them?

We had a training of the system and how to do our job in the system. Every day we have the support IT if we forget something, and that's make us fill very comfortable with the system. The IT tries to find solutions for all of our request and that's because all of our request are related with Directors issues.

Research Question 5: How would you rate the effectiveness of company's CRM?

It gives us the information we need. It's a good data base to have a good view of the customer. We can easily identify problems with the customer and get a good information and historical data to help solve these problems.

Research Question 6: Do you have a clear methodology and steps within the systems?

Training was done for the procedures in the system and we try to apply it in our day to day activities.

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11]: Refers to the Glossary of Terms (page 50)