

Chapter 10

Enhancing Customer Relationships With AI: Building Empathy Through Emotion AI, Robotics AI, and Sentiment Analysis

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ABSTRACT

In contemporary Customer Relationship Management (CRM), empathy plays a pivotal role in cultivating trust and long-term engagement. This chapter, Building Empathy with AI: Enhancing Customer Relationships, explores how Emotion AI, Robotics AI, and Sentiment Analysis are reshaping CRM by enabling context-aware, emotionally responsive interactions. Through tools such as facial recognition, vocal tone analysis, and sentiment detection, firms can interpret emotional cues in real time and tailor responses that resonate with customer needs. The chapter critically examines the integration of these technologies, emphasizing how they enhance service personalization while preserving a human-centric ethos. Drawing on case studies across sectors, it evaluates the ethical boundaries of emotional automation and proposes a framework to responsibly align AI innovation with empathy, privacy, and trust—offering practical insights for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers alike.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-1867-7.ch010

1. INTRODUCTION

Empathy has always been at the heart of meaningful customer relationships. It is the ability to listen beyond words, to sense the unspoken, and to respond in a way that makes customers feel seen and valued. In today's increasingly digital world, however, businesses face a subtle yet significant challenge: how to preserve human warmth when so many interactions are mediated by technology. (Lehnert & Kuehnl, 2025).

Modern customer relationship management (CRM) systems have evolved from transactional tools into experience-driven platforms. As customer expectations rise, the ability to understand and respond to emotional cues at scale has become a defining edge. Technologies such as Emotion AI, Robotics AI, and Sentiment Analysis are not just reshaping operations; they are transforming how organisations connect with people. (Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2024).

Emotion AI, sometimes called affective computing, interprets emotional states using cues such as facial expressions, vocal tone, and language patterns (Narimisaie et al., 2024). When used thoughtfully, it allows businesses to engage with customers in real-time, offering responses that are not only efficient but also emotionally intelligent. Robotics AI, meanwhile, handles repetitive tasks and streamlines service processes, freeing human agents to focus on situations where empathy and discretion genuinely matter. By making sense of customer feedback across platforms, Sentiment Analysis helps organisations identify emotional trends and address concerns before they escalate. (Yoo et al., 2024).

Yet, while these tools hold great promise, they also come with a set of ethical and practical considerations. Can machines truly understand human feelings? Is it enough to simulate empathy, or do we risk reducing it to scripted reactions? Questions around data privacy, algorithmic fairness, and the authenticity of AI-driven responses are not merely technical. They are deeply human. (Shen et al., 2024a).

This chapter examines how AI-driven technologies can be utilised to cultivate empathy in customer relationships without compromising the human qualities that make those relationships meaningful. Drawing on current research and practical case examples, this reflection examines the possibilities and limitations of using machines to build trust, deepen engagement, and support emotional understanding. If empathy is the soul of customer relationships, the goal is not to automate it but to support it in intelligent, respectful, and, above all, human ways.

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