

An Analysis of  
Customer Relationship Marketing  
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Customer relationship marketing is a very important and impactful part of marketing in today's society. It is absolutely vital that businesses understand the importance of this if they have any hope to compete with businesses that are well established in this area. Wendy's is a great example of a company that has effectively built relationships through online marketing and social media, specifically Twitter. Wendy's is well known for their twitter account, as it is humorous and frequently engages with customers when tweeted at. Social media is not the only way to build relationships, however, as face to face interactions are also very beneficial, but online tools are generally the easiest to use when it is a big company. This is the reason that Wendy's mainly focuses on online tools, for them to attempt to create relationships through every single individual restaurant would be simply unreasonable. Many businesses should focus on the online aspect as it encourages growth, and is very beneficial to maintaining customers.

Customer relationship marketing has changed greatly since its inception. The text states, "More recent years have seen the ability of marketers to gather, build, develop, and analyze big data sets of customer information that allow them to track and understand customers on a more detailed level than ever before." (Zahay and Roberts, 2018) This quote is important because the changes that have occurred in recent years have drastically changed marketing in general, and relationship marketing is no different. While it used to be more relational, strangely, it has become less so in recent years. It has shifted from being about relationships with individual customers to building relationships with the customer crowd as a whole, and treats them as a singular or modular unit. Relationship marketing in big businesses cannot focus on individual people as there are too many, so instead they categorize, and monitor data so as to better reach people.

A study done by Robert W. Palmatier showed the effectiveness of relationship marketing. It states, “Overall, the research empirically demonstrates that gratitude plays an important role in understanding how relationship marketing investments increase purchase intentions, sales growth, and share of wallet.” (Palmatier, 2009) In other words, increasing gratitude is important to building customer relationships. Grateful customers are repeat purchasers, as grateful people tend to want to repurchase or purchase other things from the same company. This is very important as retention is the end goal of relationship building. Relationship building is not likely to attract new customers but is likely to keep customers around. Relationship building generally will lead to gratefulness, as many people love the friendly aspect that comes with relationship building, and so they will be more satisfied with their purchases. In this aspect, it is even more effective due to this.

Another great quote was made by Nelson Oly Ndubisi, who stated, “Therefore, researchers and strategists aiming to nurture loyal customers should pay close attention to issues of trust, commitment, communication and conflict handling.” (Ndubisi, 2007) This was the conclusion drawn from the study and it is very good information. As far as trust goes, trust can only truly be built by consistency. When a company is consistently a cut above average, they build trust in their brand. Commitment, on the other hand, is usually demonstrated to customers by releasing good products and taking customer advice as the quality feedback that it is. Nothing shows commitment like seeing the second version of a product include the changes that the masses asked for. Communication goes hand in hand with this, customers want to know that their voices are being heard. Every company communicates with customers, but they rarely listen, and this is what separates the good from the great. Finally, conflict handling is a hugely important aspect of business that many companies overlook. In recent years, companies have

been better about it because issues that arise are much more public, so they are almost required to put out fires quickly and efficiently to avoid controversy. All four of these things are very important to customer relationship marketing.

Emine Mediha Sayil did a study on relationship marketing, and stated in her findings, “The findings show that relationship marketing induces loyalty through relationship quality, customer value, and satisfaction, which are mainly provided by trust, communication, and relationship investment. Furthermore, relationship investment and relationship quality are the most important factors in the development of customer value, satisfaction, and loyalty. The emotional value dimension, which captures the affective aspects of perceived value, has the strongest effect on both satisfaction and loyalty.” (Sayil, 2018) This quote emphasizes the most important aspects of relationship marketing, many of which overlap with the quote from the previous paragraph. Relationship investment is an interesting aspect that was not mentioned before, however. It is vital to relationship marketing, and some might even consider it a given, but naming it and focusing on it is very beneficial. Specifically, relationship investment is hugely impactful because of the effect it has on the concept of customer lifetime value. Keeping a customer as a lifetime customer is incredibly beneficial to a company, and investing in individuals is the way to do it. An example of how to do this is personalized reward programs, which encourage long term commitment to companies.

In conclusion, relationship marketing is changing. It has been for a very long time, but the rate of change is not slowing down. The development of new technology and more personalized social media accounts for businesses is shifting the strategies that need to be employed greatly. It is important that in adopting new strategies, Christians maintain the morals that set them apart. Proverbs 19:1 (ESV) states, “Better is a poor person who walks in his

integrity than one who is crooked in speech and is a fool.” This verse’s point is clear; Christians should be willing to lose money to maintain honest business relations because it is the right thing to do. Deception is easy and can sometimes lead to immediate monetary gain, relationship marketing is not an exception to this, but upholding strong morals is far more important.

## References

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