

---

## Support options for customer relationship management

### Možnosti podpory riadenia vzťahov so zákazníkmi

Magdaléna Cárachová<sup>1</sup>

#### Abstrakt

Úspech ktorejkoľvek spoločnosti určujú zákazníci, ich spokojnosť s produktmi danej firmy, ich spokojnosť s prístupom k nim a ich ochota sa k firme vracať. Práve preto musí každá firma venovať zákazníkovi zodpovedajúcu pozornosť a čas. Spoločnosti sa v súčasnosti stále viac orientujú na budovanie, rozvoj a efektívne riadenie vzťahov so svojimi zákazníkmi. Jednou z príčin zvýšenej orientácie na kvalitné uspokojovanie potrieb zákazníkov bola zmena charakteru konkurenčného prostredia v 90. rokoch a aj dôsledok rozvoja informačných a komunikačných technológií (IKT). Nástup internetu posilnil všadeprítomnosť konkurencie. Jednou z najúčinnějších ciest, ako sa podnik môže odlišiť od konkurencie je dokonalé porozumenie jednotlivým zákazníkom a ich potrebám, osobný prístup a vynikajúca úroveň služieb. Cieľom príspevku je poukázať na to, že poznanie zákazníka a umenie udržiavať a posilňovať dobrý vzťah s ním už nie je žiaden nadštandard, ale potreba, bez ktorej je úspešné podnikanie skôr šťastnou zhodou okolností ako očakávaným výsledkom prameniaca z profesionality. Softvérovým nástrojom umožňujúcim a podporujúcim takéto riadenie vzťahov je CRM (Customer Relationship Management) systém. Jeho úspešná implementácia je základom pre prácu so zákazníkmi vo väčšine spoločností. Takýto systém umožňuje komplexne pokryť všetky procesy týkajúce sa zákazníka.

#### Kľúčové slová

Stratégia CRM, pohľady na CRM, aktivity CRM, informačné potreby CRM, informačná stratégia, vývojové trendy

#### Abstract

The success of any company is determined by customers, their satisfaction with products of the company, their satisfaction with access to them and their willingness to come back to the company. That's why every company must pay adequate attention and time to customers. Companies are now increasingly oriented towards formation, development and efficient management of relationships with their customers. One of the causes of increased focus on high quality satisfaction of customer needs was the change in the nature of the competitive environment in the 90s and also the result of the development of information and communication technologies (ICT). The onset of the internet has strengthened the pervasiveness of competition. One of the most effective ways how business can differentiate from the competition is a perfect understanding of individual customers and their needs, a personal approach and an excellent level of services. The paper would like to point out that the knowledge of the customer and the art of maintaining and strengthening a good relationship with him is not at all above standard but rather a need without which a successful business is more of a happy coincidence than an expected result stemming from professionalism. A software tool enabling and promoting such relationship management is CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system. Its successful implementation is the basis for working with

---

<sup>1</sup> Ing. Magdaléna Cárachová, PhD., Department of Applied Informatics, Faculty of Economic Informatics, University of Economics in Bratislava, Dolnozemska cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, tel.: +421 2/672 95 864, e-mail: carach@euba.sk

customers in most companies. Such a system enables to comprehensively cover all customer-related processes.

**Key words**

CRM strategy, CRM .views, CRM activities, the information needs of CRM, information strategy, development trends

**JEL classification**

C8, O3

**1 Introduction**

Modern, internet-based business requires the company to seek new ways of creating and maintaining customer relationships. In a market economy it applies that only those companies survive that can properly adapt to changing market requirements and precisely the CRM system allows companies to create and have the map of customer needs. Therefore, CRM systems are starting to be increasingly applied in a very wide spectrum of companies - in practice it is difficult to find a company where a CRM application is not found. As a result of influence of global competition, companies have to invest in customer relationships much more money and effort than ever before.

CRM represents an iterative process in which the information collected about customers is used to form a positive relationship with them. Providing direct and two-way communication is especially important in the global competitive environment. Regarding the global availability of information, products and services, customers anticipate continuous communication with the company with appropriate compliance with their requirements. Therefore, any company that is a part of this environment must strive to offer high quality customized products and services and many other advantages that will entice new and maintain existing customers. For this reason, companies need to manage customer relationships to improve their competitiveness and strengthen their position on the market. The development of information and communication technologies (ICT) has significantly improved relationships between companies and their customers. In fact, modern ICTs are a powerful tool that improves communication between employees of the company, its customers, but also streamlines the management of the company. The most notable feature of the ICTs, as far as CRM is concerned, is enabling interactive communication.

**2 CRM**

Customer relationship management is a widely recognized and frequently used strategy for the management and care for business relationships with customers, existing as well as prospective. It involves the use of technology to organize, automate and synchronize business processes - in particular activities related to sales, marketing, customer service and their support processes. Its general objective is to find, attract and win new customers, maintain and care for those who already are the company's customers, try to win back those who were lost for various reasons, as well as reduce the cost of marketing and customer services. The concept of CRM has been developing for many years. Today, customer relationship management generally means a broader corporate strategy that encompasses all departments that come directly or indirectly in contact with the customer.

Real CRM contributes to the organization of information from different sources at the same time to provide a holistic view of each customer in real time. This allows employees who come into direct contact with the customer, i.e. in areas such as sales, sales support, customer service and marketing to make quick and at the same time informed decisions about anything, ranging

from cross-selling (i.e. selling complementary products to existing customers) and up-selling (i.e. selling a newer, more expensive or otherwise improved product to customers) to creating a targeted marketing campaign and maintaining or strengthening the market position.

Despite the fact that it is a software component, CRM has evolved into a customer-oriented philosophy that must permeate the entire organization. The success of CRM initiatives must involve three key elements - people, processes and technologies. People within the company, from the CEO to the customer service representatives, must therefore be fully engaged to support CRM solutions. Business processes must be designed so as to be ready to support CRM initiatives, mostly through the perspective of how a given process can better serve for customer satisfaction. Companies must choose an appropriate technology to handle these improved processes capable of providing the best data and it should be easy for operational activities. If just one of these factors fails, it indicates a serious threat to the entire CRM initiative.

To learn more about the needs and behaviour of consumers is a strategy to develop stronger relationships with them. After all, good customer relationships are at the key to corporate success. CRM includes many technological components, but to think of CRM as a primarily technological term is inappropriate. It is more appropriate way to think of CRM as a process gathering many pieces of information about customers, sales, marketing efficiency and trends on respective markets. For customer relationship management to be truly effective, the company must convince its staff that CRM will bring benefits to them as well. Then, it must analyse business processes to determine which of them will have to be adapted and how to achieve the highest benefit from this adjustment. The analysis is followed by deciding which aspects related to the customer are relevant and shall be dealt with. Finally, a carefully selected project team must choose the right technology that enables the automation of everything that will be necessary. If the implementation is successful and effective, people, processes and technology work together to develop and strengthen relationships, increase profitability and reduce costs.

## 2.1 CRM views

a) *strategic view* - CRM is a customer-oriented discipline, applying planning, performance and analytical activities in order to obtain, process and keep the customer. It is linked to marketing management and strategic marketing.

b) *tactical view* - CRM is an integrated corporate system consisting of processes, people, channels, partners, which is designed to fulfil the interaction with specific customers. It is linked to tactical marketing, sales and customer services. It should enable optimal interaction with the customer, namely in the context of the specific points of interaction - personal meeting, telephone, e-mail.

The corporate definition of CRM must include both views. CRM intervenes in business functions such as sales, servicing and marketing. Many software products to facilitate these activities have been used for a longer period of time already. CRM, however, should be seen as a new framework or a system of these once more or less independent applications. (Kucharik, 2006)

## 2.2 Implementation tasks

Increased sales, higher rates of customer satisfaction and significant savings in operational costs - these are also some of the benefits that CRM can bring to the company. The emphasis is on the fact that the technologies are to be implemented in the context of careful strategic and operational planning. Implementation almost always quickly fails if even one of the following aspects is not fulfilled:

**Weak planning:** Initiatives can easily fail if the effort is concentrated only in selection and deployment of the software and it is not accompanied by a comprehensive understanding of the context and support of the workforce. In other cases, companies have preferred to automate erroneous processes rather than reworking them to be acceptable.

**Incorrect integration:** For many enterprises the integration is an initiative that addresses only a certain requirement - improvement of a specific process and automation of a privileged group. Such partial solutions are not in line with the overall corporate strategy. They provide only a limited view of the customer and often lead to misunderstanding of the expectations of the user. (Chlebovský, 2005).

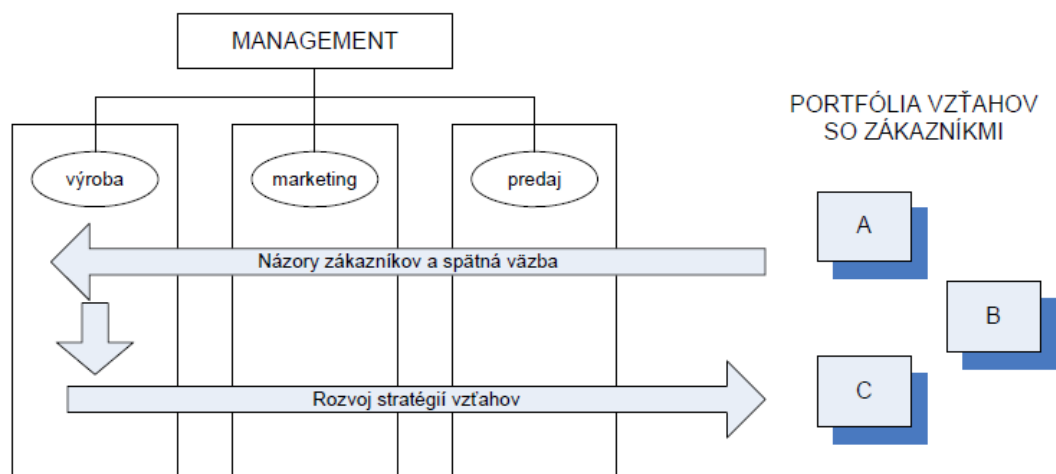
The aim of basic activities of CRM is identification and continuous update of corporate processes related to the customer, which through their activities implement the relevant business model of the company. The business model should serve the understanding of the logic of value creation for the company and the definition of its business space. The business model is therefore a strategic tool that takes into account the situation of competitors, customers, partners and possible forms of cooperation. The strategic objective of the business model is obvious. It is the ability to provide the required solution to the customer while minimizing its own costs.

The process is already a specific implementer of activities in terms of the relevant business model. Process is the basic unit of management and evaluation and as such must have defined at least its owner, content, metrics and resources. CRM processes are divided into three main groups. They include the processes of marketing, trade (i.e. sales) and services (Dohnal, 2002). The unifying point of view of the business model and the corresponding processes is currently becoming the customer. CRM processes are characterised by high intensity of knowledge, complexity and variability and they are applied sequentially with mutual interpenetration depending on specific situations arising in the business cycle. The change of business processes must be carried out under the supervision and with the active support of senior executives. The fulfilment of this essential and necessary condition will create conditions for employees to be able to act in a new way and to creatively develop new processes which pursue value creation for customers. (Dudinská, 2006).

### **2.3 Information needs resulting from the application of CRM**

It is necessary to build a system that will enable access to information for all participants, which they need to fulfil their roles. Ideally, the system should be designed to allow automatic access to the required information and automatic storage of customer data. Free flow of information between functions is essential for the management of data about customer relationships (Strbacka, 2002). The task of the team is to gather insights about customers within their own relationships and continuously develop customer relationship strategies.

Figure 1: Management of customer relationship data



Source: Storbacka, 2002

**Legend:**

výroba – production

predaj – sale

Portfóliá vzťahov so zákazníkmi - Customer relationship portfolios

Názory zákazníkov a spätná väzba - Customer opinions and feedback

Rozvoj stratégií vzťahov – Relationship strategy development

**2.4 Support of effective decision making**

CRM supports strategic and tactical decision-making by providing not only integrated real view of customers, business partners and employees in real time and their mutual interactions during sale and service provision, but also a realistic view of the activities focused on the user. CRM provides important information and surveys for employees and business partners about the whole environment of the organization from employees to executive management. CRM provides to those who have to decide a thorough and effective analysis related to the implementation of strategies, production planning, customer services and communication channels. A suitable CRM solution delivers business value by opening important communication channels and creating a common, customer-oriented knowledge base to provide better service for customers. A suitable CRM system makes it easier to use accurate information for everyone in the organization - it effectively integrates the functions of marketing, sales and customer services. An effective CRM system empowers customers to participate in the pursuit of the business together with the organization in a way that changes the image of the connection of customers with own staff and business partners in all organizational units in each process and through a variety of communication devices. CRM can be seen as "front end" to communicate with customers in an integrated environment and as an application that can provide a broad base of loyal customers. At present, the CRM solution means extremely deep links between information and business transactions between buyers and sellers. This information can help to clarify the relationships between buyers and suppliers and close links between the CRM and the solutions of the type of Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) and Supply Chain Management (SCM) then transferred directly to the customers' demands for chain suppliers. The main joint processes include:

- Lead Collaboration – joint information database of contacts, links and classifications;

- Opportunity Collaboration – shared information in the business cycle of all business opportunities;
- Demand and Order Collaboration – sharing orders and verification of the feasibility of the requirements between the company, distributors and customers. This process allows order entry, order status tracking for all participants and management of distribution channels;
- Contract Collaboration – the company may share information about the formation of a contract with its partners.

## **2.5 Knowledge management - basic condition for high quality CRM**

Knowledge management (KM) is a process by which a company creates value through knowledge and intellectual capital (Chlebovský, 2005). It is the exchange of knowledge between employees, departments and branches. CRM success is largely dependent on the functional concept of KM. All data is collected in a central database of the CRM information system, which in turn allows you to convert its sorting and analysis. It is true that the information is useful in particular for decision making. As in KM, also in CRM one of the most important factors that influence success is the human factor. It is essential to convince employees that sharing knowledge is not a means to greater control of their work and the misuse of their know-how, but a means of allowing faster development of the company. The main advantages of effective KM include:

- Faster innovations thanks to the free distribution of ideas,
- improvement of customer services by making the response to customer requests more efficient;
- boost sales by shortening development phases of products and their marketing;
- reduction in staff fluctuation through stronger integration in corporate processes;
- making internal processes more efficient by repealing unnecessary operations.

## **3 Planning process of CRM concept**

In terms of information links, CRM can be described as integration and coordination of marketing, sales and customer services in a coherent and comprehensive approach to care for a particular customer (Chlebovský, 2005). The alignment of these activities requires good preparation of the process of creating and implementing a CRM system. The entire planning process is based on multiple steps.

### **3.1 Corporate vision**

The first important step is to create a vision that is necessary for the management to define what CRM means for the company, propose company objectives and show a picture of what the company wants for its target customers. The idea is necessary for employees, customers and other stakeholders in order to know what values the company has to offer, based on which it wants to create relationships with customers and what it will mean for the corporate strategy. The corporate vision should explicitly reflect the fundamental views, values and visions of the organization. It's an ongoing process that differentiates it from its competitors and serves as a business tool to coordinate the company. It forms an interface that enables employees of different types to work together and share common values and pursue the objectives and philosophy of the organization.

The vision should be based on establishing an image of the company for the customer in connection with creation of a competitive market position, based on a proposal of values defined, provided and personified by the company brand. The vision of the company should be

based on the nature of the corporate business environment in which the company operates and the characteristics of customers that the company tries to address with its offer for a long-term relationship. The vision is superior to the strategy and represents a key idea. The vision must include management principles and business philosophy. It does not mean just focusing on certain products and markets but also on the human factor. For employees it must represent a certain ideal whose implementation is a part of their everyday work and they can identify with it.

### 3.2 CRM Strategy

The development of the strategy should direct the customer base towards the dissemination of the proposed customer value. It determines what resources there will be and how they will be used for the mutual customer contact. The strategy focuses on financial revenues of the business strategy and subsequent review of the marketing strategy, if necessary to adapt it. It provides an overview of how the company will appreciate the value of customer relationships and customer loyalty.

*The first point* of the development of the strategy is to split the segments of customers into categories and the setting of objectives and assessments for each segment. Segmentation of customers is a critical tool for the development of the strategy. Management of customer segmentation is the process of allocation of the customer groups based on common attributes and the management of these segments in a manner that maximizes the benefits brought in by customers and long-term earnings potential of the company.

For example, an enterprise might create different groups of customers based on demand for products or services, buying habits, or potential profitability of the customer. In doing so, it is important to answer the following five key questions:

1. What customers need and in what are their needs different?
2. Why are their needs different?
3. What motivates them?
4. How can we benefit from which customer?
5. How much does it cost us to service a particular customer?

The answers to these questions can be grouped and by use of these components a so-called customer segmentation model can be assembled. From this finding it is therefore apparent that building a segmentation model is an iterative process. In creating the model, intuition is applied first, and knowledge is further clarified by applying evidence-based analyses.

Before assembling the model, the enterprise must have established two criteria:

- The number of segments

From a strategic point of view, it is necessary to limit the number of segments.

- The criteria defining the segment.

Traditional methods of categorization were represented by a combination of demographic data such as age, gender, salary and addresses. Today, a cutting-edge application provides a number of behavioural data, such as the frequency of performance of certain transactions. It is possible to arrange more detailed behavioural patterns that are more valuable than the demographic ones.

In practice, there are two basic methods of segmentation of customers:

#### *Strategic segmentation*

includes management of corporate strategy based on the differences between the groups of customers. It is primarily focused on the long-term strategies of management and customer

care. Because each customer segment responds to different stimuli and values differently, an individual strategic approach is required.

#### *Marketing segmentation*

is based on a bottom-up approach by means of detailed transaction data, which give an overview of what the customer buys, what is the frequency of purchase, when the customer buys and demographic data of the customer. Detailed marketing segmentation can be used both to keep the customers as well as to gain them. Profiles of segment should provide insight into the habits of consumers, distribution channels used and response mechanism.

*The second point* is the evaluation of the status of the customer base. Representation of the intensity and the value of customer relationships are possible in two ways:

- how much value is the value of a customer for the enterprise?
- how much value represents the value of the company for the customer?

The result is a matrix of customers combined with the value of the customer in terms of supplies to individual segments. *The third point* is the definition of objectives and the setting of tactics to meet them.

### **3.3 Evaluation of Customer Experience**

Customer experience will certainly influence future revenues and is therefore very important. Bad customer experience may, potentially, pose a risk of bankruptcy. If there is inadequate customer experience, it means that the CRM initiative is inappropriately oriented and provides little value for customers. Value should be calculated for both sides in relationship management. It is important, therefore, to avoid pretending that the enterprise understands their customers without having communicated with them. Implementation of the feedback from the customer to the operational system will raise awareness of the company on customer complaints and allows them to better deal with these complaints.

### **3.4 Organisation of cooperation**

Organisation of cooperation is related to CRM in terms of changes of internal processes of the enterprises, organizational structure, motivation and skills of employees and actual behaviour. None of these aspects can be easily attained. Top management must follow the necessary changes through the formal regulation of the organization. Each of the changes must be gradual and may take several years to be fully achieved. Successful change of management implies the change of management in five areas:

- Management should propose a less hierarchical structure of the organization that is goal oriented, and there should be known how to motivate workers.
- Knowledge and competence. Changes in technology require the development of entrepreneurial skills, abilities of analysts, project management and services.
- Knowledge. Knowledge sharing develops cooperation and fosters innovation. It is necessary to pay attention to the tools and means of knowledge management.
- The organization. Decision making must be closer to the customer and allow speeding up response times.
- Encouraging. The objectives of the company must be allocated to aims for the customer. Recognizing and welcoming new customers are a great motivation.



### 3.5 CRM Processes

CRM information system is in today's understanding an application covering processes through which an interaction arises between the company that has implemented it and its prospective or existing customers. Access to processes that are customer focused is affected by multiple applications. What is important is the decision what processes represent an opportunity to the company and to distinguish them from each other and enhance the own value of the company for the customer. The company should, in principle, choose the following procedure:

- the mapping of processes that are affected by customers;
- identification of key processes from the point of view of the customer;
- quantification and allocation of priorities to these processes on the basis of their added value to the customer value;
- implementing changes in management and other management levels of the company;
- ensure that no process could be removed without the knowledge of its owner and that each major process should have its cross-assigned owner;
- perform an analysis of how these changes may affect all suppliers and partners;
- set up significant, measurable objectives;
- subdivide customer database;
- conduct an audit of business processes that are affected by the customer,
- create feedback from each customer's priorities and prioritize processes by relevance to customers and their impact on strategic business aspects of CRM.

### 3.6 Information strategy of CRM

Information strategy as the sixth region is essential for the CRM system. Information must be collected, stored, distributed and applied within the company and among business partners. This creates a basis for customer knowledge (Customer Knowledge) and effective interaction in any channel. In many companies, the opportunities of CRM information are at a low level because they contain numerous fragmented databases and systems and also, there are no strategies for cleaning of incoming data. This requires a more strategic approach to customer information, namely even at the beginning before the introduction of CRM in the planning process. Enterprises should consider what customer data are required to support operational processes and analytical tools. Customer information is at the core of any CRM program. It identifies and strengthens the weak points in the company's own value chain of corporate customer relationships.

### 3.7 CRM Technology

The seventh block (unit) deals with CRM technology, while CRM itself is not only technology, but provides the necessary analytical skills and operational interaction. Most of the corporate databases are fragmented. To achieve integration across channels and business units it is necessary to build an architecture with security and standards for the selection of applications, which output, protection and available standards they should meet and how and when they should be updated. The compatibility in the hardware, software, network and communication infrastructure is also important to support the integration, management and skills in business management. The technology should be optimal to support CRM processes and should be selected with awareness of the fact that it will be integrated into an existing IS of the company.

### **3.8 Methods of assessment of CRM**

The last block is focused on methods for assessment of CRM. For enterprises, it is necessary to introduce measurable and specific CRM objectives. Evaluation metrics should not be used only to measure the level of success, but also to carry feedback mechanism for continuous development of strategies and tactics. They may also act as a good tool to manage change and encourage staff structure. CRM metrics should track and measure own CRM strategy of the company. There needs to be a hierarchy of metrics depending on the purpose and the user. The lack of traditional methods of evaluating the performance of the company is that only the overall financial performance of the company is taken into account and it is not clear how the company acted in operating the various target markets and customers. Quite a serious problem is that these indicators only reflect the results of past transactions and do not give sufficient information on how the company is going to be successful on the market, and what are the prospects for its further actions and growth in the competitive environment. Based on these indicators it is not possible to approach to strategic decisions on the various aspects of the marketing strategy and the CRM strategy. If the company is to know not only results so far, but also examine the prospects for its future growth and expansion in a competitive environment, it is necessary, in addition to the internal financial performance indicators, to monitor primarily a whole range of non-financial performance indicators on the basis of the principles of the Balanced Scorecard, compiled from 4 different, interrelated perspectives of performance, namely related to customer care, innovation, financial and value-creating internal processes. When designing the system of performance evaluation based on the Balanced Scorecard principles, it should be based on the company's vision and strategy, i.e. rely on the first two construction blocks of CRM. It is necessary to note that in the application of CRM strategy it is not about measuring and evaluation of average performance while providing for the whole of the market, but it is necessary to introduce the evaluation of the success of the company on an individual basis, i.e. how the company behaves satisfying each of the customers in terms of market performance, innovation, level of value-creating processes and financial performance.

## **4 Key trends in customer relationship management**

Customers are changing. They have access to more information, more options, and a far greater bargaining power. CRM is today therefore affected by four key factors - mobility, social networks, big data and cloud. They have an impact on business, marketing and customer support. The companies cannot rely on previously proven methods of communication with customers, but must adopt a new model that is based on the understanding of customer behaviour in today's digital world.

### **4.1 Social networks and mobility**

One of the conditions for successful adaptation to the new market conditions with well-informed customers whose needs and interests over time often change rapidly is also an effective use of social media. These already by far do not serve only to the mutual sharing of experiences and feelings between users, but primarily as a valuable source of information on current as well as potential customers. Companies that want to succeed on a highly competitive global market must understand the habits and needs of customers and make use of this acquired knowledge to build the mutual relationship. Social media is not only a source of information for companies, but on the contrary also for customers who may have available the experience of other clients with the products and services of the companies. For this reason, it is important not only to utilise information from social media, but also to pay careful attention to the presentation of the company itself in this increasingly important communication space. Today,

more than ever, retailers and other field workers require access to information regardless of where they are and what devices are available. Mobile devices in the field of customer service are experiencing a great boom. It is predicted that by 2020 there will be more than ten billion of active connections of mobile devices. And of course, it changes the way how customers want to communicate.

## **4.2 Cloud**

Cloud is a trend in CRM for several years. It brings speed and a lower cost. But now it is becoming more popular due to its advantages both in financial and in the IT area. It offers lower costs, fast commissioning, the flexibility of settings when changing processes, the payment method "Pay-as-you-use" and instant access from anywhere. All this means that the business units and other departments in the company are less dependent on the traditional shopping process ICT. Customers can choose between a cloud solution that is implemented in the data centre, or solution "on-premise" installed on the customer's infrastructure. There is also a hybrid model that combines both mentioned variants. There is another option, CRM hosted by a partner, which is operated in his data centre.

## **4.3 Big Data**

The volume of processed data on customers is already too big. Computer systems and possibilities of Business Intelligence tools today can generate a useful overviews for decision received from a large number of internal company data as well as data available on the Internet. They deliver to the traders the real-time actual data about all customers and contact persons, both from the CRM and the social networks and third-party resources. Modern CRM solutions offer interesting technology called dashboards. This is visualization and reports processed in real time and preset for each job position in the company with the possibility of easy modification for specific business processes and preferences of specific employees. Another advantage are advanced reports or analyses, CRM data exports, which can be either static for a single analysis or dynamic, in which the data is obtained on-line, directly from the CRM.

Companies that want to keep up with market developments must practice a dynamic way of doing business. They need to have the latest current data and user-definable analytical outputs. Every company should ensure that their people have business applications that enable them to do their work best across all departments and inspire them so that their own success has a positive impact on the success of the whole enterprise.

## **5 Conclusion**

The business environment is undergoing major changes every year. There is not only an increase in supply, which largely exceeds demand, but also to the globalization of the competitive environment. Every business entity is to a greater or lesser extent influenced by its surroundings and therefore it is very important to know how to be different from the others, namely in its orientation not only on product quality but also the quality of access to customers. Through ICT companies receive a lot of information that can be processed and used as a competitive advantage. CRM unites the potential of information technology and marketing strategies to achieve long-term and profitable customer relationships. It offers enhanced capabilities to use the information to better understand customers and the consequent improvement of marketing strategies. This requires functional integration of people, operations, processes and marketing opportunities through knowledge, technology and applications. Implementation of ICTs aimed at managing relationships with customers and suppliers in the information system of the company is aimed at contributing to the fulfilment of one of the fundamental objectives of the business company - to have a satisfied customer.

## Literature

- [1] Dohnal, J. (2002). *Řízení vztahů se zákazníky: procesy, pracovníci, technologie* (ISBN 80-247-0401-3). Praha, Czech Republic: Grada.
- [2] Dudinská, E., & Novotná, L. & Droppa, M. (2006). *Riadenie vzťahov so zákazníkmi v globálnej ekonomike*. Prešov, Slovak Republic: M. Vašek Publ. (ISBN 80 - 7165-550-3)
- [3] Chlebovský, V. (2005). *CRM: řízení vztahů se zákazníky* (80-251-0798-1). Brno, Czech Republic: Computer Press.
- [4] Chlebovský, V. (2004). *Řízení vztahů se zákazníky (CRM): tvorba koncepce a její implementace: zkrácená verze Ph. D. Thesis, obor Řízení a ekonomika podniku = Customer relationship management (CRM): conception formation and implementation* (ISBN 80-214-2757-4). V Brně, Czech Republic: Vysoké učení technické, Fakulta podnikatelská, Ústav ekonomiky a managementu.
- [5] Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2007). *Marketing management* (978-80-247-1359-5). Praha, Czech Republic: Grada.
- [6] Kotler, P. (2007). *Moderní marketing: 4. evropské vydání* (ISBN 978-80247-1545-2). Praha, Czech Republic: Grada.
- [7] Kucharik, T. (2016, December 12). CRM - riadenie vzťahov so zákazníkmi. Retrieved May 03, 2017, from <http://www.efocus.sk/archiv/clanok/crm-riadenie-vzzahov-so-zakaznikmi>
- [8] Lehtinen, J., & Svozilová, A. (2007). *Aktivní CRM: řízení vztahů se zákazníky* (978-80-247-1814-9). Praha, Czech Republic: Grada.
- [9] Pásztorová, J. (2006). Riadenie konkurencieschopnosti zvyšovaním hodnoty zákazníkej základne pomocou implementácie CRM. *Marketing a obchod 2006*. Zvolen, Slovak republic: Slovenské národné lesnícke centrum, 2006. (ISBN 80-8093-009-0).
- [10] Storbacka, K., & Lehtinen, J. (2002). *Řízení vztahů se zákazníky = Customer relationship management* (ISBN 807169813X). Praha, Czech Republic: Grada.
- [11] Ryšan, M. (2009). *Jednoduchšia cesta k zákazníkovi*. INFOWARE. ISSN 1335-4787.
- [12] Wessling, H. (2003). *Aktivní vztah k zákazníkům pomocí CRM strategie, praktické příklady a scénáře* ; (ISBN 80-247-0569-9). Praha, Czech Republic: Grada Publ.