CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group

MANAGING CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS USING CUSTOMER CARE TECHNIQUES

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL ENTERPRISE

Anna Brzozowska, Stanisław Brzeziński, Arnold Pabian,
and Barbara Pabian

Managing Customer Relationships Using Customer Care Techniques

In today's global business environment, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has become key to the success of many international enterprises. *Managing Customer Relationships Using Customer Care Techniques: Strategy Development of an International Enterprise* offers a comprehensive analysis of this crucial business aspect, focusing on how companies can effectively manage their customer relationships in the context of global expansion. This book stands out with its unique approach to CRM, blending theory with practice and providing readers with a deep understanding of how CRM influences the strategies of international enterprises.

The book is divided into four main parts, each focusing on a different aspect of customer relationship management. The first part focuses on creating strategies in the context of customer relationships in international enterprises, the second part discusses the essence of the CRM concept in companies, the third part delves into the strategy of a global enterprise from the customer relationship perspective, and the fourth part centers on the evaluation and optimization of customer care strategy in modern business.

Key Features:

- In-depth analysis of the CRM concept in the context of international business.
- Discussion on the evolution of the CRM idea over the years.
- Introduction to integrated customer relationship management systems in global enterprises.
- Analysis of the impact of social media on CRM.
- Practical insights on measuring the effectiveness of customer care activities.

Managing Customer Relationships Using Customer Care Techniques: Strategy Development of an International Enterprise is a must-read for managers, business consultants, business students, and anyone wanting to understand how to effectively manage customer relationships in an international business environment.

Anna Brzozowska, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the field of economics, in the discipline of management science. Currently, she works at the Department of Logistics in the Faculty of Management of the Częstochowa University of Technology. Since 2000, the professor's research and teaching activity has been associated with the Częstochowa University of Technology, where she worked as an assistant, and since February 2005 as an assistant professor. From 2015 until now, she has been an associate professor. She is the author or co-author of about 180 scientific publications. Until 2018, she was the Editor of the *EUREKA Social and Humanistic* magazine. In the years 2018–2021, she was the Editor-in-Chief of the Częstochowa University of Technology Management's scientific journal. The journal focuses on organization management processes, primarily logistics, marketing, information and IT aspects as well as the institutional environment influencing management in the light of integration activities. The main directions of research and studies concern four key issues: the broadly understood concept of marketing and logistics management, IT in business, EU project management, management and marketing in agribusiness, and the processes of integration with the European Union. As part of her scholarly work, Dr. Brzozowska systematically develops these issues by conducting national and international research, participating in thematic groups and research and development teams, as well as through cooperation with business and local and regional authorities. To expand the reach and scope of her work, Dr. Brzozowska has cooperated with the Mechanical Engineering Faculty, University of Miskolc; Hochschule Wismar University of Applied Sciences Technology; Technical University of Ostrava; Poltava State Agrarian Academy, Ukraine; and King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia.

Stanisław Brzeziński (Prof. Dr. Habil., Full Professor). After graduating from the University of Warsaw, he worked in central administration and diplomacy for over 20 years. In the years 1996–2018, he was employed at the Faculty of Management of the Czestochowa University of Technology, in which from 2009 he was the Deputy Director of the Marketing Institute.

Since September 2018, Prof. Brzeziński has been a Professor at the University of Economics and Humanities in Warsaw. In scientific activity, he deals, among others, with the issues of sustainable development of the world economy and the role of enterprises in this process. He has authored the concept of a new marketing orientation called "Market orientation of social responsibility" as well as numerous scientific articles, monograph chapters, and peer-reviewed papers.

In September 2013, he became the Editor-in-Chief of *Przegląd Organizacji/Organization's Review* – one of the world's oldest scientific journals in the discipline of management. In addition, since 2017, he has been the Vice President of the Central Board of the Scientific Society for Organization and Management (TNOiK).

Arnold Pabian (Prof. Dr. Habil., Full Professor) is a specialist in management and marketing. He has published over 300 works, including books, articles, and papers in Poland and abroad. Many of these publications relate to sustainable management and marketing. He conducts research in Poland and abroad financed by the funds of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. He has participated in numerous scientific conferences organized in various countries around the world (the United States, Australia, Canada, Japan, Argentina, Mexico, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, China, and others). In the years 2003–2009, he was a member of the Academy of Marketing Science (the United States). He also participated in the works of the Polish Academy of Sciences. For many years, he has held various managerial positions in the Polish higher education system. For two terms (2008–2016), he was the Dean of the Faculty of Management, Czestochowa University of Technology (Poland). Currently, Prof. Arnold Pabian is the Vice-Rector for Management and Marketing at this university. He has been awarded the Golden Cross of Merit by the President of the Republic of Poland for his contribution to the development of science. Furthermore, he has been awarded the Silver Cross of Merit, Medal of National Education, as well as many other medals and prizes.

Barbara Pabian holds a post-doctoral degree (Dr. Habil.) in cultural studies and works as a Professor at the Faculty of Management, University of Economics in Katowice, Poland. She is an author of approximately 90 scientific publications, including books and articles published in Polish, English, and Russian, as well as a textbook for students. She has been a supervisor of many bachelor's and master's theses. Since 2008, she has been the Dean of the Faculty of Tourism at the WSHT (School of Graduate Studies in Hospitality Management and Tourism) in Częstochowa, as well as the Head of Post-Graduate Studies. She has been awarded the Medal of National Education. She has also obtained the Award of City of Częstochowa as well as other prizes.

Managing Customer Relationships Using Customer Care Techniques

Strategy Development of an International Enterprise

Anna Brzozowska
Stanisław Brzeziński
Arnold Pabian
Barbara Pabian

CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group
Boca Raton London New York

CRC Press is an imprint of the
Taylor & Francis Group, an **informa** business

Designed cover image: © Shutterstock

First edition published 2024
by CRC Press
2385 NW Executive Center Drive, Suite 320, Boca Raton FL 33431

and by CRC Press
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

CRC Press is an imprint of Taylor & Francis Group, LLC

© 2024 Anna Brzozowska, Stanisław Brzeziński, Arnold Pabian and Barbara Pabian

Reasonable efforts have been made to publish reliable data and information, but the author and publisher cannot assume responsibility for the validity of all materials or the consequences of their use. The authors and publishers have attempted to trace the copyright holders of all material reproduced in this publication and apologize to copyright holders if permission to publish in this form has not been obtained. If any copyright material has not been acknowledged please write and let us know so we may rectify in any future reprint.

Except as permitted under U.S. Copyright Law, no part of this book may be reprinted, reproduced, transmitted, or utilized in any form by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying, microfilming, and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without written permission from the publishers.

For permission to photocopy or use material electronically from this work, access www.copyright.com or contact the Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400. For works that are not available on CCC please contact mpkbookspermissions@tandf.co.uk

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Brzozowska, Anna, author. | Brzeziński, Stanisław, author. |
Pabian, Arnold, author. | Pabian, Barbara, author.
Title: Managing customer relationships using customer care techniques :
strategy development of an international enterprise / Anna Brzozowska,
Stanislaw Brzezìnski, Arnold Pabian and Barbara Pabian.
Description: First edition. | Boca Raton : CRC Press, 2024. | Includes
bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2023050947 (print) | LCCN 2023050948 (ebook) |
ISBN 9781032713885 (hardback) | ISBN 9781032713908 (paperback) |
ISBN 9781032713915 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Customer relations.
Classification: LCC HF5415.5 .B7975 2024 (print) | LCC HF5415.5 (ebook) |
DDC 658.8/12--dc23/eng/20231128
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2023050947
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2023050948

ISBN: 978-1-032-71388-5 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-71390-8 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-71391-5 (ebk)

DOI: 10.1201/9781032713915

Typeset in Adobe Caslon Pro
by SPi Technologies India Pvt Ltd (Straive)

Contents

Introduction

One obvious consequence of an increasing globalization consists in the emergence of multinational companies, also known as global or transnational corporations. The functioning and perspectives of future development concerning multinational enterprises (MNEs), to a large extent, depend on the adopted strategy. The process of formulating a strategy must take into account not only the reality in which an MNE operates but also the need to develop the resources and improve the capabilities necessary to operate on a dynamically changing market. However, the rapidly changing environment requires MNEs to develop new concepts for strategic action. For the long-term and sustainable growth of companies, the managerial staff must radically change its strategic thinking, with a particular focus on modern technologies and markets. The features that characterize contemporary reality essentially focus on the needs of customers, who expect an increase in competitiveness, constant technological advances, as well as high-quality products and services. Today's customers are often no longer mere consumers, but prosumers, active buyers who demand products and services from specific brands and expect increasingly customized offers from manufacturers and service providers.

Due to this, creating strategies by multinational companies increasingly relies on knowledge and information not only about themselves but also about their surroundings, customers, markets, and partners. A significant role is also played by the resources they have at their disposal to achieve the company's main business objectives. Formulating their own strategies, modern MNEs can adopt one of the following types of strategy, depending on their objectives: international,

DOI: 10.1201/9781032713915-1

multinational, global, or transnational strategy. However, despite the distinctive characteristics of the different strategies, the customer still constitutes the main objective that determines the success of the adopted strategy, as well as the acquisition and maintenance of established relationships. This results from the fact that customers (existing and potential) are the most significant and critical resource available for an MNE, the configuration of which can affect the company's future development and prospects. In accordance with resource theory, it is not only resources that determine a company's competitive advantage but also its ability to use resources effectively, introducing the concept of Customer Relationship Management (CRM). The idea of managing relations with customers is also relevant to CRM because it is part of the strategic management framework, which defines long-term goals, development directions, and methods of action concerning allocating company resources. Applying the concept of strategic management in relation to resources requires identifying long-term goals and selecting proper methods to serve customers effectively. Meeting the expectations and needs of customers indicates the commercial nature of the concept, which is based on creating a specific value that is then transferred to the customer. In this context, the knowledge and information gained thanks to proper CRM can be used in a company's marketing activities aimed at convincing customers to purchase the goods and services offered by the company. This means that MNEs must consider customer relationships in the process of formulating and implementing their strategies. Moreover, in order to ensure the operation and development of multinational companies, it is necessary to gather information on the economic, political, and social environment surrounding the company so that appropriate strategies can be formulated and implemented.

Managing relations with customers is a new strategy, process, business culture, and technology that guides the activities of multinational companies not only to increase profits but also to improve competitiveness, maintain a good image, and gain knowledge and information from customers. The multidimensional nature of this concept means that it is considered from three perspectives: business, marketing, and technology. In business terms, managing relations with customers can be seen as a "sub-strategy" that is shaped in the context of developing the company's core strategy. That is why the business dimension of the concept includes aspects of marketing and technology. In the marketing dimension, CRM aims to identify and satisfy customer needs and expectations, while in the technological dimension, the concept constitutes an information system whose task is to implement customer service processes, which depends on the need to use modern information and communication technologies in its form. Skillfully managing this concept in the three aspects mentioned above significantly influences the methods and forms of formulating proper management strategies for MNEs, allowing the rationalization of management processes in order to make optimal use of company resources and customer potential, thus leading to implementing the objectives set in the economic, social, and environmental context. These three aspects are also factors that determine current market trends and the behavior of customers, who expect companies to achieve certain economic (high profitability), social (care for employees), and environmental (care for the environment) results. Incorporating CRM into the strategy of multinational companies not only enables them to plan, build, and maintain these relationships but also ensures a stable market position, increased loyalty from existing and potential customers, as well as perceiving the company in a favorable manner by its stakeholders.

Even though a great number of research studies have been carried out on the concept of CRM, from a business, commercial, and technological perspective, lack of in-depth research on the position of CRM strategies within the strategies of multinational companies means that this topic has not been fully explored, with implications for continuing research in this area. Therefore, the main motivation for working on this topic was the need to position CRM strategies within the strategies developed by multinational companies.

PART 1
CREATING STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS IN INTERNATIONAL ENTERPRISES

1.1 CRM against the Background of Management Science

In a turbulent and rapidly changing corporate environment, entrepreneurs aim their actions at new growth opportunities. In this context, expanding to new markets has become a natural phenomenon. Entrepreneurs are aware that the globalization process is driven by increasingly diverse determinants of production or services. Today, the internationalization of companies is linked to technological advances that generate innovation and require a very receptive market. The functioning of multinational enterprises (MNEs) requires economic, social, political, and legal dimensions. Important factors that may serve as reasons for developing MNEs consist of market stability, efficient access to factors of production, and achieving determined objectives.

So far, literature provided various definitions of the term "multinational enterprise." Classifying this type of company depends on the chosen criteria and the perspective of the research question. An MNE can be considered to be one that operates in two or more countries, with the head office located in the home country and the other business units operating as subsidiaries.

The classification of MNEs with regard to their typology is shown in Table 1.1.

Globalization made it possible for entrepreneurs to take steps to expand their business and create opportunities to establish contacts with companies in different countries. In accordance with international

DOI: 10.1201/9781032713915-2

Table 1.1 MNE Classification

There are multiple criteria that can be utilized for the classification of MNEs. These include:	
• Scope, referring to the number of countries in which the company operates. • Strategy, referring to the manner in which the company manages its international operations. • Management, referring to the degree of centralization or decentralization in governance. • Innovativeness, referring to the company's level of innovation.	
Classification of MNEs	
Based on the aforementioned criteria, the following types of MNEs can be distinguished:	
• **Global MNEs**	These MNEs are characterized by a large scale of international operations, centralized management, and a global strategy. Such companies frequently employ standardized products and processes in their branches worldwide.
• **Regional MNEs**	These MNEs are characterized by a smaller scale of international operations compared to global MNEs, centralized management, and a regional strategy. They often focus on a single region and use standardized products and processes in their branches within that region.
• **Local MNEs**	This type of MNE operates in one country and lacks significant investments in other countries. These companies often focus on the local market, tailoring their products and processes to local needs and conditions.
Newer Classification Criteria	
In recent years, new classification criteria for MNEs have emerged, reflecting changes in the global economy. These criteria include:	
• Complexity, referring to the degree of complexity of a company's international operations. • Mobility, referring to the degree of resource mobility within the company. • Green, referring to the company's level of commitment to environmental protection.	

Source: own study based on Bartlett and Ghoshal 1989; Dunning 1993; Dunning and Gereffi 2019; Rugman and Verbeke 2001: 1017–1028; Rugman and Verbeke 2020; Bartlett and Ghoshal 2021.

business principles, the parent company is responsible for developing strategy, determining goals, and defining business models.

In order to implement the above principles, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) concepts are required as a factor in the proper functioning of international business and in determining the direction of change, and CRM information systems constitute an important means to this end. CRM concepts and information systems provide the opportunity to react quickly to changes, especially unfavorable ones.

If an international company is losing customers and market share, the entrepreneur, with the help of IT systems, has the opportunity to monitor the undergoing changes and thus modify the used concept and eliminate the factors that led to this unfavorable situation.

Management is a decision-making process whose effects are experienced by employees, managers, and customers of multinational companies (Mårtensson 2000: 204–216). In the age of globalization, effective management not only creates prospects for a company's development but also enables it to meet its objectives. In its simplest form, management stands for the process of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling the work of an enterprise and its employees, using all available resources to achieve predetermined goals. Management also constitutes the totality of managerial activities, particularly those that shape the company's relationships with employees and customers, leading to developing long-term relationships with them.

Over the years, the concept of "management" evolved as a subject of scientific research, resulting in modifying various formulations, which are presented in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Overview of Management Definitions

AUTHOR	DEFINITION
J.A. Stoner	Management (leadership) is the process of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the activities of an enterprise as well as using all other resources to achieve established objectives.
F.E. Kast, J.E. Rosenzweig	Management is the process of coordinating collective efforts to achieve organizational goals by people, taking advantage of technology in organized structures based on set tasks.
W.V. Owen	Management is the art of working through other people.
Classical Concept	
The classical management concept was developed at the beginning of the 20th century by Frederick Taylor and Henri Fayol. Taylor focused on labor rationalization and increasing efficiency. Conversely, Fayol defined management as the process of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling.	
Frederick Taylor	Management entails the process of planning, organizing, motivating, and overseeing work to achieve defined objectives.

(*Continued*)

Table 1.2 (Continued)

AUTHOR	DEFINITION
	Neoclassical Concept
The neoclassical management concept emerged in the 1930s. Representatives such as Chester Barnard and Douglas McGregor emphasized the role of the human factor in management. Barnard believed that an organization is a social system aimed at achieving goals through people. Meanwhile, McGregor distinguished two management styles: X and Y. Style X assumes people are lazy and reluctant to work, while Style Y assumes people are motivated to work and wish to succeed.	
Henri Fayol	Management encompasses planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling.
	Systems Concept
The systems management concept emerged in the 1950s, pioneered by Ludwig von Bertalanffy. This concept postulates that an organization is a complex system consisting of numerous interconnected elements. Management's role is to coordinate and integrate these elements' actions to achieve the organization's objectives.	
Ludwig von Bertalanffy	Management is the process of coordinating and integrating activities to achieve objectives.
	Situational Concept
The situational management concept arose in the 1960s, introduced by Henry Mintzberg. This idea suggests that there isn't a single best management method. Instead, it's essential to adjust the management style to the specific situation.	
Henry Mintzberg	Management is the process of decision-making under conditions of variability and uncertainty.
	Relational Concept
The relational concept of management was created in the 1970s. Its creator is Karl Weick. This concept assumes that management is a process of building relationships and understanding between people. Managers must be able to understand the needs and expectations of employees, customers, and other stakeholders.	
Karl Weick	Management is the process of cultivating relationships and fostering understanding among individuals.
	Postmodernist Concept
The postmodernist management concept came about in the 1980s. Its creators are Richard Sennett and Michel Foucault. This concept believes that management is a process of shaping identity and meaning. Managers must create a work environment where employees can develop and achieve their goals	
Richard Sennett	Management is the process of shaping identity and meaning.
	Value-Based Management Concept (VBM)
The VBM concept emphasizes that value creation for shareholders is the foundation of management. Managers should focus on actions that enhance the company's value, such as: • increasing sales and profits, • improving operational efficiency, • innovations and development of new products and services, • risk management.	

(*Continued*)

Table 1.2 (Continued)

AUTHOR	DEFINITION

The VBM Concept is based on the Following Principles:

- clear definition of the company's financial and strategic objectives,
- using financial indicators to measure progress toward goals,
- systematic evaluation of managerial effectiveness,
- employee engagement in the value creation process.

Sustainable Management Concept

The Sustainable Management concept suggests that organizations should aim to achieve financial, social, and environmental objectives. Managers should consider the company's impact on the natural environment and society in their decisions. The sustainable development concept is founded on the following principles:

- protection of the natural environment,
- social responsibility,
- social justice,
- a balance between the needs of present and future generations.

Data-Driven Management Concept

The Data-Driven Management concept assumes that managerial decisions should be based on data and analysis. Managers should utilize information technology to collect and analyze data, assisting them in making better decisions. The data-driven management concept is based on the following principles:

- collecting data from various sources,
- data analysis using appropriate tools and methods,
- utilizing data for decision-making,
- communicating analysis results to other company employees.

Source: compiled on the basis of: Callender 2007: 1–21; Carter 2008: 13–29; Chams and García-Blandón 2019: 109–122; Coetzee and Van Niekerk 2012: 1–9; Elgendy, Elragal, and Päivärinta 2022: 337–373; Ferdous 2016: 1–6; Kast and Rosenzweig 1990: 447–466; Kitana 2016: 16; Kozak, Kania, Juszczuk and Mitręga 2021: 102357; Malmi and Ikäheimo 2003: 235–254; Martin, Petty and Wallace 2009; Mintzberg 1990: 171–195; Mintzberg 2016: 257; Parker and Lewis 1995: 211–236; Prieto 2015: 1–85; Sullivan, Thomas and Rosano 2018: 237–246; Waring 2016; Weick 2012; Zambrzhitskaya, Tikhonova, Isaeva, Lami and Goutorbe 2020: 14–24; Zieleniewski 1982: 380.

Whereas P. Drucker interpreted management as a set of certain characteristics and principles (Figure 1.1).

Satisfied customers constitute the cornerstone of business management, and therefore, in order to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction, it is necessary to develop a set of indicators that reflect the company's fulfillment of customer expectations and needs, as well as ongoing communication and interpersonal relationships (Helgesen 2006: 245–266). Particular attention should be paid to the communication and information distribution process. Today, information is

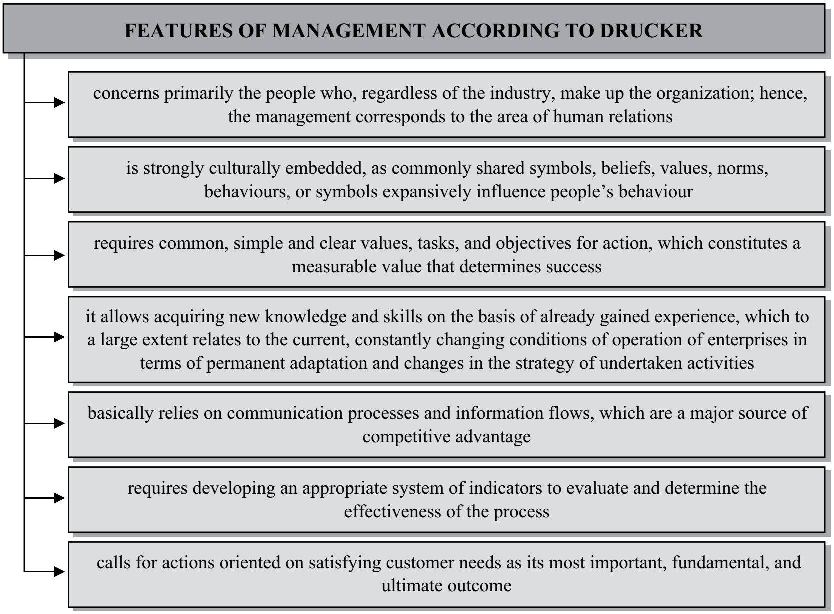

Figure 1.1 Features of management according to P. Drucker.

***Source*: own study, based on: Turriago-Hoyos, Thoene and Arjoon 2016; Drucker 2012.**

considered one of the most important elements in the operations of companies. Information constitutes an increasingly important resource as it contributes to a company's revenue. Using available information technology determines the effective use of a company's information resources. Information technology also supports and improves the operational efficiency of a company by streamlining management processes and accelerating the quality of operations (Ahluwalia et al. 2022: 1232–1244). The widespread use of information technology in management has given rise to the term "information management," which is defined as a set of principles, systems, techniques, and tools defining the structure of information and communication as well as the basis for decision-making in a company (Kotler 1994: 134). In the aspect of management science, information management is implemented in specific tasks (Figure 1.2).

The above list reflects the interdependence between management as a set of processes and CRM systems as tools supporting the effective implementation of these processes. Relations related to management

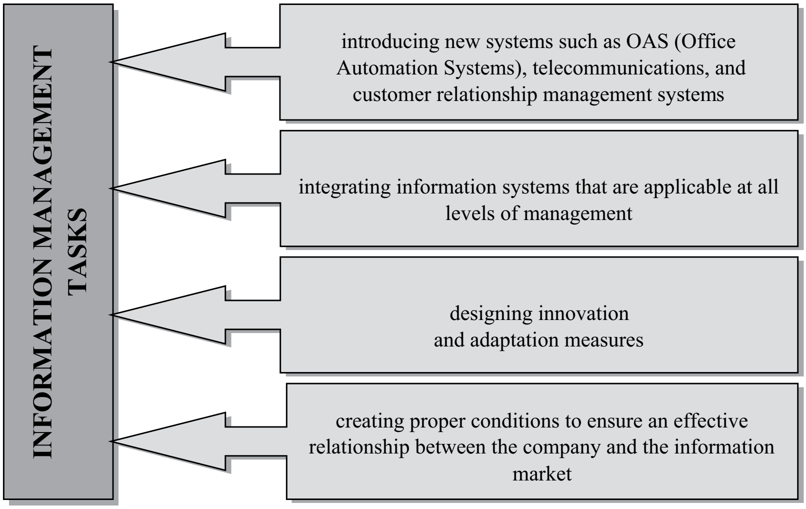

Figure 1.2 Information management tasks.

***Source*: own study, based on: Rakhmonov, Reymov and Shayumova 2019: 01080; Golitsina, Kupriyanov and Maksimov 2015: 150–161.**

refer to the relationships within the company and between the company and the external environment or other business entities.

In business terms, a relationship is formed when two parties work together over an extended period of time, usually of an economic nature. It should be noted that this cooperation is based on direct personal contacts. The concept of relationships is also treated as one of the intangible resources and reflects, on the one hand, relationships within the company and, on the other hand, relationships with partners with whom the company interacts. Therefore, business relationships are created by the partners who represent the company. These relationships determine the level and degree of connection between partners, taking into account areas of information exchange, material resources, or the degree of mutual trust, and occur on the basis of interaction, cooperation, or reaction to past customer relationships.

In the past, relationships between customers and businesses consisted only of product and service transactions, but today they concern comprehensive provision of value that satisfies the diverse needs and expectations of customers.

This alone has the effect of increasing the profitability of the business (Markonah, Salim, and Franciska 2020: 83–94). Today, relationships based on mutual trust are recognized as a resource of particular strategic value, as they have a significant impact on a company's profitability.

This results from the fact that a company's competitive advantage is increasingly located in the business practices resulting from business partnership relationships (Witell et al. 2020: 420–430). Mutual trust between the partners in a relationship becomes the basis not only for its effectiveness but also for its sustainability and growth, which in turn leads to the desired benefits for each party. The relationships between a company and its customers are considered crucial for the company's further development and competitiveness on the market.

A different aspect of the idea of CRM consists in the concept of the customer itself. In narrow terms, a customer is a person who makes a purchase to satisfy his or her needs and at the same time acquires ownership rights for the purchased product. In normative quality management systems, the central role of the customer in the context of organizational management is emphasized. The customer, as an indispensable element, is crucial for the operational continuity of every corporation and for maintaining its competitiveness in the market. In the context of contemporary economic structures, the customer is a key determinant, suggesting that a significant portion of organizational resources should be redistributed toward satisfying its specific expectations.

The phenomenon of customer satisfaction, from the perspective of management theory, is imperative for every organization. The term "customer" is multifaceted in its definition. It can be an individual entity, a corporate institution, or even a governmental administrative unit. The specific definition contained in the standard PN-EN ISO 9000:2006 articulates the customer as an "entropy or entity receiving a product," which can operate within the internal or external structure in relation to a given organization (PN-EN ISO 9000:2006: 33).

Due to the above, it is reasonable to conclude that relationships formed at the level of customers, contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers constitute one of the factors supporting a company's development. This is supported by the fact that, in a situation of constant competition, complete customer satisfaction is essential to maintain a lasting and satisfying relationship. Customer satisfaction and fulfillment are currently the foundation for a long-term relationship between a company and its customers, which is based on loyalty and trust.

Today, the dynamics of customer behavior toward the services and products on offer have increased significantly (Wibowo et al. 2020: 189). In the business world, gaining and maintaining customer loyalty has become very difficult. In this case, high-quality products and favorable prices are not enough. In today's economy, responsibility for the customer-supplier relationship plays an important role. It is said that customers whose needs, such as purchasing products or services, have not been professionally met will express their negative experiences to an average of 11 people.

In the CRM concept (Kamal et al. 2022: 84–108), a relationship is a contract of cooperation between a company and an individual customer, taking into account objectives, knowledge concerning the customer, marketing judgment, communication, and timing aspects. Both formal and informal relationships build the CRM concept and allow for continuous improvement and creating new customer relationships. The company's greatest potential is implemented during the "improvement" phase of the relationship. In other words, increasing the value of the customer relationship is possible by increasing revenue, meaning increasing the share of the customer's shopping basket, reducing costs, and extending the duration of the relationship. CRM stands also for building customer loyalty and creating customer attachment.

Building relationships with customers allows a company to develop and prepare an appropriate sales offer in line with the preferences of key customers, but also improving mechanisms for establishing and maintaining contacts with customers and cooperation between employees within the company.

The definition of CRM depends on the context of the science within which it is considered. Table 1.3 presents selected definitions.

The most common implementation of the concept of CRM used in business is the business approach, which is regarded as a philosophy and a set of a company's actions to meet the needs and expectations of its customers. This results from that the concept is based on a business philosophy. These definitions often emphasize the role of "value" in customer relationships (value is understood as a mutual benefit) in the form of satisfying needs as well as gaining and maintaining customer relationships by the company. These definitions add a strategic dimension to the concept of CRM. In the corporate sector, CRM

Table 1.3 Summary of CRM Definitions by Scientific Context

SCIENTIFIC CONTEXT	DEFINITION
IT, Business	CRM strives not only to offer exemplary products and services but also to attract, retain, and nurture the most valuable customers. CRM is a business strategy for building a relationship and managing customers to optimize long-term benefits. CRM requires introducing a “customer-focused” business philosophy and culture, ensuring effective marketing, sales, and service processes. CRM applications provide the possibilities for effective contact and customer management, indicating the “primacy” of this approach over the overall strategy and culture within the company. CRM represents a pivotal business strategy, amalgamating internal corporate actions with external environments to deliver bespoke value to individual clients while simultaneously reaping benefits. Herein, the quality of customer data and state-of-the-art technologies play an instrumental role. CRM is centered on establishing, sustaining, and reinforcing customer loyalty by understanding and fulfilling their diverse needs. CRM is a client-focused management paradigm predicated on contemporary technologies aiming to forge enduring and profitable client relationships. CRM embodies a holistic organizational strategy, engaging all customers to enhance their value, with a pronounced emphasis on leveraging cutting-edge technologies. CRM involves forging relationships with customers to maximize benefits. It also entails the integration of employees, processes, and technologies. CRM is a methodology for augmenting the long-term value of a customer. CRM pertains to all facets of management directed at satisfying client needs. Its paramount objective is to cultivate client loyalty by proficiently meeting their individual expectations and indirectly attracting new consumers. CRM is also perceived as an IT application, which, through the deployment of appropriate methods, software, and online capabilities, facilitates structured relationship-building with clients.

Source: own study based on: Abdulfattah 2012; Barszczewski and Gmitruk 2010; Blattberg et al. 2004; Buchnowska 2006; Buttle 1999: 327–337; Buttle 2009; Dembińska-Cyran, Hołub-Iwan and Perenc 2004; Deszczyński 2011; Deszczyński and Deszczyński 2004; Dziadkowiec and Dziadkowiec 2004; Fonfara 1999; Frąckiewicz and Rudawska 2004; Kostojohn, Johnson and Paulen 2011; Kotler and Armstrong 2004; Kumar and Rajan 2009; Lisiecka 2006; Mendoza, Marius, Pérez and Grimán 2007: 913–945; Orzelska 2010; Peppers and Rogers 2011; Sedighi, Mokfi and Golrizgashti 2012: 321–347; Skrzypek 2006; Sołtysik-Piorunkiewicz 2013; Swaminathnan 2001; Todman 2011; Tsiptsis and Chorianopoulos 2009; Węgorkiewicz 2002; Wilde 2011; Wojnarowska 2006; Zachara 2001; Zimerman 2010.

builds customer relationships as well as creates, maintains, and manages customer-business relationships. CRM is also considered an element of the management processes that take place within a company.

From an IT perspective, the term CRM is defined as an IT system or infrastructure that actually fulfills its purpose. It is understood as an IT system or app that takes into account customer relations and supports management processes within the company. In its simplest form, CRM is a system that implements customer service processes within a company (Guerola-Navarro et al. 2021b: 2669–2691).

CRM as a marketing concept is referred to as a philosophical customer-centric concept. This concept is implemented in the activities of companies that focus on customers – their interests, needs, and expectations. CRM is primarily aimed at forming long-term relationships with customers as well as building relationships with new customers. In order to properly define CRM, it is necessary to reflect on the English meaning of the phrase "Customer Relationship Management." The definition of CRM includes defining customer value and proper ways of increasing it as well as increasing customer loyalty, so a set of actions that encourage repeated purchases, and organizing work that allows to plan activities so that all requirements are met. In other words, CRM can be defined as a set of activities and management decisions aimed at realizing customer satisfaction as well as achieving specific objectives and financial benefits.

CRM differs significantly from traditional business models, which are based on the idea of winning as many contracts as possible in the shortest possible time and converting them into financial results. Traditional and modern business models also differ in that they do not incorporate the Internet as a tool through which a company's activities are measurable. Modern business models are often referred to as e-business models, and R. Trymer lists e-stores, e-orders, e-commerce centers, virtual shopping organizers, virtual communities, value chain service providers, information platforms, information brokers, and other service brokers. M. Rappa, A. Afuah, and C.L. Tucci also identified nine types of business models in which companies use the Internet: brokerage models, advertising models, information intermediary models, merchant models, direct producer models, partner network models, virtual community models, and subscription models. Nine typologies are presented: cost models. These new models are characterized not only by the availability of the Internet, but also by changes in organizing business as well as in perceiving and the position of customers within the company structure. The CRM concept assumes that the first contact with a customer should initiate a long-term relationship that benefits both parties. The partnership relations between a company's employees and its customers are decisive in terms of increasing the company's efficiency in carrying out its various tasks. The main objective of implementing CRM is selecting a group of customers and ensuring that they require services and products from a single supplier. Therefore, CRM can be perceived as a tool through which companies can attract new customers, maintain good relationships with existing customers, and achieve financial goals (Massa and Tucci 2021; Massa, Tucci and Afuah 2017: 73–104).

CRM is a systematic approach to building customer relationships that enables effective and integrated management of gathering customer information across the enterprise. CRM, as an information system, allows companies to effectively manage the acquired and collected information, which the widespread use of the Internet has contributed significantly to. A properly functioning CRM allows gathering detailed customer information. In order for this knowledge to be properly used, it must be processed in such a way so that it is accessible primarily to the company's employees.

The aim of CRM is to create lasting relationships with customers and to connect customers with the company and its offers. Customers themselves constitute autonomous entities, and businesses should seek to recognize their expectations; it should be emphasized that the basic assumption of CRM is to value customers and build relationships with them. While sales and revenue play a less important role in CRM; whether CRM is carried out correctly can be measured by determining the level of customer satisfaction; a key element of CRM consists in the time horizon; customer relationships should be long-term, and businesses should seek regular transactions. Moreover, one of the key requirements of CRM consists in proper communication at customer and company level. Information acquired from direct contact with customers constitutes the basis for building long-term relationships that ultimately lead to sales transactions. CRM is changing the company's business philosophy (Bietti 2020: 210–219). Selling products and achieving the expected profits is no longer a priority.

Modern economic conditions emphasize that customers are the most important relations and that meeting customer needs is a guarantee of their loyalty to the company.

In the age of competition and customer competitiveness, CRM concepts and information systems aim to collect, organize, and analyze customer information, thus defining high standards of customer service. On the basis of an analysis of information concerning customers, the surroundings, the world, the region, as well as the economic and social situation, it is possible to determine the needs and expectations of customers, as well as the additional strengths of the company, thus ensuring that specific customer groups adhere to the services offered by the company. In the age of globalization, when intense competition is an inherent part of business, companies consciously choose and implement CRM strategies in order to ensure the continuity of orders and production, but also, consequently, sales (Foltean, Trif and Tuleu 2019: 563–575). Putting customers and their needs at the center has become a condition for long-term success: companies that have declared their intention to adopt the CRM concept take into account the competition, current market conditions, and the information collected by the CRM system to build a commercial proposition for their customers. In a changing environment, it is important to observe the market and build company strategies that take into account customer orientation. CRM places an obligation on companies to monitor customer satisfaction and further expectations after purchase. Through these activities, customers are connected to the company and its products.

An important element of the CRM business strategy consists in a customer's involvement in formulating the sales proposal. A correct collaboration between the customer and the company creates a closer relationship that takes into account the customer's needs and expectations, which leads to repeated purchases, strengthens the relationship, and further enables the CRM database to be collected and updated. Correct customer relations form the basis for monitoring customer satisfaction. Warranty and after-sales services (e.g., telephone lines and consultations with representatives) also create the basis for building CRM relationships. Economic and legal aspects determine developing these relationships and allow for a competitive advantage on the markets of the company's operation. Because customer resources seem to be very important for companies today, it is natural to introduce new information technologies. The CRM strategy actively participates in creating the company's business model, with the main objective of satisfying customer needs.

1.2 Customer Service Process vs. Management in MNE Strategy

One of the key factors for a company's market success consists in using marketing tools and recognizing that customers are the main point of reference, and meeting their needs is the primary meaning and purpose of all company activities. This is because customers and related assets, such as satisfaction, loyalty, and relationship value, constitute the most important strategic, market, core, intangible, and off-balance sheet assets for a company, which are not recognized in the financial statements but have a significant impact on a company's overall value. Through the act of making a purchase, customers determine the value of the producer's and seller's actions and constitute a reference point for formulating the marketing strategies of companies.

Changes in the environment and economic transformations faced by companies since the beginning of the 19th century have forced them to change their approach to their business operations and management processes. Clearly, companies that want to exist, survive, and thrive on the market must see themselves as those that win the hearts of their customers with their own actions. That is because it was recognized a long time ago that a company's business profile should focus on its customers rather than its products or services. Kotler and Lane (2011: 57) pointed out that a company's business activity on the market consists in identifying and articulating customer expectations and determining which of these expectations the company can satisfy in the form of properly designed products and services, but also about motivating each employee to play an active role in satisfying customer needs (Nguyen et al. 2020: 395–405). He also believes that it is important to ensure that the company can meet the needs of its customers. He went on to state that only a customer-focused company can succeed.

The term "customer service process" is difficult to define (Andrade, Moazeni, and Ramirez-Marquez 2020: 221–236). This is due to the fact that it covers a very broad spectrum, beginning with the first

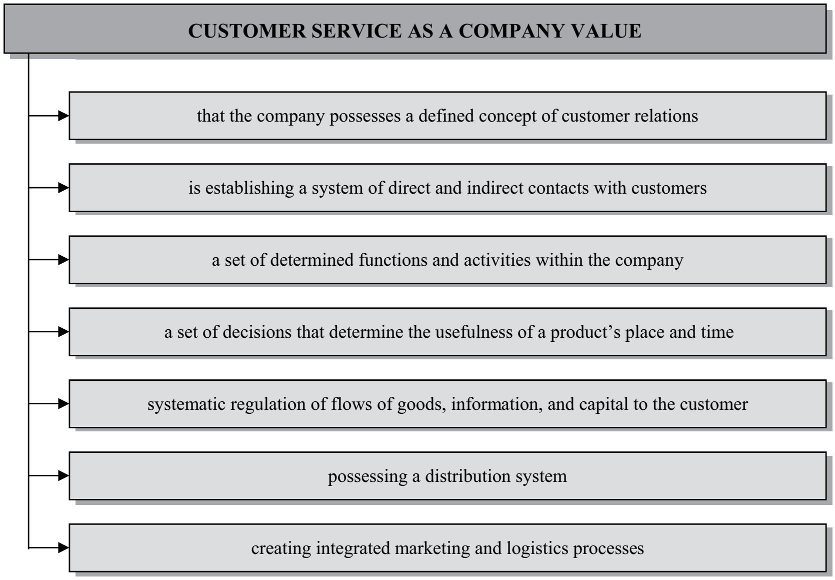

Figure 1.3 Customer service as a company value.

***Source*: own study based on: Eng 2008: 1293–1306; Ralston 2003: 201–213; Salomonson, Åberg and Allwood 2012: 145–155.**

contact between the supplier and the purchaser and including intangible elements. In the literature, it is possible to find various definitions formulated by given authors dealing with this topic.

In a way, customer service also constitutes a company's value (Figure 1.3).

Customer service can be broadly defined as the ability of a marketing company to meet customer needs in terms of time, reliability, communication, and convenience, each of which plays an important role in marketing. The customer service process consists of three stages (Lambert, Stock and Ellarm 2008: 44):

- pre-transaction phase (a written customer service policy; customer familiarized with the company's customer service policy; sensitive organizational structure; flexibility of the delivery system; service management);
- the transaction phase (level of maintained stock; information management; elements of the order cycle; speed of shipping service; special shipping operations; shipping accuracy; convenience of ordering; substitute products);

- post-transaction phase (installation, assembly, warranty service, modifications; adjustments, repairs, spare parts; monitoring of the product during operation; customer complaints, returns; temporary disposal of a replacement product).

Companies that want to stand out from the competitors aim to improve the quality of customer service by offering additional benefits related to the offered products or services, which determines different forms of customer service (Figure 1.4) (Coyle, Bardi and Langley 2009: 82).

It is also worth remembering that a good customer service process should take into account all three groups of elements mentioned here. Leaving out one of the groups can have serious consequences for the company. Firstly, the actions of the other groups of elements can be hampered, resulting, for example, in customers being driven away from the company. However, it is important to understand that improving the quality of customer service processes usually leads to increased costs for the company. That is why efforts to meet the expectations of customers must be compared on the one hand with the incurred costs and on the other with the level of quality of services and products offered by competitors.

Among product or service providers, the customer service process most often occurs at three levels of involvement. The first level consists in customer service as an activity. At this level, customer service is perceived as a top priority issue that the company must address in order to satisfy its customers. The first level of customer service is related to physical distribution at an enterprise level. Examples of activities related to this level include (Isaeva, Gruenewald, and Saunders 2020: 1031–1063):

- the process of receiving and processing orders.
- issuing invoices.
- shipping products.
- accepting product returns.
- customer service activities may also include business planning, costing, stock control, issuing invoices, or preparing required documentation.

Customer service constitutes the implementation of all activities and is a fundamental responsibility of all businesses. However, even when

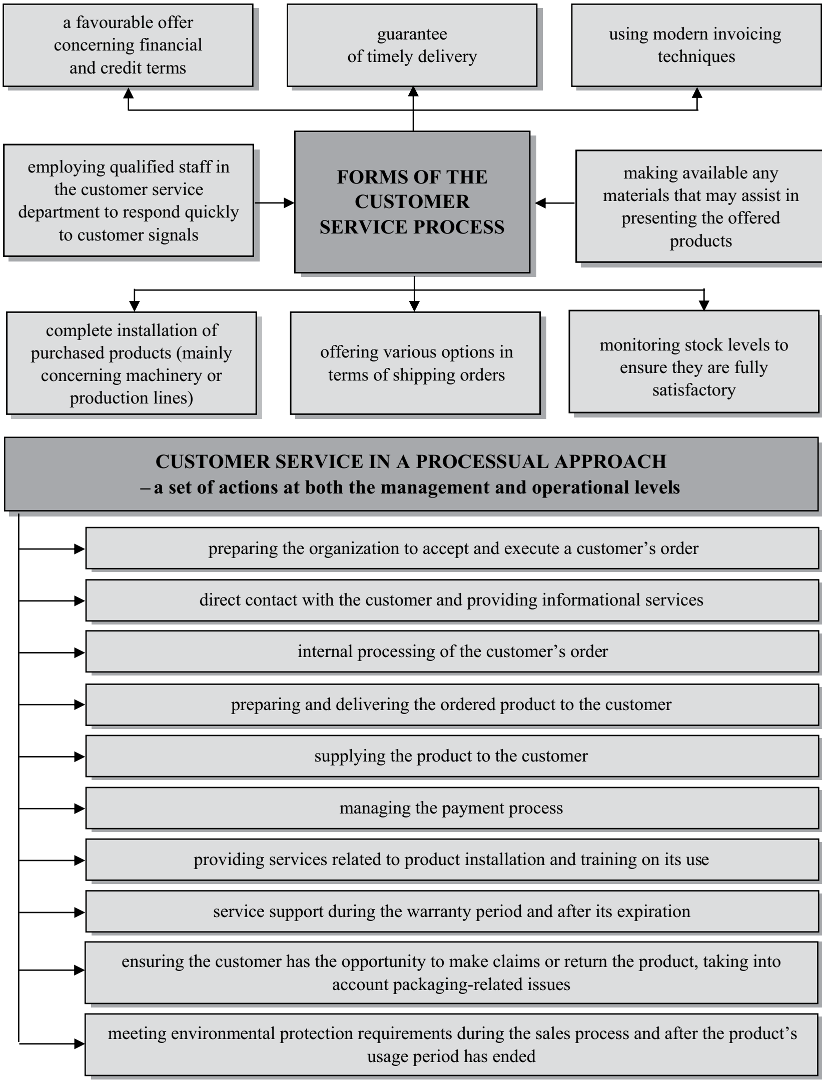

Figure 1.4 Forms of the customer service process.

Source: **own study, based on: Borucka 2016; Coyle, Bardi and Langley 2009: 82; Krawczyk 2001.**

carrying out these tasks is correct and diligent, the expected result is often not achieved, or rather, the result may be far from what is expected. The second level consists in customer service as a performance indicator. At this level, customer service is examined on the basis of certain established metrics, such as the percentage of orders delivered at a predetermined time or the number of orders completed on time. However, it should be stated that in order to achieve complete customer satisfaction, it is not enough to focus solely on metrics. The third level stands for perceiving customer service as a philosophy. At this level, customer service (which is perceived as the company's business philosophy or mission) takes the form of a commitment to ensure that the company completely meets customer requirements through a higher level of service. Customers and their orders are treated in a unique and sophisticated manner.

This final level is a clear expression of the CRM philosophy, the core of which is CRM, meaning an activity embedded in the process of consolidating customer relationships. These are referred to as CRM strategies and include clip, zip, and velcro strategies (Figure 1.5).

A zip strategy is one that coordinates the processes between a company and its customers so that they work together like a zip (Qi et al. 2023: 477–496). Implementing and promoting this strategy requires a detailed analysis of the processes that take place both on the client side and on the company side. The purpose of this analysis is to ensure that relationships and activities are maintained in the correct sequence and to eliminate activities that do not create value for the customer relationship (Lee and Lee 2020: 1–22). This leads to eliminating activities that can be repeated by both parties and will automatically create specific benefits. The assumption of this strategy bases on mutual benefits that are visible to both parties. The success of this strategy results from the fact that customers consciously and voluntarily let go of services provided by other companies and don't use their offers. In this strategy, all resources that are characterized by diversity and difference are exchanged. This mutual cooperation

Figure 1.5 CRM strategies.

***Source*: own study.**

requires interaction between the company and the customer, which constitutes the basis for mutual trust between the customer and the company. Knowledge is also exchanged at all levels. The success of this strategy depends mainly on the level of trust between the two parties. Mutual trust depends on proper adherence to rules that apply in all areas of the company. The level of trust is influenced primarily by a reliable and extensive exchange of information. The principle of openness must also apply not only between the customer and the company but also within the company. Another characteristic feature is that the zip strategy should not be discriminatory and should only be applied to important clients whose relationships are based on given principles. This strategy also requires the involvement of the management and intense work from the early stages of implementation. The success of this strategy also results from the fact that it cannot be implemented spontaneously, because its implementation is time-consuming and involves certain risks, such as procedural omissions. That is why the effectiveness of the process should be measured and monitored. The company should also analyze the current situation in order to seek new solutions and identify proposals for further development.

The safety-net strategy consists in ensuring customers with certain defined criteria in terms of the range of services and features on offer. In this strategy, it is the customer who has to adapt to the way the company operates. This strategy does not require extensive collaboration between the company and the customer or complete process alignment. This is because what is exchanged are actions, and the company's task is to continuously convince the customer about the benefits of the customer-company relationship and to increase customer engagement (Fatma et al. 2022: 858–875). The goal of this strategy is to ensure the profitability of each commercial transaction, and a requirement for the success of this strategy consists in excellent knowledge of the processes involving the customer. That is why a company must be able to talk like the customer and understand the customer's goals. Only on this basis, it will be possible to develop a strategy that is going to largely ensure that processes are tailored to the needs of the customers so that they have a sense of creation and participation. In this strategy, the effectiveness of exchanging knowledge, actions, and emotions between the customer and the company is crucial. In order to maximize efficiency, all unnecessary activities are eliminated. In many cases, the sharing of knowledge is eliminated and the sharing of activities becomes important. Instead of face-to-face contact, this strategy assumes transferring information via the Internet or fax, eliminating personal or telephone contact. This is due to the belief that customers expect companies to provide only a highly efficient service. Therefore, it is favorable for the service provider, that is, the company, to achieve a high level of satisfaction in every single transaction, thus achieving a state known as transactional satisfaction.

One feature of this strategy is that the relationship is not initially very important to the customer, and the relationship with the company does not require the customer to make a conscious decision to buy. And that is why the company's main concern is to attract the attention of its customers while encouraging them to buy its products or services. An important element of this strategy consists in creating a brand, which is then promoted and disseminated to potential customers. This creates a delicate emotional bond based on the customer's satisfaction with the process of attachment, comfort, and exchange. On the other hand, it should be remembered that the bond created by this strategy is characterized by its informal nature, which makes it difficult for companies to determine whether a relationship is coming to an end. The success of this strategy and its profitability depend on customer turnover.

In the velcro strategy, the main factor consists in the customer, who is aligned with the process of creating value (Patrick and Hollenbeck 2021: 360–381). This type of strategy is most commonly used in consulting agencies, and transactional satisfaction is best created with this type of strategy. On the other hand, the client side does not have to spend time and energy balancing the process. Therefore, by adopting this strategy, the client can experience significant benefits with minimal input. In the velcro strategy, the company is responsible for understanding the process of creating value by the client and determining the type of activity, the intensity of communication, and the type of innovation. The customer provides only information, and it is the company that creates an offer in response. This type of strategy is more applicable in a market economy, but does not guarantee that both parties will benefit from the partnership. The relations between both parties are informal, not based on trust, and not supported by loyalty. To some extent, this strategy is the opposite of the safe-pin strategy.

Of all the existing strategies, the zip strategy is the best suited, as it assumes that the customer and the company work together to achieve a common goal. This strategy includes a partnership arrangement in which the client voluntarily and knowingly accepts the services of another company. A significant role is played by mutual trust and the proper exchange of information. This strategy treats customers as partners whose views and opinions are very important.

When companies look for ways to "effectively serve customers," they must realize that the means used to create strong customer relationships are very different from the traditional methods used in marketing (Al-Hawari, Bani-Melhem, and Quratulain 2020: 223–240). Traditional methods alone, such as advertising, brochures, and direct mail, are unlikely to result in the expected increase in customer numbers and thus an expected increase in sales. Today, creativity is required to create positive surprises and possibilities of increasing customer awareness. Companies must adopt an approach that is different from all others, one that customers will notice and, most importantly, remember. Companies must understand that customer service is an element that differentiates their products from those offered by the competition. That is why customer service should be regarded as one of the key elements of competitive advantage on the market.

Customer service policy constitutes a company's set of customer-oriented intentions and objectives and should therefore be created and developed with the active participation of customers. This results from the fact that customers are the only reliable source of information about their expectations of service. Therefore, paying attention to customer needs and preferences is a simple way for companies to optimize service costs and improve quality. On the other hand, the main objective of quality improvement is to increase customer satisfaction, which in turn will increase trust and loyalty. Satisfaction also means meeting customer expectations (Figure 1.6), such as:

- identifying key quality elements,
- controlling customer expectations,
- customer education,
- developing reliable support systems and searching for feedback – most often captured in the so-called quality loop, which constitutes a model of interdependent activities that

> significantly affect the quality of a product or service, from identifying needs to determining whether those needs have been met.

It is important to note that the level of customer satisfaction is itself a function of the difference between perceived attributes and expectations that customers can experience three levels of satisfaction: dissatisfaction, satisfaction, as well as trust and pleasure.

The level and quality of contact between a company and its customers currently complements traditional competitive advantage factors such as the quality and timing of a product or service. Moreover, customers should be perceived as the company's partners. This means

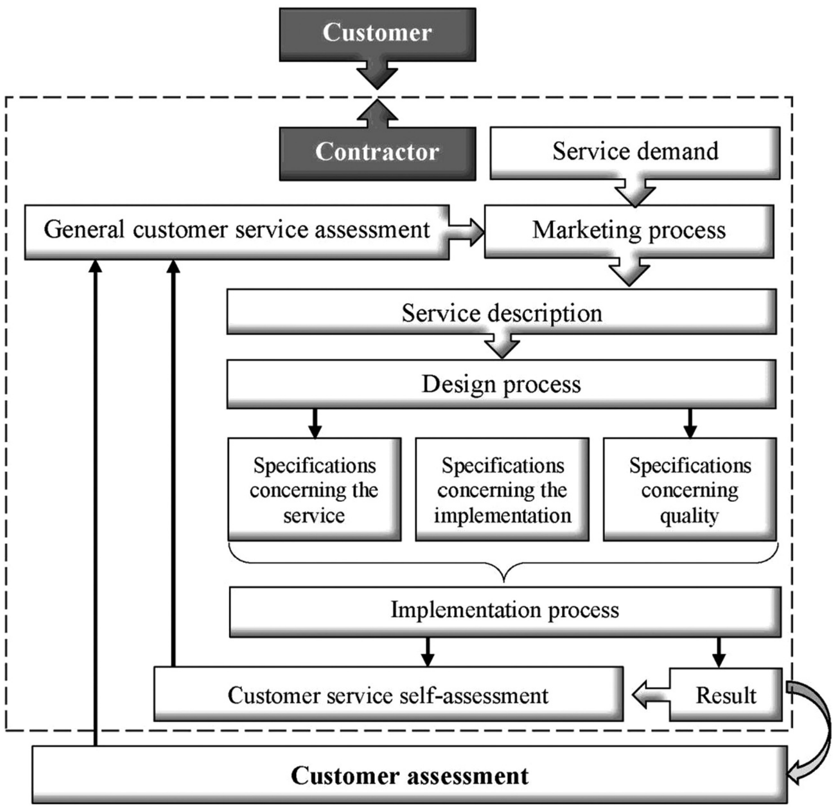

Figure 1.6 Customer service loop.

***Source*: Hosseini-Motlagh, Nouri-Harzvili, Johari and Sarker 2020: 120241; Ponte, Dominguez, Cannella and Framinan 2022: 108379.**

that they have an impact on the products and services offered by the company. Customers who feel that their opinions are relevant will feel connected to the company and are going to have a sense that the products offered by the company are for them. That is why a company should make every effort to ensure that customers become part of the company and have a clear impact on its activities. After all, maintaining contacts is a value in itself, and strategies for increasing market share for specific products and services are complemented by an integrated customer service strategy. Companies that are finding it difficult to attract new customers are looking for ways to modify their chances of winning customer loyalty by quickly adapting to customers' changing needs and building trust in the quality of offered products and services.

If in the past companies focused on maximizing the number of products sold to as many people as possible, the aim now is to maximize customer satisfaction (Haeruddin, Musa, and Kurniawan 2023: 17–24). This is because it costs up to 10 times more to acquire new customers than to retain existing ones. That is why companies that want to stay on the market should focus on retaining customers and aim to increase the number of repeating customers. This is because modern companies understand that modern customers not only purchase their products but also the benefits they derive from them. And gaining the trust of customers helps companies acquire and maintain a competitive advantage. Trust also makes customers believe in their uniqueness, which automatically demonstrates their value to the company. This underlines the idea that companies need to meet the needs of their customers, as customers are not just anonymous financiers but also discerning market participants whose needs are personalized. This idea has led to a new way of orienting companies toward customers, called service customization. This simply means identifying the precise needs of customers and, based on that profile, providing products and services that meet their expectations.

Taking into account the fact that the customer service process is a complex process involving many elements, the proper implementation of which can increase customer satisfaction with the company's services and products, the CRM system should be considered a very effective and supportive tool for this process (Chatterjee, Ghosh, and Chaudhuri 2020: 1261–1281). This is because a company's approach to customers is a kind of evolution of the concept of customer service, which, together with the emergence of related information and communication technologies (discussed later in the paper), contributed to initiating CRM. Today, CRM is not just a tool to help the customer service process run smoothly but has become an integral part of it. And the fact that CRM strategies are formulated in response to customer attitudes, needs, and expectations lies at the heart of the CRM philosophy, the purpose of which, as already mentioned, consists in continuous development of knowledge concerning customer expectations and needs. This, on the one hand, increases the efficiency of customer service processes and, on the other, determines the further development of the CRM system in response to changing customer attitudes and expectations.

1.3 MNE Strategy Concepts vs. Globalization and Regionalization

Today's reality is characterized and defined by high dynamics of change.

Significant changes are taking place in almost all aspects of social life, the national economy, technology, and the environment, which contribute to their further development and transformation. The most noticeable developments take place in the fields of technology, communications, and IT. Developments such as the Internet, mobile telephony, and social media contribute to social integration and the possibility of closer cooperation between businesses. In this context, the phenomenon of a "shrinking world" is often equated with the concept of globalization. Contemporary transformations also influence the processes of regionalization, which serve as a response to global challenges, concurrently emphasizing the importance of collaboration and integration at the regional level.

It is imperative to discern the nuanced differences between the concepts of globalization and regionalization. The term "regionalization" can be analyzed bifocally:

- in an international context – as the process of establishing integrative inter-state relations;
- within a national dimension – as a collection of initiatives undertaken within specific countries or regions. A quintessential example would be the "regional policy of member states and structures of the European Union."

It's salient to emphasize that "globalization" denotes a multifaceted phenomenon which lacks a universally accepted definition. Numerous scholars provide diverse interpretations of this term. Subsequent sections present a curated selection of such interpretations.

Globalization Perspectives: Expert Definitions:

- Within the realm of globalization lies the creation of new markets and products, but also the adoption of novel attitudes, practices, competencies, and business philosophies (Ulrich 2001: 14);
- The globalization process is manifested by the gradual integration of national and regional markets into a unified global market of goods, services, and capital. This necessitates increasing cohesion and the adoption of global operational strategies by organizations (Liberska 2002: 17–18);
- Globalization is perceived as a long-term process of integrating actions within national economies on an international scale, encompassing various sectors of activity. A pivotal aspect is the amplification of connectivity networks, such as trade channels, information flows, and investment streams, aiming to shape a comprehensive global economic structure (Zorska 2005: 17);
- Globalization is an evolution wherein economies and communities of various nations become increasingly merged. The outcomes of this integration are more frequently becoming the subject of profound academic analyses (Nilson 2010: 1191);
- Globalization is a multidimensional process and an advanced structure aiming to establish a coherent global market, both spatially and economically, integrating numerous countries into a unified framework (Walas-Trębacz 2017: 20).

In the scholarly literature, numerous definitions of globalization can be found, taking into account its evolutionary nature in the context of formulating international strategies (Figure 1.7).

Currently, in addition to the above term, it is possible to come across such terms as:

- global economy,
- global bank,
- global finance,

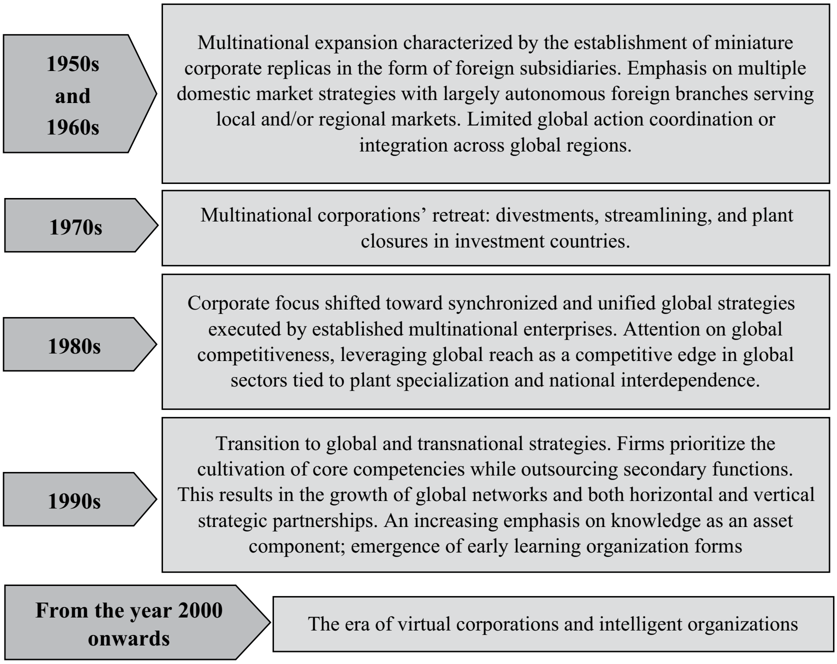

Figure 1.7 List of selected definitions of the term globalization.

Source: own study.

- global state,
- global product,
- global information society,
- global strategy.

In the discussed scholarly literature, numerous definitions of globalization are identified, reflecting its evolutionary nature in the context of formulating international strategies. These definitions frequently explore the factors, manifestations, and consequences of globalization concerning its influence on the evolution of contemporary civilization.

Instead, it was cautious, pragmatic, and critical. The following phase of globalization began in the second half of the 20th century and is known as the "contentious period" because it was a phenomenon full of contradictions and conflicts between the two sides. This phase contributed to distinguishing two social groups: the globalists, who supported globalization, and the anti-globalists, who wanted globalization with a human face (Autio, Mudambi, and Yoo, 2021: 3–16).

Alongside the concept of globalization comes the concept of regionalization. Regionalization constitutes the main direction of economic processes in the modern world. It stands for the increasing significance of internal linkages and relationships between individual national economies. In contrast to globalization, which is seen through the prism of spreading certain behaviors and patterns (meaning an attempt to standardize certain areas of human life), regionalization seeks to preserve individuality and autonomy, which is expressed as a counterbalance to globalization. Both phenomena are presented as competing and complementary processes (Figure 1.8).

Regionalization is also perceived as a tool of globalization and a specific phenomenon of globalization leading to transnational systems

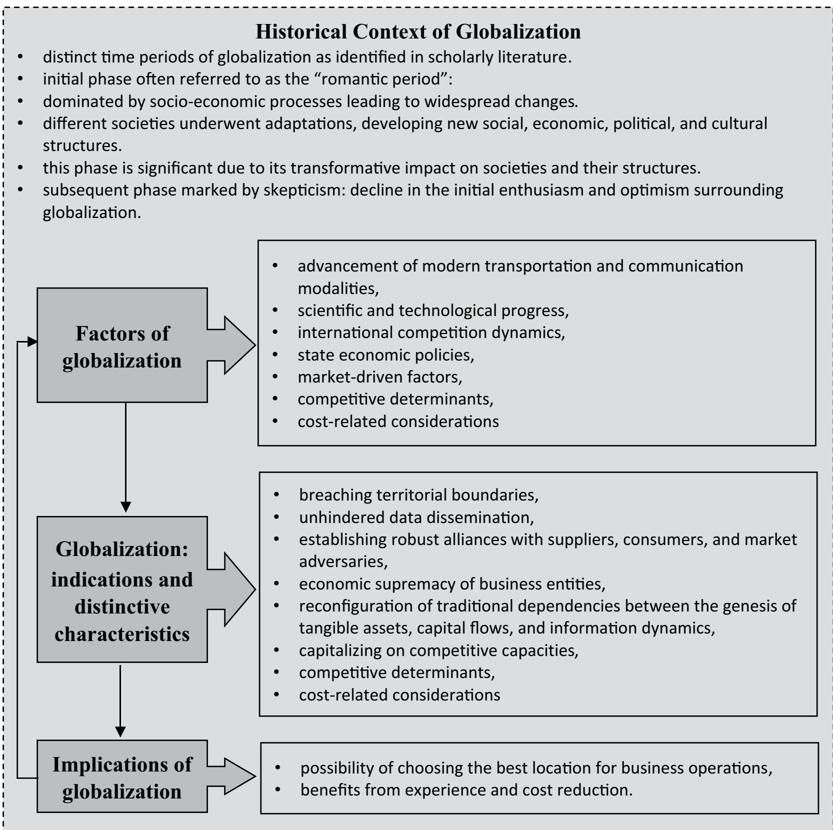

Figure 1.8 Factors, manifestations, and effects of globalization.

Source: own study.

of social integration, universalization, homogenization, and cultural autonomy (Rochman et al. 2020: 4–6).

Regionalization is also seen as a specific form of cooperation that deepens integration between states and creates conditions for the emergence of a common transnational identity. It also means integration, which includes the conditions for fragmentation, which is the driving force behind the emergence of new regional dynamics.

Currently, the process of regionalization is being considered simultaneously from three perspectives (Figure 1.9).

The process of regionalization also helps to promote political and social integration as well as economic normalization. It takes place between individual societies in the post-national context of the globalization process (Flew 2020: 19–39).

In source literature, the term peripherality is very often used together with the concept of regionalization. Regionalism is treated as a term referring to an ideology, project, or concept supported by one or more states, thus functioning as a narrow concept and as a component of regionalization as a broader term that refers to processes and projects put into practice.

Regionalism is perceived as any type of international cooperation that takes the form of an alliance or inclusive relationship between geographically close states. This cooperation, to a large extent, bases on common

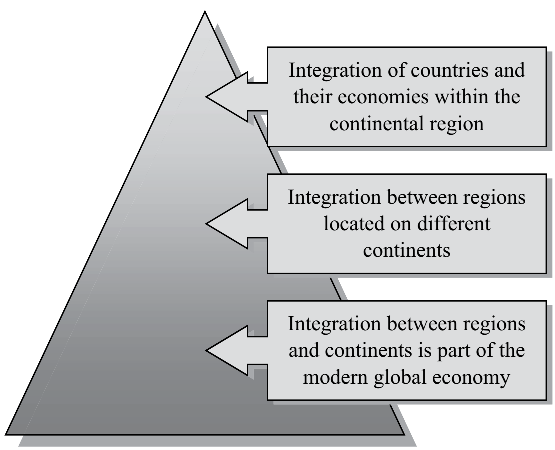

Figure 1.9 Perspectives concerning the process of regionalization.

Source: own study.

interests resulting from proximity, similarity of political regimes, a country's similar level of economic development, or similarity of culture, national traditions, language, religion, and so on, while regionalization is the process of separating individual regions as a system.

From a historical perspective, regionalization constitutes the process by which local racial groups become territorially integrated and together form larger communities, becoming increasingly similar in terms of cultural characteristics. Regionalization refers to practical measures in the dimension of regional policy, including removing barriers in communication between regions, creating regional legal norms and standards, concluding agreements to ensure peace and security, and peacefully resolving conflicts. The concept of regionalization is defined in source literature as a process of integrating states and economies located in a specific region, resulting in a highly interdependent system.

The emergence of these two phenomena – globalization and regionalization – has prompted modern MNEs to take both aspects into account when formulating their strategies. Indeed, when formulating their strategies, companies must take into account the reality in which they operate. Changes in corporate strategy are the result of, among other things, structural changes in markets, the disappearance of existing sectors, the emergence of completely new technologies, industries, and the needs reported by consumers on a global scale. A challenge for MNEs also consists in the need to develop resources and improve skills in an international environment, and when changes in the environment are very radical, companies are faced with the need to formulate new strategic concepts of action. Because as it turns out, in order to ensure a company's stable development in the long term, managers are obliged to radically change their point of view on operating strategy, contemporary technologies, and markets.

Globalization and regionalization are very complex and far-reaching phenomena (Vellinga 2019: 3–16). They occur in both the economic and social spheres. In contrast to regionalization, globalization is perceived as the most fundamental process of change taking place in the world today (Beck and Stanek 2019: 317–330). Both developments have led to radical changes.

A radical change means changing the surrounding in which businesses operate. As a result, competition on global and local markets becomes more intense, technological advances are relentless, and today's customers demand high-quality products and services (Izotov et al. 2021: 7–24).

Moreover, the phenomena of globalization and regionalization are causing MNEs to allow the possibility for multiple actions when formulating their strategies (Figure 1.10).

On the one hand, regionalization manifests itself in the fact that in production units and service centers, the working rules of these markets apply, such as working hours, foodstuffs, supplements, etc. (Vellinga 2019: 3–16). On the other hand, the downside is that wages depend on local market conditions, and workers may feel unfair when they find out that workers in other countries are paid much more for performing the same work (Bhaumik et al. 2019: 234–243).

In the context of analyzing the international strategies of enterprises with respect to globalization and regionalization, it is imperative to comprehend that while these strategies are rooted in microeconomic frameworks, they must also incorporate macroeconomic considerations. When designing such a strategy, it's pivotal to account for the macroeconomic influences on enterprise operations, as well as the enterprise's interactions within global and regional dynamics. It's essential to recognize that both globalization and regionalization are evolutionary and fluid phenomena. Thus, international strategies must

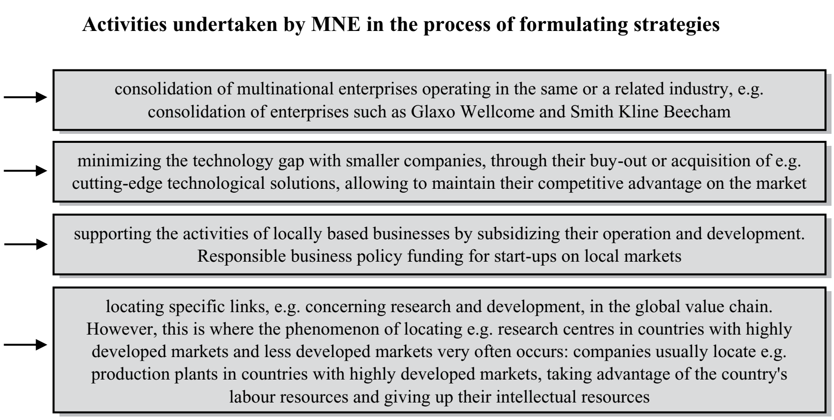

Figure 1.10 Activities undertaken by MNE in the process of formulating strategies.

***Source*: own study.**

be sufficiently adaptive to accommodate current and future shifts in these domains on both micro and macroeconomic levels.

At the macroeconomic scale, globalization manifests through changes such as modifications in countries' economic policies, often encompassing elements of deregulation and trade liberalization, as well as economic consolidation in the form of blocs. Such economic blocs can be an expression of regionalization, as they often lead to the integration of nations. These shifts create a completely novel operational environment for enterprises.

It's worth noting that such macroeconomic shifts can often be unpredictable and do not necessarily proceed linearly. Geopolitical changes, which may influence economies even if not directly associated with them, become significant in the light of intricate international linkages (Figure 1.11).

In summary, both globalization and regionalization have resulted in that the strategic management of MNEs in the 21st century is characterized by a multiplicity and diversity of concepts with accompanying methods, techniques, and tools. New strategic approaches are the result of managing a company under conditions of globalization and

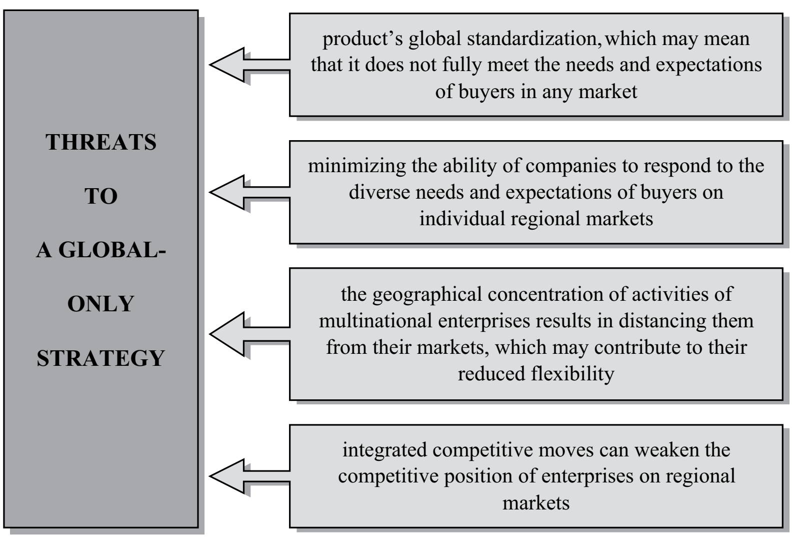

Figure 1.11 Threats to a global-only strategy.

***Source*: own study, based on: Alkhafaji and Nelson 2013; Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson 2019; Rugman and Verbeke 2004: 3–18.**

regionalization (Chen and Lombaerde 2019: 729–750). In fact, these two phenomena, which have a significant impact on the functioning of businesses (both locally and globally), should not be prevented from the possibility of developing simply because they are ignored in formulating new strategies.

Part 2
The Essence of the CRM Concept in Companies

2.1 Transformation of the CRM Idea over the Years

The starting point for considerations concerning the evolution of the CRM concept (an acronym for Customer Relationship Management) consists in realizing that customers constitute the fundamental criterion of business, and their presence not only guarantees the survival of a company but also stands for its further development (Brzeziński and Pietrasieński 2006: 27–36). According to source literature, this results in the initial attempts at product segmentation, taking into account customer needs and expectations, which date back to the 1950s. Entrepreneurs differentiate their final products in terms of price and quality, but "mass marketing" is still dominating (Kumar, Paul, and Unnithan 2020: 384–398). Introducing products to the market allows market segmentation in terms of differentiating the potential as well as clarifying the quality and price requirements. In the United States, this is the so-called economic intensification period, which is also reflected in global economic trends – that is, companies start to analyze their markets to find ways to increase customer loyalty (Khan et al. 2022: 1–26).

The origins of the CRM concept can be traced back to the early 1950s. This is because, at that time, the laws of the market were focused on production, which meant that sales were targeted even before finishing the production process, and companies tried to produce as many products as possible to meet customer expectations. Therefore, a guarantee for success was to produce as many finished products as possible in the shortest possible time. It all began to change in the mid-1950s when the economic situation of the market triggered a process of identifying customer expectations and needs. In the United States, it was initially perceived that the brand and the quality of the product were so important to customers that steps

DOI: 10.1201/9781032713915-3

should be taken to develop marketing. Therefore, the initial strategy used by entrepreneurs was profiling branded products based on their image (Setiawati et al. 2019: 2004–2007).

It should be noted that shortly thereafter, in the 1960s, there was also a high and sustained economic growth. This coincided with McCarthy's development of the "4P" concept (Figure 2.1), which constitutes a set of activities aimed at having an impact on the market and predicting the relationship between product, price, place, and promotion (Lahtinen, Dietrich, and Rundle-Thiele 2020: 357–375).

Meanwhile, face-to-face contact with customers became increasingly important in the United States. This phenomenon began with sending information to customers via mailing, followed by *door-to-door* visits. However, observing the market situation shows that not all reflectors have the same needs, so contacting each customer individually is no longer possible. Therefore, it should be emphasized that, as the economic reality changed, the "4P" concept expanded to include segments such as people, process, physical elements, and pleasure.

Observing market conditions shows that not all customers have the same needs and that there is a need to differentiate products and services aimed at specific customer groups. However, it should be emphasized that the sales situation is always more or less diverse. Some customers stay, others leave. In order to meet the changing demand, products need to adapt to the current reality. Entrepreneurs who want to introduce new products or maintain satisfactory sales levels need to diversify production and ensure that products are adapted to current demand. Therefore, entrepreneurs have been obliged to interpret consumer behavior and actively participate in the market, which

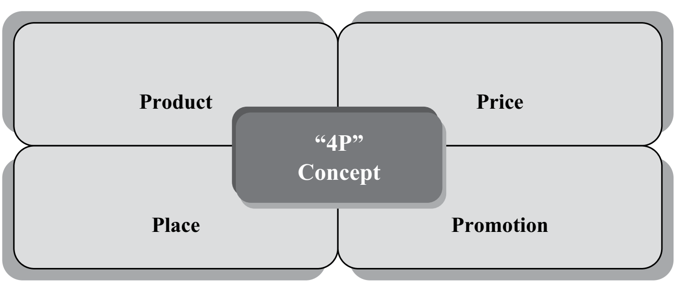

Figure 2.1 Segmentation of the "4P" concept.

***Source*: own study, based on: Lahtinen, Dietrich and Rundle-Thiele 2020: 357–375.**

contributed to formulating the so-called first-buyer theory, which is realized by managers seeking answers to two basic questions:

1. Who determines the market?
2. What do customers expect from businesses?

The following stage in the evolution of the CRM concept took place in the 1970s. As a result of the energy crisis at the time, many companies expanded into new markets to focus on their core business and become industry leaders rather than diversifying their offers. These companies were planning to expand into multiple markets and were transforming themselves into multinational enterprises. That is also when the phenomenon of positioning products and services for sale emerged, with companies using so-called targeted marketing for the first time. All these activities intended, of course, to win over customers and their loyalty (Migdadi 2021: 111–124).

Entrepreneurs sought to actively explore new markets and capture as many of them as possible in order to secure funding and grow their business. A process of internally differentiating individual markets becomes apparent in the actions taken by entrepreneurs. It consists in a segmentation analysis, which constitutes not only a fundamental factor in the market orientation of multinationals but also allows identifying individual customer groups according to accepted criteria. As a result of the undertaken measures, profits were increasing. The final products also began to meet customer needs and expectations. In the case of multinational companies, the results of such an analysis can identify so-called transnational segments, including international customer groups, allowing a company to develop products that meet the expectations and needs of buyers to the greatest extent possible. Product segmentation is according to the principle that individual customer expectations should be taken into account. At that time, an increase in the segmentation of the sales market could also be seen. In order for companies to secure their rightful position on the market, managers regularly changed products and services or introduced new products and services, as well as sought solutions to increase work efficiency and reduce costs. This resulted in restructuring processes in many companies (Dźwigoł et al. 2019: 46–70). Companies are restructured based on changes in behavior and attitudes toward customers, which represents an unmet need for direct contact with entrepreneurs, who had previously only focused on changing the company's internal processes. Therefore, customers obtained information themselves and at the same time tried to make it as valuable and complete as possible. The result of these actions consisted in an increase in customer demands and expectations of businesses in terms of service quality and access to information. This situation has been reflected in a new market dimension in which (Ali et al. 2021: 65–77):

- it is the customer, not the product or service, that is the main source of profit;
- entrepreneurs begin to introduce focus on the customer;
- entrepreneurs determine the terms of cooperation;
- distancing the customers if their expectations and needs cannot be met;
- the need for technologies focused on meeting the needs of customers in a competitive business environment was recognized;
- dedicating time and great effort to proper preparation after conducting actions aimed at achieving a market advantage.

In other words, customer orientation means a return to the days when craftsmen placed an order for a specific customer, knowing in detail what that customer expected from the ordered product.

The 1980s brought further reforms and transformations of the CRM idea. At that time companies began to conduct in-depth research into customer expectations and needs, categorize the types of needs, and then develop systems to ensure that the products purchased and services provided meet the needs of customers. They began to intensify efforts aimed at increasing customer satisfaction with the provided services, but the same situation repeated.

Looking back, it can be said that since the 1980s companies continued to focus on meeting customer expectations and needs; this is not only because such an orientation helps to strengthen competitive advantage but also because of the belief that the cost of acquiring a new customer can be up to five times higher than the cost of retaining an existing customer.

Despite the fact that from a philosophical point of view, the concept of CRM gained popularity in the 1980s, it is possible to highlight the evolutionary path that CRM underwent from an IT and technological point of view. The first IT system was the Contact Management (CM) app, which acted as a calendar and database and was made available exclusively for the sales employees of a company, who were required to collect customer information (Jones and Farquhar 2003: 71–78). This solution allows for the processing and analysis of customer contact and follow-up data as well as simplifies contact and information management processes. CM is then enhanced by a synchronization module, which is used to integrate all data to improve the quality of the performed work (Table 2.1).

CM software provided the opportunity to create the first very simple marketing campaigns and eventually became a tool for organizing the work of sales departments, significantly contributing to its widespread adoption.

An extremely dynamic acceleration of the software and the World Wide Web information systems took place in the 1990s. Marketing strategies that emphasized a two-way relationship between entrepreneurs and customers also emerged. Therefore, contact with customers was becoming increasingly personalized, and feedback became more and more important (Mruk and Stępień 2007: 477).

The following stage in the transfiguration of the CRM concept consisted in the emergence of "***contact centers***", whose main task was business communication, implemented in the *cloud computing* (CC)

Table 2.1 CM Functionality in Relation to the Company and the Customer

ENTITY	CM FUNCTIONS
COMPANY	– overview of information concerning staff, sales, marketing activities, anticipated purchases, etc.; – creative adaptation of the company's existing business forms; – creating own business forms; – using forms to organize projects; – monitoring the return on investment; – undertaking marketing activities; – access to business contacts; – sharing contacts and business information with co-workers; – monitoring the efficiency of undertaken actions (diagrams, charts).
CUSTOMER	– collecting and processing customer contact information; – classifying non-standard potential customer groups by defining dedicated criteria relating to them.

Source: own study, based on: (Jones and Farquhar 2003: 71–78).

model (Foss, Stone, and Ekinci 2008: 68–78). CC was first introduced in financial and public sector organizations. However, it quickly turned out that this solution did not fully meet business expectations. The amount of information that had to be collected and updated on a daily basis was so great that the implementation exceeded the creators' expectations. The existing databases had to be processed and updated. The solution for managing contacts met the need to control the work of only frontline staff, focusing on sharing customer information and contact reporting, providing managers with unlimited access to customer information, meeting results, and current offers. However, at the same time the information received by the employees was unsatisfactory in terms of providing a complete image of current business conditions. In this reality, the evolution of administrative support tools led to developing the *call center*, where customer queries were handled over the phone line, with the solution's format gradually becoming more sophisticated. They began to accept not only orders but also complaints and feedback concerning products and services.

In time, call centers evolved and instead of people answering questions, automated machines were introduced to perform the same function. At this stage of CRM development, the question arose as to whether the presence of staff was necessary in the future. Opinions on the subject were divided between those in favor of the answering machine form (cost savings and the possibility of handling customers quickly and efficiently) and those who argued that it did not fulfill all problem-solving possibilities, especially in terms of product and service quality. Both forms of the call center function also today, but the option of taking advantage of an answering machine is only effective for simple solutions. In case of complex issues, there is a need to take advantage of services provided by a consultant.

Understanding that CM and call center solutions were insufficient, it was decided to introduce a new tool supporting the customer service processes: sales force automation (SFA). Its main function is to integrate customer service functions and sales-related modules to streamline sales management activities in a single app. SFA is a system that takes into account the interdependencies between sales and purchasing, but mainly to improve service processes. The system is also designed to streamline service processes.

SFA can result in such benefits as:

- more efficient customer service;
- fewer complaints;
- better management of the tasks of sales representatives;
- better company positioning in relation to the competitors.

SFA systems primarily help to plan and coordinate sales-related processes and to record customer history and preferences. They also allow "targeting"[1] the sales staff and effectively plan sales activities from an organizational perspective. The possibility to categorize customers and determine the volume of potential sales should be regarded as something completely new in this app. Additionally, the app allows prioritizing activities to increase product sales. Managers can schedule sales through SFA and automatically receive reports concerning sales performance. SFA also provides reporting functions. A major advantage of the program is that it can be specialized for specific industries. For example, SFA provides transport companies with geographic maps for route planning and commercial companies with phone call apps.

At the same time, the customer service support (CSS) program was also developed with the main aim of improving customer service by supporting and handling complaints received by companies. However, CSS was mainly used to carry out a quick service for dissatisfied clients, namely – with CSS, consultants can collect information concerning complaints and their handling, as well as compensation for dissatisfied clients. The system also allows managers to see the stage of handling complaints. CSS has also been used as a support service for customers buying radios, TVs, and household appliances. For some time, CSS was well received by management – its introduction allowed operators to minimize the number of dissatisfied customers, but the lack of administrative functions in a way forced the tool's further development.

Subsequently, SFA and CSS have merged to form CRM in IT terms. This customer management system design gave rise to today's IT CRM systems (Ling and Yen 2001: 82–97). Focus on the customer, understanding customer needs, increasing loyalty, increasing profits, improving communication between customers and businesses, or identifying key customers are some of the benefits that a business can gain from implementing CRM. The essence of CRM consists in the exchange of information and documentation between customers and companies – that is, creating (workflow) between customers and companies. This resulted in an integrated CRM system.

As a result of changes in the commercial realities of the market, transformations were also taking place in the area of CRM information systems. Entrepreneurs were obliged to choose the manner of handling and acquiring customers in a realistic and proactive way. In order to meet these needs of entrepreneurs, modules such as marketing management and campaign management have been added to the integrated CRM system. Furthermore, CRM has been enhanced with tools such as customer lead management, key account management, and knowledge management.

Therefore, CRM activities can be seen as a response primarily to the decline in business efficiency and the slowdown in economic growth.

Currently, it is now up to the entrepreneur to decide on using a specific app to enrich the company's CRM system. Most systems in this category are built in a specific order, with the aim of carefully examining the expectations and needs of businesses and customers and designing a CRM system that directly meets their needs.

According to F. Newell, a pioneer in the field of CRM and initiator of individual monitoring of these relationships, the activities of CRM implementation harmonize and improve the operation of the entire company. According to the thesis formulated by F. Newell, all tasks and activities of the company with regard to CRM are focused on the customer. Therefore, from the moment of implementation, customers and clients become the company's biggest asset. However, companies that have implemented CRM are obliged to change their philosophy and CRM. Figure 2.2 lists the changes in the various departments of a company brought about by introducing the assumptions of CRM, according to F. Newell (2010).

In summary, CRM can be considered an element supporting the management process in a company. By building long-term relationships with customers, business owners try to secure the future of their company, and CRM is a prudent and cautious investment. It is expected that in the upcoming years, the evolution of CRM is going to bring many new theories concerning customer relations and sales. All industries are becoming increasingly competitive, and meeting customer expectations requires flexibility to create a competitive

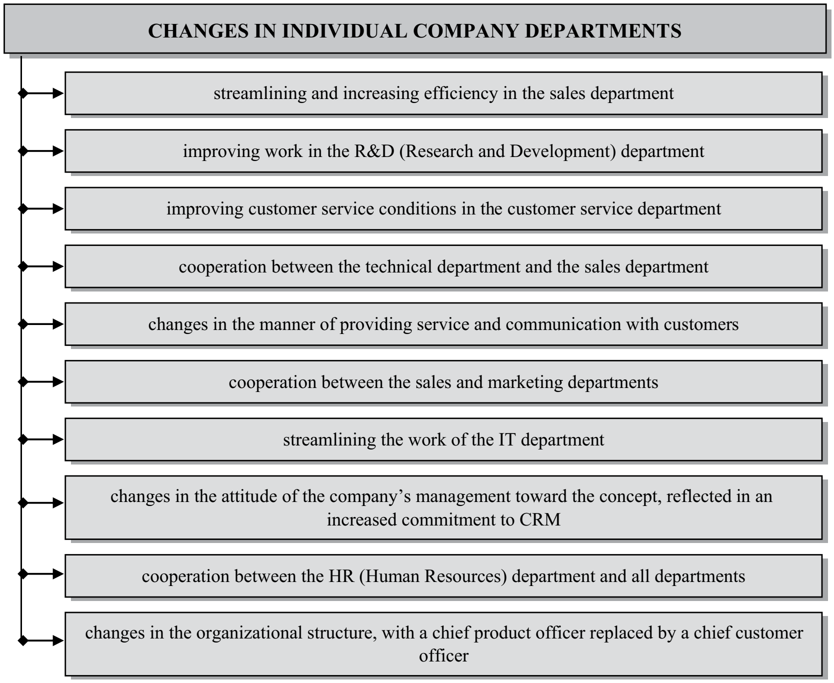

Figure 2.2 Changes in individual company departments according to F. Newell.

***Source*: own study, based on: Newell 2010.**

advantage. Thus, gaining a stable position in the market can be achieved precisely through rational customer relations.

2.2 The CRM Concept in the Marketing Dimension

Due to the wide range of possibilities, marketing constitutes an integral part of the activities of any company operating on the market. Moreover, marketing is a tool used not only by specialists but also by other company employees whose activities are aimed at achieving product sales targets and defining a company's overall strategy. In simplest terms, marketing is an activity in which companies aim to create a certain value and return it to customers. Due to this, marketing plays a very important role in achieving a company's strategic objectives. All customers are guided by one or more determinants when making a decision to purchase a product or service. Whereas the task of marketing is to persuade customers to make a decision to purchase a particular product or service. The related activities require, among others (Sin, Tse, and Yim 2005: 1264–1290):

- possessing in-depth knowledge of consumer behavior;
- cooperation between managers and management;
- cooperation between managers and clients;
- the ability to adapt to the needs of customers in order to deliver the desired product or products.

Over time, marketing activities changed and consequently became more sophisticated, but the basis for developing activities in this area is the "4P" (product, price, position, and promotion) concept, which, as discussed earlier, defines a set of activities that directly affect the market.

Similarly, as in the case of marketing activities, the definition of marketing is also changing over the years, as summarized in Table 2.2.

According to source literature, three levels of CRM strategy can be distinguished in the marketing dimension, as shown in Figure 2.3.

Taking into consideration the above definitions and the classification of functional strategies, marketing may be perceived as a kind of creative philosophy of an enterprise.

A source of literature research indicates that there are a number of theories describing strategy in terms of marketing and the functioning of multinational companies. These include Schumpeter's innovation theory, behavioral theory, Caussé theory, and ecological transaction cost theory, as well as management theory (Maris and Baumol).

Schumpeter's concept of innovation is based on the supply theory and assumes that companies develop and implement innovative products and services (Louçã 2014: 1442–1449). The authors of this theory assume that thanks to innovation, entrepreneurs achieve market dominance and, thus, higher economic satisfaction.

The development of employees and investing in internal laboratories and research centers play an important role in this theory. Investing in state-of-the-art research facilities to develop the company creates opportunities to create products that meet customer needs, but also establishes a dialogue between customers and entrepreneurs and allows designing ordered end products.

Table 2.2 List of the Most Popular Definitions of Marketing in the Literature

AUTHOR	DEFINITION	CONCLUSIONS/REMARKS
P. Kotler	Marketing is a process of meeting the needs of target markets (i.e., customers), which bases on marketing research methodology and recognizes the need for focusing on the consumer as the basis for improving business performance. Marketing stands for science, art, research, creating, and delivering profitable products of value to customers. It is a social process in which individuals and groups obtain what they need by creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services of value with others (Kotler and Keller 2012: 5).	Marketing provides the means to achieve one of the company's key objectives – attracting new customers.
American Marketing Association	Marketing constitutes the management process of identifying and meeting customer needs as well as generating profits from its activities.	Later, there was an expansion of the definition with a statement that the objective of marketing is to achieve a lasting competitive advantage (Wensley 2004: 87).
P. F. Drucker	Marketing has an impact on the activities of the entire enterprise and by permeating all its functions, it facilitates the implementation of its main objective – creating customers – and defines its entire character.	

Source: own study.

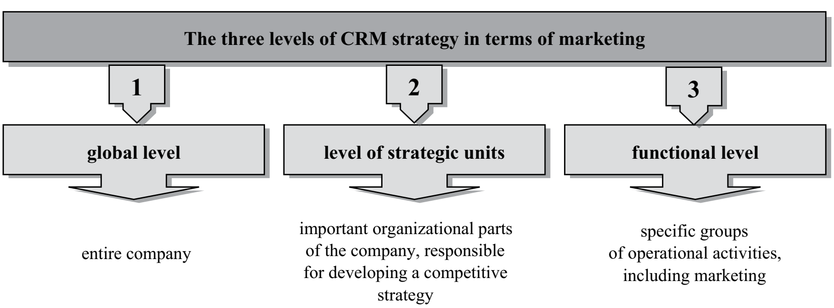

Figure 2.3 The three levels of CRM strategy in terms of marketing.

***Source*: own work.**

According to the CRM philosophy, customers constitute the most important element of a company because of their loyalty and commitment, as it is this commitment that maintains a company's financial liquidity (Idzikowski et al. 2019: 1004–1011). In turn, according to innovation theory, entrepreneurs must meet the needs of customers and guarantee the quality of the products they expect. The manager is the person responsible for a company and the one who creates its mission and vision. The manager is the driving force behind creating innovations that, in the long term, should build a competitive advantage. Therefore, one of the similarities between the CRM concept and innovation theory is investing in human resources, which can be directed toward developing new effective products for key and potential customers, resulting in that innovation theory and CRM philosophy are compatible. In this way, the management process constitutes an engine of innovation (new combinations of inputs introduced into the economic system that shake up the stagnant equilibrium and serve as a driving force for development). Schumpeter's innovative theory and his classification of innovations (as new combinations of means of production whose introduction into the economic system destabilizes the stagnant equilibrium and becomes the driving force for development) distinguishing them from inventions and imitation innovations (so-called Schumpeter's triad) was quickly widely accepted.

The successors of J.A. Schumpeter of the so-called Neo-Austrian School, adapted the innovation theory to changing economic conditions, with a strong emphasis on the concept of entrepreneurship and attention of companies was pointed toward emerging opportunities (Rydvalova and Skala 2021: 47–57). In this case, innovation is understood as the introduction of innovative products and activities into the practice of enterprises and their impact on the economy. Taking advantage of the innovation theory, CRM tools allow companies to gather information about the markets on which they operate. The gained information allows companies to finally design products that meet customer expectations. Therefore, the principles of CRM and innovation theory are closely linked in terms of meeting customer expectations with innovative products.

From the perspective of behavioral theory, the CRM concept assumes that CRM tools and strategies combined with employee engagement create a bond that should help to maximize company profits. This concept's solution in a company should support the process of developing employee competences and strengthening the intellectual capital of employees, which will lead to increased profits. The CRM concept, which is based on behavioral theory, minimizes business risk. It also minimizes risks related to market expansion thanks to management flexibility and information from strategic customers. It allows for constructing a balanced offer that responds to consumer demand, taking into account aspects such as attention to strategic customer satisfaction, proper after-sales service, effective awareness of customer expectations and consistent adherence to company policy, considering behavioral theory and customer trust, as well as building the correct relationship with customers. Based on the above assumptions of behavioral theory, a company should be able to achieve a stable market position.

The managerial theory of R. Marris is related to the growth rate maximization model, in which managers ambitiously strive for the company's long-term growth (Kumar 2021: 43–46). This theory assumes that managers satisfy their own ambitions, which has a positive impact on the company's competitiveness and contributes to their personal success (Weinsten 2012: 90–101). The company's long-term growth maximizes its profitability. A condition for a company's growth consists in a sustainable balance of supply and demand. A company's growth rate is determined by specific factors (Figure 2.4).

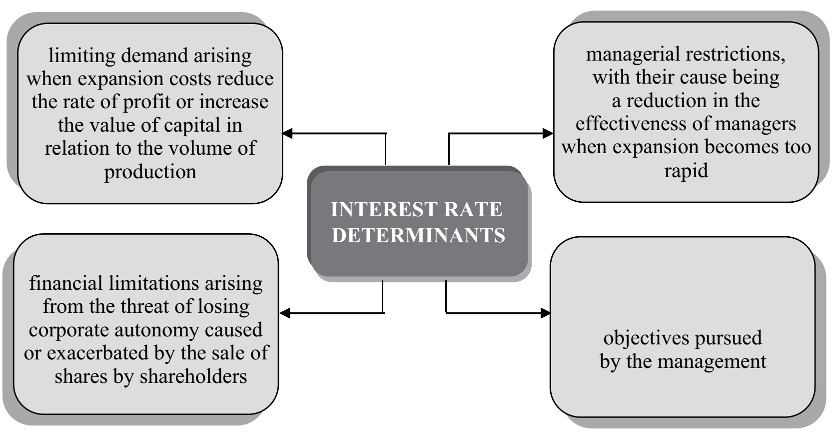

Figure 2.4 Interest rate determinants (R. Marris theory).

***Source*: own study, based on: Weinstein 2012: 89–95.**

According to Marris' theory, management pursues a very cautious policy based on diversifying end products and avoiding high-risk projects. According to this theory, the company's growth rate should increase while maintaining safe and profitable production capacity. Companies implementing policies based on Marris' theory are suitable for taking advantage of the CRM concept, the structure of which is geared to the company's intensive development over time. Combining CRM concepts and management theory makes it possible to increase a company's profitability through an activated policy of continuous differentiation, while modern information technologies determine the efficient use of human resources (Helmreich and Foushee 2019: 3–52). Moreover, attention to building relationships with customers, combined with management theory, creates a stable company structure. According to this theory, product differentiation allows for the production of finished products that meet customer expectations. Good cooperation between customers and entrepreneurs as well as care for meeting consumer expectations are also key ideas of the CRM philosophy.

Meanwhile, R.H. Sheart and J.G. March have developed one of the behavioral enterprise theories, which points to a complex process of resource allocation within the company (Tsai, Hung and Yang 2020: 350–361). The behavioral theory does not recognize a normative company vision but focuses on the current state of that business unit and assumes that it consists of employees pursuing similar views and goals. An example may be a company in which management and employees strive to improve working conditions and earn more, shareholders research the market, contractors demand specialized products at the lowest price, and customers expect regular and timely deliveries. This theory focuses mainly on factors determining the processes that shape the objectives, as shown in Figure 2.5.

Whereas T. Baumol's theory assumes that by the company's continuous development and maximizing revenue, the manager will achieve profits directly proportional to himself or herself while establishing market dominance. T. Baumol distinguishes between two types of money, transactional money and savings money, emphasizing that the main objective of economic activity is to make as many sales as possible. Savings money, on the other hand, must be invested in developing the company and promoting its products, and only the financial

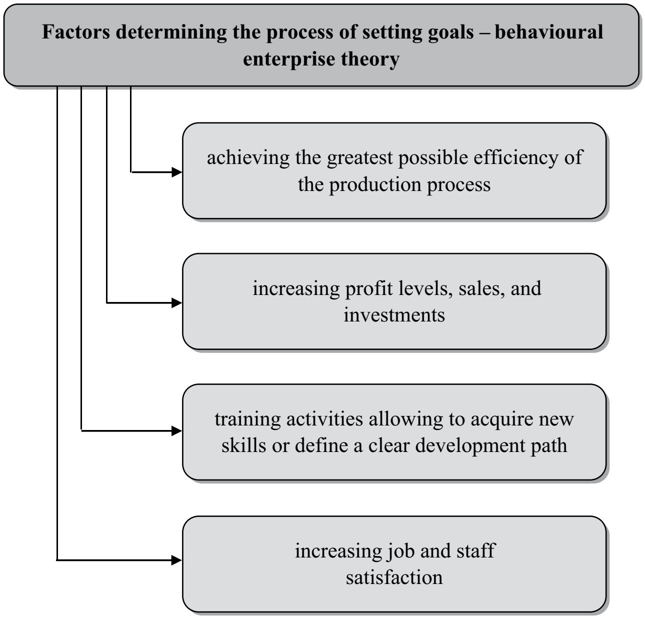

Figure 2.5 Factors determining the process of setting goals according to behavioral enterprise theory.

***Source*: own work.**

surplus achieved can be distributed to management (Principale 2023: 1–17). Cash turnover plays an important role in this theory. The managerial staff manages cash according to the size of the company's revenue.

Coase's transaction cost theory presents the proper allocation of a company's resources, taking into consideration conditions such as low transaction costs, the fact that revenue transfers do not affect income, and the performance and management of contracts by external authorities.

R. Kors believes that the allocation should be in accordance with the logic of the costs incurred by the company. Due to this, the analysis imposes restrictions on the company's development (horizontal and vertical integration) and on whether the performance of different functions is more efficient within or outside the company (Fehrer and Wieland 2021: 609–620).

In the case of this theory, the function of CRM is mainly to keep as many activities and tasks as possible within the company. Properly motivated employees will perform their tasks well. Reducing the cost of outsourcing activities creates an opportunity to hire additional staff that can be relied upon to perform tasks. That is why companies implementing CRM plan the work of their employees so that as many activities as possible are carried out by the organizational unit. Such a model allows reducing costs and increasing the team's efficiency. Thanks to the CRM IT system, the work of the various departments is better organized, resulting in time savings and, consequently, financial savings.

On the other hand, the basic premise of the company ecological theory consists in continuous development and improvement of an organizational unit, taking into account all aspects of ecology. The ecological theory must be considered from two perspectives: the perspective of ecology itself and the perspective of the company's ecological image. On the other hand, the environmental perspective can be defined as a set of environmental activities perceived by the company's main customers. For example, a company may decide to stop using printed newsletters and replace them with electronic ones: a CRM IT system makes it possible to design brochures and distribute them to all customers or to organize so-called green events. These are events aimed at a wider audience that highlight the environmental aspects of the applied philosophy through product promotion, sports events, concerts, etc. The idea behind these events is to build an ecological image of the company or brand, thereby gaining the trust of customers and enabling them to build non-business relationships, which constitutes the basic premise of the CRM concept (Dewnarain, Ramkissoon and Mavondo 2019: 172–188).

A company's ecological image and so-called green approach in recent years have become significantly stronger in terms of popularity and profitability. Companies today are increasingly focusing on ecological theory and using geographical location as well as other green aspects to shape a competitive advantage. This interest in environmental aspects is mainly related to changes in legislation and changes in the perspective of corporate clients, which may lead to changes in the top management's approach to environmental issues. Companies invest in new technologies and employee training, prioritizing environmental aspects, and the CRM concept allows for the processes of developing overt innovation, learning, and creating knowledge within the company. It also improves the conditions for adapting the resulting innovations. Many companies taking advantage of the ecological theory possess relevant programs to prove their effectiveness, such as Green Belt or corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Zaman et al. 2022: 690–752). The results of using the ecological theory in a company will emerge, above all, when the implementation process is long-lasting and in accordance with the company's policies and beliefs. Paying attention to environmental aspects in a company should be continuously applied by employees, from managers to ordinary workers. This aspect is also in line with the CRM principle, which emphasizes that effective management can only be achieved by leaders, managers, and employees working together.

2.3 CRM in the Context of Creating Value for Customers

A company's development and success depend primarily on the process of creating value by customers and businesses. The sole process of creating value defines specific customer expectations. It is the customer who must determine the final shape of the product or service. In contrast, when considering the process of creating value by a company, it is important to consider what the entrepreneur should do to make the product more attractive and desirable by potential customers in the future. At this stage, it is worth considering what factors lead customers to believe that the product they receive is exclusively for them. It is often unnecessary, and sometimes not cost-effective, for companies to use complex technology to ensure that customers receive products that satisfy them (Palalic et al. 2021: 1249–1270).

In order for an integrated CRM system to work properly for a company, it is necessary to look at the company's environment holistically and in the long run, and the process must possess a uniqueness that defines its competitive advantage. From a CRM perspective, value is created in both processes and services for both the customer and the company (Christofi et al. 2020: 1225–1239).

In terms of customer relationships, value is what the customer considers significant or wants. Customer value is defined as the subjectively perceived benefits for a customer that outweigh the subjectively perceived costs associated with purchasing and using the product. In this case, the benefit consists in satisfying a need by the product purchased, and the cost is the monetary aspect, that is, the price the customer has to pay for this product (in the strict sense of the word), but also the time and effort wasted on obtaining the product. Customer value is also defined as an investment that, over time, should bring not only a return on the capital invested in customer service but also a surplus that adds value to the company as well as its employees and shareholders (Yen, Teng and Tzeng 2020: 102514).

An important element of building customer relationships and creating value at the same time consists in the process of providing information. It takes on various forms, from emailing to business meetings, which enable a dialogue between the customer and the business owner. This stage is primarily aimed at the client getting to know the company, its operations, and the technology it uses. In particular, suppliers considering long-term contracts need to establish a working relationship before signing a sales contract. The process of creating value by companies is crucial in the following stage of building customer relationships, which is when they are trying to sell their services or products (Kamalaldin et al. 2020: 306–325). This stage is very important in producing profit for the company. The company receives payment for the sold product, and the entrepreneur receives information about the satisfaction of the business partner (Korczak and Kijewska 2008: 482–494). At this stage, it is the entrepreneur who collects customer information. At this stage, the entrepreneur begins the process of gathering information about the customer, building trust, and repeating orders in the future. At this stage, efforts are made to provide further purchases of products or services. It should be noted that the more successful this stage is, the lower the development costs for new clients should be expected. In the case of large business plans, the entrepreneur must ensure that the contractor receives a satisfactory offer. Moreover, the more customized the offer is to meet the customer's needs, the lower the cost of promotional materials. The diversity and individual preferences of customers also influence their expectations. Some prefer low prices, which are consequently associated with low quality, while others expect high quality at high prices. However, a desired situation for all consumers is purchasing high-quality products or services at a low price; the key idea of CRM is to prepare commercial offers that meet these customer expectations.

Currently, it is the customer who creates, decides, directs, and changes the product or service, and the entrepreneur is obliged to meet the customer's expectations. If the product vision is carried out, a long-term partnership will develop. Thanks to technological advances, the modern customer knows exactly what products he or she expects from manufacturers and service providers. The customer sets the standard for cooperation. Innovative trends have introduced the concept of "customer service" into the corporate structure (Glaveli et al. 2023: 767–788). Entrepreneurs have started to think about streamlining and making the above processes more attractive. Over the years, companies with a positive attitude toward dialogue with the customer have created research and development (R&D) centers within their organizations, where teams develop improvements to existing products or prototypes of new products, always in contact with customers.

While entrepreneurs valued their existing customers, the advertising and marketing teams started to promote new products with TV commercials, provocative illustrations, and advertising slogans to attract new customers. From that time, this classic method became the starting point for marketing. The first international company to assess customers and their individual needs in its marketing strategy was Burger King (founded in Florida in 1953). Its innovation was to allow customers to create custom burgers according to their own preferences. Burger King employees collect feedback, analyze customer needs, and match the most appropriate menu proposals to the sales market. The first devices dedicated to this were automated teller machines (ATMs) and interactive voice response (IVR) voice recognition systems, which customers were reluctant to use (Sekhar 2020: 8–13). Management was forced to look for solutions to increase customer loyalty and satisfaction and to improve service. Faced with this situation, there has been a rapid development of cyber tools. Internet, online shops, Wireless Application Protocol (WAP), Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS), and extranet – these tools continue to facilitate customer service in companies today (Taneja 2021: 299–318). Customers can easily communicate with the company via the Internet (email) or telephone (telephone line). Companies today go to great lengths to make customers feel special, but the basis for success consists in a dialogue between entrepreneurs and customers, which is valued by customers because, thanks to making their needs clear, they ultimately have an impact on creating exclusive products. One of the reasons why businesses do not undertake such initiatives is that the cost of implementing systems to improve customer service is too high. Entrepreneurs are reluctant to invest in tools with a long payback period that does not provide immediate benefits. Another factor that can improve the basic settlement process is individual consumer behavior. Until recently, many companies underestimated the importance of individual customers, and entrepreneurs preferred so-called mass customers, as evidenced by the still prevailing segmentation. As criteria, the segmentation process uses primarily data from structured market research (Sarstedt et al. 2022: 1035–1064). Such an approach helps in creating segments based mainly on criteria related to geographical location, demographics, politics, general economic situation, socio-cultural development, or specific behavioral or psycho-geographical criteria.

Information on product quality is constantly updated, for example, by consumers posting product reviews on online forums. An increasing number of companies are also setting up their own social media pages, not only to promote their products but also to post the opinions of consumers who have already bought their products. These comments can be critical and praising, as well as controversial. When posting comments on social media (e.g., Facebook), business owners should be aware that emphasizing production errors or other shortcomings can result in loss of customers and damage to the company's reputation.

Therefore, a question arises: what should an entrepreneur do to ensure that the company's products are perceived positively by potential customers? First of all, companies must ensure that the quality of provided products and services is repeatable and worth the price. It should be noted that this framework does not directly relate to absolute quality comparisons, meaning that not all Maserati quality cars are of Maserati quality. Entrepreneurs should determine so-called quality standards for their products, matching product quality to price. It should be emphasized that the quality of a product does not constitute a fixed price and can deteriorate or improve.

At this stage, it is worth reflecting on the definition of the word *quality* (Ginting et al. 2023: 329–340). The word quality comes from the Greek word *poiotes*, a philosophical concept proposed by Plato meaning "a certain perfection." Today, the word quality can easily be defined as meeting customer expectations. An American statistician, William Edwards Deming, defined quality as "the expected degree of uniformity and reliability of a product that meets market requirements at the lowest possible cost." On the one hand, Philip Crosby (an American businessman) believes that "quality is compliance with requirements." On the other hand, an American economist named David A. Garwin describes quality using the following characteristics: "usefulness, reliability, practicality, compliance with requirements, durability, discretion, aesthetics, and perception of quality."

A specific feature of multinational enterprises is that they operate in more than one country and their management takes on the form of a decision-making process allowing to direct further development and achieve objectives. On the other hand, CRM is one of the philosophical and strategic tools used by multinational companies. The complexity of the concept of CRM results from the fact that it can be seen, on the one hand, as a philosophy thanks to which modern companies carry out activities to acquire new customers and retain existing ones and, on the other hand, as a tool in the form of an information system that supports the relationship between the company and its customers, both as a philosophy and as a tool. This is because CRM can be seen as a combined strategy.

In other words, CRM is both an information system for organizing a company's activities as well as a business concept for improving management processes; an integrated view of CRM allows treating the concept as a kind of philosophy that actively participates in creating a company's strategy. In such a case, CRM IT systems are simply tools facilitating the implementation of CRM strategies (Suoniemi et al. 2022: 19–32). An entrepreneur who wants to meet the expectations of customers and the sales market often opts for integration. It allows the company's turbulent environment, strategy, and knowledge to be integrated and adapted. Adjusting the strategy, vision, mission, and technology determines the final shape of the CRM concept and the integrated CRM-class system (Alshurideh 2022: 325–332). Whereas CRM, as an integrated concept enriched by CRM-class IT systems, aims to improve business management processes, create contacts with new buyers, and stabilize the company in the face of turbulent real-world threats. Implementing the concept of CRM provides the opportunity to keep up with changes in international business and respond quickly to uncertainties in the sales market.

2.4 Implementation of the CRM Concept in Multinational Companies

The strategy of a multinational company refers to a plan of action that defines the company's main objectives and the means to achieve them. A CRM strategy constitutes a set of actions undertaken by a company to direct and confirm its customer orientation and to improve customer and company activities, as well as the new and improved competitiveness and profitability of the entity. The strategy focuses on identifying, prioritizing, and implementing solutions and practices.

It also supports the following changes of viewing the company's customers no longer as customers but as resources. This change begins with a process of understanding the current attitudes and expectations of customers and the relationship between the company and its environment. Such recognition requires to separately consider corporate strategy and CRM strategy, with CRM strategy being a kind of "sub-strategy" of corporate strategy (Johanning 2022: 99–124). This is because, even though corporate strategy is not considered to include the implementation of CRM (as a system or philosophy), a CRM strategy cannot exist without a core strategy, as CRM strategy is a commitment to customer needs and expectations and the implementation of IT systems to support the delivery of customer service processes. This can be understood as the company adopting a philosophy that manifests itself in focusing on customer needs and expectations and implementing IT systems to support the implementation of customer service processes.

Traditionally, CRM is carried out through systems created independently by the company (e.g., customer databases created using Excel spreadsheets), whereas in the case of large companies, each department responsible for customer relationships has its own system. As a result, different "systems" function within the same company, leading to significant differences in customer relationships. However, thanks to implementing a CRM system it is possible to replace a legacy system with one that is state-of-the-art and uses the latest information and communication technologies. This will allow reducing the level of risk, improve the quality of customer service levels, and enable acquiring and retaining new customers.

With the new technology, companies can also prioritize individual customers and personalize contact with them. Thanks to these systems, companies are moving away from so-called mass communication (Van Duyn and Collier 2019: 29–48) (e.g., replacing a standard brochure shared by all customers with a brochure aimed at a specific person or group of customers).

That is because, communication channels enable a more personalized relationship with customers thanks to using new technologies, such as video streaming and social media, which improve the way companies communicate with their customers.

The problems or challenges that arise when communicating with customers, whether customer relations representatives can always provide the right answers, whether all types of customer communication channels guarantee the same quality of response to customers, whether there are any service or customer-related activities that need to be repeated, etc. (Lutzky 2021: 100463). Indeed, a clear understanding of these issues and challenges will allow developing an overall CRM strategy framework. It also allows identifying all elements of the customer's interaction with the company and accurately characterizes the sales and complaints processes. This is because a detailed understanding of these interactions makes it possible to adjust the company's process flows and determine whether the company is an "easy" or "difficult" partner to work with. Defining key performance indicators (KPIs): allows companies to analyze their current situation and use it as a starting point for subsequent benchmarking and identifying key milestones (new products or services to be offered to customers) (Ghahremani-Nahr and Nozari 2021: 1–6). At this stage, companies can also identify a specific timeframe during which strategy development work should be suspended, for example, the holiday period resulting in fewer employees.

The methodology of D. Rigby and D. Ledingham (Cahyani et al. 2023: 201–210), which constitutes another solution for implementing a CRM strategy, instead involves the implementation of six main steps (Figure 2.6).

An integrated CRM strategy should be holistic, encompassing all business processes and systems related to customer relationships,

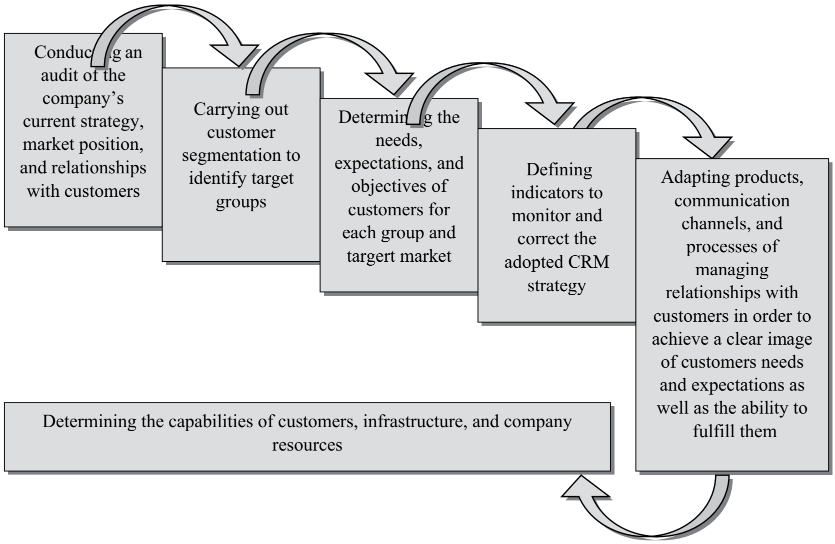

Figure 2.6 CRM implementation (Rigby and Ledingham).

***Source*: own study, based on: Cahyani et al. 2023: 201–210.**

including marketing, sales, order fulfillment, customer service, and business data analysis. It should also include all interaction channels, including call centers, stores, Point of Sale (POS), online shopping services, self-service sales, as well as retail and service partners. Therefore, a CRM strategy optimizes all processes, from core processes to support processes. It also ensures that all interaction channels function in an optimal manner. This is because a CRM system stands not only for a software or technical tool but also for a philosophy that is accepted by the company, which corresponds to a higher level of commitment to the CRM process. Furthermore, companies must possess the knowledge to set the right goals, identify ways to achieve them, and create a vision for the CRM system, which is also the starting point for the company's CRM strategy development process (Li, Larimo, and Leonidou 2021: 51–70). However, it is primarily necessary for companies to accept the fact that customers, not their products or services, are at the heart of their strategy. Such an approach may require a significant change in the company's mindset, but it is essential for the success of the entire CRM strategy process and must involve all employees.

These activities not only constitute the basis for strategy development but also demonstrate the proactivity of the CRM system as a whole and the amount of effort the company has put into developing a strategy that promises success. They also show whether these activities require using external experts or whether analysis can be done internally.

Based on this study, it is possible to determine the extent to which changes need to be made in the company before CRM apps can be used. After making these changes, the company is ready to implement the selected software. The implementation process begins when the app is launched. In most cases, this is a trial version and only covers a small part of the company's business. During this time, the necessary data and information are entered into the database, and employees are trained to use the app. During the trial period, it is not uncommon for new situations or software bugs to emerge that were not identified during research and development. After resolving the problems and errors, the CRM software is fully implemented and any errors that occur are corrected on an ongoing basis (Cricelli et al. 2020: 173–188). The process of monitoring, testing, and correcting reduces the occurrence of errors and ensures that the software functions correctly, helping to completely carry out the company's strategy based on the CRM philosophy.

Therefore, it can be understood that a company's strategy based on a CRM philosophy is a multi-level strategy that includes business objectives, strategic information and analyses, experience and qualifications, strategic channels, the nature of the strategy, technology, indicators, and metrics. Only after a complementary development of the strategy then comes the time to choose the correct technology platform. When choosing this platform, the main consideration should be its ability to integrate with systems already in use within the company. This will ensure that there are no disruptions in terms of the flow of information and data that could hinder the implementation of the adopted strategy. However, even after finalizing the selection and implementation of a suitable technology platform, the entire process is not yet complete, as monitoring and control activities are still ongoing. That is why the process of integrating CRM with the corporate strategy is based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model proposed by E. Deming, that is, first planning and preparing, then acting and validating, followed by monitoring and controlling (Tamher, Rachmawaty, and Erika 2021: S627–S631).

Based on this principle, it can be concluded that companies wishing to implement CRM must not only select and implement the right technology platform but also make significant changes in employee awareness and company philosophy (Freeman 2023: 61–88). It should also be emphasized that the effect of implementing CRM into a strategy is not an immediate change or impact but extends over time. Of course, the more CRM is treated as part of an enterprise's corporate strategy (in philosophical terms), the more it carries out business functions and processes (in application terms) as an integral part.

Modern business is conducted under conditions of globalization and regionalization. Globalization requires the ability to operate globally and adapt to specific conditions, while regionalization requires certain uniqueness. However, the philosophy of CRM must encompass both. The CRM philosophy should be developed for global companies, taking into account the conditions of globalization, and for smaller companies, taking into account the conditions of regionalization. This is because the CRM philosophy and the necessity for adaptation are undoubtedly necessary conditions for a company to be able not only to function on the market but also to continue to develop, and CRM is perceived from the perspective of technology, that is, as a technological platform, including computer infrastructure and software, to run the company's business. This results from the fact that CRM is an essential tool. This is due to the Internet and the widely developed information and communication technology, without which business would not be possible. That is also why the two dimensions are complementary. Implementing a CRM philosophy embedded in the company's strategy is impossible without the implementation of an appropriate technology platform. On the other hand, simply creating a CRM app without understanding the essence of the philosophy will make the process easier, but only on a functional level.

The above discussion confirms the thesis that CRM is a key determinant of strategy formation in multinational companies and that every modern company should supplement its strategy with elements of the CRM philosophy (Dzwigol, Dzwigol-Barosz, and Kwilinski 2020: 1–5). This makes it possible not only to identify and concretely define the needs and expectations of customers but also to understand their attitudes toward the choice they made. Most importantly, it allows treating customers as a resource for the company, ensuring its survival and further development. Moreover, the sub-hypothesis that "customer relationship management is an important factor in ordering the information conditioning strategy formation in multinational companies" was also verified positively. This is because every modern enterprise should incorporate the concept of CRM into its strategy in order to identify the needs and expectations of its customers more effectively.

2.5 Implementation of the Concept in Multinational Enterprises in Light of the Advantages and Disadvantages of CRM

The most important role in successfully implementing CRM into a company's strategy is played by a shared vision and the commitment and support of the leadership team. These two factors are also directly linked to the training and change management process.

By applying a number of factors in the process of implementing CRM in corporate strategy, companies can gain a number of tangible benefits (Sakunthala 2020: 413–418). Firstly, CRM can constitute a source of competitive advantage for companies operating in a highly dynamic environment. Furthermore, efficient CRM can also improve the quality of life for customers. Such a statement might be considered excessively radical, as it suggests that, on one hand, CRM can, for example, affect people's quality of life. On the other hand, the ability to, among others, shop online can be fully automated by a CRM that can archive customer data from previous purchases and does not need to re-enter it (if the CRM is the only IT system in the company; if not, it is one of the systems), thus significantly reducing customer shopping time that can be spent on other activities. Therefore, CRM provides advantages not only for the company, but also makes life easier for customers.

Ergo, effective CRM is currently one of the most important business areas determining the success of companies on the market. A company's long-term business success depends largely on attracting and retaining customers. Based on many years of practice in terms of using CRM in corporate strategies and the discussion concerning this topic, several key factors that determine the success of a company have been identified. The Common Vision refers to how CRM is perceived within the company and how this vision is communicated and disseminated to partners, colleagues, and other stakeholders within the company (Kampani and Jhamb 2020: 221–226). The need for top management to clearly support CRM implementation in the context of corporate strategy translates into project management capability – in other words, the ability to successfully manage CRM from start to finish in accordance with financial, time, and human resource plans (Harsch and Festing 2020: 43–61). Cooperation between departments manifests itself in the fact that departments, subsidiaries, or branches of the company are strongly supported by each other and their work is correlated (Cannavò et al. 2019: e110–e123). The cooperation allows companies to respond effectively to the needs and expectations of their customers and thus achieve their planned business objectives. Integration of IT systems and technologies involves integrating existing IT systems with the new CRM system, providing the most detailed insight into the customer profile (Østergaard and Maestosi 2019: 1–6). Thanks to transferring data from existing systems to the new version, the company will possess a great repository of customer data that can be regularly updated and shared with employees. Among the key factors determining the success of a company's CRM implementation, properly preparing for changes (including training) is also significant. Change management is a consequence of the turbulence of today's environment, which requires companies to constantly adapt, including those relating to sales, production, and customer service processes (Diem et al. 2021: 744–751). However, in order to manage change effectively, companies face the need to carry out training for their employees, especially those who are in constant contact with customers in the course of their work. This also links to correct and efficient information management (Koivisto and Hamari 2019: 191–210). This is because well-informed employees can only succeed if they are actively involved in implementing CRM into the company's strategy. Whereas, the necessity to restructure business processes results from the fact that processes such as marketing, sales, and customer service need to be optimized – as they are responsible for building and maintaining customer relationships.

The above considerations are reflected in the source literature. K.A. Richard and E. Jones (Almohaimmeed 2019: 421–435) have distinguished seven main features that provide specific benefits of implementing CRM into the strategy (Figure 2.7).

However, these features do not include all the expected benefits of a strategic CRM implementation in a company. According to the literature research, the benefits of implementing CRM can be divided into strategic, tactical, and operational dimensions, which have a positive impact at the company level (Figure 2.8). The process of implementing an integrated CRM system itself also provides benefits at an operational and strategic level.

The effectiveness of CRM at a strategic level applies to the entire company, all branches, subsidiaries, and divisions. At a tactical level, it can refer to a branch or subsidiary in a country, while at an operational

Benefits of implementing CRM according to Richards and Jones

- a higher ability to attract high-value customers, who contribute to the company's highest profit, these are also usually individual customers or other businesses, purchasing in bulk. Moreover, while an occasional customer will not mind taking more time with the purchasing process, for high-value customers, time is going to play an important role, so the automation of the sales process, and thus the purchasing process, for this type of customer constitutes an asset that can contribute to purchasing from a particular company
- the possibility of creating a fully integrated offer covering all sales channels. Such an offer may take the same form for all sales channels or, depending on specific guidelines, can be automatically customized by the system
- improved sales effectiveness, made possible thanks to acquired information concerning customer needs and expectations, gathered from previous orders, and by using all types of sales channels
- the ability to create custom marketing messages. Creating such messages is possible thanks to information collected in the past and concerning customer needs and expectations
- tailoring products and services to the needs of specific customers. Based on the history of previous orders, the company identifies specific customer requirements concerning products or services and offers dedicated products or services
- improving the efficiency of customer service, which is the overarching goal of implementing CRM in companies
- the possibility to have a proper pricing policy, determined on the basis of customers' preferences and consent on how much they will spend to purchase a product or service

Figure 2.7 Benefits of implementing CRM according to Richards and Jones.

***Source*: own study, based on: Almohaimmeed 2019: 421–435; Wang, Sedera, and Tan 2009: 1–11.**

CRM ADVANTAGES

Strategic dimension

- Increasing the awareness of advantages coming from sharing knowledge in a company.
- Bigger support in the process of designing products.
- Increasing the efficiency in the supply chain thanks to personal contacts.
- Increasing the scope of knowledge of the company's suppliers.
- Support in acquiring the so-called competitive intelligence.
- Improving coordination and communication.
- More efficient knowledge management.
- More effective sharing of knowledge with the company's partners.
- Increasing the possibility of establishing cooperation or strategic alliances.
- More efficient resource management.
- Possibility of implementing "best practices."
- Improving the process of making decisions in the company.
- More effective planning and integration within the supply chain.
- Increasing the marketing efficiency.
- More effective selection of channels.
- Possibility of integration between individual channels.
- Achieving long-term profits contributes to purchasing from a particular company.

Tactical dimension

- Lowering the cost of providing services.
- Increasing the level of income.
- Increasing the level of satisfaction and customer loyalty.
- Improving the customer service process.
- Properly adapting the products or services to customer expectations.
- Increasing the possibility of long-lasting relations.
- Increasing the possibility of searching, acquiring, and retaining customers.
- Conducting a more effective price policy.
- Lowering service costs.
- Possibility of differentiating products.
- More precise customer segmentation.
- Increasing customer loyalty.
- Segmentation on the basis of the customer's economic value.
- Higher motivation of employees to strengthen relations with customers.
- Lowering the number of administrative actions.
- Increasing the financial effectiveness in the aspect of marketing expenditures.
- Better allocation of resources in terms of a customer's portfolio.
- Automation of all aspects in relations with customers.

Operational dimension

- More efficient "targeting" of clients.
- The possibility of creating personalized marketing plans.
- Personalizing marketing messages.
- Providing beneficial options for customers' self-service.
- Increasing the integration between the client and the company.
- Increasing the efficiency of the sales staff.
- Designating a long-term development path for the sales staff.
- Simplifying customer service procedures.
- The possibility of dedicating the offer.
- Increasing the knowledge among customers, concerning the offered products/services.
- Re-acquiring customers.
- Increasing the level of customer commitment.
- Increasing customer focus.
- Providing personalized services.

Figure 2.8 The strategic, tactical, and operational dimensions of the benefits of CRM implementation.

***Source*: own study, based on: Chen and Popovich 2003: 672–688; Chinje 2013: 237–243; Crockett 2007: 1–5.**

level, it can refer to a specific branch among many in a region. For example, the CRM outcome of effective knowledge sharing with customers consists in a benefit for the company as a whole. The beneficial effect of customizing products and services is also a CRM benefit resulting from meeting the expectations of customers located in a particular country.

Whereas the benefit of simplifying customer service processes constitutes an operational benefit that may be effective in one branch but may not be effective in another. At the same time, the benefits in the operational and tactical dimensions can also be seen as positive in the strategic dimension.

However, despite the significant benefits of implementing CRM as part of a strategy, companies face challenges that can undermine CRM implementation efforts or increase the likelihood that the process is going to fail. First and foremost, the CRM implementation process and CRM itself require significant funding and a significant amount of human and physical resources to ensure the success of the effort. The process is also characterized by a high probability of failure, resulting in the acronym CRM – “Failure to Recover Money” (Howarth and Quaglia 2021: 1555–1572).

Companies that have implemented CRM have found that the expected return on investment is much lower than expected when comparing the costs associated with implementing CRM with the revenue generated through its use. This phenomenon was confirmed during a study conducted by Gartner (a global research company), which found that 70% of CRM implementation projects ended in losses and failed to increase the level of profits generated by the company. However, such a high failure and loss rate results from the fact that most executives of companies initiating the implementation of CRM do not possess sufficient knowledge concerning the amount of costs required to implement the process, how long it will take and how long it is going to take to benefit from the made investment.

It is also a mistake to assume that CRM requires advanced IT tools and resources necessary to communicate and build relationships with customers. Some companies may implement the latest e-CRM, which requires a modern IT infrastructure (Kampani and Jhamb 2020: 221–226). As the level of customer expectation in such a relationship may vary, depending not only on the specific product or service offered but also on the personality traits of each customer, it is also important to identify the customer’s needs in establishing a relationship with the company for the purchase of goods only, which should be included in the strategy. Some people like to feel that the company “cares” about them as well as receive information and notifications about discounts and news, while others are only interested in buying specific products.

However, when developing a CRM implementation strategy, companies often encounter obstacles. Senior staff and managers do not have the skills to operate the system. These could also be insufficient resources available for investment or insufficient data quality and data entry into the CRM system. Lack of understanding of the business benefits to be gained from an implemented CRM system and operational limitations are often related to equipment that is too old or employees who lack the skills to operate computer equipment. Low commitment and lack of leadership from company management. One barrier also consists in inadequate measurement of system effectiveness and efficiency.

Companies considering introducing CRM should, during the strategy formulation process, ensure that all employees receive appropriate training, introducing them to the principles of CRM and familiarizing them with the basics of its operation prior to implementation. Lack of knowledge concerning the system is considered to be one of the most important obstacles affecting the chance of failure for the entire implementation process.

There is a common perception that implementing a CRM system is expensive, but many companies estimate that the benefits actually outweigh any losses. This is because systems that support the production process or manage the entire company (e.g., Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems) are generally considered to be expensive. Whereas a CRM system, which is regarded as a customer service system, is a simple system and does not appear to involve significantly higher costs for companies to implement.

The lack of quality and quantity of data entered into the CRM system constitutes the result of a lack of diligence in sourcing and gathering information, which is due to the previous behavior of companies that did not place a high value on acquiring and maintaining customer relationships. It can be assumed that this barrier will be eliminated over time if adequate attention is given to obtaining and storing this type of information at the beginning of the implementation process.

In the case of the barrier consisting in lack of understanding of the business benefits of implementing a CRM system, it is also important to organize meetings and training sessions with the people implementing the CRM system (often referred to as external implementers), not only to familiarize them with the features of the system and the basics of its operation but also to clearly present the business benefits that the company can gain from introducing the system.

On the other hand, the emergence of functional limitations is related to the fact that some employees possess inadequate skills to operate outdated hardware and computer tools. It is also related to the lack of clarity in terms of the tasks and responsibilities of the company's various organizational units. In some companies, every employee has some degree of responsibility for establishing and maintaining customer relationships, and the company has not established a customer service department. This causes confusion and chaos not only in the relationship, but also between customers and the sales process, as they are not fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to customers and cannot make decisions for themselves.

The barrier of very low commitment on the part of the company's management also manifests itself in a lack of leadership, which is often the case in terms of companies with poor focus on the customer, but may also be due to a lack of faith in the effectiveness and efficiency of the CRM system. In order to remove these barriers, it is initially necessary to ensure that the system is suitable for the company and to gain knowledge of how it works. If you are still unsure and introduce the system in a chaotic and hasty manner, you can assume that the system will largely fail. However, there have been known cases where top management approval was not obtained when introducing a CRM system and, as a result, the system was used to a limited extent, for example, by only one employee responsible for customers.

The final obstacle results due to the initial unfamiliarity with the system. Initially, the system can be measured by the company that owns it, but over time proper indicators must be selected and the system's effectiveness and efficiency analyses must be conducted. Barriers are not only related to specific departments or processes but the entire structure of the company, which means that their identification and possible occurrence should already be considered at the level of the company's strategic activities.

Furthermore, as shown by research carried out by M. Ahearne et al., the barriers associated with using the wrong CRM system can contribute to failure in implementing the system. In other words, despite implementing the CRM system and using its tools, companies still carry out the sales process as they did before the system was implemented. In the process of implementing a CRM system, companies lack a proper strategy, technical and information background (e.g., implementing a CRM system using Excel sheets), lack of employee training, inadequate spending and clear operational boundaries, and poorly planned implementation dates, for example, most employees are on leave or the company is operating on a different basis (Ryzhkova and Bartashevska 2020: 350–356). Other possible reasons for failure include excessively relying on the provider of the CRM system and the inability to continuously change the functionality of the system.

Note

1 "Targeting" – a process consisting in businesses selecting consumers in order to identify a target audience. A term most commonly used in the advertising industry.

Part 3
The Strategy of a Global Enterprise from the Customer Relationship Perspective

3.1 Integrated CRM Systems in Global Enterprises – eCRM, PRM, SRM

In the age of digitalization and globalization, enterprises around the world become increasingly aware of the crucial role of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in achieving business success. The development of technology and the ubiquity of the Internet have resulted in new varieties of CRM systems that enable effective CRM in a wide variety of business areas. This part draws particular attention to discussing integrated CRM systems, such as eCRM (Electronic Customer Relationship Management), PRM (Partner Relationship Management), and SRM (Supplier Relationship Management) (Roba and Maric 2023: 469–487). Starting with eCRM, it was indicated how this solution allows the use of a wide range of customer communication channels, such as email, chat, web portals, or social media, and how it integrates various aspects of CRM in a digital environment. Then, PRM was presented as a manner to manage relationships with business partners, such as distributors or intermediaries, and how this system affects the efficiency of the cooperation and a company's growth. SRM was also discussed as a strategy of managing relationships with suppliers, intended to optimize the supply chain and support long-term relationships with key suppliers.

All of these integrated customer, partner, and SRM systems are crucial in the functioning of global enterprises, which must adapt to increasingly complex markets and growing customer demands.

The continuous development of technology and widespread access to the Internet, which is now a key tool for supporting business

DOI: 10.1201/9781032713915-4

activities, has led to many new CRM configurations based on traditional CRM. These are specialized software used in the functioning of enterprises that do not require a generic CRM system but determine the use of systems such as Mobile Customer Relationship Management (mCRM). For the purposes of this part, the author outlines the most common types of CRM, starting with eCRM.

eCRM is defined as "electronic information systems" on the Internet. Therefore, for companies, eCRM means integrating online channels with their overall CRM strategy, with sales, customer service, repair, support, and marketing initiatives, while ensuring consistency across all relevant channels that can support seamless customer service while maximizing profits. eCRM constitutes an app designed to synchronize the work of various tools designed to engage customers in an e-commerce environment from a CRM perspective. Thus, eCRM represents a web-based technology that enables interaction between a company and its customers by, for example, logging on to a company's website and browsing through the offered services or products (Alquhtani and Muniasamy 2022: 44–63). eCRM can be used through a variety of platforms and devices, such as laptops, mobile devices, desktop computers, and televisions that have access to the Internet. Therefore, it is not just software but rather a web-based technology used to interact, understand, and ensure customer satisfaction. Therefore, the process combines software, hardware, processes, and management commitment in order to support business strategy using CRM across the enterprise.

The eCRM system consists of functional areas described in Figure 3.1.

Based on these areas, it is possible to determine the main benefits of using an eCRM system, which can be seen in Figure 3.2.

Therefore, eCRM, like traditional CRM, can be considered one of the most important decisive factors for the survival and further development of a company (Figure 3.3).

It should be noted that eCRM observes customer history across multiple channels in real-time, creates and maintains analytical databases, and optimizes relationships with customers in three aspects:

- attraction,
- development,
- maintenance.

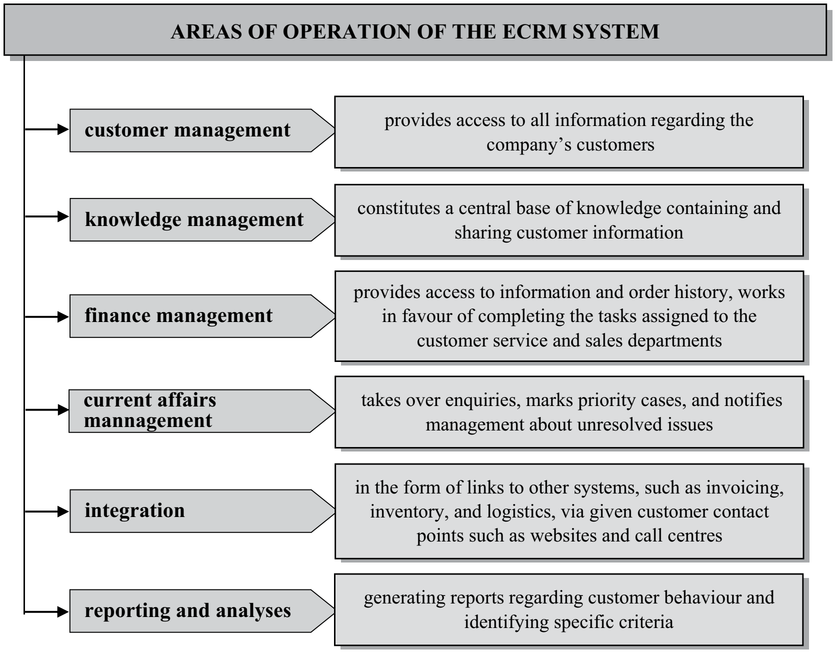

Figure 3.1 Areas of operation of the eCRM system.

***Source*: own study based on: Bai, Cui and Ye 2014: 35; Baranov 2012: 15; Bhagat 2015: 34; Chiu, Chen and Chen 2017: 14–39; Lam, Cheung and Lau 2013: 419; Lee-Kelley, Gilbert and Mannicom 2003: 239–248; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege and Zhang 2013: 270–280; Reichheld 1996; Rodriguez, Peterson and Ajjan 2015: 636–638; Shahin, Gharibpoor, Teymouri and Iraj 2013: 453–470; Stockdale 2007: 205–219; Tahir, Waggett and Hoffman 2013: 112; Turban, Outland, King, Lee, Liang and Turban 2017; Willcocks and Plant 2003: 95–99; Winer 2001: 89–105; Yoo and Donthu 2001: 1–14.**

Global enterprises with a large number of customers, branches, and multiple sales teams are likely to use eCRM instead of a traditional CRM system (Savira, Hendrayati, and Hurriyati 2022: 216–220).

In many large companies, customer service processes are more complex and varied. Departments and employees throughout the company are responsible for contacting and handling existing, but also potential, customers. When implementing a CRM system, it is necessary to automate and support all the tasks performed by these employees, observe the entire history of their activities, and share this information with other employees in the company. They also must possess a large database and quick access to enquiries from various departments, including, above all, the sales department.

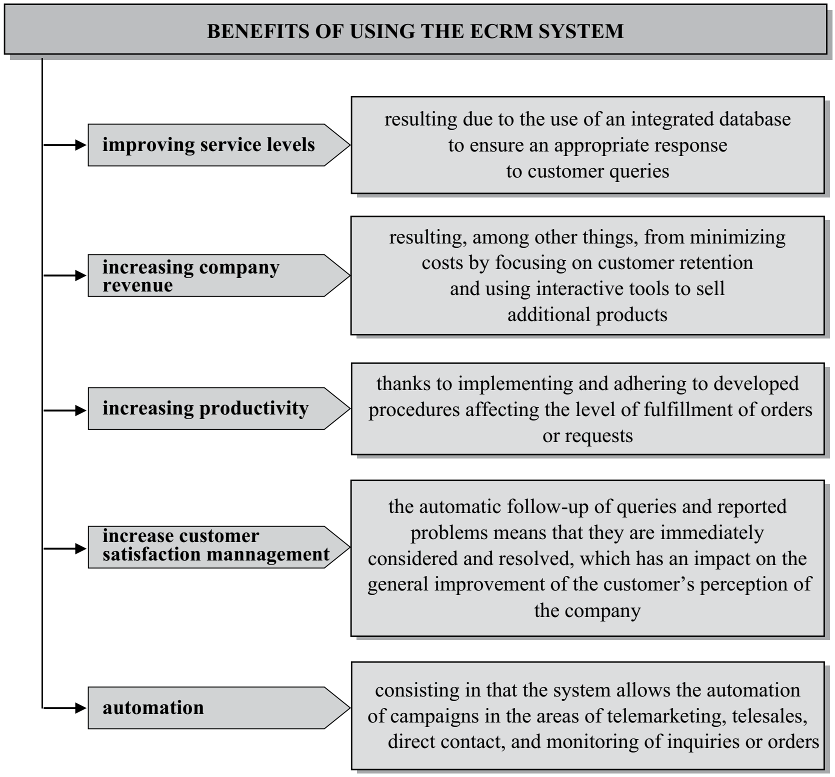

Figure 3.2 Benefits of using the eCRM system.

***Source*: own study, based on: Bai, Cui and Ye 2014: 35; Baranov 2012: 15; Bhagat 2015: 34; Chiu, Chen and Chen 2017: 14–39; Lam, Cheung and Lau 2013: 419; Lee-Kelley, Gilbert and Mannicom 2003: 239–248; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege and Zhang 2013: 270–280; Reichheld 1996; Rodriguez, Peterson and Ajjan 2015: 636–638; Shahin, Gharibpoor, Teymouri and Iraj 2013: 453–470; Stockdale 2007: 205–219; Tahir, Waggett and Hoffman 2013: 112; Turban, Outland, King, Lee, Liang and Turban 2017; Willcocks and Plant 2003: 95–99; Winer 2001: 89–105; Yoo and Donthu 2001: 1–14.**

In global enterprises, almost everyone is involved in carrying out business processes, from the lowest level, so all employees must have equal access to all information stored in databases. eCRM can automate this process significantly better than a typical CRM system, automatically recording all customer interactions and generating alerts when problems occur. eCRM can also integrate with Office products and can be adapted to work on almost any mobile device. Furthermore, eCRM coordinates all processes that affect sales and customer service and facilitates collaboration as well as information

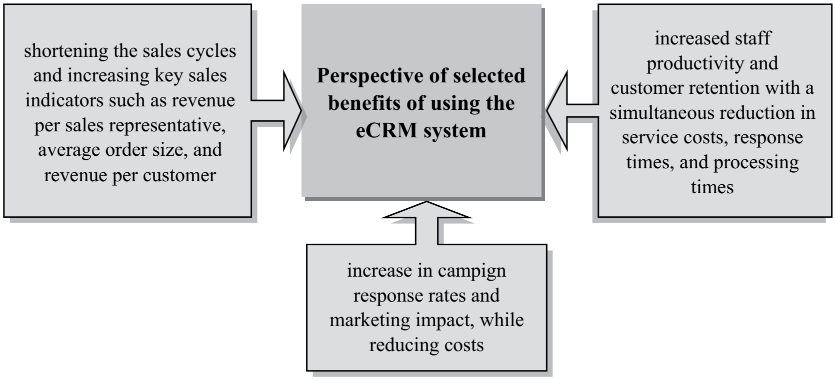

Figure 3.3 Perspective of selected benefits of using the eCRM system.

***Source*: own work.**

exchange between all employees directly involved in contact with potential customers (including sales and marketing staff), as well as support teams, accounting staff, and call center representatives. Moreover, with eCRM, this communication and coordination extends beyond the company's boundaries, so that external business partners and other external customers can also benefit from all the advantages offered by the system.

However, eCRM is significantly more expensive than CRM. This is because most of the costs result from the time and effort required to adapt the system and implement it in a company. Some solutions involve additional costs for a company, such as purchasing a server, on-site installation, as well as annual maintenance and update costs. Additional costs also involve more reliable support in relation to issues such as implementation, training, and developing the mobile app. Therefore, eCRM is more expensive, but the investment will ultimately pay off in the form of better customer service in all parts of the business. The most significant benefit for companies is that eCRM collects accurate customer information in real time. This provides insight into the customer base as well as an understanding of their needs and interests. As a result, interactions become more conscious and smart, improving the customer experience, regardless of the type of contact.

Another solution consists in PRM (Migdadi 2021: 111–124). The challenge for this system is to model customer relationships in order to optimize sales channels. Today, companies face increasing customer expectations and needs, changing market conditions, and economic fluctuations. Striving to achieve a competitive advantage consists in building highly effective internal and external relationships that ensure the company can achieve its mission and goals. Strategies for maintaining an open dialogue between communication channel partners have currently become crucial to innovation and overall company success. Therefore, it is important to build and maintain relationships between the company and its channel partners to enable the success of both.

PRM is a business strategy that improves communication between companies and their business partners. PRM allows companies possessing indirect sales channels (e.g., agents, brokers, sales representatives, distributors, value-added distributors, and resellers) to more effectively and efficiently manage sales activities, manage leads, record transactions, and manage opportunities (Guerola-Navarro et al. 2021b: 2669–2691).

Web-based PRM apps allow companies to adapt and streamline administrative tasks, making delivery schedules and other information available online to all partners in real time (Chaudhuri, Chatterjee, and Vrontis 2022: 21–45). Some of their functions, such as spreadsheets made available online, are also used by CRM systems. PRM can therefore both constitute a part of CRM and a completely separate module. It includes options for delivering products and services to different types of partners, such as suppliers, distributors, and resellers, and supports joint product and project development. Activities such as outsourcing the development of new products and services to suppliers, invoicing suppliers, joint marketing and promotional campaigns with distributors, and a centralized business communication platform for all partners are all carried out within the PRM.

Whereas companies with a strong focus on managing their relations with suppliers have adopted SRM systems (Dubey et al. 2019: 767–790). This solution was developed in the early 1980s when one of McKinsey's consultants called on the company to manage its suppliers in a much more proactive manner (Gupta and Sinha 2022: 4086–4088). He believed that the company had to develop an appropriate supplier management strategy because managing suppliers more proactively would have a significant impact on the company's profits and growth. These strategies, as he emphasized, must include a high level of commitment on the part of the purchasing company because managing relationships with suppliers requires more effort than simply relying on paper contracts.

SRM constitutes a comprehensive approach to managing interactions with partners who provide goods and services used by companies. SRM is designed to streamline processes between companies and their suppliers in the same way that CRM aims to streamline processes between companies and their customers. The central element of the SRM system consists in processes aiming at, among other things, defining delivery categories and smart delivery management (Bwaliez et al. 2019: 2371).

SRM focuses on co-creating value based on trust, open communication, and collaboration with key suppliers. The most important objective of SRM consists in taking advantage of the capabilities of suppliers, as companies realize that they do not have the resources to do everything themselves. The second most important objective of the system is to reduce costs. Even though it seems to contradict the focus on creating value, cost reduction is a key aspect of SRM. The fundamental difference concerning the traditional approach also manifests itself in implementing and providing services shared with partners.

Another objective of SRM consists in supply security. The globalization of supply chains, extreme fluctuations relating to the demand and supply, material shortages and idiosyncratic behavior of suppliers, even within individual countries, make it difficult for companies to ensure the availability of products for their customers. Through partnerships, sourcing companies try to provide preferential customer service while eliminating large fluctuations in quantities and product types through integrated forecasting and planning. A key function of SRM is the categorization of suppliers (Lajimi and Majidi 2021: 138–158). This app allows assessing and selecting the most suitable suppliers, resulting in optimizing the supply chain. The main functions of the above app are supplier database management, process automation, and optimization of the structure of the purchasing process.

In the age of globalization and digitalization, integrated relationship management systems such as eCRM, PRM, and SRM are becoming crucial for achieving success by enterprises (Jędrzejczyk 2021: 2816–2825). Thanks to them, companies can manage relationships with customers, partners, and suppliers more effectively in an increasingly complex business world.

These systems allow for a better understanding of the needs and expectations of all parties, leading to increased customer satisfaction, more effective collaboration with partners and supply chain optimization. Moreover, thanks to using modern technology, integrated relationship management systems enable companies to take advantage of various communication channels, which facilitates the exchange of information and works in favor of long-term relationships.

As a result, integrated systems for managing relationships with customers, partners, and suppliers play an important role in global enterprises achieving success. Thanks to them, companies can better adapt to changing market conditions, meet increasing customer demands, and increase their competitiveness on the market.

3.2 Modularity of CRM Information Systems

In today's dynamic and constantly evolving business world, CRM has become a key element for the success of many enterprises. CRM systems make it possible to track and analyze customer interactions and better understand their needs and preferences. In response to growing market demands and the diversity of customer needs, CRM systems began to take a modular form, allowing for more flexible and scalable solutions.

In the context of CRM systems, modularity means building software based on independent but cooperating modules. Each module serves a specific function and can be combined with others to create a complete, personalized CRM system. Such an approach has many advantages for both the providers and users of the systems.

As already mentioned, CRM was originally a philosophical concept of understanding and meeting the needs and expectations of customers (Herman, Sulhaini, and Farida 2021: 1–19). However, along with technological solutions in the form of computers, the concept quickly evolved into an information system. Ergo, CRM has a dual nature: it exists as a philosophical concept and as an information system whose smooth functioning is determined by today's information technology. Information technology and communication tools allow information to be acquired, sent, stored, created, displayed, and processed in all directions, from company to customer, from customer to company or from company to supplier, and are a key element for carrying out the entire customer service process. Using modern information and communication technologies also allows establishing and maintaining relationships with clients and companies as business partners.

Like many integrated IT systems, CRM systems also have a modular architecture. This means that the entire system consists of modules that are interlinked. The number, type, and functions of these modules can vary depending on the used system and its functional scope. However, in the case of CRM systems, three main modules are usually distinguished (Kunasekaran, Zheng, and Wang 2020: 61–77):

- operational,
- analytical,
- communication.

Operational CRM covers all areas of customer contact. The main task is to collect information concerning customers, purchases, and customer activities and to improve service processes. Operational CRM not only enables but also optimizes communication with customers. However, it should be emphasized that this is not the same as improving the quality of services (Svoboda et al. 2021: 553–572). The key functions of business CRM cover several areas (Figure 3.4).

An operational CRM can manage sales and marketing activities as well as customer-related processes. Every action can be recorded, for example, phone calls, emails, reports from client meetings. Each activity has an assigned manager and a due date. The module allows any employee to become quickly familiar with the activities related to the analyzed customer. For top management, this module allows managing and viewing the work of their staff. Managers can create reports according to their needs, for example, daily, monthly, or quarterly, according to author, time of creation, etc. They can also plan events such as conferences, conventions, and business meetings. Administrators can specify the materials needed for planned events. It is also possible to store and change customer information (customer profile, industry, payments, credit limits, invoices, cooperation agreements, information concerning the logistics of received goods, comments, additional notes, etc.).

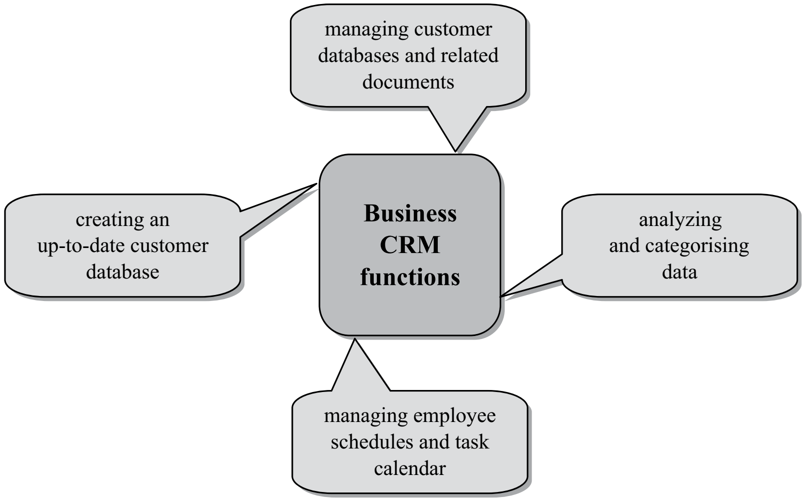

Figure 3.4 Business CRM functions.

***Source*: own study.**

Essentially, CRM business filters are constructed from two sequences: dates and business partners. From this layer, administrators can create information filtered according to various criteria that describe the identification and profile of customers. Companies offering services of building CRM systems for enterprises have formed strategic alliances with Business Intelligence (BI) system providers, as these systems work in conjunction with other systems used in a given enterprise and provide a CRM system module for data analysis (Chen, Geng, and Zhou 2021: 8237–8247).

In companies that have chosen to implement operational CRM, customer service processes run more smoothly. Entrepreneurs can also learn the results of the tools they use through a customer satisfaction survey. Operational CRM is similar to an enterprise resource planning (ERP) computer system and is divided into several subsystems (Figure 3.5).

The internal module allows collecting all data and information as well as creating a database containing basic employee information (e.g., contact details and addresses). This database also contains information concerning the position, news directly related to that employee, and information for creating work schedules. Additionally,

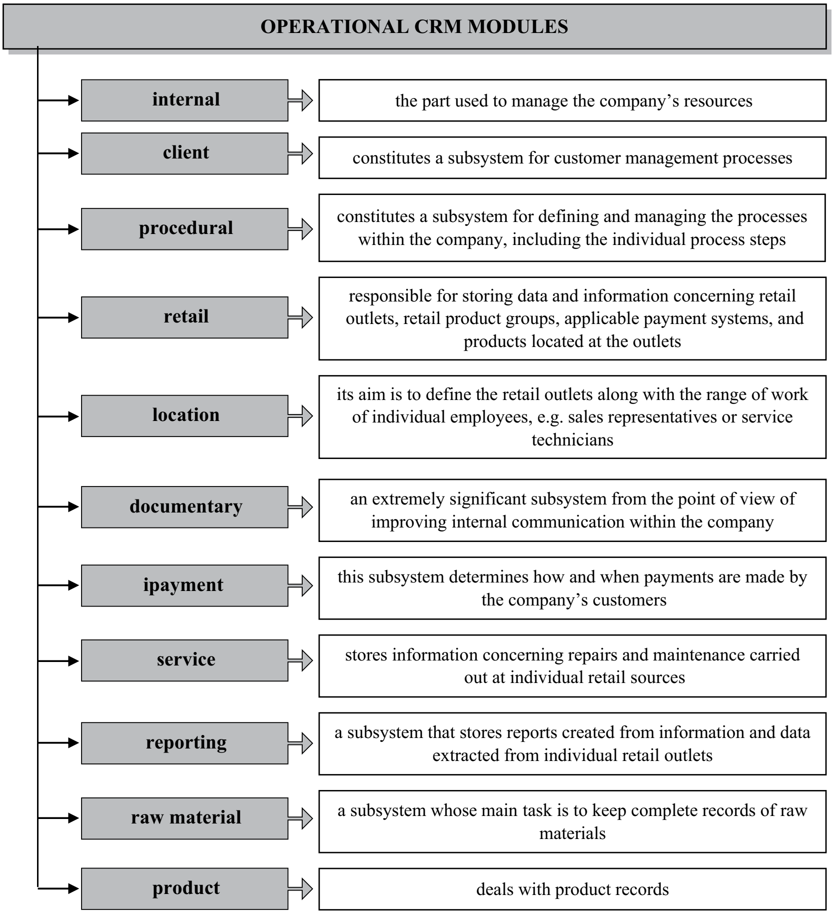

Figure 3.5 Operational CRM modules.

***Source*: own study, based on: Reinartz, Krafft and Hoyer 2004: 293–305.**

by linking individual employees, it is possible to create an account manager who is responsible for all contacts and implementing orders concerning a particular customer.

In the process module, the processes themselves are used to reflect the internal mechanisms of customer service. Thanks to defining given procedures, it is possible, among other things, to determine the exact status of a customer's order. In this subsystem, customers are assigned to specific processes, as well as to the relevant employees responsible for carrying out specific steps. This allows for the existence of tasks and workflows.

The customer module differs from the internal module in that it collects data and information about the company's customers. Thanks to collecting sufficient information, it is possible to define customer groups that have an impact on further segmentation in terms of specific advertising campaigns. It is also possible to enter the contact details of customer representatives into the system and to store the entire contact history between the customer and the company.

The retail subsystem allows the segmentation of retail shops and enables customers who have made a purchase to provide a rating. This module also contains information about the type of security used, the activities conducted, and the customers associated with the retail shop, which can even be a vending machine selling coffee. Information and data from the location module allow, for example, carrying out analyses concerning sales volumes in individual shops.

The payment module makes it possible to define various price lists, taking into account discounts and offers for individual customers.

The documentation module defines the documentation workflow within the company's organization. In this subsystem, documents can be assigned to given processes, for example, for the ordering process, this is an order document, and for an employee, it is a job application form.

The raw materials module not only stores accurate data concerning raw material purchase, storage, and sales volumes but also information on raw material suppliers.

The service subsystem is used to generate statistics regarding the failure rate of individual machines and equipment used in the retail shop.

The reporting module contains reports that provide information concerning the quantity of products sold at a given point as well as materials and raw materials transported to that point. Thanks to this, it is possible to identify and monitor the most profitable outlets.

The module also allows raw materials to be ordered in advance, avoiding shortages of raw materials that are in demand.

The product module stores detailed information on individual products and product groups, enabling their segmentation and further analysis of customer purchases.

The above modules are the source of information for the analytical CRM module, whose main task is to support decision-making that provides maximum benefit to the company.

Analytical CRM is mainly used for reporting (Al-Homery, Asharai, and Ahmad 2019: 121–145). Based on archived data, it is possible to generate reports that allow assessing investment risks and estimating potential incomes. The app provides easy access to archived data on the basis of which sales trends, that is, customer preferences and seasonality, can be identified, which determines customized offers. Analytical CRM requires an understanding of customers at the point of their contact with the company (Iriana and Buttle 2007: 23–42). It also requires technical solutions (collection and subsumption of information, better analytical processes) and new processes to strengthen customer-oriented activities that ensure customer loyalty and guarantee company profits.

Most CRM systems currently available on the market are equipped with modules allowing effective data analysis. The primary applications of CRM analytics include (Xu and Walton 2005: 955–971):

- purchasing analyses,
- sales analyses,
- web positioning analyses,
- website performance analyses,
- customer database performance analyses.

Using proper filters, it is possible to gain comprehensive customer data, for example, contact data, CRM (activity) data, and data in a Document Management System (DMS) app (usually included in CRM), for example, documents (Vargas and Samper 2012: 866–877). In the case of analytical CRM, collaboration with a call center is possible, and the sales unit can also generate reports in order to gain information whether individual customers are already in the database or view the history of the company's customer relationships. Therefore, analytical CRM becomes the company's control center. Persons authorized to hold the information can generate financial reports, sales reports, and purchase reports. The reports can be organized by date, sales manager/custodian, or customer. Analytical CRM can also collect information on customer preferences. This module allows tracking the websites that customers visit and understand the interests of potential ones, which can then be used to prepare exclusive sales offers. Analytical CRM also includes built-in filters that allow certain visitors to be ignored and not included in the visit statistics. In this way, the actual visit status of potential customers can be adjusted to eliminate the number of "artificial visitors," such as employees visiting the website. On this basis, it is also possible to predict the profile of potential buyers.

The benefits of implementing analytical CRM are obvious. The collected data and statistical analyses can help formulate corporate strategies and ultimately improve management processes. The following advantages of using analytical CRM include (Almohaimmeed 2021: 711–718):

- the possibility of acquiring new customers by linking websites with CRM apps,
- monitoring the level of interest from existing and potential customers,
- tracking the work of each employee and their contribution to the profitability of the company,
- effective control of which products and services generate the most revenue,
- creating reports that show the volume of revenue over different time periods.

Communication CRM allows clear, transparent, and better communication between customers and the company, taking into account and meeting predefined and expected customer needs. Collaborative/interactive CRM stands primarily for communicating with customers through different channels. Interactive CRM automates customer service processes. Each CRM module is, in fact, similar to an integrated CRM category system, and the correlation of the modules contributes to increasing the efficiency of the company's operations.

In global enterprises, integrated CRM-class systems are connected with other IT systems. Integrated CRM systems are usually designed individually for the company, resulting in that, after the implementation, managers looking for short-term benefits are not satisfied with the results. This is because the implementation process and the very concept of an integrated CRM system is a lengthy process. Whereas interactive CRM stands for direct contact, the exchange of information that takes place between a company's business partners and customers not only via traditional channels but also using modern technology. Interactive CRM combines the acquired customer data with sales and distribution channels – thus creating a network of contact channels. Interactive CRM includes active communication tools such as telephone, fax, SMS, and the Internet. These tools provide the opportunity to maintain the highest standards of service during the communication process.

The modularity of CRM systems allows the software to be better adapted to the needs of the company. These systems consist of three main modules: functional, analytical, and interaction. The functional module is the most extensive and includes a range of customer service functions. As an important supportive element, analytical CRM allows creating reports, summaries, and analyses that are essential for effective customer relationship management. Interactive CRM, although less developed, plays a significant role in maintaining contact with customers, and its importance has increased with the development of Internet technologies. All these modules work together to create personalized and flexible CRM solutions for different industries and business needs.

As the CRM market grows and evolves, modularity becomes a key factor in customizing systems to meet customer needs. Enterprises can take advantage of the modular structure of CRM to build systems tailored to their specific requirements, leading to increased efficiency and effectiveness in customer relationship management.

One of the trends having an impact on the development of CRM modularity consists in the growing use of cloud technologies. The cloud allows for easy integration and management of CRM modules, resulting in lower implementation and maintenance costs. Additionally, the cloud allows scaling the CRM system as the enterprise develops, which is particularly beneficial for small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Another important element of modular CRM systems is the integration with other IT systems used by companies, such as ERP or marketing automation systems (Imtiaz, Hauge, and Chen 2007: 469–476). Such integration allows data to be centralized and information to flow more easily between various systems, increasing management efficiency and supporting decision-making.

However, despite the many advantages of CRM modularity, there are also challenges associated with its implementation. Both the costs associated with module integration and potential compatibility issues between different modules must be taken into consideration. In order to avoid these problems, companies should carefully analyze their needs and make an informed choice concerning the provider and CRM system.

As a result, the modularity of CRM systems allows for greater flexibility, scalability, and customization for businesses. Therefore, both suppliers and users of CRM systems gain the possibility to adapt more easily to changing market conditions and increasing customer demands. As a result, modular CRM systems are becoming more common, contributing to further market growth and better customer relationship management across industries.

3.3 Using ICT in CRM

Information and communication technology (ICT) constitutes an integral part of modern business. Taking advantage of tools such as CRM systems, chatbots, or the personalization of communications makes it possible to increase the efficiency of operations, improve the quality of customer service, and build lasting relationships with recipients. Today, companies are more and more often using ICT solutions to improve their business processes and increase their market competitiveness. In this context, using technology in CRM is a significant part of business strategies. However, introducing new technologies into a company requires a well-thought-out approach and proper staff training to ensure their effective use (Brzozowska, Bubel, and Nekrasenko 2022).

The development of CRM would not be possible without using technologies that support its operation. These solutions include ICT, which combines information technology (using all available computing resources to gather, collect, or process information) and related technologies. Information technology is regarded as a collection of media in the form of computers and computer networks, tools in the form of software, and methods for the integrated use of information, for example, for acquiring, collecting, selecting, processing, and further transfer at any time and from anywhere. The scope of information technology includes information, computers, computing, and communication (Hitt and Brynjolfsson 1997: 81–101).

Information technology stands for a combination of computing and other technologies and disciplines that perform specific functions.

Information technology is constantly evolving – along with the development of technological tools and increasing knowledge relating to its use. It is precisely the technological tools that change the fastest, because "new innovations" such as computers, tablets, and smartphones are constantly emerging. The manners of using them evolve slower, whether because of the slow uptake of new knowledge or because of the difficulty of changing habits. Therefore, the biggest obstacle to the development of information technology consists in people's attitudes and disregard for the solutions it offers.

Information technology also has a significant impact not only on business development but also on the development of society. Universal access for all plays an important role in bridging the gap between different communities. Hence, one of the goals of sustainable development consists in equal access to information technology, bridging the technology gap between developed and developing countries, and reducing the dependence of developing countries on developed ones. Information technology has also enabled the emergence and development of information systems commonly used in organizations.

Modern information technologies include, among others, the Internet. The Internet may no longer be a modern solution in itself, but it certainly serves as a basis for building further tools that fall under the heading of information technology (Brzozowska, Bubel, and Nekrasenko 2022).

It is believed that the origins of the Internet date back to the 1950s, with its roots in the military sector. In 1957, the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) was established in the US Department of Defense (Sanders, Crowe, and Garcia 2004: 227–233). Its main task was to initiate and fund activities aimed at improving US military capabilities, that is, the country's military and technological capabilities. Thanks to this agency, the first computer network linking four academic centers was established in 1969. This network was later upgraded, and its operation was demonstrated at the International Conference on Computer Communications in 1972. This was followed by the change from experimental to accessible (1975), the introduction of Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) and Internet Protocol (IP) (1982), the introduction of Domain Name System (DNS) in 1983, and the launch of Wide Area Information Server (WAIS) in 1991. The activities that contributed to the spread of the Internet are still ongoing, but creating the World Wide Web (WWW) (Brzeziński 2016: 16) is considered to be the most significant element in its development and popularization. The Internet has replaced traditional mail and had an impact on all aspects of life, such as listening to the radio, watching TV, or shopping.

When talking about CRM, one cannot help but notice that the widespread use of the Internet allows customer relationship management. Alongside the Internet, new forms of digital services are playing an increasingly important role in business, attracting customers due to their attractiveness. Such technologies include Wireless Application Protocol (WAP), Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS), mobile phones, interactive television, and the Internet in the form of intranets and extranets (Bartram 2000: 261–274).

UMTS is a third-generation wireless telecommunications system (Chia 1992: 54–62). The system mainly makes it possible to use modern multimedia services, complex banking transactions, and online shopping. Users can use their mobile devices to make video calls and video conferences, listen to the radio, watch TV, as well as download music and movie files from online sources. UMTS is mainly used for the electronic distribution of newspapers, magazines, books, and games. Additionally, UMTS can access commercial databases such as railway timetables. Such a solution is beneficial for both parties, as companies do not need to increase the number of physical staff positions providing timetable information, and users can access the information without having to wait. UMTS also makes it possible to connect to company servers and work remotely from home (Samukic 1998: 1099–1104).

The intranet is a technology that allows any user, usually an employee of a company, to connect to people and apps and access information from anywhere in the world. The intranet is a network similar to the Internet and takes advantage of the most common Internet technologies to store information concerning the activities of the company itself, enabling collective teamwork. Intranet also includes internal email systems, file and print systems, and network resource control. Simply put, the intranet constitutes a corporate computer network whose mission is to provide information in accordance with the accepted and proven rules of the Internet. However, unlike the Internet, intranet users do not have access to all of its resources and

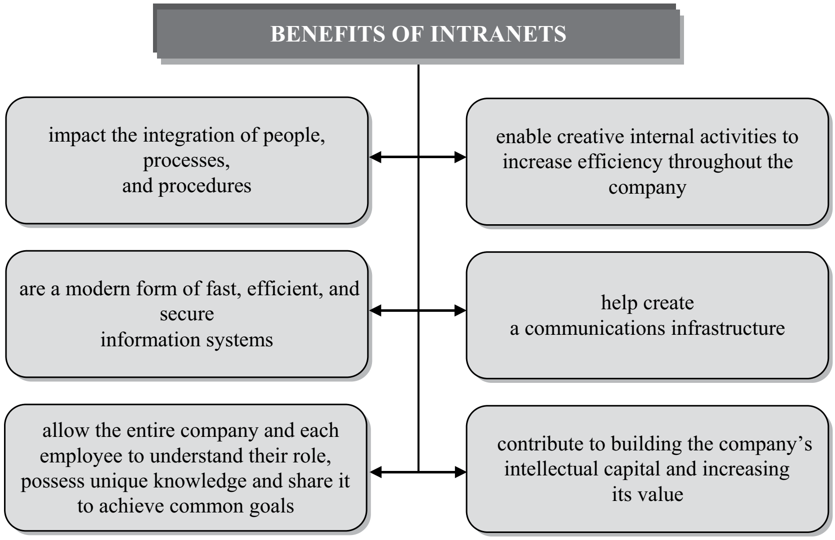

Figure 3.6 Benefits of intranets.

***Source*: own study, based on: Lai 2001: 95–100.**

cannot browse all of its websites. Features of intranets are described in Figure 3.6.

Intranets constitute a response to the phenomenon of globalization and have contributed to the emergence of multinational enterprises based on the ability to use information originating from various business units or branches. Thus, the intranet contributes to building a company's intellectual capital and increasing its value.

The WAP is a standard developed in 1998 and resulting from joint efforts by several companies, including telecom operators, telephone network operators, software manufacturers, and mobile phone manufacturers (Ericsson, Motorola, Nokia, and Openwave) (Erlandson and Ocklind 2000: 165–173). WAP constitutes a set of common standards defining how messages are encoded, encrypted, and transmitted, used by mobile phone users to access the information they need. Simply put, WAP has the same role as HTML. It allows creating documents that can be viewed and edited not only on mobile phones but also on mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones. The main advantage of WAP is constant access to information related to the economy, trade, culture, and entertainment. WAP is used as the basis for mobile banking as it enables many of the following activities.

WAP also allows users to check train timetables, buy tickets, check rail ticket availability, and access local information – customers who are WAP users can access the information they need in near real time. CRM can use this protocol to send notifications to customers, for example, concerning the expected delivery time of ordered products.

Another example of ICT used in CRM is the extranet, which constitutes at least two company networks that use Internet technology, enabling them to collaborate and carry out joint activities. Like intranets, extranets are internal computer networks that use solutions developed for the Internet. The extranet provides access to the internal computer network to selected external (privileged) parties, such as certain customers and partners, via the Internet, network resources, and web browsers while ensuring a high level of security. In this case, it is the company that identifies the privileged actors in the authentication process by providing access identifiers and passwords. Moreover, it defines the extent to which individual users can access the data.

Specialized programs for natural language communication between customers and companies are instead known as bots. Bots are usually placed on company websites and are designed to provide information about the offered products and services. The main feature of bots is that they use what is known as natural language, so the most human means of communication. Thanks to this, they are able to receive information and process it more quickly. Bots can also answer simple questions, which can significantly ease the burden on traditional call centers and help minimize their operational costs.

Meanwhile, state-of-the-art ICT technologies that impact the development of CRM, especially in the digital world, currently include artificial intelligence (AI), the cloud, the Internet of Things (IoT), social media, and blockchain (Wu et al. 2018: 2389–2406).

Cloud computing means using online services and resources to store data and information. According to a widely accepted definition, cloud computing constitutes ubiquitous, convenient, and on-demand access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources (networks, servers, storage, apps, services, etc.) over the Internet that can be provided and released efficiently with minimal effort or action on the part of the service provider in terms of management. Cloud computing also constitutes a platform that enables the dynamic provision, configuration, and reconfiguration of IT resources to meet a variety of needs – from research to services represented by e-commerce. That is because this effective solution makes it possible to respond directly to customer queries, which not only speeds up the customer service process but also maximizes its [the process's] quality (Qian et al. 2009: 626–631).

The IoT is a concept proposed by K. Ashton in 1999 to describe a system in which the real world communicates with the virtual world. It is important to note that the IoT only started to develop dynamically in 2009 when the number of people connected to the Internet exceeded the population of the planet. The IoT is understood as "an ecosystem in which objects can communicate with each other with or without human intervention." However, in order for the exchange of information to take place, three conditions must be met (Rose, Eldridge, and Chapin 2015: 1–50):

- devices equipped with sensors that collect and transmit the necessary information from the environment;
- devices that receive and process transmitted signals and result in a specific response;
- the communication medium, that is, the manner in which data is transmitted.

When discussing the IoT in terms of CRM, it finds application, for example, in the industry, and more specifically – in companies selling machinery and equipment with simultaneous transport to customers. The machines are then equipped with sensors that continuously transmit data concerning their condition and operation, as well as any hazards that could cause damage. This avoids downtime due to machine breakdowns and ensures an effective after-sales service.

In turn, AI can automate the work of sales representatives by analyzing and scanning the history of all orders and identifying, for example, outstanding payments (Chui, Manyika, and Miremadi 2015: 1–9). Thanks to using AI to perform simpler tasks on their behalf, both sales reps and other staff can focus on more complex issues and interactions with customers.

Whereas the essence of blockchain is to connect customer data to all areas of the business – sales, service, and marketing. Blockchain enables integrating a single customer's entire transaction history, allowing for a holistic view of all their interactions with the company, which was not possible in a traditional CRM environment (before the digital revolution).

Ergo, information and communication technologies are an integral part of today's multinational enterprises, and their continuous development has an impact on corporate performance not only at the operational level but also at the tactical and strategic levels (Roberts 2000: 429–443). Because information and communication technologies have a fundamental impact on the success of the adopted strategy, companies are more and more often basing their strategies on the available information and communication technologies. In the case of multinational companies, taking into consideration CRM systems implemented at a strategic level, it can be argued that ICT is an integral part of these systems. The following development of CRM is also likely to be heavily dependent on developments in ICT. This is because, in this case, the IT tools and communication technology tools are changing and emerging first, and the CRM system is evolving to use them. Due to this, it will lead to changes in formulating strategies of MNCs (Vaara and Tienar 2008: 985–993).

Using information and communication technologies constitutes an integral part of CRM systems. The development of these systems would not be impossible without using available technological tools to efficiently collect, gather, and process information. Today's multinational enterprises are more and more often basing their business strategies on available technologies, and CRM systems are heavily dependent on ICT developments. Due to this, further development of CRM systems will depend on emerging technological tools, and companies are going to have to adapt their strategies according to the availability and usability of these tools.

3.4 CRM and Social Media

The development of social media has resulted in many changes in the marketing industry, which are recognized by all users of the portals (Biloš and Kelić 2012: 155–174). Right after the first use of these platforms for advertising, many attempts were made to customize and adapt messages to individual users defined by specific characteristics such as age, gender, and location, as well as preferences and personality types. Social media has proven to be a very important tool for implementing effective ways to attract attention and interact with content, which constitutes part of the essence of its creation. The popularity of web services results perhaps due to human nature – the inherent desire to be present in society, even if only digitally. Social media constitute a place to share content, engage in conversations with other users, or respond publicly (access to written and shared content for all friends). All these opportunities offered by social networks have proven to be crucial in creating a platform for marketing messages in a modern and interactive format, characterized by increased effectiveness compared to traditional forms of advertising.

Differentiation based on the characteristic features of each user is an approach in line with the concept of customer centricity. Applying this strategy to social media has proven to be an effective way to achieve measurable marketing results. Social media also provides the opportunity to create new customer contact channels with unique features and high effectiveness, which can have an impact on the level of service quality. This is particularly significant for companies operating in highly competitive markets.

A. M. Kaplan and M. Haenlein define social media as a group of Internet apps based on the ideological and technological foundations of the second-generation World Wide Web (Web 2.0) that enable creating and sharing user-generated content (Okazaki and Taylor 2013: 56–71). The form of social media is influenced by the dynamic development of the Internet, the phenomenon of faster Internet connections, more efficient equipment, and lower purchase and usage costs, as well as by social changes manifested in a growing awareness of the technical capabilities of hardware and software, especially among young people (Brzozowska and Bubel 2015: 45–51). The impact of these changes is beginning to be experienced. Social media allow many companies to gather customer feedback on new products and effectively expand or reduce production, increase or decrease sales and marketing activities, and product recalls. This information can be easily tracked, registered, and reported via web-based CRM apps (Adebanjo 2003: 570–577).

The rapid expansion of social media into everyone's lives is bringing irreversible changes to many aspects of life. The increase in social media users has also led to new developments in various industries, such as selling products or providing services. The changes resulting from new information and a new form of communication have a significant impact on the manner in which all businesses operate, especially those that want to remain competitive on the market. The transformation of businesses takes place gradually, depending on the speed at which new technological trends and conditions begin to operate. The mentioned changes have a significant impact on aspects of CRM, with which CRM systems are closely linked (Dziwulski and Ogrzebacz 2017).

Contemporary social media constitute a platform on which innovative entrepreneurs operate. This tool provides opportunities for growth and is the basis for modern forms of marketing implemented using CRM strategies. There are many opportunities offered to organizations by social media (Figure 3.7).

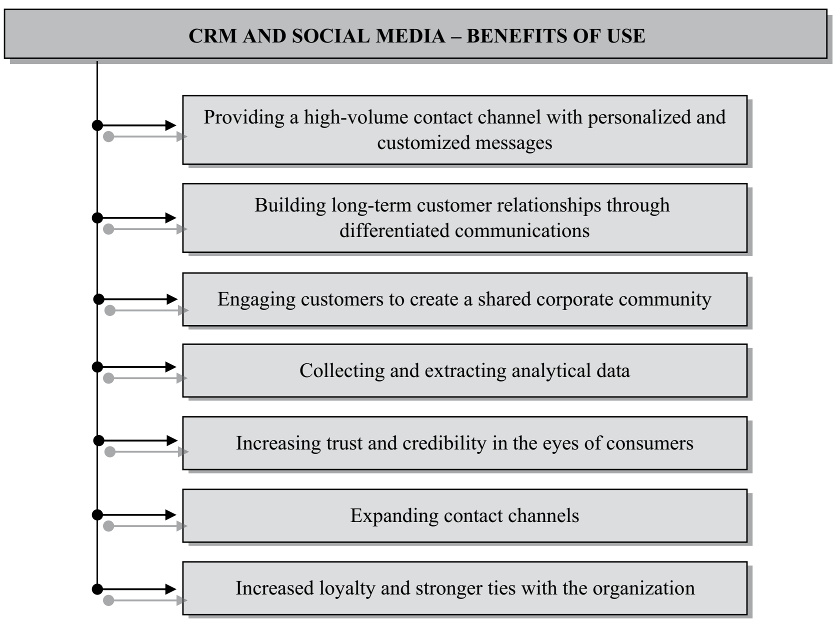

Figure 3.7 CRM and social media – benefits of use.

***Source*: own study.**

Table 3.1 Selected Categories of Social Media Portals and Examples

CATEGORIES OF PORTALS	EXAMPLE
Expressing opinions and views	Internet forums, blogs
Sharing resources	YouTube
Building interpersonal relationships	Facebook
Information platforms	Livestream services
Co-creation portals	Collaboration and cooperation in online games

Source: (Buczek 2021: 74).

The classification of the different types of portals presented in Table 3.1 allows assessing the value of a company's activities, assessing their effectiveness, and planning future activities. Entrepreneurs take advantage of social media to (Bojanowska 2018):

- build a positive brand image (45%);
- sell and promote services and products (43%);
- collect and expand the customer base (41%);
- conduct word-of-mouth marketing (41%);
- company community formation (34%).

Long-term relationships based on many years of customer loyalty and positively perceiving a company's image are valuable assets that stabilize revenues and allow the company to grow in many important ways. Maintaining attractiveness is becoming increasingly difficult as the market is crowded with companies having similar competences. A way to gain an advantage in this competition is to bet on innovation and new ways of taking advantage of technological developments (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka 2021).

The assessment of competitiveness from the consumer's point of view can be based on the added value of each company – its brand. By collecting the tangible and intangible values perceived in the context of a particular company, customers can form an opinion about the degree of emotional and environmental connection and identification with the image. Customers' beliefs, collected based on their own experiences and external sources, determine their ultimate tendency to interact with organizations offering similar or identical products and services. Therefore, branding is one of the key factors influencing customers' shopping decisions. Furthermore, for many consumers, certain brands include additional meanings based on cult, prestige, and emotional associations, and owning certain products indicates status in terms of social relationships. Acquiring a group of loyal customers can also provide significant benefits to a company in the long term.

Building a social media image is a long-term process, and the number of persons receiving a company's content often grows at a satisfactory rate. Broadening the reach of the message can be supported by skillful Public Relations (PR) activities, modern promotional techniques, or increased advertising budgets. Apart from the many benefits of social media activity, there are also drawbacks that every entrepreneur should be prepared for. The incorrect use of certain e-marketing tools can damage an organization's image and reputation. An equally undesirable situation consists in the emergence of unfriendly and critical portal users, which can lead to deteriorating a positive image. Responsible and careful management of the content writing team can minimize the risk of unwanted incidents, so it is worth paying attention to the approach consisting in continuously managing and improving ways to increase the effectiveness of online activities (Dziwulski and Ogrzebacz 2017).

Integrating image-building through social media with customer service activities is one of the modern approaches used by companies. An example may consist of an online service called directly from social media profiles as an innovation distinguishing companies from their competitors (Lupa-Wójcik 2016). Intuitive apps allow customers to ask questions or report unexpected problems. On the other hand, an automated app allows customers to select a specific category and model of equipment and report a specific type of question. They [customers] then receive feedback concerning the problem, including standard solutions and guidance most commonly used for this type of question. If the problem is not resolved, customers have the option to ask for further assistance. In order to do so, the customer can contact a qualified staff member via email, thus providing additional information about the problem and leaving contact details for the company's response. Such an app also provides an additional way to chat with staff in real time. The services provided via this solution are transparent and reliable, and the customer receives an efficient and high-quality solution package and is committed to providing the best possible support. Finally, advisors can provide feedback to assess satisfaction with the performed communication (Lupa-Wójcik 2016).

An automated customer support system constitutes not only a very useful tool to help customers solve problems but also an indicator of high service standards. Simplicity of use positively influences perceptions and is an outlet for the high expectations of all consumer groups, including those who have little experience with online interactions. Problem-solving apps are an additional channel of communication, but are still only complementary to the main social media channels. Many customers choose to communicate via the company portal because it gives the impression of direct communication. Good response times to questions and comments, as well as high-quality content, are important – companies looking for modern, high-quality services should not neglect communication in this area. Moreover, consumer signals constitute informative material for companies, as are suggestions concerning service and product specifications as well as possible developments. All of these events happening on social media can help create a positive corporate image if the organization responds appropriately. Communication on social profiles is an opportunity for businesses to significantly improve consumer opinion and show that they are a professional company that cares about consumers (Lupa-Wójcik 2016).

As an important online presence for companies, the information space is being increasingly used by a constantly growing number of Internet users (Szucs 2020: 26–36). Content published on official websites and official profiles with the permission of the company from which it originates provides reliable and easily accessible information for consumers interested in interacting. This is important for businesses, as customers aware of the convenience are increasingly willing to shop online. One of the most effective and efficient online sales tools consists in a personalized recommendation system. Thanks to the interactive nature of the Internet and related data resources, offers can be personalized for specific types of customers. Modern recommendation methods offer many opportunities to acquire new customers interested in personalized products and to inform existing customers about new products that meet their expectations (Dziwulski and Ogrzebacz 2017).

One of the most effective mechanisms shaped by the development of social media is that of user product ratings. Consumers can share opinions concerning product features, as well as pictures after purchase, indicating a high degree of credibility because the feedback comes from customers who are very close to those interested in the product. Opinions, photos, and feedback play an important role in the decision-making process and help reduce the risk of misguided purchases. Such solutions became part of the policy of many manufacturing companies because they allow disseminating reliable product information and guarantee the quality and authenticity of the product (Gregor and Stawiszyński 2011).

From the perspective of consumers and producers, another attractive feature offered by social media is the Facebook Connect service (Ko et al. 2010: 37–43). This service allows users to connect to other websites (e.g., online shops) using their Facebook account. The data used for this account is transferred to a link on the website (shop), and the customer has direct access to the ordering process. This solution saves time and makes it much easier to use online shops.

Social networks are spaces for all users to gather information, including, but not limited to, such diverse data as needs, plans, preferences, contact details, or even behaviors and performed activities. Many aspects of online life leave a digital footprint and, without a meaningful context, become a collection of valueless impulses. However, analyzing this data in an aggregated manner can be useful to extract meaningful descriptions that are directly relevant to the management domain. The usability of resources depends not only on quantity but also on diversity, which allows specific business models to be created, to a large extent tailored to specific consumer profiles. The resources available on social media contribute not only to structuring and using analytical skills in creating offers but also to the correct and adequate distribution of products and services (Kachniewska 2017).

Social media information sources are organized in a highly variable and spontaneous manner. Because they are updated in real time, the dynamics of content are high and cannot be fully controlled by companies. Monitoring Internet user activity can constitute an invaluable process for companies to correctly interpret the collected data and reflect it in the market realities (Chatterjee et al. 2019: 144–157).

Information posted on social media can be used to gather insights into consumer trends and needs. Additionally, a high level of Internet user activity in the organization's environment can impact the improvement of the quality of communication and deepen the positive image (Dziwulski and Ogrzebacz 2017).

Globalization, developing new communication methods and channels, changes in the manner of processing information, and the decline in the effectiveness of traditional advertising are all factors that have led to the popularity of the concept of marketing communication integration (Janakova 2021: 06014). This concept is defined as creating, developing, and assessing communication channels that lead to increased mutual satisfaction through interaction and stakeholder involvement in meeting their needs. This concept is fully in line with the activities that companies carry out on social media. The conditions for integrating communication activities in relation to the different audiences and channels used are well-implemented thanks to the technological possibilities offered by modern social media (Scheibe 2014).

Social media messages are very different from the traditional forms of promotion used by companies that do not engage in virtual activities. The advantage of advertising on social media consists in a more reliable reception based on personalized content, taking into account the results of segmentation data analysis. Another advantage of online marketing is the low price for the reach of messages (Scheibe 2014).

A new version of online word-of-mouth marketing plays an important role in social media. It consists in attracting the attention of leaders, stimulating the attention of consumers, and shaping their views. Through online activities on social profiles, forums and blogs, leaders create small campaigns geared toward promoting products and services. The primary advantage of this type of advertising is the ability to reach a specific target group by interacting with a group of users who follow a selected leader. It should also be noted that the smaller the audience that shows trust in a less popular creation, the more effective the message (Bojanowska 2018).

The development of social media has revolutionized the marketing industry, enabling the customization of messages and interaction with audiences. These platforms became crucial for creating effective marketing messages, and their popularity results due to the people's natural need to be part of society. Using the customer-centricity approach in social media allows achieving better marketing results and creating new, effective customer contact channels (Canhoto, Clark, and Fennemore 2013: 413–428). An increase in the number of social media users is impacting change across industries, and the transformation of businesses is occurring as they adapt to new trends and technological conditions. Today's social media constitute a platform for innovative entrepreneurs, offering opportunities for growth and modern forms of marketing using CRM systems (Matthews 2010: 17–23).

CRM systems play a key role in integrating with social media, enabling enterprises to better manage customer relationships and analyze data collected from different communication channels (Olszak 2013: 367–387). Combining the two allows companies to monitor customer behavior and preferences more effectively, which leads to better-tailored offers and marketing communications.

In practice, CRM systems support the analysis and segmentation of data collected from social media, allowing to reach the right audiences with precisely tailored messages (Czyszczoń and Zgrzywa 2013: 552–561). Due to the above, companies can build long-lasting relationships with customers based on trust and loyalty.

It is also worth noting that social media enables companies to gather information on their competitors, allowing them to adapt to changing market conditions and respond more quickly to customer needs in a better way. Integrating CRM systems with social media gives companies more control over their online presence and the ability to quickly resolve issues and provide support to customers (Mohan, Choi, and Min 2008: 237–244).

Combining CRM systems with social media allows businesses to manage customer relationships more effectively, better understand customer needs, while optimizing marketing strategies. This synergy contributes to increasing the competitiveness of companies on the market and allows for the development of modern forms of marketing.

Part 4
Evaluation and Optimization of the Customer Care Strategy in Modern Business

4.1 Measuring the Effectiveness of Customer Care Activities

Customer care is a key factor contributing to the success of companies on the international market. In order to make it easier to understand and implement customer care techniques, it is worth looking at the practical tools and case studies that can inspire to improve the day-to-day business operations (Reichheld 2003). This chapter presents a tool called the Net Promoter Score (NPS) and discusses cases of companies that have successfully implemented customer care techniques (Markey, Reichheld, and Dullweber 2009). In the age of globalization and international competition, customer care is becoming increasingly important. Companies that are able to understand their customers' needs and provide them with valuable solutions gain a competitive advantage and build a sustainable foundation for success (Kotler and Armstrong 2010).

Measuring the effectiveness of customer care activities is a process that requires not only monitoring of basic indicators but also a deeper analysis that will facilitate understanding which factors impact the effectiveness and how the latter can be improved. In addition to the basic indicators (Table 4.1), there are a number of factors that can be taken into account when evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities (Dastane 2020: 142–158).

Analysis of the above indicators allows for a more comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of customer care activities and identification of the areas for further improvement. It is also important to tailor the indicators to the specific industry and company objectives to ensure that the correct measurement tools and analysis methods

DOI: 10.1201/9781032713915-5

Table 4.1 Indicators for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Customer Care Activities

Response time	Measures the average time between the customer's contact and the moment a response is received or a problem is resolved. Shorter response times usually mean better customer service.
Solution time	Measures the average time between a customer's contact and the complete resolution of the issue. A high rate of fast problem resolution is desirable because the customer expects effective and quick support.
Customer satisfaction	It is possible to collect feedback and assessments from customers concerning the quality of service, their satisfaction, and their overall experience. A high customer satisfaction rate constitutes a positive sign that the customer care strategy yields the expected results.
Number of complaints	Measures the number of complaints from customers. A decrease in the number of complaints may indicate effective customer service, while an increase may suggest shortcomings in the customer care strategy.
Customer loyalty	It is possible to monitor the repeated purchase rates, the time the customer has been engaging with the company, and the level of customer recommendation. High customer loyalty is an indicator of effective service and building lasting relationships.
Usage of technological tools	It measures the extent to which technology, such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, chatbots, or data analytics, is used in the customer service process. Effectively using these tools can improve customer care operations and increase efficiency.

Source: own study.

are in place. For a broader understanding of the issue, it was decided to characterize and describe some of the mentioned aspects in more detail.

The first contact rate measures the percentage of customer requests that were successfully resolved with a single interaction or contact. The higher this indicator, the more effectively the operation of the customer care team. If customers have to repeatedly contact the company to resolve their issues, this can have a negative impact on their experience and satisfaction. A high first contact rate constitutes an important measure of the effectiveness of customer care activities, because it reflects the team's ability to solve customers' problems already at the first interaction. There are several factors that can influence this indicator and determine the effectiveness of customer service (Table 4.2).

Thus, the first contact rate constitutes an important element in evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities. In order to achieve a high level of this indicator, it is necessary to focus on staff competence, access to information and tools, optimization of customer service processes, multichannel, high service quality, proactivity,

Table 4.2 Factors Impacting the Effectiveness of Customer Service

Staff competence and knowledge	Customer service staff should be competent and knowledgeable in order to effectively solve problems and answer customer queries. Proper training and ongoing staff development in terms of the company's products, services, and processes are crucial for improving the competences of the customer care team.
Access to information and tools	In order to effectively resolve customer issues at first contact, the employees must have easy access to the information and tools necessary to respond or resolve the problem. CRM systems can support customer care teams by enabling them to collect and share information about customers, interaction history, or previous problems.
Customer service processes	The efficiency of customer service also depends on well-designed processes. If the customer care team lacks consistent and efficient service procedures, this can lead to unnecessary delays or the need to redirect calls to other departments. It is crucial that processes are optimized, clear, and flexible, enabling employees to resolve customer issues quickly and efficiently.
Omnichannel customer service	Customers use a variety of communication channels, such as phone, email, online chat, and social media. It is important that the customer care team is able to handle customers across various channels, ensuring a consistent and effective experience regardless of the chosen communication medium. Integrating various channels into a single customer service system can help reduce response times and improve first contact rates.
High-quality customer service	Effective customer service requires high-quality interactions. Employees should be polite, patient, empathetic, and focused on solving customers' problems. Caring for the quality of customer service in terms of the language and tone of communication, as well as the ability to listen and solve problems, contributes to the effectiveness of customer service at first contact. Regular monitoring of the quality of interactions and providing training and feedback to the employees are all crucial for ensuring a high-quality service.

(*Continued*)

Table 4.2 (Continued)

Proactivity and personalization	It is important that the customer care team is not only responsive to customer requests but also proactive. This means that the employees should proactively seek opportunities to help and resolve customer problems even before they are reported. In addition, the personalization of customer service, that is, tailoring interactions to the individual needs and preferences of customers, contributes to more effective problem-solving at the first contact.
Measurement and monitoring system	In order to assess the effectiveness of customer service and first contact rates, it is essential to use proper measurement and monitoring systems. It is possible to collect data concerning response times, the number of diverted calls, customer satisfaction, or the number of problems resolved at first contact. Regular analysis of this data will allow identifying areas for improvement and introducing proper optimization measures.

Source: own study.

personalization, and the use of measurement and monitoring systems. Improvement of the effectiveness of customer service at first contact facilitates increased customer satisfaction and the creation of a positive company image (Lu 2021: 2998–3002).

Another important aspect that is worth taking into consideration during the analysis of the effectiveness of customer care activities is the report escalation rate. The escalation rate concerns situations where a customer request cannot be resolved at the first level of customer support and must be escalated to a higher level, such as specialists or supervisors.

The escalation rate constitutes an important indicator that can provide information on the effectiveness of the customer service process. A high escalation rate may suggest several potential problems. Firstly, it may indicate a lack of sufficient skills or knowledge among members of the customer service team, which makes it difficult for them to deal effectively with more difficult cases. In such a situation, it may be necessary to provide additional training and competence development for staff to enable them to solve more complex customer problems themselves.

Secondly, a high escalation rate may result from a lack of appropriate tools, procedures, or resources available at the first level of customer service. This may mean a need to introduce or improve information technology (IT) systems, knowledge bases, or access to specialists in order to provide better opportunities to solve customer problems on-site. Providing the customer service team with the right tools and resources can reduce the need for escalation and contribute to more efficient customer service.

Monitoring the escalation rate of notifications is important as it allows identification of areas where improvement actions need to be taken. Analyzing the causes of escalating requests allows us to identify trends and recurring problems, which can be solved by adjusting processes, training staff, or introducing additional resources. Understanding and reducing escalation rates helps to improve the customer experience, reduce problem-solving times, and increase trust in the company.

Conclusions from analyzing the escalation rate should be taken into account in the further optimization of the customer care strategy (Yeo, Gog, and Rezaei 2017: 150–162). This may include additional training and the development of employee competences, adjusting customer service procedures, improving support systems, or providing additional resources and tools at the first level of customer service. There are actions that can help reduce the escalation rate, namely:

- Specific training
  Customer service employees should be properly trained to deal with a variety of problems and situations. Training should cover both the technical aspects of the job and interpersonal skills. Additional training can be directed at specific topics that are often the cause of increasing the escalation rate, such as handling complaints, solving complex technical problems, or managing conflict situations.
- Improving knowledge bases
  Ensuring that employees have access to an up-to-date and comprehensive knowledge base allows them to resolve customer issues quickly and efficiently. The knowledge base should be constantly updated and easily accessible so that employees can quickly find answers to the questions of customers. Introducing information sharing, search, and tagging tools can make the work of the customer service team much easier and also reduce the need to escalate issues.
- Improving procedures and processes
  Analyzing the causes of the increased escalation rate can help identify gaps in current customer service procedures and

processes. This could include introducing clearer and more specific guidelines for resolving issues, speeding up response times to customer requests, or improving the flow of information between different teams. It is also important to monitor the effectiveness of the introduced changes and adjust the procedures when necessary.

- Specialist support
  In the case of more complex problems or situations where first-level customer service employees may encounter difficulties, it is important to ensure access to specialists having appropriate skills. This could include setting up a dedicated support team that can provide consultation and help resolve client issues when standard procedures are not sufficient. Specialist support can significantly reduce the need to increase escalated rates and improve the overall efficiency of customer service.
- Constant monitoring and analysis
  The escalation rate should be monitored on an ongoing basis to notice any patterns and trends. Regular analysis of data concerning the escalation rate will allow identifying recurring problems and potential areas for improvement. Regular meetings can be held with the customer service team to discuss the results of the analysis and identify solutions. Customer service employees, who are on the front line with customers, can provide valuable feedback and suggestions for improving processes and procedures.
- Analytical tools
  These tools enable real-time tracking and reporting of escalation rates, making it possible to respond to situations that require immediate action. Such tools can provide detailed data that allows deeper analysis of the escalation causes and identify areas that need further optimization.
- Collecting feedback and opinions from customers concerning service that required escalation
  This can be carried out through a survey or a customer service evaluation system. Customer feedback can provide valuable insights into weaknesses in the customer service process and indicate specific areas for improvement.

Ergo, the escalation rate constitutes an important element in evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities. Analyzing this indicator allows identifying areas where improvements are needed, such as staff training, access to specialists, or improving knowledge bases and customer service procedures. Constant monitoring, data analysis, and inclusion of customer feedback in the analysis are crucial for successful optimization of the customer care strategy and providing customers with the best possible service experience.

It is also worth analyzing data concerning repeated requests. This indicator refers to the number of requests from the same customer over a short period of time. A high number of repeat requests may suggest that previous requests have not been properly resolved or that the customer is dissatisfied with the results. Monitoring this indicator allows recurring problems to be identified and action to be taken to resolve them permanently.

The following step in analyzing the effectiveness of customer care activities is researching trends and benchmarking (Nagariya, Kumar, and Kumar, 2020: 333–369). This includes comparing current results with previous periods to see whether the implemented changes and improvements provide positive results. Researching trends allows identifying possible patterns and tendencies in the effectiveness of customer care activities. Benchmarking can provide valuable information concerning a company's positioning in the area of customer care compared to its competitors. It is possible to compare performance indicators, such as response times, resolution rates, or customer service rates, with the data available on the market. If a company's performance is lower than that of its competitors, this may indicate a need to introduce improvements and adapt its customer care strategy to meet customer expectations and industry standards (Rana and Paul 2017: 157–165).

The following element of analysis of the effectiveness of customer care activities consists in identification of weaknesses and areas for improvement. Thanks to analysis of data and customer feedback, it is possible to identify the most common problems and areas where the company can improve. For example, if many of the requests relate to delivery delays, the company can focus on improvement of the logistics process or communication with suppliers. It is crucial to constantly improve and adapt the customer care strategy based on available information and market trends.

In addition to analyzing the indicators, it is also important to take customer feedback into account. Satisfaction surveys, service ratings, or reviews on social media provide valuable information concerning the customer experience and satisfaction levels. By analyzing this information, it is possible to identify specific areas for improvement and make changes to customer service processes and procedures (Setiawati et al. 2019: 2004–2007).

An important aspect of evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities also consists in awareness of the changing needs and expectations of customers. Customer trends and preferences can change along with the development of technology, the emergence of new communication channels, or changes in the society. Therefore, it is important to keep up-to-date with these changes and adapt the customer care strategy to new customer requirements (Lee and Lee 2020: 1–22).

As can be seen from the above, the effectiveness of customer care constitutes a complex process that requires analyzing a variety of indicators, comparative data, customer feedback, and considering changing trends. Evaluation and optimization of the customer care strategy should be a continuous process aimed at improving customer service and increasing customer satisfaction, which translates into success and growth for the company in today's competitive business environment (Pambreni et al. 2019: 1397–1406).

In addition to the previously mentioned indicators and data analysis, there are also other aspects to consider when evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities in modern business (Table 4.3):

Analyzing the effectiveness of customer care activities can take into account indicators such as (Mccoll-Kennedy et al. 2012: 370–389):

- Impact of customer care activities on generating new sales leads.
- The effectiveness of customer care activities in converting potential customers into paying customers.
- The impact of customer service on customer retention rates and long-term relationships.
- Taking advantage of the information collected in the customer service process to personalize marketing activities and offers.
- Analyzing the impact of customer care activities on brand reputation and image.

Table 4.3 Selected Aspects Significant for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Customer Care Activities in Modern Business

Customer service personalization	In contemporary times, customers expect a personalized approach and service. It is important to focus on measuring the effectiveness of personalization, for example, by monitoring indicators such as the degree to which responses are tailored to specific customer needs or the ability to recognize customers and tailor interactions to their purchase history and preferences.
Omnichannel and integration	Customers take advantage of various communication channels, such as email, live chat, social media, and telephone. It is worth analyzing the effectiveness of customer care activities across channels and measuring indicators such as response times across channels, consistency of response between channels, or the ability to seamlessly integrate between channels to ensure a consistent and effective customer experience.
Proactivity and prevention	An effective customer care strategy is not just about responding to customer requests but also about being proactive and preventing problems. It is important to measure the effectiveness of preventive actions, such as providing information and support before a problem occurs, providing advice and guidance, as well as tracking and analyzing trends to anticipate potential problems and act accordingly.
Employee commitment	The effectiveness of customer care activities strongly depends on the commitment and competence of employees. By monitoring indicators such as the level of employee training and development, their commitment to customer care, their problem-solving skills, and their ability to build positive relationships with customers, it is possible to assess the effectiveness of the customer care team and identify areas for improvement.
Cost and efficiency analysis	Measuring the effectiveness of customer care activities also requires assessing costs and efficiency. It is worth analyzing how much it costs to handle individual requests, what are the costs of maintaining a customer care team, or what are the costs compared to the benefits, such as increased sales or loyalty.
Improving processes automation	Evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities should take into account the possibilities of improving customer care processes as well as the potential for automation. Analyzing the time and efficiency of each step in the customer service process can help identify delays, repetitive activities, or unnecessary steps. It is also possible to assess which parts of the process can be automated, which might include, for example, answering recurring questions via chatbots or having customers solve simple problems themselves via self-service platforms.

(*Continued*)

Table 4.3 (Continued)

Analyzing links between indicators	The effectiveness of customer care activities is often linked to other aspects of the company's activity. It is worth researching the links between customer care indicators and other key business indicators, such as sales rates, customer retention rates, or profitability indicators. Analyzing these links will help to understand how customer care activities affect company-wide performance and how the customer care strategy can be optimized in the context of larger business objectives.
Customer participation	An effective customer care strategy can include the engagement of customers in decision-making processes and product or service development. It is possible to measure the effectiveness of customer care activities by analyzing customer participation in product tests, providing feedback, or activity on discussion groups and social media platforms. Properly using this information and customer engagement can contribute to greater customer satisfaction as well as increased loyalty and engagement.
Benchmarking with the industry	Comparing results and practices with other companies in the industry can be a valuable tool in analyzing the effectiveness of customer care activities. It is possible to analyze the industry's best practices and trends and participate in customer satisfaction benchmarking surveys. This way, it is possible to identify areas where the company can improve and positively differentiate itself from its competitors. Evaluating and optimizing the customer care strategy constitutes an ongoing process that requires systematic monitoring, data analysis, and adapting activities to the changing customer needs and expectations. Companies should invest in analytical tools, technologies, and processes that allow for effective evaluation and constant improvement of the customer experience.
Organizational culture and employee engagement	The effectiveness of customer care activities is closely linked to organizational culture and employee engagement. Companies should focus on building a positive customer service culture, where employees are aware that they are key brand ambassadors and have an impact on the customer experience. Evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities should also include assessing employee engagement, job satisfaction, and the degree of identifying with the company's values and mission.
Long-term customer relationships	An efficient customer care strategy is not just about solving the current problems of customers but also about building long-term relationships with them. It is worth analyzing indicators such as customer loyalty, repeat purchase rates, or customer testimonials, which indicate a company's ability to maintain and develop customer relationships over the long term.

(*Continued*)

Table 4.3 (Continued)

Using new technologies	In today's modern business, technology plays a key role in the area of customer care. Evaluating the effectiveness of customer care activities should include an assessment of using new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), process automation, chatbots, or data analytics. Technological capabilities can increase the efficiency and personalization of customer service, as well as contribute to faster resolution of problems.
Taking into account emotional factors	Effective customer service is not just limited to technical aspects but also takes emotional factors into account. It is important to measure indicators such as customer satisfaction, the level of emotional engagement of customers, or the level of positive experiences. Analysis of these factors will help to understand how customer care activities affect the emotions of customers and how stronger emotional relationships can be built.
Constant improvement and innovation	The effectiveness of customer care activities requires an approach based on continuous improvement and innovation. Companies should be open to introducing new solutions, experimenting with different strategies, and monitoring the effects. The evaluation of the effectiveness of customer care activities should promote a culture of continuous improvement and encourage innovation.
Implementing and monitoring changes	After analyzing the effectiveness of customer care activities and identifying areas for improvement, it is important to implement changes effectively. It is worth developing an action plan that includes specific steps, responsibility for their implementation, and a defined timetable. When implementing the changes, progress and results should also be monitored to ensure that the actions taken to optimize the customer care strategy provide the desired effect.
Measuring customer satisfaction	Customer satisfaction constitutes a key indicator of the effectiveness of customer care activities. In addition to assessing the overall satisfaction indicators, it is also worth examining specific areas such as ease of contact with customer service, quality of provided assistance, or satisfaction with the complaints process. Customer satisfaction studies can be carried out by means of a survey, interviews, or analysis of comments and opinions on social media.
Constant development of employee competences	Employees responsible for customer care should possess proper competences and skills to effectively implement the customer care strategy. It is important to provide training and development of skills to allow the employees to solve problems effectively, build positive customer relations, as well as take advantage of customer care tools and technology.

(*Continued*)

Table 4.3 (Continued)

Monitoring trends and changes in customer expectations	The business environment and customer expectations are constantly changing. That is why it is important to monitor market trends and changes in customer preferences. Analyzing this information allows adapting the customer care strategy to new requirements and ensuring that the company is up-to-date with the latest trends concerning customer care.
The role of technology in optimizing customer care strategies	Modern technologies such as AI, data analytics, and chatbots have great potential in optimizing customer care strategies. Studying the effectiveness of customer care activities should include an assessment of using these technologies and their impact on the effectiveness of customer care. It is possible to measure such indicators as the response time of a chatbot, the degree of customer satisfaction in terms of their interaction with AI, or the number of problems solved through automation.
An integrated approach to customer care	An effective customer care strategy should be integrated with other areas of the company's activity. It is worth extending the evaluation of the effectiveness of customer care activities to include the impact of customer care on other areas such as marketing, sales, or CRM.

Source: own study.

This way, evaluation of the effectiveness of customer care activities becomes more holistic and allows one to understand the complete impact of customer care on different aspects of the company's business. Integration of this data and analysis of the relationships between individual data allows making more informed decisions to optimize customer care strategies (Vieira et al. 2022: 709–739).

Conclusions drawn from the analysis of the effectiveness of customer care activities should be used to continue the process of improvement and optimization. It is worth organizing regular reviews and meetings to discuss results, conclusions, and recommendations related to customer care. Customer service employees and management teams should work together to implement the recommended changes and monitor their impact on customer service performance (Song et al. 2019: 103160).

Ergo, evaluation of the effectiveness of customer care activities in a modern business should cover a wide range of aspects, taking into account the personalization of customer service, omnichannel, proactivity, employee involvement, cost and efficiency analysis, as well as the use of new technologies. Integration with other areas of the company and continuous improvement are crucial to successfully optimize the customer care strategy (Hilton et al. 2020: 360–369).

When handling the issue, it is worth including and mentioning the NPS. NPS constitutes a simple and easy-to-use measure that assesses customer loyalty and satisfaction with the products and services offered by a company (Reichheld 2003). NPS is calculated by asking customers the question: "How likely would you be to recommend our company to friends or family?" and receiving answers graded on a scale from 0 to 10. The customers are then divided into three groups:

- **Promoters** (ratings 9–10): satisfied and loyal customers who are happy to recommend the company to others.
- **Passive** (ratings 7–8): satisfied but not necessarily loyal customers who may be vulnerable to offers from competitors.
- **Critics** (ratings 0–6): dissatisfied customers who can negatively affect the company's reputation. NPS is calculated by subtracting the percentage of critics from the percentage of promoters. The NPS value can range from –100 (when all customers are critics) to +100 (when all customers are promoters). The higher the NPS value, the greater the customer loyalty and the greater the chances of the company's long-term success (Reichheld 2003). In order to assess the effectiveness of customer service activities, companies should regularly monitor and analyze various indicators.

In addition to NPS, there are other indicators that can be used to assess the quality of customer service (Beck and Rygl 2015: 170–178):

- **Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT)**: the average score for customer satisfaction with products, services, and interactions with the company.
- **Customer Effort Score (CES)**: an assessment of the effort a customer has to put in to solve their problem or receive an answer to an enquiry.
- **Churn Rate**: Customer attrition rate, meaning the percentage of customers who stop using a company's services or products within a given period of time.

Regular monitoring and analysis of these indicators make it possible to identify areas requiring improvement and assess the effectiveness of customer service activities. Based on this data, companies can make the necessary changes to their customer service strategy in order to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Examples of major business players show how a focus on quality customer service can provide significant benefits. These companies include:

- **Amazon**, one of the world's largest companies, focuses on excellent customer service. It takes advantage of NPS to monitor service quality and introduces innovations to improve customer satisfaction further. As a result, it maintains a high NPS, averaging 62 (Comparably 2021), translating into a growing loyal customer base.
- **Apple** also focuses on customer service and uses NPS as a key performance indicator. In 2021, Apple's NPS was 47 (Comparably 2021), resulting from a consistent strategy based on quality of customer service, innovative products, and excellent technical support (Apple Support). Regular employee training allows the staff to solve customer problems and provide personalized product and service recommendations.
- **Zappos**, a US-based e-commerce company specializing in footwear and apparel, has made a name for itself with its philosophy of "Deliver WOW through service." Zappos strongly focuses on quality customer service, offering free shipping, returns, and long periods of return purchases. By investing in employee training, it provides excellent customer service. Thanks to these measures, it maintains a high NPS, which in 2021 was at 57 (Comparably 2021).
- **Southwest Airlines**, a US airline recognized by customers for its high-quality service. The company focuses on simplified booking processes, flexibility in rebooking, and friendly staff. It regularly analyzes its NPS and introduces changes to improve customer satisfaction. In 2021, the NPS of Southwest Airlines was 62 (Comparably 2021), which proves the effectiveness of their customer service strategy.

The presented business examples show that focusing on customer service quality can bring significant benefits in terms of increased customer loyalty and long-term business growth. Implementing effective customer care techniques, such as training employees, monitoring relevant indicators, and caring for customer loyalty, is key to succeed on the market.

4.2 Integrating Customer Care into the Strategy

In order to successfully introduce the customer care method, companies should integrate it into their business strategy. This means that customer care should be included in all aspects of a company's operations, from developing products and services to marketing, sales, and post-sales support. The following selected aspects of the companies' operations are listed and then discussed and commented upon (Chuang, Chih-Hsun, and Liao 2010: 153–196):

- Developing products and services;
- Marketing and sales;
- Post-sales support;
- Training and education in the field of customer care;
- An organizational culture based on customer care;
- Building relationships with clients;
- Analyzing the competition;

4.2.1 Developing Products and Services

Enterprises should strive to provide products and services that are tailored to customers' needs and expectations. For this, it is useful to carry out market research, analyze trends, and collect information concerning customer preferences. Creation of products and services based on customer needs contributes to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Corona et al. 2019: 104498).

In the context of business management, providing products and services that are tailored to the needs and expectations of customers constitutes an extremely important factor in achieving market success. Correct understanding of customer preferences and needs is the foundation for an effective formulation of an offer that results in increased customer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Benjaafar and Hu 2020: 93–101).

In order to better understand customer expectations, companies should take advantage of research methods such as market research, surveys, interviews, or observations. Analysis of market trends is also essential to monitor changes in customer preferences and expectations over time. Knowledge concerning customer preferences should be collected and systematically updated in order to ensure that the information is up-to-date and to enable dynamic adaptation of the offer to changing consumer needs.

Creating products and services based on customer needs has several key benefits. Primarily, providing products and services that respond to specific customer expectations leads to increased customer satisfaction. Customers feel satisfied when their needs are met, which can lead to positive reactions such as repeating purchases, recommending the brand to others, and building a positive corporate image.

Moreover, creating products and services based on customers' needs can provide a competitive advantage for a company. Adapting the offer to the requirements of the market allows it to confront the competition effectively, especially in highly competitive industries. Businesses that are better able to understand and respond to customer needs are more likely to stay in operation and win customer loyalty (Larsson and Broström 2020: 151–166).

It is also worth emphasizing that creation of products and services based on customer needs is not a one-off process but should be continuous and dynamic. Customer preferences and expectations can change along with developments in technology, social trends, or other external factors. Therefore, it is important to carry out regular research and analyses in order to keep up to date with market needs and respond effectively to them.

Provision of products and services tailored to customers' needs and expectations is a key element concerning the market success. Market research, trend analysis, and gathering information concerning customer preferences are all indispensable tools in the process of creating an offer. This allows for a better understanding of customers, identifying their needs, and providing solutions that meet their expectations.

Creation of products and services based on customer needs also contributes to customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers are more likely to perform repeated purchases, leading to stable business relationships and generating more revenue for the company. Moreover, satisfied customers often recommend the brand to others, which can help to win new customers and contribute to the business growth.

Customer loyalty is also the result of providing products and services tailored to their needs. Customers who receive satisfactory solutions often become loyal brand advocates and choose the brand during future transactions. Loyal customers can contribute to a company's financial stability and provide a basis for further growth and market expansion.

Creating products and services based on customer needs is also important from a competitive perspective. Businesses that focus on understanding and responding to customer needs gain a competitive advantage. Proper adaptation of the offer to market requirements can attract more customers and strengthen the company's position on the market.

However, it is worth noting that to effectively create products and services based on customer needs, one requires systematic monitoring of changes occurring on the market. Customer preferences can change along with technological advances, demographic changes, or social trends. That is why companies should constantly update their knowledge concerning customer needs in order to be able to quickly react to changing market conditions and behaviors.

As can be seen from the above, creation of products and services that are tailored to customers' needs and expectations is crucial for a company's success. Market research, trend analysis, and systematic collection of information concerning the preferences of customers are all essential tools in this process. Providing satisfactory solutions is a success factor for businesses. Market research, trend analysis, and collecting information on customer preferences form the foundation for the effective creation of an offer and also allow the companies to better understand their customers, identify their needs, and deliver solutions that meet their expectations.

Creation of products and services based on customer needs contributes to customer satisfaction. Customers who receive products and services that meet their needs experience positive emotions and satisfaction. Satisfied customers are more likely to perform repeated purchases, leading to increased revenue. Moreover, satisfied customers often recommend the brand to others, which can lead to acquiring new customers and the company's development (Yen, Teng, and Tzeng 2020: 102514).

Delivery of products and services tailored to customers' needs also provides competitive benefits. Businesses that focus on understanding and responding to market needs are more likely to attract and retain customers compared to their competitors. Adapting the offer to the preferences of customers allows creation of unique solutions that differentiate the company from other players on the market.

However, creation of products and services based on customer needs is an ongoing and dynamic process. Customer preferences can undergo changes along with technological developments, social changes, or consumer trends. Therefore, it is important for companies to carry out regular market research, track changes, and adapt their offers in response to new customer needs and expectations.

Contemporary technologies, such as data analytics, AI, and personalization, can be used in the process of tailoring offers to the needs of customers. Businesses can analyze big data to better understand customer preferences and deliver personalized solutions. The possibility of offering individually tailored products, services, or offers contributes to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Hung and Chen 2013: 161–172).

In a globalized and competitive business environment, providing products and services that are tailored to the needs of customers is integral to a company's long-term success. Market research, trend analysis, and gathering information concerning customer preferences should be considered an integral part of a company's strategy. Proper understanding and responding to the needs of customers allows creation of more valuable and competitive products and services.

However, adaptation of the offer to the needs of customers should not be limited to responding to already existing preferences. Businesses should aim to anticipate and predict future customer needs. Researching trends, innovations, and changes on the market allows us to stay ahead of customer expectations and create innovative solutions. Companies can take advantage of methods such as analyzing future consumer trends, forecasting customer behavior, and creating growth strategies based on anticipating changes on the market.

Furthermore, in order to effectively deliver tailored products and services, companies should involve customers in the process of creating and improving their offers. Taking advantage of the "design thinking" (Razzouk and Shute 2012: 330–348) or "customer co-creation" (O'Hern and Rindfleisch 2017: 84–106) methodologies allows for active involvement of customers in the design and customization of products and services. This allows for an even deeper understanding of their needs, generating innovative ideas, as well as building a bond and trust between the company and its customers.

An important aspect of the adaptation of the offer to the customers' needs consists in constant improvement and innovativeness. Companies should strive to constantly improve their products and services, introducing new features, technologies, or business models. The constantly changing customer needs, technological developments, and a competitive environment require flexibility and a willingness to adapt. Companies should be open to customer feedback, monitor market changes as well as making informed investment and strategic decisions to maintain a competitive advantage.

In summary, providing products and services that are tailored to customers' needs and expectations is a key element of companies' strategies. Market research, trend analysis, and collecting information concerning customer preferences enable a better understanding of customer needs, resulting in increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, as well as a competitive advantage on the market. However, the process of adapting the offer should be dynamic and take into account that customer preferences and needs may change with technological advances, social, economic, or cultural changes. Businesses should be prepared to constantly adapt and evolve to keep up with changing customer expectations.

In this context, companies can take advantage of tools such as data analytics, AI, machine learning, or automation that allow identifying trends faster, analyze customer behavior, and personalize offers. Thanks to these technologies, companies can better segment the market, create personalized marketing campaigns, and deliver customized products and services (Jahanshahi et al. 2011: 253–260).

It should also be emphasized that delivering products and services tailored to the needs of customers requires the involvement of the entire organization. This does not only apply to the marketing or sales department but also to other areas such as research and development, production, logistics, or customer service (Flores-García et al. 2023:

3884–3909). All of these departments should work together and communicate in order to effectively adapt their offers and provide quality service.

It is important that the delivery of products and services tailored to the needs of customers is not a one-off action but a long-term process. Companies should constantly monitor market developments, analyze data, respond to customer feedback, and improve their offers. Only through constant improvement and adapting the changing needs of customers companies can maintain their competitiveness and succeed on the market.

Delivery of products and services that are tailored to the needs and expectations of customers is essential for business success. Market research, trend analysis, innovation, and the involvement of the entire organization constitute crucial factors in the process of adapting an offer. Businesses that focus on understanding and responding to customer needs are more likely to build lasting relationships, increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, as well as gain a competitive advantage.

4.2.2 Marketing and Sales

Marketing and sales activities should focus on creating value for the customer and communicating it clearly and in a convincing manner (Setiawati et al. 2019: 2004–2007). Effective marketing activities, such as content marketing, whisper marketing, or social media marketing, can help build a company's image as a partner that cares about the customer. Additionally, sales should be aimed at solving customers' problems, not just meeting short-term sales targets (Baltes 2015: 111).

Observing the business reality confirms that focusing marketing and sales activities on creating customer value and communicating it clearly and in a convincing manner is crucial for the success of a company. In recent years, developing customer value marketing has become an area of interest for many researchers (Verhoef and Lemon 2013: 1–15).

One important marketing strategy is content marketing, which involves providing valuable content and information related to products or services offered by a company. Research shows that this approach allows building greater customer loyalty and increases the chances of sales success. Moreover, the value provided by marketing content can persuade customers to use the company's services and create a positive brand image (Balio and Casais 2021: 320–336).

Another effective tool consists in whisper marketing, which involves using customers' networks to spread the word about a product or service (Jóźwiakowski et al. 2015: 36–46). Research shows that people often rely on recommendations and other people's opinions when making purchasing decisions. That is why it is worth investing in building positive relationships with customers and encouraging them to share their positive experiences with others.

Social media marketing is yet another effective strategy that involves engaging customers in creating content, sharing opinions, and building a community surrounding the brand (Li, Larimo, and Leonidou 2021: 51–70). Research shows that the inclusion of customers in creative processes and participation in online communities related with a brand lead to greater engagement and company loyalty.

However, marketing activities alone are not sufficient. It is equally important that sales are directed toward solving the problems of customers. Sellers should demonstrate an understanding of the needs and expectations of customers and be focused on providing valuable solutions. Research suggests that such an approach leads to greater customer satisfaction and a long-term business relationship (Adam, Wessel, and Benlian 2021: 427–445; Stein and Ramaseshan 2016: 8–19).

Marketing and sales activities focused on creating value for the customer and communicating it clearly are crucial for the success of companies. Taking advantage of strategies such as content marketing, whisper marketing, and social media marketing can help build a positive brand image and increase customer loyalty. At the same time, focusing sales on solving customers' problems rather than just meeting short-term sales targets is important for maintaining long-term business relationships and achieving success. Research suggests that companies that focus on solving the problems of customers and providing valuable solutions gain a competitive advantage as well as build lasting customer relationships (Isaeva, Gruenewald, and Saunders 2020: 1031–1063).

An important element of efficient marketing and sales activities consists also in analyzing data and monitoring results. With the use of analytical tools, it is possible to track the effectiveness of individual campaigns, customers can be segmented, purchase preferences and behavior can be analyzed, and marketing and sales strategies can be adapted to the changing needs and expectations of customers. This allows optimizing actions and focusing on the areas that provide the best results.

As can be seen from the above, effective marketing and sales activities based on creating value for the customer, communicating it clearly, and solving their problems are of crucial importance for the success of an enterprise. Taking advantage of a variety of strategies, such as content marketing, whisper marketing, or social media marketing, can help build a positive company image as well as increase customer engagement and loyalty. At the same time, directing sales toward solving the problems of customers, rather than toward short-term goals, is of key significance for maintaining long-term business relationships. All of this should be supported by data analysis and monitoring performance in order to continuously improve strategies and adapt to changing market and customer needs.

4.2.3 Post-Sales Support

High-quality post-sales support is crucial for maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty. Companies should strive to quickly and efficiently resolve problems reported by customers and offer additional services such as warranties, maintenance, or technical support. Investing in high-quality post-sales support can contribute to increasing customer lifetime value (CLV) and turning customers into brand ambassadors (Kanchanapoom and Chongwatpol 2022: 1–14).

High-quality post-sales support is crucial for maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty. Research shows that customer satisfaction and positive post-sales service experiences have a significant impact on repeating purchases as well as brand recommendations. Enterprises should strive to quickly and efficiently resolve issues raised by customers because customer satisfaction is directly linked to customer loyalty (Miletić, Grubor, and Ćurčić 2022: 43–53).

Moreover, offering additional post-sales services, such as warranties, maintenance, or technical support, has a significant impact on the CLV (Dandis et al. 2022: 910–935). High-quality post-sales support contributes to customer retention over the long term, which translates into greater value generated for the enterprise. Research shows that a customer who receives comprehensive post-sales support and a positive experience in terms of dealing with the company is more likely to have a long-term relationship and recommend the brand to other potential customers.

Investing in high-quality post-sales support requires proper development of infrastructure and resources within the company. Employing qualified employees who are well trained in customer service and possess technical knowledge is of vital significance for providing professional support. Furthermore, IT, such as CRM systems, can help to effectively monitor requests and track the history of customer interactions, which allows to respond to customer needs in a quick manner and to ensure consistency of communication.

Findings from the research indicate that companies that focus on high-quality post-sales support can provide a competitive advantage on the market. Loyal customers who experience excellent support can become brand ambassadors, promoting the brand among their friends, family, and social networks. This is particularly important in the age of social media, where user feedback and recommendations have enormous power to influence the brand image and success.

The high quality of post-sales support has a significant impact on maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty as well as on CLV (Dandis and Al Haj Eid 2022: 476–493; Dandis et al. 2022: 910–935; Walasik and Mizerska 2023: 83–100). Companies that focus on effectively solving problems reported by customers and offering additional services create positive experiences that translate into long-term partnerships and brand recommendations.

Further research in the field of post-sales support focuses on identifying optimal strategies and practices. Researchers analyze various factors such as response times to customer reports, the effectiveness of problem-solving, the quality of communication, as well as the consistency and personalization of the customer experience. It is also important to study customer preferences and adapt the post-sales support strategy to their needs and expectations (Aboelhamd, Shamma, and Saleh 2020: 419–445).

Contemporary technologies such as AI, data analytics, and process automation are also important for improving post-sales support. Using automated report-processing tools, smart chatbots, or recommendation systems can significantly speed up and improve customer service processes (Guo, Fan, and Zhang 2020, 40.5: 575–601).

In summary, development of high-quality post-sales support is crucial for enterprises seeking to maintain customer satisfaction and loyalty. Investment in the right resources, infrastructure, and technology contributes to an increase in CLV and creation of a positive brand image. Enterprises that effectively provide professional and comprehensive support are more likely to succeed on a competitive market and build strong customer relationships.

4.2.4 Training and Education in the Field of Customer Care

In order to successfully implement customer care techniques, it is essential to invest in employee education and training (Lucas 2022: 23–78). Training should focus on developing interpersonal skills such as communication, empathy, assertiveness, or dealing with difficult situations. In addition, employees should be aware of the company's customer service strategy and rules to be applied when interacting with customers (Kurdi, Alshurideh, and Alnaser 2020: 3561–3570).

Implementing customer care techniques is based on effective investment in employee education and training. Training constitutes a key element in development of interpersonal skills, which are essential in the area of customer service. Focusing on aspects such as communication, empathy, assertiveness, and dealing with difficult situations works in favor of improving the quality of interactions with customers.

During training, employees should be introduced to the principles of effective customer service and strategies that are company specific. It is important that employees are fully aware of what is expected of them when interacting with customers. Understanding the company's customer service strategy allows to effectively tailor activities to the needs of customers and build a positive corporate image.

Employee education should have a continuous character to maintain a high level of skills and knowledge in the area of customer service. Customer care techniques evolve along with advances in technology and changing customer expectations, so it is important that employees have access to up-to-date information and tools that allow handling customers effectively (Khan et al. 2022: 1–26).

An important aspect of training concerning customer care consists also in teaching employees the skills related to solving conflicts. In difficult situations that may arise during interactions with customers, employees should be equipped with tools and strategies to effectively resolve the problem and maintain a positive relationship with the customer.

Therefore, investing in employee education and training is essential for successfully implementing customer care techniques. Training should focus on developing interpersonal skills and familiarizing employees with customer service strategies and principles. Regularly updating employee knowledge and skills, including resolving conflicts, is key for maintaining quality customer service and building a positive corporate image.

4.2.5 Organizational Culture Based on Customer Service

One of the key elements of a successful customer care strategy consists in an organizational culture based on customer service (Metz, Ilieș, and Nistor 2020: 6240). In such a culture, customer care is a priority for all company employees, regardless of their position or role. This means that the company's management should actively promote customer service values and involve employees in actions related to this area (Mousavi, Johar, and Mookerjee 2020: 340–360).

Acting in favor of an organizational culture based on customer service is a key element of a successful customer care strategy. Research in the field of organizational management points to a number of factors that have an impact on developing such a culture and effective CRM.

Company management plays an important role in promoting and implementing customer service values. It should actively communicate that customer care is a priority for all employees, regardless of their position or role. This encourages employees to engage with customers and build positive relationships with them. The management should also provide resources and tools, allowing the employees to efficiently carry out customer service tasks.

Proper training and development of employees in the area of customer care is crucial. Employees should not only have the right technical skills but also interpersonal skills such as communication, empathy, and problem-solving. Training should be focused on developing these competences, as well as increasing knowledge concerning industry specifics and customer needs (Misuraca, Scepi, and Spano 2020).

It is important to create proper organizational structures and processes that support customer service. Companies should adapt their structures to ensure a fast and efficient response to customer needs. Processes should be clear, defined, and optimized to minimize potential barriers for communication and customer service.

Monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of customer service activities is essential for continuous improvement. Companies should take advantage of relevant indicators, such as customer satisfaction, service times, or repeatability rates, in order to assess the effectiveness of their operations. Based on this data, corrective actions can be taken, and the customer care strategy may be improved.

An effective customer care strategy relying on organizational culture requires active involvement of management, appropriate employee training, alignment of organizational structures and processes, as well as monitoring and measuring performance (Lim et al. 2020: 47–62). Implementation of these elements contributes to building strong and lasting customer relationships, which in turn has a positive impact on the company's financial performance and reputation.

4.2.6 Building Customer Relationships

Building lasting relationships with customers is one of the main objectives of the customer care strategy (Mcilroy and Barnett 2000, 10.6: 347–355). Enterprises should aim to maintain regular contact with customers, for example, through newsletters, social media, or regular satisfaction surveys. It is also worth introducing loyalty programs that motivate customers for long-term cooperation and increase their satisfaction.

Contemporary research in the field of CRM confirms that building lasting relationships with customers is vital for an enterprise's success. A customer care strategy focusing on meeting the needs and expectations of customers requires an approach based on a long-term commitment (Al Shraah et al. 2022: 605–626).

In order to achieve this goal, companies should take advantage of various communication tools that enable regular contact with customers. Newsletters, which are sent electronically or by traditional post, constitute an effective information tool. They allow a company to provide customers with the latest information concerning products, promotions, or changes in the company.

Today's social media also plays a key role in building lasting relationships with customers. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow direct interaction with customers, leading to increased engagement and greater loyalty. Enterprises can publish interesting content, answer customer questions, as well as monitor feedback and respond to any problems or complaints (Appel et al. 2020: 79–95).

Satisfaction surveys constitute another tool that allows companies to find out the opinions and expectations of their customers. Regular surveys allow monitoring customer satisfaction levels and identifying areas for improvement. Thanks to this, enterprises have the opportunity to react to customer needs and adapt their offer to their expectations.

Furthermore, introducing loyalty programs is a common practice in building lasting relationships with customers. These programs offer customers a variety of benefits for their continued use of services or purchasing a product of a given company. Examples of benefits may include discounts, rewards, or access to exclusive offers. Such programs motivate customers to continue to do business together, strengthen the relationship with the brand, and increase customer satisfaction (Fletcher-Brown et al. 2021: 518–529).

Building lasting relationships with customers is an extremely important objective of a customer care strategy. Regular contact, the use of various communication tools, conducting satisfaction surveys, and introducing loyalty programs all constitute effective ways of achieving this goal. However, building lasting relationships with customers requires an even greater commitment from the company.

A key element consists in personalized communication (Niedzielska 2020). Customers expect the company to understand their individual needs and preferences. That is why it is important to collect and analyze customer data, such as purchase history, product preferences, or demographic information. This allows the company to adapt its messages and offers to specific customers, increasing the chances of building a strong relationship and loyalty.

Moreover, building trust constitutes (Panasiuk 2022) a key element of sustainable customer relationships. Enterprises should provide quality products and services, ensure reliable and honest communication, and effectively resolve any problems or complaints. Transparency and ethical operation are of vital significance, as customers expect an honest partnership with the company.

Constant improvement of the offer is another important aspect of building lasting relationships with customers. Companies should monitor changing customer needs and expectations and respond to them by introducing new products, services, and innovations. Companies that constantly adapt their offers to changing market conditions can build strong loyalty from customers who see that the company cares about their needs and strives to provide them with the best solutions.

Finally, sustainable customer relationships require constant two-way communication. Companies should not only inform customers about news and promotions but also listen to their opinions, comments, and suggestions. Regular collection of customer feedback, organization of meetings or workshops, and creation of opportunities for direct contact with company representatives all constitute significant elements in building engagement and a lasting relationship with customers.

4.2.7 Analyzing the Competition

In order to maintain a high level of customer care, enterprises should regularly analyze the activity of the competition in the field of customer care. Such analysis allows identifying the best practices that can be adapted to an own customer service strategy. It is also worth researching what innovations are introduced by competitors in order to properly adapt to changing market conditions.

To maintain a high level of customer care, enterprises should regularly carry out comprehensive analyses of the activities performed by the competition in the field of customer care. Such analyses allow identification of the best practices that can be successfully adapted to an own customer service strategy. There are many methods and tools that can be used in the process of analyzing the competition, such as market research, monitoring social media, analyzing customer data and feedback, as well as directly observing the competition (Lee and Lee 2020: 1–22).

Researching the activities of the competition in the field of customer care allows understanding their strengths, the techniques and approaches used to handle customers, as well as the introduced innovations. Identifying the best practices of the competition can provide valuable insights into improving own customer service processes. For example, if a competitor is effectively taking advantage of live chat, then the company may consider implementing a similar solution.

Innovations introduced by competitors are particularly important in a dynamic business environment where market conditions are constantly changing. Researching these innovations allows enterprises to adapt their customer service strategy and meet changing customer needs and expectations. For example, if a competitor introduces a new technology such as AI into customer service, an enterprise may consider a similar solution to streamline its processes and increase customer satisfaction (Juanamasta et al. 2019: 2004–2007).

It is important to remember that analysis of the competition in the field of customer care should not be a one-off activity but a recurring element of a business strategy. The activities of the competition should be followed in a regular and systematic way to allow the company to be up-to-date in terms of new trends and innovations, thus allowing it to maintain a high level of customer service and remain competitive on the market.

Customer care techniques are essential for multinational enterprises that strive to succeed on the market. Implementation of techniques such as employee training, monitoring of indicators related to customer service, technology utilization, collection of customer feedback, or caring for customer loyalty can all contribute to increased customer satisfaction and sustainable growth for the company. In order to successfully implement customer care techniques, companies should invest in employee training and education, promote an organizational culture based on customer care, build long-term relationships with customers, and innovate in the field of customer service. Monitoring the activities of the competition and indicators related to customer care allows constant improvement of the customer care strategy and helps to maintain competitiveness on the market (Xu et al. 2020: 189–199).

Implementing a customer care strategy for multinational enterprises requires taking into account the specific characteristics of the individual markets in which they operate. Some practical guidelines can be included that simplify implementing customer care techniques in daily business operations (Ye, Lyu, and He 2019: 1330–1347):

- **Understanding cultural differences**
  Multinational enterprises operate on different markets with different cultural norms and customer expectations. Understanding these differences is crucial for adapting customer care strategies to meet the needs of customers from different countries.
- **Cooperation with local partners**
  In order to better understand local markets, it is worth working with partners from a given country. Local partners can help to understand customer needs and tailor customer service strategies to a specific market.
- **Quick adaptation to change**
  The international market is characterized by high dynamics of change. Companies must be flexible and ready to quickly adapt to new conditions, such as changes in regulations, the emergence of new competitors, or new customer expectations.
- **Using new technologies**
  Technologies such as AI, machine learning, big data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) (Gimpel 2020: 519–530) can greatly facilitate implementation of customer service techniques in multinational companies. Utilization of these technologies facilitates the understanding of the needs of customers and tailoring offers to their expectations.
- **Constant improvement**
  Implementing a customer service strategy is not a one-off action but a process of continuous improvement. Enterprises should regularly analyze indicators related to customer service and monitor the activities of competitors in order to constantly improve the quality of customer service.

In light of the above guidelines, multinational enterprises should focus on adapting their customer service strategies to the specifics of the markets on which they operate and on taking advantage of new technologies that enable a better understanding of customer needs. Thanks to the constant improvement of their customer service processes, these enterprises will be able to build lasting relationships with their customers, as well as increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, which in the long term can contribute to increased turnover and profits.

In the era of globalization and increasing competition, multinational enterprises should also focus on multi-channel communication with customers, including both traditional methods and new tools based on AI or big data analytics, which will allow them to offer customized and convenient experiences to customers around the world, regardless of local expectations or preferences (Indriasari, Gaol, and Matsuo 2019: 863–868).

It is also worth investing in training and developing the competences of customer service employees so that they are able to respond effectively and empathetically to the needs of customers. This will contribute to the company's image as being open to the needs of its audience and able to provide solutions of the highest quality.

It is important not to forget to monitor customer satisfaction and analyze the collected data so that changes can be implemented quickly and the customer service strategy may be improved. It is also important to maintain an ongoing dialogue with customers, both through market research and active participation in the industry communities, in order to provide a real-time response to evolving needs and expectations.

In conclusion, multinational enterprises should pay particular attention to customer service strategies, adapting them to the specifics of local markets and taking advantage of modern technology and analytical tools. Only then will they be able to build lasting relationships with their customers, retain their loyalty, and achieve long-term success on an increasingly competitive global market.

4.3 The Impact of Social Media on Customer Care

Social media channels are increasingly important in the area of customer service. They provide platforms for communication with customers, enabling the collection of feedback, and responding to customer needs in real-time. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn allow for quick and convenient contact with customers, gathering feedback, and resolving issues. This allows enterprises to keep up-to-date with the needs and expectations of their customers and to respond quickly to any dissatisfaction. Enterprises should proactively take advantage of social media to build relationships with customers, monitor customer satisfaction, and make quick changes when problems arise (Bitiktas and Tuna 2020; Devereux, Grimmer, and Grimmer 2020: 151–159; Macarthy 2021).

In today's world, customers expect an immediate and effective solution to their problems. Social media channels allow enterprises to quickly interact with their customers, which makes it possible to solve problems and answer questions in an instant. It is worth investing in dedicated customer service teams on social media platforms to ensure the best quality of support for customers.

Mobility became a key element in the lives of today's consumers, who expect speed, convenience, and accessibility in the customer service area. Enterprises should adapt their customer service strategies to the needs of mobile customers , for example, developing mobile apps and responsive websites or offering customer service through mobile messaging systems. More and more customers are using mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, to communicate with businesses and perform purchases. That is why enterprises should adapt their customer service strategies to meet the needs of customers using mobile devices. This means, among other things, optimizing websites and mobile apps in terms of speed, usability, and compatibility with various operating systems (Agnihotri et al. 2016: 172–180).

Social media channels allow building a community around a brand, which can contribute to increased customer loyalty and business value. Businesses should carry out active communication via their social media profiles, posting valuable content and engaging in discussions with customers. Collaboration with influencers, as well as organization of competitions and promotional campaigns, can help build a strong brand image (Lepkowska-White, Parsons, and Berg 2019: 321–345).

As the activity of international enterprises develops, it often becomes necessary to work with external partners in the area of customer service. Such partnerships may include working with customer service technology providers, outsourcing customer service, or working with companies specializing in education and training. Working with external partners allows effective implementation and development of customer service techniques tailored to the company's needs (Wang et al. 2020: 647–669).

Implementing a customer service strategy constitutes a process of continuous improvement and evaluation. Enterprises should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their customer service activities, for example, by analyzing indicators such as NPS (Fisher and Kordupleski 2019: 138–151), CSAT (Wei et al. 2020: 7545), or Churn Rate. Based on this analysis, it is possible to introduce necessary changes to the customer service strategy and strive to achieve increasingly better results.

The contemporary market is characterized by dynamic changes that affect customer expectations. Businesses should be flexible and ready to adapt their customer service strategy to changing consumer needs and preferences. This requires monitoring market trends, analyzing the competition, and adapting the offer to the expectations of customers (Sano 2015: 21–32).

In addition to the already discussed issues, there are other important aspects related to taking advantage of social media in the area of customer service, namely (Buczek 2022a: 71–84; Buczek 2022b: 33–47; Janulek 2022):

1. Personalization of the customer experience
   Social media channels allow enterprises to tailor their communications to individual customer preferences and needs. By analyzing demographic data, purchase history, or online behavior, companies can create personalized offers, recommendations, and messages that better match the expectations of customers. This makes the client feel more understood and appreciated, which increases the chances of building a lasting relationship (Tyrväinen, Karjaluoto, and Saarijärvi 2020: 102233).
2. Using analytical tools
   Social media platforms offer powerful analytical tools that allow businesses to monitor the effectiveness of their activities and campaigns. Thanks to analyzing data, it is possible to keep track of indicators such as customer engagement, the number

of interactions, or conversion trends. This information is valuable in the process of improving customer service strategies and making measured decisions concerning marketing activities (Lambert and Harrington 1989: 44–60).

3. Cooperating with users
   Social media channels provide enterprises the opportunity to actively participate in conversations and discussions with users. Thanks to this, it is possible to find out customers' opinions, suggestions, and comments concerning the products and services in order to constantly improve the offer. Moreover, active cooperation with users can generate a positive brand image and build an engaged online community.
4. Crisis management
   Social media also constitutes an important tool in crisis situations. In the event of sudden incidents or customer dissatisfaction, enterprises can quickly respond by providing information, explanations, and solutions to problems publicly via social media platforms. Transparency and effective crisis management can help maintain customer confidence and minimize the negative effects of crises.

Introduction of the aforementioned additional aspects in using social media in the field of customer service can broaden the perspective and include additional benefits that may be important for businesses in terms of building positive customer relationships.

As the dynamics of the changing world, introducing trends, and how everyone's life becomes increasingly dependent on social media, there are a few more aspects worth mentioning (Baj-Rogowska et al. 2019: 125–139; Peng and Ma 2019: 204–223; Vrontis et al. 2021: 617–644):

- Influencer marketing
  Taking advantage of influencers as part of a customer service strategy can provide many benefits. Working with influential people in the world of social media can help raise brand awareness, reach new audiences, and build customer trust. Influencers can also act as brand ambassadors, recommending a company's products and services, as well as engaging in interactions with their community.

- Using chatbots
  Chatbots are AI tools that can be used in the field of customer service on social media platforms. They enable companies to automate some of their customer communications, answer simple questions, provide information about products and services, and redirect customers to relevant resources. Chatbots can speed up the customer service process and improve efficiency.
- Sentiment analysis
  Using sentiment analysis tools allows enterprises to monitor the opinions of customers concerning a brand, product, or service on social media. This allows us to identify positive and negative comments and properly respond to them. Sentiment analysis also makes it possible to detect trends and patterns in customer experiences, which can lead to improvement of the offer and customer service strategies.
- Live video and broadcasts
  Social media channels offer the possibility of live streaming, which constitutes an interesting tool for interacting with customers. Enterprises organize live broadcasts, present new products, give advice, or answer customer questions in real time. This form of communication creates a more authentic connection with customers and enables direct interaction (Voramontri and Klieb 2019: 209–233).

Taking advantage of these additional elements in a social media customer service strategy can enrich customer interactions, increase engagement, and build stronger relationships. It is important to adapt these solutions to meet the specifics of a given industry and customer preferences in order to achieve the best possible results.

4.4 Innovation in the Field of Customer Care

Innovations constitute a key factor determining the competitiveness of companies on today's market. In the field of customer care (Haaker et al. 2021: 126–136), apart from constant improvement of the customer care processes and search for new solutions, it is also worth paying attention to the aspects of personalization and automation.

An individual approach to customers and tailoring the offer to their preferences and needs become increasingly important. Technologies such as AI and machine learning (Janiesch, Zschech, and Heinrich 2021: 685–695) make it possible to analyze large sets of customer data to better understand their behavior, preferences, and needs. Using this information as a starting point, companies can create personalized offers and provide customers with valuable recommendations.

An important aspect of innovation in the area of customer care is also the use of modern communication tools. In addition to traditional channels such as telephony and email, the development of online and social media technologies opens up new opportunities for customer interaction. Despite the fact that it is important to maintain consistency and quality of customer service across all communication channels, it is also worth experimenting with new means of interaction, such as chatbots, instant messaging, and social media. Thanks to this, enterprises can reach customers in a more effective and attractive manner, building stronger relationships and strengthening loyalty (Desouza et al. 2008: 35–44).

Furthermore, in the context of the IoT technology, enterprises may take advantage of data collected from smart devices, such as smart homes or wearables, in order to better understand customer needs and adapt their offers. Analyzing data from the IoT allows us to track customer behavior in real-time and respond to the needs of customers in a quick and personalized manner.

Enterprises should also consider ethics and privacy aspects in the context of using advanced technologies in the area of customer care. Increasing the capabilities of data analytics and automation requires attention to customer privacy and proper information security.

Ergo, innovation in the field of customer care (Zhan, Tan, and Huo 2019: 6335–6350) is essential for companies to remain competitive. Using modern technology in the area of customer care opens up a number of opportunities for companies. For example, analyzing large data sets (big data) can help identify consumer trends and predict changes in customer preferences, allowing companies to respond quickly to changing market needs and adjust their offers to remain competitive.

AI and machine learning create opportunities to automate customer service processes. Smart chatbots can answer frequently asked questions and provide basic information, which results in enthusiastic feedback from customers and allows enterprises to focus on more complex and valuable service tasks. Furthermore, recommendation systems, supported by machine learning, can provide customers with personalized product or service suggestions, thus increasing the appeal of a company's offer.

An important aspect of innovation in the area of customer care consists also in integrating various communication channels into a coherent ecosystem. Thanks to this, customers can freely switch between different channels, for example, starting a conversation on a web chat and then continuing it on the phone. Integration of customer interaction data and history in one place allows for better contextual understanding and provision of personalized service (Ngo and O'Cass 2012: 861–877).

Along with the development of technology, new challenges appear. Enterprises must ensure proper training and development for employees so that they can take advantage of new technologies effectively and provide high-quality customer service. Moreover, it is necessary to remain flexible and ready to adapt to rapidly changing trends and customer expectations.

According to the discussion above, innovation in the area of customer care is crucial for enterprises that wish to remain competitive on the market. Usage of advanced technology, personalization of customer service, and integration of communication channels constitute key elements of a successful customer care strategy. Businesses that will actively monitor technology developments and invest in innovation are more likely to build long-term customer relationships and succeed on the market in the future (Guerola-Navarro et al. 2021a: 83–87).

Apart from the mentioned aspects, there are also additional issues that are relevant in the context of innovation and customer service techniques. Technologies developing in the area of customer care allow for more and more advanced personalization of the customer experience. Enterprises can use customer data, such as preferences, purchase history, or online behavior, to create personalized experiences. For example, generating product recommendations based on analyzing data can lead to higher customer satisfaction and increased loyalty.

Real-time Analytics is also important (Novak, Bennett, and Kliestik 2021: 62–72). Businesses have an increasing ability to monitor and analyze data in real time. Thanks to this, they are able to track customer activity, respond to situations immediately, and adapt customer service strategies based on current information. Real-time analysis makes it possible to quickly identify problems, optimize customer service processes, and respond quickly to market changes.

Innovations in customer care encourage greater customer involvement in service processes. Companies can take advantage of social media platforms and other communication tools to engage in dialogue with customers, provide feedback and suggestions, as well as involve them in creative processes through, for example, joint product development. This way, the customer becomes a partner in the service process, which can contribute to increased loyalty and engagement (Gonring 2008: 29–40).

Another point worth emphasizing is experimenting with new technologies. Innovations in the area of customer care create opportunities for companies to experiment with new technologies and solutions. Examples include virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR), which can be used to create interactive customer experiences (Pyrkosz 2021: 107–121; Szymczak 2019: 53–69). In addition, the development of voice technology and virtual assistants establishes new perspectives in the area of communication and customer service.

Ergo, innovations in the field of customer care are dynamic and create many opportunities for companies. It is worth keeping up to date with the latest trends and technologies, experimenting, listening to customers, and adapting customer service strategies based on their needs. Companies that actively pursue innovation and develop their customer care techniques are more likely to succeed on a competitive market. However, it is also important to remember the balance between using technology and maintaining an authentic and human connection with the customer. Despite technological advancements, many people still value face-to-face interaction with employees and expect quality service. In addition, a key aspect of this issue is a constant improvement of the customer care strategy. Enterprises should be ready to adapt and adjust to changing customer preferences and expectations. Regular study of customer satisfaction, collection of feedback and addressing the changes introduced over time, as well as analyzing the competition are all important tools in improving customer service. It is also worth emphasizing that innovations in the field of customer care should not be treated as a one-off project but as an ongoing process. Enterprises should maintain awareness of new technologies, market trends, and customer expectations. Openness to new ideas, experimentation, and learning from mistakes are all crucial for the effective use of innovation in the customer service area (Jing 2020: 469–478).

Therefore, innovations in the field of customer care are fundamental for the competitiveness of companies. Using modern technologies, personalization, integration of communication channels, and customer engagement constitute the key elements of a successful strategy. Companies that actively strive for innovation, take into account changing customer needs and preferences, and also continuously improve their customer care techniques are more likely to build long-term customer relationships and succeed on the market.

Analyzing the reality, while taking into account future planning, in the context of customer care innovation, there are a number of interesting paths for further research and potential innovative ideas, namely (Shin and Perdue 2022: 103077):

1. **Researching the impact of AI on customer service**
   Despite the already existing AI-based solutions, there are many possibilities for further research and development in terms of these technologies. It is possible to focus on developing more advanced AI systems that are able to recognize customer emotions, analyze context, and deliver even more personalized service experiences.
2. **Exploring the potential of voice and speech analysis**
   Voice and speech analysis is becoming increasingly popular in the field of customer care. Research concerning advanced speech recognition technologies, such as analyzing the emotions in a customer's voice, can help to better understand the needs and preferences of customers and also deliver more customized solutions.
3. **Using the technology of VR and AR**
   Continuing research concerning the application of VR and AR technology in the area of customer care can provide innovative

solutions. For example, creating interactive virtual assistants that can provide a realistic customer experience when shopping online or allowing customers to virtually "try on" products.

4. **Researching the impact of blockchain on customer service**
   The blockchain technology has potential in the area of customer care. Researching how blockchain can be used to make customer service processes more transparent, secure, and efficient can provide innovative new solutions.
5. **Exploring new communication channels**
   Technological developments are opening the door to new channels of communication with customers. Researching and exploring the potential of channels such as chatbots, real-time chats, social media, or audio-video platforms can provide innovative means of interacting with customers.
6. **Researching the impact of e-commerce and changes in shopping behavior**
   The accelerated development of e-commerce and the changes in purchasing behavior of customers provide an interesting field of research. Analysis of these trends and identification of the best practices in the field of online customer service can lead to innovative strategies that adapt to the changing retail landscape.

Summing up the discussion so far, there are many interesting opportunities for further research and innovative ideas concerning the area of innovation in customer care. It is important to continue researching new technologies, such as AI, voice and speech analytics, virtual technologies, or blockchain, and understand their potential in the context of customer service (Sitko and Jagodziński 2021: 37–41; Symela and Stępnikowski 2021: 21–28; Wodnicka et al. 2021: 48–59). Furthermore, the changing retail landscape, the development of e-commerce, and the changing shopping behavior of customers are opening up new research perspectives. Studying the impact of these changes on customer service and identifying the best practices and innovative strategies in the field of online customer service is valuable for businesses seeking to remain competitive.

It should also be remembered to constantly improve customer service processes and strategies through customer satisfaction surveys, competitive analysis, and feedback collection. Implementation and testing of new solutions, experimenting with different communication channels, and personalization of the customer experience are crucial for maintaining competitive edge and ensuring an excellent customer experience (Witell et al. 2020: 420–430).

Finally, it is important to promote an organizational culture focused on customer care, investing in employee training and development, as well as building lasting relationships with customers. All of this contributes to a company's success on the market.

Researching new technologies, understanding changes in customer behavior, and continuously improving customer care strategies are of vital significance for future innovations in the field of customer care. As already mentioned, there are many interesting research paths and potential innovative ideas that can contribute to customer satisfaction and business success.

4.5 Conclusion

The book *Managing Customer Relationships Using Customer Care Techniques: Strategy Development of an International Enterprise* provides a comprehensive overview of CRM concepts and practices. Customer relationships play a pivotal role in the success of businesses in today's volatile and uncertain business environment. In this book, the authors delve into these relationships from an international perspective, emphasizing that they are not merely about financial transactions but about enduring bonds based on mutual trust and understanding. The book underscores that the key to success in international business is investing in long-lasting and satisfying relationships with customers, adapting to their needs, and utilizing the latest technologies in CRM. Key takeaways from the book include:

CRM is a strategic process focused on building long-term relationships with customers.

To effectively manage customer relationships, businesses need to gather customer data, manage customer interactions, personalize customer experiences, and provide excellent customer service.

In the international development of a business, understanding the needs and expectations of customers in individual markets is crucial.

References

Abdulfattah F. 2012. *The effect of electronic customer relationship on customer satisfaction a study in web banking in Saudi Arabia* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Huddersfield).

Aboelhamd E., Shamma H.M. and Saleh M. 2020. Dynamic programming models for maximizing customer lifetime value: An overview. In: *Intelligent Systems and Applications: Proceedings of the 2019 Intelligent Systems Conference (IntelliSys) Volume 1*. Springer International Publishing, pp. 419–445.

Adam M., Wessel M. and Benlian A. 2021. AI-based chatbots in customer service and their effects on user compliance. *Electronic Markets*, 31.2: 427–445.

Adebanjo D. 2003. Classifying and selecting e-CRM applications: An analysis-based proposal. *Management Decision*, 41.6: 570–577.

Agnihotri R. et al. 2016. Social media: Influencing customer satisfaction in B2B sales. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 53: 172–180.

Ahluwalia K. et al. 2022. The future of CMC regulatory submissions: Streamlining activities using structured content and data management. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences*, 111.5: 1232–1244.

Al Shraah A. et al. 2022. The impact of quality management practices on knowledge management processes: A study of a social security corporation in Jordan. *The TQM Journal*, 34.4: 605–626.

Alander C. 2019. *Building Long-Term Customer Relationships in Service Business*. Turku University of Applied Sciences, pp. 10–13.

Al-Hawari M.A., Bani-Melhem S. and Quratulain S. 2020. Do frontline employees cope effectively with abusive supervision and customer incivility? Testing the effect of employee resilience. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 35: 223–240.

Al-Homery H.A., Asharai H. and Ahmad A. 2019. The core components and types of CRM. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7.1: 121–145.

Ali, B.J. et al. 2021. Impact of service quality on the customer satisfaction: Case study at online meeting platforms. In: Ali B.J., Saleh A.S., Abdulrahman A.A., Muhamed A.S., Noori H.N. and Anwar G. (eds.), *Impact of Service Quality on the Customer Satisfaction: Case Study at Online Meeting Platforms. International Journal of Engineering, Business and Management*, pp. 65–77.

Alkhafaji A. and Nelson R.A. 2013. *Strategic Management: Formulation, Implementation, and Control in a Dynamic Environment*. Routledge.

Almohaimmeed B. 2019. Pillars of customer retention: An empirical study on the influence of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, customer profitability on customer retention. *Serbian Journal of Management*, 14.2: 421–435.

Almohaimmeed B. 2021. The impact of analytical CRM on strategic CRM, operational CRM and customer satisfaction: Empirical study on commercial banks. *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 9.3: 711–718.

Alquhtani S.A. and Muniasamy A. 2022. Development of effective electronic customer relationship management (ECRM) model by the applications of web intelligence analytics. In: *Building a Brand Image through Electronic Customer Relationship Management*. IGI Global, pp. 44–63.

Alshurideh M. 2022. Does electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM) affect service quality at private hospitals in Jordan? *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 10.2: 325–332.

Andrade R., Moazeni S. and Ramirez-Marquez J.E. 2020. A systems perspective on contact centers and customer service reliability modeling. *Systems Engineering*, 23.2: 221–236.

Appel G. et al. 2020. The future of social media in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing science*, 48.1: 79–95.

Autio E., Mudambi R. and Yoo Y. 2021. Digitalization and globalization in a turbulent world: Centrifugal and centripetal forces. *Global Strategy Journal*, 11.1: 3–16.

Bai P., Cui Y. and Ye L. 2014. Research of the relationship of e-service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in C2C online shopping. *Contemporary Logistics*, 14: 35.

Baj-Rogowska A. et al. 2019. Analiza sentymentu jako narzędzie monitorowania wyników finansowych przedsiębiorstwa. *Przedsiębiorczość i Zarządzanie* 20.12: 125–139.

Balio S. and Casais B. 2021. A content marketing framework to analyze customer engagement on social media. In: *Research Anthology on Strategies for Using Social Media as a Service and Tool in Business*. IGI Global, pp. 320–336.

Baltes L.P. 2015. Content marketing-the fundamental tool of digital marketing. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov. Economic Sciences. Series V*, 8.2: 111.

Baranov A. 2012. Building online customer relationship. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov. Economic Sciences. Series V*, 5(1): 15.

Barauskaite G. and Streimikiene D. 2021. Corporate social responsibility and financial performance of companies: The puzzle of concepts, definitions and assessment methods. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 28.1: 278–287.

Barszczewski A. and Gmitruk P. 2010. Tworzenie narzędzi budowania relacji z klientami, [w:] E. Skrzypek (red.), Mat. Konf. Ogólnopolskiej Konferencji Naukowej: *Klient jako wyznacznik sukcesu organizacji*, Lublin 6-7 V.

Bartlett C.A. and Ghoshal S. 1989. *Managing across Borders: The Transnational Solution*. Harvard Business School Press.

Bartlett C.A. and Ghoshal S. 2021. *The Transnational Corporation: The Internationalization of Business*. Cambridge University Press.

Bartlett Ch. and Ghoshal S. 1987. Managing across borders: New organizational responses. *Sloan Management Review*, 9: 43–54.

Bartoli Ch., Bonetti E. and Mattiacci A. 2022. Marketing geographical indication products in the digital age: A holistic perspective. *British Food Journal*, 124.9: 2857–2876.

Bartram D. 2000. Internet recruitment and selection: Kissing frogs to find princes. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 8.4: 261–274.

Beck K. and Stanek P. 2019. Globalization or regionalization of stock markets? The case of central and eastern European countries. *Eastern European Economics*, 57.4: 317–330.

Beck N. and Rygl D. 2015. Categorization of multiple channel retailing in multi-, cross-, and omni-channel retailing for retailers and retailing. *Journal of retailing and consumer services*, 27: 170–178.

Benjaafar S. and Hu M. 2020. Operations management in the age of the sharing economy: What is old and what is new?. *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, 22.1: 93–101.

Bhagat S.M. 2015. Factors influencing purchase and nonpurchase behaviour in online shopping. *Anvesha*, 8(1): 34.

Bhaumik S. et al. 2019. Corporate governance and MNE strategies in emerging economies. *Journal of World Business*, 54.4: 234–243.

Bieńkowski J. et al. 2016. *Zarządzanie procesami biznesowymi*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Bietti E. 2020. From ethics washing to ethics bashing: A view on tech ethics from within moral philosophy. In: *Proceedings of the 2020 Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency*, pp. 210–219.

Biloš A. and Kelić I. 2012. Marketing aspects of social networks. *Economic Research-Ekonomska istraživanja*, 2: 155–174.

Bitiktas F. and Tuna O. 2020. Social media usage in container shipping companies: Analysis of Facebook messages. *Research in Transportation Business & Management*, 34: 100454.

Blattberg R.C., Getz G. and Thomas J.S. 2004. *Klient jako kapitał. Budowa cennego majątku relacji z klientem i zarządzanie nim*. Wydawnictwo MT Biznes, Konstancin Jeziorna.

Bojanowska A. 2018, Using social media in marketing activities of enterprises. *Marketing and Market*, No. 4.

Borucka A. 2016. Modelowanie procesu obsługi klienta. *Gospodarka Materiałowa i Logistyka*, (9 (CD)), 9–16.

Brzeziński S. 2016. *Management of socially responsible enterprises vs. global integration processes. Selected Issues*, Polish Economic Publishing House, Warsaw, p. 16.

Brzeziński S. and Pietrasieński P. 2006. Koszty standaryzacji produktu jako podstawowego elementu marketingu-mix. In: Nowicka-Skowron M. (ed.), *Koszty w zarządzaniu przedsiębiorstwem. Standardy międzynarodowe*, Wydawnictwo AGH [AGH Publishing house], Kraków, pp. 27–36.

Brzozowska A. and Bubel D. 2015. E-business as a new trend in the economy, ICCMIT 2015. In: *International Conference on Communication, Management and Information Technology*. April 20–22, 2015, Prague, Czech Republic, pp. 45–51.

Brzozowska A., Bubel D. and Nekrasenko L. 2022. *Organisation management in the digital economy: Globalization challenges*. CRC Press.

Buccieri D., Javalgi R.G. and Cavusgil E. 2020. International new venture performance: Role of international entrepreneurial culture, ambidextrous innovation, and dynamic marketing capabilities. *International Business Review*, 29.2: 101639.

Buchnowska D. 2006. *CRM strategia i technologia*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk.

Buczek K. 2021. Implementing the customer-oriented strategy in activities of companies in the social media. *Innovative Management in Economy and Business* No. 2(33)/2021, p. 74. https://doi.org/10.25312/2391-5129.33/2021_06kb

Buczek K. 2022a. Realizacja strategii zorientowania na klienta w działaniach firm w mediach społecznościowych. *Zarządzanie Innowacyjne w Gospodarce i Biznesie*, 33.2: 71–84.

Buczek K. 2022b. Aplikacje mobilne jako narzędzie realizacji strategii zarzadzania relacją z klientem. *Zarządzanie Innowacyjne w Gospodarce i Biznesie*, 33.2: 33–47.

Budzanowska-Drzewiecka M. 2021. *Challenges relating to the use of marketing activities through social media from the point of view of integrated marketing communication*, "Media Management", No. 2, 2021.

Burnett K. 2002. *Relacje z kluczowymi klientami*. Oficyna ekonomiczna, Kraków.

Buttle F. 1999. The SCOPE of customer relationship management. *International Journal of Customer Relationship Management*, 1(4): 327–337.

Buttle F. 2009. *Customer Relationship Management*. Butterworth-Heinemann.

Bwaliez O.M. et al. 2019. Integrating the SRM and lean paradigms: The constructs and measurements. *Theoretical Economics Letters*, 9.07: 2371.

Cahyani D.E. et al. 2023. Development of e-commerce application using customer relationship management to increase the turnover of Bendosewu farmers. *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 6.4: 201–210.

Callender A.K. 2007. The mechanistic/vitalistic dualism of chiropractic and general systems theory: Daniel D. Palmer and Ludwig von Bertalanffy. *Journal of Chiropractic Humanities*, 14: 1–21.

Canhoto A.I., Clark M. and Fennemore P. 2013. Emerging segmentation practices in the age of the social customer. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 21.5: 413–428.

Cannavò M. et al. 2019. Work related violence as a predictor of stress and correlated disorders in emergency department healthcare professionals. *La Clinica Terapeutica*, 170.2: e110–e123.

Carter C. 2008. A curiously British story: Foucault goes to business school. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 38(1): 13–29.

Chams N. and García-Blandón J. 2019. On the importance of sustainable human resource management for the adoption of sustainable development goals. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 141: 109–122.

Chatterjee S., Ghosh S.K. and Chaudhuri R. 2020. Knowledge management in improving business process: An interpretative framework for successful implementation of AI–CRM–KM system in organizations. *Business Process Management Journal*, 26.6: 1261–1281.

Chatterjee S. et al. 2019. Are CRM systems ready for AI integration? A conceptual framework of organizational readiness for effective AI-CRM integration. *The Bottom Line*, 32.2: 144–157.

Chaudhuri R., Chatterjee S. and Vrontis D. 2022. Digital transformation of the organisations using AI integrated partner relationship management. In: *Business Advancement through Technology Volume I: Markets and Marketing in Transition*. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp. 21–45.

Chen C., Geng L. and Zhou S. 2021. Design and implementation of bank CRM system based on decision tree algorithm. *Neural Computing and Applications*, 33: 8237–8247.

Chen I.J. and Popovich K. 2003. Understanding customer relationship management: People, process and technology. *Business Process Management Journal*, no. 9/5/2003, pp. 672–688.

Chen L. and Lombaerde P. 2019. De. ASEAN between globalization and regionalization. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 25.5: 729–750.

Chia S. 1992. The universal mobile telecommunication system. *IEEE Communications Magazine*, 30.12: 54–62.

Chinje N.B. 2013. *Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Implementation within the Banking and Mobile Telephony Sectors of Nigeria and South Africa*. Wits Business School, pp. 237–243.

Chiu C.Y., Chen S. and Chen C.L. 2017. An integrated perspective of TOE framework and innovation diffusion in broadband mobile applications adoption by enterprises. *International Journal of Management, Economics and Social Sciences (IJMESS)*, 6(1): 14–39.

Christofi M. et al. 2020. CRM campaigns with choice for enhanced business process performance: The collectivist customers' collaborative role for positive word-of-mouth. *Business Process Management Journal*, 26.5: 1225–1239.

Chuang Chih-Hsun and Liao, 2010. Strategic human resource management in service context: Taking care of business by taking care of employees and customers. *Personnel psychology*, 63.1: 153–196.

Chui M., Manyika J. and Miremadi M. 2015. Four fundamentals of workplace automation. *McKinsey Quarterly*, 29.3: 1–9.

Coetzee C. and Van Niekerk D. 2012. Tracking the evolution of the disaster management cycle: A general system theory approach. *Jàmbá: Journal of Disaster Risk Studies*, 4(1): 1–9.

Comparably. 2021. Zappos Net Promoter Score (NPS) 2021 Benchmarks. https://www.comparably.com/companies/zappos/net-promoter-score

Corona B. et al. 2019. Towards sustainable development through the circular economy—A review and critical assessment on current circularity metrics. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 151: 104498.

Coyle J.J., Bardi E.J. and Langley C.J. 2009. *Supply Chain Management. A Logistics perspective*. West Publishing Company, Minnesota, p. 82.

Cricelli L. et al. 2020. Searching for the one: Customer relationship management software selection. *Journal of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis*, 27.3–4: 173–188.

Crockett B. 2007. *CRM Strategy: The Roadmap for Creating CRM Capabilities, Industry Perspective*. Accenture Publication, pp. 1–5.

Czyszczoń A. and Zgrzywa A. 2013. Automatic customer segmentation for social CRM systems. In: *Computer Networks: 20th International Conference, CN 2013, Lwówek Śląski, Poland, June 17–21, 2013. Proceedings 20*. Springer Berlin Heidelberg, p. 552–561.

Dandis A-O. and Al Haj Eid M.B. 2022. Customer lifetime value: Investigating the factors affecting attitudinal and behavioural brand loyalty. *The TQM Journal*, 34.3: 476–493.

Dandis A-O. et al. 2022. An empirical investigation of the factors affecting customer lifetime value. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 39.4: 910–935.

Dastane D.O. 2020. Impact of digital marketing on online purchase intention: Mediation effect of customer relationship management. *Journal of Asian Business Strategy*, 10: 142–158.

Dembińska-Cyran I., Hołub-Iwan J. and Perenc J. 2004. *Zarządzanie relacjami z klientem*. Difin, Warszawa.

Desouza K.C., et al. 2008. Customer-driven innovation. *Research-Technology Management*, 51.3: 3–44.

Deszczyński B. 2011. *CRM strategia system zarządzanie zmianą*. Oficyna a Wolters Kluwer business, Warszawa.

Deszczyński B. and Deszczyński P. 2004. Customer Relationship Management konsekwencją globalizacji. *Zeszyty Naukowe Akademii Ekonomicznej*, 44, Poznań.

Devereux E., Grimmer L. and Grimmer M. 2020. Consumer engagement on social media: Evidence from small retailers. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 19.2: 151–159.

Dewnarain S., Ramkissoon H. and Mavondo, F. 2019. Social customer relationship management: An integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 28.2: 172–188.

Diem P.T. et al. 2021. Customer care and customer relation ship maintenance at Ministop, Family Mart and CoopSmile in Vietnam. *International Journal Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation*, 2.4: 744–751.

Dixon M., Freeman K. and Toman N. 2010. Stop Trying to Delight Your Customers. *Harvard Business Review*.

Drucker P. 2012. *Management*. Routledge.

Dubey R. et al. 2019. Supplier relationship management for circular economy: Influence of external pressures and top management commitment. *Management Decision*, 57.4: 767–790.

Dunning J.H. 1993. *Multinational Enterprises and the Global Economy*. Addison-Wesley.

Dunning J.H. and Gereffi G.J. 2019. *The Global Business Strategy of Multinational Enterprises*. Oxford University Press.

Dziadkowiec J. and Dziadkowiec P. 2004. Kształtowanie relacji z klientami – czynności w procesach CRM (poszczególne elementy procesu CRM). In: E. Skrzypek (ed.), Mat. Konf. Nauk. nt. *Sposoby osiągnięcia doskonałości organizacji w warunkach zmienności otoczenia*. Tom I, Wyd. UMCS, Lublin.

Dziwulski J. and Ogrzebacz T. 2017. Social media as an element of strategy for management of customer relationships in times of globalisation. In: W. Harasim (ed.), *The Impact of the Globalised World on Management*. Higher School of Promotion, Media and Show Business, Warsaw.

Dzwigol H., Dzwigol-Barosz M. and Kwilinski A. 2020. Formation of global competitive enterprise environment based on industry 4.0 concept. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 24.1: 1–5.

Dźwigoł H. et al. 2019. The concept of the system approach of the enterprise restructuring process. *Virtual Economics*, 2.4: 46–70.

Elgendy N., Elragal A. and Päivärinta T. 2022. DECAS: A modern data-driven decision theory for big data and analytics. *Journal of Decision Systems*, 31(4): 337–373.

Eng T.Y. 2008. E-customer service capability and value creation. *The Service Industries Journal*, 28(9), 1293–1306.

Erlandson Ch. and Ocklind P. 2000. WAP–The wireless application protocol. In: *Mobile Networking with WAP: The Ultimate Guide to the Efficient Use of Wireless Application Protocol*. Vieweg+ Teubner Verlag, Wiesbaden, pp. 165–173.

Fatma M. et al. 2022. Corporate social responsibility and customer-citizenship behaviors: The role of customer–company identification. *European Business Review*, 34.6: 858–875.

Fehrer J.A. and Wieland H. 2021. A systemic logic for circular business models. *Journal of Business Research*, 125: 609–620.

Ferdous J. 2016. Organization theories: From classical perspective. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law*, 9(2): 1–6.

Fisher N.I. and Kordupleski R.E. 2019. Good and bad market research: A critical review of Net Promoter Score. *Applied Stochastic Models in Business and Industry*, 35.1: 138–151.

Fletcher-Brown J. et al. 2021. Vulnerable consumer engagement: How corporate social media can facilitate the replenishment of depleted resources. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 38.2: 518–529.

Flew T. 2020. Globalization, neo-globalization and post-globalization: The challenge of populism and the return of the national. *Global Media and Communication*, 16.1: 19–39.

Flores-García E. et al. 2023. Enabling industrial internet of things-based digital servitization in smart production logistics. *International Journal of Production Research*, 61.12: 3884–3909.

Foltean F.S., Trif S.M. and Tuleu D.L. 2019. Customer relationship management capabilities and social media technology use: Consequences on firm performance. *Journal of business research*, 104: 563–575.

Fonfara K. 1999. *Marketing partnerski na rynku przedsiębiorstw*. PWE, Warszawa.

Foss B., Stone M. and Ekinci Y. 2008. What makes for CRM system success - Or failure? *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management*, 15: 68–78.

Frąckiewicz E. and Rudawska E. 2004. Zarządzanie relacjami z klientem z wykorzystaniem koncepcji Customer Relationship Management. *Przegląd Organizacji*.

Frank A.G. et al. 2022. Service customization in turbulent environments: Service business models and knowledge integration to create capability-based switching costs. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 100: 1–18.

Freeman, R.E. 2023. Stakeholder management: Framework and philosophy. In: *R. Edward Freeman's Selected Works on Stakeholder Theory and Business Ethics*. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp. 61–88.

Ghahremani-Nahr J. and Nozari H. 2021. A survey for investigating key performance indicators in digital marketing. *International Journal of Innovation in Marketing Elements*, 1.1: 1–6.

Ghemawat P. 2007. *Redefining Global Strategy: Crossing Borders in a World Where Differences Still Matter*. Harvard Business Press.

Giddens A. 2010. *Socjologia*. PWN [PWN Publishing House], Warsaw, p. 74.

Gil-Gomez H. et al. 2020. Customer relationship management: Digital transformation and sustainable business model innovation. *Economic research-Ekonomska istraživanja*, 33.1: 2733–2750.

Gimpel G. 2020. Bringing dark data into the light: Illuminating existing IoT data lost within your organization. *Business Horizons*, 63.4: 519–530.

Ginting Y. et al. 2023. Repurchase intention of e-commerce customers in Indonesia: An overview of the effect of e-service quality, e-word of mouth, customer trust, and customer satisfaction mediation. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 7.1: 329–340.

Glaveli N. et al. 2023. Exploring the role of fitness instructors' interaction quality skills in building customer trust in the service provider and customer satisfaction. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 23.3: 767–788.

Golitsina O.L., Kupriyanov V.M. and Maksimov N.V. 2015. Information and technological solutions applied for knowledge-management tasks. *Scientific and Technical Information Processing*, 42, 150–161.

Gonring M.P. 2008. Customer loyalty and employee engagement: An alignment for value. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 29.4: 29–40.

Gregor B. and Stawiszyński M. 2011. *E-commerce in relations to social media challenges* "Scientific Books of the University of Szczecin", No. 651.

Grzybowski M. 1998. *Metodyka projektowania i wdrażania strategii marketingowych w przedsiębiorstwach gospodarki morskiej w warunkach transformacji gospodarczej*. College of Administration and Business in Gdynia, Gdynia, pp. 138–142.

Guerola-Navarro V. et al. 2021a. Customer relationship management and its impact on innovation: A literature review. *Journal of Business Research*, 129: 83–87.

Guerola-Navarro V. et al. 2021b. Research model for measuring the impact of customer relationship management (CRM) on performance indicators. *Economic Research-ekonomska istraživanja*, 34.1: 2669–2691.

Guo Y., Fan D. and Zhang X. 2020. Social media-based customer service and firm reputation. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 40.5: 575–601.

Gupta V. and Sinha A.R. 2022. McKinsey's 7s Principle and its inferences in Ramayana. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6.2: 4086–4088.

Haaker T. et al. 2021. Business model innovation through the application of the Internet-of-Things: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 126: 126–136.

Haeruddin M.I.W., Musa M.I. and Kurniawan A.W. 2023. Marketing strategy analysis in a global market. *Journal Management & Economics Review (JUMPER)*, 1.1: 17–24.

Hammer M. 2006. *Sztuka konkurowania w gospodarce XXI wieku. Plan działania*. Wydawnictwo Helion [Helion Publishing House], Gliwice, p. 341.

Harsch K. and Festing M. 2020. Dynamic talent management capabilities and organizational agility — A qualitative exploration. *Human Resource Management*, 59.1: 43–61.

Helgesen Ø. 2006. Are loyal customers profitable? Customer satisfaction, customer (action) loyalty and customer profitability at the individual level. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 22.3–4: 24–266.

Helmreich R.L. and Foushee H.C. 2019. Why CRM? Empirical and theoretical bases of human factors training. In: *Crew Resource Management*. Academic Press, pp. 3–52.

Herman L.E., Sulhaini S. and Farida N. 2021. Electronic customer relationship management and company performance: Exploring the product innovativeness development. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 20.1: 1–19.

Hernas A. and Gajda L. 2004. Systemy Zarządzania Jakością, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Śląskiej [Wydawnictwo Politechniki Śląskiej], Gliwice, p. 140.

Hilton B. et al. 2020. Customer success management: The next evolution in customer management practice? *Industrial marketing management*, 90: 360–369.

Hitt L.M. and Brynjolfsson E. 1997. Information technology and internal firm organization: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 14.2: 81–101.

Hitt M.A., Ireland R.D. and Hoskisson R.E. 2019. *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases: Competitiveness and Globalization*. Cengage Learning.

Hosseini-Motlagh S.M., Nouri-Harzvili M., Johari M. and Sarker B.R. 2020. Coordinating economic incentives, customer service and pricing decisions in a competitive closed-loop supply chain. *Journal of cleaner production*, 255, 120241.

Howarth D. and Quaglia L. 2021. Failing forward in Economic and Monetary Union: Explaining weak Eurozone financial support mechanisms. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28.10: 1555–1572.

Hung L.-M. and Chen, Ch.-Ch. 2013. A study of customer care and satisfaction towards hotel service quality. *International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management*, 7.3–4: 161–172.

Idzikowski A. et al. 2019. Customer Relationship Management (CRM)-philosophy and its significance for the enterprise. *System Safety: Human-Technical Facility-Environment*, 1.1: 1004–1011.

Imtiaz A., Hauge J.B. and Chen S. 2007. Collaboration within the tool-and-die manufacturing industry through open-source modular ERP/CRM systems. In: *Working Conference on Virtual Enterprises*. Springer US, Boston, MA, pp. 469–476.

Indriasari E., Gaol F.L. and Matsuo T. 2019. Digital banking transformation: Application of artificial intelligence and big data analytics for leveraging customer experience in the Indonesia banking sector. In: *2019 8th International Congress on Advanced Applied Informatics (IIAI-AAI)*. IEEE, pp. 863–868.

Iriana R. and Buttle F. 2007, Strategic, operational, and analytical customer relationship management: Attributes and measures. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 5.4: 23–42.

Isaeva N., Gruenewald K. and Saunders M.N.K. 2020.Trust theory and customer services research: Theoretical review and synthesis. *The Service Industries Journal*, 40.15–16: 1031–1063.

Izotov D.A. et al. 2021. Economic integration in the context of globalization and regionalization. *Russian Foreign Economic Journal*, 5: 7–24.

Jahanshahi A.A. et al. 2011. Study the effects of customer service and product quality on customer satisfaction and loyalty. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1.7: 253–260.

Janakova M. 2021. CRM to support International Relationships in a Global Society. In: *SHS Web of Conferences*. EDP Sciences, p. 06014.

Janiesch Ch., Zschech P. and Heinrich K. 2021. Machine learning and deep learning. *Electronic Markets*, 31.3: 685–695.

Janulek P. 2022. *Projektowanie modeli biznesu usług profesjonalnych w mediach społecznościowych*. Centrum Myśli Strategicznych.

Jędrzejczyk W. 2021. Managing customer relations and value in organizations with the use of IT tools: Customer segmentation on the market of eco-innovative services. *Procedia Computer Science*, 192: 2816–2825.

Jin Z., Navare J. and Lynch R. 2019. The relationship between innovation culture and innovation outcomes: Exploring the effects of sustainability orientation and firm size. *R&D Management*, 49.4: 607–623.

Jing N. 2020. Research on Tesla's customer care innovation. In: *2020 Management Science Informatization and Economic Innovation Development Conference (MSIEID)*. IEEE, pp. 469–478.

Johanning V. 2022. Step 2: Analysis of the corporate strategy and derivation of challenges for IT. In: *IT Strategy: Making IT Fit for the Digital Transformation*. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, Wiesbaden, pp. 99–124.

Jones H. and Farquhar J.D. 2003. Contact management and customer loyalty. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 8.1: 71–78.

Jóźwiakowski P. et al. 2015. Marketing szeptany jako nieformalna komunikacja międzyludzka. *Zeszyty Naukowe Polskiego Towarzystwa Ekonomicznego w Zielonej Górze*, 2.3: 36–46.

Juanamasta I.G. et al. 2019. The role of customer service through customer relationship management (CRM) to increase customer loyalty and good image. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*, 8.10: 2004–2007.

Kachniewska M. 2017. *Marketing strategies of enterprises and tourist regions in social media*, "Oeconomica Posananiensia" Studies, No. 5.

Kamal S. et al. 2022. The relationship between e-service quality, ease of use, and E-CRM performance referred by brand image. In: *Building a Brand Image through Electronic Customer Relationship Management*. IGI Global, pp. 84–108.

Kamalaldin A. et al. 2020. Transforming provider-customer relationships in digital servitization: A relational view on digitalization. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 89: 306–325.

Kampani N. and Jhamb D. 2020. Analyzing the role of E-CRM in managing customer relations: A critical review of the literature. *Journal of Critical Review*, 7.4: 221–226.

Kanchanapoom K. and Chongwatpol J. 2022. Integrated customer lifetime value (CLV) and customer migration model to improve customer segmentation. *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, pp. 1–14.

Kast F.E. and Rosenzweig J.E. 1990. General systems theory: Applications for organization and management. *Academy of Management Journal*, pp. 447–466.

Kautish P. and Sharma R. 2020. Determinants of pro-environmental behavior and environmentally conscious consumer behavior: An empirical investigation from emerging market. *Business Strategy & Development*, 3.1: 112–127.

Khan R.U. et al. 2022. The impact of customer relationship management and company reputation on customer loyalty: The mediating role of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 21.1: 1–26.

Kitana A. 2016. Overview of the managerial thoughts and theories from the history: Classical management theory to modern management theory. *Indian Journal of Management Science*, 6(1): 16.

Klonowski Z.J., 2016. *Systemy informatyczne zarządzania przedsiebiorstwem – modele rozwoju i właściwości funkcjonalne*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa.

Kłosowski J. 2018. *Marketing relacji z klientami*. Wydawnictwo PWE, Warszawa.

Ko M.N. et al. 2010. Social-networks connect services. *Computer*, 43.8: 37–43.

Koivisto J. and Hamari J. 2019. The rise of motivational information systems: A review of gamification research. *International Journal of Information Management*, 45: 191–210.

Korczak J. and Kijewska K. 2008., Zadowolenie klienta wewnętrznego warunkiem sukcesu firmy usługowej. In: Borys T. and Rogala P. (eds.), *Zarządzanie personelem jako kryterium doskonałości*, Prace Naukowe Akademii Ekonomicznej im. Oskara Langego we Wrocławiu [Scientific Papers of the Oskar Lange Academy of Economics in Wrocław], Wrocław, pp. 482–494.

Kostojohn S., Johnson M. and Paulen B. 2011. *CRM Fundamentals*. Apress, New York.

Kotler P. 1994. *Marketing. Analiza, planowanie, wdrażanie i kontrola*. Gebethner i ska [Gebethner i ska Publishing House], Warsaw, p. 134.

Kotler P. 2013. *Marketing*. Dom Wydawniczy Rebis [Rebis Publishing house], Poznań, pp. 8–9.

Kotler P. and Armstrong G. 2004. *Marketing: An Introduction*.

Kotler P. and Armstrong G. 2010. *Principles of Marketing (13th Edition)*. Prentice Hall.

Kotler P. and Keller K.L. 2012. *Marketing*, Dom Wydawniczy Rebis [Rebis Publishing house], Poznań, p. 5.

Kotler P. and Lane K. 2011, *Marketing Management*. 14th Edition, Pearson Education, New York, p. 57.

Kozak J., Kania K., Juszczuk P. and Mitręga M. 2021. Swarm intelligence goal-oriented approach to data-driven innovation in customer churn management. *International Journal of Information Management*, 60: 102357.

Krawczyk S. 2001. *Zarządzanie procesami logistycznymi. PWE*, Warszawa.

Kumar A., Paul J. and Unnithan A.B. 2020. 'Masstige'marketing: A review, synthesis and research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 113: 384–398.

Kumar B.P. 2021. Changing objectives of firms and managerial preferences: A review of models in microeconomics. *Shanlax International Journal of Management*, 8.4: 43–46.

Kumar V. and Rajan B. 2009. Profitable customer management: Measuring and maximizing customer lifetime value. *Management Accounting Quarterly*, 10(3): 1.

Kunasekaran K.K.H., Zheng Y. and Wang W. 2020. Research on customer relationship management based on data mining. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Convergent Research Interchange, FuCoS, ISSN: 2508-9080 (Print); 2671-5325 (Online)*, 6.5: 61–77.

Kurdi B., Alshurideh M. and Alnaser A. 2020. The impact of employee satisfaction on customer satisfaction: Theoretical and empirical underpinning. *Management Science Letters*, 10.15: 3561–3570.

Lahtinen V., Dietrich T. and Rundle-Thiele S. 2020. Long live the marketing mix. Testing the effectiveness of the commercial marketing mix in a social marketing context. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 10.3: 357–375.

Lai V.S. 2001. Intraorganizational communication with intranets. *Communications of the ACM*, 44(7): 95–100.

Lajimi H.F. and Majidi S. 2021. Supplier segmentation: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Supply Chain Management Science*, 2.3–4: 138–158.

Lam A.Y., Cheung R. and Lau M.M. 2013. The influence of internet-based customer relationship management on customer loyalty. *Contemporary Management Research*, 9(4): 419.

Lambert D.M. and Harrington T.C. 1989. Establishing customer service strategies within the marketing mix: More empirical evidence. *Journal of Business Logistics*, 10.2: 44–60.

Lambert D.M., Stock J.R. and Ellarm L.M. 2008. *Fundamenatls of Logistics Management*. McGraw-Hill, Boston, p. 44.

Larsson A. and Broström E. 2020. Ensuring customer retention: Insurers' perception of customer loyalty. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 38.2: 151–166.

Lee S.M. and Lee D.H. 2020. "Untact": A new customer service strategy in the digital age. *Service Business*, 14.1: 1–22.

Lee-Kelley L., Gilbert D. and Mannicom R. 2003. How eCRM can enhance customer loyalty. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 21(4): 239–248.

Lepkowska-White E., Parsons A. and Berg W. 2019. Social media marketing management: An application to small restaurants in the US. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 13.3: 321–345.

Li F., Larimo J. and Leonidou L.C. 2021. Social media marketing strategy: Definition, conceptualization, taxonomy, validation, and future agenda. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 49: 51–70.

Liberska B. 2002. *Globalizacja. Mechanizmy i wyzwania*. PWE Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa, pp. 17–18.

Lim Y.H. et al. 2020. Organizational culture and customer loyalty: A case of Harvey Norman. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management and Education (APJME)*, 3.1: 47–62.

Ling R. and Yen D.C. 2001. Customer relationship management: An analysis framework and implementation strategies. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 41.3: 82–97.

Lisiecka K. 2006. W kierunku zrozumienia klienta. In: T. Sikora (ed.), *Klient w organizacji zarządzanej przez jakość*. Akademia Ekonomiczna w Krakowie, Kraków.

Louçã F. 2014. The elusive concept of innovation for Schumpeter, Marschak and the early econometricians. *Research Policy*, 43.8: 1442–1449.

Lu J. 2021. The role of customer behavior and relationship management in modern enterprise marketing. In: *2021 3rd International Conference on Economic Management and Cultural Industry (ICEMCI 2021)*. Atlantis Press, pp. 2998–3002.

Lucas R. 2022. *Customer Service*. McGraw-Hill US Higher Ed USE, 23–78.

Luo Y. 2022. A general framework of digitization risks in international business. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 53.2: 344–361.

Lupa-Wójcik I. 2016. Quality of customer services in social media with an example of Samsung Polska. In: E. Skrzypek (ed.), *Quality in Organisation Management Systems in New Economy*. University of Economics in Krakow, Krakow.

Lutzky U. 2021, "You keep saying you are sorry". Exploring the use of sorry in customer communication on Twitter. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 39: 100463.

Lynch R. 2017. *How to build a global strategy*. http://www.global-strategy.net/how-do-you-build-a-global-strategy/, accessed on: 15-09-2017.

Macarthy A. 2021. *500 social media marketing tips: Essential advice, hints and strategy for business: Facebook, twitter, pinterest, Google+, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, and mor*.

Maćkowiak P. et al. 2020. *Sztuczna inteligencja w biznesie*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa.

Malmi T. and Ikäheimo S. 2003. Value based management practices—Some evidence from the field. *Management Accounting Research*, 14(3): 235–254.

Malthouse E.C., Haenlein M., Skiera B., Wege E. and Zhang M. 2013. Managing customer relationships in the social media era: Introducing the social CRM house. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 27(4): 270–280.

Markey R., Reichheld F. and Dullweber A. 2009. Closing the Customer Feedback Loop. *Harvard Business Review*, December 2009.

Markonah M., Salim A. and Franciska, J. 2020. Effect of profitability, leverage, and liquidity to the firm value. *Dinasti International Journal of Economics, Finance & Accounting*, 1.1: 83–94.

Mårtensson M. 2000. A critical review of knowledge management as a management tool. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 4.3: 204–216.

Martin J.D., Petty J.W. and Wallace, J.S. 2009. *Value Based Management with Corporate Social Responsibility*. Oxford University Press.

Massa, L., & Tucci, C.L. 2021. Innovation and business models. In: *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management*.

Massa L., Tucci C.L. and Afuah A. 2017. A critical assessment of business model research. *Academy of Management Annals*, 11(1), 73–104.

Matthews L. 2010. Social media and the evolution of corporate communications. *The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 1.1: 17–23.

Mccoll-Kennedy J.R. et al. 2012. Health care customer value cocreation practice styles. *Journal of Service Research*, 15.4: 370–389.

Mcilroy A. and Barnett S. 2000. Building customer relationships: Do discount cards work?. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 10.6: 347–355.

Melović B. et al. 2020. The impact of digital transformation and digital marketing on the brand promotion, positioning and electronic business in Montenegro. *Technology in Society*, 63: 101425.

Mendoza L.E., Marius A., Pérez M. and Grimán A.C. 2007. Critical success factors for a customer relationship management strategy. *Information and Software Technology*, 49(8): 913–945.

Metz D., Ilieș L. and Nistor R.L. 2020. The impact of organizational culture on customer service effectiveness from a sustainability perspective. *Sustainability*, 12.15: 6240.

Migdadi M.M. 2021. Knowledge management, customer relationship management and innovation capabilities. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 36.1: 111–124.

Miletić V., Grubor A. and Ćurčić N. 2022. Post-sales services: A significant performance of organizations' competitive advantage. *Ekonomika*, 68.2: 43–53.

Mintzberg H. 1990. The design school: Reconsidering the basic premises of strategic management. *Strategic Management Journal*, 11(3): 171–195.

Mintzberg H. 2016. 10 The age of the management gurus. *A History of Management Thought*, p. 257.

Misiak W. 2009. *Globalizacja, więcej niż podręcznik. Społeczeństwo, kultura, polityka*. Difin [Difin Publishing House], Warsaw, p. 11.

Misuraca M., Scepi G. and Spano M. 2020. A network-based concept extraction for managing customer requests in a social media care context. *International Journal of Information Management*, 51: 101956.

Mohan S., Choi E. and Min D. 2008. Conceptual modeling of enterprise application system using social networking and Web 2.0 "social CRM system". In: *2008 International Conference on Convergence and Hybrid Information Technology*. IEEE, pp. 237–244.

Motohashi K. 2015. *Global Business Strategy: Multinational Corporations Venturing into Emerging Markets* (p. 259). Springer Nature.

Motohashi K. and Motohashi K. 2015. Management strategies for global businesses. *Global Business Strategy: Multinational Corporations Venturing into Emerging Markets*, pp. 21–40.

Mousavi R., Johar M. and Mookerjee V.S. 2020. The voice of the customer: Managing customer care in Twitter. *Information Systems Research*, 31.2: 340–360.

Mruk R. and Stępień B. 2007, Klient jako źródło przewagi konkurencyjnej w przedsiębiorstwie międzynarodowym – perspektywa instytucjonalna. In: Schoeder J. and Stępień B. (eds.), *Handel i finanse międzynarodowe w warunkach globalizacji*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu [Publishing house of the Poznań University of Economics], Poznań, p. 477.

Nagariya R., Kumar D. and Kumar I. 2020. Service supply chain: From bibliometric analysis to content analysis, current research trends and future research directions. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 28.1: 333–369.

Newell F. 2010. *Why CRM Doesn't Work: How to Win by Letting Customers Manange the Relationship*. John Wiley & Sons.

Ngo L.V. and O'Cass, A. 2012. In search of innovation and customer-related performance superiority: The role of market orientation, marketing capability, and innovation capability interactions. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 29.5: 861–877.

Nguyen, D.T. et al. 2020. Impact of service quality, customer satisfaction and switching costs on customer loyalty. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7.8: 395–405.

Niedzielska N. 2020. *Personalizacja w komunikacji marketingowej online–perspektywa konsumenta*.

Nilson T. 2010. Good for Living? On the relationship between globalization and life expectancy. *World Development*, 38.9: 1191.

Novak, A., Bennett D. and Kliestik T. 2021. Product decision-making information systems, real-time sensor networks, and artificial intelligence-driven big data analytics in sustainable Industry 4.0. *Economics, Management and Financial Markets*, 16.2: 62–72.

O'Hern M.S. and Rindfleisch A. 2017. Customer co-creation: A typology and research agenda. *Review of Marketing Research*, 84–106.

Okazaki S., Taylor Ch. R. 2013. Social media and international advertising: Theoretical challenges and future directions. *International Marketing Review*, 30.1: 56–71.

Olszak C. 2013. Multi-agent framework for social customer relationship management systems. In: *Proceedings of the Informing Science and Information Technology Education Conference*. Informing Science Institute, pp. 367–387.

Orzelska P. 2010 System CRM podstaw sukcesu zarządzania relacjami z klientem. In: E. Skrzypek (ed.), *Mat. Konf. Ogólnopolskiej Konferencji Naukowej: Klient jako wyznacznik sukcesu organizacji*. Lublin 6-7.V.2010.

Østergaard P.A. and Maestosi, P.C. 2019. Tools, technologies and systems integration for the Smart and Sustainable Cities to come. *International Journal of Sustainable Energy Planning and Management*, 24: 1–6.

Pabian A. 2001. Profesjonalne zarządzanie zadowoleniem klientów. *Marketing w Praktyce*, no. 1, p. 45.

Palalic R. et al. 2021. Social media and consumer buying behavior decision: What entrepreneurs should know?. *Management Decision*, 59.6: 1249–1270.

Pambreni Y. et al. 2019. The influence of total quality management toward organization performance. *Management Science Letters*, 9.9: 1397–1406.

Panasiuk A. 2022. *Inteligentne technologie MarTech jako wsparcie działów marketingu w branży e-commerce a doświadczenia konsumenckie*.

Parker B. 1998. *Globalization and Business Practice Managing across Boundaries*. Sage Publications, London, p. 21.

Parker L.D. and Lewis N.R. 1995. Classical management control in contemporary management and accounting: The persistence of Taylor and Fayol's world. *Accounting, Business & Financial History*, 5(2): 211–236.

Patrick V.M. and Hollenbeck C.R. 2021. Designing for all: Consumer response to inclusive design. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 31.2: 360–381.

Peng Z. and Ma X. 2019. A survey on construction and enhancement methods in service chatbots design. *CCF Transactions on Pervasive Computing and Interaction*, 1: 204–223.

Peppers D. and Rogers M. 2011. *Managing Customer Relationships: A Strategic Framework*. John Wiley & Sons, New Jersey.

PN-EN ISO 9000:2006. Systemy zarządzania jakością. Podstawy i terminologia, p. 33.

Ponte B., Dominguez R., Cannella S. and Framinan J.M. 2022. The implications of batching in the bullwhip effect and customer service of closed-loop supply chains. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 244, 108379.

Prieto B. 2015. Project management theory and the management of large complex projects. *PM World Journal*, 4(6): 1–85.

Principale S. 2023. Corporate governance and strategic management. In: *Fostering Sustainability in Corporate Governance: Analysis of the EU Sustainable Corporate Governance and Due Diligence Directives*. Springer Nature Switzerland, Cham, pp. 1–17.

Pyrkosz A. 2021. Wirtualna rzeczywistość-realne korzyści. *inAW Journal-Multidisciplinary Academic Magazine*, 2.1: 107–121.

Qi Y. et al. Developing supply chain resilience through integration: An empirical study on an e-commerce platform. *Journal of Operations Management*, 2023, 69.3: 477–496.

Qian L. et al. 2009. Cloud computing: An overview. In: *Cloud Computing: First International Conference, CloudCom 2009, Beijing, China, December 1-4, 2009. Proceedings 1*. Springer Berlin Heidelberg, pp. 626–631.

Rakhmonov I.U., Reymov K.M. and Shayumova Z.M. 2019. The role of information in power management tasks. In *E3S Web of Conferences* (Vol. 139, p. 01080).

Ralston, R.W. 2003. The effects of customer service, branding, and price on the perceived value of local telephone service. *Journal of Business Research*, 56(3), 201–213.

Rana J. and Paul J. 2017. Consumer behavior and purchase intention for organic food: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 38: 157–165.

Razzouk R. and Shute V. 2012. What is design thinking and why is it important? *Review of Educational Research*, 82.3: 330–348.

Reichheld F.F. 1996. *The Loyalty Effect ± The Force Behind Growth, Profits and Lasting Value*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

Reichheld F.F. 2003. The one number you need to grow. *Harvard Business Review*, 81(12): 46–55.

Reinartz W., Krafft M., Hoyer W.D. 2004. *The CRM Process: Its Measurement and Impact on Performance*, *Journal of Marketing Research*" No. 43/1/2004, American Marketing Association, Chicago, pp. 293–305.

Roba, G.B. and Maric P. 2023. AI in customer relationship management. In: *Developments in Information and Knowledge Management Systems for Business Applications: Volume 7*. Springer Nature Switzerland, Cham, pp. 469–487.

Roberts J. 2000. From know-how to show-how? Questioning the role of information and communication technologies in knowledge transfer. *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, 12.4: 429–443.

Rochman Ch. M. et al. 2020. Think global, act local: Local knowledge is critical to inform positive change when it comes to microplastics. *Environmental Science & Technology*, 55.1: 4–6.

Rodriguez M., Peterson R.M. and Ajjan H. 2015. CRM/social media technology: Impact on customer orientation process and organizational sales performance. In: *Ideas in Marketing: Finding the New and Polishing the Old*. Springer, Cham, pp. 636–638.

Roggeveen A.L. and Beitelspacher L. 2020. Understanding and implementing CRM initiatives in international markets. *International Marketing Review*, 37.4: 735–746.

Rose K., Eldridge S. and Chapin L. 2015. The internet of things: An overview. *The Internet Society (ISOC)*, 80: 1–50.

Rugman A.M. and Verbeke A. 2001. Subsidiary-specific advantages in multinational enterprises. *Strategic Management Journal*, 22(12): 1017–1028.

Rugman A.M. and Verbeke A. 2004. A perspective on regional and global strategies of multinational enterprises. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 35, 3–18.

Rugman A.M. and Verbeke A. 2020. *Multinational Enterprises in the Global Economy*. Cambridge University Press.

Rusek A. (red.). 2017. *Zarządzanie jakością w obliczu wyzwań rynku*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach, Katowice.

Rydvalova P. and Skala M. 2021. Innovation and innovation partnership. In: *Innovation and Performance Drivers of Business Clusters: An Empirical Study*. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp. 47–57.

Ryzhkova H. and Bartashevska Y. 2020. Analysis of the effectiveness of implementing a CRM system in an enterprise. In: *ICTERI*, pp. 350–356.

Sachs J.D. et al. 2019. Six transformations to achieve the sustainable development goals. *Nature Sustainability*, 2.9: 805–814.

Sakunthala A. 2020,.Role of information technology on CRM implementation in selected industries. *Asian Journal of Management*, 11.4: 413–418.

Salomonson N., Åberg, A. and Allwood, J. 2012. Communicative skills that support value creation: A study of B2B interactions between customers and customer service representatives. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41(1): 145–155.

Samukic A. 1998. UMTS universal mobile telecommunications system: Development of standards for the third generation. *IEEE Transactions on Vehicular Technology*, 47.4: 1099–1104.

Sanders B., Crowe R. and Garcia E. 2004. Defense advanced research projects agency–Smart materials and structures demonstration program overview. *Journal of Intelligent Material Systems and Structures*, 15.4: 227–233.

Sano K. 2015. An empirical study the effect of social media marketing activities upon customer satisfaction, positive word-of-mouth and commitment in indemnity insurance service. In: *Proceedings International Marketing Trends Conference*, pp. 21–32.

Sarstedt M. et al. 2022. Progress in partial least squares structural equation modeling use in marketing research in the last decade. *Psychology & Marketing*, 39.5: 1035–1064.

Savira D.A., Hendrayat H. and Hurriyati R. 2022. The effect of Electronic Customer Relationship Management (eCRM) on customer satisfaction. In: *6th Global Conference on Business, Management, and Entrepreneurship (GCBME 2021)*. Atlantis Press, pp. 216–220.

Scheibe A. 2014. *Social Media and the possibilities of integration*, "Marketing and Market", No. 11.

Sedighi M.M., Mokfi T. and Golrizgashti S. 2012. Proposing a customer knowledge management model for customer value augmentation: A home appliances case study. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management*, 19: 321–347.

Sekhar S.Ch. 2020. A study on effectiveness of electronic banking system. *Sanshodhan*, 9.1: 8–13.

Setiawati A.P., Susetyorini Susetyorini U.E., Rusdiyanto R., Astanto D., Ulum B., Khadijah S.N., and Umanailo M.C.B. 2019. The role of customer service through Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to increase customer loyalty and good lmage. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*, 8(10): 2004–2007.

Shahin A., Gharibpoor M., Teymouri S. and Iraj E.B. 2013. Studying the influence of e-CRM on web-based brand personality–The case of Mellat Bank. *International Journal of Business Information Systems*, 13(4): 453–470.

Shin H. and Perdue R.R. 2022. Developing creative service ideas through hotel customer engagement for open innovation: Focused on empowerment and motivation processes. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 100: 103077.

Sin L.Y.M., Tse A.C.B. and Yim F.H.K. 2005. CRM: Conceptualization and scale development. *European Journal of marketing*, 39.11/12: 1264–1290.

Sitko M. and Jagodziński M. 2021. Technologia blockchain. *Studia i Materiały Informatyki Stosowanej*, 1: 37–41.

Skrzypek E. 2006. Klient jako współtwórca poziomu jakości w organizacji. In: T. Sikora (ed.), *Klient w organizacji zarządzanej przez jakość*. Akademia Ekonomiczna w Krakowie, Kraków.

Sołtysik-Piorunkiewicz A. 2013. *Zarządzanie relacjami z klientem z wykorzystaniem techniki customer care – charakterystyka systemów CRM*. http://www.sbc.org.pl/Content/19341/piorunkiewicz.pdf (7.01.2013 r.)

Song Q. et al. 2019. Impact of the usage of social media in the workplace on team and employee Performance. *Information & Management*, 56.8: 103160.

Stein A. and Ramaseshan B. 2016. Towards the identification of customer experience touch point elements. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 30: 8–19.

Stiglitz J. 2004. *Globalizacja*. PWN PWN [PWN Publishing House], Warsaw, p. 26.

Stockdale R. 2007. Managing customer relationships in the self-service environment of e-tourism. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 13(3): 205–219.

Sullivan K., Thomas S. and Rosano M. 2018. Using industrial ecology and strategic management concepts to pursue the Sustainable Development Goals. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 174: 237–246.

Suoniemi S. et al. 2022. CRM system implementation and firm performance: The role of consultant facilitation and user involvement. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 37.13: 19–32.

Svoboda P. et al. 2021. Information systems integration to enhance operational customer relationship management in the pharmaceutical industry. In: *The International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Computer Vision*. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp. 553–572.

Swaminathnan S., 2001. CRM Talk, nr 055, www.CRMGuru.com

Symela K. and Stępnikowski A. 2021. Wyzwania kompetencyjne w rozwoju sztucznej inteligencji w Polsce. *Polityka Społeczna*, 568.7: 21–28.

Szucs K. 2020. Can online presence give companies a competitive edge? *Pollack Periodica*, 15.3: 26–36.

Szymczak A. 2019. Czy wykorzystanie wirtualnej rzeczywistości doprowadzi do rewolucji w komunikacji marketingowej? *Marketing Instytucji Naukowych i Badawczych*, 3.33: 53–69.

Tahir H., Waggett C. and Hoffman A. 2013. Antecedents of customer satisfaction: An E-CRM Framework. *Journal of Business and Behavior Sciences*, 25(2): 112.

Tamher S.D., Rachmawaty R., Erika K. 2021. The effectiveness of Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) method implementation in improving nursing care quality: A systematic review. *Enfermería Clínica*, 31: S627–S631.

Taneja B. 2021. The digital edge for M-commerce to replace E-commerce. In: *Emerging Challenges, Solutions, and Best Practices for Digital Enterprise Transformation*. IGI Global, pp. 299–318.

Todman Ch. 2011. Projektowanie hurtowni danych. Zarządzanie relacjami z klientami. WNT, Warszawa.

Tsai J.-M., Hung S.-W. and Yang T.-T. 2020. In pursuit of goodwill? The cross-level effects of social enterprise consumer behaviours. *Journal of Business Research*, 109: 350–361.

Tsiptsis K. and Chorianopoulos A. 2009. *Data Mining Techniques in CRM Inside Customer Segmentation*. John Wiley & Sons, Chichester.

Turban E., Outland J., King D., Lee J.K., Liang T.P. and Turban D.C. 2017. *Electronic Commerce 2018: A Managerial and Social Networks Perspective*. Springer.

Turriago-Hoyos A., Thoene U. and Arjoon S. 2016. Knowledge workers and virtues in Peter Drucker's management theory. *Sage Open*, 6(1), 2158244016639631.

Tyrväinen O., Karjaluoto H. and Saarijärvi H. 2020. Personalization and hedonic motivation in creating customer experiences and loyalty in omnichannel retail. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 57: 102233.

Ulrich D. 2001. *Liderzy zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi. Nowe wyzwania, nowe role*. Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków, p. 14.

Vaara E. and Tienar, J. 2008. A discursive perspective on legitimation strategies in multinational corporations. *Academy of Management review*, 33.4: 985–993.

Van Duyn E. and Collier J. 2019. Priming and fake news: The effects of elite discourse on evaluations of news media. *Mass Communication and Society*, 22.1: 29–48.

Vargas A. and Samper M.E. 2012. Real-time monitoring and economic dispatch of smart distribution grids: High performance algorithms for DMS applications. *IEEE Transactions on Smart Grid*, 3.2: 866–877.

Vargo S.L. and Lusch R.F. 2004. Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 68.1: 1–17.

Vellinga M. 2019. The dialectics of globalization: Internationalization, regionalization, and subregional response. In: *The Dialectics of Globalization*. Routledge, pp. 3–16.

Verhoef P.C. and Lemon K.N. 2013. Successful customer value management: Key lessons and emerging trends. *European Management Journal*, 31.1: 1–15.

Verma R.K. 2018. Customer relationship management and social media: Why it matters and how you can do it. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(1), 81–97.

Vieira V.A. et al. 2022. Optimising digital marketing and social media strategy: From push to pull to performance. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 38.7–8: 709–739.

Voramontri D. and Klieb L. 2019. Impact of social media on consumer behaviour. *International Journal of Information and Decision Sciences*, 11.3: 209–233.

Vrontis D. et al. 2021. Social media influencer marketing: A systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45.4: 617–644.

Walasik M. and Mizerska P. 2023. Pomiar efektywności działań marketingowych na przykładzie organizacji badawczej w Polsce. *Studia i Prace Kolegium Zarządzania i Finansów*, 188: 83–100.

Walas-Trębacz J. 2017. Globalizacja – przesłanki i wyzwania dla przedsiębiorstw funkcjonujących na rynkach międzynarodowych. In: J.W. Wiktor (ed.), *Zarządzanie przedsiębiorstwem międzynarodowym. Integracja różnorodności*. Wydawnictwo C.H. Beck, Warszawa p. 20.

Wang H. and Chen K. 2018. Impact of social media on customer relationship management: An information value-added perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 86: 166–172.

Wang W., Sedera, D. and Tan, F. 2009. Measuring CRM and SCM benefits: A preliminary measurement model. In: *Proceedings of the 13th Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems (PACIS)* (pp. 1–11). AIS Electronic Library (AISeL).

Wang Y. et al. 2020. Unpacking the impact of social media analytics on customer satisfaction: Do external stakeholder characteristics matter?. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 40.5: 647–669.

Waring S.P. 2016. *Taylorism Transformed: Scientific Management Theory since 1945*. UNC Press Books.

Węgorkiewicz W. 2001. Customer Relationship Management (cz. I), Manager.

Węgorkiewicz W. 2002. Customer Relationship Managment (cz. II), Manager.

Wei A.-P. et al. 2020. Effects of corporate social responsibility on firm performance: Does customer satisfaction matter? *Sustainability*, 12.18: 7545.

Weick K.E. 2012. *Making Sense of the Organization, Volume 2: The Impermanent Organization* (Vol. 2). John Wiley & Sons.

Weinstein O. 2012. Managerial theories: Baumol and Marris. In: *Handbook on the Economics and Theory of the Firm*, pp. 89–95.

Weinsten O. 2012. Managerial theories: Baumol and Marris. In: Dietrich M. and Krafft J. (eds.), *Handbook on the Economics and Theory of the Firm*. Edward Elgar Print, pp. 90–101.

Wensley R. 2004. *Strategic Marketing: A Review*. Butterworth Marketing, London, p. 87.

Wenzel M., Stanske S. and Lieberman M.B. 2020. Strategic responses to crisis. *Strategic Management Journal*, 41.7/18: 3161.

Wibowo A. et al. 2020. Customer behavior as an outcome of social media marketing: The role of social media marketing activity and customer experience. *Sustainability*, 13.1: 189.

Wilde S. 2011. *Improving Customer Relationship through Knowledge Application*. Springer New York, p. 89.

Willcocks L.P., Plant R., Pan S.L. and Lee J.N. 2003. Using e-CRM for a unified view of the customer. *Communications of the ACM*, 46(4): 95–99.

Winer R.S. 2001. A framework for customer relationship management. *California Management Review*, 43: 89–105.

Witell L. et al. 2020. Characterizing customer experience management in business markets. *Journal of Business Research*, 116: 420–430.

Wodnicka M. et al. 2021. Wpływ czwartej rewolucji przemysłowej na innowacyjność usług. *Optimum. Economic Studies*, 105.3: 48–59.

Wojnarowska H. 2006. Marketing partnerski źródłem wzrostu rynkowej wartości przedsiębiorstw. In: T. Sikora (ed.), *Klient w organizacji zarządzanej przez jakość*. Akademia Ekonomiczna w Krakowie, Kraków.

Wood B. et al. 2021. Market strategies used by processed food manufacturers to increase and consolidate their power: A systematic review and document analysis. *Globalization and Health*, 17.1: 1–23.

Wu J. et al. 2018. Information and communications technologies for sustainable development goals: State-of-the-art, needs and perspectives. *IEEE Communications Surveys & Tutorials*, 20.3: 2389–2406.

Xiao L. and Kumar V. 2021. Robotics for customer service: A useful complement or an ultimate substitute? *Journal of Service Research*, 24.1: 9–29.

Xu M. and Walton J. 2005. Gaining customer knowledge through analytical CRM. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 105.7: 955–971.

Xu Y. et al. 2020. AI customer service: Task complexity, problem-solving ability, and usage intention. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 28.4: 189–199.

Ye Y., Lyu Y. and He Y. 2019. Servant leadership and proactive customer service performance. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31.3: 1330–1347.

Yen Ch.-H., Teng H.-Y. and Tzeng J.-C. 2020. Innovativeness and customer value co-creation behaviors: Mediating role of customer engagement. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 88: 102514.

Yeo V.Ch.S. Gog S.-K. and Rezaei S. 2017. Consumer experiences, attitude and behavioral intention toward online food delivery (OFD) services. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 35: 150–162.

Yoo B. and Donthu N. 2001. Developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. *Journal of Business Research*, 52(1): 1–14.

Zachara M. 2001. Strategia CRM - pomysł na biznes czy system informatyczny, *Modern Marketing*, 10.

Zaman R. et al. 2022 Corporate governance meets corporate social responsibility: Mapping the interface. *Business & Society*, 61.3: 690–752.

Zambrzhitskaya E.S., Tikhonova A.V., Isaeva M.I., Lami T.A.M.G. and Goutorbe A.P. 2020. Classical management in the conditions of modern companies: Opportunities and limitations. *Корпоративная экономика*, 2: 14–24.

Zhan Y., Tan K.H. and Huo B. 2019. Bridging customer knowledge to innovative product development: A data mining approach. *International Journal of Production Research*, 57.20: 6335–6350.

Zieleniewski J. 1982. *Organizacja zespołów ludzkich*, PWN, Warszawa.

Zimerman A. 2010. Skuteczne budowanie relacji z klientem gwarancja sukcesu. In: E. Skrzypek (ed.), *Mat. Konf. Ogólnopolskiej Konferencji Naukowej: Klient jako wyznacznik sukcesu organizacji.*, Lublin 6-7 V, 2010.

Zorska A. 2005. *Korporacje transnarodowe. Przemiany, oddziaływania, wyzwania*. PWE, Warszawa, p. 17.

Index

Pages in *italics* refer to figures and pages in **bold** refer to tables.

D

E

G

I

M

R

S

T

Z