



Review

Customer relationship management mechanisms: A systematic review of the state of the art literature and recommendations for future research



Zeynab Soltani ^a, Nima Jafari Navimipour ^{b,*}

^a Young Researchers and Elite Club, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

^b Department of Computer Engineering, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 7 October 2015

Received in revised form

27 February 2016

Accepted 1 March 2016

Keywords:

Information systems

CRM

Electronic

Knowledge management

Data mining

Data quality

ABSTRACT

In the information systems, customer relationship management (CRM) is the overall process of building and maintaining profitable customer relationships by delivering superior customer value and satisfaction with the goal of improving the business relationships with customers. Also, it is the strongest and the most efficient approach to maintaining and creating the relationships with customers. However, to the best of our knowledge and despite its importance, there is not any comprehensive and systematic study about reviewing and analyzing its important techniques. Therefore, in this paper, a comprehensive study and survey on the state of the art mechanisms in the scope of the CRM are done. It follows this goal by looking at five categories in which CRM plays a significant role: E-CRM, knowledge management, data mining, data quality and, social CRM. In each category, a couple of studies are presented and determinants of CRM are described and discussed. The major development in these five categories is reviewed and the new challenges are outlined. Also, a systematic literature review (SLR) in each of these five categories is provided. Furthermore, insights into the identification of open issues and guidelines for future research are provided.

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* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: jafari@iaut.ac.ir (N.J. Navimipour).

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1. Introduction

In the 1990s, in the business domain gradually emerges the concept of customer relationship management (CRM) which from the very first years, the CRM prevailed, gained prominence as a legitimate area of scholarly inquiry and stimulated the interest of global business and research community. The CRM is nothing more than an approach that stems from the need to create a new business environment, which allows a more effective management of relationships with customers (Galbreath & Rogers, 1999). The CRM a comprehensive strategy and the process of acquiring, retaining and collaborating with selected customers to create superior value for the company and the customer. It involves the integration of marketing, sales, customer service, and the supply-chain functions of the organization to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness in delivering customer value (Giannakis-Bompolis & Boutsouki, 2014; Navimipour & Soltani, 2016). Successful firms and organizations often strive for competitive advantages through the relationships with their customers (Jafari Navimipour, Rahmani, Habibzad Navin, & Hosseinzadeh, 2015). Many of them have implemented customer relationship management (CRM) technology in the hope that it will enable them to better target profitable segments, improve customer service, enhance customer retention and ultimately increase the firm's financial performance (Josiasen, Assaf, & Cvelbar, 2014). In today's business environment, top managers invest in CRM systems as a strategic tool for processing end-to-end customer information to develop customer relationships (Chuang & Lin, 2013b). Many researchers have demonstrated that CRM systems significantly improved customer relationship performance (Keramati, Mehrabi, & Mojir, 2010; Kim & Choi, 2010). Also, the CRM systems have become the backbone of customer relationship development by advancing customer information processing capabilities (Chuang & Lin, 2013b). This is because CRM is a widely implemented strategy for managing organizational interactions with customers. It involves the processes of finding, attracting, and retaining new customers, nurturing and retaining customers the organization already has, enticing former customers back into the fold, and reducing the costs of marketing and customer service. The overall goals of CRM are to create customer satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and retention (Siriprasoetsin, Tuamsuk, & Vongprasert, 2011). Five dimensions named as strategy, organization, technology, segmentation and process, are necessary to implement a CRM project effectively (Lin, Su, & Chien, 2006). The current challenges in the field of CRM can be customer data quality

(Alshawi, Missi, & Irani, 2011; Chuang & Lin, 2013a; Peltier, Zahay, & Lehmann, 2013), online trust (Hwang, 2009; Khosravifar, Bentahar, Gomrokchi, & Alam, 2012; Wrobel, Heupel, & Thiel, 2013), customer knowledge (Ariffin, Hamdan, Omar, & Janom, 2012; Garrido-Moreno & Padilla-Meléndez, 2011; Khodakarami & Chan, 2014), infrastructure capability (Chuang & Lin, 2013b), and organizational learning (Peltier et al., 2013).

Despite the importance of CRM in many fields, there is not any comprehensive study about reviewing and analyzing its important techniques. Therefore, this paper investigates the state of the art mechanisms in the field of CRM. Specifically, this study discusses the five categories of CRM techniques: E-CRM, knowledge management, data mining, data quality, and social CRM. E-CRM is a collection of concepts, tools, and processes that allow an organization to obtain the maximum value from their e-business investment (Mahdavi, Cho, Shirazi, & Sahebjamnia, 2008). Knowledge management is to get the knowledge about customers, constantly improve and share it through those parts of the organization, which need the knowledge to use it hence add value to their work (Sulaiman, Ariffin, Esmaeilian, Faghihi, & Baharudin, 2011). The data mining tools serve as the backbone driving CRM systems to enable the measurement frameworks in place today (Al-Mudimigh, Ullah, & Saleem, 2009; Kellen, 2002). Data quality assessment has focused on four primary areas: data accuracy, timeliness, completeness and consistency (Ballou & Tayi, 1999; Peltier et al., 2013). Finally, Social CRM or CRM 2.0, that is a philosophy and a business strategy, supported by a technology platform, business rules, processes, and social characteristics, designed to engage the customer in a collaborative conversation in order to provide mutually beneficial value in a trusted and transparent business environment. It's the company's response to the customer's ownership of the conversation (Askool & Nakata, 2011; Greenberg, 2009). This study aims at understanding the trend of CRM research by analyzing and examining the published articles. In drafting this review, it is not set out to consider all common techniques in the CRM. Therefore, since the CRM is playing an increasingly important role in the information systems, the purpose of this paper is to survey the existing techniques and to outline the types of challenges that can be addressed. Finally, the guidelines for the existing challenges are presented. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this survey represents the first attempt to examine the CRM mechanisms systematically with a specific focus on the information system. Briefly, the contributions of this paper are as follows

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