


# Chapter 12

## The Future of CRM Innovation and Emerging Trends: Customer Relationship Management

**Kritika**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6253-5807>

*CT Institute of Management and Information Technology*

**Mandeep Kumar**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-9833-1178>

*JECRC University, Jaipur, India*

**Deepa Dixit**

*SIES School of Business Studies, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Customer Relationship Management systems are super important in today's business world. They give us awesome insights about how customers behave, what they like, and the latest trends. All this information comes from the massive amount of customer data that CRM tools gather, store, and analyze. By using this data, businesses can make smart decisions that help keep customers happy and loyal. Plus, CRM systems allow companies to personalize their strategies and communications to meet each customer's unique needs, which makes for way better engagement. This chapter dives into how CRM tools can provide the actionable insights businesses need to*

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*stay ahead of the game with data-driven customer relationships. It also covers how companies can get the most out of their CRM systems to create amazing customer experiences that solidify their place in the market.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

CRM has always been at the intersection of technology, customer-facing processes, and strategy. Over the last decade, digital transformation has converted CRM from a primarily transaction-tracking technology to an orchestration layer for personalized, contextual customer experiences (Verhoef et al., 2021). The last few years (2018–2025) have seen an acceleration in capability: large-scale customer data aggregation, machine learning-driven personalization, conversational AI, automated service orchestration, and real-time decisioning. These changes are not merely incremental: they reconfigure the capabilities firms use to acquire, retain, and grow customer relationships (Ozay et al., 2024; Huang & Rust, 2021).

This chapter examines these developments, synthesizing contemporary academic findings to produce a cohesive view of CRM's future. Where appropriate, the chapter identifies practical implications for managers and outlines open research questions for academics.

### **1.1 State of the field: recent syntheses and trends**

Recent systematic and bibliometric reviews provide useful entry points to the contemporary CRM literature. Ozay et al. (2024) conducted a large bibliometric review specifically on AI-based CRM research, identifying four clusters of activity—data-driven CRM strategies, AI techniques applied to CRM tasks, strategic AI implementation in CRM, and customer experience outcomes from AI-based CRM. Hortatory and framework pieces (e.g., Huang & Rust, 2021) provide theoretical scaffolding that connects AI capabilities (mechanical, thinking, and feeling intelligence) to marketing tasks. Meanwhile, work on digital transformation more broadly highlights how changes in consumer behavior and touchpoints require CRM systems to be both more integrated and more adaptive (Verhoef et al., 2021). Empirical studies in specialized domains (e.g., healthcare CRM) underscore both promise and implementation gaps—particularly around integration, data quality, and governance (Baashar et al., 2020).

Collectively, this scholarship shows three cross-cutting shifts: (1) CRM is moving from descriptive reporting to prescriptive/predictive decisioning; (2) integration—both technical (APIs, CDPs) and organizational (silos, processes)—is now a core

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