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Amazon CRM



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Introduction

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is simply a database. It tracks sales and marketing opportunities. Its objective is to maintain a dynamic relationship with both loyal and potential customers. This paper will cover Amazon CRM, particularly its integration with Sales, Marketing, and Data mining.

What is CRM?

**Customer Relationship Management** is a business philosophy with a set of strategies that focuses on identifying and building loyalty with a retailer’s most valued customers (Harlam, 2012). Put another way~~;~~ customer relationship management is an interaction between an organization and a customer. Implementation of technology associated with CRM can enhance the strength and usefulness of this interaction, which requires obtaining information about the customer and prospect. Let me express on point with crystal clarity, CRM is about more than simply tracking and managing a customer's behavior.

Apart from being a philosophical point of view, CRM applications have the potential to transform an organization from being product-centric to being customer-centric. Such a change can allow~~s~~ the organization to attract and keep current and potential customers, while tailoring services to meet their individual needs. Certainly CRM is a process that integrates sales, marketing and other services into a single and unique service. It is also a technology that centralizes customer information. It is safe to say that CRM is both a business and a technology approach that manages and automates customer information and the relationship with that customer.

CRM may take the form of database. That database holds records of everyone who comes in touch with the organization whether it involves customers, prospects, suppliers, no one is excluded. If CRM is implemented properly, these people have follow ups due to features like appointments, tasks, schedules, emails, instant messaging, etc. These applications can be stored in a local drive, and they are very effective when integrated across the enterprise. CRM also handles complaints. In fact, when there are issues, complaints, or problems CRM is the first source of information to be looked at.

The people that use the most CRM are in Sales and Marketing. CRM is used to maintain positive relationships with customers, increase customers’ loyalty, and expand customers’ lifetime values as described by Blattberg (Blattberg & Deighton, 1996). The goal of CRM is to improve customers experience (CE) by being very responsive to their needs and maximizing profits. Employing CRM can systematically allow organizations to do better jobs in maintaining contact with customers, caring for them and providing quality, service and value (Yourdon, 2000). Therefore, the objective of CRM is to transform organizations from being product-centric to being customer-centric.

There are at least three types of CRMs

**Operational CRM**: The goal of operational CRM is to integrate Sales, Marketing, and support. It provides one view of the three departments. Operational CRM is used mainly to interact with customers more effectively.

**Analytical CRM**: Analytical CRM provides an elemental view of customer data obtained through multiple channels, and creates strategy reports that shows an organization’s direction while helping management make good decisions.

**Collaborative CRM**: Collaborative CRM is used to enhance business-to-customer communication. It shares customer data via cross-departmental customer interactions using email, and instant messaging systems.

History of CRM

Customer relationship management (CRM), as an application, has gone through dynamic changes since its release early in 1980’s. It was called **Contact** **Management** and was meant to store customer contact information. The 1990’s witnessed the use of data warehouse and data mining with CRM. A few years later, the first step toward CRM software was taken. Early innovators like Brock Control Systems helped push the evolution of contact management software toward sales force automation (SFA). SFA took many of the features of database marketing, automated them, and combined them with contact management. This provided businesses with much more useful customer information. It also automated business tasks like inventory control, and sales tasks like customer interaction tracking.

By 1995, SFA and contact management had `both evolved to closely resemble modern CRM software. However, this emerging product still didn’t have a proper name. A number of terms like enterprise customer management (ECM) and customer information system (CIS) were in use. By the end of 1995, CRM had won out. Its preeminence can be attributed to the technology research company Gartner, while Tom Siebel (of Siebel Systems) is also named as a possible source. Either way, the CRM industry finally had a name.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1986 | Sage ACT was released by Sage Group. It was the first tool to address Contact Management. |
| 1990 | Sales Force Automation (SFA) entered the market. It introduced the idea of sales pipeline. |
| 1993 | Siebel System was released, and acquired by Oracle. |
| 1995 | CRM as we know it now, was introduced by IBM, Gartner, and Siebel System. |
| 1998 | CRM was fully integrated with Sales and Marketing. SAP labs were created. |
| 1999 | The first mobile CRM application was released by Siebel, called Siebel Sales Handheld.  Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) CRM was released by Salesforce.com |
| 20003 | The release of Microsoft Dynamics CRM. Fully integrated with Microsoft products. |
| 2008 - Present | Social CRM was developed and integrated with social media such as Facebook and Twitter. |

Amazon CRM

In 2014, Mathias Dopfner, chief executive of Axel Springer, expressed concern about how Google was collecting Data (FT, 2014). He was honest and admitted that Google put fear into everyone’s heart. He said that not only did Google knows where we are driving, but it also knew what we are doing while driving. He said that the war in previous (20th) century was about energy fossil, now the war is about data.

Of course, no one does a better job at maintaining and manipulating data than Google and Amazon. Here we are interested in how Amazon manages data to gain competitive advantage through the use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and data integration.

It has been reported that Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, used to bring an empty chair to work meetings. The purpose was to remind his staff to always consider that the empty chair is occupied by the customer, and that the customer is the most important person in the room. In 1997 Bezos wrote to shareholders that Amazon will continue to focus relentlessly on its customers. Usually it takes a long time for companies to transition from being product-centric to customer-centric, but Amazon was the exceptional company. Since its launch in 1994, **Amazon has being customer-centric.** “Know your customer”; is an old saying. Certainly Amazon does know its customers about as perfectly as a company conceivably can. It knows what its customers do, where they do it, when they do it, what they like, what they don’t like, and what they will like et al. All of this knowledge is "thanks" to CRM.

Using CRM Amazon knows the wishes, the wants, the buying trends of customers and their families. Amazon has a profile for each customer, it knows the age, gender, hobbies, address, profession, the likes and dislikes, education, and a lot more about every customer. Having all these pieces of updated information and using them to meet customers’ needs, makes Amazon the best e-commerce business in the world.

On your second visit to Amazon.com your name will appear on the page and you will be presented with things that may interest you. Automatically offering you promotions and products makes your browsing a breeze. If you like what you see, you are welcome to read product reviews. Often buyers rely on these reviews to make informed decisions as buyers tend to trust each other. It is clear that Amazon has an accurate view of who you are, what your needs are.

Amazon runs a complex of **algorithms** **to predict customer’s needs and desires**. While this may create a good customer experience, it also certainly may raise privacy concerns. This is an indication that Amazon uses a **one to one learning relationship management strategy**. While I am not sure, I surmise that Amazon does this. I believe this because Amazon is relatively opaque in what it discloses to the public. Amazon staff are not authorized to talk to the media without permission from top management. Staff was required as a condition of employment to sign a consent form in this regard.

Amazon develops its technology internally, and it does have enough resources to invest in its information technology. Amazon protects its information technology, and that very information technology has allowed Amazon to always maintain its competitive advantage, thus far.

Amazon has announced the use of its own technologies as well as technologies from third parties (SEC, 2005). Amazon puts great efforts and money to develop unique software that combines many functionalities to enhance its customers' shopping experiences.

What is data integration?

**Data integration** is a process of combining data from disparate sources into understandable and useful data. As result, data can be trusted under a unified view. Amazon uses **Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) to integrate its data**. ERP is a business process tool~~s~~ that allows the integration of data from several departments such as Human Resources, Marketing, and Finance. The outcome is an application model that functions across the organization, with all important data ~~is~~ being shared throughout the organization.

With a single system connecting together all important information (Wailgum, 2008), Amazon struck. Amazon took advantage of the ERP system functionality to build a highly developed distribution system with **supply** **chain** **management** (SCM) that promised delivery of products to customers anywhere, anytime, and more quickly than customers expected.

Amazon uses Oracle databases and **Oracle** **Recovery** **Manager** (RMAN) to run its operations. It had set a world record for online transactional database performance at 69 transactions per second. The order process goes through different departments under one single invoice, because ERP integrates customer information, product information, and shipment data in one model system. In addition, integration makes it so easy to track the order, it also creates a great impression in customers’ minds, while they would receive their orders much faster than expected.

ERP software consists of multiple enterprise software modules. These modules are designed differently in terms of functional requirements and technical architectures, because of compatibility issues. Every module spans one business cycle such as Sales, Marketing, Accounting, Human Resources, etc. However, ERP systems may focus on supply chain management, distribution management only, or can be used for product planning, and marketing. Amazon does an exemplary job incorporating ERP with CRM under single unified package. Thus, the benefits of using these tools are improvement of operational efficiency, with elimination of **data redundancy** and errors. Together, these items may boost the quality and the flow of data across the organization.

Data mining

**Data** **mining**, sometimes called "**knowledge** **discovery**" is the **process of analyzing data to discover patterns in it.** The patterns discovered must be both useful and understandable so that they lead to tangible advantages, such as increasing revenue and/or cutting costs. In order to create a data model, an algorithm first analyzes the data provided, then it looks for specific types of patterns or trends. According to Microsoft database developers (Microsoft.com) the algorithm uses the results of the analysis to define the optimal parameters for creating the mining model. These parameters are then applied across the entire data set to extract actionable patterns and detailed statistics.

An organization that is customer-centric, such as **Amazon, uses data mining to interpret relationships between internal factors such as price and external factors such as competition to assess their impact on sales and customer satisfaction**. Many organizations use data mining increasingly for customer relationship management. In comparison to mass-marketing, customer relationship management based upon data mining can offer a good service that meets customers' needs better.

**Amazon uses Oracle databases to integrate Data mining with CRM**. Often, advanced algorithm writing in machine learning language is used to search for any hidden pattern in all relational databases. The same algorithm was used by Google to run YouTube’s recommendation engine. This is an indication that the algorithm is very sophisticated.

An Amazon team made of statisticians, database developers, marketing, and sales people, worked together to integrate Data mining with CRM and developed the algorithm. They were motivated and inspired, so their hard work paid off. The outcome of their work is what is called **statistical** **analysis**, often used by business analysts to identify trends. Marketing and Sales teams who work proactively care about these trends. Analyzing former customer’s behavior may determine characteristics of those likely to stay loyal and those likely to quit. A search for the same characteristics in current customer’s behavior to determine who are likely to take their business somewhere else. The same technique may apply to other customer’s behavior.

For instance, Amazon is able to determine customers who are likely to buy more or less products, switch to different brand, sign up for a new service, etc. Each customer will be targeted by special offers and promotions. The idea behind the data mining is to determine patterns in both the former customer's and the present customer's consumption behavior. Once those patterns are found, the marketing team would have something to work with. Often marketing customizes its service, because it is too costly to target all customers with same promotions and offers. One size doesn’t fit all. Certainly Data mining does fuel business growth to high degree.

CRM and Sales

For many years, Amazon has received the highest the score ever recorded by **American Customer Satisfaction Index** (ACSI).This is because of Amazon's ability to influence consumers by providing outstanding service that is extra-ordinary. Its world class sales teams are invested in long-term relationship with Amazon's customers that add value for customers. This wouldn’t have happened if Amazon didn’t embrace an effective customer relationship management strategy

Amazon has invested heavily in its sales department, in terms of money and time, to take full advantage of CRM capabilities. Some business analysts concluded that one third of Amazon jobs are sales positions and account management. The sales salaries range from 100k to 250k. This figures are very impressive because they show how much Amazon is willing to invest on its sales team. This is one of many reasons why Amazon has no problem attracting the best talent in the region to join its sales team, and help them develop into exceptional talent. On the contrary, Oracle and Salesforce had lost more of their sales force. Amazon is number one both in net hiring and rate of growth of its sales force (McGraw).

Amazon has developed a sophisticated a customer relationship management application that allows it to manage customer data effectively and monitors employees’ behavior and activities as well. More importantly, **CRM is a good tool to monitor the sales process**. Sales managers may choose to view any **sales cycles**. They have the means to prioritize sales, assign them to agents, close them, and open new ones. Sales managers also can create **opportunity** **reports**, and automatically **journal** **activities**. Amazon is interested in monitoring the progress of its employees. It tracks hour-by-hour their performance that go so deep as to include every mouse click. Managers can determine who is performing well and who might need help, by measuring everyone’s performance through benchmarks. Managers want to make sure the sales requirements are met, and that they are not allowing ~~a~~ room for error. The New York Times revealed recently that Amazon has developed a new software besides CRM called **Anytime** **Feedback** that allows employees to share praise or criticism about their colleagues.

Amazon uses **artificial intelligence** to customize recommendations more effectively. For instance, when you buy a book, Amazon's computers not only tell you what else you might like but what other people bought and what they thought of their purchases. The site allows readers to post their opinions about books, rate products, and swap anecdotes. These customer reviews help potential consumers become customers. Amazon sales teams are confident that the more relevant the products are to the user, the more likely users are to purchase. Amazon can galvanize~~s~~ consumers to buy more than just one product by bundling products together.

Certainly CRM has helped Amazon increases its sales and revenue. In June 2012, Amazon reported a 29% sales increase during the second quarter compared to the same quarter in 2011. This growth was a result of how Amazon has integrated recommendations during business transactions from product discovery to checkout. Certainly, the success of Amazon can be attributed to its ability to align sales strategy with revenue goals. The frame that supports this strategy is CRM. Without CRM sales strategy payoff is a long term.

CRM and Marketing

A fundamental approach in marketing is to make a unique product so that it appeals to as many consumers as possible, then to take advantage of that product's uniqueness through mass-media to persuade people to buy. Not anymore. Amazon has succeeded in reversing this concept. It makes every attempt to sell as many products as possible to a single customer, as many times as possible. Through this process, using CRM application, **Amazon develops a relationship with customers on a one-to-one basis**. Amazon avoids common mistakes that most businesses make, one of which is treating all customers the same way. Amazon recognizes that different people respond differently to the same thing, and different customers buy different things for different reasons. The goal is to have one satisfied customer who buys more of your brand products. The buzzword is **loyalty**.

Examining myself in relation to Amazon, my passion and love for wildlife and animals are known to Amazon. When I log in to Amazon.com, it suggests new articles, outdoor gears, and new films that I might find interesting. It allows me to sample their collections and links me to new magazines I've never heard about. When I purchased the National Geography kit, Amazon suggested books and DVDs about Safari. It even provided me with links to travel agencies. I like doing business with Amazon because I can find anything I want, while being sure I'll never to pay full price. Plus, I have the option to buy used items (my choice) from many sellers. It guarantees I get the best merchandise at the best price. All of this is 'thanks' to CRM.

Amazon’s software tracks consumers’ viewing and buying habits. Recently Amazon went beyond tracking everything customers do on its site to recommend other products and services that might interest customers as well. How does Amazon it? By **using predictions and analytics, another form of CRM.**

Data Science or Business Analytics is something that Amazon is turning to in order to gain insights into customers shopping patterns so it better meets their desires and needs. Using predictive analytics, Amazon pairs right promotions with right customers, and automatically adjusts price over time based on many factors such as type of browser, operating system, time spent browsing the site, duration of views, links clicked and hovered over, etc. Predictive analytics is making marketing a precise science.

Amazon is attempting to exploit predictive science fully by no longer depending on the old-fashioned marketing techniques. It is already benefiting from big data**. Amazon has not yet disclosed its strategy, what we know is based on observation and guesswork, combined with leaks from former employees**. Amazon has only revealed an “anticipatory shipping” program. It is a method to start the delivery process before the customer has clicked the buy button. Based on predictions and other factors, Amazon said it may box and ship product that has not yet been ordered by a customer. The package will be ready for shipping at the hubs or trucks waiting for an order to arrive.

By using analytics, Amazon has the ability to know in advance what will work, what will not work, and how to spend time and money more effectively; especially in marketing. Analytics are the tool to help Amazon better understand the needs, desires and behavior of its customers. As a result~~s~~, a stronger relationship between Amazon and its customers may develop. CRM may render the relationship very sophisticated. According to a study by McKinsey, retailers who are using big data have experienced a 60% enhancement in business margins and 1% improvement in labor productivity. Certainly analytics have helped Amazon identify its best available business opportunities~~,~~ and improve marketing return on investment.

CRM Measures

There are so many ways to measure the effectiveness of CRM. I surmise that Amazon uses measures that are simple but effective, that allow the organization to weight and prioritize work. The effectiveness of a customer relationship program is often measured by increases in:

* Customer retention
* Cross sales
* Up sales
* referrals

Other indicators include a decrease in:

* Customer complaints.
* Returns.

The best way to measure the effectiveness of CRM is to set a measurable goals. Which has both a baseline measurement and a target of improvement. Without these measures the success of CRM would be subject to questions. Secondly CRM measure needs to be easy to collect, easy understand, and meaningful. Also making distinction between long-term and short-term measure. A short-term measure the success of a project while a long-term measure how to manage business.

Some metrics are easy to quantify like Sales revenue, profits, etc. However some are very difficult to quantify (intangible) such as customer satisfaction. How to measure customer satisfaction? One way to do it, is to conduct a short survey well focused on certain events that Amazon may see as a target goal. Unfortunately I am unable to be very specific because more parameters are needed to determine the target goal. To go around it, we may use proxy measurement. It is a way to measure what we can if we can’t measure what we want.

CRM Ethics

CRM is not just about customer experience and loyalty. It is about getting the most out of customer interaction. Examining a case in point: Amazon was revealed to be selling the same DVD movies to different customers at different prices. If one customer is getting a better deal than another an ethical issue is raised. Such pricing is well known as **'dynamic'** **pricing**. In its simple form, **dynamic pricing is a system under which prices are altered for different customers, based on their perceived ability to pay per se**. The changing price for a particular product varies according to customer profiles if there are any, whether a Mac or PC is used, browser, and IP address. When a user navigates Amazon's website, his physical address is known to Amazon based on his or her IP address. Therefore geographic area may determine the price for such product.

Dynamic pricing is another effective method to increase sales. According to Econsultancy blog, Amazon changes its prices every 10 minutes based on the data it collects in real time. It more accurately reflects supply and demand for every item it offers. That was the reason why Amazon sales increased 27% between 2012 and 2013. CRM application is responsible for negative feelings that some of the customers may have. After disclosing their personal information to Amazon, they thought they are loyal customers. They found out that they were exploited, and treated worse than new customers. Amazon takes into consideration the needs and the wants of customers when it developed CRM application, meaning that Amazon takes advantage of customers trust to build an increase in sales. This would eliminate the R from CRM, please see ‘Improving CRM’ section.

The notion of loyal customer is out the window. It would seem that Amazon has moral and ethical obligations to balance its desire to increase sales while maintaining integrity in its customer relations. James Heneage, founder of the former Ottakars book chain, has described Amazon as a dangerous force. “With great market power comes great market responsibility and I don’t get the feeling that the leaders of businesses like Amazon really understand that aspect”. I dare say, that Amazon lacks customers' trust, and the success that is having is based on convenience rather than loyalty. If customers receive the same service elsewhere they will take their business there. Business relationship between customers and Amazon must be based on integrity and fairness. Integrity is the foundation of trust. And trust is the foundation of commerce.

Any interaction with customers must be fair and defensible. The concept of low-customer and high-customer must be altered. While developing CRM application, fairness must be taken into count. I think a set of rules can be put in place and never be violated. For Amazon to build a genuine trust with its customers, it needs to honour this set of rules of "code of conduct" inside and out. By now Amazon should be concerned about its business reputation. I have a strong impression that Amazon lacks the sense of urgency to balance the need to grow and the need to maintain relationships with its customers characterized by high ethical standards.

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Improving CRM

Without doubt, Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google are emerging as superpowers in the business world. Their competitions are based on the ability to innovate and continue to improve, rather than on technology. Can any business keep growing forever? The answer to this question is of course ‘No’, there is a limit to growth. In order for Amazon to keep growing even at lower rate, it must continue to improve its technology and its relationship with customers. Amazon has to invent a new system, or improves the technical aspect of the current one, while investing more time and effort on the management and taking 'human being' factors into account, appropriately.

Employees and interactions with customers

The objective behind improving CRM is to retain customers. The evidence shows that the best way to keep customers happy, is to take care of employees. A happy employee is passionate, focused, and more productive than any employee under stress. There are many ways, besides financial reward, to make employees happy. One way is to empower them while developing CRM. Employees that interact with customers are the ones really able to address customers concerns in parallel with the organizational goals and mission. Simms (2003) thinks that the success of CRM relies on involving staff in designing it at an early age, rather than simply imposing it on them. Employees are core to execution. It is very challenging to get them right. If you don’t have the right team that performs at the level required, even with a perfect CRM application, the path to improvement is severely hampered. Remember! All it takes is one unhappy employee to kill your business. Therefore a well-trained team is at the heart of improving CRM.

Focus on R in CRM

Since the introduction of Electronic Health Records (HER), doctors are required to do much more data entry than face-to-face care. Divided concentration can lead to less critical attention to a key responsibility -- paying attention to the patient and the symptoms actually being presented. Similarly when customer service representatives do much of data entry, the results can be degraded customer care.

Amazon puts high premium on the development and the analysis of more advanced algorithms that integrate with CRM, which makes employees shift their focus from fulfilling customers’ needs to just collecting data. There is always risk associated with having too much data in storage. If data is left unmanaged, as the size of the data grows larger, it will become more challenging to find true value from data. While it is easy to collect it, the challenge is what to do with it, in terms of how to store it, and analyze it. Managing big data is very complex issue and it can be very expensive.

A result of Amazon's emphasis on big data, is a de-emphasis on customer care through actual relationships with people. Big data takes resources and attention. Yet, customer experience or customer interaction is long lasting. It starts before a customer places an order and it goes beyond; the product warranty period. Recognizing this truth is how to meet customer’s expectations.

However, in competitive markets many companies are willing to meet customer needs and continue to provide for them into the future. What will make Amazon stand out? Amazon offerings should meet the need in an excellent fashion with a presentation, shopping and delivery experience that are done exceptionally well. The customer will have the impression that no one else in the market can provide this wonderful experience. At this point Amazon's Marketing department will no longer depends on CRM to push for promotion because customers will simply reach for Amazon when he or she needs to do business**. This is unique relationship, intentionally nurtured by Amazon for its interest as well as the customers, tailored to individual fit, and above all competitors' options.**

CRM and Social Media

The integration of social media, in particular Facebook with customer relationship management is a perfect path for Amazon to get closer to its customers and provide~~s~~ them with compelling service. With the popularity of social media, businesses are under tremendous pressure to integrate social media with their system to keep close eyes on customers. **Social** **CRM** gives Amazon the advantage over customers by listening in on their conversations on social media and taking appropriate measures to retain them. The results would be an increase in revenue, cost reduction, and efficiency. The problem is that Amazon had engaged in fierce competition with Facebook over online payment services, mobile industry, and social networking. When two organizations are engaged in such dispute, life expectancy of both can be short. The opportunity to add more value to the traditional CRM by integrating social CRM is a long shot for Amazon.

Overdependence on Technology

It was noted that the biggest cause of CRM failure is technology. It is not surprising that technology may produce unintended results. Yet many organizations put their trust in it to seek solutions to CRM issues and ignore everything else. Because it remains the prime force that governs our work activities because it is easily manipulated, objective and is an entity that does not have feelings. As such, competence in using CRM technology provides some sort of relative advantage over anything else. However, CRM is relationship between an organization that is a group of faceless people and between customers. My suggestion is to put part of the trust on the human factor.

For Amazon to achieve a perfect CRM, it needs to go beyond technological answers. We are talking about the human-to-human relationship between organization and customer. No matter how sophisticated CRM is, it is very difficult to read a customer’s mind. We may succeed in predicting his behavior but managing the human factors relating to CRM is as important as using software itself.

Glossary

A

**ACSI**: American customer satisfaction.

**Algorithm**: a logical process to be used in computation for solving a problem.

**Analytical CRM**: a type of customer relationship management, it is used to create reports.

**Anticipatory shipping**: Amazon a system of delivering products to customers before they place an order.

**Anytime Feedback**: an internal tool that employees of Amazon can secretly use to either praise or critique their colleagues.

C

**Contact Management**: in 1980’s customer relationship management was called contact management.

**CRM**: stands for Customer Relationship Management, it is a set of strategies that manages interaction between an organization and a customer.

**Customer Loyalty**: tendency to favor one brand or service over all others.

**Customer-Centric**: is an approach based on providing a positive customer experience.

D

**Data Integration**: is a process of combining data from disparate sources into understandable and useful data.

**Data Mining**: is the process of analyzing data to discover patterns in it.

**Dynamic pricing**: online retailers would look at their patrons, size them up, and decide what to charge them on an individual basis.

E

**Econsultancy**: is an organization with mission to help our customers achieve excellence in digital business, marketing and ecommerce.

**ERP**: Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning is a tool that allows data integration.

K

**Knowledge Discovery**: another name for Data mining.

O

**Oracle Recovery Manager**: is an Oracle utility that can back up, restore, and recover database files.

S

**Sales cycle**: every sale goes through stages and follows the same pattern.

**Social CRM**: is the use of social media services, techniques and technology to enable organizations to engage with their customers.

**Statistical analysis**: integration of data mining and CRM.

**Supply Chain Management**: is the management of the flow of goods and services.

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