#1 Marketing

In the marketing department's plans to shift to CRM, they needed applications that can identify prospective customers. They must be able to identify prospective customers. They must be able to identify the calibre of customers that they want and how they can meet their needs.

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Also, there is the need for segmentation of customers. Under this, organizations that deal with different age groups must be able to come up with products and services that will meet the needs of the various age groups. The organisation also needs accurate targeting. Under this, they must be able to predict correctly who their prospects are and how they can meet them at the right place with the right products(s) and services.

The marketing department in this organisation must also be able to come up with correct customer acquisition strategies. They must be able to pin-point how various prospects want to be approached. Some like to relate with the customers online while some other want to do business from the convenience of their homes.

OBJECTIVE OF THIS ARTICLE

In this article, we want to look at various application that can be deployed in running a successful CRM program. Attention will be focused on those departments in an organisation that have direct contact with customers.

In any organization, we have two sets of departments. These include those that have direct

·   Relationship with customers and those that do not relate directly with customers.

·   We have seen in the previous chapters that customer facing departments include: marketing, sales and customer services department.

There is also the need for campaign management. When we talk of campaign management, we are talking about creating awareness about products and services that the organization has to offer. This includes making sure that the existing products get to the final consumers.

[Finally under marketing](), we can have lead distribution**,** this involves follow-up on information that you have about a particular prospect. Take for example a customer that likes to do business from the convenience of his home; such a customer/prospect will easily jump at products and services that will afford him the opportunity to do so.

Scenerio

Benson is an etisalat customer while his father who happens to be a carpenter also uses the same network. Benson who likes socializing and free things decided to migrate from **easy starter** to easy cliq because it gives him the opportunity to enjoy low call rates, get megabytes for browsing and free access to facebook and 2go among others.

His father on the other hand migrated front ***easy cliq*** to ***easy starter*** simply because he does not need some of those things that his son wanted in a sim. He was attracted to ***easy starter*** because of the "you and me" which allowed him to talk to his wife free of charge and home zone which allowed him to enjoy low call rates from his workshop.

#2 Sales

The sales department in a customer-centric enterprise also needs some application that will allow the staffs of the department to satisfy the needs of customers. One of such is the application that will allow effective sales processes so that closure of

deals can be faster. This will allow the department to know those that really need the product and the best way to sell it to them.

The sales departments also need proposal generation took. This tool automatically notifies prospects and [customers about products and services](#) that might be of interest to them. These are programmed based on information at the disposal of the organization about the prospects or customers.

The sales department. might also need knowledge management tool. As we all know. information is power. The organisation could only succeed if they have valuable information that could help in faster closure of deals.

We also have contact management tools. Under this, the organisation tries to manage their contacts and database in order to see how it could help in closure of deals. If you suddenly discovered that you have Aliko Dangote's son as one of those that have used your product or you have a link to the Nigerian President, this might help you to sell your products to them. Like was said earlier the problem remains that. many organisations in Nigeria cannot say precisely the total number of customers that they have.

Finally, there are applications that can help in forecasting. When you are **forecasting,** you are predicting things that are not in demand now but customers are likely to request for in the future. This can he done using information that is available in the customer database.

#3   E-commerce

The benefit of the e-comrnerce platform is to ensure that the organisation is able to use the World Wide Web to increase their sales effortlessly. The organizations have to deploy applications that will ensure that both the online customers and those that walk into the various branch offices enjoy the same benefits.

1. **Services**

This is the medium through which the organization support customers that have purchased their products and services. This might include deployment of call centre applications, portals or customized interfaces which arc meant to meet the need of the customers. A good example of this is the MTN online service centres which are meant to provide supports to customers who might be having challenges with their MTN services.

Summary

So far. we have looked at the various applications that are needed for a CRM program. We said that these various applications are mostly needed in various departments that have to deal with the customers directly such as Marketing, Sales, Customer service and B-Commerce departments.

Brainstorming Session

1. Do you think marketing is relevant to CI{M? Give reasons *for* your answers.

2. Discuss the various branches of CRM in relation to any beverages firm that you know.

3. Examine marketing and sales in a product-centric enterprise. Why are they different?

Action Point
PS: I know you might agree with some of the points that I have raised in this article. You might not agree with some of the issues raised. Let me know your views about the topic discussed. We will appreciate it if you could drop your comment. Thanks in anticipation.

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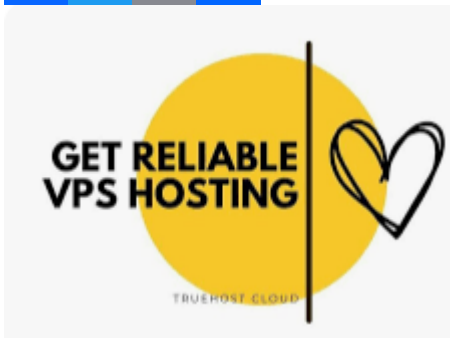**Instagram**: @**crmnigeriablog**
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