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## **What is Customer Interaction In CRM?**

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Many at times organisations have put mechanisms and technologies in place that allow the customers to relate with organisations; ask questions and make suggestions. If this is well utilized.



It will help the organisation to satisfy its customers and retain them for life. Now let's go through the stages of the Customer Interaction Cycle as presented in the diagram below.

## **#1 Be Ready**

In relation to your customers, you have to be ready. You must be ready to prevent attrition.

You must be ready to guide your customers. You must be ready to see to it that you do not lose customers that are still learning about your competitors.

This involves welcoming new customers to your Life Cycle and assuring them of superior products and services as they enter your Life Cycle.

## **#2 Receiving**

The next thing is to receive new customers into your fold. When you are receiving them, you have to give them a feel of what they should expect from your organisation.

You should also take into consideration the fact that they have not made their final decision, as to whether they should stay with your organisation or not.

### **#3 Understanding**

As you and I know that if two people want to have a long-lasting relationship with each other, they have to take time to learn their like and dislikes of each other, which will help them to have a long-lasting mutual relationship.

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This principle is also applicable to you and your customer; you have to learn the best ways that they want to be served.

Give them what they want and they will be with you for life. In doing this, you have to listen to them, and allow them to do the talking.

Apart from that, you have to ask them questions concerning areas that are not clear to you about what they want.

On a final note in this section, you have to confirm their facts and feelings. All these will help you in serving them better.

### **#4 Helping**

if you want your customers to remain with you for life, you and your entire workforce should learn how to treat them like royalty.

You have to help them; they came to your life cycle so that they can be served.

You should see that as an opportunity to gain them for life. Not only that, they will drag their friends and families to your Life Cycle.

## **#6 Keeping**

This has much to do with guiding our customers so that you don't lose them to your competitor's life cycle.

In order to keep your customers, you must be able to produce quality goods and services that are better than what they can get from your competitors.

You should understand one thing about customers, one better opportunity avail itself, they are bound to leave.

## **#7 Follow-up**

This is just telling you that you have to continue to learn about your customers.

You must find out how they live their life, the kind of relationship they keep; their marital status; their mother's maiden name and all other details about your customers.

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You can also use their birth date to your own advantage. Take, for example, I have been trying to reduce the number of saving accounts that I have but I will never close down n my GTB account.

They always wish me a “happy birthday” on my birthday. The same thing applies to those that moved to GT Bank because of their zero account policy.

## **Customer Interaction and CRM**

In a contemporary time when the next organisation that produces similar products and services are just a mouse click away, organisations have to devise ways of maintaining a consistent customer interaction in order to stay afloat.

In a customer-centric organisation, they devise ways of learning from the customers in order to use the knowledge in devising ways of delighting the customers, we have said earlier that the beauty of a customer-centric enterprise is the ability of the organisation to predict the customer’s next move and meet them at that destination with goods and services that meet their specification.

Through interactions with your customers, you should be able to group your customers based on the nature of their needs.

You can do this by segmenting and profiling your customers in order to come up with models that can meet up with their needs.

This will help customers to come up with goods and services that will meet the need for a very large number of your customers, thereby reducing costs.

### **Changing Role of CRM**

In the past, in advanced countries of the world, CRM was all about attending to some customers' complaints and setting up chairs and tables in order for customers to ask some questions and get some inconclusive answers.

In such settings, the Customer Service Representative (CSR) is not fully empowered to resolve customers' complaints completely. In that archaic setting, as it is still applicable to many organisations in Nigeria today, customers' files move from one table to another unattended to. It is very bad for a forward-looking organisation.

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What we are saying, in essence, is that CRM is ever-dynamic. It is no longer what it used to be. In modern times, the multifaceted job of customer relations is no longer left in the hand of the Customer Care Agent.

Almost all the departments having direct contact with customers are involved in customer relationships.

In this era, you can't say that because you are a salesperson, and not in Public Relations, there is nothing that concerns you about projecting the good image of the organisation to customers when you are trying to sell some products or services to.

That is why CRM is no longer what it used to be.

### **Brainstorming Session**

1. Discuss the Customer Interaction Cycle

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### **Action Point**

**PS:** I know you might agree with some of the points raised in this article or disagree with some of the issues raised.

Please share your thoughts on the topic discussed. We would appreciate it if you could drop your comment. Thanks in anticipation.

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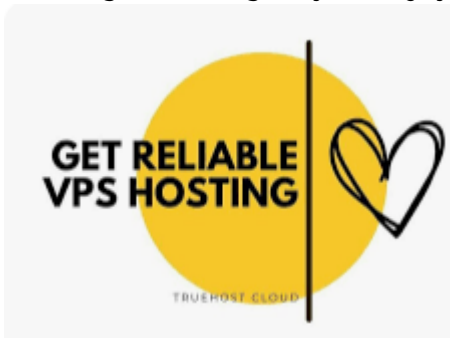
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