



## Chapter XXVIII

# Infosys Technologies Limited: Unleashing CIMBA

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Infosys Technologies Ltd., one of the world's most profitable IT services company, implemented a customer relationship management (CRM) system called CIMBA — Customer Information Management By All. This customer-focused system was conceived and designed to improve communication and collaboration between the company and its customers. By seamlessly integrating the front-end sales system with the back-end delivery system, CIMBA was expected to further enhance the company's IT solutions delivery capability. This case provides insights into the factors that triggered the need for developing such an integrated CRM solution and how the company went about developing and launching this system. It also brings to light the various challenges associated with the implementation of this IS solution.*

## BACKGROUND

There was a lot on Nitin's mind as he came out of yet another marathon meeting, a meeting to discuss problems the Infosys sales team was facing with the current customer relationship management (CRM) solution. As the Head of the Sales & Marketing Group in the Information Systems Department, Nitin Gupta was responsible for the software support needs of Infosys' sales teams.

Only two years ago, he along with a team of four, had deployed a CRM package called CRMX,<sup>1</sup> for meeting the contact management and opportunity tracking needs of the sales team. The disappointing performance of CRMX had been the reason for this and numerous earlier meetings.

At the time it was implemented, CRMX, a sales force automation (SFA) tool, marked the first automation attempt by Infosys in the area of customer relationship management. One of the primary objectives was to establish a centralized repository for the contact database of the enterprise and help the sales teams target potential customers. Another major objective was to improve responsiveness to customer needs by enabling seamless sharing of information between the onsite sales team and offshore delivery teams. Thus, the system was expected to provide synergistic benefits by facilitating communication and knowledge sharing during every stage of the order generation and fulfillment process. The system was also expected to be easily scalable to meet the growing information needs of the company.

Though CRMX was a good and robust tool, it was not meeting Infosys' expectations, especially those of the sales people. The Business Development managers (BDMs), who were supposed to be the key users of CRMX, found it difficult and cumbersome to use. Moreover, it did not enable real-time sharing of information between the onsite (at customer locations) sales personnel and offshore delivery personnel. Phone, fax, and e-mail continued to be the primary means of communication and information exchange for the personnel located at client offices and sales offices in different parts of the world. As a result, these sales personnel operating from remote locations felt disconnected and isolated and often called themselves the *lone warriors*.

Nitin, a graduate of one of India's premier business schools, was a smart young man, who fully understood the changing business needs of his company in a rapidly growing software consultancy market. A multitude of ideas ran through his mind. He knew something more scalable and dynamic was needed and that Infosys had to do away with the current tool, once and for all. Infosys had done enough performance tuning of the system to realize the futility of any further performance enhancement exercise. Sivashankar, the IS Head at Infosys and Basab Pradhan, the Regional Manager for the Chicago office, both key players in the technology initiatives for the sales team, were also very keen on a new system. Like Nitin, they were convinced that CRMX had outlived its usefulness.

## Company History & Growth

Infosys Technologies Ltd. was founded in 1981 by seven engineers working for Patni Computers, a small reseller of U.S.-based Data General. Its aim was to be a key player in the software solutions market. Narayana NR Murthy, the CEO and founder of the company, was a visionary, who could see the potential in the still infantile software solutions market — a market in which Infosys built its reputation by not only providing

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