

# Customer Relationship Management

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## Abstract

**How Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is regarded has been changing over time, and is currently a phenomenon with considerable importance, not only for big organizations but also for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), due to the competitiveness that presently exists. After the literature review about the theme, the research questions emerged were: Why do SMEs need to implement CRM? How is CRM implemented in SMEs? In this, we proposed a methodology for the adoption of CRM by SMEs. A multiple case study, with an exploratory approach, was conducted. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews in 6 organizations, with a total of 19 interviews. These organizations needed to be SMEs and to have a CRM strategy implemented in it already. Although, there are many SMEs that do not have the necessary resources to implement an adequate combined CRM strategy as well as CRM software, many result in using other programs that are more accessible, but not without limitations. This study proposes a suggestion for CRM adoption in SMEs, taking into consideration the analysis of the current CRM strategies employed by 6 different Portuguese SMEs, their characteristics, qualities and limitations, as well as their current experience. In our sample we were able to observe that most processes corroborated what was presented in the literature. However, there were some exceptions that are discussed and that may be of importance in the Portuguese current context.**

## Keywords

**Customer Relationship Management, Small and Medium Enterprises, Adoption methodology..**

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## 1. Introduction

Customer relationship management is defined as the process in which an enterprise, in order to improve its core competitiveness, USES relevant information technology and Internet technology to coordinate the interaction between the enterprise and the customer in terms of sales, marketing and service, so as to improve its management mode and provide innovative and personalized customer interaction and service to the customer. The ultimate goal is to attract new customers, retain existing customers and turn existing customers into loyal customers, increasing the market. CRM is an approach and process for acquiring, retaining, and adding profitable customers. CRM is not only a brand new, internationally advanced and customer-centric enterprise management theory, business philosophy and business operation model, but also a specific software and implementation method that takes information technology as the means to effectively improve enterprise income, customer satisfaction and employee productivity. The implementation goal of CRM is to reduce enterprise costs by comprehensively improving the management of enterprise business processes, and attract and keep more customers by providing more rapid and considerate quality services. As a new management

mechanism, CRM greatly improves the relationship between enterprises and customers, which is implemented in the fields related to customers such as marketing, sales, service and technical support. As a Solution to customer relationship management (CRM), it brings together the latest information technologies today, including Internet and e-commerce, multimedia technology, data warehouse and data mining, expert systems and artificial intelligence, call centers, and so on. Customer relationship management (CRM), as an application software, embodies the management concept of marketing. Marketing, sales management, customer care, service and support constitute the cornerstone of CRM software.

## 2. Identification of Relevant Literature

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### 3. Key Research Questions

- (1)The importance of customer relationship management to business operation
- (2)The strategy of CRM
- (3)Problems in CRM
- (4)Implementation steps of customer relationship management

### 4. Methodology

The methodology will involve surveys, interviews, first hand data collection from field research, desk research and modelling. Qualitative analysis will be done on the data collected to account for the reasons for various phenomena. Quantitative analysis will be done to form parameters for modelling. In the end, financial mathematical models will be built to propose solutions and make forecasts and set up database for future studies and application

In terms of qualitative analysis, social sciences such as sociology, economy and probably anthropology will be involved. In terms of quantitative analysis, the key is the data analysis and modelling. For the past 15 years, I have been using Excel of Microsoft for analysis. I believe that I can continue with Excel but do hope that I can learn much more tools in my future research.

### 5. Significance of the Research

The development of customer relationship management in just over ten years, there are many successful examples in front of us, whose inevitability and importance cannot be ignored. The following is a case study of longwang hotel in Thailand. The world's largest hotel is the dragon king hotel in Bangkok, Thailand. Almost every day is full, it is difficult to get a room without a one-month reservation, and most guests come from western developed countries. It was awarded a Guinness world record. The hotel covers 6 football fields and can accommodate 5000 people. The hotel serves 20,000 dishes a day and employs 1,200 people. There are 100 super chefs. It imports more than 10,000 fresh seafood and fruits, 3.5 tons of rice, 2.5 tons of meat and 2 tons of vegetables every day, and has 6 registered purchasers. The hotel is beautifully decorated, and guests can dine in the open air or on the boating lake to taste delicious food. The rotating tower in the center of the hotel is seven stories high and can accommodate more than 1,000 guests at the same time. Any dish can be served in 15 minutes. To speed things up, some waitresses ride roller skates between guests, and some waitresses like to fly in the air, crossing lakes and rockeries by sling. Thailand isn't particularly well developed in Asia, but why are there such tempting restaurants? People often think of Thailand as a tourist country, but there are also unique goblin performances in the world, and whether efforts have been made in this regard. What's wrong is that they rely on real effort, extraordinary customer service, which is now often referred to as CRM. What's wrong is that they rely on real effort, extraordinary customer service, which is now often referred to as CRM. Longwang hotel attaches great importance to the cultivation of loyal customers, and has established a perfect customer relationship management system, so that customers can receive detailed and humanized service after checking in. So far, they say, about 200,000 people around the world have been living there, with one in 10 regular customers visiting each year. The restaurant is always full. This is the secret of the success of longwang hotel. Therefore, customer relationship management is very important to modern enterprises. It is mainly shown in the following aspects:

1. CRM can comprehensively improve the operational efficiency of an enterprise. CRM improves the operating efficiency of an enterprise by integrating all business links and resource systems. It can extend to all directions of the enterprise channel. It can integrate not only traditional call centers and customer organizations, but also enterprise portals, online sales, online customer service and other e-commerce content. It can build dynamic enterprise front ends. Gradually infiltrated into production, design, logistics distribution, human resources and other areas. Resources and other departments to integrate ERP, SCM and other systems. The integration of the resource system realizes the

information sharing within the enterprise, greatly improves the automation of business processes and the working ability of employees, making the use of the enterprise more smooth and the allocation of resources more effective.

2. CRM enables companies to retain existing customers and attract new ones. On the one hand, by integrating customer information, enterprises are helped to acquire, track and utilize all customer information to achieve internal resource sharing, so that enterprises can better manage sales, service and customer resources and provide customers with fast and high-quality services. On the other hand, customers can choose their preferred ways to communicate with the enterprise, and if convenient, they can get better services through information. The improvement of customer satisfaction team can help enterprises retain more old customers and effectively attract customers with their last names.

3. CRM can reduce the cost of the enterprise. Customer relationship management can greatly reduce the cost of the enterprise. In particular, advertising cost, in today's information technology development, accounts for the vast majority of enterprise costs. Customer relationship management helps enterprises to have a clear investment plan, so that they will not blindly invest in advertising cost, but cannot achieve the expected effect. Through customer relationship management, product and customer segmentation, targeted at different groups of customers with different advertising, selective advertising. Not only that, personalized products can be produced according to customers' needs, thus reducing costs and attracting consumers.

4. Enterprises can continue to expand market space. Expand sales and service system through new business model, expand business scope, grasp new market opportunities in time, and occupy more market shares.

The successful application of CRM will bring measurable benefits to the enterprise. The independent IT market research institute ISM (Information Systems Marketing) has been tracking the impact of CRM application on enterprises for 13 years. Through the follow-up investigation of a large number of CRM implementation enterprises, a detailed and quantifiable list of benefits has been obtained, which proves that the investment of funds, time and manpower in CRM system is justified.

1. During the first three years of implementation of the system, the annual total sales of each sales representative increased by at least 10%. This benefit is achieved because the salesperson is more productive (e.g., has more time to visit customers and implement strategies) and is more productive (e.g., because the salesperson is more focused on valuable customers and more aware of customers' needs, thus improving the quality of their sales visits.)

2. During the first three years of the implementation of the system, general marketing and management costs were reduced by at least 5%. For companies and marketers can more targeted to the target customers the information they need, choose communication channels, and don't have to be like in the past, to send out a lot of expensive print and information to all existing and potential customers, due to the traditional way of pertinence is not strong, will be extensive cultivation, cost is high.

3. The sales success rate is expected to increase by at least 5% in the first three years after the implementation of the system. Because salespeople can be more careful about identifying and choosing opportunities, foregoing the bad ones early and focusing on the ones with high success rates.

4. In the application process, each business value increases by at least 1% of the marginal profit. Salespeople tend to discount less because they can work more closely with carefully selected customers who are as value oriented as discounts.

5. Customer satisfaction rate increased by at least 5%. Because customers who get the information they need more quickly, those who get better service feel more satisfied with those who are willing to engage in relationship marketing and the salesperson is able to provide it.

In a word, CRM is an inevitable choice for modern enterprises to win customers and gain development.

## 6. Key Findings

### 6.1 The importance of customer relationship management to business operation

With the development of e-commerce in whole world, more and more derivative management tools are applied to the competitive market as innovative products and services by information technology enterprises. The early 2000s following B2B, MRP, ASP, and ERP, the heat wave of the comprehensive promotion of CRM (Customer Relationship Management, Customer Relationship Management) has been set off.

Customer relationship management (CRM) is a management model that combines enterprise processes with information technology, understands and differentiates customers from different perspectives, organizes internal economic activities, and develops products or services that meet customers' individual needs. It sees the customer as an important resource. Strengthen the relationship between enterprises and customers, satisfy customer needs through perfect customer service and comprehensive customer analysis, establish a one-to-one marketing model based on the learning relationship with customers, improve customer satisfaction, enable customers to achieve the highest loyalty, retention rate and profit contribution rate, and screen out the good ones. The customer. In essence, customer relationship management (CRM) is a new management concept that emphasizes the customer as the core of their own business, serving customers wholeheartedly and conducting business around customers.

In the current macroeconomic environment, market competition is becoming increasingly fierce, products are constantly updated, new products emerge in endlessly, and product life cycle is getting shorter and shorter. With the progress of production technology, it is more and more difficult to distinguish product differences between enterprises, and the phenomenon of product homogenization is more and more obvious. Therefore, it is increasingly difficult to create competitive advantages through product differentiation. Third, as market competition intensifies, customer resources become relatively scarce. At this time, the initiative of the market to the customer, the customer's dominant position in the market established. Enterprises can win the market only if they win customers, and to win customers, they must meet the personalized and diversified needs of customers. In this context, customer relationship management becomes the focus of enterprise strategy research and marketing system research.

#### 6.1.1 Improve customer loyalty

Many companies want to bribe customers with promotions, coupons, rebates and other items to get the loyalty they need, but it often backfires. Customers now need special treatment and services. Enterprises can realize the long-term value of customers by providing reliable services beyond customers' expectations and strive to become long-term customers. From the perspective of marketing, enterprises can cultivate loyal customers through relationship marketing. We should establish the awareness of "customer first", through establishing long-term and stable cooperation and trust with customers, mutual benefit relationship, so that the interests of all parties are met, customers can become loyal customers of the enterprise.

#### 6.1.2 Establish barriers to commercial entry

In other words, CRM values customer loyalty more. Traditional methods such as promotion and discount cannot effectively establish barriers to entry and are easily imitated by competitors. Customer satisfaction is a kind of psychological satisfaction, is the customer's attitude after consumption. Customer loyalty is a kind of continuous transaction behaviour, which can promote the occurrence of repeated purchase. For enterprises, customer loyalty is the most important, and satisfaction is not the fundamental purpose of customer relationship management. The establishment of CRM system makes it difficult for competitors to imitate. Customer information is in your hands. It takes longer, more favourable conditions and higher costs for other businesses to find customers. As long as CRM can provide customers with personalized services effectively, customer loyalty will be greatly improved.

### 6.1.3 Create win-win results

CRM system is widely favoured by the enterprise because good customer relationship management is a win-win strategy for both the customer and the enterprise. For customers, the establishment of CRM can provide better information, better quality products and services; For enterprises, CRM enables them to understand the composition of customers and changes in requirements at any time, so as to set the marketing direction of the enterprise.

### 6.1.4 Reduce marketing costs

In the past, every enterprise's business activities were designed to meet the internal needs of the enterprise, rather than the needs of customers. Non-customer-centric business activities would reduce efficiency and thus increase marketing costs. Enterprises now implement CRM management system to promote sales growth through measures such as the maintenance of existing customers, customer maintenance and the pursuit of lifelong value to customers, saving sales cost, marketing cost, customer communication cost and internal communication cost. The application of another CRM system can also significantly reduce human error and reduce marketing costs.

## 6.2 The strategy of CRM

The maintenance of customer relationship should adopt different strategies through different stages of customer relationship development. How to better implement customer relationship management so that the implementation effect is good, which is also improved and developed in continuous practice.

### 6.2.1 Customer insights and choices

Most of the time, the customer you want to enter already has a regular supplier, and from the potential customer to becoming a regular customer overnight, the salesperson should wait for the right opportunity. Opportunities may include new product releases, annual supplier assessments, changes in customer internal personnel, current supplier product quality and service issues, deteriorating supplier to current supplier relationships, and reduced low-cost demand(2).

### 6.2.2 Establish the customer relationship model

The model of customer relationship will be established on the basis of customer segmentation, and customer segmentation will be able to better identify the different needs of different customer groups, in addition, we can provide them with personalized services to improve customer satisfaction. (3)The formation of customer relationship is based on business strategy, organizational structure, business process, and performance evaluation and information technology integration.

### 6.2.3 Customer relationship maintenance

In the buyer's market, the product homogenization degree is higher and higher. At the same time, due to the rapid development of science and technology, the life cycle of the product itself has been shortened. Many companies have adopted similar marketing strategies and approaches. Consumers have become quite rational, so conduct customer maintenance and after-sales service. Very necessary. Next, we will analyse how to maintain customers:

#### (1) Don't embarrass the client

We must pay attention when talking about cooperation and projects. Adversity leads to good cooperation. When a customer is in trouble, be considerate and don't put him in a bind.

#### (2) Consider the customer

We have to work with our customers to achieve a win-win situation, especially for our customers to be able to communicate beautifully with their superiors. We work for the company and hope we can achieve something. Others work for the company and they want to do their own thing. Therefore, we should pay attention to cooperation, do not sell customers unnecessary or useless things to him, do not let customers spend more money, try to reduce unnecessary expenses, customers will save your investment.

### (3) Respect for the customers

Everyone needs the respect and approval of others. We must thank our customers for their cooperation and express our thanks to them. And you should show tolerance for customers' mistakes or even mistakes, rather than blame, and immediately work together to research and explore, finding remedies and solutions. This way, your customers will appreciate you from the bottom of their hearts.

### (4) Honest and trustworthy

People who stick to their principles earn the respect and trust of their customers. Only in this way can customers have reason to believe that you also follow certain principles when recommending products to them, so as to guarantee their cooperation and communication with you. For example, it is acceptable to add some services appropriately, but it is not acceptable to ask for damages to the company, customers or even others. Because when you can harm the interests of the company or other people in front of the customer, he will worry that his own interests will also be threatened.

### (5) Establish customer database and establish good relationship with customers.

In the information age, customers can obtain more and more detailed product and service information through various convenient channels such as the Internet, making customers smarter, stronger and less tolerant of passive marketing than before. In this way, the emotional communication with customers is an important way for the enterprise to maintain customer relations, daily visits, sincere holiday greetings, wedding celebrations and birthdays. A sincere blessing and a bunch of flowers will make customers deeply moved. The end of the transaction does not mean the end of the customer relationship, but also means to make after-sales contact with customers to ensure customer satisfaction continued. Because customers are more willing to interact with such people, they want more relationships with the enterprise than simple sales and purchasing relationships. Enterprises need to quickly establish good interactions with each customer and provide personalized services for customers, so that customers can do well in the process of procurement.

## 6.3 Problems in CRM

Customer relationship management (CRM) is a strategy of selecting and managing customers for continuous optimization of customer value. Under the condition of electronic commerce, the enterprise takes the customer as the center. To achieve customer relationship management, any enterprise must first make strategic deployment. Only in this way can CRM be extensible in the enterprise and create value for the enterprise continuously. SME have two problems.

### 6.3.1 Weak competition awareness and weak customer data collection

Most SME's also pay attention to the real market and fail to fully realize the necessity and urgency of obtaining information in the era of knowledge economy. Many businesses do not collect detailed customer information before, during, or even after a transaction with a user. Some enterprises still use traditional methods to record customer information, resulting in the failure to timely store, retain and update customer information, resulting in huge waste of resources. Knowledge of customer characteristics, preferences, consumer behaviour, satisfaction and other information can help enterprises better understand customer needs and potential needs, so as to provide customers with better products and services(4).Therefore, to understand customers, we should first start from the acquisition of customer data. Through data collection, data mining and data analysis, we can understand customers' consumption patterns and habits changes. Combined with the analysis of customers' life cycle, we can cultivate enterprises' insight into customers.

### 6.3.2 The network utilization rate is low, the customer and the enterprise connection is not flexible.

Most small and medium-sized enterprises only stay in online advertising and promotion, and most of them only send the name of the factory, the name of the product, the address, and the contact phone number on the homepage of the company website. The huge advantages and potential of the network are far from being discovered. After the establishment of the website, the data update speed is slow, and the network sometimes lags far behind the information transmission speed of physical stores (5). Enterprises use more phone calls or direct contact and communication, and customers rarely give

active feedback, but customers use E-mail for consultation, and usually do not reply. Therefore, if we want to obtain customer demand information through direct investigation, the effect is not significant. There is a need to expand the connection with users in a number of ways.

### 6.3.3 Other problems

First, many businesses attract new customers when they launch new products. However, when they think of moving forward, they forget to stop. They often ignore old customers, but they don't know that the benefits of old customers are never less than those of new ones.

Secondly, some enterprises adopt single and invariable means in customer relationship maintenance, ignoring the age level, work direction, work category and customer diversity of customers. Therefore, in customer relationship maintenance, we should pay attention to uniqueness and various methods. One idea is to serve customers. Diversified but not single, unique but not monotonous.

Third, co-operation between firms and customers is no longer a hammer business. The above customer satisfaction also reflects the popularity of after-sales service. The corporate image is good or bad. In addition to the product, its popularity, after-sales service is also a key. Imagine that the key to maintaining a customer relationship is not retaining old customers. If you fail, will your clients trust you to continue working with you?

It is fourth, because the customer of an enterprise is diversity, existing customer can be a business, can be an individual, cannot establish formally, can be will cooperate, can be once cooperated. Because of the variety, the customer information recorded within the company will not be exactly the same, if not targeted, will be confused, which is like looking for a needle in a haystack. Enterprise internal information system is a large database with massive information, it must require integrity, for every customer, can not be careless.

## 6.4 Implementation steps of customer relationship management

First of all, the successful implementation of customer relationship management system (CRM) must have certain premise and foundation, among which the most important is to get the understanding and support of the senior leaders. Generally, a vice President of sales, vice President of marketing, or general manager of a business should be a supporter of the project. He sets clear goals for the CRM project and provides support for the time, funding and other resources needed to achieve the goals. In the course of the project, especially in the face of difficulties and problems, he should insist on support for the CRM project. Encouragement and support from the project team.

Second, the implementation team of CRM should be an organized team. Members of this team should not only have a comprehensive understanding of the enterprise's business processes and technical solutions, but also be good at technology and specific problems that need to be improved, and select appropriate technologies according to the problems rather than adjusting the processes to meet the technical requirements. On the other hand, team members should be good at communication so that the project team can grasp more facts to ensure that the development of CRM systems can meet the greatest needs of the enterprise, so that users can adapt to and accept new business processes in the future.

Third, CRM is a formal membership project. In fact, CRM is not a project team, but the work of a full member. All employees of the enterprise can realize the value of CRM system and do their best to cooperate with it to make the CRM project proceed smoothly. If some individuals or groups are passive, the value of a CRM project will not be fully reflected. For example, if the customer manager feels that the customer information is not important and does not want to fill in details or update in time, then the customer service center cannot obtain correct information for communication and analysis; And if product developers think that customer feedback on customer service center statistics isn't worth mentioning, then the new product won't fit into the real customer. What is needed.

Under these three premises, the basic steps of CRM project implementation are as follows:

1. Establish business plan



Enterprises should clearly understand their requirements for CRM system and the impact of CRM system on business activities. On the basis of accurately grasping and describing the application requirements of the enterprise, the enterprise should formulate the management plan at the highest level, and strive to realize the reasonable combination of the technical scheme and enterprise resources.

## 2. Establish the CRM team.

After the establishment of the CRM project, the enterprise should set up the team in time. The team can select effective representatives from each department that intends to use the CRM system. Early training and promotion of CRM programs is required to ensure the team's ability to work.

3. Analyse customer demand and develop information system. The CRM project team must have an in-depth understanding of the different needs or service needs of different customers, what interactions exist between the enterprise and the customer, and how people want it to work. The collection of customer information and the preliminary construction of housing system are to establish customer information documents, which generally include the original records of each household, statistical analysis data and enterprise input records. In order to ensure the economy and practicability of archives, enterprises should select and determine different contents of customer archives according to their own management decision needs, customer characteristics and information collection ability.

4. Evaluate the sales and service process, and clarify the application requirements of the enterprise. On the basis of clarifying customer requirements, the original business process of the enterprise is analysed, evaluated and reconstructed to form a standard and reasonable new business process. During this process, staff should be consulted extensively to understand their understanding and needs for sales and service processes, and to ensure the involvement of business managers. After reconstructing the process, the functions of each module are determined from the perspective of the application of each department. The end users should find the features that are beneficial to the process and what they want to use.

## 5. Select the right scheme, invest in the overall development of resources and promote it in stages.

The enterprise chooses the service provider of application software and implementation under the premise that the software manufacturer considers whether to fully understand the problem to be solved and master the solution, and conducts a comprehensive cleaning up on the function provided by the solution. Then, invest resources to facilitate the installation, debugging and system integration of enterprise software and solutions, and organize software implementation. Its CRM solution should be implemented in an incremental manner, as the enterprise can adapt the CRM system at any time according to its business needs without disrupting the end-user's use of the system. The progressive approach is to implement a program in stages when more functionality is needed, and then add it to the system continuously to avoid confusion during system implementation. If necessary, you can test the user group to determine whether the new functionality is necessary and effective. This allows software systems to be deployed in different parts of the enterprise as needed before they are integrated with other application systems.

## 6. Organize training.

The enterprise should conduct corresponding training on CRM programs. The training target mainly includes sales staff, service staff and management staff. The training goal is to enable system users to master the usage methods, understand the management and maintenance requirements after the implementation of the scheme, and make the CRM system run smoothly.

## 7. Use, maintain, evaluate and improve.

Companies use new systems, such as data monitoring systems, internal management reporting systems, decision data and analysis systems, to analyse their operations. During this process, the enterprise and the system supplier should evaluate the effectiveness of the system application and find problems in the use. Different modules have been modified to improve their applicability.

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