

Sport Technology News

The Model of Creation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Technology in Sports Services Section

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decades, sport venues have increased their investments in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) realm. The investment ranges from strategy development to software implementation and other applications which will help attract new customers, maintaining and growing existing programs. Accordingly, the aim of this study was to design the CRM technology model in the sports services sector of East Azerbaijan province based on individual narratives and personal experiences of 10 managers and 384 sports customers in the province during in-depth interviews by using foundation data theorizing method. Their views on the relationship between CRM technology and sport venues were recorded and analyzed. Findings indicate that recognition of customer and market, attracting customer, maintaining and developing customer are among the consequences of implementing CRM technology in sports venues. Also, respondents agreed that the most important elements of customer relationship are committed (7.20), satisfaction (6.30) and performance (4.70). Therefore, having a CRM system can help for better decision making in terms of service delivery, increasing intra-organizational communication, reducing costs, attracting and maintaining customers.

Keywords: Venues, Services, CRM, Success Model, Sport.

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Introduction

Customer relationship management (CRM) is one of the key business strategies of the new millennium. CRM is one of the key principles for business management interaction with customers. Grounded in the relationship marketing literature, the theoretical foundation of CRM suggests that establishing and maintaining long term customer relationships, marketing, management, IT is at the core of the marketing concept (1- 4). The rapid growth of CRM can be attributed to (a) fierce business competition for valuable customers, (b) economics of customer retention (i.e. lifetime value) and (c) technology advances (5, 6).

Sport customer relationship management (SCRM) is a technology for managing all sport venues relationships and interactions with customers and potential customers. The goal is simple improve business relationships. A CRM system helps sport venues stay connected to customers, streamline processes, and improve profitability. The term CRM technology is broadly defined as a suite of IT (information technology) solutions designed to support the CRM process. CRM technology is used to track customers, help manage customer information and knowledge and, remain relevant to their needs. In many cases CRM implementations have faced serious difficulties or even outright failures (7). These include the inability to deliver profitable growth and in some cases even damaging existing customer relationships (8-10).

Customer relationship management technology has a special place in the sports industry (11). Sports organizations need to increase competitors because of changing customer needs so they can better understand their customers' needs and desires (12). Concerning the importance of customer relationship management technology argue that developing appropriate relationships with sports customers can increase their satisfaction and loyalty, which is at the core of customer relationship marketing and sports marketing activities (1). From a CRM technology perspective, customers should be looked at in terms of their life cycle, not in terms of sales and marketing capabilities and services. That is to say, according to Figure 1, all parts of the organization must partner.

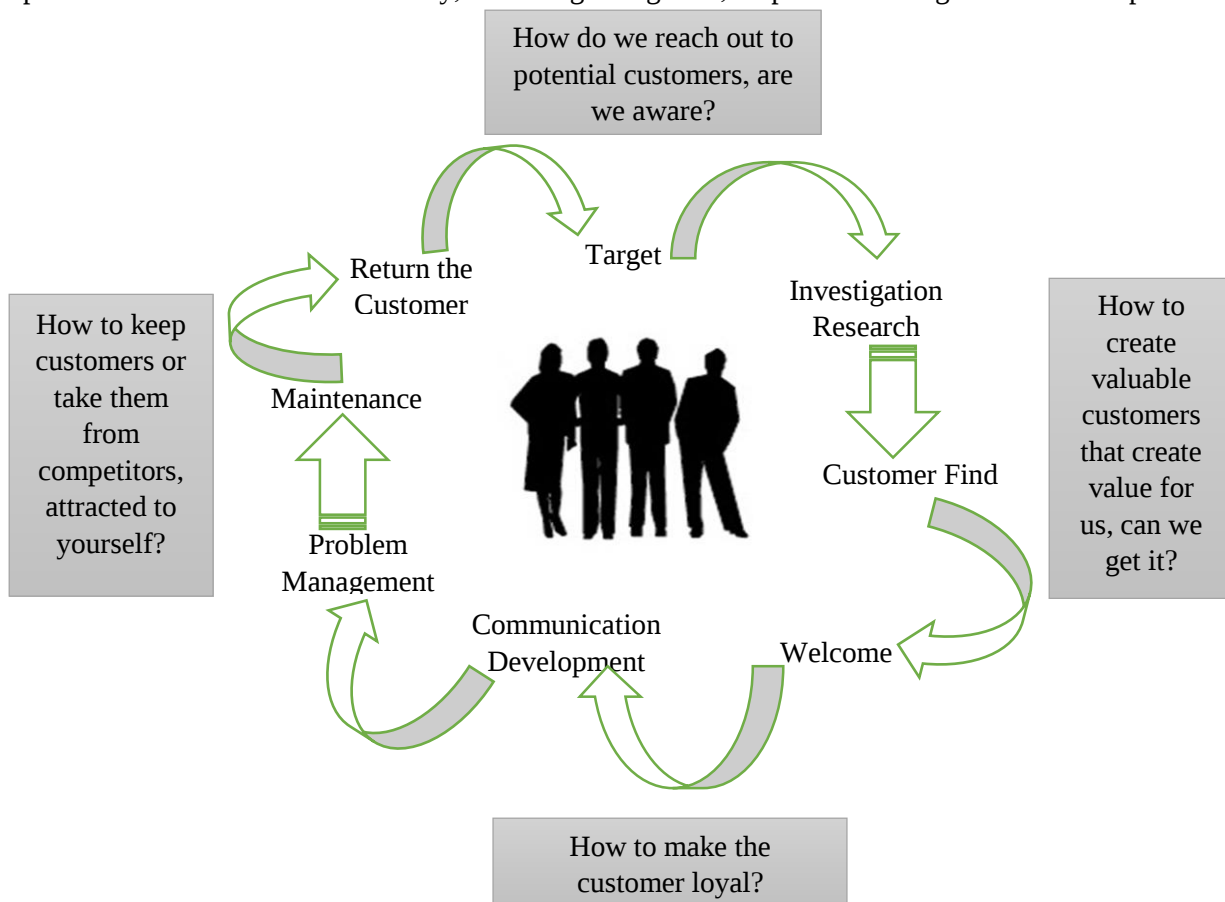


Figure 1. CRM Technology Strategy

Underlying the adoption of CRM technology in the sport industry are the concepts of marketing orientation (MO) and relationship marketing (RM) (10). Other research also indicates that differences in CRM technology adoption and outcomes within a firm may reflect the firm's IT management orientation and sophistication (11).

CRM has changed the way companies handle customer inquiries, advertise and sell their products or manage the entire relationship with their customers. As the power of CRM technology has expanded, companies have come to view it as a resource ever more critical to their success in customer management. Therefore, in to design a customer relationship management model and explain its model in Iranian sports, we need a tool that evaluates the obvious and invisible factors, has a comprehensive approach and eliminates the shortcomings of existing models. Given the problems in Iranian sports, including sports venues, in identifying and evaluating customer relationship activities and the shortcomings of existing models and studies, the present study seeks to provide a model for the technology of successful customer relationship management in sports, to fix the shortcomings of the current models and with a comprehensive and systematic approach to identify the tangible and intangible dimensions of customer relationship in Iranian sports.

Conceptual Model

Conceptual Model a common theme throughout the IT and sport marketing literature is that sport CRM technology is viewed as an enabler (12, 5). Through sport technology, tracking, customizing, integrating, communications, minimizing errors, augmenting core services and personalizing can be implemented quickly and cost effectively (13).

The conceptual model shown in Figure 1 has been derived from the literature on CRM. Sport venues orientation is hypothesized to positively affect a sport venues adoption of CRM technology, and also the strength of the relationship between the sport venues and its sport customer. The degree, extent and acceptance of the CRM technology adopted also positively affects relationship strength. Finally, Relationship Strength and CRM technology adopted are both expected to affect relationship performance positively.

Again, drawing on the literature in technology adoption, CRM and relationship marketing, each of the four main constructs are also hypothesized to comprise certain sub-constructs, as indicated in Figure 1. Sport venues orientation is shown as consisting of a combination of Sports industry orientation, and technology orientation. CRM technology adoption consists of CRM functionality, acceptance, and degree of integration. Relationship Strength includes components of trust, commitment, and communications quality. Finally, relationship performance comprises customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and customer retention.

The model shown in Figure 1 provides the overarching research framework for this study. The present study does not attempt to analyses the model in its entirety, rather, this study focuses specifically on the linkages between sport CRM technology adoption, relationship strength and relationship performance.

Technology and CRM - CRM ecosystem

Technological developments continue to affect the organization and the marketing of its products and services. These technological applications include the computer (specifically the World Wide Web) and mobile telephone technology. CRM needs to be seen as more than just technology with the technology being regarded as the enabler of the CRM strategy (14). In using technology, a number of technology applications can be identified that are used in the development of CRM strategy (15). Three main components of CRM systems can be identified, as illustrated in Figure 2.

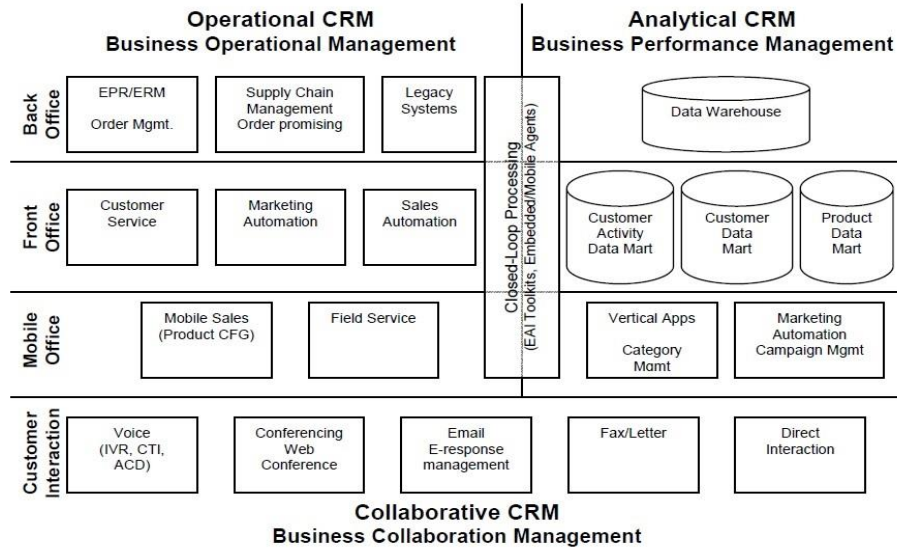


Figure 2. Execution structure of technology and CRM

Operational CRM includes customer-facing applications such as sales force automation, enterprise marketing automation and customer service and support (16). Customer call centers are also a component of operational CRM, and have been identified as the dominant aspect in CRM systems (17, 18). All interactions with the customer are recorded, enabling the organization to gather data on the customer and thus track the customer (17). Despite calls centers being the dominant form of operational CRM, in research conducted in the UK, it was found that less than 40% of organizations had implemented a call center (18).

Analytical CRM analyses the data that has been created through operational CRM to build a picture of the customer. Analytical CRM includes the capturing, storage, extraction, processing, interpretation and reporting of customer data stored in data warehouses. This enables the organization to examine customer behavioral patterns in order to develop marketing and promotional strategies. In research conducted in the UK, 25% of the organizations surveyed indicated that they used analytical CRM. This would appear to indicate that the primary use of CRM systems is operational (17).

Collaborative CRM uses new and traditional communication technologies to enable customers to interact with the organization. Collaborative CRM allows a better level of response to customer needs by involving all the members of the supply chain such as suppliers or other partners. It also involves channel strategies or any function that provides a point of interaction (or touchpoint) between the customer and the channel (19).

Research Methodology

This research seeks to provide a new technology model and method for evaluating customer relationship with sports places. It is a fundamental applied research. In terms of data collection, it is also in the category of descriptive (non-experimental) research. To solve the research problem and develop a model for evaluating the relationship with customers in the country's sports venues, the qualitative research method and especially in the construction of the theory, the "foundation data theory" method was used.

A qualitative approach was adopted, consisting of individual in depth interviews. The interviews were semi-structured with a combination of open ended and closed questions. An interview protocol was developed, drawing on the literature and various instruments used in previous studies (Figure 3). A sample of 10 sport venues East Azerbaijan Province of Iran was selected for the study based on industry, sports customers' size and CRM system implemented.

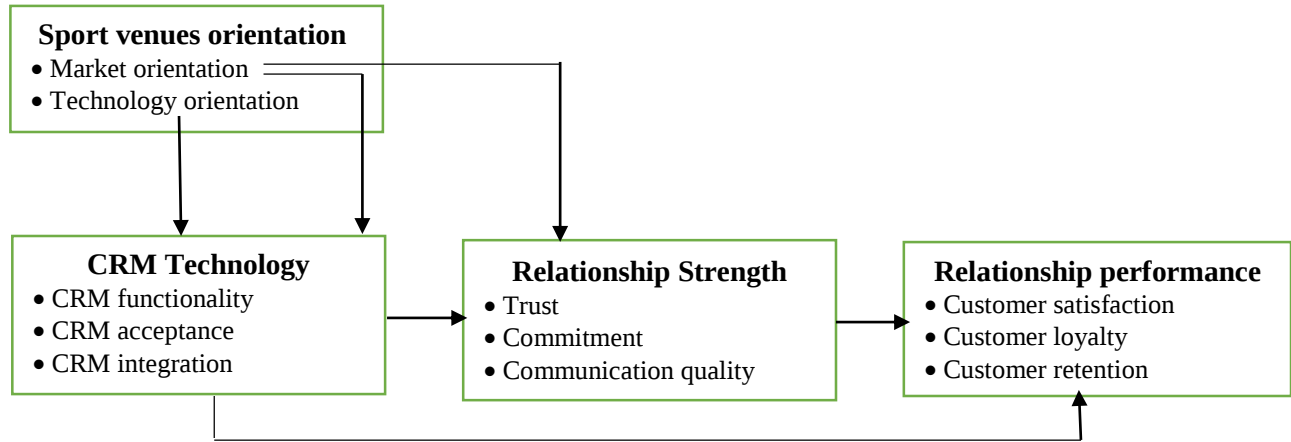


Figure 3. Sport CRM technology adoption – relationship model

In each sport venues, responsible for sports manager was interviewed. The interviews lasted 45 minutes on average. Each of the sport venues provided contact details for three of their customers. 10 directors of sports, and their respective 384 sport customers, from a variety of East Azerbaijan Province sport venues were interviewed. Data collection has been used successfully in sport marketing relationship research (20). All of the customers contacted agreed to participate. Each customer interview lasted 30 minutes on average. All 20 of the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and an opportunity provided for the interviewees to check the transcriptions for accuracy. Each transcript was coded, data displays constructed and the results analyzed for common themes and insights within and between the cases (21).

Findings

Detailed data analysis, questioning, and comparison analysis are the main methods of analysis in fundamental data theory. To develop the theoretical model of the sport customer relationship management process, the researcher has moved continuously and purposefully during the data analysis process between open and centralized coding.

All of the contacted sport venues had implemented some form of CRM technology (Table 1). A and B had implemented a popular and simple CRM contact management system, while four sport venues (C, D, E and I) had undertaken their in-house or custom system development. F had implemented a hosted CRM solution; the other telecommunications sport venues (G, H, and J) continued to use an old CRM system that it had implemented some years earlier.

The sport venues of Iran provided a broad distribution of CRM products from small to large CRM implementations, with a wide variety of functionality.

In general, CRM technology was considered by both groups of respondents as a customer orientation and sport marketing support tool that can facilitate superior processes for sport customer data collection, analysis and retrieval. No discernable patterns emerged to suggest that either sports venues or industry were related to the companies' reasons for CRM adoption. Table 2 indicates the occurrence of salient relevant CRM relationship themes from the interview transcripts (22).

Table 1. Demographic summary of firms interviewed

Code	Sports venues	Informant	CRM System
A	Petrochemical sports hall	Owner/manager	Database
B	Tractor stadium	Relationship Executive	Database
C	Takhti stadium	Owner/manager	Custom
D	Multifunctional gym	Owner/manager	Database
E	Blind sports hall	Head of Operations	Database
F	Mashinsazi sports hall	Relationship Executive	Database

G	Ancient sports stadium	Owner/manager	Database
H	Weightlifting hall	Head of Operations	Database
I	Poursharifi sports hall	Owner/manager	Database
J	Kargaran Pool	Account Director	Custom

There were many different perceptions of CRM technology by both the sport venues and the customers. Analysis of the qualitative data indicates that firms with CRM technology, for the most part, do consider CRM technology as potentially benefiting sport venues relationships and performance.

From the customer's perspective, trust, communications, performance and understanding the customers' business were important relationship elements. Table 2 shows the results of a prioritization exercise, where the respondents ranked the set of eight relationship characteristics. Prior to this ranking exercise, respondents were asked to describe key terms, elements and sport venues with sports customer's relationships. Trust, performance and commitment were ranked the top three characteristics by both groups of respondents to describe relationships. Performance in most cases referred to the ability to deliver what was promised and hence was more reflective of the type of trust termed competence trust (23).

Table 2. Summary of ranked relationship characteristics

Characteristics	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	Avg	Rank
Trust	4	1	1	1	1	4	1	5	1	1	2.00	8
Power	3	4	5	6	2	1	1	3	4	5	3.40	5
Control	3	3	3	3	8	5	4	4	5	6	4.40	4
Commitment	7	8	8	6	8	7	8	6	6	8	7.20	1
Satisfaction	6	5	7	7	7	8	5	8	5	5	6.30	2
Cooperation	4	5	6	2	2	2	4	2	3	4	3.40	5
Performance	3	6	6	6	5	4	5	2	5	5	4.70	3
Conflict & resolution	5	4	1	3	3	5	8	6	7	2	4.40	4

Communications, and communications quality, were highlighted quite often as extremely important within a with sports customers relationship. A number of respondents indicated that clear messages, mutual understanding, and goal and strategic alignment between the parties only became evident through appropriate and timely communications. Other factors related to strong relationships included dealing with the right people and creating mutual value. Relationship performance was generally described using terms such as customer satisfaction, mutual benefit, and added value. Customer satisfaction surveys, loyalty metrics and customer retention are common measures of relationship performance. So, it's having a CRM system that allows us to both measure, report and reward our customers for loyalty and also to drive retention and satisfaction.

CRM users indicated that their reasons for adopting CRM technology were many and varied. One general theme revolved around the collection and management of customer information, in some cases to help manage customer relationships, in other cases, simply to provide an efficient and standard internal reporting processes for management.

Selective coding the results of the previous steps used coding, Selects the main category and links it systematically to other categories, it validates communication and it develops categories that need further refinement and development. It should be noted that the above steps are performed in a reciprocal process; therefore, the steps of selective coding are clearly not separate from each other and are done through an interactive process with open and axial coding. In short, the process of data analysis that leads to the creation of a theoretical model; They include causal conditions, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies and actions and consequences, which explain the main phenomenon, the process of managing communication with sports customers. The final model of customer relationship management technology can be seen in the following figure, according to the dimensions of the paradigm model (Figure 4).

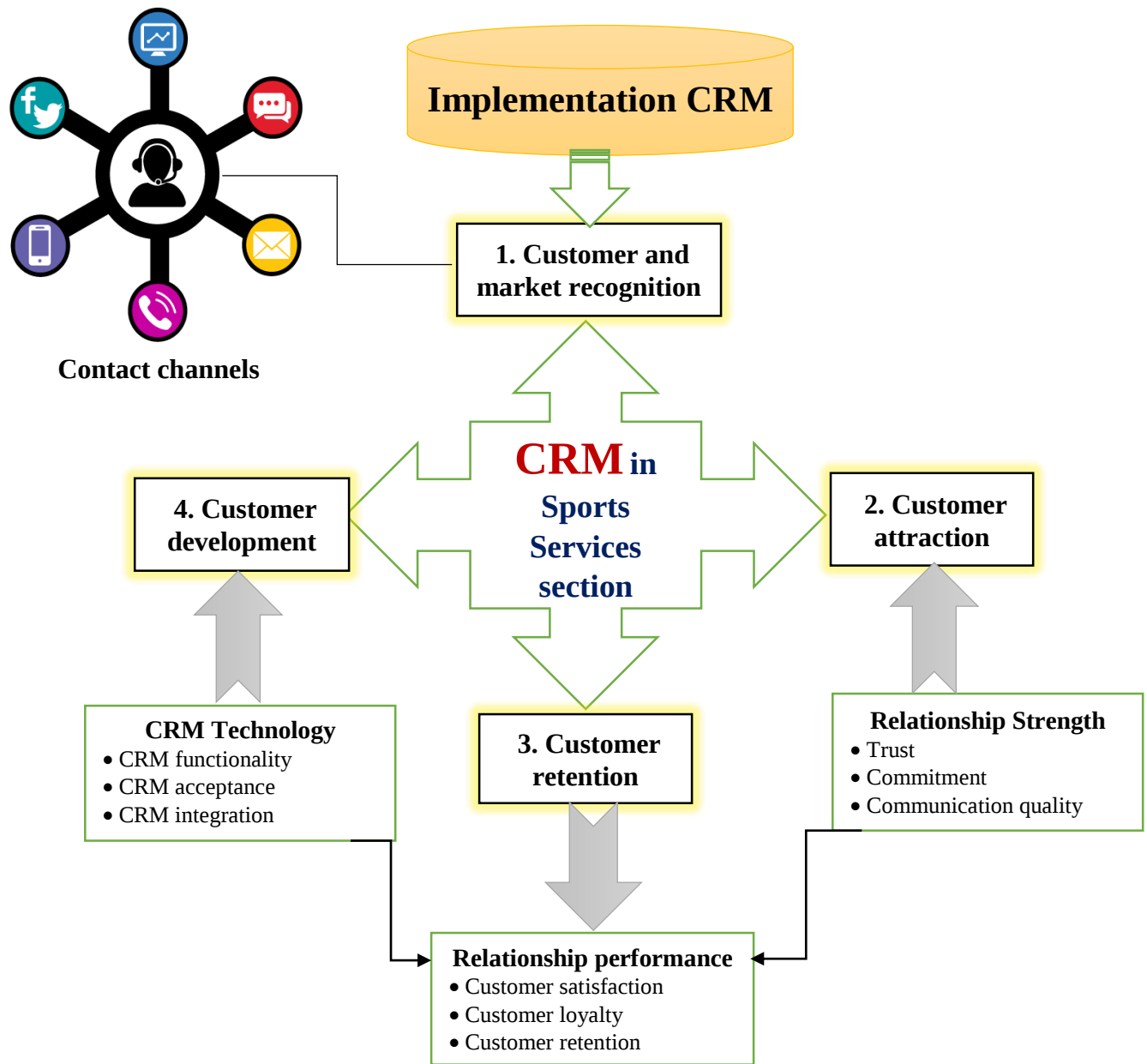


Figure 4. Model of CRM technology in sports services section

Discussion

Widespread utility in sporting endeavors and more recently have been applied by consumers and researchers (24). Today, with the rise of technology, we are witnessing new advances in the world (25). Customer relationship management technology is a system that helps an organization establish a long-term relationship with its customers. Relationships based on win-win strategy are designed to be profitable and profitable for both parties. Because a strong customer relationship is the key to success in any business. In other words, customer relationship management is a strategy for selecting, retaining and managing customers in order to create long-term value (26). Findings indicate that recognition of customer and market, attracting customer, maintaining and developing customer are the consequences of implementing CRM technology in sports places and are in same line with the findings of Lee and Dion (2019), Foster (2018), Hadizadeh (2010), Mahmoudi *et al* (2016), Abdavi and Pashaie, (2016), Babaei *et al* (2017), Soltania *et al* (2020) (27- 33). Also, trust, power, control, commitment, satisfaction,

participation, efficiency and performance, conflict and transparency were identified as 9 factors from the interviewees' point of view. Therefore, the respondents agreed that the important elements of customer relationship include a commitment (7.20), satisfaction (6.30) and performance (4.70), which are in the same line with the results of research Lee and Dion's (2019), Foster (2019), Rahimi and Kozak (2017), Bay Ghanbarpour (2017), Babaei *et al*, (2017), Moaddi and Mirkazemi (2018), Moharramzadeh and Pashaie (2019). (27, 28, 34-37, 32).

Many technologies are offered in CRM but having a CRM image as a set of technologies is also incorrect. As a better way to understand CRM, it can be seen as a process that helps us gather different customer information, sales, effectiveness of marketing activities, speed of response, and market desires. Sport venues and customers consider CRM technology as a sport marketing support tool that can provide customer knowledge management, and superior processes for customer data collection, information analysis and knowledge retrieval. Customers believe that CRM technology can help sport venues understand the customers, align objectives and better communicate in customer oriented sport terms.

Sport venues are using CRM technology to build profiles of fans based on ticket and retail purchase history, demographic information, match attendance, and website logins. The detailed fan information collected can be used to identify and segment them for engagement email campaigns.

Conclusion

This study is designed a customer relationship management (CRM) technology model in sports services section of East Azerbaijan Province of Iran. Findings indicate that CRM technology does have a role to play in sustaining and maintaining sport customers' relationships, but it is the sport customers communications and people aspect that may be most important. Respondents agreed that the important elements of relations include commitment, satisfaction and performance. Relationship performance is generally measured using customer satisfaction, loyalty and/or customer retention. While the start-up of a CRM software is expensive and time-consuming, over time the benefits far outweigh the costs. So it's having a CRM system that allows us to both measures, report and reward our customers for loyalty and also to drive retention and satisfaction.

Customer relationship management (CRM) system is the system that integrates management of customer groups, establishment and management of marketing companies referring to the relationship (intercourse) marketing. CRM is an exciting and topical area, but there are few rigorous studies exploring the phenomenon within the CRM Technology Model in sports services section context. Having an accurate and up-to-date CRM that everyone uses and has access to helps managers of sport venues solve client problems. Some IT and marketing research indicates that CRM technology may not actually assist in the creation or maintenance of customer relationships. In contrast, CRM technology is considered by some academics as the practical implementation of communication management theory (38). These differences in findings and opinion focus on the current research.

Customer performance measurement in sport venues is the, analysis and the evaluation of performance-related customer information and an important task of sport customer relationship management (SCRM). A Customer performance measurement system is therefore a CRM system used in analyses, evaluate, control and communicate customer performance and customer strategies. So, customer performance measurement is an important instrument of analytical CRM in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes and sport customer management. Figure 4 is a model of creation of CRM technology in sports services section of Iran.

Customer performance measurement in sport venues has to rely on an adequate number customer performance indicators, which can be defined as customer-related monetary or non-monetary criteria (measures, metrics, indices, figures or ratios) about customer performance. Examples of important customer performance are:

- Customer value
- Customer satisfaction
- Customer loyalty and retention
- Customer equity
- Customer turnover, margins, profit, etc.

Managers of sport venues are suggested to utilize modern architectural techniques to beautify the interior and exterior and to update facilities to satisfy and attract customers. It is also suggested that customer Centricity is a

pre-requisite for developing CRM in service organizations. Finally, it is suggested for future research to examine the impact of environmental threat factors such as market perturbation, competition intensity and market growth of the relationship between customer relationship management dimensions and its success in service organizations.

The exploratory nature of the study and the small sample size are limitations of the study's generalizability; however, the study did confirm and clarify the key elements of the model. There were interesting variations in the CRM functionality adopted and perceptions the CRM impact on the relationship constructs to merit further exploration. Developing a measure of the impact of CRM technology adoption on sport venues which customer relationships should provide an empirical method for academics to better understand and predict the relationship between CRM technology and Communication management. Sports marketing, and IT practitioners ought to benefit from a better understanding of the relationship between CRM technology adoption (i.e. CRM functionality, integration and acceptance) and customer relationship performance.

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ایجاد الگوی فناوری مدیریت ارتباط با مشتری در بخش خدمات اماکن ورزشی

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چکیده

طی دهه‌های گذشته اماکن ورزشی سرمایه‌گذاری‌های خود را در حوزه مدیریت ارتباط با مشتری (CRM) افزایش داده‌اند. این سرمایه‌گذاری از توسعه استراتژی گرفته تا اجرای نرم‌افزار و سایر برنامه‌های کاربردی است که به جذب مشتری جدید و حفظ و رشد برنامه‌های موجود کمک خواهد کرد. بر این اساس، هدف از این مطالعه طراحی مدل فناوری CRM در بخش خدمات ورزشی استان آذربایجان شرقی بر اساس روایت‌های فردی و تجربه‌های شخصی ۱۰ مدیر و ۳۸۴ مشتری ورزشی در استان طی مصاحبه‌های عمیق صورت گرفته، با استفاده از روش نظریه‌پردازی داده بنیاد می‌باشد. دیدگاه‌های آن‌ها در مورد رابطه بین فناوری CRM و اماکن ورزشی ثبت و تجزیه و تحلیل شد. یافته‌ها حاکی از آن است که، شناخت مشتری و بازار، جذب مشتری، حفظ مشتری و توسعه مشتری از پیامدهای پیاده‌سازی فناوری CRM در اماکن ورزشی است. همچنین پاسخ دهندگان توافق کردند که عناصر مهم ارتباط با مشتری، تعهد (۷/۲۰)، رضایت (۶/۳۰) و عملکرد (۴/۷۰) است. بنابراین داشتن یک سیستم CRM می‌تواند در اتخاذ تصمیم‌گیری‌های بهتر در زمینه ارائه خدمات، افزایش ارتباطات داخل سازمانی، پایین آمدن هزینه‌ها، جذب و حفظ مشتری کمک کند.

واژه‌های کلیدی: اماکن، خدمات، مدیریت ارتباط با مشتری، مدل موفقیت، ورزش.