

USING CRM TECHNOLOGY TO MANAGE CUSTOMER RELATIONS

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Abstract

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>Customer relationship management (CRM) is a comprehensive approach to relationship management that focuses on customer retention and engagement. This thesis gives an understanding of the influence of customer relationship management through the implementation of CRM and how it has resulted in organizational improvements in customer interaction processes. Businesses that apply CRM properly will enjoy the benefits of increased customer loyalty and long-term income. However, many businesses struggle with effective implementation. To manage a CRM installation successfully, an integrated and balanced approach to technology, process, and people are critical.</p> <p>This thesis is divided into two sections: theoretical and empirical. The chapter in the theoretical part discusses customer relationship management, customer loyalty, the CRM platform, and its process. The empirical section demonstrates the user experience and introduces the best CRM application from a client perspective and the software's future forecast on a worldwide scale. Interviews have been conducted via email with companies of various sizes and companies have been properly assessed on the basic requirements of the CRM system and the problems offered by the current system.</p> <p>As a result, this thesis explains the impact of customer relationship management adoption and how it has led to organizational enhanced customer workflows. The data that has been gathered from primary sources and secondary sources, let us come up with some suggestions and ideas for future research.</p>		
Keywords CRM, Strategic customer management, Customer satisfaction, User experience		

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1 INTRODUCTION

Changes in the relationship between companies and their customers define the modern business market. Most people who have businesses know that CRM stands for Customer Relationship Management, the word has also been used to indicate Customer Relationship Marketing (Buttle & Maklan 2015,3). Millions of Organizations have already converted from traditional business relationships to customer-oriented relationships (Santos & Joao 2019, 4). CRM definition is picking the clients that a company can provide most economically and customizing its relationships with these consumers. The main purpose is to increase the company's present and potential customer value (Kumar et al.2012, 2). It's important to keep a reliable and unified connection with the customer at all points of contact, from the website to the store and from sales to services (Pan & Lee 2003).

Customer relationship management is an old concept that has been used for years but nowadays it starts to involve again, and many companies start to use it. The consumer in every context desire personalized service also the companies wish to categorize their clients based on the entire value they bring to the organization. The mission is to develop strong relations with the most valuable clients. Customer relationship management is a great instrument for enhancing brand and customer insights (Peppers & Rogers 2017.)

CRM installations are costly and time-consuming, and despite the substantial investment, enterprises struggle to realize the desired outcomes (Corner & Rogers 2005). Regarding this high failure rate, every aspect of CRM must be addressed with extreme care (Mendoza et al.2006).

CRM software comes in a variety of types to address a wide range of business needs. If a company is using a CRM system, it needs to understand how to get much more out of it. To minimize the risk of CRM failure, managers must establish a CRM environment that supports all CRM deployment phases (Galbreath & Rogers 1999.) When businesses know what they like and do not like about their current CRM system, they are better able to figure out how well and how well the system can work for them. The outcome of this research might be valuable to enterprises that looking to enhance their current CRM system.

1.1 Background

The first real CRM software began to appear in the early 1990s. In addition to storing customer information, a sales force automation (SFA) module was developed for the systems. In the middle of the decade, the term CRM was introduced, and an increasing number of software providers began to appear on the market. The increase in supply was also affected

by the rapid proliferation of microcomputers and thus the continuous increase in the number of potential users. At the turn of the millennium, with the constant development of the Internet and telecommunications connections, software and systems began to appear on the market that operates in the so-called storage space. Here, the program is not installed locally on the workstation but is accessed through an Internet browser over the internet. Today, the well-established designation for this type of operation is Software as a Service (SaaS) which is now called a software service (Stair 2012, 281.)

Since the late 1900s, the modern business market has evolved over time and from various perspectives. Traditional business processes start with a focus on the product, so all past business strategies were just focused on the product. In recent years, the corporate orientation trend has shifted to one that is customer centric. A growing number of customers in companies have developed customer-centric company strategies, but not all have been successful. Understanding the wants and demands of customers is necessary, but it is not sufficient for firms to compete. Furthermore, the main strategy should emphasize relationship management to give value to companies and create a goal for both the organization and its consumers. Developing a relationship with customers allows both parties to benefit from the increased information flow. For example, sharing information can help a customer have more faith in a company and its products. (Grönroos, 2004.)

When we talk about CRM systems, a CRM service is very often referred to, because all major CRM software vendors offer a customer relationship management system specifically as a software service. There is still traditional CRM software that can be installed on a company's server, which usually requires the installation of a local application. At each user's workstation, this supply is constantly shrinking (Peelen 2013, 369).

1.2 Research objectives and questions

The primary goal of this thesis is to present a general introduction to how CRM may change business processes, as it is critical to understand how it improves customer loyalty and increases sales. We will examine the CRM approach from the users' perspective. Key data, such as user experience and satisfaction, as well as functionality and technicalities, must be gathered to meet the goal.

The following questions are the main research of this study:

- i. What is the best CRM solution for companies?
- ii. How do businesses increase usability in their current CRM software?

The research may provide insight into the possible reasons for the success of small and medium-sized B2-B businesses that have already used CRM systems. Finally, it is hoped that the findings of this study will be used to guide future, thorough studies.

1.3 Research methods

This thesis is based on both quantitative and qualitative research strategies, which are appropriate for different stages or levels of research. Qualitative research is a combination of the logical, experiential, and intelligent, and the skills and experience of the researcher play a significant role in the analysis of data. In terms of quantitative methods, most are analyzed using statistical measurement which is useful when the study's objectives require in-depth insight into a phenomenon. (Ghauri et al 2020, 99).

The interview is planned and arranged in such a way that the focus is on the main topic of the study and undesirable topics are avoided during the interview session (O'Gorman & Macintosh 2015.) The list of questions was created on the topics of customer relationships, the best CRM solution for companies, and the usability of the software.

The target group was selected for the basis of the interview in the study, the participants were picked from the companies that produce CRM systems like HubSpot, companies that are currently using the CRM, as well as enterprises that are looking for the best CRM solution. We will review the CRM system in different companies, industries, and business processes to get the primary data. The goal of gathering primary data will be accomplished by using a survey. The survey's goal is to determine how companies have been satisfied with their CRM software and find the best CRM system from the user's perspective.

Secondary data will be gathered through online meetings, internal reports, market research reports, and emails. It is necessary to ensure the collection of data and to consider that we are reliable throughout the process of achieving the purpose to obtain the most accurate information possible.

Using parameters from the theoretical model, the method helps to provide a clearer picture of the data collection process and for empirical comparing results, we used a table, charts, and figures.

The obtained data will be analyzed to determine what the CRM software can achieve for the user and business. They choose which method to use based on which method can best help them figure out what the case is about (Leavy 2014, 455).

1.4 Theoretical framework

This research's theoretical framework is devoted to comprehending various types of CRM systems, CRM technology implementation, customer satisfaction, and organizational culture, phases of the CRM Process, loyalty programs, CRM Marketing, all these elements are linked to the study's purpose. The data is gathered from a variety of sources, including books, papers, websites, and corporate reports.

Additionally, social CRM is considered a critical component of successful customer satisfaction and loyalty program.

1.5 The study framework

Chapter 1 discusses the study's history and purpose. This chapter introduces the thesis background, purpose, objectives, methodologies, and organization.

Chapter 2 discusses the concept of CRM and customer relationship objectives. It presents the overall conceptual background of the thesis.

Chapter 3 presents the empirical part of the study where the results will be analyzed.

Chapter 4 analyze the data and presents research results.

Chapter 5 presents conclusions and discusses the validity of the study, presents some suggestions for further research as well as offers personal thoughts and opinions on the study's strengths and weaknesses.

2 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Every company's future is dependent on its ability to successfully address its client relationships. CRM technology helps businesses to better understand their customers' behavior and, therefore, develop better methods to improve their experience while also building a long-lasting connection and partnership. (Setor 2019, 184-185.)

According to some directors, CRM is a software solution that allows for the tracking of customer data and information to provide exceptional customer satisfaction. (Pepperse & Rogers 2016.)

However, CRM is defined in recent literature as a strategic approach that focuses on increasing profitability by developing suitable relationships with important customers and customer groups. CRM combines the functionality of connection marketing methods with information technology to build valuable, long-term connections with customers and other important stakeholders. Moreover, it makes it possible to make good use of resources and data to truly comprehend and interact with clients. Information, technology, and applications provide the necessary bridge between the involvement of people and processes, as well as the management and marketing functions that support them. (Payne & Frow 2018.)

CRM is described as an income and profit-generating, and customer-loyalty company strategy comprised of customer-focused activities and an integrated information system to enhance customer relationships. These processes include pre-and post-sales strategy, monitoring, and supervision, as well as managing client interactions and creating customer value. CRM business strategies also consider controlling all elements of customer contacts and relationships via the use of software and other technologies. (Buttle & Maklan 2015.) These integrated views of customers and customers who interact with a company must be a big part of CRM (Jerry et al. 2015, 3).

CRM has moved to the top of business models in recent years. For two fundamental reasons, organizations of all sizes have applied CRM. For starters, CRM software helps firms better tailor their varied services to certain market target groups, even down to the level of an individual customer. Second, businesses have recognized the problems of previous marketing. CRM helps companies to build exact target groups for whom customized customer-focused and procedural strategies may be planned. Finally, everything is predicated on maximizing profitability, which is delivered via the development of deep and long-term customer connections. Since the use of communication technology to produce new methods of engaging and interacting is a recurring feature in CRM, it's more important now than ever. (Payne & Frow 2013.)

However, the most important component of a business is the analysis and management of large amounts of data from plenty of sources, including consumer value categories. (Li & Nguyen, 2016). Current CRM solutions help manage large data volumes effectively and efficiently. Hence, adaptability is essential for businesses that would like to keep up with a rapidly changing market. The growth of enterprise operational systems will require industries to adapt to the digital age. (Farman et al. 2021, 2.) CRM is related to tactics for enhancing enterprises by increasing customer satisfaction and organizational outcomes (Keramati et al. 2010).

2.1 The concept of CRM

The term **customer relationship management** was initially used in the early 2000s. However, it is not known when the phrase was originally used for the first time. The phrase did not arise immediately, but it has gone through a process that began in the 1950s. Demand for consumer products expanded rapidly during the Second World War, and the first firms to use a proper marketing strategy were those that dealt with these materials. Non-profit enterprises, such as museums and charities, began to appear in the picture in the next decade. They looked for finance for their projects as well as for customers. CRM was first thought to be valuable in the 1970s only when thought they were getting something from it. (Grattan 2012, 7.)

2.2 CRM system

Today, different CRM applications are offered to companies to manage their business and customer service. It is striving to enhance all customer tools through the implementation of a corporate CRM application. CRM system is designed to unite people and consolidate the diverse tools and vast amounts of data available to customers and investment advisors from across the companies that use the CRM system's numerous applications and datasets. (Fatouretchi 2019, 51.)

A prior study reveals differences in how people use IT at work in terms of functionality when it comes to CRM software. CRM systems are used to manage customer relations and increase organization exposure among its customers. They serve as a market for consumer interactions, information, and searchable databases. (Gute 2011.) CRM software generally is associated with this type of CRM software that integrates the company's main business such as sales, marketing, and customer support to the company's accounting department like finance, operations, logistics, and human resources (Chen & Popovich 2003). The use of CRM software helps in the implementation of proper relations. As of today, CRM software is in need by every modern organization that wants to expand and generate more profit.

CRM software helps firms to easily handle branding, revenues, and tech support as one package by combining information concerning profitability, current clients, associated businesses, and workers across many sectors. Various business activities are supported by it, and the correct information about its clients is maintained and organized so that it can be analyzed. Using this data, organizations might plan out future sales and marketing initiatives with more efficiency. (Lee et al. 2017.) Although multiple software providers use a different framework typically follow a common structure. Reporting and analysis modules are part of the CRM framework. Operational modules automate sales, marketing, and customer service to improve efficiency. (Li & Mao 2012.).

2.3 CRM process phases

According to Kotter (2012, 33) CRM implementation involves significant priorities such as defining a CRM strategy and a project structure. To achieve a beneficial outcome from CRM implementation, four factors are explained in detail in this chapter.



Figure 1. CRM process phases

The process (figure 1) begins with developing the strategic plan, which includes analyzing the situation, CRM vision development, implementation of CRM training, defining goals and objectives, identifying resources, and calculating project costs. On the other hand, CRM training is crucial early in the process, as each contributing department, including IT, sales, and marketing, would naturally have a viewpoint on the project. A CRM vision is a statement

that explains how integration will impact how businesses interact with their consumers. CRM systems may be used to accomplish a range of aims and objectives, ranging from improving customer satisfaction to decreasing sales costs. (Buttle & Maklan 2015, 370.)

The following step is required to build the project principles. This requires identifying key performance targets and designing a risk management strategy to identify areas that may be complex and ultimately prevent the process from succeeding by recognizing such challenges in advance, the project manager may focus more on them throughout the process. (Buttle & Maklan 2015, 371.)

Step three is to finalize the goal description and partner selection. CRM application had to produce a document containing all the information stored in the first two processes and demonstrating the overall CRM strategy of the company. For different vendors to provide what is needed to complete the process, this request document called a bid request, is essential. (Buttle & Maklan 2015, 378.)

The fourth step is to set up CRM software, during which the system prototype is tested and updated before implementation. The test determines whether the application is functional and usable. In addition, various technical customizations are performed as needed. Before using CRM software in the day-to-day operations of an organization, it is important to resolve any remaining questions. (Buttle & Maklan 2015, 380.)

2.4 Implementation of CRM technologies

CRM became more process- and service-efficient because of IT, particularly in online sales (Kumar & Reinartz 2018). Buttle and Maklan (2015,14) state that an effective CRM deployment involves people creating and implementing the procedures that are provided by technology. While IT is undoubtedly a factor in many CRM initiatives, it is crucial to remember that not all CRM projects require IT expenditures.

The previous research looked at the use and impact of technology in customer service, but with the rise of social media, advertisers are rapidly learning that such tools may be key accelerators of Initiatives.

Numerous CRM software has been developed throughout the last years to preserve consumer relationships, as well as to identify and target the most lucrative clients. Examples include Sugar CRM, Microsoft Dynamics, Salesforce, Super Office, Pipedrive, and others. All CRM systems may be customized to meet the specific demands of a company, which is why larger organizations are more willing to use one of them. (Ahonen 2016.)

Through CRM software, salespeople may enter new activities or amend existing ones while the program generates vital information for sales management. It is evident from these statistics if, for example, sales are reducing or if additional customer visits are needed to boost sales. If salespeople are not using CRM software, issues will begin to arise. As a result, the business condition will be portrayed incorrectly in reports. (Oksanen 2010.) Many businesses already use Microsoft products, so it makes sense to go with their version.

2.5 Customers satisfaction

The importance of customer satisfaction cannot be underestimated. Keeping customers is far preferable to gaining new ones. As a result, a company's ability to retain customers is critical. It's essential to keep the customer happy in a business. Customer happiness is a critical subject that must be addressed. This phrase is used in communications to indicate if a business's services meet or exceed the requirements of the clients. When it comes to a product or service, it's commonly defined as meeting the customer's needs, wants, and desires. Business owners and executives must maintain and improve customer satisfaction. (El-annan et al. 2020, 6103-6104.)

Considering the wider acceptance that customer happiness plays a substantial role in repeat sales, positive word-of-mouth, and client maintenance, marketers are concerned about it. Due to the limited resources and positive accomplishments of prior needs, it is a worthwhile product for consumers. As a result, both the company and the customer share the belief that achieving maximum satisfaction is an important goal. (Mouri 2005, 46.)

According to Parasurman (et al. 1991, 420-450.), quality and satisfaction are not synonymous. More satisfied customers are more likely to stick around.

- Customers who are pleased with their experience are still more willing to share their positive experiences with everyone else.
- Intentions and word-of-mouth have a direct link because of cognitive satisfaction.

- When people are happy, they are more likely to spread the word about their experiences.

Customer relationship management (CRM) can boost a company's productivity by increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Customer insight allows companies to better understand their customers, develop better customer value propositions, and deliver better customer experiences. This leads to an increase in customer satisfaction. The probability of a repeat purchase increases in direct proportion to the level of customer satisfaction. An impact on business performance is caused by an influence on purchasing behavior. (Buttle & Maklan 2015, 41.)

2.5.1 Organizational culture

Hofstede (2005, 35) argues that the culture of an organization has been a popular topic in organizational theory since the early 1980s when authors began to argue that an organization's greatness was trendy. This organizational structure includes the common techniques through which its members have learned to act, believe, and express themselves. Since its members did not grow up in it, and the culture of an organization is distinct from that of the rest of the country, this is more likely to occur when the business is structured around customer segments and individuals are rewarded for outstanding CRM achievement. (Wang & Feng 2012.)

Software companies go on to say that national culture, which contains core values, is acquired throughout the first ten years of people's lives, whereas organizational culture, which contains organizational practices, is gained when an adult enters a work organization with the basic values already in place. (Hofstede 2005, 284.)

CRM leaders must be aware of the company culture in which CRM will be implemented. Organizational culture, according to Buttle and Maklan (2015, 369), consists of broadly shared and strongly held values. Individual and interpersonal conduct is influenced by these values, and organizational culture has a broad impact on overall business performance. One cultural aspect, according to Raab et al. (2008, 119), is some employees' reluctance to new or innovative ideas.

Next, there are three most customer-focused firms, according to Bradshaw and Brash (2001), must understand the three key principles necessary for successful customer connections to navigate the obstacles of customer interactions in the rapidly changing digital world:

- Building the CRM for the office is only the beginning; it also involves the integration of back-office activities like production, distribution, invoice, and analytical services capabilities such as data storage and presentation. (Bradshaw & Brash 2001, 520).
- Managing relationships throughout multiple media require the appropriate level of technical expertise and infrastructure, which enables businesses to interact with their customers consistently across various media and even add new media as needed, without having to develop each interface individually and from scratch. (Bradshaw & Brash 2001, 520).
- Developing the appropriate approach for directing clients to various media. While "we treat clients in whatever manner we can" is acceptable for a few organizational strategies, it is a recipe for failure for most organizations. (Bradshaw & Brash 2001, 523)

Building the CRM for front office use is just the beginning and requires background effects, such as manufacturing, shipping, and billing, as well as analytical services, such as storing data and displaying customer insights in the office (Bradshaw & Brash 2001, 525).

2.5.2 Marketing

According to Singh (et al. 2014, 6), most businesses these days communicate with their potential customers via the internet and social media. Thanks to the wide reach of the Internet and social media, it's now much easier to get your message out to a broad audience quickly and regularly. Marketers can also get a little overwhelmed and bewildered by the sheer volume and complexity of the data that they receive from their customers. Even seasoned marketers may find it difficult to design, execute, and measure their marketing strategy, even seasoned marketers may find it difficult without the necessary automation technologies. The following paragraphs highlight some of the difficulties faced by marketers in today's world.

2.5.3 Spamming

Marketers' efforts have become unproductive and irrelevant because of the Internet's ease of communication. Due to their employment of inappropriate and inconsistent messages, marketing efforts often simply end up being a source of confusion and aggravation for the overexposed customer. (Singh et al. 2014, 6.)

2.5.4 Targeting

Prospects cannot be sold with just their names and contact information on a "golden list." A successful marketing campaign requires considering all the relevant information known about the software company's target audience. For this reason, most businesses choose to ignore it. Their marketing is rendered inefficient, and their campaign expenditures yield low returns because they lack critical information on the people on their mailing list (Singh et al. 2014).

2.5.5 Execution

If the CRM campaign implementation is chaotic and not methodical, even the best-planned effort will fail. Target lists are commonly used in campaigns, and the marketing team follows up on each member of that list by sending emails, making phone calls, or checking their progress. Individual replies from numerous marketing channels must be recorded and reported to reach a peak in complexity. With too much trust in the marketing team's abilities and efficiency in manual efforts, there is a high probability of blunders. This raises the bar since it shifts the focus from processes to people in marketing. (Singh et al. 2014, 6.)

2.6 Collaboration of the process

Customer-related processes are viewed broadly by Raab et al. (2008, 118) According to these authors, all the sections of a customer-oriented structure must work together. Success in implementing a CRM system can be traced back to the use of cross-functional teams at the start of the process.

CRM studies have indicated that all departments should be able to see and access customer activity. Customer activity must be visible across many channels and business segments to ensure the success of service offerings (Peppers & Rogers 2011, 362).

Sales managers face the challenge of effective collaboration with internal stakeholders (Rodriguez & Honeycutt 2011). They stress the importance of cross-functional cooperation to

build a customer-focused organization. Rodriguez & Honeycutt produce three hypotheses about the relationship between CRM and internal collaboration in their article:

- The use of CRM enhances internal collaboration with colleagues and managers.
- Increasing performance for consumers is strongly influenced by collaboration.
- Cooperation has a strong influence on the efficiency of the sales process.

Not all processes are equally important to the customer, according to Kale (2004).

However, the customer value proposition should guide all the processes. Businesses should review and identify processes that could be improved with the use of CRM software before beginning a CRM implementation project. That is when we will start dealing with change management and preparing the people who will be carrying out the reorganized tasks.

2.7 Restricting the process

Customers' expectations can be met more effectively if all departments of the company are aware of their needs, according to Rodriguez and Honeycutt (2011). Providing a differentiated and consistent customer experience is critical in today's business environment, according to Tayob (2013). This necessitates a customer-centric sales strategy that makes use of all available channels and resources within the company. With today's increasingly mobile and connected customers, this is more critical than ever.

Change management, communication, follow-up, feedback, and leadership are all critical to the success of a customer-centric process restructure (Mendoza et al. 2007). Companies must consider CRM implementation at every point of contact with customers if they are to provide a reliable, knowledgeable, and high-quality customer experience to their clients (King 2003).

Firms must be customer-focused to implement CRM projects successfully. Prioritizing the interests of the customer is essential to a company's customer orientation, which can improve its CRM capabilities and enhance success. CRM activities can only be as effective as the company's existing processes and structures are integrated with CRM. Organizational systems that are customer-focused allow companies to begin sharing customer information, managed to overcome functional barriers, and dedicate themselves to customer relationship retention and upgrading when they are effectively implemented (Wang & Feng, 2012).

2.8 Customer loyalty

In terms of consumer commitment, customer loyalty is a better statistic than customer satisfaction. Loyalty to a business or brand is described as an emotional attachment. It typically has an attitude aspect, which makes the software company feel better, so the company will continue to use it in addition to the behavior component. Regardless, of the software company, many will continue to purchase it. Because repurchase alone is not sufficient to ensure success, attitudes are critical. (Lehtonen 2012.)

The personal connection does not always equal financial commitment on the part of the customer. For instance, an employee in a software company may dislike their present job yet feel compelled to stay since they have nowhere else to go and make money. Another example is that employees have an insurance agent, but they renew with them each year due to a lack of time to pursue other insurance agent opportunities. Indeed, loyalty was a question of the contract with a local. (Mindshare 2011.)

When a company and its customers are both satisfied with their relationship, it develops into mutual understanding and mutual satisfaction. This creates a good customer relationship. In most cases, the desire to remain committed grows as the relationship progresses. (Peppers & Rogers 2006.)

The scope of brand loyalty is when a consumer consistently purchases the same brand in a particular product category. Customers will stick with a brand if it is available. No other suppliers in the product category are used by them. There are times when a consumer's perception of a brand's value comes from their experience with its product features and quality. The brand-loyal consumer sticks with the company's brand despite the availability of cheaper or higher-quality alternatives. (Leventhal 2006, 415.)

2.9 Social CRM

Social CRM is the use of social media technologies to enhance customer service. Many businesses are now trying to be active on social media platforms since social media's overall appearance on networking between persons. (Rainer & Olaf 2019, 1.)

Due to technology's enormous effect on CRM, several companies believe it as a primarily or exclusively technology undertaking, ignorant of the brand management that genuinely pushes it (Reinartz et al. 2004). Businesses have been interested in social media as a domain for investment because they see it as a technique for developing and sustaining long-term connections with their clients (Trainor 2012). Companies spend more on solutions that

consider social feeds into their existing CRM applications, allowing them better to connect with customers while also serving their long-term interests (VanBoskirk 2011).

Consumers and organizations may communicate with one another in real-time with social media platforms, which allow for collaborative two-way communication (Van et al. 2010). Moreover, according to Nielsen (2012), 46% of online users tend to use social media while making online purchases. Analysts predict that the market will be worth approximately \$34 billion by 2016.

Today's social media technology includes websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google Analytics, and a range of other peer-to-peer websites such as blogs, microblogs podcasts, media applications, video sharing, and social bookmarking, among other peer-to-peer technologies (Kim & Ko, 2012). According to Deloitte university press (2013), more than 80% of Chief executives claimed that most organizations utilized social media to gain business insights.

The widespread usage of social media platforms enables businesses to communicate directly with many potential and current consumers in a cost-effective manner. Consequently, they provide an extra communication channel with two distinct features. (Toivonen et al. 2019, 298.)

The first element is targeted community which indicates social media contact is typically topical and occurs directly between individuals. Social media platforms provide access to groups of people who share common interests, implying that communication is already taking place inside a certain target group. (Toivonen et al. 2019, 300.)

The second potential is multidirectional interaction which shows social media platforms may be used to facilitate communication between consumers as well as between customers and businesses. Depending on the context, social media platforms provide effortless transitions between adaptive publishing and bidirectional communication via text, audio, and video between numerous people. In interactions with businesses rather than one-to-many marketing, in which the same material is generalized to a larger number of receivers, new communication technologies offer a move toward one-to-one marketing. The mission is to establish highly personalized offers and communications that have the potential to elicit a greater level of emotion. (Toivonen et al. 2019, 310.)

Contacting via electronic methods in comparison to traditional media indicates that social media allows meaningful interaction with clients. According to how the platform works, interactions are maintained and displayed to other users as well. (Rainer & Olaf 2019, 11.)

The growth rate of the social media population would decrease over time. Facebook, for example, has seen steady growth, but Twitter has seen a gradual decline in users. This is because of the small user base, which has led to crowding out effects. Messaging platforms like WeChat and WhatsApp are quickly overtaking it. Platforms are always competing for the attention of active users.

3 CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

Due to conducting empirical research for the thesis, in this chapter in the first place, we gave information about the benefits of using CRM systems for companies then data were collected based on the user feedback, identifying the popularity of CRM systems used by employees, and user data collection. The second phase discussed CRM in global marketing and provided predictions on the global market potential, the best CRM solutions introduce from a user's perspective, and we provided the data that showed the relationship between marketing and sales technology.

3.1 The benefit of using a CRM for companies

Using a CRM system has resulted in numerous immediate advantages. CRM systems have made the company's business processes more efficient and the quality of customer service easier to maintain. As a result of the CRM system's time-saving benefits, business operations at the company have improved. For example, all products sold to customers can now be recorded in the system's new store records data CRM system.

The main features used by companies using CRM systems are the service system, the account information system, the customized billing system, and the accounting software developed by the company. According to the interviewees, in the current CRM system, everything must be different, the data stored in the places can be found in the same place. The reporting capabilities of the CRM system are also praised by employees. The reporting feature allows the CRM system to print a variety of reports, images, and spreadsheets.

Currently, the most important tool for business sales is a customized CRM system, a sending program that replaces previously used programs, such as Excel spreadsheets. Excel spreadsheets are used to store customer contacts and call requests. Today, the submission program processes contact systematically without processing Excel spreadsheets. These programs include Zoho, Salesforce, HubSpot, etc. Also, the invoicing system modified to the CRM system has become an important role, as it took many working days before the CRM system. Thanks to the billing feature of the CRM system, almost all billing is automated. The billing system has changed to meet the needs of the company.

3.2 User data collection

According to the Capterra website which is the reliable online tech press and is chosen for the world's leading software reviews, we gathered information based on customer feedback

(table 1) that shows the number of reviews of CRM software from the user perspective which is visualized in (table 2). These items were collected on March 03, 2022.

CRM software provider	Number of reviews
Zoho	5339
Salesforce	278
HubSpot	3005
Microsoft Dynamic365	4223
Monday.com	2625
Pipedrive	2367
Freshsale	487
Zendesk	2738
Insightly	497

Table 1. Considered CRM software and the relevant amount of review (Capterra 2022)

CRM software provider	Overall user rating
Zoho	4.5 out of 5
Salesforce	4.5 out of 5
Microsoft Dynamic365	4.5 out of 5
Hubspot	4.3 out of 5
Monday.com	4.3 out of 5
Insightly	4.0 out of 5,
Freshsale	4.0 out of 5
Zendesk	4.0 out of 5
Pipedrive	3.8 out of 5

Table 2. Ratings based on user feedback (Capterra 2022)

A well-implemented customer relationship management system goes beyond basic contact monitoring by maintaining an audit record of every interaction company's employee has

with each client. According to the number of reviews, Zoho CRM features is such a well software and class sale solution provider for organizations of all sizes. the second scale belongs to Salesforce CRM which offers 45 Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) products to help organizations function smoothly from start to finish.

The third place belongs to Microsoft Dynamics functions in the same way as some other Microsoft applications, making it easier to use and lowering the risks associated with deploying a new solution. These tools automate and streamline financial, customer relationship, and supply chain procedures, allowing to focus on growing business.

Based on the employee overview CRM software from HubSpot is designed for businesses who want to spend less time logging data. It organizes all contacts into a single, customizable database.

Monday.com CRM is suitable for medium-sized enterprises in addition to saving more time to focus on sales, users may utilize built-in automation or quickly develop their own. Our last three picks are Pipedrive, Freshsale, Zendesk, and Insightly all of which have gained the Editors' Choice award for balanced feature sets and intelligent integration capabilities. Not all CRM systems are suitable for all company requirements; nonetheless, evaluating the market and testing with newer entries such as Salesforce Sell makes more sense. In the end, the ideal CRM system for a business is determined by the balance between a company's demands, the size and breadth of its sales staff, and how the organization connects with its customers.

3.3 Collecting data

An important aspect of this project was the development of reports on CRM software as well as the integration of CRM and other applications within the company. Customers and orders were managed to be in the CRM system which was used in many companies. The CRM software system also requests event management features to keep track of upcoming events and the number of people who plan to attend them. Data can be mined for frequencies, averages, and patterns using survey research, which is a type of descriptive research that looks for connections between different variables. However, as you interact with customers and leads, a CRM system collects data about them and builds profiles for each one. Your customers will be able to see their purchase history and previous communications with you across multiple channels thanks to this (chat, email, etc.).

To improve customer loyalty, customers won't have to keep repeating their stories to you, and you'll be able to address issues using best practices and with less effort.

Kate Adams, manager of marketing at Validity said that everything a company does begins with and is dependent on correct CRM data - from marketing campaigns to sales development activities to providing an outstanding customer experience and everything in between. Validity studied more than 600 CRM-using firms throughout the world in research published in 2022. When asked how CRM data influenced sales, 75% of respondents claimed that poor data cost their company clients. Another 44% said that their organizations had lost at least 10% of annual sales because of insufficient CRM data.

CRM is built on a holistic perspective of a customer, and the capacity to gather data at the right time, in the right place, and to the appropriate person is at the heart of CRM. Users, commodities, and sales characteristics are all examples of essential business things that may be harmed by poor data quality, which can have a significant influence on an organization's overall success (Alshawhi et al. 2011, 376-383.)

3.4 CRM In the global market

According to the Gartner Customer Service Priorities Poll for 2022, 54% of customer service and support leaders say that the main goal for 2022 should be expanding the business. In today's world of increasing competition and global instability, it's more crucial than ever to service consumers properly. Improved customer service is essential to the success of a leader success.

Customer feedback and customer engagement software revenues increased by 15.6% reaching \$48.2 billion in 2018, according to Gartner. CRM is still the most popular and extremely fast area of business development tools.

In 2018, global enterprise business applications revenue was more than \$193.6 billion, up 12.5 percent from \$172.1 billion in 2017. CRM accounted for about a quarter of all revenue.

In 2018, software as a service (SaaS) accounted for 72.9 percent of total CRM software investment, and this figure is predicted to rise to 75 percent in 2019, with agility, as well as the need for mobility and distant customers, being major drivers.

Cloud revenue fell significantly in 2018, but it remains robust at 20%, far higher than the overall CRM growth rate of 15.6 percent," according to Julian Poulter, Gartner's senior director of analysis. CRM software, as an early user of cloud computing, is projected to see a continuous drop in cloud revenue rates because of popular applications.

In 2018, the top five CRM software suppliers controlled more than 40% of the overall market (table 3). In comparison to 2017, the top five vendors saw minimal change in their rankings, as Microsoft climbed to fifth place, barely displacing Genesys.

Company	2018	2018 Market	2017	2017 Market
	Revenue	Share (%)	Revenue	Share (%)
Salesforce	9,420.5	19.5	7,648.1	18.3
SAP	4,012.2	8.3	3,474.4	8.3
Oracle	2,669.0	5.5	2,492.9	6.0
Adobe	2,454.8	5.1	2,017.2	4.8
Microsoft	1,302.0	2.7	1,132.1	2.7
Others	28,371.7	58.8	24,962.0	59.9
Total	48,230.2	100.0	41,726.7	100.0

Table 3. Expenditure on CRM Software by Supplier (Gartner 2019)

In (Table 3) CRM Software Spending by Vendor (Gartner 2019) Poulter claims that to take advantage of the substantial market potential, CRM program vendors should double down on cloud installations and explore expanding features in the fast-growing marketing category.

3.5 Prediction of CRM software worldwide

Revenue from CRM software is estimated to reach 49.6 billion US dollars in 2025. This is an almost four-billion-dollar increase over 2020, assuming a compound annual growth rate of 1.7 percent. (Valishery 2022.)

The Worldwide CRM software report is categorized according to deployment type, company size, version number, client-side, and location. The market may be classified into cloud-based and on-premises deployments. Platform solutions are expected to dominate the market during the next few years, due to the creation in the use of CRM Software solutions across many industries, including healthcare. The market may be segmented into the following end-user categories: Universal health care, Industrial, IT & Mobile Communications, Media & Entertainment, Energy & Utilities, Retail, and Education. In 2019, the Healthcare, Media, and Entertainment categories held the largest market shares, a pattern that is projected to continue throughout the projection period. (Vailshery 2022.)

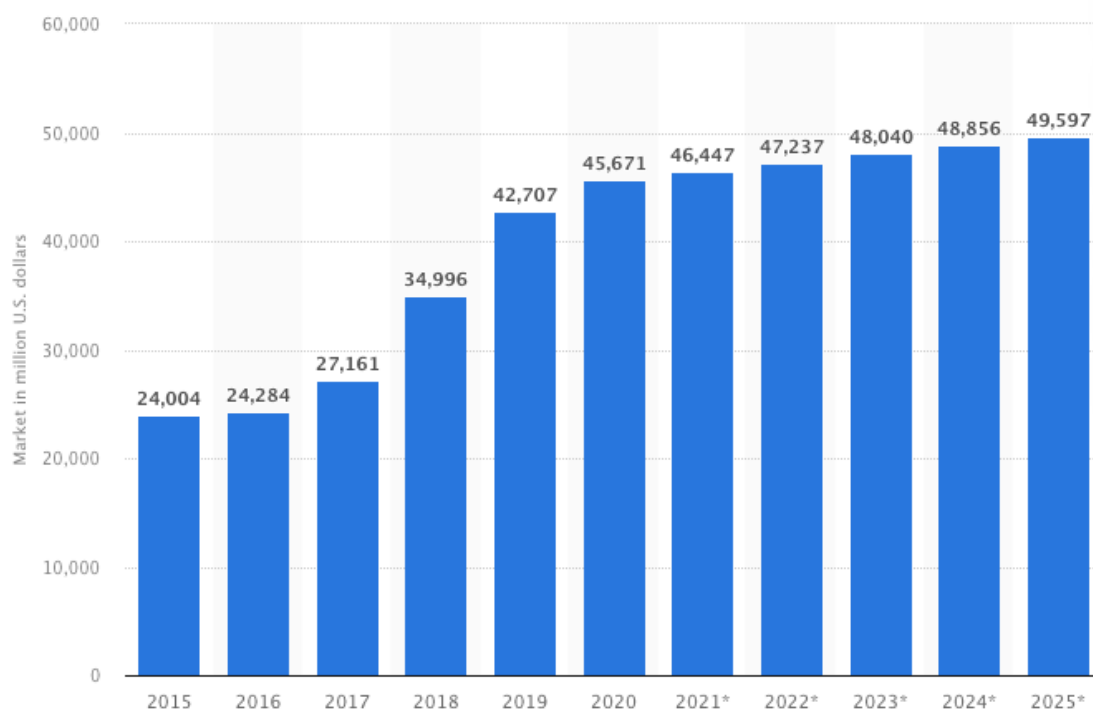


Table 4. Market size for customer relationship management software on a global scale from 2015 to 2025 (Vailshery 2022)

3.6 Best CRM solution

Based on table 4, analytical data gathering methods are used for analysis to determine which CRM software would be best to use. There are several CRM software suppliers to pick from in the business. Some sources give greater emphasis and attention to specific parts of the software, which has an impact on its applicability to the thesis client's needs. Some CRM software, for example, may be better suited for usage by large businesses, where there is a greater emphasis on cases concerning several users, to ensure stability and efficiency under high load.

There are several aspects to consider when selecting a CRM for your business, including the pricing and whether it contains the features and tools your firm needs. Because so many alternatives are available, we have studied more than several systems to find the ones that best suit our clients' needs. Best CRM solutions help marketing, sales, commerce, service, and IT teams collaborate more effectively, even when individuals are working remotely. Here are references to picking the best CRM software for companies. (Hawkins 2022.)

- Scaling a business using Zoho CRM is an excellent choice for remote teams and sales professionals that spend a significant amount of time on the road. Its iPhone and Android mobile applications provide many of the same features as the desktop

version and update in real-time, ensuring that the most recent client data is always available.

- Salesforce: Sales Cloud for Customizability
- HubSpot: enables more work but with much less data input. The interactions are tracked down automatically, and a separate visual dashboard highlight deals for comprehensive visibility. Now manage up to 1,000,000 contacts.
- Microsoft Dynamic365
- Monday.com: the tool of choice for multi-channel communication
- Pipedrive: known for its ease of usage.
- Freshsale CRM: automate internet purchases
- Zendesk: Sell to manage business
- Insightly: use for email power users may utilize CRM to manage their Gmail accounts

3.7 CRM sales technology

In figure 2, Gartner's 2019 Trend for CRM Marketing Automation evaluates the trends and commercial viability of systems targeted at enhancing sales productive capacity, to empower sales organizations in analyzing those that are emerging to change, as well as their company's performance (Omale 2019).

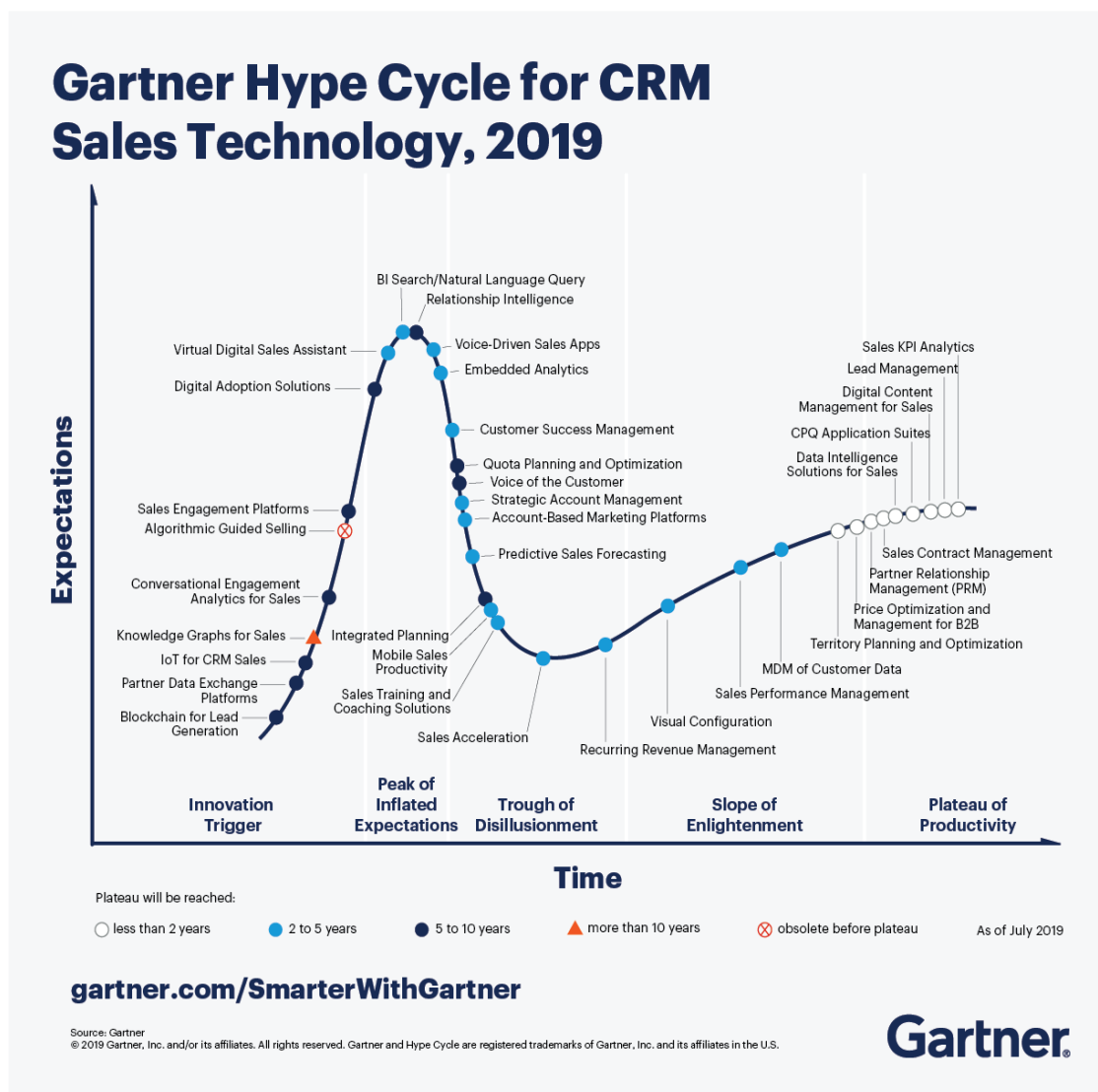


Figure 2. Gartner for sale Leaders Market Survey (Gartner 2019)

In general, technology has had a significant effect on business processes, especially simulation approaches, which may help field sales managers make a wide range of strategic and tactical decisions. Main decision areas in field sales management, such as allocating personnel and financial resources and determining optimal sales force sizes, as well as allocating territory and analyzing the profitability of sales operations' component elements, all appear to be moving toward automation (Hinson et al. 2018).

3.8 Result

As discussed in this chapter, data is classified according to user perspective, we discussed how the best CRM software has been effective for enterprises based on customer point of view on a global scale, how this system has changed their sales and business processes, and how this system has also exceeded the application's prediction for the upcoming years. All of it was classified, examined, and organized. The next chapter will analyze the data that we received via survey across diverse organizations around the world.

4 DATA ANALYSIS & RESULT

This chapter discusses the result of the research. The seven candidates were chosen by the different types of companies. The first chapter discussed the respondent's demographics then every single question was thoroughly analyzed, the result was given to the reader in each chapter and the best CRM solution was introduced. In the following chapter, we evaluated the system and provided the pros and cons of various CRM applications that are used in different companies from user experience which can consider as a possibility of boosting the efficacy of CRM systems. Investing in CRM solutions may ensure success and enjoy the benefits of good customer relationship management. In the end, we provided a summary of the results of the survey.

4.1 Review of survey responses

We undertook direct interviews for our thesis, also ten different questions were made and distributed to the seven different attendees which started from the 1st of March to the 31st of March. All data was gathered in a private form and given to different organizations via email or personal contact. Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to interview a significant number of clients, therefore, a quantitative research technique was utilized to collect data and analyze the results. The responses demographics are extensively discussed in this chapter.

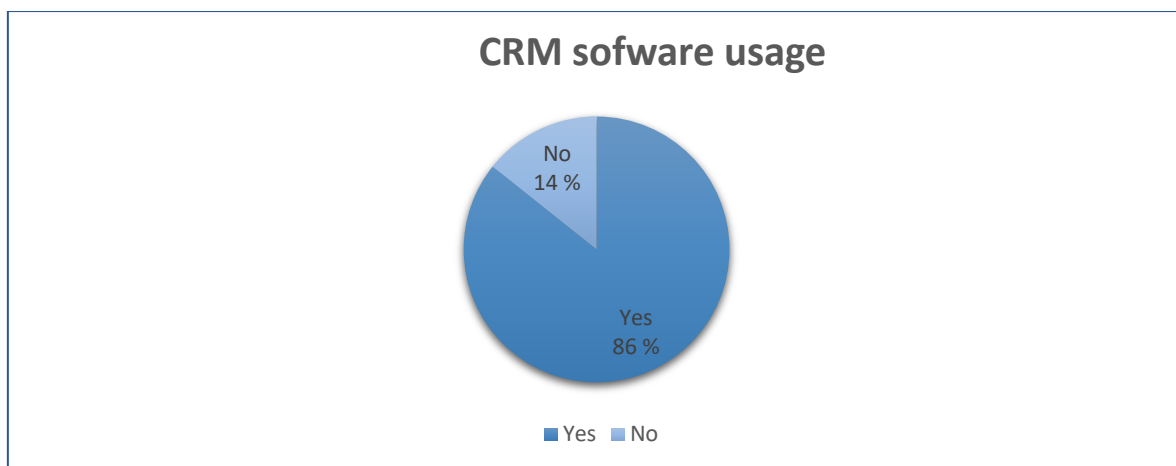


Figure 3. CRM software usage in organizations

The survey started with a question about using CRM software in a company, it is shown in figure 3 that the CRM program is used by many people in their organization. More than 86% of the seven participants in the survey utilized CRM tools in their daily work, while just 14% of those in attendance did not use them.

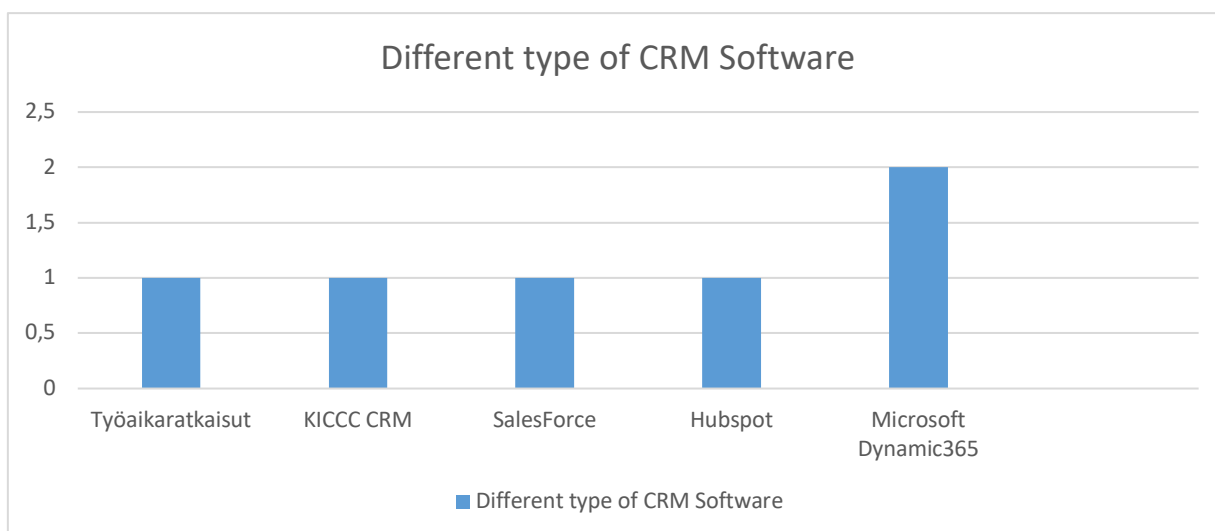


Figure 4. Most popular CRM application

The most popular CRM application is revealed in the next question, according to figure 4, there are a lot of applications that businesses use to serve their customers. All in all, we can see that Microsoft Dynamics 365 is a lot more popular than other CRM software.

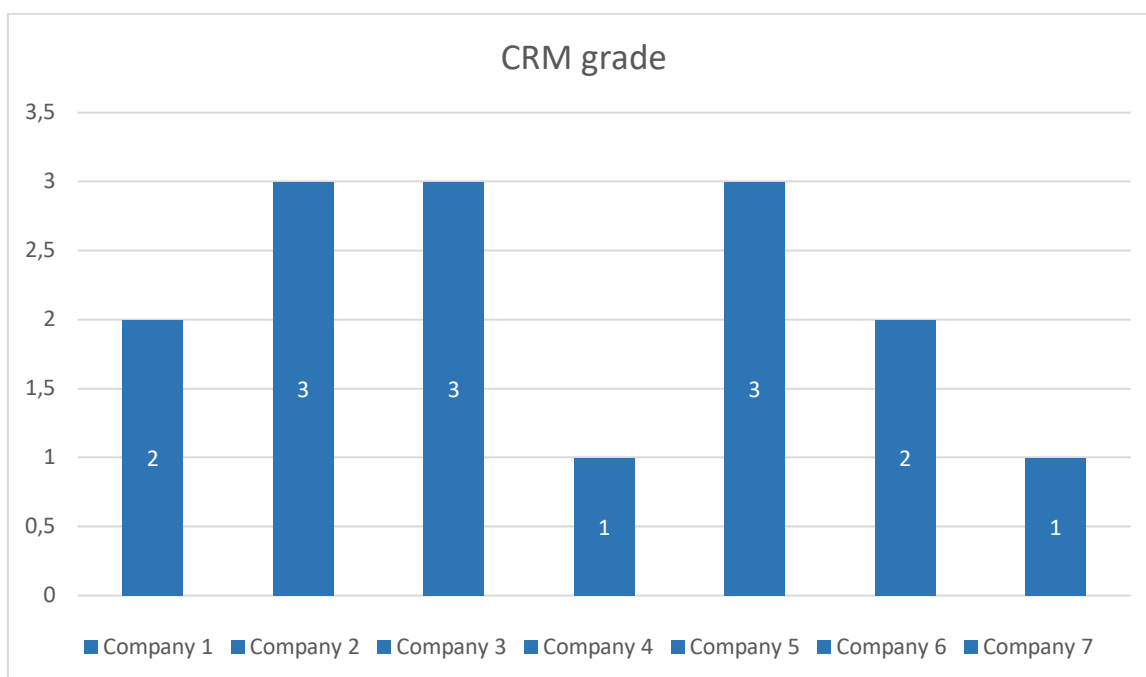


Figure 5. Ratings based on user feedback

As illustrated in figure 5, the average grade users gave their current CRM system was nearly 2 of 3, indicating that most respondents were satisfied with their system. also contact management, lead management, sales forecasting, instant messaging amongst workers, email monitoring, and connection with Outlook and Gmail, file and content sharing, and dashboard-based analytics are all made possible with their current CRM. According to figure 5,

the companies have been satisfied with their CRM applications and the average is 2.14 out of 3.

Positive Responses	Data organized, easy to use, effectively communicate
Neutral Responses	A new concept, not familiar with CRM concept
Negative Responses	Not user friendly, system complicated

Table 5. Reactions to using CRM application

In this question (Table 5), the companies answer why they gave this specific rate for their CRM application. One of the companies answered that *"it's not user-friendly and every functionality should be modified manually."* So, it's possible that this organization was unhappy with its CRM software. Another company said, *"We are just starting to use CRM."* This company is new to the CRM system or application but apparently, they liked it already even though they are new users. Another company answered, *"Everything in one place and extremely convenient to use."* This company seems like they are experts and know very well how to use the CRM system because they gave a high rate for their CRM application. There was also this one company that seems to have good knowledge about CRM systems because their answer was very well put together and very well described. They claimed that as a business, you should be able to communicate with your consumers by phone, e-mail, and live chat. Find the ideal time and channel to communicate with your consumers by measuring the success of your customer communication.

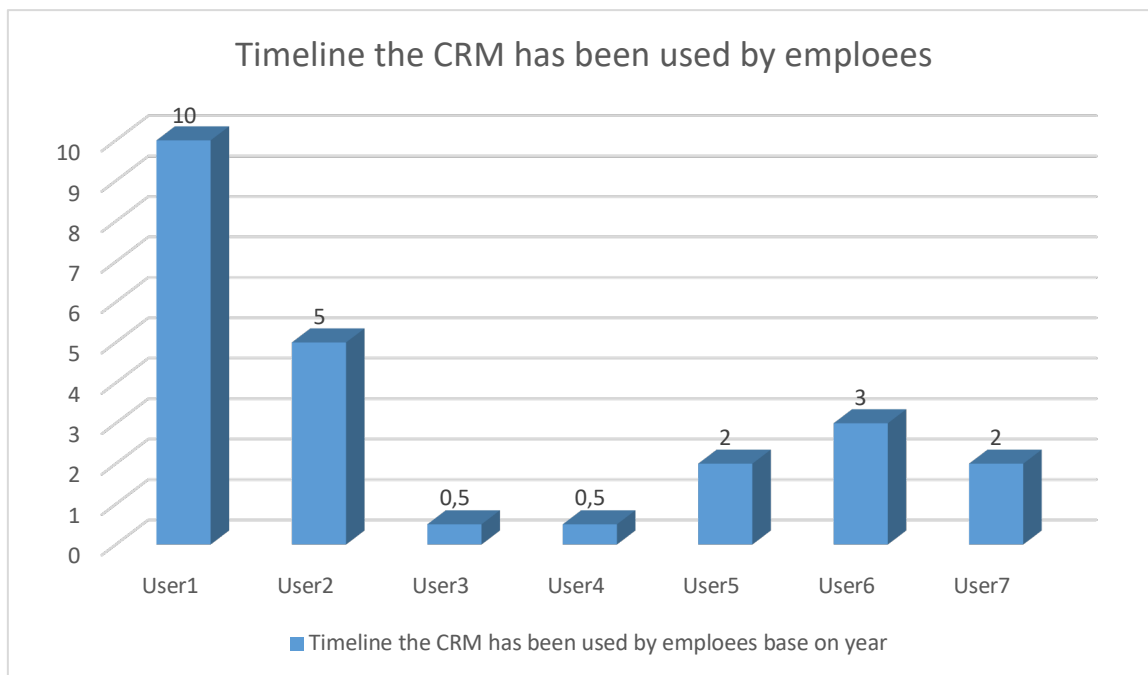


Figure 6. The timeline the CRM has been used by employees based on the year

Based on the survey in figure 6, candidates were asked to indicate the period they utilized the CRM software in their organization. There were several responses from 6 months to 10 years which were varied and discovered that Businesses are eager to enhance their client connections as promptly as feasible. This frequently involves investing in CRM early - during the first five years of a business's start.

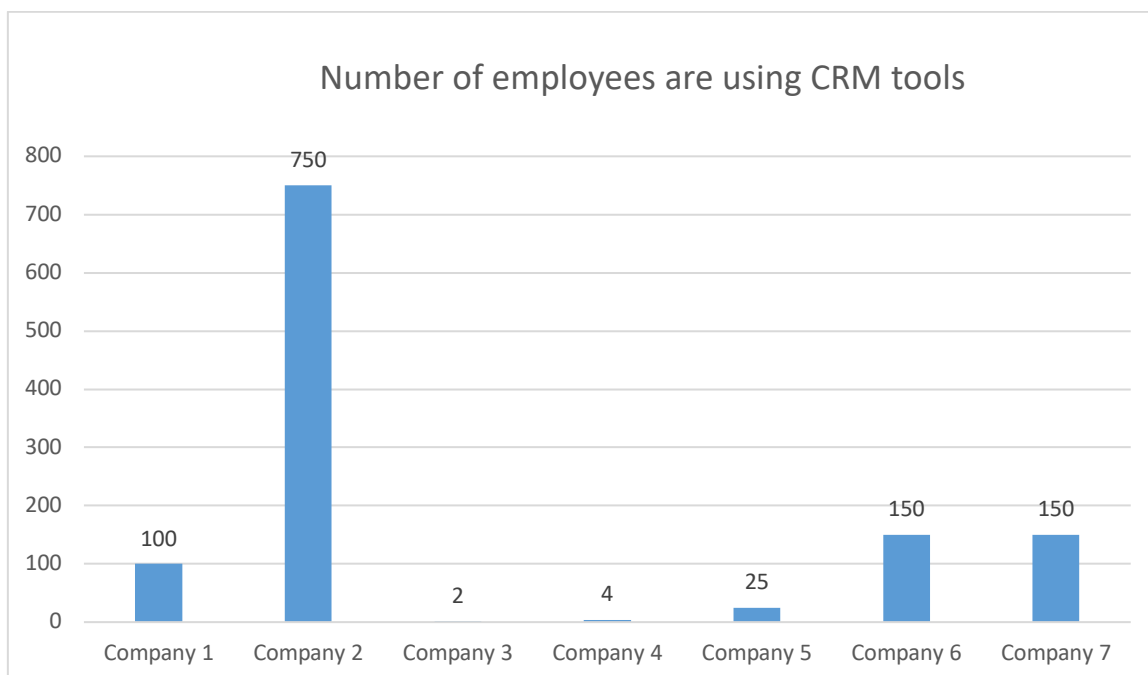


Figure 7. The number of employees who use CRM tools in their work daily

In response to the following question, the survey found the number of employees who use CRM tools in their work daily. According to figure 7, CRM technology is fast gaining traction as a critical element of any organizational technology. According to research, more than 98 percent of businesses with between 1 and 750 workers regularly use CRM software to monitor client relationships. Around 90 percent of businesses use CRM to track sales. Nearly 82% of businesses interviewed in a recent analysis indicated that they utilize their CRM systems for sales reporting and process automation. Senior management, on the other hand, is increasingly depending on CRM systems to manage meaningful customer data across organizations.

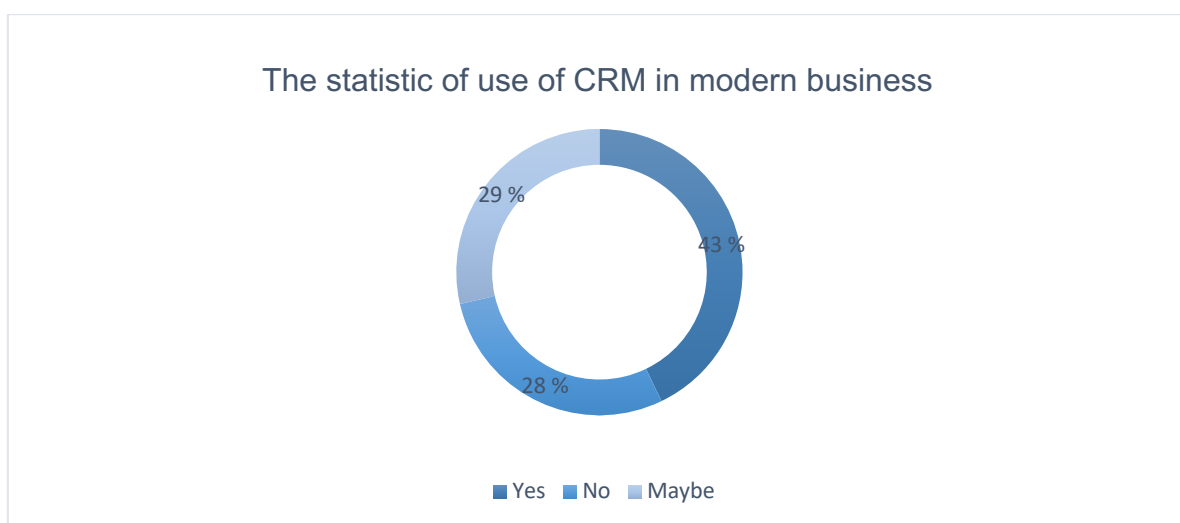


Figure 8. The statistic of easy usage of CRM in organization

The above pie chart (figure 8) indicates the results of how users found it simple to use CRM in their ordinary work in modern business. As a result of the responses, 29% of organizations that use CRM in their day-to-day is more difficult today than it was two-three years ago. Additionally, nearly 43% of salespeople say that they adjust what works for them once they discover it. Most significantly, according to 28% of business owners, the most challenging difficulty they encounter is adopting new technology.

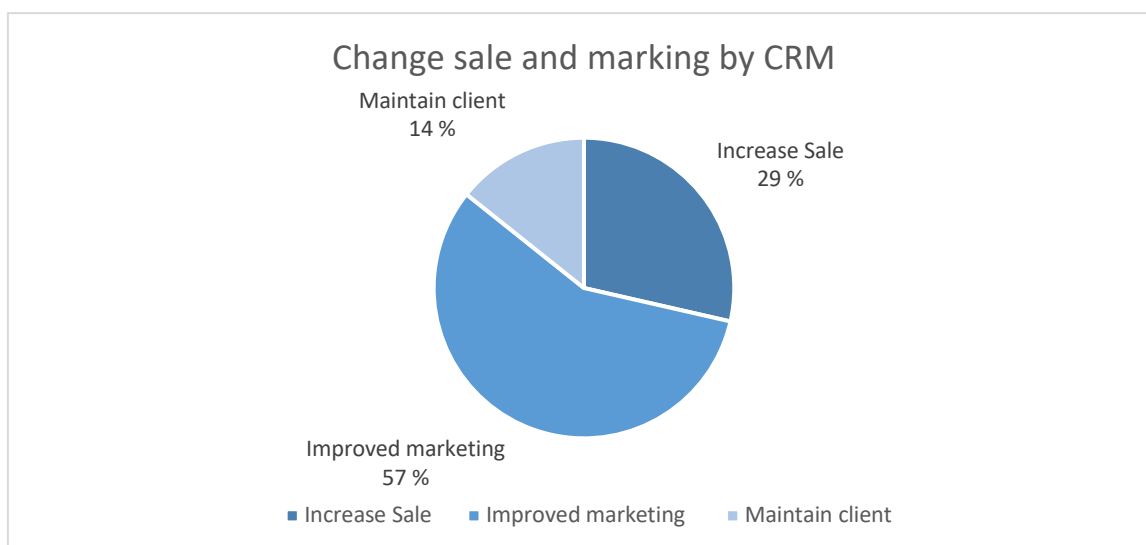


Figure 9. Changes Business process with CRM tools

This question presented (figure 9) presents how the CRM concept could change business processes in companies, we gained a deeper understanding of business clients is critical for providing more customized and meaningful experiences. CRM tools can improve marketing automation systems and make client data more accessible to businesses, according to 57% of responses. In addition, 14% of respondents claimed that using CRM tools could keep customers within the organization for a long time, and 29% of sales teams used CRM to better understand the sale pipeline. Furthermore, users preferred CRM technology to facilitate connection management and interaction tracking; CRM also significantly influences their customer satisfaction rates.

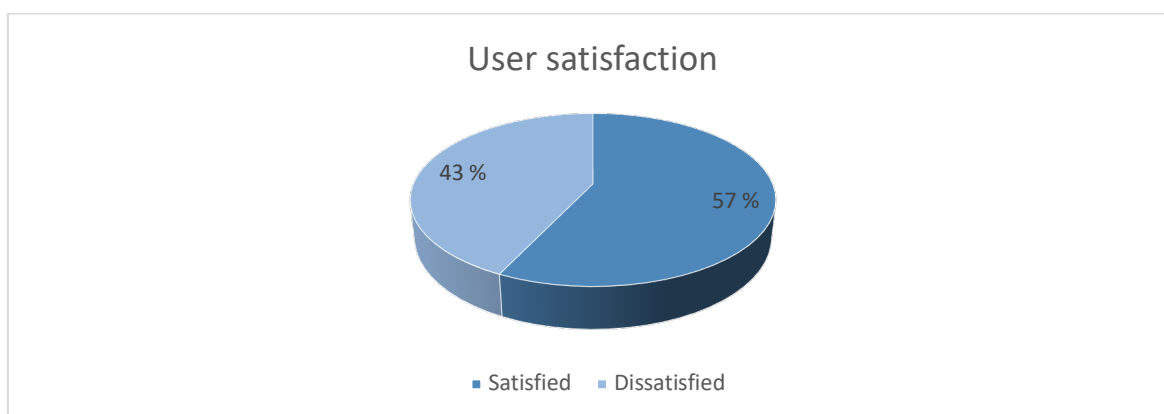


Figure 10. User satisfaction about automate the business Process

The above (figure 10) displays the participants' responses to the question about automating the process between sale and market, 57% of participants were in favor of automation and use for sale reporting. They would rather suggest their CRM software to another group of

businesses. Furthermore, 43% of participants are dissatisfied with their system, claiming that their current CRM is unsuitable for their business and that integration with sales, marketing, and other platforms in their enterprise is a concern.

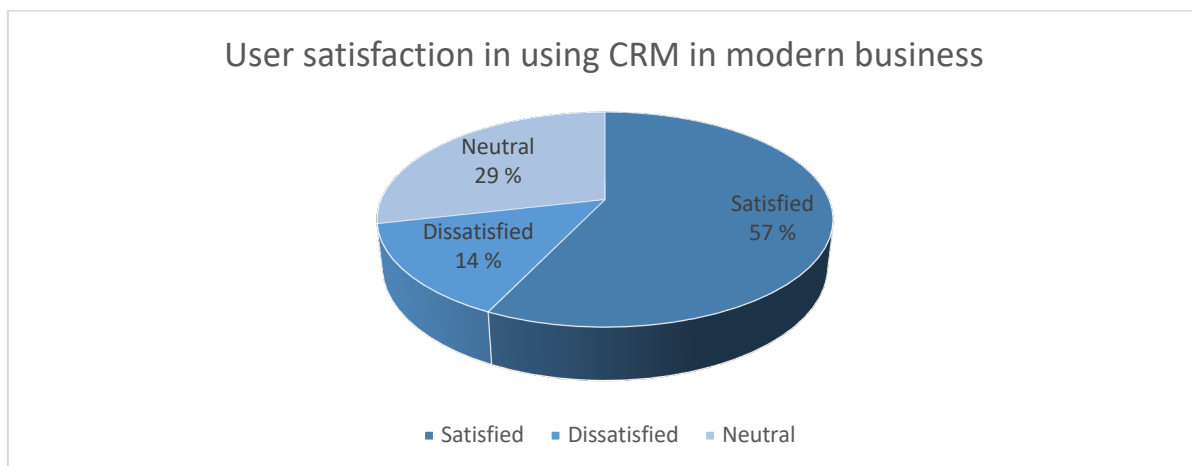


Figure 11. User satisfaction while using the CRM application in modern business

Toward the end of the interview, interviewees were asked whether CRM applications could provide useful information for end-users. It was a good topic to ask because we discussed the ability of organizations to use CRM tools to deliver important information.

In figure 11, these are the responses we received *“Give your customers a way to get in touch. Design and embed simple web forms, track their effectiveness, and reach out to form-fillers in a few clicks”*. Finally, one of the participants responded *“The company’s accounting software is old and not connected to CRM. We use information API in CRM with difficulty and with strange solutions. Of course, this hard way is worth it. Reports are very useful and practical and help increase sales and maintain the market”*.

4.2 Evaluation of CRM system

Companies need more technology to keep track of maintaining consumer engagement across various platforms. The many types of customer satisfaction were examined in the theoretical section of this thesis.

According to the survey most CRM systems are utilized for sales reporting and process automation. CRM systems are increasingly relied upon by senior management to handle meaningful customer data. The tables below present a summary of the survey that we conducted in the theoretical section, the benefits, and disadvantages of the CRM concept for businesses.

Pros	Cons
Customer knowledge that is more in-depth	Requires higher costs
Protection of personal information	Involves Training
CRM gives the company sales, marketing, and customer relationship or service team a competitive advantage	It May Not Be Appropriate for Every Business
Data by categories and criteria, making it easy to create targeted lists	Requires a sales organization that is process-driven
Who is interested in the company's products and services	Technical Support issues
Improved ability to retain clients	Resistant Staff
Excellent client service	Access by a Third Party
Maintain its commitments by reminding customers of upcoming appointments or sending follow-up emails.	Concerns about data security and protection when data is centralized
Improved strategic planning of requirements	Complicated data input
Help salespeople sell more and sell faster	Inappropriate usage is a waste of time
Obtain and document their customer's contacts	It is worthless without a proper method
Enables easy collaboration	difficulties encountered when installing a CRM
Opportunity to increase revenue	If the database is not properly managed, data might still be lost.

Table 6. Pros And Cons of different CRM applications in a variety of enterprises

According to this survey (table 6), we could estimate the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing the CRM application by employees in different companies based on the responses.

4.3 Result of survey

Every software or application certainly has its limits, in total 75 % of respondents claimed that utilizing a CRM enhanced their income, client retention, and satisfaction rates substantially, but 39 % stated that their current platform is not properly working for them, this could lead to a loss of time or a low level of use by the people who work there and it might be time-consuming or extremely difficult.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study discusses the benefits that may be gained from using a CRM system in a business and the potential goals and benefits that can be pursued. The main goal was a deep understanding of CRM in the global market and how the business workflow can be effective by managing the customer relationship in the technological pathway. We studied different CRM apps, both popular and less common, to provide reliable information to help readers pick the appropriate CRM solution for the business depending on what they require.

The reason for selecting the different CRM tools and comparing them together is that the users of these tools will benefit significantly from basic organizational training. The biggest and most significant part of the CRM tool would be that its methods offer to simplify their processes when used appropriately.

Primary research was given at the beginning of the thesis, we proved that the valid information on CRM's potential to impact business functions, and the way companies could manage and analyze customer interaction efficiently.

The research process was both challenging and straightforward, it was easy to gather important information because there was already a lot of information about the CRM system. It was difficult to find the right sources. The process was difficult, Additionally, the imposed new coronavirus presented a problem, but all the issues were resolved through additional online research.

In conclusion, depending on the company and the type of CRM system they require, CRM implementations can be broken down into a variety of different processes. Knowing the implementation's aims and objectives is also critical. An integrated data system that can be used by various departments, including marketing, sales, accounting, and social media is the primary goal of the implementation. Users and organizations equally benefit from having a data-based system that can easily access, operate, and manage. Improved system integration allows for better data understanding when all the departments are working together it is leading the companies to change their business process and gain customer satisfaction.

5.1 Validity of research

Validity refers to the technique or methods of data collection accurately examine what they are supposed to analyze. Validity also determines if the study findings are truly on the relevant topic. (Ben et al. 2017, 278.)

Data for the theoretical research was gathered from paper books, electronic books, articles and journals, and online tech press. personal online interviews via LinkedIn were afterward undertaken to provide a more in-depth understanding of the study subject.

Chapter 3 examined approaches for ensuring validity and relevancy have been applied successfully, the survey was made in Finland among seven different-sized organizations in 2022 by answering research questions, Although the most of participants were from Finland, and we got seven answered from companies such as Barona, HubSpot, H&M and Kekale, as a result, making the statistic hardly applicable for the global researcher data was gathered via an email so there is a possibility of spearing false information answered to the survey question.

The main goal of the survey research results is to provide information about the benefits of providing CRM software to modern businesses and evaluate user satisfaction. Through the research results, companies can now better understand their current system than before. Through it, the data collected can help them choose the best software base on their business and improve a specific aspect of CRM software. During the process of this analysis, the companies understand the disadvantages and advantages of all CRM software

5.2 Further research

This study did not identify all the aspects of benefits and objectives of using CRM for enhancing the relationship with the customers around the world, so in further research, we recommend paying more attention to the unique application and benefits obtained by various CRM systems around the world to ensure that the data is as useful as possible by increasing the size and diversity of the group.

Additionally, future studies might broaden the sorts of CRM systems analyzed and the methods used to analyze their data.

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