

Chapter 28

A Comparative Analysis of Functionalities of Salesforce.com, mySAP. com, and SiebelCRM

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ABSTRACT

Customer Relationship Management or CRM is an enterprise-wide initiative which belongs to all areas of an organization. It reflects the comprehensive strategy and process of acquiring, retaining, and partnering with selective customers to create superior value for the company and the customer. In the era of IT-enabled relationship management, organisations have a host of CRM software products from which they can choose. These products come with different functionalities and support the different functions of a firm, thereby changing the face of global business today. In the era of so-called Cloud computing, support for web-based functionalities is the prime requisite for any CRM Software. This chapter attempts to compare functionalities of three well-established CRM Tools for Organisations: Salesforce.com, mySAPCRM and Siebel CRM.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary globalism has ushered in an era in which the words *Business* and *Technology* are inseparable. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Technology offers the business world a host

of solutions for process and revenue optimisation. Functionally, CRM applications can be categorised into three main segments: Sales Applications (Sales Force Automation Solutions), Marketing Applications (Campaign Management), and Customer Service and Support (CSS) Applica-

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tions. Availability of a diverse range of software applications helps to streamline enterprise functions and save invaluable time and resources for organisations. Issues under consideration at the time of CRM tool selection include Functionalities, Legacy System Integration, Technologies used in the tool, performance under critical solutions, security issues, and scalability. Decisions have been made easier in the era of the Cloud. As business applications are moving to the Cloud, the shift from traditional software models to the Internet has steadily gained ground. With the advent of Cloud computing, companies pay for what they need, as the shared infrastructure implies usage of the services like a utility, wherein companies pay only for what they need with options for scalability and automatic upgrades.

Each CRM solution should essentially have three main components: *Operational CRM* involves process management technologies; *Analytical CRM* involves business performance management technologies; and *Collaborative CRM* involves business collaboration management technologies. This chapter evaluates significant functions which any CRM Software needs to perform for an organisation, and further proceeds to conduct detailed studies of three well-established CRM Tools for Organisations: Salesforce.com, mySAPCRM and Siebel CRM, and subsequently compares the tools.

BACKGROUND

Customer Relationship Management

Customer Relationship Management or CRM is an enterprise-wide initiative which belongs to all areas of an organization (Singh, Agarwal, 2003). It reflects the comprehensive strategy and process of acquiring, retaining, and partnering with selective customers to create superior value for the company and the customer.

The goals of CRM include:

1. Building long term and profitable relationships with chosen customers.
2. *Getting closer to those customers with every point of contact with them* (Shainesh & Sheth, 2006).

CRM is an enterprise-wide approach to understanding and influencing customer behavior through meaningful communication to improve customer acquisition, customer retention, customer loyalty, and corporate profitability. CRM can be viewed as an application of one-to-one marketing and relationship marketing, responding to an individual customer on the basis of what the customer says and what else is known about that customer (Pepper et al., 1999). It is a management approach which enables organizations to identify, attract, and increase retention of profitable customers by managing relationships with them (Hobby, 1999), and further identifying strategically significant customers (Buttle, 2008). In the academic community, the terms “relationship marketing” and CRM are often used interchangeably (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2002). The heart of marketing is relationships and nurturing long term relationships should be the goal of marketing practice (Berry et al., 2006). Five macro-environmental factors responsible for the growth of relationship orientation in marketing (Sheth, 2000) include:

- Rapid technological advancements, especially in the field of information technology
- The adoption of total quality programs by companies.
- The growth of the service economy
- Organizational development processes leading to the empowerment of individuals and teams
- An increase in competitive intensity leading to concern for customer retention

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