# Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems in Higher Education

*The guide to selecting a CRM system for higher education institutions*

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# Table of Contents

# Executive Summary

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are experiencing vital changes in the way they operate and interact with their 'customers', i.e. students, their parents, alumni, employers and staff members. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems are a very useful tool in improving the quality of these interactions. They are somewhat similar to enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications, though they focus more on the customer and communications side of operations, rather than the internal business processes.

To help universities identify and select an appropriate CRM system, StudyPortals and iE&D Solutions conducted a research project during the first six months of 2015.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of 15 education specific and 5 generic CRM systems. It shows the current state of CRM systems in the higher education industry and guides institutions in selecting top-notch CRM systems suited to their needs and wants.

A survey conducted by StudyPortals and iE&D Solutions revealed that 104 (59%) out of 176 survey respondents do not use a CRM system, while 72 (41%) of the survey respondents reported using at least one CRM system (Figure 1). 27 of these respondents own more than one system, 21 were uncertain.
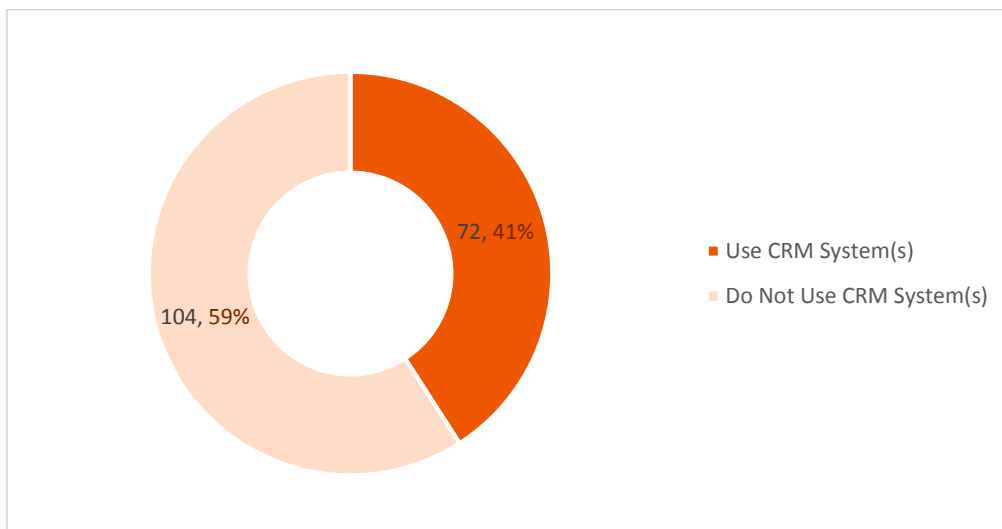


*Figure 1 - Respondent CRM Use*

The majority of survey respondents are located in the United Kingdom (23), Germany (17) and France (17). Overall, most of the respondents were institutions that have up to 5,000 students (and up to 1,000 staff members) of which up to 500 are international, degree seeking students and that offer less than six English taught programmes.

Within HEIs, a CRM system is most likely to be used to support recruitment and admissions.

26% of the institutions that use a CRM system, use Microsoft Dynamics CRM. Student Recruitment System is the second most commonly used system with seven and Salesforce is the third most commonly used system with five institutions using it.

Those that indicated not to use a CRM system, pointed out that lack of knowledge about CRM systems is the main reason why such a system is not being utilized. Lack of budget is the second major barrier.

Out of 104 institutions that do not use a CRM system, 37 (36%) are considering the purchase of one. Institutions that were able to point out what systems they are interested in purchasing, indicated the following systems: "Salesforce", "Dream Apply" and "Oracle".

In order to collect in-depth information about each system, CRM vendors were asked to provide a demo of their product. Twelve CRM vendors were willing and able to do so. Once the information was gathered, systems were compared based on carefully selected features in the areas of contact management, user management, ease of use, recruitment & marketing features, and help & support.

**Results:** Every system in this report may be classified into a few general categories:

1. For institutions looking for CRM software that offers tools to manage every part of the student life cycle, from enquiry to alumni, the following systems may be a good fit:
   - Campus Management (Campus Nexus CRM)
   - Ellucian (Recruiter)
   - Hobsons (Radius)
   - Jenzabar (SEM CRM)
   - Maximizer CRM (Student Relate)
   - Proretention (Enrollment CRM)
   - Symplicity (Ascend)
   - TargetX

   While some of these systems come as a full student life cycle management CRM system as it is, others require additional modules to be purchased in order to have access to features that help to manage stages of the student life cycle other than recruitment.

2. Institutions that need an on-premises solution could consider the following systems:
   - Campus Management (Campus Nexus CRM)
   - Ellucian (Recruiter)
   - Maximizer CRM (Student Relate)
   - Microsoft Dynamics CRM
   - Oracle
   - Proretention (Enrollment CRM)
   - Sugar CRM

All of the above systems also are available as a cloud solution. It is important to keep in mind that Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Sugar CRM and Oracle are all generic systems, albeit with experience in the higher education industry.

3. HEIs that are interested in generic solutions and are prepared to invest extra for customization of the system should consider the CRM systems below:
   - Microsoft Dynamics CRM
   - Oracle
   - Salesforce
   - Sugar CRM
   - Zoho

   While MS Dynamics CRM, Salesforce, Sugar CRM and Oracle are active in the higher education industry, Zoho does not provide any information regarding its presence in this market.

4. In case an institution is looking for an easy-to-use system that offers the most important features out-of-the-box and is easy-to-navigate, the following systems should be reviewed:
   - Admittor
   - Azorus
   - Dream Apply
   - Full Fabric

5. UK based institutions looking for a CRM system specific to the British educational system, should have a look at these systems:
   - Data Harvesting (Student CRM)
   - Full Fabric
   - Azorus

   While both have clients outside the UK, their expertise in the UK educational system brings advantages to UK institutions.

6. Nordic institutions keen on finding a CRM system that takes into consideration the specifics of the educational system in the Nordic countries, might find the following CRM systems interesting:
   - Mira Network
   - Student Recruitment System

7. If a wide range of features is the deciding factor when choosing a CRM system, the systems below might be a match:
   - Campus Management (Campus Nexus CRM)
   - Data Harvesting (Student CRM)
   - Jenzabar (SEM CRM)
   - Maximizer CRM (StudentRelate)

- Salesforce
- Sugar CRM
- Symplicity (Ascend)
- TargetX

# 1. Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are experiencing vital changes in the way they operate and interact with their 'customers', i.e. students, their parents, alumni, employers and staff members. Higher education clients are demanding more attention and instant service and so universities are turning to technology to cater to this demand in an effective way. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems are somewhat similar to enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications, though they focus more on the customer and communications side of operations, rather than the internal business processes.

Even though numerous proactive HEIs are aware of the relevance and importance of CRM systems, the vast number of CRM systems offered and the lack of information about them make it difficult to select and implement a suitable system. A survey conducted in April 2015 by StudyPortals and iE&D Solutions shows that out of 176 higher education institutions, 59% (104) do not use a CRM system. The majority of these institutions (59) explained that the main reason for this is the lack of knowledge about them.

The purpose of this report is to assist HEIs in the identification and selection process by offering an overview of various CRM systems available. The report provides a comprehensive overview of CRM systems, with a focus on education specific software. 15 higher education specific CRM solutions and five generic systems were selected and compared based on preselected features, prices and ease-of-use. CRM systems are then reviewed in more detail. This should make the selection process faster, more efficient and better suited to institutions' needs.

Furthermore, StudyPortals and iE&D Solutions aim to improve Study Choice and higher education marketing efforts. CRM would enable HEIs to track their marketing campaigns performance and allocate their marketing resources to the most effective activities.

On top of that the report also presents the findings of a survey that provide insights into the types of CRM systems used by universities of different sizes. Universities are classified based on the number of international students, total number of students, number of international programmes offered and the number of staff members.

# 2. Methodology

The CRM systems were compared based on a list of features that includes deployment options, contact management, recruitment/sales and marketing, user management, ease-of-use, reliability, help and support, system compatibility, and prices. The full list of features can be seen in Appendix 1. The list was obtained by conducting desk research, taking into consideration the requirements that participating universities defined as important.

The applicability of the features for each CRM system was researched using various search engine searches and by contacting the vendors via email and video chats. In order to collect the information as accurately as possible, the vendors of each system were contacted personally and were asked to confirm/reject the applicability of each feature in the list. In the end, 14 out of 20 vendors were willing to help in this matter and provided the information requested.

To find out about the specific requirements universities have, individual interviews were held with representatives of universities that recently implemented a CRM system. The representatives were asked to answer a set of questions concerning their requirements for a CRM system, the implementation process, obstacles faced, average costs, advantages and disadvantages of the system, and more.

In order to get an overview about the types of CRM systems being used by universities, their satisfaction rates with the system, what departments they are used in and more, a comprehensive survey was built. The survey is enclosed in Appendix 2. The survey and email invitation (Appendix 3) were sent electronically using the JotForm[1] platform to all active StudyPortals clients that were involved in projects with the company in the last year. 919 institutions have been contacted. The overall response rate was 19% (176 institutions). The survey was open for responses from 26 March, 2015 until 28 April, 2015. One reminder email was sent three weeks after the initial email was sent.

Apart from completing the survey, 12 out of 20 CRM vendors were willing and able to provide a demo of their product. CRM vendors were asked to perform multiple tasks in order to check functionality of each system. The information gathered during each of the demos is reflected in Appendix 5 of this report.

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[1] http://www.jotform.com/

# 3. Survey Findings

In order to get an overview of CRM systems used by various institutions, a survey was built. In total, 919 selected institutions received the survey. The overall response rate was 19% (176 institutions). The findings of the survey are detailed below.

The 176 survey respondents represented a variety of universities of different sizes and in different locations.

The size of the institution was determined by the total number of students, the number of international - degree-seeking - students, the number of international programmes offered and the number of staff members.

Figure 2 shows the number of respondents by the number of international, degree-seeking students (from less than 500 to over 5,000 students).
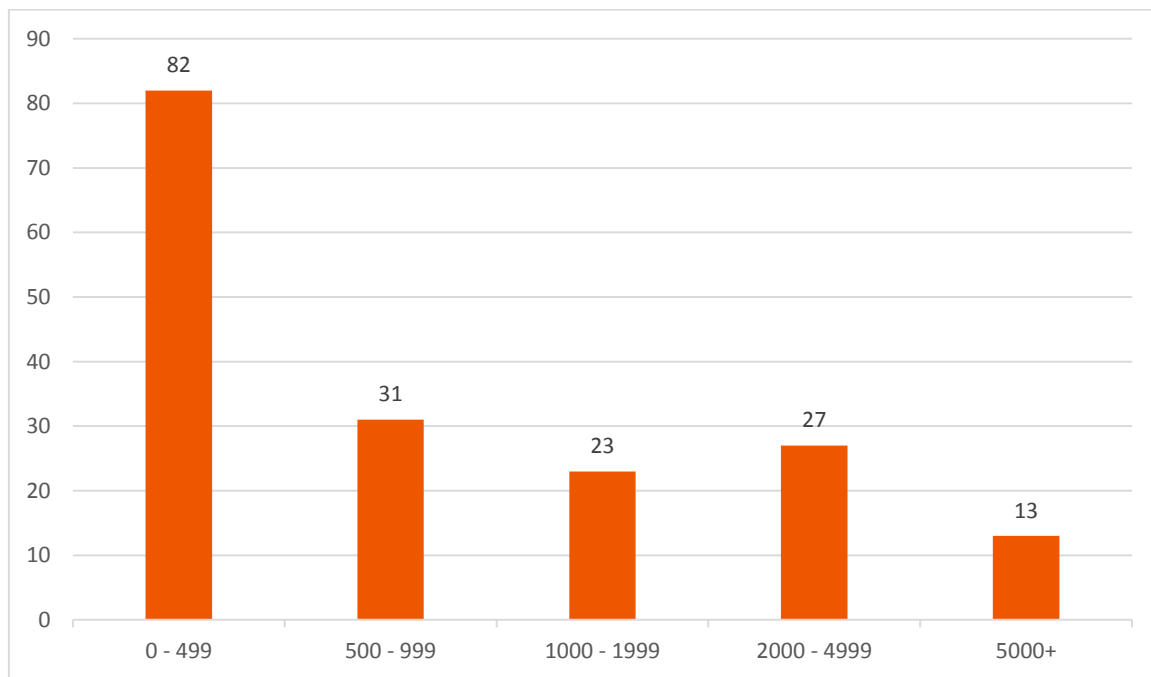
*Figure 2 - Respondents by the Number of International, Degree-seeking Students*

The total number of students, both international and domestic, ranges from less than 5,000 to over 30,000 students (Figure 3).
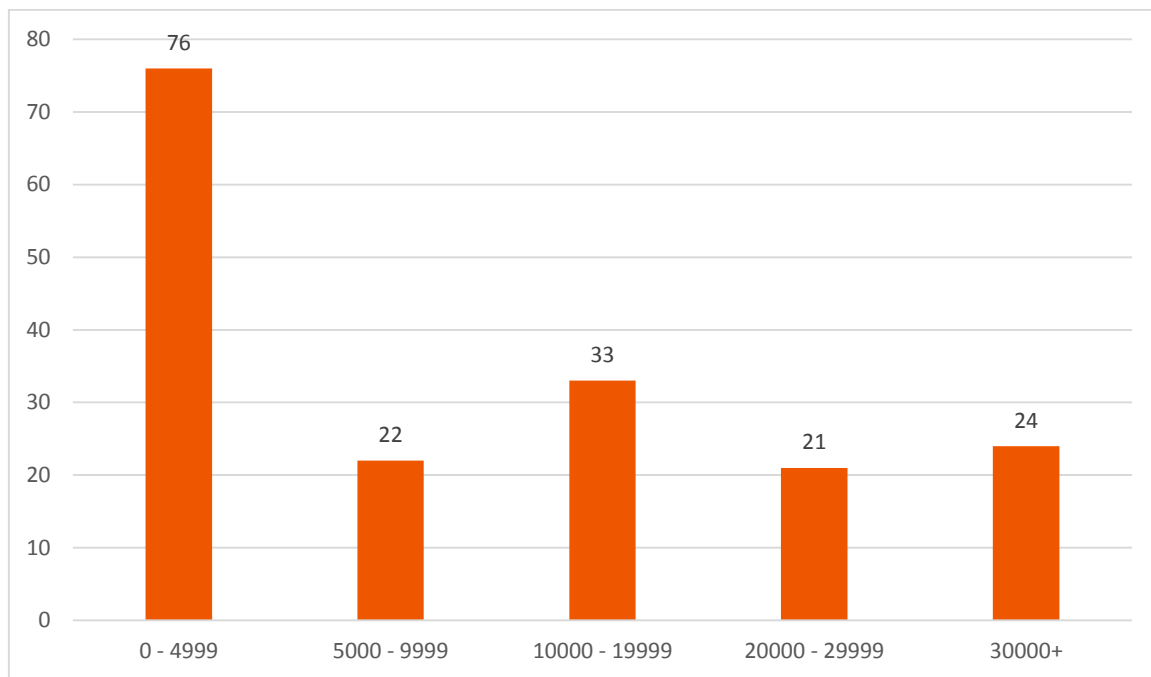
*Figure 3 - Respondents by the Number of both International and Domestic Students*

The number of English taught, international programmes offered, both at bachelor and master levels, ranged from less than five to more than 30 programmes (Figure 4).
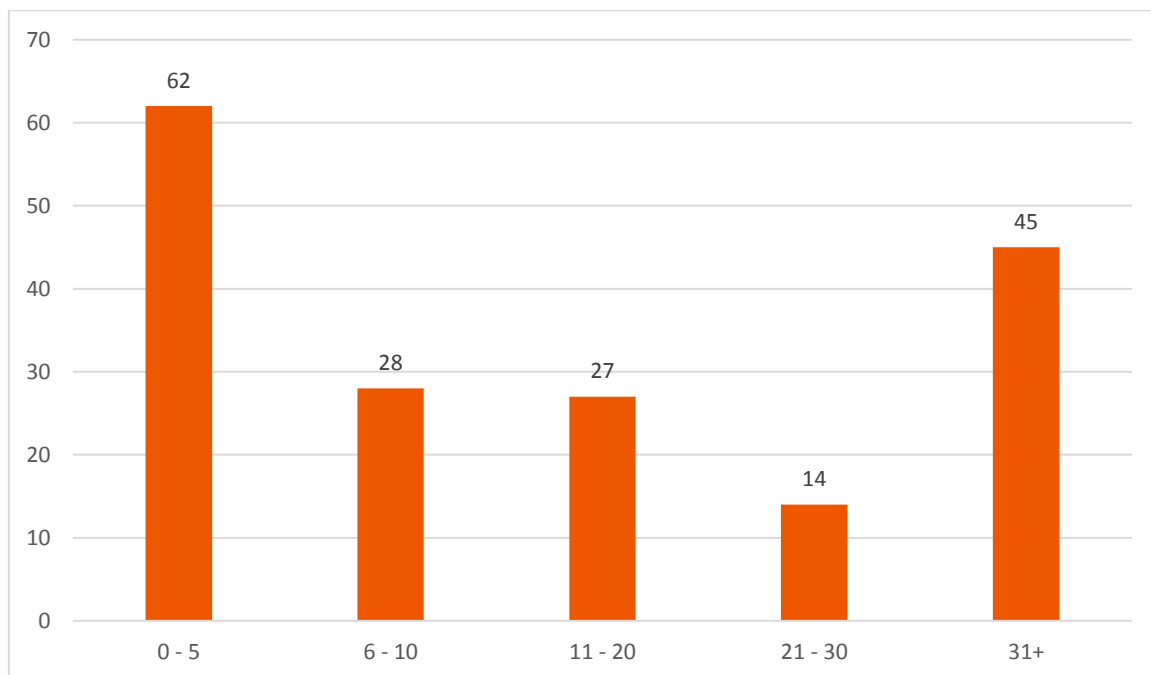


*Figure 4 - Respondents by the Number of English Taught, International (Bachelor and Master) Programmes Offered*

The number of staff members in the institution ranged from under 1,000 to over 5,000 members (Figure 5).
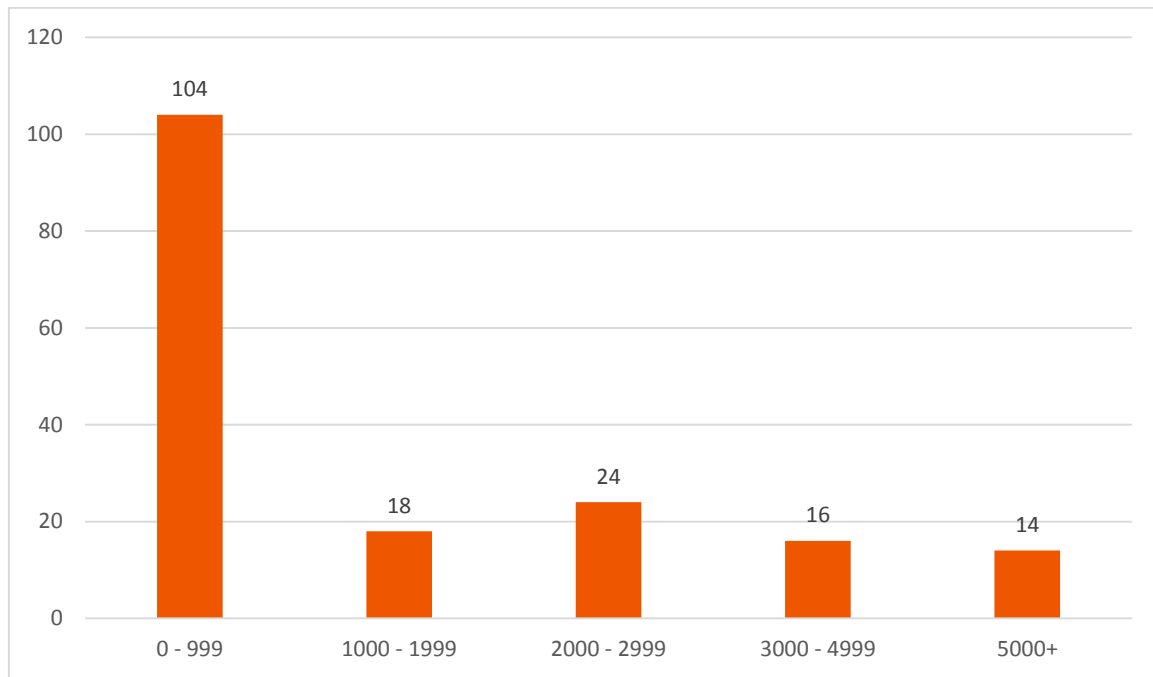
*Figure 5 - Respondents by the Number of Staff Members*

The respondents came from a large variety of countries, with the majority located in the United Kingdom (23) followed by Germany and France, with 17 respondents from each country (Figure 6).
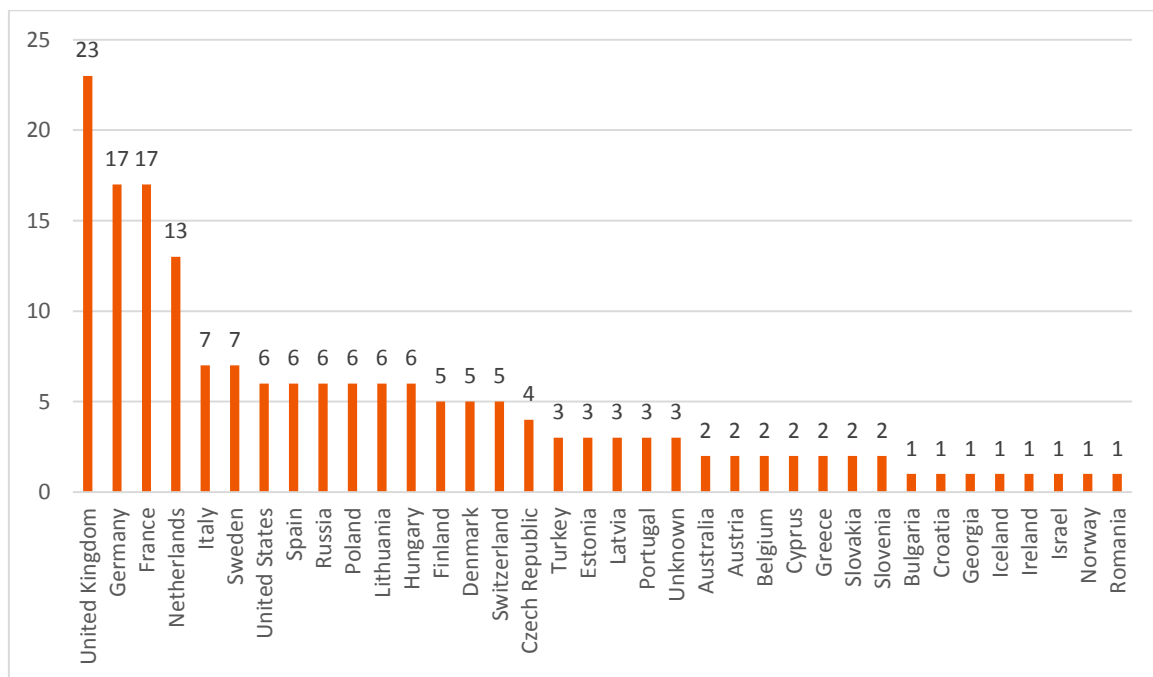


*Figure 6 - Respondents by Country*

In the first part of the survey, we asked the respondents whether or not their institution uses a CRM system and based further questions on the answer to this question.

The 62 respondents that use a CRM system were asked to point out which system is being used at their institution (Figure 7).
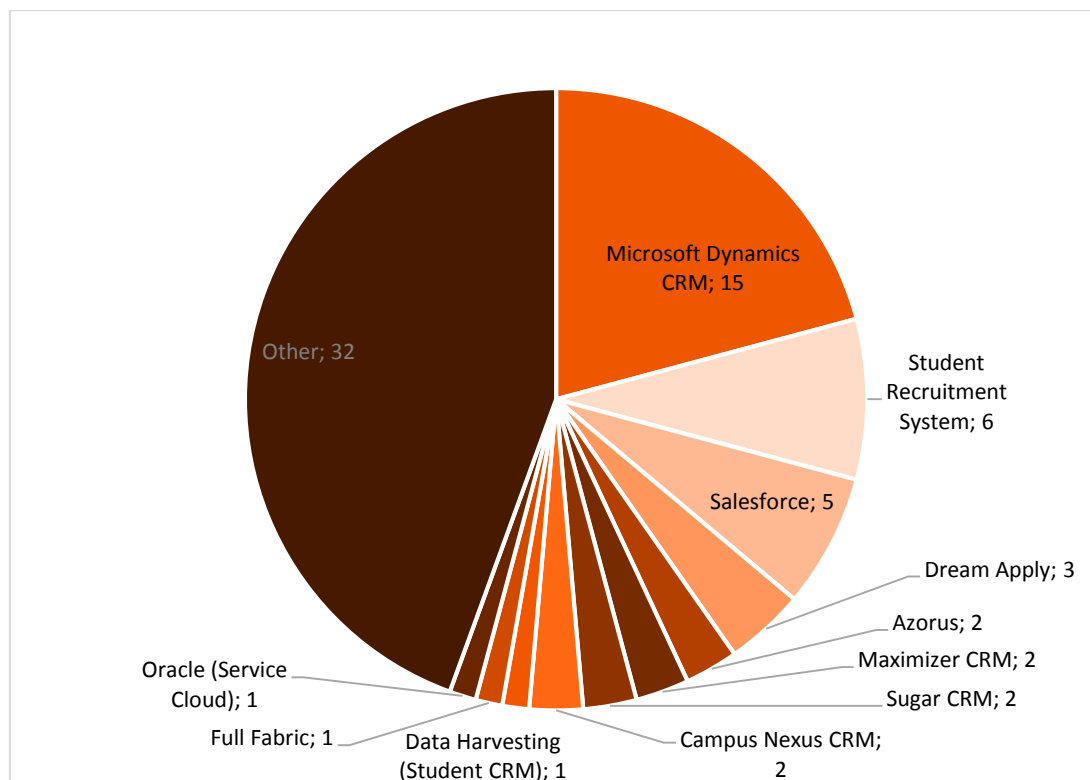


*Figure 7 - CRM Systems Used*

The above chart shows that Microsoft Dynamics is most commonly used by 15 institutions. Salesforce is the second most popular CRM system with 6 respondents using it, while Student Recruitment System is being used by five institutions. A total of 32 respondents indicated that they use another CRM system not included in the list. Proprietary CRM systems (tailor-made by or for the university) dominated among these, while the rest of the systems were the following, with no dominant system: Hobsons EMS, SuperOffice, Selligent, SOP, Embark, Suite CRM, Alpha Partner, Simovative, AcademyFIVE, DEV, SAP, SAGE CRM, Sitefinity, Goldmine, Eudonet, TOP APPLY QS, Neptun, Velocify, AES Achiever, Oscar Campus, Banner Relationship Management, CAS Genesis World, and Danish State.

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether or not their institution uses more than one CRM system and if so, if they were able and willing to provide more information about it. 27 respondents indicated that an additional system is being used and 12 of those were willing and able to answer further questions (Figure 8).
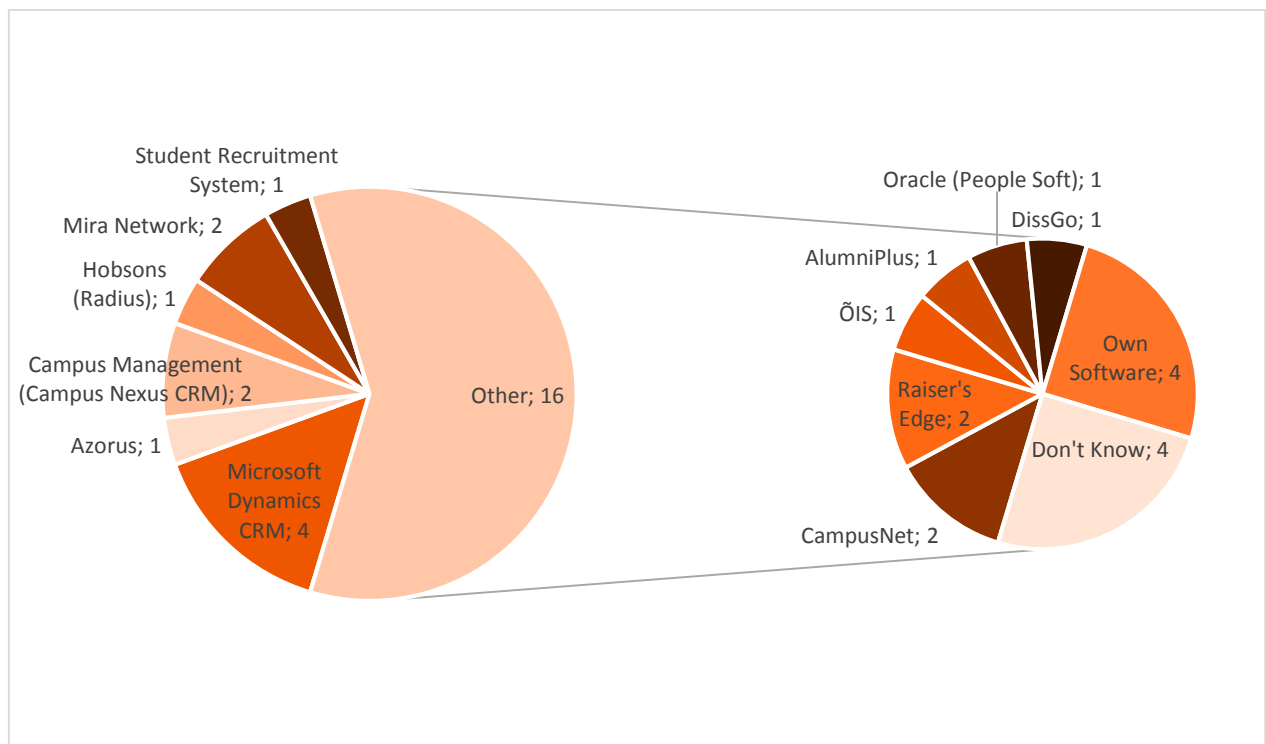
*Figure 8 - Additional CRM Systems Used*

Once again Microsoft Dynamics CRM came out as the most popular, with four institutions using it. Many institutions indicated that they use another system than provided in the list, which were mostly proprietary systems once again.

Figure 9 and Figure 10 show the correlation between the size of the institution in terms of number of students in total and the number of international, degree seeking students and the systems used, respectively. It is difficult to conclude whether there is a connection between the size of the institution and the system used due to the uneven distribution of systems used by survey participants and the low number of responses per system. Microsoft Dynamics CRM is used by most respondents, but it seems that there is no correlation between the institutional size and the use of this system. On the other hand, from the graph below one might conclude that smaller institutions tend to use a proprietary CRM system more often than existing standard systems.
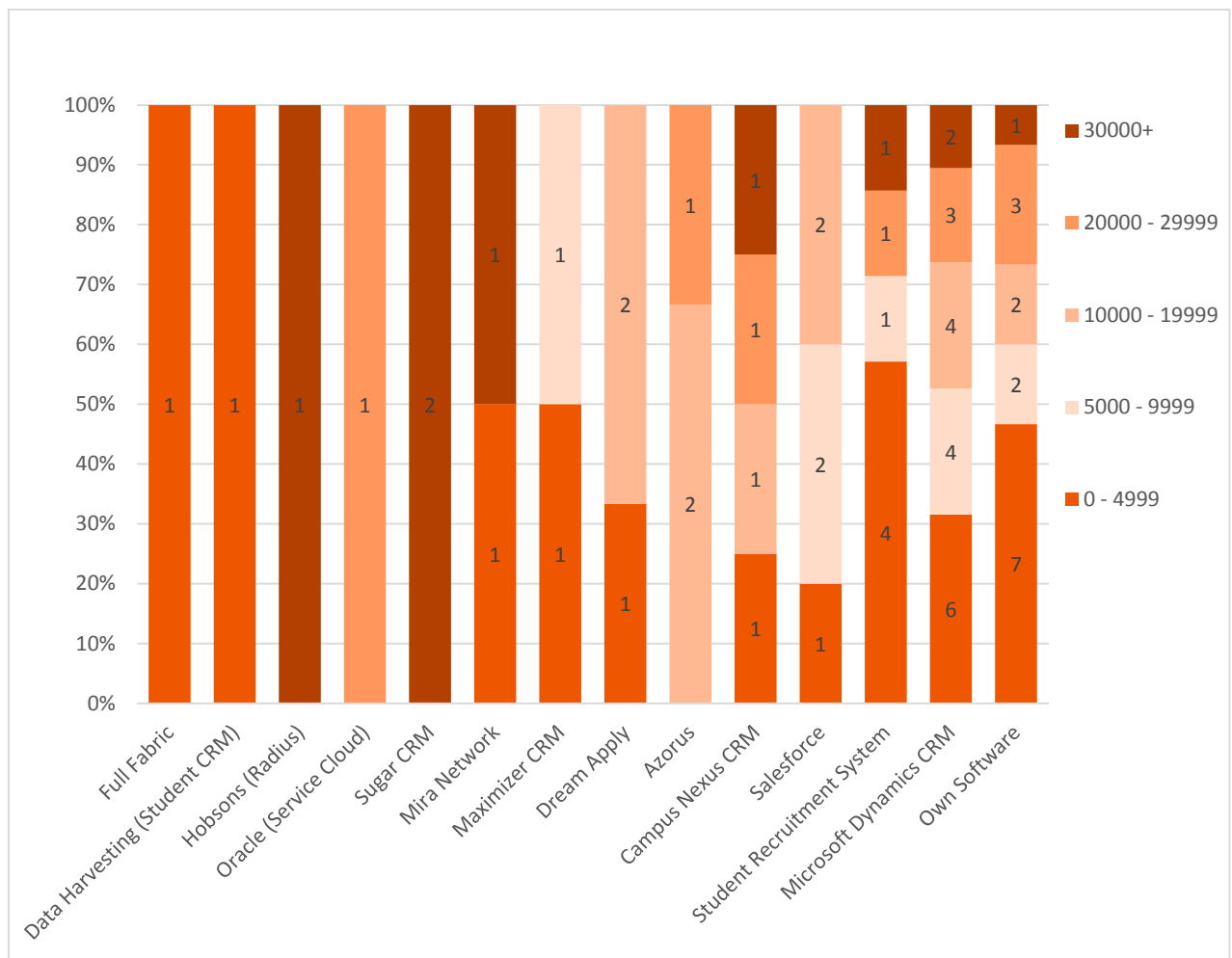
*Figure 9 - CRM Systems by the Number of Students*
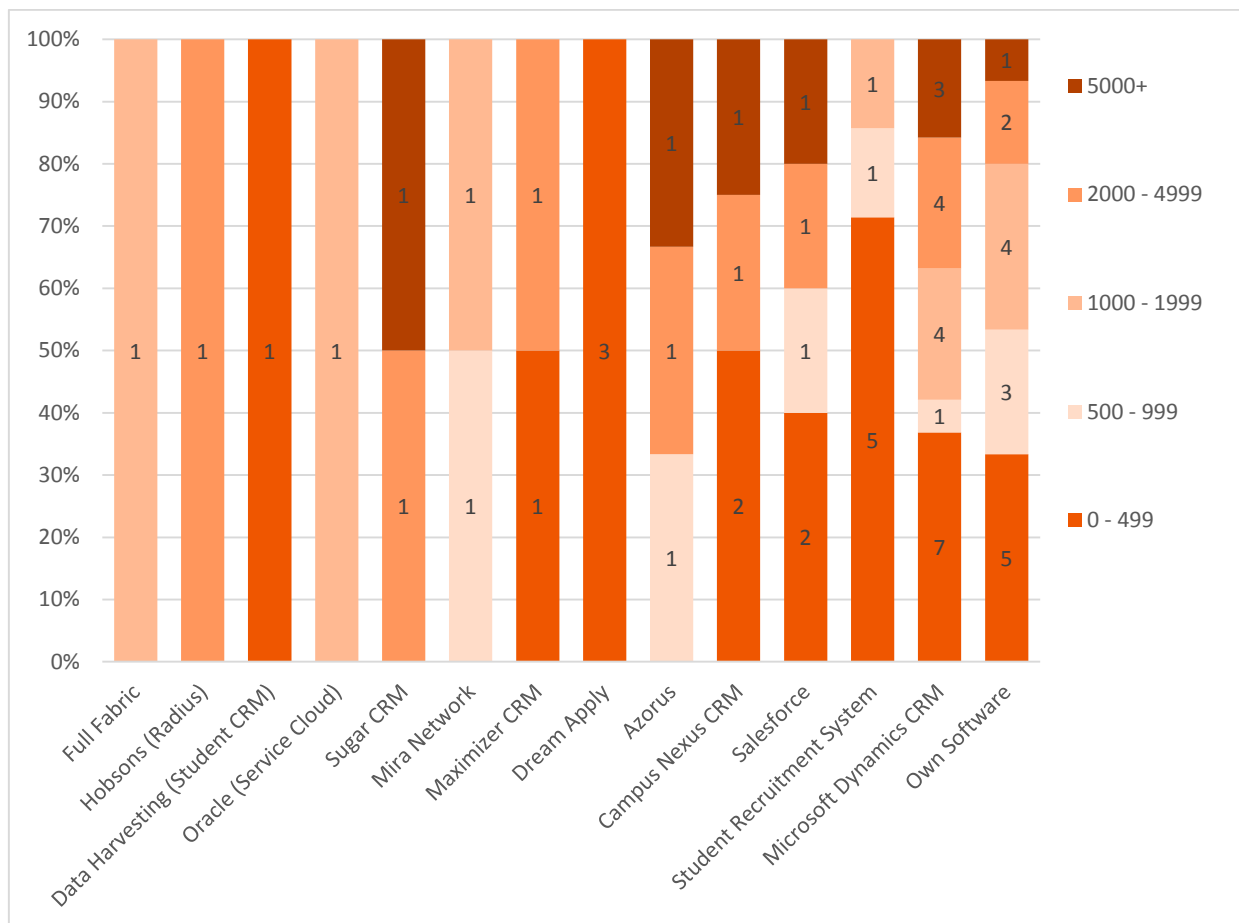
*Figure 10 - CRM Systems by the Number of International, Degree-seeking Students*

Survey respondents who indicated that their institution uses a CRM system were asked to point out the departments that use that system. Figure 11 clearly shows that CRM systems are mostly being used by the recruitment and admissions departments and 57% of surveyed HEIs use CRM for both recruitment and admissions. The housing office seems to be making the least use of the CRM system.
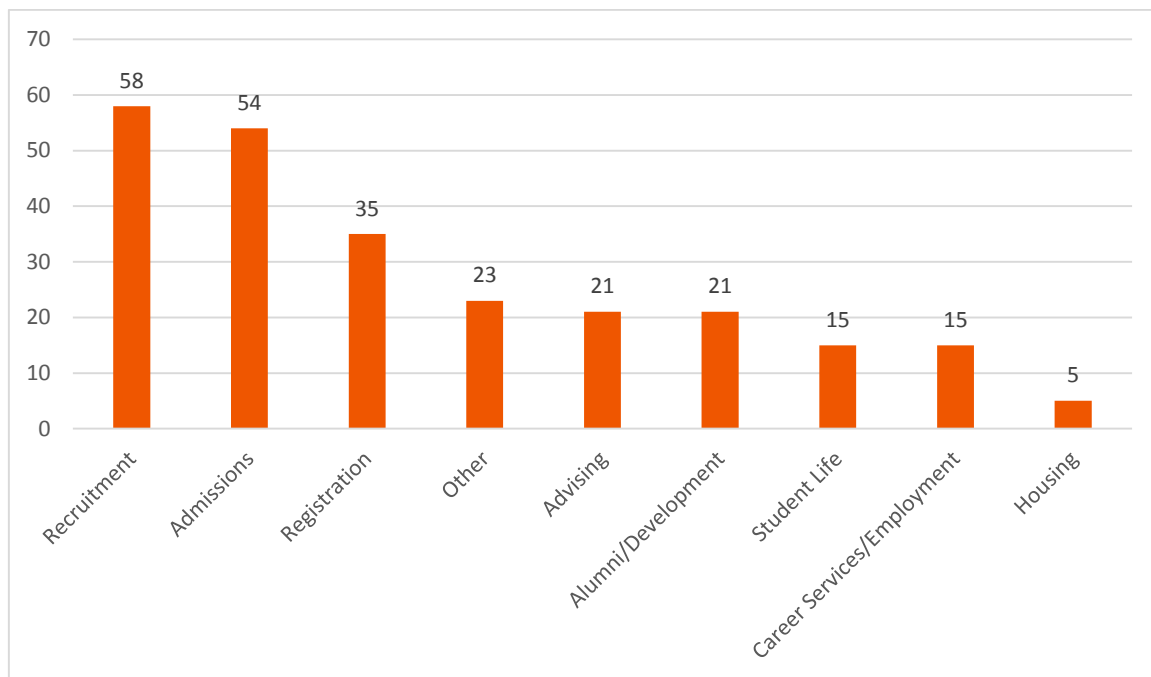
*Figure 11 - Use of CRM by Department*

Other departments included the following: Projects and Research (1), Sales and Marketing (7), Executive Development Programs (1), Administration (1), Immigration and Other Student Services (1), Communication Services (2), Finance (1), Lectures (1), Exchange Management (1), Event Management (1), Contract Education (1), Newsletter (1), PhD Process (1), Uncertain (3).

When respondents indicated that their institution does not use a CRM, different questions followed. Firstly, they were asked to indicate the reasons why a CRM system is not being used (Figure 12). Respondents were given five options to choose from and multiple answers were allowed: Not Needed, Technical Reasons, Lack of Knowledge about CRM Systems, Lack of Budget, and Other Reasons. The findings revealed that Lack of knowledge about CRM systems is the main reason why universities do not use any CRM system, with 59 institutions indicating this reason. Lack of Budget is the next major reason, mentioned by 45 institutions. A total of 23 respondents indicated the reasons being both Lack of Knowledge and Lack of Budget. Other reasons for not using a CRM system included the following: Unspecified (4), Focus on Other Things (1), Lack of Interest in Recruitment (1), Not in the Culture or Approach of the Institution (1), Strategic Reasons (1), Lack of Policy (1), In the Process of Obtaining a CRM (6), No Decision Taken Yet (1), Lack of Time (2), Lack of Internal Processes (1), Not Being Able to Agree on a System that Meets Institution's Needs (1), Lack of Resources to Implement (1). Multiple institutions indicated that they are in a process of obtaining a CRM system.
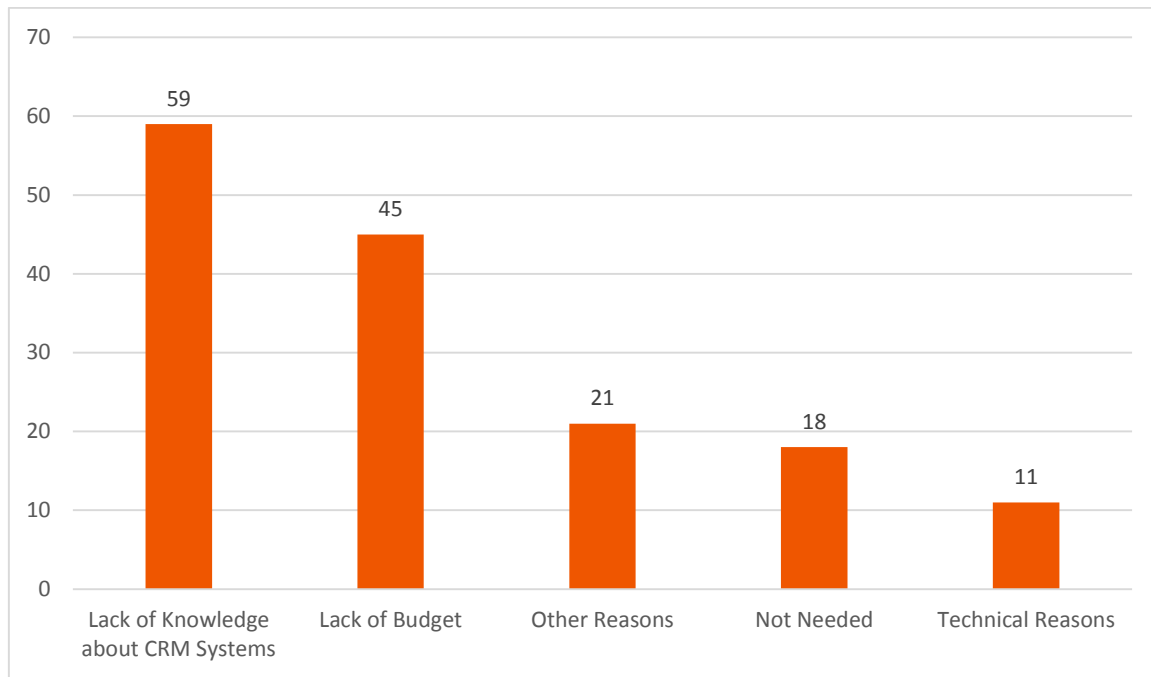
*Figure 12 - Reasons Why the CRM is Not Utilized*

Later, the participants were asked to further explain the reasons why CRM is not being used at their institution. Some of the answers can be found below:

- A few respondents indicated that it was the first time they have heard of the term "CRM system."
- Some said that such system is not needed due to the small size of the institution.
- One of the respondents stated the following: *"The need to use a CRM system has just recently entered our view of how to manage international students. However, since we lack even the most basic knowledge on how to use a CRM system and since the budget required would be pretty consistent, so far we have not reached a decision about which CRM we should use and how."*
- Another respondent explained that: *"We have too many applicants, domestic and international, and we have to turn down qualified students as it is. Limited staffing and additional resources force us to do the essential activities to keep afloat, and this is essentially processing the applications already coming in, which we are receiving from very little marketing effort and essentially because of our brand."*
- Lastly, a couple of institutions said that they recognize the need for a CRM system and are either in a tendering process, or are waiting for the system to be implemented.

The participants were also asked whether they are considering the purchase of a CRM system or not. In total 37 (36%) institutions indicated that they are. They were then asked to indicate which systems they are interested in. Five indicated "Salesforce", two mentioned "Dream Apply" and two - "Oracle".

Finally, respondents were asked when the institution is planning to implement a CRM system (Figure 13). Almost 50% were unable to specify the exact time.
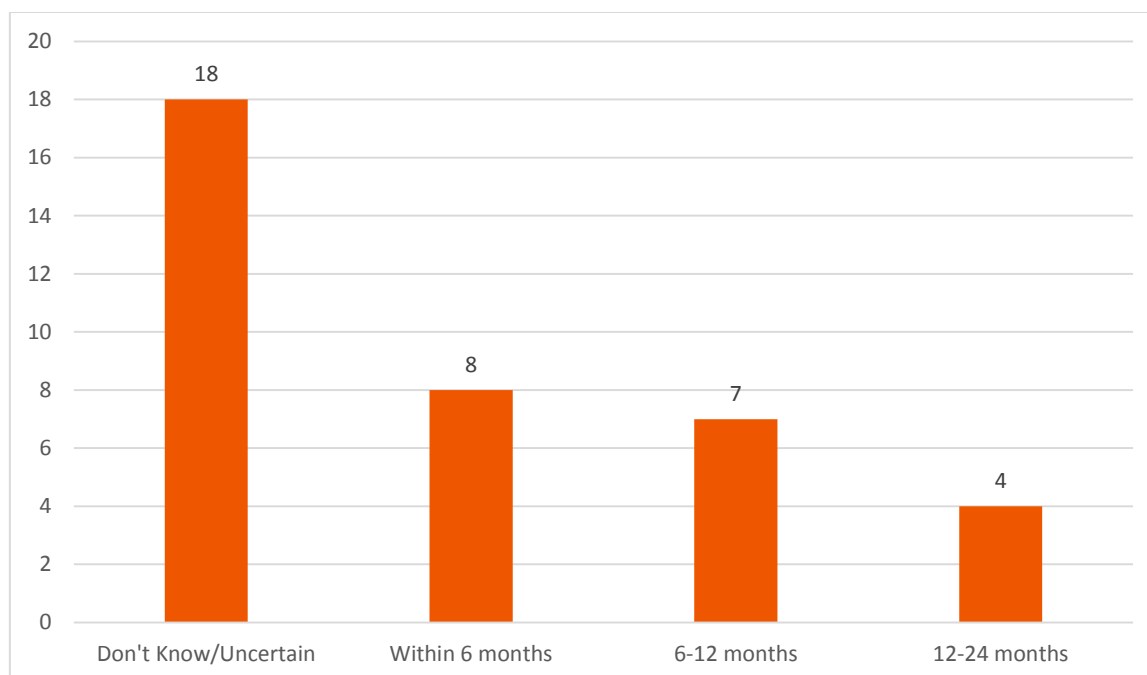


*Figure 13 - Expected CRM Implementation Date*

*As of March-2015

At the end of the survey the participants were asked to indicate how big their institution is in terms of the number of international students, students in total, number of staff members and international programmes offered. The size of the institution together with the use of CRM can be seen in Figures 14 to 17 below.

When looking at Figure 14 we might conclude that the number of international students within the organization has an influence on the use of a CRM system. Two thirds of the institutions that have 0 to 499 international students report not using a CRM system. It seems that the use of a CRM system increases with the number of international students. Institutions with 1,000+ international students use a CRM system more often, with approximately an equal number of organizations using and not using any system.
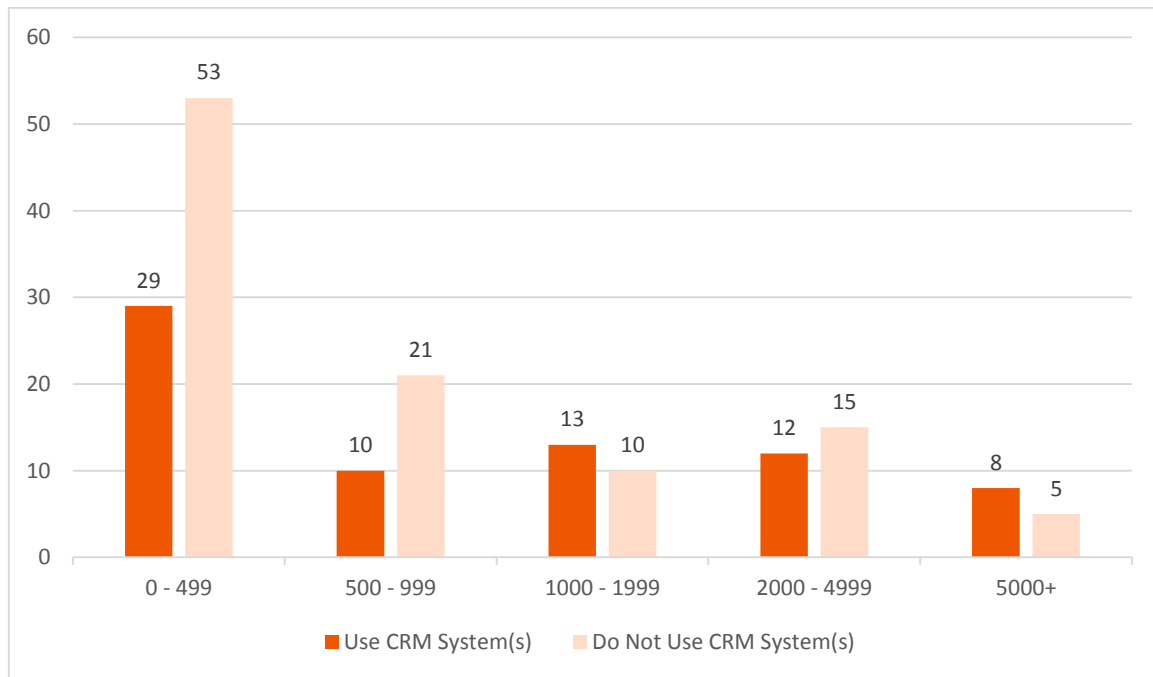
*Figure 14 - Use of CRM by the Number of International, Degree-seeking Students*

Figure 15 shows that the total number of students has a limited effect on the use of a CRM system.
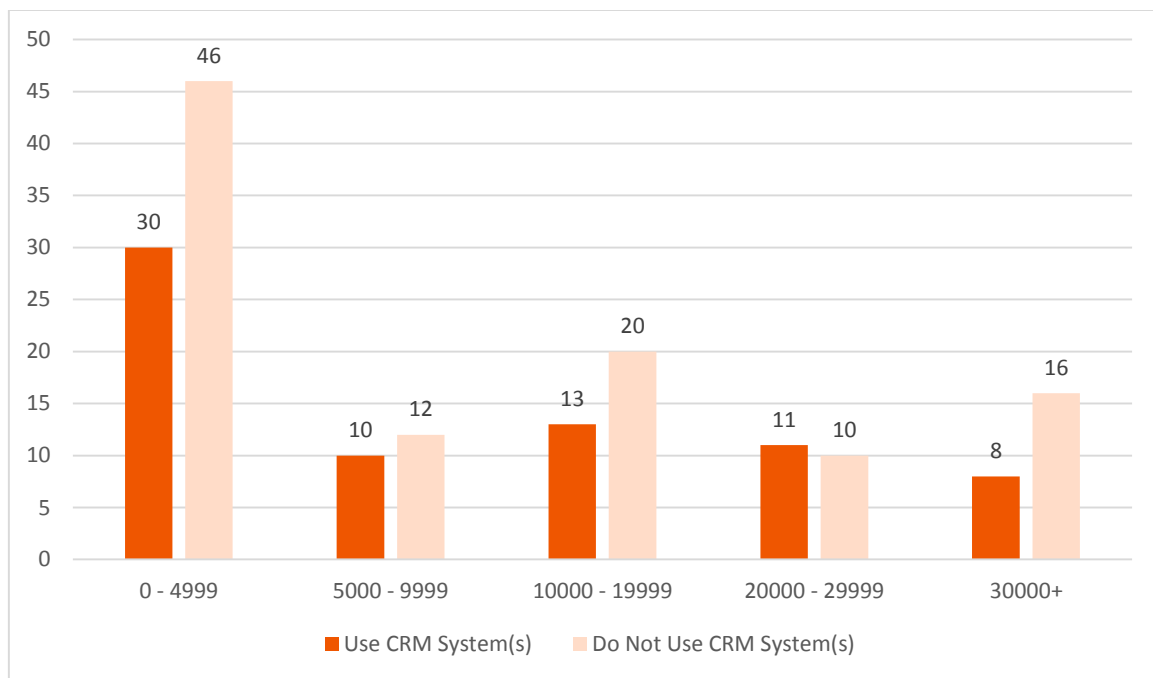


*Figure 15 - Use of CRM by the Number of Both International and Local Students*

We might conclude that the use of a CRM system increases with the number of international programmes offered as more programmes might generate more interest, applications, etc. Figure 16 shows that only 26% of the institutions that offer zero to five international programmes use a CRM

system, whereas the number increases to 60% of the institutions that offer 31+ international programmes which are using a CRM system.
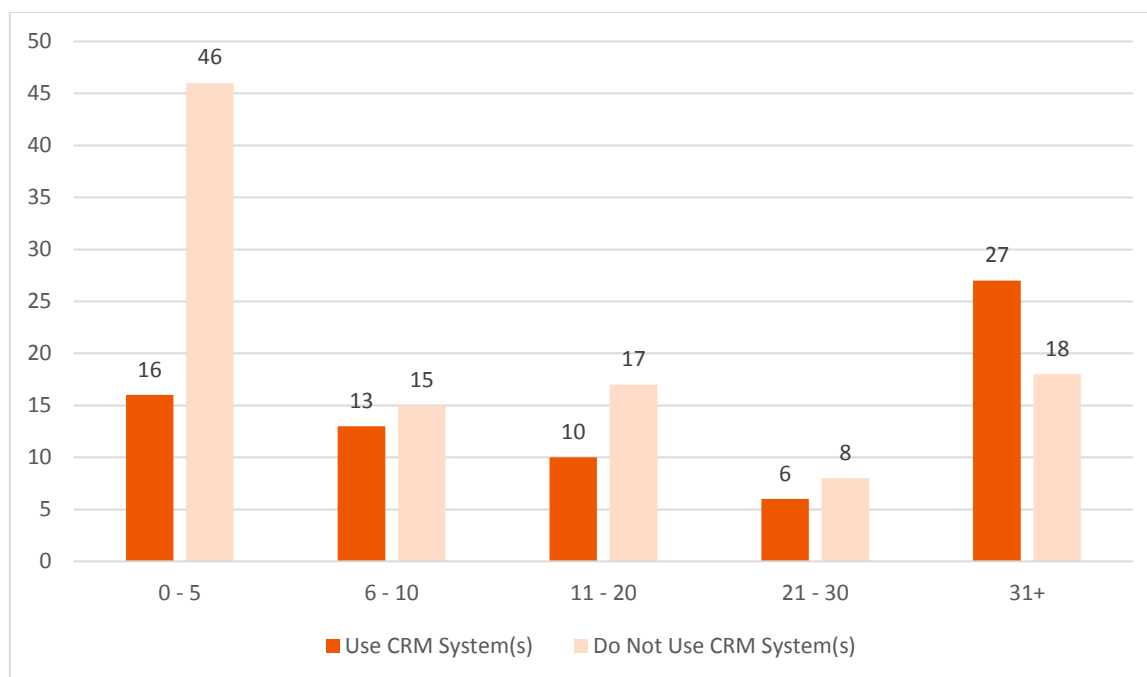


*Figure 16 - Use of CRM by the Number of English Taught, International (Bachelor and Master) Programmes Offered*

From Figure 17, it can be concluded that the number of staff members does not seem to be a relevant factor in the use of CRM systems. The numbers of institutions using and not using a CRM seem to be evenly distributed between different numbers of staff members within institutions.
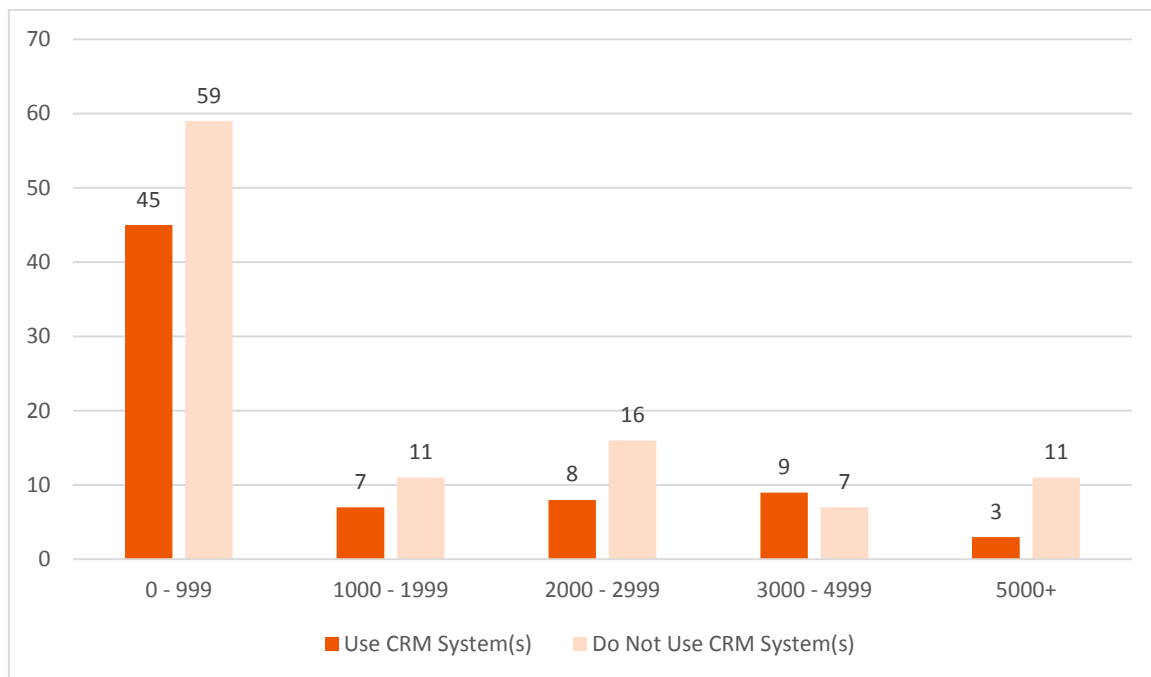
*Figure 17 - Use of CRM by the Number of Staff Members*

Figure 18 shows the use of CRM systems by region. It is safe to conclude that Eastern European universities tend to use CRM systems less than institutions in other regions, with North America using CRM systems the most. Meanwhile around half of Northern and Western European universities use at least one CRM system. See Figure 1 – Use of CRM by Country in the Appendix 6 for a detailed analysis of the use of CRM systems by country.
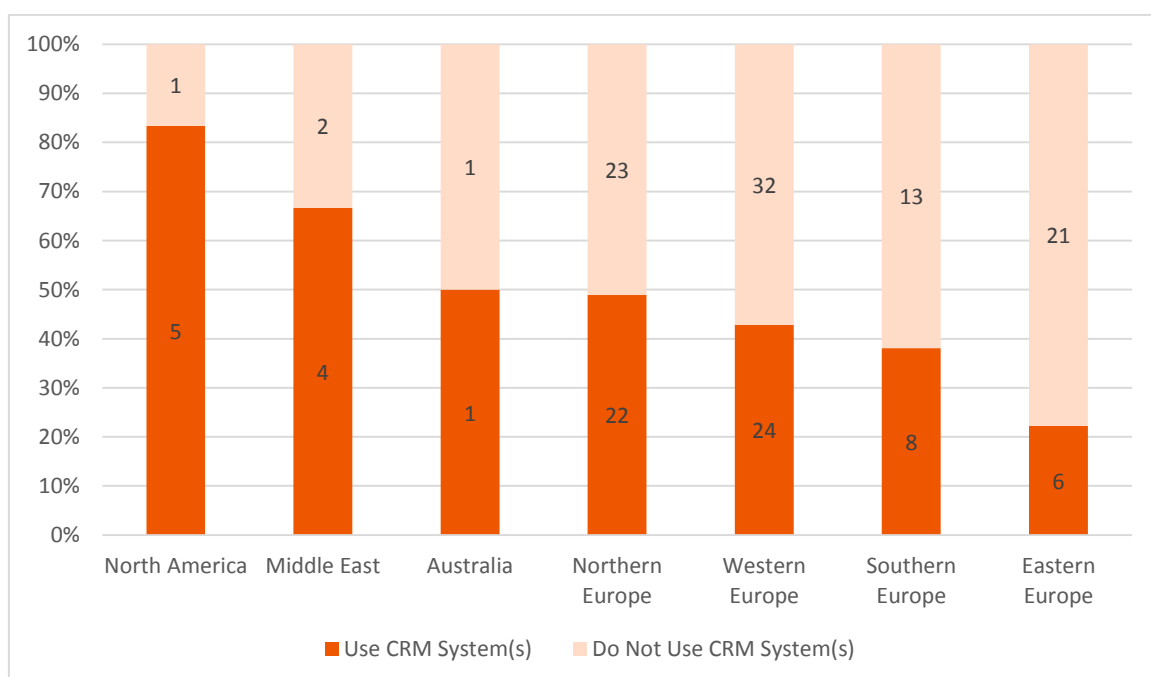


*Figure 18 - Use of CRM by Region*

Figure 19 gives an overview of the different types of systems used in each region. It seems that Northern and Western European countries tend to use Microsoft Dynamics CRM the most, with around 25% of the universities in each region using this system. These two regions also have the largest variety of CRM systems used.
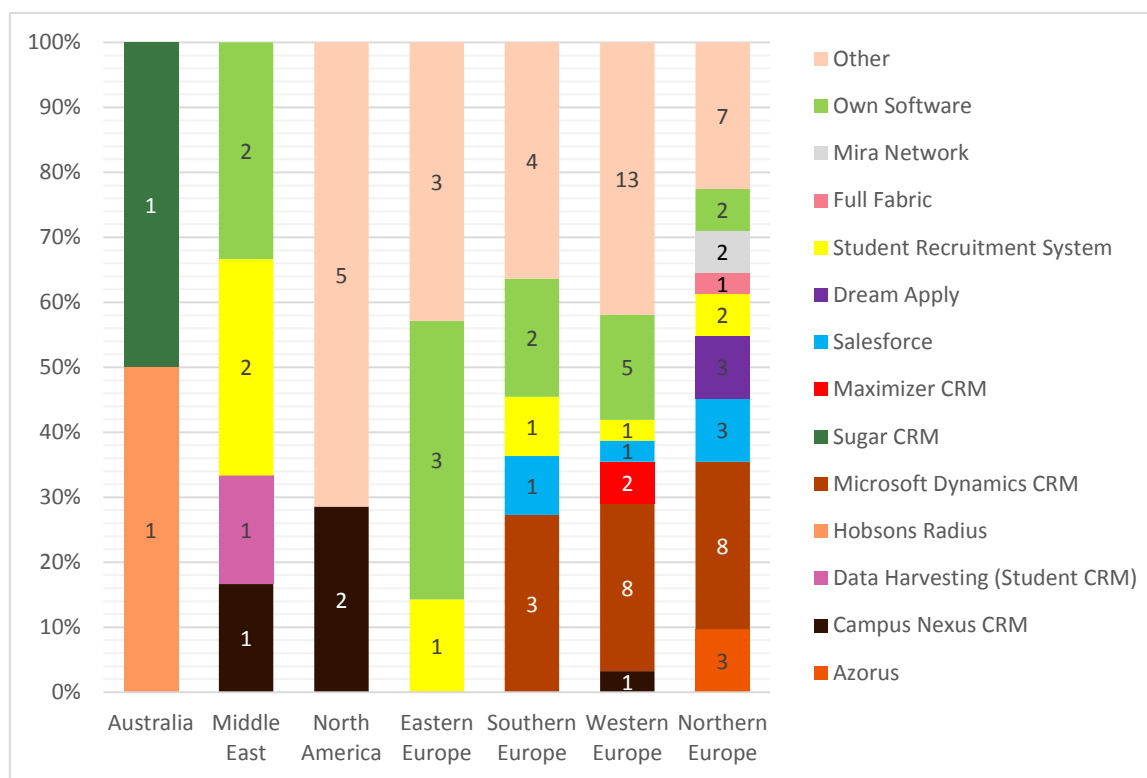


*Figure 19 - CRM Systems Used by Regions*

*Regions were devised by the United Nations Statistics Division

The four countries with the highest number of CRM systems used (Figure 20), predominantly use systems not listed in the survey, followed by Microsoft Dynamics CRM with 13 institutions using this system.
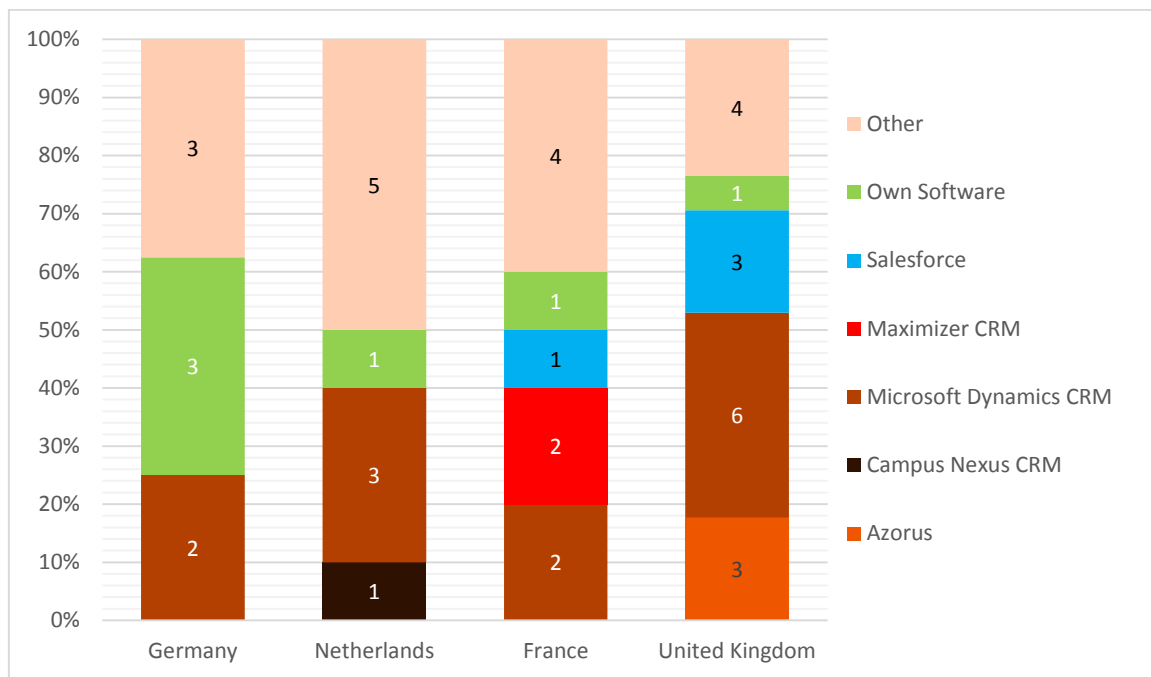
*Figure 20 - CRM Systems Used by Top 4 Countries*

For a more detailed presentation and analysis of the survey results, please see Appendix 6.

# 4. Important Aspects When Choosing a CRM System

## Explanation of the Categories

In this part of the report, different categories are explained that were used to assess and compare each CRM system. For a full break-down of the features, see Appendix 1. For a comparison table of the systems based on grades per each category, see Overview of CRM Systems. For a detailed comparison table, see Appendix 4.

### Contact Management

The Contact Management category consists of features that help to better manage leads, prospects, students, alumni, etc.

Firstly, storage space might limit the number of contacts and documents that can be imported to the system (some companies distinguish between data and file storage space limits, some have a shared or combined storage limit). In most cases, additional storage can be purchased, meaning that the number of contacts or documents is limitless, but will cost extra after the initial limit has been exceeded.

In case uploading and saving of documents with individual accounts is possible, the system has a document management feature.

The creation of online application forms and the ability to update the status of an application so that students can track it are very important features in this category.

Furthermore, event creation and management tools (e.g. open days) that often come with analytical tools that help to track attendance and registration are also an important part of this list.

Email integration is another important feature within contact management. Emails can be sent through the system, and/or there can be an integration/synchronization with other email software, such as Outlook, or sometimes both.

It is very useful for potential and enrolled students to have access to an applicant web page, where they can track their application, book accommodation, sign up for events and more. This feature is called "Customer Portal/Account."

It is always useful to see the touch points with a prospective student, an enrolled student or an alumnus, whether it was a phone call, an email or any other means of communication and that is

where the "customer interactions" feature comes in handy. This feature is supported by contact timelines that present contacts activity in a chronological order.

"Workflow automation" automatically creates and assigns tasks to employees based on predetermined prompts you set within the CRM software.

"File sharing" enables multiple departments and users to access customer accounts and history.

An integrated dialler is a handy tool to have for some. It enables making phone calls directly through the CRM system. It usually comes as a third party plug-in, but often for an additional fee.

Finally, some systems have an invoicing functionality which allows users to send invoices directly from the CRM system.

## Recruitment & Marketing Features

Recruitment and marketing features help institutions create more targeted recruitment campaigns and recruit qualified candidates from around the world.

One of the most important features is lead management, which enables institutions to efficiently collect information about leads (i.e. an interested, prospective student) by means of landing pages, education fairs, etc. As it is one of the main functionalities in every CRM system, every CRM system reviewed in this report has this feature, though some systems might have more advanced lead management tools than others.

Email marketing tools and email templates further optimize the student recruitment process and are valuable features to have.

Finally, forecasting functionality enables the system to forecast how likely a lead is to enrol based on the leads past education, the interactions between the university and the lead, etc. This feature is offered by very few vendors.

## User Management

User management is all about the tools that help CRM users to increase efficiency and effectiveness of their work and get the best user experience possible.

A group calendar enables staff members to see their own and other users' tasks and appointments, making it easier to arrange a meeting, assign a task on the best time possible, etc.

Performance tracking is not very common in education specific CRM systems, but it might be handy for some. It enables management to track staff members' input in recruitment efforts by tracking their engagement and activities in recruitment campaigns or everyday tasks.

Furthermore, employee profiles is a functionality of CRM systems that enables employees to have private profiles with certain roles and restrictions, as well as personalized tasks, dashboards and more.

In case a staff member encounters some operational issues, a knowledge base is a handy feature to have.

Finally, social CRM is becoming increasingly popular within CRM systems. This feature enables users to connect with social media-type groups within the system.

### Ease of Use

Ease of use represents how user friendly and customizable the system is.

User friendliness is represented as a grade on a scale from one to five. Five meaning that the system has a very clear design, is easy to navigate, has an eye appealing interface, and does not have too many tabs, data fields or cluttering text. A grade of one indicates that the system has a very messy design, is really difficult to navigate, and has an uninviting interface. It has lots of tabs, data fields or cluttering text.

Customizability is also expressed as a grade on a scale from one to five. Five means that the software is highly customizable and the user is able to perform in-house customizations without external support. A grade of one means that the software is not at all customizable and that for every minor change the provider must be contacted.

Mobile app is also a part of the user experience, enabling the user to access the system in the most convenient way possible, whether it is a phone or a tablet.

Multi-language capability is an important feature to have for institutions that deal with international students or have international staff members. This feature usually comes on the admin side of operations, but sometimes also on the customer side of operations.

### Help & Support

Help and support describes in what ways a user can get help or contact support teams, whether it is Online Tutorials/Training, Phone, Email, Social Media, Live Chat, or FAQs.

# Cloud-Based or On-Premises?

On-premise solutions are usually installed on a users' server or users' computers. Cloud solutions on the other hand, are accessed via the internet, and typically hosted by a third-party vendor. Furthermore, cloud solutions often have the "pay as you go" or on-demand usage service model, while on-premises solutions typically adapt the traditional upfront capital expenditure model.

A cloud solution is right for your institution if you:

- Want a straightforward way to get the system up and running as quickly as possible
- Want a low initial investment
- Have limited IT support, infrastructure, technical resources/support staff
- Want to cut overheads on your existing IT infrastructure
- Want to remain up-to-date with the latest CRM software without the headache of upgrading

- Want the flexibility and peace of mind to migrate to an on-premises system in the future with minimal technical requirements and without any data loss
- Require little customization
- Have basic integration requirements
- Want predictable monthly IT operating expenses
- Have a distributed workforce at remote locations.

An on-premises solution is right for your institution if you:

- Need to customize your CRM solution heavily to fit your institutions processes
- Require your CRM to integrate tightly into your institution's existing applications or have complex integration requirements
- Have already invested in internal IT infrastructure or have available in-house IT resources and support systems
- Require specialized data structures
- Have budget for up-front capital investment and prefer an initial one-time investment over monthly recurring costs.

# Funnel Reach

Each CRM system may serve different part(s) of the student life cycle – whether it is enquiries, applications, enrolment, students, alumni or any mix of these (Figure 21). In case the system covers every part of the student life cycle funnel, it is referred to as an enterprise wide system.

*Figure 21 - Funnel Reach*
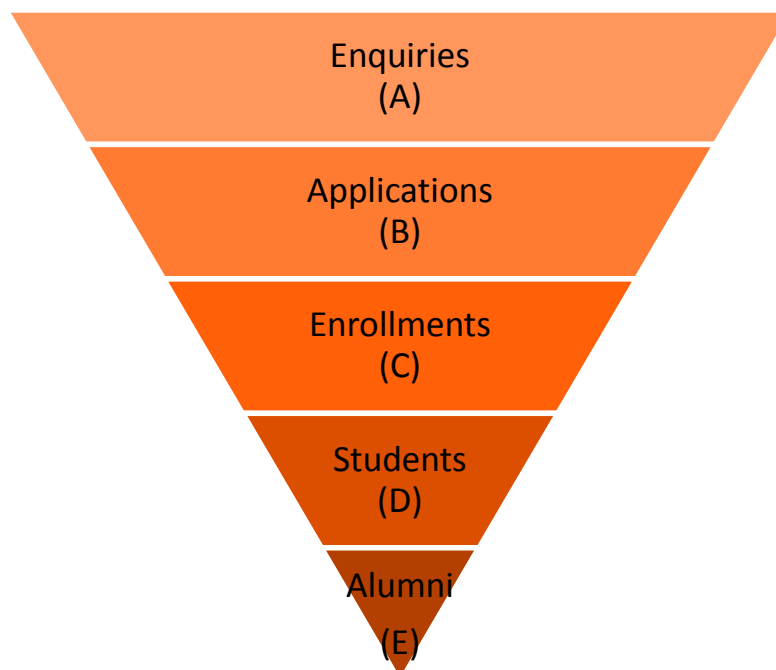
# 5. Overview of CRM Systems

In this chapter each system is compared based on the number of applicable features in five categories: Contact Management, Recruitment & Marketing Features, User Management, Ease of Use, and Help & Support (See Explanation of the Categories for more information about the categories).

See Appendix 5 for a more detailed comparison tables.

| | TARGET X | DATA HARVESTING | SYMPLICITY | JENZABAR | FULL FABRIC | ADMITTOR | MAXIMIZER CRM | AZORUS | CAMPUS MANAGEMENT | MIRA NETWORK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contact Management | 12/13 | 10.5/13 | 11/13 | 10.5/13 | 11.5/13 | 9/13 | 10/13 | 10/13 | 13/13 | 8/13 |
| Recruitment & Marketing Features | 3.5/4 | 3/4 | 3.5/4 | 3/4 | 3/4 | 3/4 | 4/4 | 3.5/4 | 4/4 | 3/4 |
| User Management | 4/5 | 2/5 | 2/5 | 2/5 | 2/5 | 2/5 | 4/5 | 2/5 | 4/5 | 2.5/5 |
| Ease of Use | - | 10.5/12 | - | 8.5/12 | 9.5/12 | 9.5/12 | 10/12 | 10/12 | 10/12 | 7/12 |
| Help & Support | 5/6 | 4/6 | 5/6 | 4/6 | 5/6 | 2/6 | 5/6 | 4.5/6 | 4/6 | 5/6 |
| Funnel Reach** | A-E | A-C | A-C | A-E | A-C | A-C | A-E | A-C | A-E | A,C,D,E |

| | DREAM APPLY | HOBSONS | ELLUCIAN | PRORETENTION | SRS | MICROSOFT DYNAMICS | SALESFORCE | SUGAR CRM | ZOHO | ORACLE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contact Management | 13/13 | 12/13 | - | - | - | 11.5/13 | 10.5/13 | 10/13 | 11/13 | - |
| Recruitment & Marketing Features | 3/4 | 3.5/4 | - | - | - | 4/4 | 4/4 | 3/4 | 4/4 | - |
| User Management | 2.5/5 | 2/5 | - | - | - | 5/5 | 5/5 | 5/5 | 5/5 | - |
| Ease of Use | 6/12 | 11/12 | - | - | - | 9/12 | 12/12 | 12/12 | 10/12 | - |
| Help & Support | 4.5/6 | 6/6 | 5/6 | 3/6 | 2/6 | 6/6 | 6/6 | 5/6 | 6/6 | 6/6 |
| Funnel Reach** | B-C | A-E | A-E | A-E | A-C | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

* Systems in black are education specific, while orange CRM systems are generic.

** Additional modules might need to be purchased for a further funnel reach.

Below, we will shortly describe the key features of each of the systems involved. A more extensive overview of all systems can be found in Appendix 5.

# Target X

This system was built on a Salesforce platform and is an open source platform. Its features help to manage the full student life cycle – from Inquiry to Alumnus. The system is highly customizable and functional, while still being very user friendly. In case any additional features are needed, most of these can be purchased at an AppExchange that offers over 2,700 different apps. TargetX comes with an integrated "Pardot" app that enables marketing campaign management, emailing and many other features.

Key features:

- Built on Salesforce platform
- Open source software
- Enterprise wide (full student life cycle)
- Highly customizable and user friendly

- Ability to purchase plug-ins from App Exchange (over 2,700 apps available)
- Integrated Pardot[2] app for marketing campaign management, emailing, etc.
- Automatic import of leading tests (IELTS, TOEFL, etc.) scores

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Data Harvesting (Student CRM)

Data Harvesting is a modular system that allows institutions to save money by purchasing only the modules that are necessary for their particular needs. They are experts in the UK market and the majority of their customers are based there. The company is proud of their excellent customer service. Furthermore, the system is extremely user friendly and very customizable. Native iOS app improves user experience even more by providing an offline data capture for student fairs.

Key Features:

- A modular system
- Excellent customer service
- Experts in the UK market
- Extremely user friendly and highly customizable
- Native iOS app for providing offline data capture
- Advanced event management tools that are categorized into Applicant Open Days, Pre-applicant Open Days, and Event Manager modules

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Symplicity (Ascend)

Symplicity has a pricing structure based on the number of applications. This supposedly guarantees the highest return on investment. Also, while Ascend is made for the recruitment part of a student life cycle, additional modules can be purchased that cover the rest of the cycle. The system is user friendly and customizable. Furthermore, multi-language capability also contributes to the friendliness of the system.

Key features:

- Per number of applications pricing
- Highly customizable and user friendly
- Ad-hoc reporting
- Additional modules for further funnel reach available
- Email analytics
- Multi-lingual

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[2] http://www.pardot.com/

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See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Admittor

Admittor is a rather simple system, without too many complicated functionalities, but with an eye-appealing design. The white labelling feature enables the institutions to make this software look like it is their own property. The company is proud of the system's high level of customization and the ease of using it. Some of the great perks that this system has to offer is a tagging system that allows users to better manage and search the applicant pool, online/offline annotator and evaluation scorecards of the candidates.

Key features:

- White labelling feature
- Highly customizable
- Simple to use and navigate
- Tagging system allows one to better manage and search the applicant pool
- Online/Offline reader annotator
- Evaluation scorecards

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Jenzabar (SEM CRM)

Jenzabar is a cloud-based CRM system. Besides the number of functionalities that Jenzabar has to offer on its own, the system also has integrated IBM "Cognos" software that provides a toolset for reporting, analysis, score carding, monitoring of events and metrics. Furthermore, "Dotmailer" software brings top notch email marketing tools to optimize the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. The system also has a separate contact list for feeder organizations that helps with early stage recruitment.

Key features:

- Advanced reporting tools (the system uses "Cognos[3]" by IBM)
- Predictive score that shows how likely a student is to enrol, based on various factors, such as touch-points, past, age, etc.
- Vast number of functionalities
- Separate contact list for feeder organizations
- Partnership with "Dotmailer[4]"
- Four hour window support for urgent matters

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[3] http://www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/cognos/
[4] http://www.dotmailer.com/

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Full Fabric

Full Fabric paid a lot of attention to creating an eye-appealing, easy-to-navigate design. While the system itself is rather straightforward, it does come with some great perks, such as real-time reporting, integration with Google Maps and many more. Also, the software has a big focus on the prospective student, which makes the student's experience with the institution pleasurable.

Key features:

- Simple and competitive pricing
- Eye-appealing, easy-to-navigate design
- Majority of system's features are focused on the prospective student
- Specialized in higher education
- Integration with Google Maps

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Azorus

Azorus is a rather straightforward system with a focus on helping its client to recruit and retain "more of the right students". The tools within the Azorus suite are purpose built for higher education institutions to allow them to manage the journey to enrollment. The Azorus CRM software platform is lean, functional and goal oriented. Central to the Azorus platform is the ability to manage the various contact points that students have with an institution. One can create landing pages with the ability to download content which is great for lead management. One of the most powerful features of this system is the advanced event creation and management tools. Also, the integration with Google Analytics is a useful feature to have.

Key features:

- Integration with Google Analytics

- Advanced event creation and management tools

- Landing pages with ability to download content

- Ability to seamlessly integrate with SITS (UK) as well as other student information systems integrations including PeopleSoft, Ellucian, Campus IT and others

- Flexible and open platform that allows an institution to completely customize the end user (student) experience

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Campus Management (Campus Nexus CRM)

Campus Management claims to be the leader in the SIS market among all types of institutions. It is a full student life cycle management system. The system comes as both on-premises and cloud solutions for maximum functionality. It is extremely customizable, yet still rather user friendly. The vast number of languages supported on both the admin and applicant side of operations contribute to the friendliness of the system a lot. In case a user encounters any problems, 24/7 support will always be there to help.

Key Features:

- SIS market leader among private, for-profit institutions
- Full student life cycle management
- Comes in both cloud and on-premises solutions
- Full synchronization with social media websites
- 24/7 support
- Multi-lingual
- Functional and customizable.

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Mira Network

Mira Network is the leader in the Nordic countries because of their knowledge of this specific market. Since in Nordic countries recruitment is done through a national system for university admissions, online applications are not available. The system comes as an enterprise wide system. Mira Network comes with some unique features, such as integration with Office365 or the option to import career info of a contact from their LinkedIn page. Multi-language (mostly Nordic languages) capability is also a useful feature to have when it comes to the friendliness of the system.

Key Features:

- Market leaders in Nordic countries
- Full student life cycle management
- Synchronization with Office365
- Multi-lingual

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Dream Apply

This system was specifically designed for organizing student admissions. Dream Apply comes with a set of various useful tools, such as reporting, student exchange management and agent management tools. Furthermore, the company offers 24/7 support.

Key features:

- 24/7 support
- Specifically designed for managing student admission
- Convenient reporting
- Student exchange management tools
- Agent management tools

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Maximizer CRM (Student Relate)

Student Relate is a very functional system that has a lot to offer. The integration with Microsoft products such as Word, Excel, Outlook and SharePoint is very convenient for those who have worked with these products before. Also, integrated KnowledgeSync software comes with great tools that optimize workflow automation.

Key features:

- Wizard-driven dashboards, formatted with user choice of indicator style, displaying the key information that matters to user, in real-time
- integration with Microsoft Word®, Excel®, Outlook® and Sharepoint®
- In-depth reporting tools
- Monitor staff performance with Workflow Automation, powered by KnowledgeSync[5]
- Online behaviour tracking to get the ideal message to the best candidates at the right time, with smart online content and activity triggered workflows

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Hobsons (Radius)

Radius by Hobsons is an admissions and enrolment management CRM for higher education that helps institutions make deeper connections with students from enquiry to application and enrolment through graduation. Radius combines robust CRM and application management functionality into one seamless solution to track across the entire student lifecycle. Radius can also be combined with Starfish by Hobsons, the enterprise student success platform that allows you to identify at-risk students, manage academic advising, create comprehensive degree plans, and analyse student outcomes.

Key features:

- Multi-channel communication plans including e-mail, direct mail, live chat, and customized student portal

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[5] http://vineyardsoft.com/

- Track all student touchpoints including marketing campaigns, enquiries, application status, and event registrations
- Customized enquiry and event registration forms with drag and drop functionality
- Robust application management with acceptance of online payments and invoice generation

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Ellucian (Recruiter)[6]

Ellucian's software is built on the Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform. Some of the handy tools that this system has are the ROI calculator and external systems' data import (test scores, purchased names, third party applications).

Key features:

- Built on Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform
- Prospect and funnel management tools
- Return on investment (ROI) calculations on admissions events, campus visits, and other recruiting activities
- Real-time integration of financial aid information
- Import of external systems' data including test scores, purchased names, and third-party applications

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Proretention (Enrollment CRM)[6]

Proretention brings a vast selection of communication modes such as emails, SMS, phone, and social media. The integrated dialler allows users to call the contacts right from the CRM system. Furthermore, a mobile app specifically designed for prospects gives quick access to all the important information about housing, enrolment, etc.

Key features:

- Multi-channel communication modes such as Email, SMS, Phone, Social Media
- Dialler Integration
- Mobile app for prospects
- Vendor management tools
- Intuitive dashboards and reports

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

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[6] A demo of this software could not be arranged, therefore the overview might not be complete

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# Student Recruitment System (SRS) [6]

The company has in-depth knowledge about the Nordic education system and therefore most of its clients are based there. Some of the handy features that this system has to offer are offline access that allows offline data collection and automatic data synchronization once the system is back online and ROI insights of every marketing channel.

Key features:

- Custom-built for the education industry
- Division of incoming information requests per marketing channel
- ROI insights of each marketing channel
- Offline access

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Microsoft Dynamics CRM

Microsoft Dynamics CRM comes as on-premises and as a cloud solution. Even though the system is not education specific, many educational institutions favour this system, often due to the discounts Microsoft offers for non-profit organizations. Another useful thing about this system is the integration with Microsoft office products such as Skype for Business, Outlook, etc. – which is extremely useful for people who have worked with these software packages before.

Key features:

- Comes as both on-premises and cloud solutions
- Discounts for non-profits
- Integration with Office365
- Employee performance tracking tools

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Salesforce [7]

Salesforce is one of the largest cloud computing companies. It is often described as the best CRM system in the current market. This CRM is highly customizable and has a very eye-appealing design. The company offers big discounts for non-profit institutions, though it is not an education specific CRM. One of the most useful things about this software is the ability to purchase additional plug-ins at the App Exchange that offers over 2700 apps.

Key features:

- Discounts for non-profit organizations

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[7] A demo of this software could not be arranged, therefore the overview might not be complete

- Performance measurement via real-time dashboards on any device
- Ability to purchase plug-ins from App Exchange (over 2700 apps available)
- One of the most highly valued American cloud computing companies
- Extremely functional, easily customizable and user-friendly

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Sugar CRM[7]

Sugar CRM comes as an on-premises or a cloud solution. The system is very customizable and user friendly, multi-languages are supported. Additional plug-ins can be purchased in case there is a need.

Key features:

- Comes as both on-premises and cloud solutions
- Multi-lingual
- Ability to purchase additional plug-ins
- Powerful workflow tools
- High level of customization

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Zoho[7]

Zoho has a social CRM feature that allows users to create individual profiles and connect with social media-type groups within CRM. It is highly customizable and works well with Google Apps.

Key features:

- Zoho works seamlessly with Google Apps
- Insightful reports
- Highly customizable
- Create, manage and access individual applications, forms and views
- Social CRM

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# Oracle (Service Cloud)[8]

Oracle's Service Cloud platform has the features that help to manage recruitment process in HEIs. While the system is not education specific, having worked with many educational institutions helped the company to customize their CRM rapidly to meet institutions' requirements. Some of the

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[8] A demo of this software could not be arranged, therefore the overview might not be complete

valuable features of this system are goal alignment and worker performance evaluation tools, targeted multi-channel campaigns, chat, digital content, social media publishing, and many more.

Key features:

- Financials, procurement, and project portfolio management
- Goal alignment and worker performance evaluation
- Targeted multi-channel campaigns, chat, digital content, and social media publishing
- Mobile access

See Appendix 5 for more information about this system.

# 6. Conclusions & Recommendations

From the above analyses and comparison of CRM systems a series of conclusion can be drawn.

1. Findings of the survey revealed that 59% of the respondents do not use a CRM system, while 41% indicated using at least one system. When asked why a CRM system is not being used, 57% of the institutions indicated that the lack of knowledge about CRM systems is the main reason, followed by lack of budget, (43% of HEIs pointing out this reason) and 25% of the institutions indicated both these reasons.

2. However, 36% out of 104 institutions that do not use a CRM system are considering purchasing one.

3. CRM systems are most commonly used for recruitment and admissions with 57% of institutions using the CRM system(s) for both processes.

4. Microsoft Dynamics CRM is used by most HEIs that responded to the survey, with 19 respondents using this CRM, followed by Student Recruitment System with seven and Salesforce with five institutions using these systems, respectively.

5. Smaller institutions tend to use a proprietary CRM system more often than existing standard systems.

6. Most generic systems were not willing to provide an online demo, whereas most education specific system providers were very eager to collaborate and provide a demo.

7. It is impossible to recommend any system in particular, as every system in this report comes with unique functionalities that different institutions might find useful.

8. For institutions looking for CRM software that offers tools to manage every part of the student life cycle, from enquiry to alumni, the following systems may be a good fit:
   - Campus Management (Campus Nexus CRM)
   - Ellucian (Recruiter)
   - Hobsons (Radius)
   - Jenzabar (SEM CRM)
   - Maximizer CRM (Student Relate)
   - Proretention (Enrollment CRM)

- Symplicity (Ascend)
- TargetX

While some of these systems come as a full student life cycle management CRM system as it is, other systems require additional modules to be purchased in order to have access to features that help to manage the parts of the student life cycle other than recruitment.

9.  Institutions that need an on-premises solution should consider the following systems:
    - Campus Management (Campus Nexus CRM)
    - Ellucian (Recruiter)
    - Maximizer CRM (Student Relate)
    - Microsoft Dynamics CRM
    - Oracle
    - Proretention (Enrollment CRM)
    - Sugar CRM

The above systems are also available as a cloud solution. It is important to keep in mind that Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Sugar CRM and Oracle are all generic systems, albeit with experience in the higher education industry.

10. HEIs that are interested in generic solutions and are prepared to invest extra in customization of the system should consider the CRM systems below:
    - Microsoft Dynamics CRM
    - Oracle
    - Salesforce
    - Sugar CRM
    - Zoho

While MS Dynamics CRM, Salesforce, Sugar CRM and Oracle are active in the higher education industry, Zoho does not provide any information regarding its presence in this market.

11. In case an institution is looking for an easy-to-use system that offers  the most important features out-of-the-box and is easy-to-navigate, the following systems should be reviewed:
    - Admittor
    - Azorus
    - Dream Apply
    - Full Fabric

12. UK based institutions looking for a CRM system specific to the British educational system, should have a look at these systems:
    - Data Harvesting (Student CRM)
    - Full Fabric
    - Azorus

While both have clients outside the UK, their expertise in the UK educational system brings advantages to UK institutions.

13. Nordic institutions keen on finding a CRM system that takes into consideration the specifics of the educational system of the Nordic countries, might find the following CRM systems interesting:
    - Mira Network
    - Student Recruitment System

14. If a wide range of features is the deciding factor when choosing a CRM system, the systems below might be a perfect match:
    - Campus Management (Campus Nexus CRM)
    - Data Harvesting (Student CRM)
    - Jenzabar (SEM CRM)
    - Maximizer CRM (StudentRelate)
    - Salesforce
    - Sugar CRM
    - Symplicity (Ascend)
    - TargetX

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# 8. Glossary

**Availability**
Percentage of time a computer system is available for use. Formula: Uptime x 100 ÷ (Uptime + Downtime).

**Cloud-Based**
Technology where the CRM software, CRM tools and the organization's customer data resides in the cloud and is delivered to end-users via the Internet.

**Contact Timelines**
Timeline is a presentation of contacts activity in a chronological order. CRM displays the history of interactions with a given lead or prospect such as Notes, Actions, recorded Emails or other updates with a time-stamp and team member responsible for the change.

**Dialling Capabilities**
The CRM software has an internal telephone dialler that lets you dial from within the program. Extra hardware may be needed in order for it to work properly.

**Doc. Management**
Upload documents, such as motivation letters, and save with individual account.

**Email Integration**
This program works within your email program and is not limited to just Outlook.

**Event Management**
Manage marketing and registrations for an event using a single system; Build custom online registration forms with the data fields you require; Send targeted campaigns to specific student lists; Integrate event locations with Google Maps; Send email reminders.

**File Sharing**
Multiple departments and users can access customer accounts and history.

**Group Calendar**
Community calendar that lists employee tasks.

**Knowledgebase**
Online tutorials and content library to help clients troubleshoot their account and products.

**Offline Access**
The system can be accessed offline in order to collect prospect information in recruitment fairs and the data is synced back to the CRM once it is back online.

**On-Premise**
On-premises software is installed and run on computers on the premises (in the building) of the organization using the software, rather than at a remote facility, such as a server farm or cloud somewhere on the Internet.

**SaaS**              Software as a Service is a software distribution model in which applications are hosted by a vendor or service provider and made available to customers over a network, typically the Internet.

**Social CRM**        Create individual profiles and connect with social media-type groups within CRM.

**User-Friendly**     This score takes into consideration the ease of navigating the software, how easy it is to locate icons and tabs, and the overall look of the application.

**White labelling**   Institutions have permission to rebrand the product to make it appear as if they had made it.

**Workflow Automation** This tool automatically creates and assigns tasks to employees based on predetermined prompts you set within the CRM software.