

UNIT 2

CRM CONCEPTS

CUSTOMER VALUE:

MEANING AND DEFINITIONS

Once the new customers acquired, the organization must estimate the value of its customers.

Customer Value refers to the sum of benefits that an organization promises to customer if he/she purchases the product or service. It may be defined as the sum of advantages that an organization commits to provide to its customers when they purchase a product or avail a service. In terms of CRM, value can be defined as the difference between advantages (benefits) received from a product or service and the sacrifices made to have those advantages. Organizations offering better value to its customers are able to have competitive edge over its competitors. Of course, the customers will prefer the organization that will offer better customer value.

Customer value is directly related to customer satisfaction that a product or service delivers in return to the price charged from a customer. Numerous strategies can be adopted to deliver customer value and the best way is to offer quality products along with excellent customer service. Besides that taking customer feedback, offering solutions to their problems, resolving their queries etc. can further enhance value manifold for organizational customers.

Calculation of Customer Value depends upon costs associated, quality, services, price, demand and availability of product or service. Based on the customer value, the organizations differentiate their products or services from that of competitors. It may be quite challenging for the organization to calculate customer value, as it is a qualitative concept.

$$\text{Value} = \frac{\text{Benefits Received from A Product or Service}}{\text{Costs Associated}}$$

Benefits	Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product benefits• Services benefits• Personal benefits• Image benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monetary cost• Time cost• Energy cost• Psychological cost

$$\text{Total Value} = \text{Value from Products} + \text{Value from Services} + \text{Value from Processes} + \text{Value from People} + \text{Value from Physical Evidences} + \text{Value from Communication} + \text{Value form Channels}$$

Following definitions would further define the term 'Customer Value' in precise terms:

In the words of Mohanbir Sawhney, "Customer value is the perceived worth of the set of benefits received by a customer in exchange for the total cost of the offering, taking into consideration available competitive offerings and pricings."

Woodruff defines customer value as, "Customer's perceived preference for an evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances and consequences arising from use that facilitate achieving the customer's goals and purposes in use situations."

From the above definitions following crucial points can be summed up:

- Organizations can differentiate themselves from competitors by offering better customer value.
- Focus can be diverted to the acquisition and retention of the most valuable customers.
- Organizations must understand customer requirements and offer the product accordingly to create value.

- It is quite challenging task for an organization to offer desired value to customer and maintaining long term relationships.
- Organizations must know and understand the difference between desired and real value.
- Employees must be involved for contributing to customer value.

SOURCES OF CREATING CUSTOMER VALUE

Organizations promise to deliver value in terms of product advantages to their customers through a business statement, known as Customer Value Proposition (CVP). Organizations can create value via different sources such as:

Sources of Value	
Value from Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product Innovation • Product Service Bundling • Product Branding
Value from Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Quality • Service Guarantees • Service Recovery
Value from Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Innovation • Process Improvements
Value from People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Services to Customers • Interactions with Skilled Staff
Value from Physical Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangible Facilities, Equipments, Materials • Websites, Computers • Uniforms
Value from Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising, Sales Promotion, Publicity, Personal Selling, Public Relations • Blogs, Chat Rooms, Web Forms, e-mails
Value from Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholesalers • Retailers • Websites

To be very precise, value can be generated from following components:

1. **Operational Excellence:** Excellence in operations is the most widely used strategy for creating customer value. Operational excellence is a philosophy of making continuous improvements in the organizational operations/processes by focusing on the customers needs and expectations.
2. **Product Leadership:** Offering quality products and services is another most accepted way of creating and delivering customer value. This requires continuous research and development, product innovation and customer feedback collection.
3. **Customer Intimacy:** Understanding and fulfilling customer requirements is a creative source of delivering customer value. Organizations have to conduct in-depth market analysis to know and understand what customer wants. Effective customer interactions can help in collecting data.
4. **Service:** Organizations can create value by delivering excellent customer service via help desks, service centers, customer care numbers etc.

CUSTOMER VALUE MODELLING (CVM) AND PROPOSITION (CVP)

Value creation process includes:

- Defining the value
- Developing the value
- Delivering the value

Value Modelling involves predicting the value of organizational customers over a given time period. It deals with the value of customer's other features like ability to bring in more profitable customers or potential to be a more profitable customer. Customer Value Model includes estimation of customer costs, customer revenue, risk and attrition to drive a value for each customer. Value Modelling is only as accurate as the customer's data is rich.

In other words, customer value model is a data driven representation of the worth, in monetary terms, of what a company is doing or could do for its customers. This model is a tool, where the choice of a given product, service or offering is based primarily upon the amount of customer value created.

Following are the key points in Value Modelling:

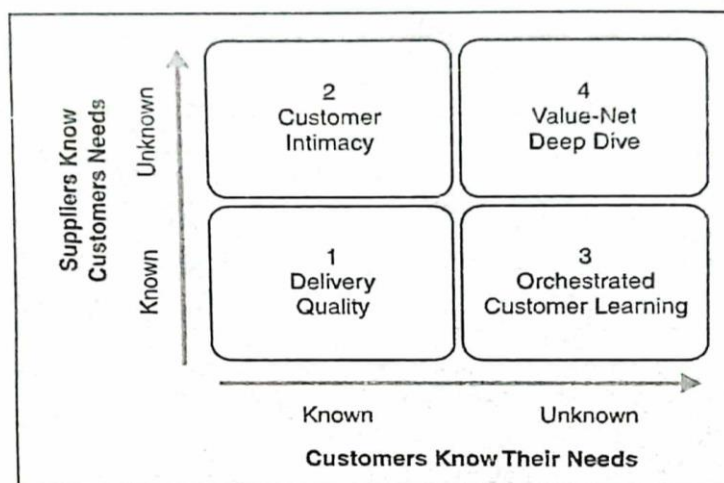
- CVM is the quantified statement of value and benefits for a customer.
- Product features and capabilities are also transformed into dollars.
- There are multiple methods and approaches used to create customer value models. These approaches depend upon substantial customer interaction and onsite interviews and observations of customers' challenges related to products and services.

Customer Value Proposition is widely used in contemporary business organizations. It may be defined as a business statement that describes why a customer should purchase a specific product. It is the summary of advantages that a customer would experience after purchasing and using organizational product. It is a crucial tool that an organization publicizes to know how its product would be valued by its customers. CVP should describe the key aspects of product and must be revised from time to time.

CUSTOMER VALUE FRAMEWORK (CVF)

Customer value framework involves the identification of customer requirements for creating value, so that customers can be retained for long. It is necessary for an organization to know customer requirements by conducting surveys. CVF is based on two key dimensions of Customer and Supplier Organization, which are:

- (i) How well customers know what they want
- (ii) How well supplier know what customer wants



Four scenarios of Customer Value Framework are as follows:

1. Delivery Quality: This box represents the clarity of needs to customer as well as the organization. Here the focus is on delivering the quality. The key needs of customers are well understood by both parties. Customer value is measured and reflected in delivery quality, making the service efficient,

robust and timely. Here, the customer value can be enhanced by building a congenial relationship with the customer through all customer touch points. Here, unique experience is created for customers.

2. Customer Intimacy: This box depicts that customer needs are unknown to the organization. Supplier must discover what the customer needs by customer intimacy i.e. getting to know customer better. Customers' needs must be observed, examined and recognized through trust and confidence. Needs must be captured through multiple interactions and touch points.

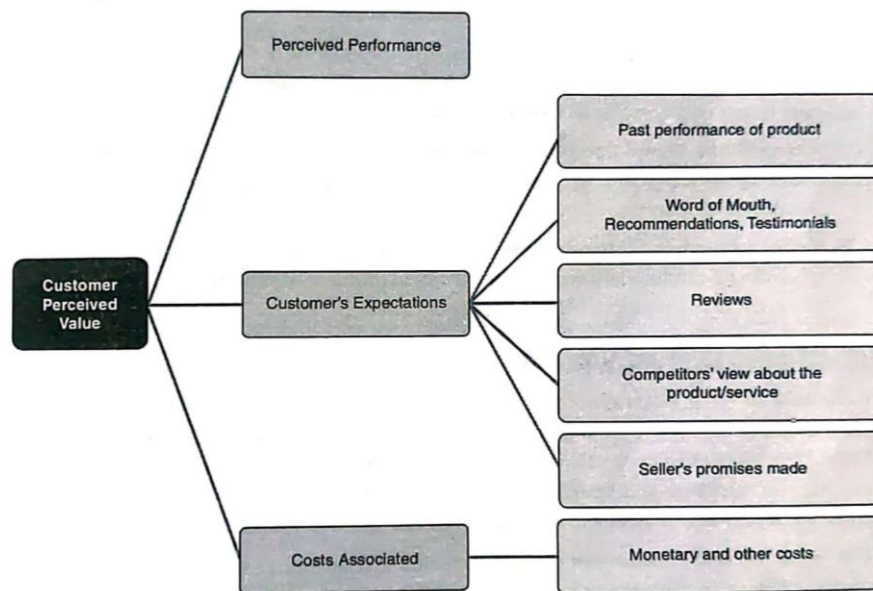
3. Orchestrated Customer Learning: Customer is made aware about the solutions that organization knows through informative workshops, interactions, experiences, discussions etc. Supplier has to make the customer learn through Orchestrated customer learning. Customer's hidden needs are revealed and they are convinced/guided through diplomatic skills of the supplier.

4. Value Net Deep Drive: Here, both parties don't know needs and maximum synergy and value can be co-created. Net deep drive is a model of creating and discovering value. Parties may not know needs due to ignorance.

CUSTOMER'S PERCEIVED VALUE (CPV)

Customers' perceptions are the beliefs shaped by the consumers regarding a product. Customer Perceived Value is the value that a customer perceives about a product or service based on his expectations and perception regarding its performance and all the costs of an offering. CPV is based on the difference between what customer expects to get and what he/she expects to pay. Customer satisfaction depends upon the customers' expectations prior to purchase or use a product/service and customer's relative perception of the performance of that product after using it.

Customer's Perceived Value (Perceived Performance + Customer's Expectations) - Total costs incurred on purchase



CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

Customer expectations relate to how a consumer anticipates the product to perform. The customers may have variety of expectations regarding the value a product/service will offer. Expectations are crucial, as actual results are compared with the expected performance.

Expectations include:

- Expectations about the cost
- Expectations about the nature of product

- Efforts in obtaining benefits
- Expectations of social values
- Emotional expectations

Customer expectations are shaped due to various determinants such as:

1. **Past Performance:** When the consumer has already used/availed the product or service, his expectations are shaped according to the experience he got from the previous purchase.
2. **Word of Mouth:** Consumers may get feedback about the product or service from their peer groups, friends or any other associates, who have already used the same product. Positive feedback increases the level of customer expectations.
3. **Reviews:** The reviews related to a particular product or service can be seen from social networking sites, magazines or other publications of consumer associations. These reviews also have a major impact on customer expectations.
4. **Competitor's Views:** Competitors' view about the product is a very informative source to know about a product, as it provides a critical idea about the working and utility of a product or service.
5. **Seller's Promise:** Customer expectations are also shaped by the claims made by seller regarding a product/service. If the seller doesn't fulfill the promises made, a consumer can file a suit in the appropriate forum or commission.

CUSTOMER LIFETIME VALUE (CLV)

Customers are the greatest assets for any business, as they are the reason of firm's existence. The current customers, who are loyal and will remain future customers as well, are the most important ones. Organizations utilize the customers' information to maximize their lifetime value. CLV offers a lifetime view of customer and gives a clear idea about whom company is targeting. To be very specific, CLV depicts how much each customer is worth in monetary terms.

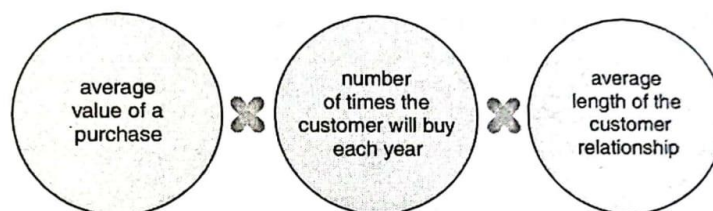
CLV is the marketing metric that projects the value of a customer over the entire history of that customer's relationship with the organization. It is the current value of likely future income flow generated by an individual customer. In simple terms, CLV is the present value of future profits.

According to Wikipedia, "Customer Lifetime Value is the prediction of net profit attributed to the entire future relationship with a customer."

Another definition states that CLV is the net present value of total profits that a company could realise with the average new customer within a given customer segment during a given number of years. It is the true value of a customer that can be considered as the most appropriate measurement of how much an organization would/should be willing to invest to acquire or retain that customer. For an organization, a profitable customer is the one that overtime will fetch a revenue that exceeds by an expected amount of organizational costs (in terms of attracting, selling, servicing and retaining the customer over time). Such customers recommend the organizational offering to their friends, relatives and others and have higher CLV.

$$\text{Customer Lifetime Value} = \text{Margin} \times \frac{\text{Retention Rate}}{1 + \text{Discount Rate} - \text{Retention Rate}}$$

Or



Objectives of CLV

Customer lifetime value is not just a number, but a way of thinking and doing business. This concept is applied with the following objectives:

- The concept of CLV transforms a business' perspective to a great extent, as organization can estimate the current value of all of its customers.
- It helps in analyzing the customer's behavior, which further assists in maximizing organizational profits.
- Organization can identify the customers with greatest potential (highest CLV) over time.
- By calculating the current value of customers, organizations can segment them in different categories on the basis of their lifetime values and can target the customer with higher CLV. It helps the organization to concentrate on more profitable customers.
- Different marketing strategies can be envisaged for different customers segmented on CLV criteria e.g. any complaints made by the customers with more CLV can be solved at a faster pace as compared to others.
- Special strategies can be designed for customers with less profitability, so that they get converted into more loyal and more profitable customers.
- Organizational resources can be allocated on the criteria of customer lifetime value.
- CLV also assists in retaining the existing customers. As it has been researched that acquiring a new customer costs a lot more than retaining the existing ones, therefore, it is advisable to get their feedback and know their satisfaction level. Satisfied customers will be more loyal, they will buy more and would be less sensitive to competitive offerings.

Customer lifetime value can be increased by increasing profits generated from those customers.

Following strategies can be used for enhancing CLV:

- Reducing the rates of customer defection
- Delivering them personalized services
- Upsell or Cross sell to the same customer
- Motivating existing customer to buy more and buy only from the same organization
- Making the customer satisfied, so that he/she recommends the organizational offering to his/her friends, family, neighbors and others, which will further increase their lifetime value

Challenges in Calculating CLV

CLV is an abstract concept as it measures how much each customer has a worth in monetary terms and how much the organization should be willing to spend to acquire each customer. This calculation would depend upon the nature of customer relationship programme. Therefore, there can be challenges such as:

- **New Organization:** Calculating the customer worth may be a huge challenge for newly established organizations, as they don't have any past data which can show the customer value.
- **Lost Customers:** There may be some customers who were loyal, but due to certain conditions they got disconnected from the organizations. The challenge would be whether to include them in analysis or not.
- **Selection of Formula:** There may be various formulae to reach at CLV. Whether to include certain components or not can be an issue e.g. value of referrals to be included or not, whether to include gross revenue or net revenue, will there be a need for customer segmentation or not etc.
- **Unavailability of Data:** Data may be insufficient or unsuitable for the calculation of accurate CLV.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Customers purchase various products and services from an organization. Experience is the total impression that he/she gets after having exposure to products, services, people, processes and other organizational aspects. It is the combined experience that a customer perceives about organization's offerings and processes. Experience largely depends upon the products attributes delivered to a

customer. In simpler terms, Customer experience is the overall impact that a customer has from all interactions with an organization.

Positive experiences lead to satisfaction which in turn results in customer loyalty towards an organization. Customer experience is indispensable component of CRM, an organization must focus on delivering high level of customer experience. Positive experience can be given by various ways such as:

- Offering effective customer interactions
- Giving quality goods and services
- Having differentiated offerings for that of competitors

3D Approach of Customer Experience

To deliver effective experience to customers, organizations make use of 3D approach:

1. Designing: The organization must have primary focus on designing the right offer for its customers. The product that has to be delivered to customers must be right in terms of quality, quantity, price, service, safety etc.
2. Delivering: Delivering value to the customers must be at the priority list at every stage of product design. Value must be enhanced by offering various customer advantages such as after sale services, easy installments, feedback, excellent customer support etc.
3. Developing: Organizations must consider the aspect of developing its own potential, which means continuous improvements must be done in the products and services. Standards must be designed as benchmarks and customer feedback should be welcomed to transform offerings.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT (CEM)

Managing the customer experiences is very vital for any organization irrespective of its size and nature. CEM has emerged as a domain of CRM, which deals with managing every customer interaction optimally that he/she has with the organization. It includes collection of processes used by an organization to record, analyze, and organize every experience of customer.

Aspects of CEM

Customer experience Management includes three crucial aspects:

1. Touch Points: These are the points when a customer comes into contact with the organization through its products, services, people, processes, places, channels, communications etc. It must be ensured that customer has similar experience at all touch points
2. Moments of Truth: There are certain special moments or events that create a deep impression about the organization in the mind of a customer. The moment of truth occurs when a customer interacts with the organization through touch points. It is experience in moment of truth that shapes the direction of customer's opinion about the organization
3. Engagement: Engagement with the customer at crucial times helps in developing a long term connect. Intimacy with customers, listening to their complaints, offering them solutions is must to offer unforgettable experience.

METHODS OF KNOWING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Organizations make use of numerous methods to know what experience a customer has got from offerings, which have been discussed here:

1. Mystery Shopping: In this method, organizations hire some individuals who behave like customers. They observe the actual customers and record their shopping experience with the organization. Mystery shopping is a tool used in marketing research to understand the experience of customers. The hired individuals may be asked to make audio or video recordings of actual customers, so that organizational officials can analyze them later and work on delivering better customer experience in the future.

2. **Process Mapping:** This method deals with the graphic presentation of processes to be performed for developing better customer service. Organizational experts refine the process of excellent service and a graphical presentation of the same is designed to offer a better understanding.

3. **Experience Mapping:** It is a method under which organization makes use of sophisticated tools to have in-depth understanding of customer experience and customer touch points. Generally used methods to learn about customer experience include:

- Focus group method
- Executive meetings
- Interviews
- Telephonic interviews

Once the customer experience is understood, organization finds ways to know the gap between actual customer experience and desired customer experience. And then strategies for closing these gaps are envisaged.

4. **Observation Method:** Organizational staff directly or indirectly interacts with customers to know their experience with products and services

5. **Customer Activity Cycle:** Customer undergoes various stages while taking a purchase decision such as information search, analysis of options, making purchase decision, post purchase reaction. In this method, organizations record customer experience at every stage of customer activity cycle and work on the methods to further improve this experience at every stage.

IMPROVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

1. **Regular Communication:** To enrich the customers' experience, organizations must communicate with their customers on regular basis. Communications can be made via SMS, emails, annual reports, advertisements, brochures etc.

2. **Unique Product Features:** The best way to enhance customer experience is by giving them the product, which offers unique features and is better than the competitors in clear terms. Variations can be introduced in product size, product shape, quality, quantity, packing, distribution strategies, product availability etc.

3. **After Sale Service:** By adding the feature of unique services, organizations can enhance customers' experience manifold. Listening to their complaints, offering them reasonable solutions, making the company representatives available, assisting in installation and replacement etc. all these services can create an emotional connect between the customers and organization.

4. **Customer Centric Training:** Besides, product features and services, customer experience is largely influenced by the way a customer is dealt by the service provider/representative. The quality of sales representatives, how they greet the customers and their behavior have a deep impact on the customer experience.

5. **Electronic Media:** Organizations must make use of internet and other technological advancements to improve customer experience.

Electronic media can assist in discharging many responsibilities, such as:

- Promotion of the products and services worldwide
- Virtual view of offerings
- Easy payment terms
- Saving in time and effort
- Attractive organizational profile display
- All these strategies assist in enhanced customer experience

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:

MEANING AND DEFINITIONS

The organizations need to know the level of satisfaction they are offering to their consumers.

Measuring customer satisfaction provides an indication regarding how successful the organization is at providing products and/or services according to the needs of customers.

The following are some of the widely accepted definitions of the term 'Customer Satisfaction':

According to Accounting Dictionary, "Customer Satisfaction indicates the fulfillment that customers derive from doing business with a firm. In other words, it is how happy the customers are with the transaction and overall experience with the company."

According to Paul Farris the number of customers or the percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with the firm's products and its services exceeds specified satisfaction goals. In the words of Philip Kotler, Customer Satisfaction is a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment which resulted from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome against his/her expectations.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

1. Individual Focus: Customer satisfaction is measured at the individual level, but it is always reported at an aggregate level. It is measured along various dimensions.
2. Subjective: The state of satisfaction depends on a number of psychological and physical factors which becomes evident with the behaviors such as return and recommendation to others. It will vary from person to person and from product (service) to product (service).
3. Abstract: Customer satisfaction is an abstract concept which varies from customer to customer, but businessmen can assign numbers to it. Customer satisfaction may be defined as the number of customers or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products or its services exceeds specified satisfaction goals.
4. Goal Oriented: The level of satisfaction depends upon the satisfaction goals set by consumers. They judge a product on a set of norms and attributes. Customers may set any goals or expectations for themselves before they buy any product. These goals will vary among different products and services and among different customers.
5. Indicator of Loyalty: Customer satisfaction is a key indicator of customer's future purchase intentions and loyalty.
6. Measure of Organizational Success: Customer Satisfaction is a measure of how far products and services sold by a company meet the customer expectations. It is a key term used in managing and monitoring a business. Therefore, a company should continually seek to get true customer feedback to assess consumer satisfaction.
7. Time Period: In some products, customer satisfaction may be created over time e.g. in case of durables. Customer satisfaction can evolve over time, as a product is used or service is availed many times.

MODEL OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Following concepts design a model of customer satisfaction:

1. Customer's Perceived Value (CPV): It is the value that a customer perceives about a product or service based on his expectations and perception regarding its performance and all the costs of an offering. CPV is based on the difference between what customer expects to get and what he/she expects to pay.

Customer's Perceived Value = (Perceived Performance + Customer's Expectations) - Total costs incurred on purchase

Therefore, the determinants of Customer Satisfaction are:

(i) Perceived Performance: Customers may have different types of perceptions/opinions about the product such as:

- Ideal: The product or service may prove to be an ideal alternative for satisfying a specific consumer need.

- Expected: The product or service may perform as expected by the consumer for a satisfying a specific need
- Minimum tolerable: The product or service may atleast satisfy the basic need for which it had been bought.
- Desirable: The product may be desirable for consumers to a certain extent.

(ii) Customers' Expectations about the Product: Customer expectations relate to how a consumer anticipates the product to perform(refer to topic Customer Expectation in chapter 3).

(iii) Total Customer Cost: It is the perceived bundle of costs that customers expect to incur in evaluating, using and disposing of the product/service. It includes various costs such as monetary costs, time cost, energy cost and psychological costs. In simple terms, customers' perceptions are the beliefs shaped by the consumers regarding a product.

2. Product Purchase: On the basis of perceived value, customer takes a decision to buy a product or avail a service.

3. Outcomes: Purchase decision of the customers leads them towards certain outcomes. These outcomes or results can be known by taking feedback from the customers. It would help the seller in knowing the level of customer satisfaction. In addition to obtaining spontaneous feedback, listening to the voice of the customer is essential. The feedback on outcomes can be taken through the following ways on a valid and reliable scale:

- Interviewing the customers
- Observing the customers in store
- Sending them questionnaires
- Telephonic interviews
- Telling them to rate the organization

4. Customer Satisfaction vs Dissatisfaction: The feedback would reveal whether the customer is satisfied or dissatisfied with the purchase decision, which will shape his/her future purchase decisions.

(a) Customer Satisfaction: Customer satisfaction is a leading indicator of purchase intentions and customer loyalty. Satisfaction may lie in any of the following levels:

- Satisfaction: It is the level of satisfaction where the product attributes are sufficient enough to satisfy an expectation.
- Customer Delight: It is the level of satisfaction that goes above and beyond customer expectation to satisfy a desire. In terms of market research, a satisfied customer's contentment lies somewhere between their expectations and the desired results. A delighted customer, however, will feel that the desired results have not only been met, but also exceeded.
- Loyalty: The product or service has satisfied the customers so much that they will prefer the organization's product over any competitor.

(b) Customer Dissatisfaction: Dissatisfied customers may file complaints against the company or its products in legal courts/forums. Some may also choose to handle the complaint privately

METHODS OF MEASURING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

1. Survey Mails: Survey mailing is the primary method used by organizations to measure the customer satisfaction. Customers are mailed certain messages to check the level of their satisfaction such as sending emojis to see their reactions or asking them to rate their experience on 5 point scale.

2. Questionnaire Method: Detailed questionnaires are designed which are personalized according to individual customers or customer segments. Customers answer the questions and their satisfaction is measured by quantifying their responses.

3. Customer Reviews: Customers post their reviews on company websites related to their experience. These responses are recorded in customer data base through their profiles. These reviews are collected and analyzed by the organizations. Some organizations (e.g. Airtel) ask customers to share the 'happy code' after satisfactory service is received.

4. Tracking Customers: It deals with keeping the track on customer actions e.g. whether the customer purchases the organizational product again or shifts to the competitors' products. It clearly shows the satisfaction of customers from organizational dealings.

5. Pop Up Surveys: E-businesses make use of pop-up surveys to know various aspects such as:

- From where customers got information about organization's web site?
- What attracted them to revisit the web site?
- What made them take a decision to purchase or not purchase the product/service?
- What they feel about connecting the company for long?

WAYS TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

1. Customer Focus: The customer must be at the focus in every stage of sale and distribution. Right from planning about the design of the product, deciding the 4 Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion), till the full commercialization of the product, customer needs must be kept in mind.

2. Handling Grievances: Customers' grievances must be handled economically and in a speedy manner. Complaints must be sought out at priority and view point of customers must be heard to improve their satisfaction level.

3. Regular Feedback: Customer feedback plays a crucial role in improving their satisfaction level. Feedback can be taken by interviewing the customers or by observing them buying at the company store.

4. Keep Promises: The customers must be delivered what and when has been promised. The quality and quantity of products/services must be the same on which contract has been created. The delivery should be made in time and in manner specified by the customers.

5. Understanding Specific Needs: Every customer is crucial, and can lead to new business by his positive word of mouth. Therefore, the needs of each one of them must be known and well met. Some customers may have specific needs, which the company must understand and fulfill.

CUSTOMER ACQUISITION: MEANING

A customer is like an 'Opportunity of Business' for the organization. Managing present and potential customers is one of the most crucial factors to run a business successfully. The use of CRM is not only for the existing customers but is also beneficial in acquiring new customers. The term 'Customer Acquisition' refers to the process of finding, qualifying and securing new clients/ customers. It is a process of locating the prospects, attracting them and converting them into actual customers.

Customer Acquisition involves various steps and measures taken by an organization to acquire or gain customers. It is the process of acquiring new customers/clients for an organization or converting prospects into actual customers. Organizations must adopt a systematic and sustainable Customer Acquisition strategy to tap suitable leads. They need to know and understand Customers' needs and expectations and offer products/services accordingly. Defining and offering maximum customer value assists in acquiring potential customers and retaining existing ones.

MEANING OF A NEW CUSTOMER

Customers are the individuals or groups who purchase the organization's products or services. But when a customer purchases the organization's product for the first time, that customer is known as a 'New Customer' for the organization. Therefore, a new customer is the one who has never made any order to the same organization earlier. A new customer is the one who belongs to any one of the following categories:

(i) Customer New to the Organization: This category includes the prospects who never dealt with the organization and are entirely new to it. These customers might be purchasing the similar product/services earlier from competitors. These customers may not be loyal as they may switch to other organizations if they get better offers. Organizations have to invest on rigorous promotion and communication tools if they want to attract these new customers.

(ii) Customer New to A Product Category: Some customers buy the organization's products but it may be their first experience for a new product category. Therefore, these customers are existing customers for the organization but would be called a 'New Customer' for a specific product category. Demand for new product category arise because customers may identify a new need or they opt for finding new solution to the existing need. For example, a customer is already using Xiaomi mobile phones but is going to buy Mi laptop for the first time.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMER ACQUISITION

Customer Acquisition involves identifying processes and procedures to find, identify and win new customers. Acquiring new customers is a need of all organizations irrespective of their size and nature. Following are certain characteristics of New Customer acquisition:

- It requires a systematic approach to acquire new customers by the sellers.
- Acquisition is a continuous process.
- Process of customer acquisition is more challenging and expensive as compared to retaining an existing customer.
- New customer is an added source of revenue for an organization.
- For making the process of customer acquisition successful, the organization must focus on the needs and expectations of the prospects. A good rapport must be established with customers.

METHODS OF NEW CUSTOMERS ACQUISITION

1 Advertising:

In this ad world, advertising is advocacy. In the words of Britannica Encyclopedia, 'advertising is a form of communication intended to promote the sale of the product or service to influence public opinion, gain political support or to advance a particular product. According to American Marketing Association "Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor." Advertising is one of the widely used methods to attract new customers, which are geographically spread. It leaves long term impression in the minds of existing and potential customers.

FEATURES OF ADVERTISING

Advertising reaches the prospects faster than any other method. It has the following features:

- Mass Communication Process: Organizations use advertising to communicate the message to the large target audience. Advertisements reach masses in no time. It has been researched that within a fraction of minute, or few seconds, a manufacturer can draw attention of 850 million people on national network advertising program.
- Informative: Every advertisement is a piece of information to the listeners, readers and potential customers. An effective advertisement announces the arrival of a new product to existing customers or same products/services to new customers. It also talks about special features and explains the best use of the products/services. Therefore, advertising helps the hesitant and undecided prospects to make the final decision to buy or not.
- Persuasive: Persuasion is the power of advertising. Advertising, by its very nature, is influential. Major function of advertising is to convince the potential buyers. A logical process of persuasion known as A-I-D-A (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) formula is followed in advertising.
- Competitive: Advertising is a successful strategy in today's world of competition. There are numerous organizations offering similar products and services. Advertising assists them in pushing their products to new customers and fetching profits through customer satisfaction.
- Paid Form: Advertising is a paid form of promotion. If it is not paid for, it may be publicity, or propaganda or rumor. Advertising as an act of persuasion is deliberate and planned one. Cost involved in advertisement is generally very high but cost per exposure come out to be quite reasonable.

- Identified Sponsor. Every advertisement is sponsored by a manufacturer or dealers on behalf of manufacturers and the identity of sponsor is always known. The advertisers don't hide their existence and build their corporate image.
- Image: Customers take advertised products positively. It builds brand image of an organization and its products in the eyes of prospective customers. It helps the organization to attain competitive advantage through higher sales and profit image.
- Impersonal: In the words of Philip Kotler "advertising is an impersonal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor".
- One Way Communication: Advertising is a form of one-way promotion. The content is advertised via various advertising media and customer's feedback can't be taken on the spot. However, the effect of advertising can be noticed through increased level of consumer awareness, changing attitudes and opinions or trend of product sales.

ROLE OF ADVERTISING

Advertising, as a powerful technique of promotion has been doing wonders in the domain of tapping widespread customers. Ads are quite capable of influencing the course of consumption, process of production, enlarging the exchange and diversifying the distribution. Role of advertising can be seen under following points:

- Advertising updates the target market (potential and actual customers) about new products.
- It maintains the existing customer market and helps in exploring new ones.
- It assists the customers to know about new uses of an existing product.
- It controls product price and also informs the customers about any changes in price.
- The ultimate aim of advertising is to satisfy the needs of consumers by transferring the benefits of productive efficiency to the final users.
- It reminds the potential customers about the product again and again.
- It acts as a silent salesman who guides potential consumers.
- It creates a colorful background to attract the potential customers. Sometimes the attractive functions of product are also made part of advertisements.
- Advertising reduces fear in the minds of potential customers. It instills confidence and initiative. It also rectifies the false impressions in the minds of customers.
- It acts as driving force in decision making for potential customers. It reduces the confusions and assists the customer to switch over to the desired brand.
- Advertising ensures better quality products at reasonable prices. It also facilitates retail price maintenance.
- It saves good deal of time for consumers. Customers are made aware about the place where they can buy the products.

2 Sales Promotion:

Promotion has been defined as "any identifiable effort on the part of the seller to persuade potential buyers to accept the seller's information and store it in retrievable form". Sales Promotion tools tend to stimulate new attitudes towards the promoted product or service through the lure of getting something for nothing.

According to Philip Kotler, "Sales promotion refers to a variety of short-term incentives to encourage trial or purchase of a product or service."

According to AMA, Sales Promotion includes, "marketing activities other than personal selling, advertising and publicity that stimulate consumer purchasing and dealer effectiveness such as display, shows and exhibitions, demonstrations and various non-recurrent selling effort in the ordinary routine."

In the words of W.J. Stanton, "Sales Promotion includes all the promotional activities (other than advertising, personal selling and publicity) that are intended to stimulate customer's demand and to improve middlemen's marketing performance".

Organizations use various sales promotional tools such as contests, premiums, coupon draw, free samples etc. The aim of these short-term incentives is to boost up the sales and inspire the customers to respond.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SALES PROMOTION

1. Irregular and Non-Recurring Activity: Sales promotion is an irregular and non-recurring activity to improve the sales volume of the firm. It does not involve the routine marketing activities like advertising, personal salesmanship and publicity. It is occasionally used by the company in certain specific conditions like fall of demand, decline in profits, stiff competition in the market or to introduce the new product. New customers can be acquired easily with these sales promotional activities.
2. Scope: Sales promotion plays a supportive role to promote the product. It is supplementary activity to advertising and personal selling.
3. Motivation: The basic object of sales promotion is to motivate the new customers to opt for organizational offer. Sales promotion offers attract the attention of potential buyers.
4. Variety of Tools: Sales promotion includes various tools to bring the customers at the point of sale such as the display, shows and exhibitions, demonstrations, price-off, free samples, coupons, premiums and prizes etc.
5. Speedy Response: Sales promotion tools are meant to stimulate speedy response.
6. Objectives: The prime objective of sales promotion is to bridge the gap between advertising and personal salesmanship. It helps to establish a better coordination between these two wings of promotion.
7. Short-Period Effect: It is a technique which has a short period effect on the buyers. But it is an objective oriented technique to get increased sales during that short time period.
8. Personal and Impersonal Nature: Sales promotion includes both personal and impersonal activities. Personal activities include premium, samples, demonstration, training, repairing etc. On the other hand, impersonal tools include sales contests, trade fairs and exhibitions.

ROLE OF SALES PROMOTION

Sales promotion activities are undertaken to achieve the following objectives:

- Sales promotion helps in gaining attention of new customers by communicating variety of short-term incentives such as free samples and discounts.
- New customers are motivated to switch over to the organizational products rather than using competitor's products.
- Sales promotion tools are most often used to induce the existing customers of a firm to buy more e.g. offering three products at the cost of two.
- Products having seasonal demand may be sold through promotions to stabilize their demand throughout the year.
- A promotion can be a way to reach a new segment of the market.
- Sales promotion can help in introducing a new product to the marketplace.
- Promotional incentives tie the buyer to a seller. Retailers can encourage stores loyalty through special sales offers.
- It is through the sales promotion that the consumers get number of incentives- both cash and non-cash.
- It build brand loyalty.

3. Public Relations (PR):

In the words of Philip Kotler, "Public relations refers to the variety of programs designed to promote or protect an organization's image or its individual products." Public relation is an efficient tool in building awareness regarding organization's products/services among public by generating stories in media. Once the story is in circulation, PR can establish credibility and create a sense of enigma among sales people as well as dealers to boost enthusiasm. It is much more cost-effective tool than other promotional activities.

FEATURES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations has the following characteristics:

- (i) Non-Personal Communication: Public relations is a non-personal communication technique that promotes organization's image in the eyes of public.

(ii) Non-paid: This is a non-paid form of promotion. Generally, this promotion is in the form of news or journalistic comments regarding an organizational product or service.

(iii) Directed at Large Number: This technique is meant to reach out to a great extent of people. i.e. public. Public relation reaches a large number of prospects.

(iv) Image Building: Public relations assists the organization in building strong image by building good relations with public through favorable publicity. It also helps in handling unfavorable gossips, stories and rumors.

(v) Dramatization: Public relations presents a specific pre-designed image of a company or product in the market.

ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Public Relation plays the following roles for an organization:
- It reaches large number of customers that may not be connected with advertising and public relations.
- Public relations is an authentic way of promotion. Customers take this promotion method to be more authentic and credible, as information travels via news, stories etc.
- It is a powerful tool to portray the image of an organization and its products/services positively.

4 Personal Selling:

According to J. R. Evans and B. Berman, "Personal selling is the part of promotion that involves an oral presentation in a conversation with one or more prospective buyers for the purpose of making a sale." In the words of E.G. Belch and A.M. Belch, "Personal selling is a form of person -to-person communication in which a seller attempts to assist and/or persuade prospective buyers to purchase the company's product or service."

FEATURES OF PERSONAL SELLING

It has the following features:

(i) Two-Way Communication: Personal selling involves two-way communication. It encompasses face-to-face interaction in which sales person representing a company tries to persuade the potential buyer to buy. The potential buyer puts forth his queries, clarifications and views regarding the product or service.

(ii) Process: Personal selling is a process of interaction, persuasion, exchange, negotiation between salesperson and prospect. It involves series of steps from identifying the prospective buyer, understanding his needs, communicating with him, providing information in pre-sale phase, follow up, after sale services and building relationships.

(iii) Promotional Technique: Personal selling is one of the promotional techniques used by the organizations to increase their customer base. It is a promotional method like advertising, sales promotion and public relations.

(iv) Success: The success of personal selling largely depends upon the qualities of a sales person who represents the company. Salesperson uses his experience and skills for engaging buyer in an exchange from where both will derive value.

(v) Positive Process: Process of personal selling is positive in nature. It is not a manipulation technique, as salesperson can't pressurize the prospect to buy. He can only encourage, stimulate, persuade and influence the prospective buyer.

(vi) Wider Application: In the era of information technology, personal selling is done through telephones, video conferencing and internet. Therefore, buyers all around the world can be tapped.

ROLE OF PERSONAL SELLING

- Personal selling focuses on personal interaction with the customers. They are provided first hand information about the product being offered.
- There is an interactive dialogue between both parties. Both can see each other's reactions and can collect right feedback.
- Personal selling offers instant information about a product or service to the prospective buyers. Salesmen describe the prospect about attributes, features, benefits, and values from the deal.

- Salespersons answer queries of prospective customers and clarify their doubts. Therefore, it assists the prospective buyers in taking buying decision. Personal selling creates and increases awareness, desire, and interest of potential buyer.
- It focuses on building long term cordial relations with the buyers, so that they talk positive about the organization.
- Building and sustaining long term relations with the customers is another objective of personal selling.

5. Events and Experiences:

According to Marketing Guru (Philip Kotler), "events are defined as the occurrences designed to communicate particular messages to target audience." Events and experiences leave long lasting impression in the minds of audiences. Organizing a perfectly synchronized, well planned, well conducted and memorable event results in attracting new prospects towards the organization and its products. Successful events and experiences involve the following:

- The organizers must conduct in depth study of the subject matter of event e.g. brand in case of corporate events.
- The event must be directed on the audiences. Event managers must collect information about the target audiences.
- There must be strong event concept and theme.
- The planning and coordination are crucial for successful events.
- When a fool proof plan is ready, then only the event should be launched

FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS OF EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES

Events are planned with due care, as they carry some unique characteristics. The organizations must know and understand these characteristics, as they are always expected to do everything right in events. Events generally exhibit the following characteristics:

- Unique: Every event is unique in itself and is remembered by the host forever.
- Expensive: Events are generally expensive to stage. From planning to execution phase, events involve commitment of funds, people, and time etc. It is very important to analyze the feasibility of events in initial stages, as the outcomes should outweigh the investments made.
- Intangible: Like the services, events are intangible, which means that the events can be seen, and even experienced, but can't be touched.
- Perishability: Events have to be conducted only at specific times. Once that special time has passed, the event may lose its importance e.g. the day of 50th marriage anniversary.
- Personal Interactions: The actions and reactions of the participants are critical aspects of the event. The people participating in the event interact with each other and directly with the organizational representatives. If the prospective customers, for whom event is designed, do not enjoy it, the event is considered a flop or a failure.
- Real Time Experience: Events provide real time experience to the customers. The event is to be conducted completely at one place. Different facilities are organized under one roof for the convenience and active participation of audiences.

To make the events successful, the organization must come up with creative ideas and manage the flow of event optimally. Effective events promote the product and help in indirect selling.

6. Direct Marketing:

The promotion and communication established through a direct channel without using any intermediaries is referred to as direct marketing. It can be used to deliver message or service to prospects. This promotion method has shown tremendous growth in recent years. The internet has played major part in this growth story. Direct marketing saves time, makes an experience personal and pleasant. It also reduces cost for the organization. Face to face selling direct mail, catalog marketing, telemarketing, TV and kiosks are media for direct marketing.

FEATURES OF DIRECT MARKETING

Direct marketing depicts the following characteristics:

1. No Middlemen: Here the organization directly deals with the target audiences without the involvement of any third party.
2. Instant Feedback: The responses of the prospective customers can be gathered instantly without any delays.
3. Forms: There are various ways to directly market the products and services to potential consumers such as via telephone, internet, face to face, direct mail, fax etc.
4. Interaction: Direct marketing involves direct interaction between the prospect and organization.
5. Flexible: Companies can customize their interaction with the prospective buyers according to the situation and tastes of customers. They need not depend upon middlemen to design their interaction patterns.
6. Long-Term Relations: Direct marketing helps in developing and maintaining long lasting relationships with the customers. Every individual is approached personally and the issues are instantly solved. Such interactions lead to healthy relations.

BENEFITS OF DIRECT MARKETING

Direct Marketing offers the following benefits:

- Personal interaction with the prospective buyers
- No involvement of middlemen
- Inexpensive method
- Quick response to customers
- Long term relationship building

7. Referral Marketing or Word of Mouth:

It is the communication regarding an organization or its products from satisfied/loyal customer to prospective customer. Most people rely on 'Word of Mouth' the most than any other means of communication and promotion. Organizations can't force their existing customers to refer their products to peers but they can offer unique experiences to them, so that existing customers talk positive about the company.

FEATURES OF REFERRAL MARKETING

Following are the characteristics of Referral Marketing:

- (i) Forms: This communication may be oral or written, offline or online, face to face or electronic.
- (ii) Experiences: Previous experiences of people are shared with other people regarding an organization or its product. Such experiences may be positive or negative.
- (iii) Speed: Word of mouth travels faster than any other mode of communication.
- (iv) Reliability: Word of mouth is considered to be the most reliable source by prospective buyers.
- (v) Personal Touch: Word of mouth involves a concern and warm dialogue from one person to another.
- (vi) Subjective: The communication is all about attitudes, experiences, tastes etc.

Generally, organizations make use of above discussed methods to acquire new customers. In the modern world, offering information through social media channels, websites, blogs, online ads on other websites are also used to reach the audiences.

PROCESS OF CUSTOMER ACQUISITION

Acquiring new customers requires a systematic process. The steps of generally applied customer acquisition process are as follows:

1. Designing the Right Offer. The first and foremost step in customer acquisition is to design a right offer for the prospective customers. All other marketing and promotional efforts would be fruitful only when a right product or service is planned and created. Customer is going to deal with the organization for the first time and this interaction may be converted into repeated buying only when a 'good offering' is proposed. Good offering refers to the one that delivers maximum possible attributes of a product to the target customers. A right offer includes:

- Customer value i.e, more benefits than costs
- Availability at the right time

- Easily accessible
- Support services

2. **Situation Analysis:** Situation analysis involves the analysis of company's existing customer base. Under situation analysis existing customers are classified on different criteria such as sales, profit margin, potential, size etc. The tastes, needs and expectations of existing customers are thoroughly analyzed.

3. **Customer Planning:** Based on the number of existing customers, companies go for estimating the number or proportion of fresh customers, they wish to acquire. Then the expected new customers are classified and segmented according to the business objectives,

4. **Competitor Analysis:** Organizations would analyze the strategies adopted by their competitors to attract new customers, which may be cost leadership or product differentiation. To be successful in the process of customer acquisition, organization must have a strong competitive advantage over others.

5. **Designing Marketing Initiatives:** Initial stages were the planning phases of customer acquisition process, while in this stage companies come up with certain marketing initiatives. This stage is also known as Action plan phase. Various tools for attracting customers have already been discussed. Selection, assessment and use of appropriate marketing tool is quite crucial to attract new customers.

6. **Tapping the New Customers:** Finally, the organization would tap the potential customers by securitizing them on certain criteria. The further efforts would be focused on the leads which seem to be promising.

This process is dynamic in nature and depends upon various organizational issues such as cost involved, number of customers to be acquired, nature of customers to be acquired, reach of marketing channel expected etc.

ACQUIRING CUSTOMERS USING CUSTOMER DATA

Organizations can acquire new customers from data collected from various sources. Customer data can be collected from the following sources:

(1) **Primary Customer Data:** Primary data is the first hand data, which is collected for the first time. It is collected directly from respondents. This data is generally considered to be more reliable than secondary customer data. Following are some of the methods to collect primary data for customer acquisition:

(a) **Questionnaire Method:** In this method, a written form (questionnaire) is circulated among respondents. Questions are in quantitative form, while qualitative aspects are also transformed in numeric terms. Organizations can send the questionnaires through mail or post to the respondents, who fill the same and are sent back to the organization. Questionnaires are the most effective source of prospective customer data.

(b) **Schedule Method:** In this method, a set of questions is designed. Schedules are accompanied by specially appointed enumerators, who fill the same while meeting the respondents personally. This method is generally used by research institutions and public agencies.

(c) **Interview Method:** Interviewer takes the personal interview of respondents (a group of individuals) on a specific topic. Views, attitudes and opinions of potential customers are recorded. It is a challenging task for the interviewer to take the information out from respondents, as they may be hesitant in opening up.

(d) **Observation Method:** Here the potential customers are observed to find certain facts e.g. how they react to a specific product or brand. Reactions and discussion of potential customers are recorded and reasons behind their reactions are also analysed.

(ii) **Secondary Customer Data:** Secondary data refers to the data collected by someone before, but is utilized by some other person later on. Following are some of the methods of secondary data collection:

(a) **Internet:** Internet is a great source of secondary data. Organizations can collect information regarding prospective customers from earlier researches available on internet.

(b) **Organizational Records:** Organizational P&L account and Balance Sheets are also the source of secondary data, on which various analysis can be performed. Organizations can observe trends,

forecast future demand and see the growth rates. These records guide the organization about customer acquisition strategies to be followed.

(c) Print Media: Print media includes newspapers, business journals, magazines, books, research reports etc. This source provides relevant information regarding prospective customers in the market

Acquiring new customers is a need of all organizations irrespective of their size and nature. Organizations make use of varied tools to acquire new customers and enhance their customer base to have increased revenue.

CUSTOMER RETENTION: MEANING

Customer acquisition is a crucial source of growth and revenue for the organization, but retaining the existing customer base is far more important. Acquiring new customer is a costly affair as compared to retaining the existing ones, as investment has to be made in advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing and positive brand image. Besides that, a newly acquired customer may not be loyal and promising. Revenue of an organization is a function of number of customers who buy organization's product and amount of money they spent to buy. Therefore, existing loyal customer base is the foundation for organizational success.

Customer Retention is a strategy adopted by the organizations to retain the existing customers. It involves company's effort to turn customers into repeat buyers and prevent them from switching to any competitor. It leads to long term relationships with the customers. Retention is a challenging task as organizations have to continuously look for keeping their customers satisfied. The defections need to be minimized as far as possible by focusing on customer needs and expectations. According to Investopedia, it costs five to ten times more to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing one

CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMER RETENTION

1. **Lifetime Commitment:** Retention is a challenging task that continues throughout the lifetime of a relationship between organization and customers. Companies can't take this strategy lightly at any stage, as competitors will gulp these customers in no time.
2. **Establishing Rapport:** Organizations need to give full confidence to the customers that their needs and emotions will be taken care of. Retention begins with establishing a rapport with the customers.
3. **Pre-Requisites:** Customer retention largely depends upon the quality of products offered to the existing customers along with the after sale support services. Brand image of the organization and its products, listening to customers' complaints, incorporating their feedback are some other pre-requisites for long lasting relations and customer retention.
4. **Regular Feedback:** Customer retention rates can be enhanced tremendously by taking regular feedback of existing customers. When the customers know that they are being heard, they feel connected with the organization.
5. **Target Customers:** Retention is a challenging task. The organization can't retain all of its customers. Therefore, it must identify the customers to be retained. Customers with higher customer value and commitment levels may be focused.
6. **Data Base:** Organizations have to keep up-to-date customers information in their data base to apply various retention strategies. They can collect data about their customers from various sources such as primary and secondary. The customers whom organization wants to retain for long may be offered exclusive benefits e.g. Club membership can be given to selected customers to provide them value added benefits where customers can avail extended benefits. Organizations can make use of customer information from registrations as well

DANGERS TO CUSTOMER RETENTION

Following are some of the reasons due to which customer retention may be in danger:

1. **Unreasonable Price:** If the organization charges unfair high prices for the existing products, customers may prefer to switch over competitor's brand. The additional price charged must be justified with the benefits offered.
2. **Deficient Services:** Customers can't tolerate deficiency in services. Organizations must provide the best support even after sale along with quality products.
3. **Better Alternatives:** If customer finds better products/services available in the market, they won't take much time in taking switch over decisions. Competitors may lure the organizational customers with attractive discounts and startling offers.
4. **Change in Earnings:** Change in the economic status of customer (e.g. increase in salary) may be another danger for customer retention for a specific organization, as customers may shift to better brands.
5. **Peer Pressure:** Referral groups may motivate the existing customers to give a trial to other options available in the market.
6. **New Attractions:** Advertisements and promotional techniques of competitor's brand may leave a long-lasting impression in the minds of existing customers.
7. **Ethical Issues:** Unethical practices such as fraud and misrepresentations by an employee may lead to bad organizational image and company may lose its loyal customers.

STRATEGIES FOR CUSTOMER RETENTION

1. **Customer Engagement:** Customers can be engaged in various organizational activities to make them feel emotionally connected. When the customers have sense of belongingness with the organization, they can't be influenced by competitor's attractions. Customers can be engaged in various ways:

- Making them judges in various contests
- Asking their suggestions for upcoming products or services
- Offering them free samples during test marketing stage of new products development
- Incorporating their feedback in the new offerings
- Arranging social gatherings for their family
- Offering tour packages

2. **Customer Delight:** Customer expectations denote how a consumer anticipates the product to perform. The customers may have variety of expectations regarding the value a product/service will offer. Expectations are crucial, as customers compare actual results with the expected performance. Satisfaction is a leading indicator of purchase intentions and customer loyalty. Customer delight is the level of satisfaction that goes above and beyond customer expectation to satisfy a desire. In terms of market research, a satisfied customer's contentment lies somewhere between their expectations and the desired results. A delighted customer, however, will feel that the desired results have not only been met, but also exceeded. A delighted customer will be connected with the organization for long period of time. Organizations can offer this delight by giving special offers and free tour packages to their gold customers.

3. **Understanding Customer Perceived Value:** Customers may have different types of perceptions/opinions about the product such as:

- **Ideal:** The product or service may prove to be an ideal alternative for satisfying a specific consumer need.
- **Expected:** The product or service may perform as expected by the consumer for satisfying a specific need.
- **Minimum Tolerable:** The product or service may at least satisfy the basic need for which it had been bought.
- **Desirable:** The product may be desirable for consumers to a certain extent.

4. Handling Grievances: Customers' grievances must be handled economically and in a speedy manner to retain them a long term. Complaints must be sought out at priority and view point of customers must be heard to improve their satisfaction level.

5. Regular Feedback: Customer feedback plays a crucial role in improving their satisfaction level and retention rate. Feedback can be taken by interviewing the customers or by observing them buying at the company store.

6. Keep the Promises: Retention is also affected by what has been promised and what has been actually delivered. The customers must be delivered what and when has been promised. The quality and quantity of products/services must be the same, as specified in the contract. The delivery should be in time and in manner as defined by the customers.

7. Understanding Specific Needs: Every customer is crucial, and can lead to new customers by his positive word of mouth. Therefore, the needs of each one of them must be known and well met. Some customers may have specific needs, which the company must understand and fulfill. When the specific needs are taken care of, customer feel connected with the organization and can be retained for long.

8. Rewarding Loyal Customers: Customers can be made feel special by rewarding them depending upon the purchases they made from the organization. More purchase, more reward and vice versa.

Rewards can relate to any of the following categories:

- Price cuts for repeated buyers/hard core loyals
- Discounts and rebates
- Gifts and vouchers
- Offering membership of various clubs
- Free shopping at specified outlets
- Cash back
- Self-liquidating premium

These rewards help the organization in increasing retention rates and are a great way to acknowledge customers for their support and loyalty.

9. Remembering Special Days: Customers may be wished or gifted on special occasions of their lives e.g. birthdays, anniversaries, wedding etc. Making customers days special helps the organization in positioning its image in their minds forever and retaining them for long.

CUSTOMER LOYALTY:

MEANING AND DEFINITIONS

Customer loyalty is the foundation for creating and maintaining long term relationship. In this 21 century competitive world, getting loyal customers is a real blessing for the organization, as numerous options are available and customers have valid reasons to switch over the competitive brands. These loyal customers are the assets for any organization and having the strong loyal customer base offer numerous benefits. In fact, having loyal customers offer the organizations a distinctive competitive advantage over others. Therefore, creating and sustaining loyal customers must be at the top of organization aim list. Following are certain well accepted definitions of the term 'Customer Loyalty':

Dick and Basu (1994) stated that "Loyalty is a customer's commitment to the brand or approach to the brand."

Accounting dictionary states, "Customer loyalty indicates the extent to which customers are devoted to a company's products or services and how strong is their tendency to select one brand over the competition."

CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY

1. **Loyalty and Price:** Loyalty has nothing to do with price of product. Loyal customers are not much affected by fluctuations in price. Apple is a brand with high customer loyalty and its products are quite expensive. It is common for the customers to queue up all night just to get the chance to spend hundreds of pounds on a new iPhone.
2. **Satisfaction Designs Loyalty:** Customer satisfaction is positively related to loyalty, as happy customers consistently favour the brand that meet their needs and expectations, Satisfaction occurs when a product or service meets the expectations of customer.
3. **Satisfaction Doesn't Guarantee Loyalty:** Satisfied customers may or may not be loyal towards the organization. Some customers feel satisfied with a product but they always have the curiosity to try other brands. Therefore, satisfaction leads to loyalty but doesn't guarantee it.
4. **Result of Consistent Efforts:** Brand loyalty stems out of firm's consistent efforts to deliver the same product and quality every time. The best example of consistent organizational efforts is of the Starbucks. The company has managed not only to retain its customers but also to expand its customer base through exemplary loyalty programs. The company seeks to enhance the experience every time a customer visits their coffee store. Besides that, the company also offers 'My Starbucks Rewards' customer loyalty program for its loyal customers.
5. **Effect of Competitors' Offerings:** Loyal customers are not influenced by the competitor's promotional appeals. It doesn't mean that the organization need not put in efforts to improve their offerings. Suggestions of loyal customers must be incorporated seriously from time to time to make these customers hard core loyals.
6. **Intangible:** Loyalty is something which can't be touched or seen, as it is intangible, but its presence can be felt in various aspects, some of which are:
 - Nature of referrals that customers make to their relatives, peer group, friends and family.
 - Number of visits a customer makes to the store
 - Validity of feedback given to the organization for updating products and services.
7. **Cross Selling:** Loyalty leads to sales of existing products and also of the other products offered by organizations from time to time. When the organization introduces other related products, it is the loyal customer base who first tries the same.
8. **Feedback:** Loyal customers offer a genuine feedback to the organization about how to improve the product functioning.
9. **Trust in the Organization:** Even in case of any organizational issues or negative publicity, the loyal customer stand by the organization and maintain high level of trust.

IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY

1. **High Conversion Rates:** Loyal customer leads to higher conversion rates than new customers.
2. **Increased Profits:** Every organization works for higher levels of profits and revenue. Loyalty boosts the profits and revenue of the organization. These loyal customers don't switch over easily to other brands.
3. **Reduced Cost:** Research has shown that retaining the existing customers is far cheaper than acquiring the new ones. It takes three times more efforts to attract a new customer than retaining the existing ones and it costs six to seven time more for attracting new customers
4. **Enhanced Business:** Loyal customers bring a large business to the organization by spreading positive word of mouth among their family and friends. Repeat and loyal customers spend more than first time buyers, as they trust the organization and its offerings.

5. Easy to Convince: First time buyers are difficult to convince, but loyal customers can be convinced easily to buy other related organizational products.
6. Genuine Feedback Loyal customers offer genuine feedback to the organization for transforming their offerings.
7. Cross Selling and Upselling The loyal customers don't hesitate in buying the related products of same organization and high end products also can be sold to them.

FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER LOYALTY

1. Customer Satisfaction: The loyalty towards an organization is directly influenced by the level of satisfaction a customer gets from an organizational offering. Customers visit a store with certain predefined expectations. When the expectations are met, customer gets satisfaction and that is the first step towards long term loyalty.

Customer satisfaction is a post-purchase evaluation that results from a comparison between customer's pre-purchase expectations and actual performance of product/service. When the organization doesn't meet the customers' expectations, it leads to dissatisfaction and the dissatisfied customers may resort to complain or never purchase the same product again

Therefore, the organizations focus on measuring and managing customer satisfaction in every customer interaction. Successful organizations try to understand the degree of satisfaction gap when they fail to meet expectations.

2. Emotional Bond: Once the customer gets satisfaction from organizational offering, this relationship must be nourished with emotional bond. Over time customer loyalty requires emotional bonding. Customers must feel an affinity, comfort and attachment with the brand, which denotes that they have connect with the organization. Some companies know how to connect emotionally with their customers while others may face difficulty in accomplishing this level of commitment. Organizations must strive to establish feeling of closeness, affection, and trust, as true emotional bonding is often based on the same.

3. Trust: Trust means having confidence that one can rely on the other party. Trust can be defined as the willingness of the customer to rely on the organization or brand to perform its stated function. It means a customer believes that the company and its offerings are reliable.

Higher the level of trust in the organization, stronger will be the loyalty from customers' side. Trust reduces uncertainty/risk in the minds of customers. Therefore, a customer must have confidence that the organization is honest, fair and responsible and the organizational promises can be relied on. Organizations must establish trust by maintaining open and honest communication and by keeping their promises with integrity.

4. Past Experience: Customer loyalty is also affected by customer's past experience with the organization. A positive past experience has a favourable impact on customer loyalty. One bad experience with an organization may cost the organization a loyal customer forever and many other connected. Therefore, the organizations need to focus on enriching every customer interaction with the organization.

5. Historic Image of Company: Perceptions of the company's historical image can impact customer intentions, loyalty and likelihood of buying. Companies like Proctor and Gamble, MDH, Hindustan Unilever have a positive historic image and customers purchase their products since many years without any doubts.

6. Peer Groups: Customers loyalty is largely affected by the discussions with friends, family, colleagues, and peer groups. A negative experience with any of these connected people may lead to negative image of the organizational products in the minds of loyal customers.

CUSTOMER LOYALTY LADDER

Customer loyalty is not designed in one day, it has to pass through many positive experiences. This process of building loyalty is known as climbing the 'loyalty ladder'. Therefore, ladder of loyalty shows different stages through which a prospect passes to become a customer, a client and finally a partner of the organization. Following are the generally discussed stages of customer loyalty ladder

1. **Suspect:** The customers daily look at the advertisements in newspapers, magazines, hoardings, vehicles etc. Anyone who reads or hears any information, looks at a brochure or encounters some other type of promotion of an organization is known as the suspect. This suspect may or may not be a prospect for organization.
2. **Prospect:** Prospect is an individual in market (or an organization in the business market) who fulfils the requirement of the marketer's definition of target customer. Prospect can be anyone who pays attention to the organizational promotion and fulfills all the requirements/criteria of being an organizational customer.
3. **Customer.** The prospect becomes a customer when he/she gets attracted towards the offering of the organization and purchases the product/service.
4. **Client:** A customer becomes a client when he/she purchases the product or service more than once. In simple terms, client is the one who purchases the organizational product for at least a second time. A customer may make the initial purchase as a trial or test, while the client is one who does a repeat purchase due to satisfaction from previous purchase(s). There is a higher probability that the first purchase/trial was a satisfactory experience for the client. In many situations, customers become clients due to the nature of the product or service e.g. if a customer purchases Dell laptop, he/she is bound to become a client due to the associated services. Same is the case with the purchase of any durable product like television, washing machine, water purifier or car etc., as here the customer becomes a client of the associated services like servicing.
5. **Advocate:** An advocate is a supporter who, in addition to referrals the loyalty ladder gives increased sales, proactively works with the organization to improve its product and services. Advocate gives unpaid advertisement to the product, which enhances its acceptability in market. Here the interaction between the advocate and the company is at a higher level, as vital information is shared. Besides that, the comfort level as well as the confidence between the parties is high. For example, software companies regularly depend on the feedback from the lead users of their clients, whenever they want to come up with new products. These companies set up the protocol of client's premises for usage and feedback, which helps in improvement.

CUSTOMER CENTRICITY

Customer centricity or Client centricity is a business strategy that is based on putting the customer first and at the core of business in order to provide positive experience and build long term relationships. In the words of Craig Bailey and Kurt Jensen, customer centricity involves aligning organizational resources for effectively responding to ever changing needs of customers, while building mutually profitable relationships. It is a way of doing business with customers, so that customers are given positive experience at any stage of sales process in order to have repeat business, increased profits and customer loyalty. Customer centricity gives a company competitive edge over its competitors, who don't offer similar experience to customers. Such firms can differentiate themselves in the eyes of customers by having customer centricity positioning.

When the customer is placed at the core of business, all decisions are taken by keeping customer at priority and all this is combined with CRM, this gives 360-degree view of customer. CRM utilizes information to improve customer experience. Therefore, the aim of customer centricity is to give better experience to customer at the point of sale or after the sale.

Process of Customer Centricity

1. Central Database: A centralized data base is the key for successful customer centric organizations. Keeping all customer data at a centralized place helps all the departments to have access to similar data without wastage of time. It also helps in retrieving the information from all customer touch points.

2. Behaviour Prediction: Based on the past customer data, predicting the customer behaviour is the next stage. The analysts and business units must cooperate with each other to effectively predict future customer behaviour. Various prediction models can be used by the organizations for this task and interventions are introduced to alter the behaviours during experimentation. Then results are measured with and without interventions and then campaigns are designed based on results.

3. Update Customer Data: The company must update customer information constantly. When the customers are asked about their needs, it gives clear idea to the company regarding what customer expects. Therefore, collecting updates from existing customers must be done quite often. It gives clear direction what changes are required and which things are to be kept the same.

4. Obtaining the Customer Pulse: The process of customer centricity requires the organization to know customer requirements and needs. Customer may need product/service for himself, family or may be just a purchaser. Organizations can obtain customer pulse by the following ways:

- Conducting consumer survey
- Interviewing the customer
- Getting information from the sales force directly dealing with customer
- Observing the actions or behaviors of customers
- Mystery or Ghost shopping

When the customers are heard, they feel more connected with the organization. It leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

5. Facilitating the Communication Process: The communication process between the company and its customers must be direct and easy. Modern companies are coming up with creative solutions to facilitate the direct communication process such as customer satisfaction surveys, and posting of reviews on websites.

6. Involving the Customer: Customers feel connected with the firm, when they are involved in business decision making. Following strategies can be used for customer involvement:

- Focus Group: It involves discussion within a small group may be of 8-10 people.
- Customer Board of Advisors: Inviting senior people from customers' data base for periodic meetings.

7. Analyzing Information or Reviewing the Feedback: Just collection of feedback will not solve the purpose, rather company has to work upon the suggestions. This stage includes the analysis of feedback and queries received from customers. There must be recurring meetings with strategic team, where the crucial issues are reviewed and constructive solutions are brainstormed for better customer service. When the customer issues are discussed on regular intervals and their solutions are found, it helps in keeping customer at the priority list of entire team members. It also gives information about the upcoming market trends through customer suggestions and help in making their offerings better.

8. Socialize Results: The results obtained must be reported by the top management within and outside the organization. The reports can be made in comprehensive format for sectional and departmental planning.

9. Implement Customer Focused Changes: After analysis, the weak areas are identified and customer focused changes can be introduced. It will require the following steps:

- Getting management commitment

- Conducting cross functional reviews
- Voice of customer tracking and reviews
- Forecasting

10. Respond to the Customer: Customers must be given response for their queries, which can be immediate or delayed response. Companies can design 'Immediacy' teams, which will offer quick response to emergency issues, while some critical issues may take time and require senior managers advice, as they have ore customer experience,

11. Encouraging Customer Centric Culture: Best brands who value their customers have made customer the cornerstone of their company culture. Top management can make policies which spread a customer centric culture among various organizational departments. A customer centric culture requires cross team commitment and make everyone feel that they have played their role in the process of customer satisfaction. It can be achieved by the following strategies:

- Putting the employees in customers' shoes
- Putting the employees in shoes of particular colleague
- Be evaluated in a 360 degree approach by colleagues who is close to employee

Strategies to Encourage Customer Centricity

1. Rewarding Customer Centric Behaviour: Organizational staff should keep customer in their minds while taking any decision. Rewarding and recognizing customer centric behavior in the organizations can motivate employees to adopt the same.

2. Giving Training to Staff: Customer centricity must be enriched via training cum internalization in organization. Staff can be given training on various customer centricity components. Training sessions may include following aspects:

- Communicating effectively and building rapport with customers during interactions
- Taking every touch point seriously
- Managing complex conversations with customers
- Making the communication style better

3. Decision Making: The CRM managers must ensure that organizational decision-making hinges on customers. All decisions must keep customers at priority.

4. Measure the Progress: In every business meeting and promotion, firm's progress in customer centricity must be highlighted.

5. Customer requests: Taking the customers' requests and feedback seriously is another way to implement customer centricity successfully.

6. Involving customers: Loyal customers can be involved in organizational crucial decisions, where they can keep customer viewpoint.

7. Other strategies:

- Implementing customer focused changes
- Analyzing customer information thoroughly
- Conducting customer surveys, interviews and recoding observations (mystery shopping)
- Responding to customers via emails, websites, texts
- Putting employees in customer shoes

Customer centricity is a business strategy that is based on 'putting the customer first and at the core of business' to have positive experience and long term relationships. It demands that customer is the focal point for all organizational decisions. Providing a positive customer experience before and after

the sale is the basic aim, which will lead to repeat business for the organization. Customer centric company requires more than just offering good service. Amazon is the best example of customer centric company, as it has spent years in creating a culture around the customers and their needs.

WEB BASED CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Advent of internet and advancements in technology has altogether changed the way businesses used to be managed. Companies can collect, analyze and store massive amount of data in no time. E-commerce is one of the most fascinating outcomes of online transactions. Today, more than half of the customers prefer online shopping, payments via online platforms, and online services.

Web based customer support is designed to offer a better and real time customer experience. Besides that, webbased solutions also help in reducing the cost both for a consumer as well as for the organization. Customer experience largely depends upon the use of appropriate webbased customer support technology and many organizations are quite successfully using these web based solutions.

Types of Web Based Customer Support

Web based customer support can be offered to customers by any of the following options:

1. **Social Media:** The use of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter is no longer confined to chatting and fun. Modern businesses have identified that majority of present and potential customers spend substantial time on social media websites. Whenever a customer faces difficulty in product/service or wants to enquire about it, he/she will go on social media for solutions. Even when a customer writes the query on google, it will take customers to company's social media platforms. The company must be ready to deliver what customer expects. Therefore, conveniently available and systematically designed social media profile can be a great source of web based customer support from the company's side.

2. **Demonstration Videos:** The customers today prefer to go through the videos instead of text content. The millions of views on you tube, and Instagram has proved that visual content is preferred, as it is easy to understand. No doubt modern internet has been taken over the video content, which can be an excellent method to communicate with customers. Companies and individuals are uploading various types of videos such as product demo, customer views, previous experiences, grievance procedure and much more.

3. **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):** FAQs section is designed by the organizations with care and concern, as they know that many clients will have few queries in common. Generally, FAQ section is created on the main page of company's website. When the customer visits this section, majority of queries are ultimately resolved at this single platform. Staff of company is relieved from explaining the same things to multiple clients and topics can be written in great depth.

4. **Email Support:** Website of almost every company gives the email support to customers. They can send their queries, ask for product demonstrations, write complaints. Email of the company is daily checked by the designated personnel and responses are sent back to customers. When customer gets in-time reply via email, it boosts his confidence in the organization. Besides that, email works as a permanent documentary proof with both parties. Most of the companies send customized replies. It must be taken care that writing an email is art and how the reply is designed, makes a big difference in how customer look at the company.

Benefits of Web Based Customer Support

1. **No Pressure of Queues:** Web based customer support relieves the organization and its employees from the pressure of handling long customer queues wanting to talk to customer representative. They will have the option to pick solution mode from myriad online channels such as email or social media. Therefore, there will be less traffic on any single medium. It will lead to better customer response, as representatives will be able to work more efficiently.

2. **Better Customer Service:** Customers are able to get quick and genuine response from the web based solutions. They need not wait in long queues; it saves their time. Therefore, companies are able to deliver better customer experience.

3. **Customer Satisfaction:** As customers will get prompt response anytime and anywhere, there will be no point left for their disappointment.

4. **Better Efficiency:** Web based customer solutions enhances efficiency by saving time and cost. Tasks are allotted to customer representatives, which increases efficiency and offers the benefit of specialization. Customers will be able to get timely responses.

Above discussed points reveal that web-based customer solutions are more effective, reliable, efficient in terms of cost and time cutting. Organizations are able to serve their customer better if they have presence over multiple online platforms. It can be a great source of competitive advantage over other organizations.

ENTERPRISE MARKETING MANAGEMENT (EMM)

A new dimension of CRM emerging these days is EMM. As it has been realized that companies have to build stronger customer relationships, so that have to create a positive impact from their marketing operations. EMM is pioneered by UNICA with the idea of turning relationship marketing approach into a systematic and scientific approach.

Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM) is a comprehensive strategy that helps an organization to effectively plan, coordinate and control marketing activities across multiple channels using data and analytics. In another words, EMM is vital technology term which means the strategies, tools and practices adopted by an organization to effectively manage and organize its marketing efforts across various channels such as CRM, email marketing, social media marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization, and marketing automation etc. According to Gartner Inc., EMM encompasses the business strategy, process automation and technologies required to operate a marketing department effectively, align resources, execute customer centric strategies and improve marketing performance. Therefore, EMM helps the organization to unify data from various sources, streamline their marketing efforts, and derive insights that can be used to optimize its marketing performance. EMM is best suited for large organizations with 50 or more people in marketing.

Enterprises are the large organizations, generally having more than 500 employees. There can be other factors which may contribute to a company being considered as an enterprise such as revenue, number of outlets, nature of product/service etc. As small companies grow in market, and start emerging as enterprises, it is must that their marketing efforts also expand and grow. These marketing efforts (across myriad channels) have to be optimally manage. Here comes the importance of EMM. It is an evolving approach, which encapsulates the processes, technologies and methodologies that allow businesses to manage their marketing efforts across multiple channels seamlessly. EMM may also be considered as a component of CRM that helps in providing, maintaining and monitoring the structure of promotional campaigns organized by an enterprise.

In the modern organizations, EMM is exercised by centralizing and unifying marketing related data and processes related to entire organization. There are EMM software which offer multiple features such as campaign management, customer analytics, lead management and social media tracking etc. By employing EMM solutions, organization can

- Streamline its marketing operations
- Reduce unnecessary tasks and
- Instill coordination among marketing teams

For example: Adobe Marketing Cloud is an EMM solution that integrates multiple marketing tools such as Adobe Analytics, Adobe Experience Manager, and Adobe Campaign to create a single comprehensive platform for managing marketing campaigns. Adobe Marketing Cloud helps the organization to understand needs and preferences of customers, create personalized content, deliver consistent and targeted experience across various channels and platforms.

Characteristics of Enterprise Marketing Management

EMM is drastically different from traditional marketing practices. Traditional marketing methods help to develop and maintain loyal customer base for small organizations, while enterprise marketing takes the marketing tasks to next level. EMM has the following features:

1. **Comprehensive Term:** EMM adopts a holistic approach. It streamlines and optimizes marketing processes by integrating data, technology and resources, so that business can target its customers more effectively. Traditional marketing was focused on individual marketing components, while EMM is a comprehensive idea bridging various marketing facets such as advertising, sales, product development and customer service.

2. **Suitable for Large Organizations:** For the large organizations operating across myriad markets (geographically and demographically), importance of EMM can't be overstated.

3. **Integration:** EMM integrates various marketing systems, platforms and tools leveraged with customer data and analytics. It offers an integrated solution that brings together various marketing functions and technologies such as CRM, email marketing, social media marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization, marketing automation

analytics, and reporting. With this integration marketing professionals are able to organise more targeted, personalized and impactful campaigns.

4. **Aim/Outcome:** The aim of EMM is to maximize marketing efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance customer experience. It allows organizations to maximize customer value, high return on marketing investment (ROI), improve brand communication and boost their overall market presence.

5. **Data Driven Insights:** EMM tools and strategies facilitate organizations to take data driven decisions. Such decisions improve organization's marketing performance, foster growth and improve competitive position.

6. **Personalized Experience:** EMM combines marketing, sales and customer service efforts to create personalized experiences for customers.

7. **Customer Relationship:** It focuses on personalizing the customer journey and offering tailored and relevant content to each segment of customers, which would lead towards enhancing customer relationships.

8. **Advances in EMM:** As businesses are evolving and digital transformations have come, EMM is also being attached with technology. Advanced analytics, AI and machine learning are assisting organizations in gathering and analyzing large amount of customer data to personalize marketing efforts.

EMM market is still not much developed, many organizations are offering comprehensive suits of marketing applications. The ultimate aim of EMM technology is to assist the marketers in analysis, planning, implementation and control of marketing activities, so that marketing operations can be handled more effectively.

Strategies for Effective EMM

To make EMM effective, following strategies may be implemented:

1. **Integrated Marketing Communication:** To make EMM effective, all forms of marketing communications (public relations, direct marketing, social media etc.) must be integrated. Similar message must be disseminated to have a consistent marketing view. The marketing voice must be unified over different channels.
2. **Segmentation:** Customers must be segmented on the basis of certain homogenous criteria, so that marketing efforts can be tailored for each segment's unique needs. With the advancements in technology, businesses can introduce micro-segmentation to target smaller groups of customers.
3. **Data Driven Decision Making:** In the field of EMM, data is the most crucial component. Businesses can gain new insights about customer behaviour, demand forecasting and market trends by leveraging data from various sources e.g. CRM systems, social media, web analytics etc. Future market trends can be predicted with high accuracy if suitable data is available.
4. **Multi-Channel Marketing:** Organizations must offer consistent and personalized experience across multiple platforms. It would assist in better and stronger customer relationships. Both offline and online channels must give seamless customer experience.
5. **Shaking Hands with Technology:** The success of EMM depends upon the level of technology adoption in the organization. Modern technologies assist the businesses to analyze large amount of data, automate repetitive tasks, add the feature of personalization and 24*7 web support. Decisions can be taken more quickly.

EMM is no longer a luxury for businesses, rather it has become a necessity. The future of EMM is directly linked to the developments and adoption of new technologies. With the effective use of EMM, businesses would be able to get deeper insights related to customer behaviors and would be able to devise effective strategies.