CRM Benefits for Customers : Literature Review (2005-2012)

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ABSTRACT

CRM is a strategic approach that integrates people, business and technology to understand the needs of customers to be more satisfied. Customers are the vital key for each business and company to help them to grow. So, implementing CRM applications is one of the important tools that will help managers and companies to increase the satisfaction and loyalty of customers more than before. Beside this, there are some benefits which will affect on customers after implementing CRM. These benefits will help the customers to become happy and pleasant of using the companies that is offering their product and services from using CRM facilities. In this study, we find eight benefits of CRM which are important and beneficial for customers such as improve customer services, increased personalized service, responsive to customer's needs, customer segmentation, of marketing, improve customization multichannel integration, time saving, and improve customer knowledge. We reviewed previous studies, and identify these benefits which will affect on customers. Our result will help the managers and companies to know and recognize the factors and benefits of CRM which are more significant for their customers. So they can increase their customer's satisfaction and retention by more attention to these benefits.

Keywords - CRM, BENEFITS, CUSTOMER

I. INTRODUCTION

Customers are the critical factors in each business. In all companies, the loyal and the fixed customers are expecting more level of service qualifications, suitable transaction, and customized products. So it means that the companies should be informed of each customer to increase the loyalty and effectiveness. For this reason, CRM systems can help to change the way that each company is treated with customers and employees, to promote its revenue and obtain higher final profit. Nowadays, organizations are implementing Customer Relationship Management applications more and more because CRM will help them to achieve a range of business benefits [1-2].

Moreover, Implementing CRM will consider as a set of information processes and

technology tools for enterprises that enable the firm to expand its customer relationship management [3]. It will raise the firms' ability to earn profits and generate higher-quality products or services. Based on Gartner explanation, CRM is a business strategy designed and implemented to help the firms and companies to know and foresee the requirements of their potential and obtainable customers. Discover, attract, and find new clients and customers are the vital aim of the CRM. Pay attention and be responsible about those customers which are the loyal customers, attract previous customers for come to the company again, and lessen the cost and money of promotion; marketing and customer service are also goals of the CRM [4]

According to Winer [5] "this revolution in customer relationship management...has created a worldwide market for CRM products and services of \$34 billion in 1999, a market that is forecasted by IDC to grow to \$125 billion by 2004." While there is a huge investment in CRM implementation, still there are many CRM initiatives that fail to understand their proposed benefits [6].

Although CRM has a huge impact on the firms and organizations, there are some advantages and benefits of implementing CRM which have a direct impact on the customers, and will bring customer's satisfaction and improving retention of customer. Assessing and finding the benefits of CRM is a vital aspect of managing [7]. These benefits will help the firms to find out the way that increase effective relationship with customers and finally will profit firms. Some studies classified the benefits of CRM in terms of operational, organizational, strategic, IT infrastructure, and managerial. In our study, we want to find out the benefits of CRM for the customers. Since the customers are the critical key for each organization, they will have a huge impact on making profit and sales.

Considering that some of the effects of CRM are multi-dimensional faceted, the objective of this paper is to have literature review about the CRM benefits. The CRM benefits will affect on the customer's needs and acquiescence that could be extensible. Also the results can be comparable across time, different systems and contexts.

II. CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM)

In a general Customer relationship management (CRM) is a business strategy, which aims is acquiring new customers and retaining

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current customers to increase competitive advantages. CRM helps firms preserve relationships with customers that are directly connected competitive compensation. The basis of CRM is relationship marketing, which aims are improving the long-term profitability of customers through moving away from product-centric marketing to customer-centric.

More and more, firms understand the worth of establishing close relationships with customers to growing retention. According to Khalid Rababah [8] Knowing customers, will enable firms to serve them better and keep them loyal forever. This is the main theme of Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Therefore, Defining CRM is necessary for increasing and developing a clear perceptive and vision of what CRM means to a business and organization while the lack of such obvious understanding is considered as an obstacle to successfully implement CRM [9].

The CRM concept is used widely in cooperation of perform and research, while not for all time without fail [6] and also, Rigby [10] [10][9][9][9] states that the majority of executives can not immediately define CRM. Therefore, here we present some definition to describe the meaning of CRM.

In the other definition ,CRM is the combination of marketing efforts, business processes and technology which will lets the firm to know and recognize its customers from numerous perspectives [11].

In addition, a number of studies define CRM more holistically and they attempt to define CRM through its association with technology, and also as a business strategy [12-15].

On the other definitions, Kincaid [16] defined CRM as a strategic tool that use of information, processes, technology, and community to handle the customer's relationship with the company departments such as marketing, sales, services, and support, during the customer life cycle, and Buttle [17] quoted that "CRM is an integration of technologies and business processes used to satisfy the requirements of a customer throughout any given interaction. CRM involves achievement, analysis and exploit of knowledge about a customer to sell more goods more efficiently".

In the other literatures, CRM is defines as an opportunity to increase profit, attracting and retaining "economically valuable" customers though removing "economically invaluable" ones [18-20].

Consequently, by looking towards the CRM definition, it is clear that satisfying the needs and requirements of customer is an important and significant part of CRM. Also, one of the vital goals of firms through implementing CRM is

improving customer's satisfaction. There are a numbers of studies which have explored the different aspect of CRM, such as CRM benefits. Recently, some researchers are classified the CRM benefits based on Shang and Seddon 's (2002) enterprise systems benefit frameworks [6-7]. Although this studies are very efficient in extracting the benefits of CRM, but still there is a lack of CRM framework benefits which present the CRM benefits from customer's point of view. Considering customer as an end user who is interacting as an external user with CRM applications, will help to take out those benefits which are related to customer. Therefore, through reviewing the past literatures, it is possible to find and extract those benefits that are important for customers.

III. CRM BENEFITS

There are some problems regarding the benefits of CRM, David [21], as Managers did not know what kind of advantages the CRM system will brings to a company. So management should have at least the basic understanding or knowledge about CRM's benefit. The following lists of CRM benefits are selected and minimized from a wide range of survey from latest CRM studies.

With CRM systems customers are served better on day to day process and with more reliable information their demand of self service from companies will decrease. Therefore if there is less need to contact with the company for different problems, customer satisfaction level increases [22]. Through Implementing CRM Companies can remove confusion that exists in the productivity, efficiency and control and every level through appropriate use of CRM (Rushforth, 2007).

In recent findings, the list of benefits will be considered as a critical connection among CRM initiatives and growth of customer equity. These central benefits of CRM will be connected hypothetically to the three kind of equity that are relationship, value and brand, and in the end to customer equity[2]. Eight core benefits were recognized to provide value drivers.

- 1. Enhanced ability to target profitable customers
- 2. Integrated assistance across channels
- 3. Enhanced sales force efficiency and effectiveness
- 4. Improved pricing
- 5. Customized products and services
- 6. Improved customer service efficiency and effectiveness
- 7. Individualized marketing messages

CRM system helps companies to keep and record the customer information, like their goals, needs and events. Moreover, saved knowledge is updated into the CRM system, so that the customer's information will be up to date without being outdated. With these connections the information is always expands in the CRM system that enhances

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the profile data for customers and works like a strong instrument in making business decisions [23].

Greenberg [24] stated that through developing the total lifetime value of customer, CRM can raise the true economic worth of a business. Moreover successful CRM strategies promote customers to purchase more products, stay loyal for longer periods and be in touch effectively with a company.

Curry and Kolou [25] quoted some benefits and reasons for adoption of CRM:

Customers from the competition will desire come your organization, Simplify customer-focused internal organization will make simpler the infrastructure, decrease the workflow and remove non-productive information process, and Profits will increase from more satisfied customers and more integrated focused company.

Since adopting CRM will provide a lot of benefit in firms and their process, it would be helpful to clarify results and benefits of implementing CRM for them. Therefore, they will have a good background about the results and incomes from using CRM applications.

As we mentioned above, most of the studies on customer relationship management (CRM) focused mainly on exploring CRM benefits from organizational and managerial point of view, and there is a few studies that specifically concentrate on customer's point of view. However, finding this benefits and reinforcing them in the company will affect on the satisfaction of the customers. We had reviewed some of the previous research and studies since 2005 to 2012 which were about the CRM and its benefits. It will help to find the benefits which are critical for customers. For this reason we reviewed around 60 papers and select those studies that were mentioned benefits of CRM for customers too. Because of the limitation of our domain search, only 15 papers were recognized that were exactly mentioned and discussed about the CRM benefits from customer's sides. Of course, these studies and others had mentioned some other benefits of CRM form other views but, here we focused on the benefits which are for customers only.

Table1 : CRM customer's benefits

Dimension	Reference	year
• Enhanced customization	[26]	2005
of services and product		
offerings		

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Dimension		Reference	year
• Improves c	ustomer	[27]	2005
segmentation and asse	essment		
• Enable commu	nication		
through multiple	selling		
channels			
• The ability to	gather	[28]	2005
customer data			
• identify the most	valuable		
	increase		
customer retention is	s highly		
desirable	_		
• learning	from		
customers(customer			
knowledge)			
D. 11		[20]	2005
• Deliver the right		[29]	2005
and service in the right			
from the right channe		1	
• Channels for custo	omers to		
give feedback		- N A	ű
Produce personali oustomizable produce		-	
customizable produ	ict and		
• Institution of c	natomor.	1	
trust in CRM systems			/3
• Information us		[6]	2005
	e and	[O]	2003
aptureBetter pers	onolizad		1
service pers	onalized		000
 Being more response 	ncivo to		y
customer requirement			
Closer relationsh		[30]	2006
customers and offer		[50]	2000
services	phone		
• Servicing custom	ers and		-
receive information		1000	7
develop the level of		1	
offered to customers	12.0		
	nmercial	[2]	2006
customers			
Offerings from	different		
channels	from the same		
• Enhanced c	ustomer		
service			
• Customized produ	ucts and		
services			
Advance responsi	veness	[31]	2009
• Accelerate delive			
times			
• Enable c	ustomer		
knowledge managem	ent		
	ustomer		
segmentation			
• Targeting the	most		
profitable customers			
• Improve produc	ct and		

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Dimension	Reference	year
• Enhance customization of		
marketing efforts and		
messages to individual		
customers		
• Permit multi-channel		
integration		
• Allow multi-channel		
communication		
• Enable personalized		
products and services		
• Improve product		
separation	100	
• Focus on customers and		
their needs	15	J. Bee
• Provide customers a	-	
"one-to-one" skill	100	1000
Personalized services	[32]	2009
 Customers knowledge 	[32]	200)
and experience empowered	S.Eliston	
 Deliver high quality 		
service light quanty	on Fill	
	ar sales	
needs(personalization)	9 1	
• Employee empower more	1	
time to serve up customers	65 min	
• Advanced satisfaction	30	
ratings	y/i	
• Targeted product and		
service contributions can be		
timed to match with		
customer actions and		
requirements	[22]	2010
• Individualization of	[33]	2010
market	J	
• Customization of product		
and services	52.17	2010
 Improved responsiveness 	[34]	2010
• Valuable time savings		7
during reduction of the		
search effort		
 Seamless communication 	1000	
• Enhancing customer's	[35]	2011
attentiveness	Contract of the Contract of th	
• Consolidating helpful		
services		
• Describe diverse	[36]	2011
customer groups that will be		4 100
served in different ways	1	101
• Customer service and	1	
support service operations		
• Predict potential and	1	
personal customers' behavior	1	
• Improved capability to	[37]	2011
target profitable customers	[5,]	
• Integrated contributions		
across channels	1	
 Individualized marketing 		
- marviduanzed marketing	L	L

cinoci 2012, pp.1270 1200		
Dimension	Reference	year
communication		
 Customized products and 		
services;		
• Improved customer		
service efficiency and		
success		
• Identify and target their	[38]	2012
best customers		
• Allowing the formation of		
individualized relationships		
with customers		
• Identifying the most		
profitable customers and		
providing them the highest		
level of service		
 Understand and identify 		
customer needs and	h.	
	179.	

IV. CRM BNENEFITS FOR CUSTOEMRS

According to the above table, and reviewing the previous studies, we selected some of this benefits which are more significant in customer's satisfaction. We summarize them into the following cases:

- Improve customer services
- Increased personalized service or one to one service
- Responsive to customer's needs
- Customer segmentation
- Improve customization of marketing
- Multichannel integration
- Time saving
- Improve customer knowledge

According to table 1 this benefit's rate and frequency can be seen in the following fig 1.

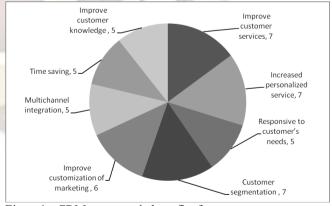


Figure1: CRM customer's benefits frequency Based on table1, we find the most repeated benefits for customers and tried to show the frequency of these benefits in fig 1. Based on this classification we can see these eight benefit's frequency and numbers of repeat in these fifteen studies from customer's point of view. So it is important to

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know and discuss about the vital benefits of CRM that will impact on customers. For this reason, having an overview about these dimensions will help the companies to know this importance.

A. Improve Customer Services

Customer Service is a communication among a customer and the company, frequently by usual channels like phone or email. Regularly the customer will have a concern or request that wants resolving. CRM services provide a business with the ability to produce, allocate and manage requests made by customers. For example, Call Center software, which helps to connect a customer to the manager or person who can best assist them with their existing problem, is one of the CRM abilities that can be implement in the firms and organizations. Recognizing and using of this type of service can help to the companies to improve their clients' knowledge to improve customer services and also can increase efficiency and minimize costs [39].

Personalized services, identify and reward profitable customers, creating and scheduling appointments with customer, customization of marketing efforts and sending messages to individual customers, providing multi-channel communication, and More responsive to customer needs are some of the CRM applications ability which can impact on customer service quality [6-7, 40].

A business with high service quality will satisfy customer needs while is remained economically competitive. Improving customer service quality is one of the important achievements of using CRM in each company. Based on Freeman & Seddon [6] the major reasons for these improvements were; information access and capture ,increased personalized service, and being more responsive to customer needs.

B. Increased Personalized Service (one to one service)

One-to-one service is about individuals and personalization. Communicating with, selling, and servicing individuals by providing a particular and significant personal experience can be considered as personalize services. One-to-one service is an ability and skill of understanding a customer's needs and requirements by asking questions and listening to their answers, in addition to observing their actions.

Therefore, personalize customer service or one to one service provides companies to improve understanding and knowledge about the customers that the company cares about them and also to have better knowledge about their customers' preferences, requirements and wants.

According to Dwayne Ball [41] " The rationale makes common sense: personalization should

produce a more satisfactory transaction, and over time, a more satisfactory relationship. Personalized service should simply be better service than routine service that does not take the individual's needs into account."

With a Personalize service companies concentrate on what the customer desires to buy more than what the company wants to purchase. Therefore, one to one service is a strategy to meet the customer's needs and helps them to become happy through providing personalize service.

C. Responsive to Customer's Needs

CRM is not only application of technology, although it is a strategy to study more about customers' needs and requirements to implement powerful relationships with them. Customer responsiveness is providing customers what they deal to obtain, nothing more, and nothing less. CRM is a strong tool to help the companies to focus more proactive on their customer CRM responsiveness. contains gathering information about customers to discover better ways to satisfy their needs.

Focusing on customer needs and requirements, take the relationship one step further. It shows that companies can understand their customers' situations and needs [42]. It's the right of each customer to want the companies for foresee what will bring value to them through finding and addressing their unknown wants and needs. And, these unknown wants and needs must then be changed into new products and services. For this reason, CRM is a significant tool that will help to the companies to know and find the needs of their customers, and be responsible about them [43-45].

D. Customer Segmentation

Segmentation is in center the process by which objects or items are categorized or classified into groups that split similar characteristics. Although these characteristics, can be one or more attributes. It can be defined as a subdividing the popularity based on already known good discriminator. In CRM, segmentation is used to categorize customers according to some similarity, such as industry [46].

There are many techniques for classifying and segmentation, but in this research we just want to focus on the benefits of segmentation for customers. Three ordinary group of segmentation variables in consumer markets are demographics, psychographics and behavioral characteristics, like loyalty status or benefits required.

Segmentation or target marketing moved a company's attention to balancing products and marketing efforts to be according customer needs. Firms need to describe slighter and smaller segments to find customer needs and preferences [47]. Therefore, customers can be segmented to

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groups based on ages, gender, demographic and etc. Though this, CRM will provide a capability of dividing customers based on their needs. It will help companies to categorize their customers according to their requirements into similar groups. CRM application will facilitate the process of segmentation for companies.

E. Improve Customization of Marketing

Customization of marketing means that, the company or organization adapt and change its services or products based on presenting a unique product or services for each customer.

With the purpose of ensuring that customer needs and requirements are met Customization is used by the organization[48]. Firms can invest in information gaining about customers and then customize their products as best as they can to contest customer interests.

Moreover, communication can be customized with customers for improving the product or services for a specific customer. As the ability of CRM to customization of the services, Customization of services and products is one of the benefits of CRM for customers [49].

F. Multi Channel Integration

Nowadays, the range of Customers channel choice is changed and therefore, a winning CRM need to more efficiently manage customer relationships inside a multichannel environment. Technology, customer potential, and competitive forces, are more and more convincing local companies and firms to support customer service operations from some delivery channels as much of the customer knowledge occurs within this channel environment.

The multichannel integration development has a important responsibility in CRM since it takes the result of the business strategy and value-creation processes and change them into value adding communications with customers [50]. Multichannel integration can maintain all three phases of CRM which are acquisition, extension and retention. According to Goersch [51] channel customers are more loyal and spend more than other customers. It is also valuable for retailers that connect in CRM. Multi-channel integration is good for a transactional marketing approach, where retailers are just interested in effective customer achievement. Therefore, CRM strategy may needed all three phases to be implemented, multi-channel integration residue valuable although just one or two goals are obtained [51].

Multichannel integration shows the point of co creation of customer value in CRM. On the other hand, a company's skill to perform multichannel integration successfully , is heavily dependent on the organization's ability to collect and bring together customer information from all

channels and incorporate it with other related information [52].

G. Time Saving

Faster and quicker time to market is significant to organizations looking for a competitive edge. It is also critical for customers to have a fast respond in sale process from the company and do not waste their time in buying process or product delivery. Organizations can take benefit of CRM capabilities that simplify the development and deployment cycle to respond to the customers. CRM systems bring in functionality and enhancements, more quickly, at lower cost and enabling IT to be more responsive to business needs.

One of the useful benefits of using a CRM system is reduction in using paper in the company or during interacts with customers. All processes that were done by forms and paperwork can be virtualized and mechanized within a CRM solution. Not only this process can save time and money spent on paper, but it also makes a firm more environmentally-friendly with customers.

CRM systems can store and organize every detail of each individual and customer and easily retrieval them. Sell person or employee can save the time of themselves and customers for searching about the information. In addition managers and marketers of the company can better analyze customer behaviors and trends in less time and then, perform more systematic research about the company's customer base and product offerings. CRM will let companies to interact with customers more frequently, by personalized massage and communication way which can be produced rapidly and matched on a timely basis, and finally they can better understand their customers and therefore look forward to their needs [53].

H. Improve Customer Knowledge

Tracking customer behavior to customer tastes and needs is a motivation for a firm to implement CRM systems. Firms can make and develop enhanced products and services through using this information [54]. Since Customer knowledge is changing rapidly CRM applications help organizational improve their knowledge about the customers by analyzing purchase behavior through different channels of the customers customer [55]. CRM systems give a competitive advantage in improving firm's collection of customer information to customize product and services according to customer needs.

According to Sunil Mithas [55] "Customer relationship management applications help firms gather and use customer knowledge through two mechanisms. First, CRM applications enable customer contact employees to record relevant

information about each customer transaction. After this information is captured, it can be processed and converted into customer knowledge on the basis of information-processing rules and organizational policies."

Customer knowledge also can benefits customers through enabling the company to respond their needs based on their purchasing behavior and their suitable services. By this reason finding the taste of the customers and personalize the products can be the result of customer knowledge.

V. CONCLUSION

New technologies affects on companies by accelerating the speed of knowledge and information through them. Nowadays, managers and owners are gradually convinced about using of CRM in their company to improve the revenue and profit, quality of product and services, customer's retention and satisfaction. By implementing a successful CRM, the benefits are emerging and the companies are more interested in using CRM systems. Although there are so many benefits for companies which are the result of implementing CRM but there are some benefits that will have a positive impact on customers too. So it would be beneficial to classify and group those benefit that can affect customers. It is clear that using and implementing CRM will have an impact on customers, since they are using CRM applications indirectly.

These study and its classification shows the most important benefits of CRM from customer's point of view, through reviewing limited previous researches. Since our domain is limit, there can be others benefits that are missed to consider here. According to our review companies and managers can have a better guideline to know which factors are more important for their customers and invest time and attempt on them. It is obvious that enhance and improve these benefits will have a positive impact on customer's satisfaction and retention. So satisfying the customers means increasing revenue and income for business.

Consequently it is in imperative part on the policy makers and strategist of each company to understand and improve the benefits of CRM from customer's viewpoint which can finally lead to customer's satisfaction.

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