
Evaluation of Various Factors to Estimate the Success of CRM Projects within Automotive Industry

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ABSTRACT

This research evaluating of various factors to estimate the success of CRM projects within automotive industry. The main objectives of this research are examination of the strategic factors and identification of the factors causes' success occurs in CRM projects within automotive industry. Another side examination of the tactical factors and identification of the factors causes' success occur in CRM projects within automotive industry. The present research is an applied study using descriptive method. Applied research aims to develop applied knowledge in a specific issue. The method of present study on how the data collection provided is descriptive from the survey type. A statistical population is a set of entities concerning which statistical inferences are to be drawn, often based on a random sample taken from the population. The sample size consists of 53 individuals of the statistical population where it is selected among experts in customer relationship management system within automotive manufacturer companies. The data has been gathered through questionnaire used as the preliminary information sources. According to the obtained results, however, the status of implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry has been reported proper on the whole, some dimensions and components to implement this system have not set in a proper condition. Comparing the dimensions, the highest infrastructure and conditions belong to technological and hardware, cultural, support, efficiency, managerial, empowerment dimensions in implementing consulting company. Among six dimensions observed, the managerial and empowerment dimensions have not reported with proper status in implementing CRM.

Keywords: Various Factors, CRM, Automotive Industry, Evaluation Project.

Introduction

One of the topics prevailed several years in management area is the topic of customer relationship management which it has received a huge attention with expanding global markets and increasing competition. The topic of customer relationship

management has composed of several parts and aspects where spans the entire stages from marketing to contract, sales and after-sales period. In recent years regarding the changes and developments appeared in information and communication

technologies, the concept of customer relationship management has been raised as a vital approach in business, aiming at returning to the Personal Marketing Course. Here, the essential point which has to receive attention lied in a fact that CRM means customer relationship management rather than customer relationship management. Management is a broader concept rather than Marketing, which contains production, human resources, management, services, sales and research and development. Hence, customer relationship management requires an organizational approach at all levels of business needed for getting conducted business rather than being used as a simple strategy of customer-centric marketing. Customer relationship management encompasses Total functions of the organization (marketing, manufacturing, customer service, etc.) which are in need of direct or indirect contact with customers. The term "points of contact" in the customer relationship management refers to a variety of ways of interaction with the customer.

Problem Statement

One of the topics prevailed several years in management area is the topic of customer relationship management developed with expanding global markets and increasing competition which spans the entire stages from marketing to contract, sales and after-sales period. Customer relationship management assigned a core as a vital issue in the corporate world to itself; Customer relationship management (CRM) has once again gained prominence amongst academics and practitioners, however, there is a tremendous amount of confusion regarding its domain and meaning. In this regards, applying CRM projects does not cost effective, needed for a more accurate process, so, evidences show that roughly 60%-70% of CRM projects have failed. Since Automotive industry is considered as leading industry,

made effort to be a pioneer, normally tendency to develop CRM is mentioned of importance in future measures whereby companies like SAPCO Saipa and Zamyad would use such systems definitely. Due to reasons for the failure within customer relationship management projects that are seen in the literature contexts, a measurement of the success or lack of failure at their projects within automotive industry can be provided.

Research Importance

From the scratch while customer relationship management has received attention, competition for customer acquisition has been intensified. Customer experiences show how much the process and strategy of dealing with customers to gain success within organization are important. Investment in CRM technology itself cannot substitute for a better deal with customers, but the processes and methods have to be taken together with the culture. Performing such scenarios like other managerial concepts needs observe the organization's preparation and several key points. The circumstance dominated on performing business tasks are increasingly changing. The changes appeared in the societies causes the need appeared in customers' needs whereby the customers would intend to be provided with services personally and with a direct relationship. In other words, major marketing has substituted for tendency to individuals where the customers are desired to receive the products and services which belong to them. The next change is the very notion of increasing competition in regional and global markets by which the organizations obliged to seek to new ways to compete in the long term for gaining more success. Only rely on advanced technology and high quality is not enough to keep customers because the rivals are increasingly going through advancement whereby would

get it immediately. The services and products have to be designed relevant with the customers' needs and tendencies aiming at increasing value of products and services.

Research Objectives

This paper intends to examine various factors to estimate the success of CRM projects within automotive industry; in doing so the objectives as follows have to come to realize: Examination of the strategic factors and identification of the factors causes' success occur in CRM projects within automotive industry.

Examination of the tactical factors and identification of the factors causes' success occur in CRM projects within automotive industry.

Research Hypotheses

First hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of managerial dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Second hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of support has been set in a proper condition.

Third hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of technical and hardware dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Fourth hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of efficiency dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Fifth hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of cultural dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Sixth hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of empowerment dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Seventh hypothesis: a significant difference exists in the conditions of six dimensions of Customer relationship management (CRM).

Literature Review

The factors influencing Customer relationship management (CRM) implementation: Experience, Project Management, Process Reengineering, Customer-oriented, Transfer and convert databases, Rapid transition to e-business, Training.

Barriers to perform Customer relationship management systems:

Problems stemmed from changes from previous system to new, lack of skilled personnel in the project, existing problems in ensuring project requirements, resistance of personnel, the limited resources of the organization, practice gap existing between the staff and the project team, cooperation and coordination among departments, lack of top management commitment, technical problems, deficiencies in the software, training of staffs.

Factors Leading to Success for Projects of Customer Relationship Management

A large body of organizations has applied the Customer Relationship Management gained large benefits from them. Currently, based on the research studies conducted by Dr Mohammad Zarei from Total Europe Quality Management Centre located in the UK, one can say that at least 90% of the Customer Relationship Management users have achieved success (Scandarian and Jafar, 2004). On the other hand, systems of Customer Relationship Management are accounted as the most important tolls for advancement and development in applying information technology since the 1990s. Applying and performing such systems generally assigned in form of complex and huge processes at which large groups of

human force and other resources continue their activities altogether. Yet, unexpected events might occur while performing such project whereby the trend of advancement would face failure or delay. The failures occurred in Customer Relationship Management systems and re-engineering business processes have been reported by means of lack of strong leadership, focus on processes, poor planning, inadequate communication, lack of employee involvement and management and etc.

Factors Leading to Success for Projects of Customer Relationship Management in Perspective of Somers & Nelson

In a study by Somers and Nelson (2001) on the basis of seeking to the factors which lead to the success of customer relationship management, 110 case study in applying customer relationship management have been extracted where on the most important outcomes have been proposed:

Support by senior manager: Studies have shown the support by senior manager is of typical particularly in the early stage of project. Indeed, the role of middle management and other personnel is not empty of value, but, studies have shown if the senior manager continuously devolves the responsibilities and duties upon others, so the possibility of failure in project would be evident. Slevin & Pinto have defined the support by senior manager towards providing necessary resources and authorities in accordance with successful project management (Slevin and Pinto, 1986).

Communication, planning, teamwork, and education: these are core functions that affect and are affected by the management of organizational change. They arise from peoples' different perspective about change management as it relates to an ERP implementation. The first attribute, communication is the most critical aspect of

change management for a CRM implementation. It includes several components. Initially, there is a need for a clear understanding of strategic goals as they relate to the CRM implementation. Secondly their needs to be a clear understanding of implementation steps and their impact on workers at all levels (Umble, Haft and Umble, 2003). Third, it is necessary to present a clear understanding of new business processes and the new responsibilities these processes bring to employees. Finally, an understanding of measurements used for tracking implementation progress is essential (Somers and Nelson, 2004).

Clear purposes: Access to an in-depth understanding from the purposes and the way to access such purpose are recognized in the earliest stage of performing any information technology project, known as a vital task.

Project management: a person or group of individuals has to undertake the responsibility to perform the project successfully. This group has to define the area of proficiency and activity of project at first which this includes the number of systems used, the extent of cooperation by business units and the extent of reengineering used in processes.

Communication among parts: the importance of communications among different groups in the literature for applying and implementing information technology projects is evident for everyone. In access to this goal, use of communicative tools such as E-mail instead of using telephone and face to face communication would come fruitful.

The Hero of Project: the success of such projects relies severely on involvement of a hero who could create the main duties, leadership, facilitation of affairs and building feeling of satisfaction in users.

Support by seller: CRM project cannot be authorized to a consultant in abroad. On the other hand, since the company is not

provided with all the necessary skills to manage and control such project inside the company.

Accuracy in selecting the software package: software packages existing in the market might be provided for the organizations and institutes in different sizes, so it is essential before selection to take into account this point that which package can meet the needs in a proper way; otherwise, lack of consistency between software package and business process or need to building fundamental changes in software and processes would be with high risk, cost wasting the time besides.

Analysis and data conversion: in implementing CRM system, data conversion is of typical, where a great deal of customer information in previous systems is necessary. Conversion of previous data to new data is very important and expensive in such project.

Change management: An organizational change management strategy should be developed that will maximize productivity and customer satisfaction as a direct by product of CRM technology. The technology systems worked perfectly well but the people issues created obstacles to seamless transformation of the organization. The people problems have been repeatedly documented as the major cause of CRM implementation difficulties and failure (Martin *et al.*, 1999). Proper change management is an important attribute affecting people issues in all organizations (Norris *et al.*, 2000).

Education: Customer relationship management systems are systems that need training. Inadequate education or lack of it can lead to project failure. The company requires different levels of training on this system.

Documentation: The underlying challenge in every documentation project is to produce quality documentation on time and within budget. You can do this successfully, provided

you understand and use proven document management techniques. Within the scope of any documentation project management, one can identify the objectives and customer need, Provide effort and cost estimate, Document milestones and schedules, Assess and allocate resource, Standardize and develop content, Review and fine-tune deliverable, Test and Implement information consistency and archive and maintain information.

Expectations management: on the basis of the relationship among critical success factors in implementing CRM, several studies have been proposed where the studies by Ocker and Mudambi in 1997-1999 can be proposed here.

Factors Leading to Success for Projects of Customer Relationship Management in Perspective of Ocker & Mudambi

The model by Ocker & Mudambi defines the dimensions as follows:

Intellectual Dimension: this includes strategy, structure and planning. Social dimension: this includes culture, stakeholder interactions and domain knowledge.

Technological dimension: CRM application, IT capability, knowledge management

Methodology

The present research is an applied study using descriptive method. Applied research aims to develop applied knowledge in a specific issue. The method of present study on how the data collection provided is descriptive from the survey type.

Statistical Population

A statistical population is a set of entities concerning which statistical inferences are to be drawn, often based on a random sample taken from the population. The statistical population of this study involves experts in

customer relationship management system within Zamyad companies – Iran Khodro – Emdad Khodro - SAIPA and SAPCO continuing their activities in 2009 in one of the departments of customer relationship management within the automotive manufacturer companies.

The Sample Size and Sampling Method

The sample size consists of 53 individuals of the statistical population where it is selected among experts in customer relationship management system within automotive manufacturer companies.

Data Gathering Tools and Method

The data has been gathered through questionnaire used as the preliminary information sources. The questionnaire of the present papers using three scales nominal, ordinal and interval have measured the features of interest. The scale of gender within nominal scale, the scales of age and education status within ordinal scale and the Likert spectrum data within interval values have been taken.

Data Analysis Method

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making. Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a

variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains. For data analysis, the statistics sciences and descriptive and inferential techniques have been used. To characterize the responses of questionnaire and setting and converting them to the research variables, the descriptive statistics has been used where indices of central tendency and dispersion have been measured and analyzed. The inferential statistics used to define the descriptive results, and judgments on the importance and validity of the obtained results based upon the principles and rules grounded on the probability theory have been proposed. In this paper, to test the research hypotheses, the statistical techniques as follows have been used.

Data Analysis

Research hypothesis testing

To test the research hypotheses, Comparison of mean with one variable, i.e. comparing the mean observed with the theoretical mean, where Friedman rank test has been used to compare the mean of dimensions rank. The obtained results show that the zero hypothesis on the first and sixth hypotheses has not been rejected. The second, third, fourth, fifth and seventh hypotheses with rejecting the zero hypothesis have confirmed the research hypothesis. The results of test based on zero hypotheses have been proposed in Table 1.

Table 1. The results of research hypotheses test with regard to the zero hypothesis and research hypothesis

Research hypotheses	Comparison of one variable mean		Result of research hypothesis
	Zero hypothesis <i>Mean ≤ 3</i>	Research hypothesis <i>Mean > 3</i>	
Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of managerial dimension has been set in	☒	☒	Rejected

a proper condition. Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of support has been set in a proper condition.	?	?	Confirmed
Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of technical and hardware dimension has been set in a proper condition.	?	?	Confirmed
Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of efficiency dimension has been set in a proper condition.	?	?	Confirmed
Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of cultural dimension has been set in a proper condition.	?	?	Confirmed
Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of empowerment dimension has been set in a proper condition.	?	?	Rejected
Research hypotheses	Comparison of one variable mean		Result of research hypothesis
	Zero hypothesis	Research hypothesis	
	There is a difference among dimensions	There is not a difference among dimensions	
a significant difference exists in the conditions of six dimensions of Customer relationship management (CRM).	?	?	Confirmed

Findings of research

First hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of managerial dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Results of hypothesis: according to the data gathered of the sample group and statistical indices of comparing empirical mean with theoretical mean, the research hypothesis has not been confirmed.

Interpretation of Test Results

In general, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of managerial dimension has not been set in a proper condition. Although, support by senior manager in implementing CRM has been in a proper conditions, the style of project management, implementation

of Customer Relationship Management system, expertise on how to select a consulting company, knowledge of managers towards new and upgraded systems, organizational knowledge of management of customer relationship management system have not set in a proper condition.

Second hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of support has been set in a proper condition.

Results of hypothesis: according to the data gathered of the sample group and statistical indices of comparing empirical mean with theoretical mean, the research hypothesis has been confirmed.

Interpretation of Test Results

In general, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of support has been set in a proper condition. Updated expertise and efficiency of development and support systems and trust by senior managers on experts in the field of development and support systems are all in a proper conditions, whereas the ability to implementing projects by teamwork is not in a proper condition. The results show that implementing system in automotive industry in terms of support dimension has the proper infrastructure and conditions.

Third hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of technical and hardware dimension has been set in a proper condition. Results of hypothesis: according to the data gathered of the sample group and statistical indices of comparing empirical mean with theoretical mean, the research hypothesis has been confirmed.

Interpretation of Test Results

In general, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry

in terms of technical and hardware dimension has been set in a proper condition. The automotive industry contains essential infrastructures in the context of the amount of electronic communications, the quality of communication networks, hardware requirements, how to provide time and hardware requirements and distribution of hardware in order to provide essential hardware to implement Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry.

Fourth hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of efficiency dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Results of hypothesis: according to the data gathered of the sample group and statistical indices of comparing empirical mean with theoretical mean, the research hypothesis has been confirmed.

Interpretation of Test Results

In general, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of efficiency dimension has been set in a proper condition. Although, familiarity of users with basic skills on how to work with computer and economic ability to participate in major projects of Customer Relationship Management are in a proper conditions, explaining the goals and objectives of implementing CRM, users familiarity on how to work with customer relationship management projects, activity of teaching staff to implement customer relationship management are not in a proper conditions.

Fifth hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of cultural dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Results of hypothesis: according to the data gathered of the sample group and statistical indices of comparing empirical mean with theoretical mean, the research hypothesis has been confirmed.

Interpretation of Test Results

In general, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of cultural dimension has been set in a proper condition. The infrastructures for tolerance and flexibility of employees during implementation of system, staff teamwork in large projects and members cooperation with a team in implementing system are in a proper conditions, the cooperation among organizational departments to implement system has not set in a proper condition.

Sixth hypothesis: Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of empowerment dimension has been set in a proper condition.

Results of hypothesis: according to the data gathered of the sample group and statistical indices of comparing empirical mean with theoretical mean, the research hypothesis has not been confirmed.

Interpretation of Test Results

In general, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in terms of empowerment dimension has not been set in a proper condition. Necessary infrastructures to measure the size of the project by the consultant, how to holding meetings, feature presentation for customer relationship management systems, consulting firm response to these requirements and changes, the consulting company's response time to requirements, experts involvement in implementing system and consulting company involvement in resolving deficiencies have not set in a proper condition.

Seventh hypothesis: a significant difference exists in the conditions of six dimensions of Customer relationship management (CRM).

Result of hypothesis: according to the data gathered from the sample group and statistical indices of comparing the rank

mean among six dimensions of Customer relationship management (CRM), the research hypothesis has been confirmed.

Interpretation of Test Results

In general, there is a difference on the conditions of six dimensions of Customer relationship management (CRM) where the features of hardware and technical, cultural, support, efficient, managerial and empowerment in implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) in consulting company have the highest degree with the proper condition. The conditions of technological and hardware features rather than other dimensions of Customer relationship management (CRM) have set in a more proper condition. This dimension comparing to managerial and empowerment dimensions in implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) in consulting company is more proper which is equivalent with the dimensions of support and efficiency. The conditions of dimensions: efficiency and support are not different from each other, but, both of them rather than the conditions of other dimensions such as management and empowerment in implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) have better conditions. The conditions of managerial and empowerment dimensions in implementing consulting company rather than other dimensions have improper conditions, but no difference along this has been reported.

Conclusion

According to the obtained results, however, the status of implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry has been reported proper on the whole, some dimensions and components to implement this system have not set in a proper condition. Comparing the dimensions, the highest infrastructure and

conditions belong to technological and hardware, cultural, support, efficiency, managerial, empowerment dimensions in implementing consulting company. Among six dimensions observed, the managerial and empowerment dimensions have not reported with proper status in implementing CRM. The remained four other dimensions include hardware and technological, support, cultural and efficiency dimensions.

Automotive industry in Iran in the context of economic ability in supplying hardware, economic ability in implementing CRM, required hardware, users cooperation, senior managers' trust on experts, support by senior manager, users familiarity with basic skills on how to work with computer, quality of communicative network, how to provide hardware, electronic communication, employees work team, efficiency and specialism of the project unit has the proper conditions. The infrastructure for the components of distribution of hardware, Capability of team in implementing project, Knowledge of managers towards new systems, project management and implementation, estimating the size of the project by consulting firm is average. The condition in the components of attendance of consulting company in implementing CRM, cooperation by organizational units, familiarity with CRM systems, customer relationship management, specialism in choosing consulting company, consulting firm answer for explanation of implementation purposes, user familiarity with how it works, holding meetings on getting to know about the capability of system, responding by a consulting company to the requirements, the consulting company attendance to resolve deficiencies, training staffs to implement CRM and level of stability in the organization are all categorized in the level lower than average level.

Suggestions

Managerial components are from the most important indices of success in each scenario and system particularly the system for implementing and performing Customer relationship management (CRM). According to the results from the findings, in general, the dimension of implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry has not set in a proper condition where how to implement Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry, expertise in choosing consulting company, extent of knowledge and information by managers towards modern systems, and extent of managers' familiarity from Customer relationship management (CRM) have not set in a proper status. Hence, it is suggested to implement this system in a successful way, to pay attention to the managerial dimension and its components.

One of the dimensions to implement Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry is the support to implement such system. According to the results from the findings, however, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry has been set in a proper condition in terms of support, one of the most important components in implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry is the ability of project team where it has not been set in a proper condition. Hence, it is suggested to implement this system in a successful way, a strong and efficient team to be used where experts have to be hired to enhance the project team.

To implement Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry in a successful way, the infrastructures, hardware and technological problems are essential. According to the results from the findings, however, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry has been set in a proper condition in terms of

technological and hardware dimension, how to distribute hardware of this system has not set in a proper status. Hence, it is suggested to achieve the favorable results in distributing hardware, in addition to having expertise in distributing hardware, providing proper and updated hardware has to be taken into account in order to distribute hardware to the standards.

One of the most important dimensions for implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) is the use of essential and proper infrastructures. According to the results from the findings, however, Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry has been set in a proper condition in terms of efficiency dimension, it has not set in a proper condition in terms of the extent to which the purposes of implementing CRM defined, users familiarity on how Customer relationship management (CRM) works and training employees to implement Customer relationship management (CRM). According to the importance of getting informed of implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) and proposing necessary trainings, it is suggested to propose courses during providing services in order to define the purposes of system and necessary trainings in how to work and implement system.

Organizational culture is the leading factor causing success within organizations appears. According to the results from the findings, however, automotive industries in terms of cultural dimension particularly the issues associated to users have necessary infrastructure to implement Customer relationship management (CRM), one of the most fundamental problems associated to cooperation among different units of organization is categorized in improper condition. Hence, it is suggested to codify necessary regulations and infrastructures in order to build integration among units and

propose necessary managerial trainings to managers to make them continue their activities.

The ability and capability of the software suppliers in the context of Customer relationship management (CRM) and the commitment of suppliers on providing systems are the essential pillars to implement CRM successfully. According to the results from the findings, in general, implementing Customer relationship management (CRM) in automotive industry has not set in a proper condition in terms of empowerment dimension. Necessary infrastructures to measure the size of the project by the consultant, how to holding meetings, feature presentation for customer relationship management systems, consulting firm response to these requirements and changes, the consulting company's response time to requirements, experts involvement in implementing system and consulting company involvement in resolving deficiencies have not set in a proper condition. Hence, it is suggested to resolve the barriers and difficulties associated to the services by the consulting companies, necessary facilities get provided.

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