

The Forms of Customer Relationship Management within Companies; SARL Very Net Case

Les formes de la gestion de la relation client dans l'entreprise : cas de la SARL VeryNet

BOUGHERABA Ouassila^{1*}, MEZIANI Mustapha²

¹Université Mouloud MAMMERI Tizi Ouzou, laboratoire Recherche en Management et Techniques Quantitatives, ouassila.bougheraba@ummto.dz

² Université Abderrahmane MIRA Bejaia, Laboratoire Recherche en Management et Techniques Quantitatives, mustapha.meziani@univ-bejaia.dz

Received: 27/01/2025

Accepted: 13/05/2025

Published: 01/06/2025

Abstract:

The objective of this work is to explore the concept of customer relationship management (CRM) within the company by studying its various dimensions, operational, analytical and collaborative. To achieve this, we conducted a study based on interviews within the SARL Very net. The result obtained allowed us to conclude that CRM is predominantly perceived as operational.

Keywords: Customer relationship management, SARL Very net, collaborative management, analytical management, operational management.

Jel Classification Codes : A10

Résumé :

L'objectif de ce travail est d'explorer la conception de la gestion de la relation client (GRC) dans l'entreprise, à travers l'étude des différentes dimensions : opérationnelle, analytique et collaborative. Dans cette optique, nous avons mené une étude par des entretiens au niveau de la SARL Very net. Les résultats obtenus nous ont permis de déduire que la gestion de la relation client est perçue principalement comme opérationnelle.

Mots clés : gestion de la relation client, Sarl Very Net, gestion collaborative, gestion analytique, gestion opérationnelle

Jel Classification Codes: A10

*** Corresponding author**

1. INTRODUCTION

The major challenge for companies today is to find the best way to serve their customers, meet their expectations, and fulfil their demands in order to retain them. The customer then becomes the central focus of the company's concerns. This implies that all departments within the company must come together around a customer-oriented vision.

Pepper & Roger (1999) (DURAND, 11 Octobre 2010, p. 06) were the first to conduct studies on approaches to Customer Relationship Management (CRM). They defined it as a simple technology characterized by a customer database aimed at improving sales levels. The concept of CRM is often associated with the use of technological tools. René Lefébure (Lefebure & Ventouri, 2005, p. 33), in his definition, emphasized the relational aspect aimed at dedicating more attention and importance to customers and the goals the company seeks to achieve, without necessarily requiring the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies).

Mc. Kenna 1988, Rigby, Reicheld & Schefter (JALLAT, STEVENS, & VOLLE, 2007 , pp. 3, 6) describe CRM as a true customer-oriented business strategy aimed at building individualized and lasting relationships with customers. Similarly, Dionne 2001 (TALMENSSOUR, CHEBH, & NOUREDDINE, Avril 2022, p. 02) sees CRM as a business strategy supported by technology. In 2004, Gartner Group emphasized the organizational, relational, and technological dimensions in its definition of CRM, describing it as “a business strategy that, with the help of ICTs, aims to optimize the profitability of the organization and customer satisfaction, by focusing on specific customer segments, encouraging behaviors that meet customer desires, and applying customer-centered processes.” (JALLAT, STEVENS, & VOLLE, Gestion de la relation client, 2006, p. 03)

The involvement and commitment of top management is crucial in this three-step approach (VOLLE, 2013, p. 37) . The company then strives to collect the maximum amount of useful information about customer preferences by increasing contact points with them. This data must be shared across all departments in order to have a common view of the customer. Furthermore, effective customer relationship management is not

limited to the collection, storage, and sharing of customer data; it aims at utilizing this data through analysis and observation of trends to make strategic decisions and take action.

Our study is based off this context. It aims to understand the way companies manage their relationships with customers and to answer our research question: What are the forms of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in the company?

To this end, we have formulated the following hypotheses:

H1: The company's customer relationship management improves operational processes.

H2: The implemented customer relationship management practices stimulate targeting, personalization, and innovation.

H3: The form of customer relationship management in the company is the one that facilitates collaboration with distributors and customers.

2.The Forms of Customer Relationship Management

The Meta group (2001) (khalid & WARIAGHLI, 2020 , p. 07) was the first to identify the three forms of CRM: operational, analytical, and collaborative, each serving well-defined objectives. The implementation of these forms within organizations varies depending on different criteria (mechant & Geffroy-Maronnat, , 2011, p. 13) such as the organization's size, industrial type, and its strategy.

Rababah (2011) (RABABAH, MOHD, & IBRAHIM, April 2011, p. 23) expanded on Meta Group's framework by explaining these different forms in his article and how each of them interact in a complementary manner. Specifically, operational CRM collects customer data and channels it to analytical CRM for processing and analysis, enabling strategic decision-making. In turn, analytical CRM provides operational CRM with valuable insights.

The following table presents a summary, based on Rababah's work, outlining the objectives and tools associated with the different forms of CRM.

Table N° 01: The three forms of CRM

CRM Form	Objective	Tools
Operational CRM	• Optimization of business processes to improve the efficiency of customer interactions and data collection • Unification and identification of customer-related information. • Automation and streamlining of processes in direct contact with customers (front-office functions).	• Sales force automation • Services automation • Marketing campaign automation
Analytical CRM	• Optimizing customer segmentation and targeting through better utilization of collected data. • Predicting the customers' behavior • Assessing customer value for the company to support data-driven decision-making with actionable insights	• Data mining • Data warehouse • Statistical data analysis

Collaborative CRM	• Enhancing collaboration with suppliers, business partners, and customers • Maximizing the sharing of relevant information across all departments	• Various communication channels (email, fax, phone calls, and websites)
--------------------------	---	--

Source: Synthesis conducted by ourselves based on Rababah's (2011) work

2.1 Operational Customer Relationship Management:

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) enables companies to collect customer data to enhance loyalty. Operational CRM aims to “industrialize the company's daily interactions with its customers through pre-established processes.” (Billé & Soparnot, 2006/1, p. 102). It includes all front-office tools. According to CHEN & POPOVICH: “Customer Relationship Management corresponds to the automation of the sales force, the corporate marketing, and the customer services.” (khalid & WARIAGHLI, 2020 , p. 291)

New Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) allow companies to expand their contact channels, increase communication opportunities with customers, and consequently upgrade their customer database.

Table N°02: Operational customer relationship management

Marketing Automation	Sales Force Automation	Service Automation
➤ Customer Segmentation ➤ Management of marketing campaigns ➤ Event marketing	➤ Contact management ➤ Generating commercial proposals ➤ Product configuration	➤ Call centers ➤ Online services

Source: DURAND, A. (Impact of the alignment between customer orientation and technological deployment on organizational performance, p.51).

Although customer segmentation is part of the operational customer

relationship management, it generally falls under analytical management, which involves analyzing customer data. Operational management handles and personalizes interactions with customers through the segmentation that originates from analytical customer relationship management.

2.2 Analytical Customer Relationship management:

Its purpose is to exploit and analyze the collected data in order to better understand customer expectations.

The data analysis process is the source of value creation because a list of data means nothing on its own. The objective of analytical customer relationship management is to transform raw data into knowledge that can provide a comprehensive and unified view of the customer, allowing for a better understanding of their profile and needs. To achieve this, the quality of customer data must be controlled to prevent any deterioration, which could lead to a significant decline in customer relationship management activities.

2.3 Collaborative Customer Relationship Management:

It encompasses all the communication channels with the customer, and involves interconnecting and coordinating all company services and exchanging customer information. Collaborative CRM also allows the voluntary involvement of all stakeholders in the company, both upstream and downstream, by, for example, inviting customers or consumers to participate in developing an offer.

The goal of this collaboration is to satisfy consumers to the best, foster customer loyalty, and improve service quality and company profitability.

The possibilities for interaction between the company and its prospects or customers are numerous, thanks to significant advances in telecommunications. As a result, new channels have emerged, offering companies the opportunity to increase communication with customers. This increase in the number of channels is called "multichannel communication," which aims to optimize customer contact through interactions via all possible channels.

According to Crosby & Johnson "Collaborative CRM aims to improve communication and internal coordination through technologies (such as

electronic process management or workflow) that ensure the coordination of activities, thus enabling an integrated view of the customer, but also externally, through technologies (such as emails) that facilitate and develop direct interactions with the customer.” (DURAND, 11 Octobre 2010, p. 58)

Multichannel communication facilitates interactions between the company and its customers and allows for a unified view of the customers by sharing the information collected through these channels across the different departments (marketing, customer service, and sales), promoting and fostering collaboration between teams.

However, using multiple channels requires significant planning and investment from the company.

Communication channels differ from one another in terms of communication power. Three criteria (JALLAT, STEVENS, & VOLLE, *Gestion de la relation client*, 2006, p. 288) help determine the communication power of the various channels: the first being the degree of personalization, or the ability to deliver a personalized message; the second is the degree of interactivity, meaning, the speed of response during each contact; and finally, the number of senses stimulated by a channel.

3. Results and discussion

As part of this study, we have conducted semi-structured interviews to gather as much relevant information as possible for our analysis. To this end, we first prepared our interview guide, which we structured around four essential key areas with open-ended questions. The first area addresses operational CRM, the second focuses on analytical CRM, the third is dedicated to collaborative CRM, and the fourth concerns the use of information and communication technologies.

Our interview guide was initially intended for the marketing manager. However, after contacting the company in question, we found that it does not have a marketing department. Consequently, we redirected our interview guide to the sales manager, who is responsible for front-office operations, and the information systems manager to obtain insights into the company's use of new technologies, particularly in managing customer relationships.

3.1 Brief presentation of SARL Very Net:

SARL Very Net (Limited Liability Company LLC) was established in 2006, specializing in the production of bleach under the brand name D'OZ, initially for local distribution. The company was able to expand its distribution network to cover the entire national territory thanks to the experience gained by its staff over time and the modernization of its production process, eventually becoming one of the leaders in the manufacturing of cleaning products in Algeria.

3.2 Results:

3.2.1 Operational Customer Relationship Management:

To collect information on operational customer relationship management, we asked a series of questions about ordering and complaint management, sales tracking, marketing campaign management, and also the methods used to carry out these various tasks.

Regarding order management, the sales manager informed us that the company receives orders from distributors and also generates them. Additionally, even if the product is available in the distributor's stock, the company can still supply it to meet its objectives.

The relationship between the company and distributors is transactional. The company retains them through the margins they receive, knowing that these distributors are not company employees but independent intermediaries.

Although the company has multiple contact channels with customers (phone, email, website, social media), its relationship with them remains indirect. It is indeed handled through distributors, who act as independent intermediaries of the company and manage distribution under contractual agreements.

Regarding complaint management, the interviewees stated that there is no dedicated service for it, and the company does not frequently receive complaints. When it does, they are directly forwarded to the relevant departments (production, laboratory, quality assurance, etc.), depending on the nature of the complaint.

We also questioned our respondents about their relationship marketing

practices, and their responses were negative. They believe that product quality alone is sufficient to ensure success and that sales are growing, so for them, additional promotional actions are unnecessary.

The company does not actively do promotions about its product; buyers discover it spontaneously on store shelves. The company's marketing practices include displaying product prices on labels, using publicity metal stands in select points of sale to better display the product and attract customers, and placing bulk pallets on the floor for product exposure to the clientele.

The tools used for order transmission and sales tracking include phone, apps like Viber and WhatsApp, and emails. Records are kept using semi-automated methods, such as Excel spreadsheets and daily manual entries. These methods consume a significant amount of time and energy. Therefore, we asked our interviewees about the potential adoption of automation.

3.2.2 Analytical Customer Relationship Management:

To provide responses insights and analysis on this aspect, we asked the respondents about the methods used to collect, analyze, utilize, and leverage customer data.

The sales manager stated that the company does not conduct consumer surveys nor satisfaction studies to collect customer data. This is attributed to the department being understaffed and the company's lack of trust in communication agencies.

The company only possesses customer data that was transmitted through distributors, which is used exclusively for stock management and order fulfillment. However, these data are not utilized for segmentation, prospecting, or targeted marketing campaigns. According to the sales manager, this is due to the absence of a dedicated marketing department responsible for data analysis.

We also inquired our interviewees about the use of analytical models for market forecasting, and their responses were negative. Apart from seasonal trends, forecasts are made based on the company's internal objectives rather than data-driven market predictions.

3.2.3 Collaborative Customer Relationship Management:

The company does not have control over its distribution network. The company is not in direct contact with consumers, despite having multiple points of contact.

However, the company is aware of the importance of focusing more on customers and analyzing data. As a result, our interviewees informed us that the company has invested in acquiring software for the commercial department. We, therefore, investigated the usefulness, objectives, and functionalities of this software. These aspects will be detailed in the following element.

3.2.4 Customer Relationship Management Automation Systems:

Insidjam is an integrated management software suite composed of a set of technological tools. This software includes several modules: finance, accounting, logistics, sales, human resources, production, mobility, and project management.

In July 2024, the company invested in the distribution module. The choice of this software is justified by its clear commercial offering and multiple functionalities.

It should be noted that the company also has an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, “SAP” with the most commonly used modules being accounting, sales, inventory management, and procurement.

For the commercial department, this ERP system SAP is used only for invoicing (i.e., generating invoices). According to the information systems manager: “Due to connectivity issues and internet outages, we have a limited access to invoicing only. Orders are manually entered into Excel and then inserted into SAP to generate invoices, which are subsequently sent to the accounting department.”

When asked about the motivations behind the decision to implement this software, the commercial manager and the information systems manager cited the following points:

- The centralization of information and data for all stakeholders, with real-time transmission.

- The automation of processes to improve efficiency and reduce repetitive manual tasks.
- The Professionalization of distributors.
- The Improvement of relationships with distributors, customers, and their integration.

On this subject, the commercial manager stated "With traditional methods, meaning those used until now, we feel that the distributor is distant from us. With this application, we will integrate them closer, and we will work collaboratively."

- Ensuring distributor tracking and controlling product distribution and dissemination. Currently, the distributor handles product distribution without any oversight from the company, leading to frequent issues regarding reliability and feedback.

Once these objectives are achieved, the company aims in the future to establish closer relationships with customers, conduct satisfaction surveys, build a customer database, and exploit it to make strategic decisions.

3.3 Discussion:

3.3.1 Operational Customer Relationship Management:

In light of these responses, we deduce that the company adopts a transactional approach, focusing primarily on managing transactions (orders, sales, etc.) without considering long-term relationships with customers. Its main objective is to generate significant revenue, with little concern for customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The company's indirect relationship with its customers deprives it of valuable feedback on customer satisfaction, needs, and behavior that are critical insights for improving offerings and even fostering innovation.

Regarding marketing practices, which the company perceives as an unnecessary cost center, we can conclude that it follows a product-centered approach. This approach is only viable in the short term, especially when not accompanied by customer feedback mechanisms. Indeed, the company places little importance on customer preferences and remains disconnected from its market. However, in the long run, customer expectations and needs

evolve, and the company must continuously adjust its offerings to satisfy and retain them.

Nevertheless, focusing solely on the product can lead to marketing myopia, a concept introduced in 1960 by Theodore Levitt in his Harvard Business Review article. According to Levitt: “Every major industry was once a growth industry. But those that are now riding a wave of growth enthusiasm are very much in the shadow of decline. Others, which are thought of as seasoned growth industries, have actually stopped growing. In every case, the reason growth is threatened, slowed, or stopped is not because the market is saturated. It is because there has been a failure of management.” (Théodore Levitt, July-August 1960, p. 01)

Marketing myopia refers to having a narrow vision of the market. It affects business leaders and executives who focus solely on the product without considering the real needs of consumers. It emerges when companies limit their marketing practices, believing that their product alone is the best and that is sufficient for success.

3.3.2 Analytical Customer Relationship Management:

Based on these responses, we observe a lack of a true strategic analysis of customer data. The company uses the data it possesses solely to facilitate internal operations management (inventory and order management) and to track commercial performance in terms of the volume of products sold.

3.3.3 Collaborative Customer Relationship Management:

Regarding collaborative customer relationship management, we concluded that the company does not collaborate with distributors; they are considered independent intermediaries.

3.3.4 Customer Relationship Management Automation Systems:

The primary goal of automation is to improve process efficiency and traceability. However, we observe that the focus is mainly on financial management, rather than decision-making regarding positioning, segmentation, personalization, and innovation.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has allowed us to uncover several key findings regarding

the company's approach to Customer Relationship Management (CRM). The main results are as follows:

- Lack of a true customer relationship.
- Operational management focused on optimizing internal processes and routine operations (order management, inventory management, and accounting).

This confirms our first hypothesis: The company's Customer Relationship Management CRM approach improves operational processes.

- A product-centric approach and lack of listening to customer.
- Absence of a customer database and analytical tools.

This contradicts our second hypothesis: The company's Customer Relationship Management practices stimulate targeting, personalization, and innovation».

- Absence of collaboration with distributors and customers.
- Indirect contacts with customers.
- Deficiencies in communication.

These findings contradict our third hypothesis: The form of the company's Customer Relationship Management CRM facilitates collaboration with distributors and customers.

In light of these observations, we can conclude that the company's Customer Relationship Management approach is primarily operational, focusing on internal process efficiency while lacking the analytical and collaborative dimensions essential for a customer-oriented strategy.

We conclude this study with several improvement propositions:

- Enhancing operational management by ensuring the full automation of processes, for not only invoicing and order management but also for managing customer interactions and tracking their preferences using the existing software solutions.
- Optimizing the use of the software Insidjam's functionalities by building a customer database and conducting regular analyses to make informed decisions regarding segmentation, promotions, personalization, and even innovation, while ensuring continuous monitoring. This will contribute to long-term business success.
- Establishing better relationships and collaboration with distributors by

organizing regular meetings to encourage the sharing of customer feedback and market trends. This will help in making better-informed decisions and ensuring sustainable commercial success.

5. Bibliography List:

- AMBOISE, L., & PRIM-ALLAZ, I. (Janvier-Mars 2015). gestion de la relation client et performance des PME. *Décisions Marketing* n°77 , 13-30.
- Billé, J., & Soparnot, R. (2006/1). La gestion de la relation client ou customer relationship management, une source d'innovation. *revue des sciences de gestion*, n°217, 101-110.
- BROWN, S. (2006). *La gestion de la relation client*, Pearson Education. France: Pearson Education.
- CHABRY, L., GILLET-GOINARD, F., & JOURDAN, R. (2017). *La boîte à outils du management de la relation client*. Paris: Edition Dunod.
- DURAND, A. (11 Octobre 2010). Impact de co-alignement entre l'orientation CRM et le déploiement technologique sur la performance organisationnelle : proposition et test d'un modèle de recherche. *univ Jean Moulin, Lyon 03*.
- JALLAT, F., STEVENS, E., & VOLLE, P. (2007). *La gestion de la relation client*. France: Pearson Education.
- JALLAT, F., STEVENS, E., & VOLLE, P. (2006). *Gestion de la relation client*. France: Pearson Edition.
- khalid, B., & WARIAGHLI, R. (2020). La Gestion de la Relation Client : Acceptions, Taxonstypes, Objectifs et Causalité illustrative. *Revue Internationale des Sciences de Gestion*, ISSN : 2665-7473, numéro 6/Volume 3 : numéro 01, 285-301.
- Lefebure, R., & Ventouri, G. (2005). *la gestion de la relation client* . paris,: Editions Eyrols,.
- mechant, V., & Geffroy-Maronnat, , B. (2011). Les transformations liées au système CRM « une meta-synthèse au prisme de la théorie de structuration ». *revue système d'information et de management, cairn info*, 113-151.
- RABABAH, K., MOHD, H., & IBRAHIM, H. (April 2011). Customer relationship management (CRM) Process from théory

to practice : the pré-implementation plan of CRM systems.
International journal of e-education, e-marketing and e-learning, Vol1, N0 .1.

TALMENSSOUR, K., CHEBH, I., & NOUREDDINE, A. (Avril 2022). La Gestion de la Relation Client et La Performance Organisationnelle des Clusters dans la Région Souss Massa. *International Journal of Business and Technology Studies and Research*, 01-08.

Théodore Levitt. (July-August 1960). Marketing myopia. *Harvard Business Review*, 45-56.

VOLLE, P. (2013). *stratégie client : point de vue d'expert sur le management de la relation client* . France: Pearson Education.