

E- Customer Relationship Management in E-Commerce – To Study Its Role, Issues and Challenges

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Abstract- Existence of any business entity in a defined circumstance by the information society, depends on successful e-commerce and the final credit of successful modern e-commerce is primarily based upon the relationship marketing i.e. CRM/ e-CRM. The transition of any classic business to e-com business constitutes the complex process which includes reengineering of business model & modification of the corporate culture, keeping in view the customer behavior and finally the selection of the best CRM strategy, appropriate and compatible with the upcoming business structure. Therefore, the analysis and rich efforts are required inscrutiny of proper CRM model suitable for any e-commerce system.

The rapid transformation in customer behavior from traditional to internet usage (for commercial purpose) has been tremendously grown and influence the e-commerce industry in the overall business activities carried out globally. Most of the Asian countries like India, Brazil, China and other Southeast Asian nations have become the pioneer hub in providing IT enabled services and suitable environments for the progression and expansion of any globale-commerce business comfortably[4]. This paper covers the challenges/ issues surrounded across the e-commerce and the e-customer relationship management in e-commerce industry. Globalization of the marketplace have risen extensively and multiplying tremendous opportunities for the industry which in turn increases the quantum of business at a very economical cost with hassle-free payment system. This growth also advocates the challenges in the industry ranging from localizing the user interface of E-commerce sites, organization dealing with the platforms in order to reduce the cultural differences among the industry[1].

Keywords- Customer Relationship Management, Localization, Software usability, E-Customer Relationship Management, E-Commerce

I. INTRODUCTION

Customer relationship management are the policies adopted by company for retaining the customer and providing the maximum customer value and satisfaction to attract them through other loyalty programs in future. e-CRM also aims on improving the long-term profitability by retention of the

customer in transactions sphere and principally, the concept of CRM is rooted in the impression of relationship marketing. Due to the convention of internet, the incredible growth in globalization has been recorded and it has been acknowledged that the relationship with customers can greatly be improved by implementation of such information-based technologies in the existing business models through which customer relationships can be improved by providing facilities with the lesser cost, effort and time. For most of the organizations and ecommerce companies, the most palpable way to implement CRM is achieved through automation platforms where the customer data is stored, sorted, managed and analyzed, generally known as e-CRM Technology, and is continuously improving the scenario with the execution of big data analytic techniques^[3].

Any e-commerce business depends upon purely IT and IT enabled services where the front as well as the back-end environment resides securely and operatively. In web-based business models, booking and retailing of the product lies at the front-end interface usually termed as application user interface (API) and the delivery of the product has to pass through the long process of packaging, logistic services and customer support which is generally categorized as the back-end process. Ensuring the smooth practice of e-commerce, there are several challenges associated to security and privacy of customer and financial data which is also taken into consideration by the e-commerce business owners during enactment. For any successful e-com business, designing of portal are heavily mounted on criteria such as speedy, accurately downloading & attractive designing of the web pages with usability in view, easy, faster accessibility of the product on the portal and the support contact information (in case of any inconvenience) are watched closely^{[4][7]}.

Swiftly growing competition in the e-commerce marketplace and continuous increasing demand of the customer on quality products has challenged the retention of customer by e-commerce businesses in the industry. Hence, it is very necessary to take steps in the direction to minimize iteration and renovate it into customer retention which is successfully achieved through evolving CRM and e-CRM models by the industry.

Usability and Localization of Models in Context to CRM

Challenges encountered in interaction with the machine-based interfaces from customer's point of view is handled by the team of experts in the respective domain without losing the required specification of the vendors and maintaining the quality information serving 24x7 to the customers. With the continuous advancement in the technology, every day user interface designing has become more interactive, while the technology implementing the usability has to cope with other unattended challenges imposed by the law of land. In particular, to accumulate customer responsiveness and retention, various platforms are merging together to achieve higher degree of quality data acquisition. Redirection of a customer from shopping interface to the net banking is one of the best examples supporting the fact. Customer retention is covered by customer satisfaction and by the degree of acceptability to the provided interactive system of e-com portal. Customer Relationship Management revolves around the process of understandable interactive platforms through the prototype development models by involving the customer in design, development and even testing phase (generally beta versions are launched beforehand) of the final implementation. User-centric wireframe models pleasing customer relationship management incorporates the following four activities^[4]:

1. Realize and stipulate the framework of usage.
2. Postulate the customer and organizational requirements including delivery system
3. Purpose design frameworks.
4. Appraisal of this purposed framework against requirements.

In order to settle the objectives of customer relationship models, the customer behavior is recorded for the most important parameters of satisfaction and quality of the product while the demand of any product is heavily varied from one geographic region to other along with culture. Hence, localization of any e-commerce plays an important role in rapid success. Diversification of multi cultured environments impact the CRM strategies adopted by the organization and refine them by inputting the feedback loop to providing any service^[6]. Therefore, the technology arrayed for the personalization of the e-business portals, determination of the most valuable customers and the need to treat the customers from different cultural background, are handled very precisely and carefully for the longer retention of customer base and due to this the perception is better services varies from country to country.

Role of CRM in E-Commerce

Unstoppable progression in e-business is transforming the responsiveness, marketing strategies and techniques. With

the implementation of electronic customer relationship management, more strong, accurate, flexible and agile systems are emerging in the marketplace. Various roles of CRM in context to e-commerce are identified as follow ^{[2] [5]}:

1. **Loyalty Programs for preferred customers in dynamic market:** It is very important and challenging for the business owners to retain and attract the new consumer base in a highly competitive and dynamic market space. Organizations with proper CRM implemented and followed with discipline are able to keep the customer in touch and provide information of upcoming products at lower cost by dropping investment on conventional advertisement through tele-media services.
2. **CRM in e-business as a value co-creator:** In the present model, CRM assists e-businesses to build knowledge base about the customer, exclusively based upon customer preferences. The modern data mining and big data analytics technique helps the team to segregate the customer preferences more accurately and more precisely. The practice also helps to reduce non-value addition of operation which in return improves more leanness value of the chain.
3. **Inspiration based product specifications in e-business and CRM:** Inspired from the customer's imagination about the system, the patterns are captured through CRM which further supports company to improve design and development of customer predilections.
4. **CRM based Consumer behavior repository for e-auction(s) and e-commerce:** Customer responsiveness to various trends and interest are captured through navigation footage over the business portals, e-profile and advertising contents displayed on the sites. This information plays an important role in finalizing the deals successfully in e-auction.
5. **CRM Platforms for different-business models:** Customer relationship management is more than that from e-business perspective. The different representations of e-business, like business-to-business, business-to-consumer, consumer-to-consumer and others are formulated to framework the business dynamics & defining players and their collaboration in e-market space. Though, CRM stands for customer relationship management, but can be applied on various business models like in business-to-business model where buyer and seller are different business organization. But customer to each other and to sustain the relationship in this exceedingly volatile demanding market

space, focus on meeting the customer expectation remains on highest priority.

6. **CRM based prototype design for Flexibility, Agility:** The basic concern for exhibiting an e-business accompanied by flexibility, agility and sophistication of the system, e-CRM may assist in design parameter and to enumerate the weight factors for customer footage over the profiled e-space which may be achieved through data analytic and other mining techniques.

Issues and Challenges with e-CRM

Uninterrupted communication with a buyer is limited in a traditional business where as e-business provides great opportunities in this. Company dealing in web-based business can use the data left by shoppers on the company's portal could be great starting point in edification of a good e-CRM strategy. The main aim is to surge sales and to increase loyalty of customers— turning a buyer (consumer) into a client and further motivating them to repurchase. Keeping in watch over the other side of coin, following challenges must be encountered in order to implement successful e-CRM strategy in any online venture [2][3][5].

Maintaining customer interaction and loyalties

Organizations must have to deal with the changing trends in the marketplace from tele-media to social media and pursuing their preferred customer base by offering the best services to them. Most of the companies have their own social community, social networking platforms for marketing but still in the absence of online facilities, it is not possible to create intimacy with the customers in the remote areas and hence is not possible to gain enough confidence and trust.

Introducing and implementing new online channels

Trend to remain confined over one source just as web is not a best idea and every vendor has to change the strategies according to the changing world and must have to adapt new channels. Upcoming latest channel should be implemented in the manner such that traditional front and back-office systems in place should retain as it is for successful functionality of the system. It is very hard for the companies to establish a new channel that must make every possible effort to integrate them firmly with standing business channels. The outcome of these channels is expected to retain the already existing customer sphere and to satisfy them to the best possible level. On the other hand, traditional contact points may also persist as the most appropriate source. The main difficulty associated with

the companies trying to assess e-CRM is to analyze the performance. Traditional e-CRM has evident assess challenges in terms of corporation performance and return on investment (ROI); likewise, establishments need metrics to track the efficacy of their e-CRM inventiveness.

Data Analysis and Integration Challenges

Looking on the technology perspective from an e-CRM system, it signifies a mass that need to be tightly bonded together, in essence of integration. It is not possible for the single software application to fill the gap. In order to implement e-CRM successfully, companies require a variety of hardware/software applications and tools. Integrating data from and with multiple sources, both online and off-line channels, play a critical role in facilitating successful and appreciated e-CRM analytics. But it also represents a challenge for even the most progressive businesses in early stages. After getting in place successfully, it eventually results in shorter call duration, lesser costs per contact and more effective and automated removal of the need for agent intervention. The key success factors of e-CRM strategies in practice consisting of sub-factors such as purposeful integration, system compatibility, data integration, experience comparability to offline customer relationship management and integration with other CRM channels are critical factors for corporations.

Alignment of various departments

Information Technology has advocated the best possible strategies for any business, though, there may exist mismatch perceptions and expectations between the IT functions and marketing, but IT can often impact and delay e-CRM strategies. Marketing workforce often concentrates over the front-end of applications and assess the functionality of the e-CRM system, without proper understanding of data and web application and associated integration issues, whereas on the other hand, IT function are bound to assess its technical quality. Over and above, the main concern lies with e-CRM projects driven by a monopoly functional heads in various departments like Marketing or IT and they seldom produce an organization view of clientage, modeling applications and such single functional views may generally lead to failure. The success of any organization in e-CRM comprises creative usage of appropriate analytical techniques to analyze the data accompanied with increased collaboration and alignment between various departments to maximize opportunities.

II. CONCLUSION

E-technologies will remain to mature continuously with upcoming market trends. Along with e-customer base,

companies should make efforts to harness the opportunities available to deliver maintainable competitive benefits in the digital world of e-CRM. E-commerce have already emerged as a huge market place for business models and accordingly e-com technologies cannot survive alone [4]. In order to remain competent consistently in global market place, e-commerce must have to focus on the best flexible infrastructure and CRM / e-CRM strategies those are aligned with the customer base of the organization and should be capable of retaining the existing customer base and further should be capable of widening this space with attractive product and service policies[6]. As the customer behavior changes according to geography and culture, the CRM/ e-CRM policies must be placed accordingly to flourish the business online without ignoring the rich concept of localization.

It may also be problematic for businesses to put in place the accurate metrics to appraise e-CRM strategies, and further research on assessing the effectiveness of e-CRM through performance measurements which would always be useful. The appearance of e-business stimulates defining and quantifying new parameters such as trust, governing power and transparency of information in e-CRM (maintaining security and privacy of financial and customer data). It requires continuous periodic analysis and research for implementing successful e-CRM strategies by the experts in the domain [7]. There is acknowledgement in the speculative literature of the marketing benefits and the IT encounters of e-CRM. At the moment acquaintance gap exists between the real adoption and implementation of e-CRM in practiced and hearty research-based perceptions and principles.

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