CONTEMPORARY IT SOLUTIONS WITH CRM KEY COMPETENCIES FOR MARKETING

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Abstract: This paper focuses on contemporary IT solutions for better knowledge in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems for marketing with regard to e-learning capabilities. The positive advantage is that CRM systems offer diversity, and companies choose by preferences. However, the negative reality is in the fact that marketers need an optimal amount of CRM key competencies (skills) for marketing. Quality skills are focused on contact management, customer reports, document storage, emails, and social media integration. Effective acceptance of these skills requires the training of students in optimal CRM systems. In this paper, specified CRM systems were selected to test the level of integration of needed options for CRM key competencies. The analysis made shows the diversity in the integration of marketing options; therefore, education has to train needed skills in more (two or three) CRM systems such as vtiger CRM, Zoho CRM, Marketing 360 or eWay-CRM.

Keywords: E-Learning, CRM, key competencies, marketing

INTRODUCTION

Marketing is one of the important areas in company as a value-creating process (Chernev & Kotler (Foreword), 2018). Markets are overestimated by commodities and services and it is difficult to search for a target audience. Changes are visible also to customers who are intelligent and have a good orientation in commodity substitutions, the level of prices and the amount of services they can provide at a fixed price. Social networks (such as Twitter, Facebook) offer great support and day-to-day search using Google to share common knowledge and existing market and retailer experience (Evans, 2010).

In all cases, optimal marketing communication (Frey, 2008) and patience for customers are indispensable for all employees in companies. It is not just a question for employers who speak directly with customers, but it is a question of

all employers because they are part of the production chain to make the optimum product or service for customers, preferably from own production to billing and shipping. A special place has marketing for great responsibility for optimal communication with customers and special services that offer available commodities and services.

Marketing has great influence on patience and soft skills. It is the ability to understand the words of customers, their preferences and needs to build customer profiles (Artun & Levin, 2015). Further requirements are focused on timing, quality and knowledge about the company's ability to offer optimal commodities with events (Lattenberg, 2010). You can use default paper and pencil for the default notes on what you do. Unfortunately this is not optimal. Strong pressure from customers and competitors leads to the use of modern systems of information technology (IT). An important role is played by dedicated contacts with customers to increasing customer lifetime value (Dib, 2016). The focus is on CRM systems for marketing support and key competencies (Ghazian et al., 2016; Gupta, 2011) for the preparation of new generation specialists based on e-learning.

1. MARKETING NEEDS

Marketing activities also rely on information technology and there is a place for digital marketing and management (Hunt (Editor), 2018; Marshall & Johnston, 2018). Marketing responsibility is linked to the demand to maximize competition and minimize instability and frustration. Unfortunately, many companies do not have an optimal focus on marketing strategy. They use PPC Ads with high costs and low returns. The reason is that paid advertising is not the same as marketing strategy. Ads bring benefit in form of time to support campaigns. Otherwise, they bring a long-term risk (Volpe, 2017).

Marketing management (Kotler & Keller, 2015) requires complexity and long-term work to understand all internal and external factors that affect sales and customer interest. There are following reasons why marketers are important:

- To present a company with products and services in a better light with modern systems.

- To use optimal knowledge and good insight into proven methods and the best practice example.

- To promote humanization of products and services that customers will like.

- To ensure optimal consistency with support for social communication.

- To create marketing with ROI (Return on Investment) on realized activities.

- To build space for everyday tasks as desired by the customers.

(White, 2017)

Marketers have to work with a unique perspective through the company. That is why they ask a lot of questions about the special affairs of the brand (Miller, 2017). A good solution is for those who known the sings of suitable systems with experience to share value-added information for customers and they talk about it (Hughes, 2006). The high impact on the brand is supported by the Internet rules. Social networks (like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+) have own rules, and it is difficult to take care of the optimal presentation for customers. It must use the optimal technology that is appropriate for the adopted strategy. The world does not care about technical background, but it is important to know if systems or services address specific problems.

There are special systems, social media and different websites and everyone knows them. That is why everyone thinks he is a good marketer. However, it is difficult to be a good marketer and there are important key competencies for innovative marketing (Kotler & Trias De Bes, 2005). The solution is not to buy more and more Google AdWords PPC. This way, leads are formed, but in a limited volume. One can buy more and more. Then more revenue is expected (over and over), but it does not work. And budget is becoming more and more disadvantageous (Patalas, 2009). There is no sustainable marketing strategy and marketing model with business metrics (Kozielski (Editor), (2017).

In this situation, modern marketing communication (Prikrylova & Jahodova, 2010) is important through blogs and social media. One spends the time (money) needed to publish blogs for customers and potential customers. They start to with free Google search results. The results are based on continuous work with articles (only a few articles from last month + a few articles from actual month + others for the next month, …). The advantage is continuous blogging and the form of asset-centric marketing program.

Social media creates a marketing strategy based on activity. Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter help to build on what is already done. It attracts more friends and followers and company has more and more potential customers, which can increase each month. There is room for intellectual creativity with complexity. It is important to believe in success, and understand customers very well with the necessary knowledge to create a personal relationship environment with sincerity.

A heavy pressure of competitors and new technologies brings the possibility of introducing marketing innovations. Companies must consider new ways of preparing marketing plans and marketing guide for business (Johnson, 2018). It is more difficult for customers to find optimal commodities, and it is also more difficult to build their interest in available products and services. The number of new brands is higher in the market, and people change habits and test news. It

creates a pragmatic reality that companies are losing market share without innovations.
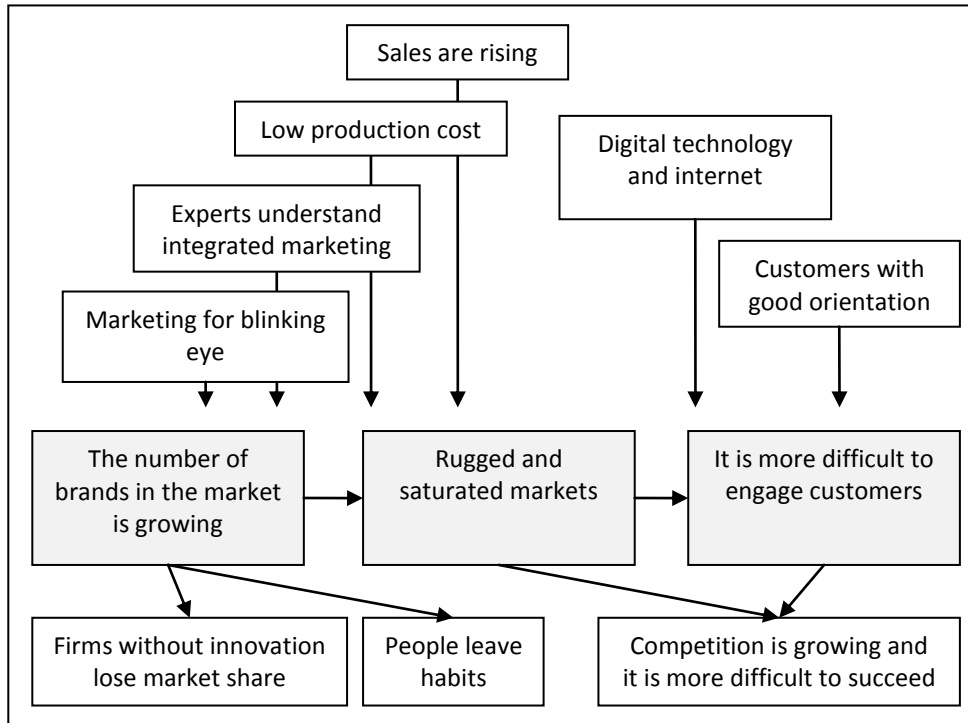
For illustration of this situation see Figure 1.

Figure 1. Marketing in new conditions

Source: Own work based on Kotler, 2005

Marketing is a sophisticated business and there are dynamic influences from customers, the market, information technology, innovation, and manufacturing (Kotler et al., 2007). An intelligent marketer needs to use different systems, applications and tools, and it is natural that information technology is an essential part of marketing success in modern society. And good marketers must have an optimal knowledge of information technology to support marketing.

2. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR MARKETING

Successful marketing management (Moutinho, 2016) needs unique communication skills and precise timing to make the right time with the right product (or services) in the right place. The tasks performed are focused on working with target customers and leads, but it is difficult to find customers interested in the products or services. Personal charisma and intuition are important, but a great role to play here has information technology.

Information technologies offer many applications and systems that support activities implemented in all areas of human life. Marketing is one of the areas where information technology has a place. It is positive that marketers choose from different solutions such as blogging, computer presentations, CRM systems, email communication, email marketing, graphic design software, social media, and websites (White, 2018):

- Blogging.

Blogging is a place to communicate with customers on a professional level to marketers who create and manage information (blog) about products, services, questions, and business advice. One can choose from many platforms as Blogger, Ghost, Joomla, Medium, Squarespace, Tumblr, Weebly, Wix, WordPress.com, and WordPress.org.

- Computer Presentations.

The computer presentation is focused on creating marketing presentations and sales based on applications such as PowerPoint.

- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems.

CRM systems are one of the special IT solutions for customer care. There are comprehensive solutions and simple applications to support customer contact, complaints, presentations, purchases, sales calls, and other links to forecasting and business intelligence. CRM systems are for all employers who take care of customers and offer goods with services. The advantage is that marketers have instant access to information with database support and mobile access.

- Email Communication.

Email communication is one of the primary forms of communication with support of information technology. Positive influence is visible when sharing documents, offers, and contacts with contracts. In this form of communication, there is time to read necessary documents and to understand the context in which to work. Email communication is available with potential customers, customers, co-workers, and media and journals.

- Email Marketing.

Email marketing is still one of the major forms of marketing in companies. Easily sends offers and information about available cooperation on selected emails. This form of communication focuses on new business and customer relationships (potential, current and past). This approach uses database customer information to automatically send newsletters and email ads.

- Graphic Design Software.

Graphic design software is important software for setting the optimal design that is being sold. Marketers use this software to create advertising and collateral

materials in the form of newsletters and presentations. There are applications such as Adobe Indesign, Cinema 4D, CorelDraw, Cyberlink, GIMP, Illustrator, Inkscape, PhotoShop, Sumopaint, Vector, and Xara Xtreme.

- Social Media.

Social media are web sites for sharing information with followers in various forms like tweets and posts with text, pictures and links. Marketers use media like Baidu Tieba, Facebook, Instagram, Line, Messenger, Pinterest, Sina Weibo, Reddit, Skype, Snapchat, Tumblr, Twitter, Viber, QQ, QZone, WeChat, WhatsApp, YouTube. Social media (networks) play and will play an important role in marketing. Social networks are used for promotional purposes, and marketers need to know about using popular social media technologies to attract the products and services they offer to create new business relationships and customer relationships. This is the responsibility for creating and managing Facebook and Twitter accounts for businesses, publishing videos on YouTube, and using LinkedIn profiles for a company contact.

- Websites.

Websites are once again well-known places where businesses offer forms of customer contacts and information on the products and services they offer. The primary challenge is for marketers to be responsible for web design with maintenance skills at the design, security, content, and programming level. Perhaps all companies use this technology to communicate with the world.

The lines above show one of the big marketing problems. Marketing uses many information technologies. There are enterprise information systems, CRM systems, and data warehouse based analytics. It needs large projects to support marketing, but these projects are cumbersome without the optimal relationship to time and change in society. It is hard to keep up with the fast pace of change for ever-changing marketing, campaigns and customer contacts (Saran, 2011). Many experts say that time is one of the main barriers between information technology and marketing. Time, reaction speed and mentality are different for marketing and information technology. The reason is that information technology likes to be more serious, but it leads to a great slowdown.

But information technology needs marketing and marketing needs information technology. There is a successful way of cooperation between information technology and marketing. The current challenges also lead to innovations in marketing and information technology. And innovation brings a new solution for success. Innovations are being built on a solid partnership with shared goals and metrics for deep cooperation. Innovations also require a good knowledge of marketing and information technology to bring the existing approach together with a new approach. Education and e-learning have sufficient knowledge to learn about optimal marketing skills based on information technology. The necessary changes are dynamic and it is important to look for an optimal amount of information

technology knowledge (skill) for marketers as new generation specialists with respect to marketing management essentials (Publishers, 2018).

3. EXISTING PROBLEM AND METHOD FOR SOLUTION

Marketing needs are well known. The same situation is in the area of information technology. A modern approach calls for the use of information technology in all human activities. Marketing is one of them. There are many approaches and templates as an example of good practice. Internet and social networks also have a positive impact because it is a place to share ideas and work method with others. Problems cause serious press with timing, budget, and quality of customer contact with support marketers. In this unstable environment, it is not easy to choose optimal support with information technology. This reality also needs a wide range of skills for new generation marketers, and because one can not know all, then it is important to specify the optimal volume of key marketing competencies. Interest is focused on CRM systems, so this optimal volume of key competencies for marketing is oriented to CRM systems for new generation specialists (Paliouras & Siakas, 2017; Wali et al., 2016).

To address this problem effectively, the most important marketing needs and information technologies (two captions above) were specified. The next step is to specify the CRM options for more detailed evaluation. The focus is on integration:

- Contact management.
- Custom reporting.
- Document storage.
- Emails.
- Social media.

Selected CRM systems will not only be top-class, but also middle and lower hierarchies. Very interesting is the CRM systems at the top, but there are roughly 500 CRM systems and it will interested to evaluate some systems from middle and lower hierarchy as these CRM systems also have customers and companies use them for marketing. Selected CRM systems are:

- Easy Simple CRM.
- eWay-CRM.
- Hubspot CRM.
- Marketing 360.
- Maxcustomer.
- The Newspaper Manager.

- Snapforce CRM.

- SutiCRM.

- vtiger CRM.

- Zoho CRM.

The following work focuses on evaluation of selected CRM systems according to specified criteria (evaluation options). Individual CRM systems have been analyzed according to their existence, user-friendly and templates with advices to support the necessary tasks in important CRM key marketing competencies.

4. CRM KEY COMPETENCIES FOR MARKETING

It is important to know the CRM key competencies for marketing in order to set optimal e-learning based on education. Marketing is changing at high speed in relation to market and customer needs. Information technologies have great development and new approaches are here. In this situation, education needs to reflect current changes to better support marketing through information technology. Quality and time are also important. Following rows show the integration level for contacts, custom reports, document storage, email and social media as selected evaluation options for specified CRM systems.

Easy Project CRM is a system for registering leads and contacts to track communication with integration with a lead generation solution. The individual modules deal with Leads, Contract Management, Contact Management, Sales Manager Dashboard, Sales Consultant Dashboard, Marketing automation, Lead qualification, Lead generation, E-commerce solution. Contact information is stored as needed and personal contacts are available and can be synchronized with other devices. Leads are generated from forms, imported, and manually. There are advanced filters for setting up sales pipelines and opportunity lists (Easy Project, 2018).

eWay-CRM is a system that offers modules as Societies, Contacts, Opportunities, Projects, Marketing, Diary, Documents, Emails, Attendance, Tasks, Calendar, and Reports. The Societies module manages information about companies integrated with the Commercial Register (ARES) and the European VAT Payers Register. The Contacts module manages all business contacts and lets you add notes, communication history, and documents. The Opportunity module is useful for working with opportunities and activity planning. The Marketing module supports personalized emails and links to phone calls and feedback letters. The Module Diary uses store notes and meeting or phone call information. The Document module stores accessibility documents in Microsoft Outlook. Documents are different types such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PDF. The Emails module offers compatibility with Microsoft Outlook and eWay-CRM communication. The Report module has preset reports that provide help in different views of stored data as the

success of a particular trader, the best source of inquiries, or a list of opportunities without a scheduled task (eWay-CRM, 2018).

Hubspot CRM has basic features that are oriented on Contact management, Contact & company insights, Company records, Gmail & Outlook integration, Deals, and Tasks. The advantage is to use special features for marketers as Lead analytics dashboard, Forms and Contact activity. Other features are for retailers who support Email scheduling, Email templates, Documents, Calling, Meetings, and Canned snippets (Hubspot CRM, 2018).

Marketing 360 is a cloud-based marketing system. There are modules oriented on Digital Marketing, Natural Listing Ads, Top Placement Ads, Retargeting Ads, Social Targeting Ads and Other Services. The Digital Marketing is based on a variety of goal-setting variables that allow you to generate views on sales and monthly performance forecast. The Natural Listing Ads serve to market content. The Top Placement Ads manage paid-to-click campaigns for Google Search and Google Shopping. The Retargeting Ads are part of support for remarketing campaigns. There are Email Marketing, SMS Marketing, and Marketing Analytics with links on Social Media Management and Social Profiling. Social media is used for campaigns and an integrated search engine is used to optimize and analyze the performance of digital marketing (Marketing 360, 2018).

MaxCustomer is one from the simpler CRM systems. This system is based on managing Sales Reps, Leads, Opportunities, Customers and Tasks, Products and Vendors. Here is a place for Quick View of Sales, Pipeline, Call History, and the Calendar. For the Sales Reps, the system displays a list of sales reps with information on the job role, manager with their activity. Leads are responsible for all leads and can turn potential customers into opportunities with support for creating tasks and log conversations with customer for reference. A bid advantage is dashboards that show a summary of important business components by statistics and tracking the level of sales trend, pipeline trend, sales rep, call history (MaxCustomer, 2018).

The Newspaper Manager servers Contact manager, Customer search, Calendar and event, Notification, My call backs, My mailing lists, Email marketing, Dashboards and reports. Contact manager shows default issues related to contacts, teamwork, and business management. Positive benefits bring Customer searching for seamless and specific search. Calendar and events synchronize with web calendar so all events are in one place. My mailing lists are focused on creating and managing email lists with campaign links and exporting data by performance. Email marketing uses a predefined email template to run campaigns. Dashboard and reports provide customizable reports and shows an overview of sales and production metrics (The Newspaper Manager, 2018).

Snapforce CRM divides work into several modules as Getting started, Sales, Marketing, Service, Communication channels, Calendar, Billing, and Analytics. All modules have a navigation bar to work in the specification area. The Sales

module is used to navigate through leads with creation and conversion. There is a place for opportunities and quick adding. Marketing focuses on campaigns. An amazing skill has Communication channels that can be used to set up a phone, email configuration, activity timeline, notes, tasks, events, calls, files, e-mail, mailbox, associating e-mail messages, voicemail settings, and chat. Analytics provides regular reports, call reporting, exporting reports, dashboards, and filter operators (Snapforce CRM, 2018).

SutiCRM is a cloud-based CRM system with automation of marketing, sales, and contracts. Interest is focused on marketing, sales, service support, reports and analytics, activity management, social CRM, inventory management. Marketing helps with marketing activities to reach targeted audience based on campaigns, leads from different sources, and targeted emails. Sales offers contact management, opportunity management, lead management, reports, dashboards, territory management. Social CRM enables real-time interaction with customers through social media. It is possible to transfer communication between existing and potential customers (SutiCRM, 2018).

Vtiger CRM has a large volume of modules. Individual modules are focused on Calendar, Campaigns, Contacts, Dashboard, Documents, Leads, Mail Manager, Opportunities, Project tasks, Reports, Sales order, Tickets, Vendors, vtmessages, vttwitter, Webmail. Contacts store information about a person with links to organizations or events. The Documents module is designed to display the list of documents used in CRM system. These documents are grouped into folders by preferences. The Mail manager is designed to create contacts, leads and email tickets. The vttwitter is module provides the necessary integration with Twitter (vtiger CRM, 2018).

Zoho CRM offers default modules for contact management with customers. These modules are Leads, Accounts, Contacts, Deals, Campaigns, Cases, Solutions, Products, Price Books, Quotes, Invoices, Sales Orders, Vendors, Purchase Orders, Events, Tasks, and Calls. Interesting is marketing automation that offers Auto Response Rules and Google AdWords. There is space for multi-channel communication with Sales Signals, Zoho CRM emails, Mass Emails, Email Insights, and Live Chat with Visitor Tracking. Social networks are based on the Set up social tab, Using social tab, and Social profiles. There is no special module, but you can add lead/contact from Twitter, Facebook, or Google+ page, and Twitter, Facebook, or Google+ profile will automatically connect to the record. The Document management focuses on Document library, Manage documents, and Manage folders (Zoho CRM, 2018).

A summary of the analysis is presented in Table 1. This table shows the solution for selected key competencies in the specified CRM systems. It is clear that there are different spectral approaches and it is not always easy to work with emails or social media (networks) in individual CRM systems. The bigger difference is in supporting work with document storage. On the other hand, it is natural that all

CRM systems offer contact management and custom reporting as one of the basic things for custom relationship management.

Table 1.

Key competencies in selected CRM systems

Key competencies in selected CRM systems	Contact management	Custom reporting	Document storage	Emails	Social media
Easy Project CRM	X	X			
eWay-CRM	X	X	X	X	
Hubspot CRM	X	X	X	X	
Marketing 360	X	X		X	X
Maxcustomer	X	X			
The Newspaper Manager	X	X		X	
Snapforce CRM	X	X		X	
SutiCRM	X	X			X
vtiger CRM	X	X	X	X	X
Zoho CRM	X	X	X	X	X
Total	**10**	**10**	**4**	**7**	**4**

Source: Own work

The first column shows 10 selected CRM systems from Easy project CRM to Zoho CRM. CRM systems are selected from the top, but there are also middle and lower ranking systems. The other columns are dedicated to the individual key competencies that marketing needs and CRM systems must offer the easiest work in these areas. Contact management and custom reporting are available on all CRM systems (10), but sophisticated document storage is only in 4 CRM systems, comprehensive social media work offers also 4 CRM systems, and suitable email tools are available in 7 CRM systems.

For e-learning, it is important to take care of key competencies in difficult areas such as email for marketing, social networking to communicate with customers, as well as customer reporting. The reason is that CRM systems have different work support here and it is not easy to use CRM systems for marketing because experience from one CRM system is difficult to use for another CRM system.

5. RECOMMENDATION FOR E-LEARNING TO SUPPORT
KEY MARKETING COMPETENCIES

The e-learning recommendation promotes various IT skills that are used in marketing. There are many educational documents on marketing and information technology, but practical skills are important. Many authors are interested in successful e-learning education for digital marketers (Google Digital Academy, 2017) focusing on the development of a marketing strategy (B r a d l e y, 2015) or for machine learning to strengthen marketing campaigns (R a j e c k, 2014). To improve the current situation, it is important to show the variability of CRM systems because marketing needs different solutions. In practice, there is not unique and the best marketing and education solutions have to respect it.

Education is responsible for preparing new-generation specialists with CRM key competencies for marketing. This is an active work with various CRM systems. One cannot rely on just one CRM system because it is not the diversity that would be accepted for marketing. However, e-learning has a limited time and capacity in one or two semesters in a given academic year. There is, therefore, a place to understand only a few CRM systems with key marketing competencies.

Based on the CRM analyses, the CRM systems like vtiger CRM or Zoho CRM have to create a basic CRM system for training in marketing tasks. These CRM systems, however, cannot offer experience with all the necessary marketing tasks and it is optional adding of another CRM system that shows a different method of working. From this perspective, CRM systems such as Marketing 360 or eWay-CRM can offer more insight into marketing tasks that are not available on other systems.

CONCLUSION

This paper focuses on the use of e-learning to prepare a new generation of marketing specialists with optimal capabilities to use CRM systems. Marketing is a highly dynamic field and is a site for information technology. The reason is that there is no optimal presentation of a company based on optimal knowledge with good overview and respecting return on investment (ROI). Information technologies offer many ways to promote marketing, but their use varies according to real needs.

CRM systems are systems that are used for marketing. The market offers over 500 CRM systems ranking from simple to complex solution. Marketers must have the optimal amount of skills to work with them. Key competencies are focused on working with contacts management, custom reporting, document storage, emails, and social media. Problems cause CRM systems have different levels of integration menu to work. Education is also difficult because it is not optimal to select only one CRM system for e-learning. It is better to choose two or three CRM systems

that would show different marketing jobs to have the optimal volume of skills. One is basic (such as vtiger CRM or Zoho CRM), because it has to offer the most suitable menu for training CRM key competencies. Other CRM systems (such as Marketing 360 or eWay-CRM) have special menus that serve to marketing in their own custom reports, emails, or social networks.

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