



Digital Customer Relationship Management A Review of the Most Important Websites and Applications

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Abstract:

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) as a term, has known a significant transformation due to technological development, these changes have positively impacted organizations from the economic side, by boosting sales, enhancing external communication with customers, and increasing competitiveness, as a result, the quality of services and products has been improved, benefiting both, organizations and their customers.

In this research paper, we aim to explore the different websites and applications that companies use to manage their customer relationship. Additionally, we also target to discuss the importance of leveraging technology to upgrade customer relationship management.

Keywords: Customer Relationship Management, Technology, Digital environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the recent digital landscape, the relationship between businesses and their customers has undergone a profound transformation. At the heart of this shift lies Customer Relationship Management (CRM), a concept that has expanded far beyond its traditional boundaries thanks to the growth of new technologies. No longer limited to simple databases or basic customer service tools, CRM now includes a wide range of digital platforms and applications designed to enhance every level of engagement between the company and its customers. From initial contact to post-purchase support, organizations are increasingly relying on sophisticated software solutions to manage interactions, gather valuable data, and personalize experiences in real time.

The implementation of technology into Customer Relationship Management has brought with it a wide range of economic and operational advantages. Enhanced communication channels, automated workflows, and data-driven insights have collectively led to increased efficiency, improved customer satisfaction, and ultimately, higher sales. These changes not only serve the internal goals of organizations—such as boosting profitability and streamlining operations—but also lead to elevate the organization's external goals such as building a strong brand and enhancing the quality of the relationship with customers

In the current business climate that is known by its accelerating transformations, competitiveness is closely tied to how effectively a company can understand and meet the needs of its customers. Thus, adopting CRM technologies is no longer optional; it is a strategic imperative. From global enterprises to small startups, businesses are investing in a variety of web-based platforms and mobile applications to maintain meaningful relationships with their clients. As a result, the very definition of customer engagement has evolved, becoming more interactive, data-driven, and personalized than ever before.

From this context, this research paper delves into the modern landscape of CRM by exploring the digital tools organizations utilize to manage customer relationships. It also highlights the strategic importance of adopting technological innovations in this domain. Through this exploration, we aim to demonstrate how a well-implemented CRM system can act as a catalyst for growth, innovation, and sustained customer loyalty in a technology-driven world. Based on this we can formulate our research question as follows:

How do companies utilize technology to manage their customer relationships?

Research questions:

- What does the term "Customer relationship management " mean?
- What do we mean by Digital Customer Relationship Management?
- What are the positive outcome of customer relationship management?

-What are the different applications and websites used by companies to manage their customer relationships?

Objectives of the study: this study seeks to achieve the following goals:

-Defining the term of customer relationship management and digital customer relationship management.

-Revealing the importance of Customer Relationship Management.

-Discovering the different applications and websites used by companies to manage their customer relationships.

2. Customer Relationship Management:

2.1 Definition of Customer Relationship Management

The term CRM has been defined in various ways, largely due to the diverse backgrounds and specializations of the researchers. In this section, we will explore some of these definitions.

Customer Relationship Management was seen in several sources as "the strategic use of information, processes, technology, and people to manage the customer's relationship with your company (marketing, sales, services, and support) across the whole customer life cycle". (Judith, 41p)

This definition asserts that customer relationship management (CRM) necessitates the interaction of key components, and the absence of any of these components can negatively impact the quality of the relationship between the company and its customers. Therefore, it is imperative for the company to carefully manage the processes involved in customer relationship management, while also leveraging modern technologies

Historically, the term Customer Relationship Management CRM has only been in use since the early 1990s. Since then there have been many attempts to define this domain which represents a disciplined approach to developing and maintaining profitable customer relationships. (Buttle, p26)

Due to the challenging business environment faced by organizations throughout the world, CRM is growing in importance, It is particularly critical in industries undergoing changes in traditional channel configuration. CRM is considered as a mean of addressing increasing competition, changing economic conditions and promotional dependence through the use of intimate customer knowledge. CRM is increasing in prominence because it focuses on current users who are the source of the majority of business revenue and the best option for improving business in uncertain times. (Zerres, Baran, Zerres, 2014, p5)

From another perspective, Customer Relationship Management was defined as: "the creation of a competitive advantage by being the best at understanding, communicating, delivering, and developing existing customer relationships, in addition to creating and keeping new customers ". CRM has emerged as one of the largest management buzzword. Popularized by the business press and marketed by the aggressive CRM vendors as a panacea for all the ills facing the firms and managers. It means different things to different people. CRM, for some, means one to one marketing while for others a call center. Some

call database marketing as CRM, and many others refer to technology solutions as CRM. (Babu, Kadavil, Manjula, Thampi, p 3)

2.2 Digital Customer Relationship Management.

The term "Customer Relationship Management" has known various changes due to advanced technology outcomes. We have moved beyond traditional approaches of CRM and we are discussing what is known by digital CRM, this concept that refers to maintaining the customer relationship through a Digital medium or internet communication channels.

2.3 Components of Customer Relationship Management.

According to the previous definitions, Customer Relationship Management contains four essential elements, that are: information, process, technology, and people. These four components are explained in the following table:

.Table 1 Components of CRM.

Component	Description
Information	Information is the raw material of CRM. Some examples are: -Identification DATA: Name/address/phone data collected from customers to complete a business transaction. -Marketing data: Descriptors/traits preferences collected from customers during a transaction. -Overlay data: Customer profile data collected by third party.
Process	Customer-centered processes are the " product" of CRM. Some examples are: -All processes that directly touch the customer. -Touch points, or means by which we interact with customers, such as phone, email, etc. -Identifying and eliminating process disconnects and white space. -Integrating and rationalizing processes from the customer's point of view.
Technology	Technology is the machinery that enables CRM to work. These are examples of technologies that CRM may find useful: -Software products (process automation tools, analysis tools, web site development, and management tools) -Networking and integrating applications and databases. -Databases, either purchased solutions or home-grown, central or distributed. -Security features, such as encryption tools and firewalls.
People	People are the power supply of CRM. The energy source must be set to the right voltage for the entire system to work. People are "reset" through various change management tools and support mechanisms, such as: -Training and education.

	-New tools. -Measurements and rewards.
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Source: Judith, year, P 44.

2.4 Advantages of Customer Relationship Management.

One of the essential goals that modern companies seek to achieve is to benefit from the advantages that customer relationship management can provide.

Many considerations justify investment in the setting up and realizing of CRM: (Gerhard, p9)

- Every satisfied customer brings in at least three more customers.
- An unhappy customer communicates his negative experience to ten more potential customers.
- Regular customers exhibit less price sensitivity than new.
- Reducing the level of customers leaving the firm by five percent can raise profit by as much as 85%.

It is becoming clear what an immense increase in effectiveness the implementation of CRM can provide, a large number of leading companies have already recognized the success potential of CRM and are using it to their long-term competitive advantage.

For example, airlines, through engaging frequent flyer programs, established the first steps of CRM years ago. Indeed, SAS, British Airways and Lufthansa have determinedly established almost identical bonus programs and are thus able to achieve a competitive advantage. German BA (British Airways) analyzed just how important the "miles and more" programs and customer cards are for the various airlines; 12% of frequent flyers buy their tickets because of a customer commitment program. Customer Relationship Management processes enable profound improvements in customer sales and retention programs. Advantages are seen from the perspective of the management, customer as well as business partners. Effective CRM system helps the following ways: (Srivastava, p15)

- It helps to communicate with the customers the fact that the company understands how they wish to be served any time they interact with them personally or through automated systems.
- It helps in serving the customers from all areas of the company in accordance with its commitment making it easy for the customers to do business.
- It ensures by getting opportunities for cross-selling.
- It helps in providing product information, product usage and technical help to the customers through internet that is accessible 24 × 7
- It provides a user-friendly and easy mechanism for registering and resolving customer complaints which are a major source of customer dissatisfaction.
- It helps in identifying individual customer's definition of quality and then based on this design a service strategy according to his/her expectations.
- It improves the entire sales process by helping in qualifying customers and customizing proposals.

- Continuous customer feedback leads to new and improved products or services.

4. The employment of technology in Customer Relationship Management.

This section sheds light on the importance of leveraging modern technologies to enhance the management of the relationship between the organization and its customers. This is manifested through the adoption of various tools and techniques introduced by the contemporary technological environment, such as websites and diverse applications, which contribute to improving customer relations across all levels.

4.1 The most useful applications for managing customer relationship.

- **Salesforce:** It is a cloud-based CRM platform that offers a comprehensive suite of tools for sales, service, marketing, and analytics. Among its key features are integration with Microsoft Office applications, advanced analytics and business intelligence capabilities, and AI-driven insights that provide valuable support for both sales strategies and customer relationship management.
- **Zoho CRM:** Zoho CRM is a comprehensive customer relationship management solution designed to meet the needs of businesses of all sizes, from small enterprises to large organizations. It offers a wide range of tools for sales automation, marketing, and analytics. Key features include multi-channel communication—supporting email, social media, and phone—affordable pricing tiers, and highly customizable workflows and modules to suit diverse business requirements.
- **Freshsales:** Freshsales is a customer relationship management platform known for providing comprehensive views of customer interactions along with a range of management services. Its key features include AI-based lead scoring, built-in email and phone capabilities, customizable sales pipelines and reporting tools, and seamless integration with other Freshworks applications.
- **Insightly:** Insightly is a CRM and project management tool tailored for small to mid-sized businesses, offering a unified platform to manage both customer relationships and project workflows. Key features include integrated project management capabilities, advanced reporting and analytics, email tracking and integration, as well as customizable fields and workflows to adapt to specific business needs.

Several applications are used by companies to manage their customer relationships, some are dedicated for marketing and analytics such as Salesforce and Zoho CRM, while others can afford precised statistics and data that the company benefits from to establish decisions and elaborate strategic plans including Freshsales. There exists also a type of applications that are utilized for feedback purpose, they can provide data about customers opinions and reactions, which is extremely significant for any company.

4.2 The most useful websites for managing customer relationship:

- **Slack.com:** it is a collaboration platform that facilitates team communication through channels, direct messaging, and file sharing, improving internal communication related to customer interactions.

- **Mailchimp.com:** it is an email marketing service that helps businesses managers and automate their email campaigns, aiding in customer engagement and retention.
- **SurveyMonkey.com:** it is a survey creation tool that allows businesses to gather customer feedback, which can be invaluable for improving products and services.
- **Hootsuit.com:** it is a social media management platform that enables companies to schedule posts, monitor social interactions, and analyze performance across various social channels.
- **Calendly.com:** it is a scheduling tool that simplifies the process of booking meetings with customers, reducing friction in the scheduling process.
- **Zendesk.com:** it is a tool focuses specifically on live chat functionality for real-time customer support rather than comprehensive CRM.
- **Assana.com:** it is a project management tool that helps teams track tasks, deadlines, and projects, which can indirectly enhance customer satisfaction through efficient service delivery.
- **Trello.com:** it is a visual project management application that allows teams to organize tasks and workflows, helping with customer-related projects.
- **Intercom.com:** it is a messaging platform for businesses that focuses on customer communication, support, and engagement rather than traditional CRM functions.
- **Typeform.com:** it is a tool for creating interactive surveys and forms, allowing businesses to collect customer data and feedback in a more engaging way.

5. CONCLUSION

To summarize, the integration of technological advancements into the field of Customer Relationship Management has significantly reframed how businesses interact with and serve their customers. As digital tools are becoming continuously advanced and smart, today's companies are now compelled to gather and analyze customer data, personalize experiences, automate tasks, and maintain consistent communication across various platforms. These capabilities are not only enhancing operational efficiency but also fostering deeper and more meaningful customer connections.

The remarkable shift from traditional Customer Relationship Management practices to technological one marks a significant transformation in modern business strategy. By embracing innovative websites, applications, and platforms, organizations can respond more swiftly to customer needs, predict future behaviors, and remain competitive in an environment characterized by rapid change. As a result, customer satisfaction and loyalty are no longer passive outcomes, but rather measurable and manageable elements of business performance. Additionally, the economic advantages of effective CRM implementation are countless., including increased sales, improved customer retention, and reduced marketing costs, all stem from a well-structured CRM strategy. These benefits highlight the strategic value of investing in digital CRM solutions, especially as markets

become more saturated and customer expectations continue to rise. However, the success of CRM does not rely entirely on technology itself, but also on how effectively businesses align these tools with their customer-centric goals. Human insight, thoughtful planning, and continuous adaptation remain essential components in maximizing CRM's potential.

This scientific paper concluded that there exists a wide range of CRM applications and web-based tools, which are available to support various aspects of customer relationship management. Platforms like Salesforce, Zoho CRM, and Freshsales offer robust solutions for sales automation, analytics, and strategic planning, while tools such as Insightly provide integrated project and customer management functionalities. Complementary websites—ranging from communication platforms like Slack to feedback tools like SurveyMonkey and Typeform—further enhance engagement, streamline operations, and enrich customer insights. Together, these technologies form a powerful ecosystem that enables businesses to build, manage, and sustain meaningful customer relationships.

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