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- Bowersox, Donald J., Closs, David J., (1996), "Logistical Management." Tata McGraw, Hill, New Delhi.
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- Sharma T., Kwatra, G. (2008) Effectiveness of Social Advertising: A Study of Selected Campaigns, Corporate Social Responsibility, Edited by David Crowther & Nicholas Capaldi, Ashgate Research Companion to Corporate Social Responsibility, Chapter 15, pp 287-303.

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- Schemenner, R.W., Huber, J.C. and Cook, R.L. (1987), "Geographic Differences and the Location of New Manufacturing Facilities," Journal of Urban Economics, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 83-104.

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- Garg, Sambhav (2011): "Business Ethics" Paper presented at the Annual International Conference for the All India Management Association, New Delhi, India, 19–22 June.

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A STUDY OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN HOTELING SECTOR**V. P. DESHMUKH****ASST. PROFESSOR****BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT****BHARATI VIDYAPEETH DEEMED UNIVERSITY****PUNE****N. R. JADHAV****ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR****BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT****BHARATI VIDYAPEETH DEEMED UNIVERSITY****PUNE****S. P. SHINDE****ASST. PROFESSOR****COMPUTER APPLICATIONS DEPARTMENT****BHARATI VIDYAPEETH DEEMED UNIVERSITY****PUNE****ABSTRACT**

In a present scenario in order to succeed under existing conditions, hotels will have to perceive the needs of its customers and devise better means of fulfilling them therefore hotels will have to formulate marketing strategies in a way to not only increasing new customers toward them but also retain them for lifetime. Customer Relationship Management has emerged as a popular business strategy in today's competitive environment. It is a discipline which enables the Hotel sector to identify and target their most profitable customers. It involves new and advance marketing strategies which not only retain the existing customers but also acquire new customers. It has been invented as a unique technique capable of remarkable changes in total output of companies. Services are then provided in a timely manner using the channels that are preferred by the customers. Effective Customer Relationship Management focuses on the development of business strategies and aligns an organization to serve customers.

KEYWORDS

Aligning, Customer Relationship Management, Discipline, Lifetime, Perceive Strategies, Target, Unique.

INTRODUCTION

The field of Customer Relationship Management is becoming popular in service sector. With more and more companies adopting customer-centric strategies, programmes, tools, and technology for efficient and effective customer relationship management, the need for. They are realizing the need for in-depth and integrated customer knowledge in order to build close cooperative and partnering relationships with their customers. Hotel sector is one of the leading service sectors where customer needs and wants have top priority. The emergence of new channels and technologies is significantly altering how hotels interface with their customers, a development bringing about a greater degree of integration between marketing, sales, and customer service functions in organizations. For hotel sector, CRM represents an enterprise approach to developing full-knowledge about customer behavior and preferences and to developing programmes and strategies that encourage customers to continually enhance their relationship with the respective hotel.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section deals with the gist of the available literature related to CRM or Relationship Management in Hospitality services or service sector written by both national and international authors and published in research journals, magazines, white papers, bulletins, books, etc. Hokey Min, Hyesung Min and Ahmed Emam (2002) in their published research article titled "A data mining approach to developing the profiles of hotel customers" are of the opinion that to stay competitive, hotels need to develop a viable customer retention strategy. Since the key to the successful development of such a strategy rests with customer relationship management, hotels should identify the most profitable ways to build and maintain a loyal customer relationship. Diana Luck and Geoff Lancaster (2003) in their research article titled "ECRM: Customer Relationship Marketing in the Hotel Industry" have explored the degree to which hotel groups have exploited the medium of electronic customer relationship marketing (E-CRM). They have investigated whether hotels made use of the Internet and verified whether customer relationship marketing was being implemented within online operations or it was being used to provide information and hotel reservations. Yonggui Wang (2004) in their research article titled "An Integrated Framework for Customer Value and Customer-Relationship-Management Performance: A Customer-Based Perspective from China" have highlighted that in the modern customer-centered era, customer value is a strategic weapon in attracting and retaining customers. Mark Xu and John Walton (2005) in their research article titled "Gaining Customer Knowledge through Analytical CRM" have found that the current CRM systems are dominated by operational applications such as call centers. The application of analytical CRM has been low, and the provision of these systems is limited to a few leading software vendors. Madhavi Garikaparathi (2006) "CRM in Hospitality Industry", is a case that focuses on many Indian and Global players in the hospitality industry. It emphasizes the changing scenario and the cutthroat competition and various aspects of implementation of CRM in hospitality industry. Yuksel Ekinci (2008) in their research article titled "An extended model of the antecedents and consequences of consumer satisfaction for hospitality services" has examined the impact of self-congruence on consumer satisfaction with services and to develop and test a conceptual model of the antecedents and consequences of consumer satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Jane Moriarty (2009), in their published article have highlighted the need for marketing expertise in SME sector hotels or hotels belonging to the lesser grades (that is 2 star and below). Their study, aimed at developing marketing expertise for the hospitality executives, categorizes hotels on the basis of their involvement in various marketing activities for example marketing intelligence and promotion.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has become a globally recognized business practice and yet it is still loosely defined and rarely well defined. CRM means many different things to different people. It is possible to develop a greater understanding of it by looking at its origin and principles that drove its development. It was in 1990's that relationship marketing emerged when true value of retention and the use of lifetime value as a business case were

recognized. The present shows many practitioners in the CRM marketplace who understand the key concepts of CRM. However the feedback from the clients and what we see in the marketplace paints a slightly different picture. In terms of what the future holds can be summarized as follows:

- Customer will play a significant role in managing the relationship
- Service model will continue to change
- The Web will create globalization
- Technology will consolidate
- Do we have what it needs to get there?
- Can end to end customer processes be developed?
- Is the best use of customer knowledge being made?
- Need to be proactive instead of reactive
- Recognize customer individuality

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In a market driven economy, the consumer has occupied the central position. A large number of activities are directed towards attracting the customers. All industries are paying special attention towards customer relationship and have changed their mode of operation of dealing with their customers. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) gained recognition in the mid-1990's, primarily driven by its perception as Information Technology (IT). However not enough attention has been given to the fundamental drivers of CRM success: Strategy, metrics and the organization. Hence this research study titled "A Study of Customer Relationship Management Practices in Hotel Sectors in Maharashtra State", which strives to explain how successful CRM works and why it is important to give customer utmost importance. It establishes a relationship and explains how customer loyalty affects profitability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the approach being adopted by the selected service organizations in the state of Maharashtra, for relationship marketing.
2. To find out whether the different service organizations believe that their processes are customer centric.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

There is a significant difference in the customer centricity of the CRM processes implemented by different hotels. (2 Star hotels, 3 Star hotels, 4 Star hotels and 5 Star hotels)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In view of the objectives and hypotheses presented earlier the methodology adopted for the present study is elaborated as under:

Survey Method: The survey method was adopted in order to elicit relevant information pertaining to the CRM practices implemented in the Hotel sector i.e. Hospitality. To begin with a pilot survey was conducted to clarify and finalize the key issues. After the pilot survey the selected hotels were visited and responses were collected. A well designed comprehensive questionnaire was the research instrument that was self administered. A separate survey of the customers was also conducted. Information from the customers of these hotels was also obtained with the help of a well designed self-administered questionnaire.

Observation Method: Since the interviews took place in the interviewee's place of work, this gave the researcher the opportunity to directly observe the CRM environment and programmes. Thus to enable the researcher to have a close and clear view of the CRM practices implemented the observation method was also adopted. The aim of the observation method was to cross examine the information provided by the employees of respected hotels in form of responses related to CRM infrastructure, technology and practices implemented by the selected hotels.

Sources of data: The researcher adopted the survey method to collect the required information for the study. Information from the concerned hotels was collected on one hand and on another the customers of these selected hotels were also surveyed with the help of a questionnaire, which was used as the main research instrument. Both, primary and secondary sources of data were utilized for the study.

Primary Sources of Data: The primary data was collected from the Managers and the customers of the selected hotels through two separate well structured direct questionnaires, which were administered by the researcher and in some cases they were mailed to the respondents. In addition personal observation and informal discussions were also held with the concerned hotel managers to elicit the required information.

(a) **Questionnaires:** Two sets of structured direct questionnaires one for the managers of the selected hotels and the other for the customers of these organizations were prepared in consultation with experts in the field, later they were suitably amended after pre-testing through a pilot survey. The questionnaires were administered to the concerned hotel managers and the customers of the selected hotels. In some cases the questionnaires were self administered by the respondents. The types of questions in the questionnaires included: Open-ended questions, Dichotomous questions, and multiple choice questions. All the questions were applicable to the hotels and its customers.

(a) **Structured and Unstructured Interviews and Informal Discussions:** Certain information required to fulfill a few objectives could not be elicited with the questionnaires alone. Further the questionnaire included several open-ended questions. Hence responses to such questions required further investigation and clarifications. Therefore, in such cases, in-depth interviews and informal discussions were taken up by the researcher.

(b) **Observation:** During the survey the researcher personally visited to the selected hotels and observed the infrastructure, physical setting, procedures and activities, services in these hotels.

Secondary Source of Data: The sources for secondary data comprised of existing published and unpublished literature, which was used for laying the conceptual foundation, review of literature relevant to the study and statistical data with respect to the study. Large number of published text and reference books were referred for clarifying the theoretical concepts. Previous research in the field of the present study was reviewed by referring to research journals, trade magazines and publications of the hospitality and tourism sector.

The below named libraries were the main sources of secondary data:

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8. Websites.

SAMPLE DESIGN

This study pertains to the study of CRM practices in the hotels i.e. 2 Star hotel, 3 Star hotels, 4 Star hotels and 5 Star hotels)The geographical scope of the study being the entire state of Maharashtra, the state was divided into following regions:

- a) Metropolitan area of the state i.e. Mumbai city
- b) Cosmopolitan area of the state i.e. Pune city
- c) Marathawada area i.e. Aurangabad city
- d) Vidarbha area i.e. Nagpur city

Using Convenience sampling method, five commercial banks were selected for the study as shown in table 1.1 and using Random sampling method 250 customers from each selected banks from all the five cities totaling to 1250

TABLE NO. 1.1: SELECTION OF SAMPLE FOR SURVEY OF HOTELS

Category	Total No. of Hotels	No. of Hotels Selected (Sample Size)	No. of Regions (Cities)	Sample size
2 star hotels	92	06	05	25
3 star hotels	84	05		
4 star hotels	78	07		
5 star hotels	65	07		
Total	319	25		

Total Number of Hotel Managers surveyed: 25

TABLE NO. 1.2: SELECTION OF SAMPLE FOR SURVEY OF CUSTOMERS

Category	No. of Hotels Selected (Sample Size)	No. of Customers Selected	No. of Regions (Cities)
2 star hotels	06	250	05
3 star hotels	05	250	
4 star hotels	07	250	
5 star hotels	07	250	
Total	25	1250	

Total Number of Customers surveyed: 1250

VALIDITY OF SAMPLE

1. The customer rating scale reliability was tested during the pilot survey of 100 customers using SPSS version 16.0 software. The results are: Cronbach alpha value = 0.8855, Correlation between 1st half and 2nd = 0.7758, Split half reliability = 0.8739
 2. Similarly for the management rating scale reliability was tested during the pilot survey of 10 managers/officers. The results are: Cronbach alpha value = 0.8930, Correlation between 1st half and 2nd = 0.9161, Split half reliability = 0.9561
 From the above results it can be seen that the Cronbach alpha value is greater than 0.70. Hence the primary statistical data is reliable and valid for further analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS (TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS)

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between customers belongs to different hotels (2 Star hotels, 3 Star hotels, 4 Star hotels and 5 Star hotels) with respect to their customer centricity scores.

To achieve this hypothesis, the one way ANOVA test was applied and the results are presented in the following table.

TABLE 2: RESULTS OF ANOVA TEST BETWEEN CUSTOMERS BELONGS TO DIFFERENT HOTELS (2 STAR HOTEL, 3 STAR HOTEL, 4 STAR HOTEL AND 5 STAR HOTEL) WITH RESPECT TO THEIR CUSTOMER CENTRICITY SCORES WITH RESPECT TO CUSTOMER CENTRICITY SCORES

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean sum of squares	F-value	P-value
Between hospitalities	3	14637.33	4879.109	87.1500	0.0000*
Within hospitalities	1246	69757.56	55.985		
Total	1249	84394.89			

*p<0.05

From the results of the above table, it can be seen that, the customers belongs to different hotels (2 Star hotel, 3 Star hotel, 4 Star hotel and 5 Star hotel) differ statistically significant with respect to their customer centricity scores (F=87.1500, p<0.05) at 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the customers belongs to different hotels (2 Star hotel, 3 Star hotel, 4 Star hotel and 5 Star hotel) have different customer centricity scores.

If F is significant, to know the pair wise comparison of customers belongs to different hotels (2 Star hotel, 3 Star hotel, 4 Star hotel and 5 Star hotel) with respect to their customer centricity scores by applying the Tukeys multiple post hoc procedures and the results are presented in the following table.

TABLE 3: PAIR WISE COMPARISON OF DIFFERENT HOTELS (2 STAR HOTEL, 3 STAR HOTEL, 4 STAR HOTEL AND 5 STAR HOTEL) WITH RESPECT TO CUSTOMER CENTRICITY SCORES BY TUKEYS MULTIPLE POST HOC PROCEDURES

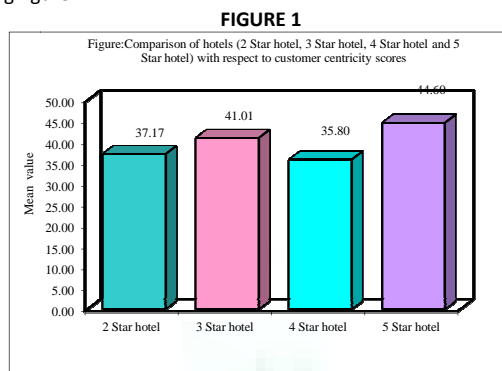
Hospitality	2 Star hotel	3 Star hotel	4 Star hotel	5 Star hotel
Mean	37.1670	41.0140	35.8000	44.6020
2 Star hotel	1.0000			
3 Star hotel	0.0000*	1.0000		
4 Star hotel	0.3284	0.0000*	1.0000	
5 Star hotel	0.0000*	0.0000*	0.0000*	1.0000

*p<0.05

From the results of the above table, it can be seen that,

1. The customers belong to 2 Star hotels and 3 Star hotels differ statistically significant with respect to their customer centricity scores at 5% level of significance. It means that, the customers belongs to 3 Star hotel have higher customer centricity scores as compared to 2 Star hotels.
2. The customers belong to 2 Star hotels and 5 Star hotels differ statistically significant with respect to their customer centricity scores at 5% level of significance. It means that, the customers belongs to 5 Star hotel have higher customer centricity scores as compared to 2 Star hotels.
3. The customers belong to 3 Star hotels and 4 Star hotels differ statistically significant with respect to their customer centricity scores at 5% level of significance. It means that, the customers belongs to 3 Star hotel have higher customer centricity scores as compared to 4 Star hotels.
4. The customers belong to 3 Star hotels and 5 Star hotels differ statistically significant with respect to their customer centricity scores at 5% level of significance. It means that, the customers belongs to 5 Star hotel have higher customer centricity scores as compared to 3 Star hotels.
5. The customers belong to 4 Star hotels and 5 Star hotels differ statistically significant with respect to their customer centricity scores at 5% level of significance. It means that, the customers belongs to 5 Star hotel have higher customer centricity scores as compared to 4 Star hotels.

The mean scores are also presented in the following figure.



Above figure shows that the Customer Relationship Management practices of five star hotels are more customers centric.

FINDINGS

- Based on the customers' survey it was found that the CRM processes of hotels with five star rating are most customer centric as compared to the hotels of lesser rating. The processes of 3 star hotels are more customer centric than 2 star and 4 star hotels.
- It was observed that all the selected hotels have implemented the CRM programme with the following top three objectives
 - Customer satisfaction
 - To increase customer loyalty
 - To enhance the service quality
- The CRM organization structure in all the selected hotels is limited only to the hotel itself because each hotel is considered as an independent organization. Therefore in all the 5 star, 4 star, and 3 star hotels the CRM responsibility lies with the guest relations officer of the hotel and in case of the 2 star hotels the CRM responsibility is with the front office staff.
- It was observed that unlike other service sector organizations the hotel industry has not implemented any CRM technology. The only technology implemented is limited to the hotels website for online reservations and inquiry. Some of the hotels are also members of some web portals, which help the member hotels in bookings and providing information to visitors of the web portal.
- Although the hotel industry has not made a significant investment in any technology, they have a CRM programme in the form of the CRM concept clearly spelt out to the sales and marketing staff. This is reflected in their duties and responsibilities. Therefore the hotel managements look at certain benefits of the CRM programme, which are customer retention, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.
- It was observed in case of the hotel industry that none of the hotels use CRM application software whereas, they make use of the operations software installed in the front office for reservations, booking and billing for their CRM needs. The operations software provides the marketing/sales staff with a customer database. Thus the hotels practice database marketing by analyzing the database without using any specialized technological tool.
- It was observed that the most popular operations software used by most of the 5 Star hotels is 'Opera', which also helps the management in their CRM needs like database marketing. The investment in this software package is less than Rs. 50 lakhs. The investment and the CRM efforts of the hotels are justified by the management on the grounds that it helps in creating loyal customers resulting in assured business and customer value. Thus return on investment.
- It was observed in the hotel industry that it does not have to cope up with a huge size of customer data. However the rate of growth of customer data is the highest among the four selected service organizations, which stands at 19.90%.

SUGGESTIONS

- The managers and marketing executives in the hospitality industry should adopt a continuous strategy for collecting customer information. Unlike other services, in hospitality the opportunity to come in direct contact with their customers are high. Therefore, it is natural for hotels to collect customer information on a regular basis. But information collection is just the first step in generating customer knowledge. This information has to be combined with experiences to develop consumer insights, which help them serve their customers better.
- The hotel managements are recommended to run loyalty programmes. Customers who become members of the loyalty clubs by the virtue of their value to the hotel, are important people not only on the premises of the hotel but also have privilege to flash their loyalty membership cards at the locations of the hotels' channel partners like travel agents, airlines and other allied service providers. This gives the customer a sense-of-belonging to the hotel. This is the feeling that bonds the relationship which not only gives the hotel the customer's life-time-value but will definitely lead to referrals.

CONCLUSION

This research would like to conclude that Hotel sector is also a forward looking sector since the customer centricity and CRM dimension scores of lesser rated hotels are not lagging in any way, which indicates the outlook of the managements of these hotels. The above research stated that 2 star hotels 3 star hotels and 4 star hotels need to adopt CRM strategy very effectively.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is a scope for further research by comparing CRM practices adopted by five star hotels and other types of hotels, and the analysis of the practices and the relationship between the different parameters of CRM.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Questionnaire for Customers of the Organization

Name of the Customer: Age: Sex: M/ F Qualifications: Occupation: Contact details: Phone: e-mail ID:

1. How long have you been associated with the organization?

.....

2. Frequency of your visit to the organization?

a) Once a week b) Once in a fortnight c) Once in a month d) Twice or thrice in a year e) As and when the need arises

3. How often did you have to make complaints about the products & service offered by the organization?

a) Several times b) Once or twice c) Do not remember d) Never

4. Whether at any time you did not get service at all or were delayed or did not get proper attention at all?

a) Several times b) Once or twice c) Do not remember d) Never

5. Frequency of customer meets organized by the bank?

a) Once in a year b) Twice a year c) On special occasions d) Never

2. Questionnaire for high-ranking Marketing/Sales/Customer Relationship Managers of the Hotels

1. Name of the Organisation:

2. Name of the Respondent:

3. Respondent's Designation:

4. What are the top three objectives of your CRM programme?

a).....

b).....

c).....

5. How would you describe the CRM organization structure?

.....

6. What type of CRM technologies have you implemented for interacting with your customers?

a) Call Centre b) Campaign Management c) Contact Management d) Personalization e) Marketing Automation f) Data Warehousing g) Sales Force Automation e) any other please specify

.....

7. What are the benefits achieved from implementing the CRM system?

a).....

b).....

c).....

d).....

e).....

8. Is the CRM application package Off-the-shelf or Custom built?

Off-the-shelf Custom-built

Who is your vendor?.....

9. Approximate investment made in the CRM application?

Below Rs.50 lacs Rs.50 lacs to 1Crore Rs.1 to 2 Crores Rs.2 to 3 Crores 3 to 4 Crores Above Rs. 4 Crores

10. How do you justify the investment in the CRM programme.

a).....

b).....

c).....

d).....

11. What is the time period between the investment in the CRM programme and the perceived benefits?

Less than 6 months 1year 1 to 2 Years 2 to 3 years more than 3 years

12. What information do you need in your database so that you can develop your CRM strategy?.....

.....

.....

13. What are the difficulties/constraints of maintaining the customer database?

.....

.....

.....

14. What is the rate of growth of data (speed at which the data gets generated every month?)

.....

15. What are the different ways of obtaining customer information?

a).....

b).....

c).....

d).....

16. Which department or unit is responsible for the analysis and distribution of data?

.....

17. Is senior management actively involved in the CRM program?

Yes No

18. Is the staff that comes in direct contact with the customers encouraged to give suggestions to improve the quality of service offered?

Yes No

19. Do senior managers accept and discuss ideas offered from staff about improving the system?

Yes No

20. How do you evaluate the success of the CRM programme (mention your evaluation metrics)

a).....

b).....

c).....

d).....

21. How do you get to know your customers expectations about your product or service?

a).....

b).....

22. How do you know if your customers are satisfied?

.....

23. What do you do with customer complaints?

.....

24. Does your CRM strategy involve identifying 'loyal customers'?

Yes No

25. If yes how do you reward them?

.....

26. Are your loyal customers also profitable customers?

Yes No

27. Do you categorize your customers as more valuable or less valuable?

Yes No

28. If yes what is the criteria of identifying high value customers?
.....

29. What is the relation between customer loyalty and profitability?

a).....

b).....

c).....

30. Is your organization and its processes customer oriented?

Yes No

31. What do you do to acquire new customers?

a).....

b).....

c).....

32. What do you do to retain existing customers?

a).....

b).....

c).....



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