

Archetypal characteristics of social customer relationship management

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Keywords

Social CRM, Relationship Marketing, Social Media

Abstract

Social Customer Relationship Management (SCRM) is a relatively new concept in the contemporary marketing studies. Although its general understanding seems to be rather intuitive and simple within business managerial environments, as the sole name of it induces the usage of Social Media (SM) and data that it contains and constantly produces in company's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategies, scholars still struggle to create its holistic definition or even one unified description and a general list of characteristics.

In this paper, we discuss and find deficiencies and incoherencies among researched works and detecting a group of characteristics archetypal to SCRM.

1. Introduction

The Social Customer Relationship Management (SCRM) is a relatively new concept in the contemporary marketing studies. Although its general understanding seems to be rather intuitive and simple within business managerial environments, as the sole name of it induces the usage of Social Media (SM) and data that it contains and constantly produces in company's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategies, scholars still struggle to create its holistic definition or even one unified description and a general list of characteristics.

In this paper, we discuss and find deficiencies and incoherencies among researched works and detecting a group of characteristics archetypal to SCRM's origins. In order to begin the search for archetypal characteristics of SCRM one should first decide upon starting point. In Jacewicz and Cho (2012), we have proven that the contemporary understandings of SCRM are incoherent and deficient in many different ways. Although majority of the authors represent the CRM-centric approach towards the concept, others discredit it for its many problems and propose to focus on community instead.

Undeniably, process of defying universal characteristics of SCRM would lack the credibility were it to favor only one, or at the worse, none of the existing approaches, and thus our search should start from the point that unifies them. After analyzing works of Greenberg and Ang, in our opinion major representatives of contemporary SCRM movements, we believe that the strongest similarity between their points of view is the collaboration concept. Ang (2011) places it among one of his 4C model, and explains the importance of multi-user cooperation within specially prepared environment in order to create and complete given projects. Greenberg¹ on the other hand refers to the concept of 'bricks, bits, and interaction' introduced by Fruchter² to explain the collaboration process in the CRM, and proposes his own understanding

¹ Greenberg, P., "CRM at the speed of light: essential customer strategies for the 21st century", McGraw-Hill, Osborne 2004 [in:] Askol and Nakada (2011).

² Refer to: Renate Fruchter: Bricks & Bits & Interaction. JSAI Workshops 2001: pp.35-42.

of collaboration in SCRM where it is used by the businesses for collaborative managing of business relationships and creating collaborative customer experience. Finally, Askool and Nakata (2011) use Greenberg's understanding of collaboration to form three aspects of SCRM - environmental (bricks), technical (bits), and social (interactions) - to classify it as a 'collaboration system'. Thus implying that based on SCRM's collaborative characteristics one could derive guidelines crucial to its practical implementation in holistic model.

At this point we need to refer one more time to Greenberg (2008) who stated that SCRM is *company's response to the customer's ownership of the conversation*". The uneven division of 'power' suggested by this definition may induce, that the collaboration per se (understood as a *deep, collective, determined to reach an identical objective*³) is in fact impossible. However, as proposed by Jacewicz and Cho (2012) SCRM might be perceived as a next after CRM, evolution stage of the *relationship marketing* (RM). In this case the uneven power division between the company and its clients may be balanced by firm's actions, and thus both 'organization-user' and 'user-user' groups working within the SM(Social Marketing)-based environment on projects they value, may be referred to as collaborators.

In other words, we believe that after adjusting some of the aspects identified by Askool and Nakata (2011), collaboration is fully qualified to become a starting point for the research of universal, archetypal characteristics of SCRM. For this purpose we would like to propose the main aspects of SCRM (Figure 1), created in reference to Askool and Nakata's aspects of SCRM.

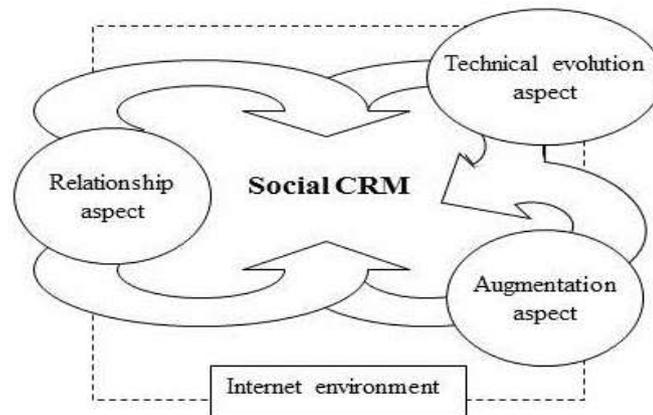


Figure 1. Main aspects of SCRM

The main aspects of SCRM presented in the Figure 1, in contrast to Askool and Nakata's division, consist of four elements. The environmental 'bricks' are perceived as the 'Internet environment' as all of the SM-based communication is located in this medium. The technical 'bits' have been modified to 'Technical evolution' in order to reflect the constant changes in technology that influence the characteristics of collaboration (e.g., mobile technology allowed users to post and comment wherever and whenever they want, while Twitter encouraged them to send short contents *inter alia* via their mobile devices). Lastly, the social 'interaction' has been presented as 'Relationship aspect', as the interaction requires mutuality, whereas many users like to 'audit' SM but interact only in 'the real world' (e.g., people who never write internet product reviews may still read them and base their purchase patterns on the read opinions). The new element is 'Augmentation aspect'. In our understanding it represents all the actions undertaken by the company in order to foot the power difference between it and other SM users.

³ Collaboration, <en.wikipedia.org> (access date: 06.02.2013).

The synergy of all four elements allows SCRM actors to collaborate, and thus construct the SCRM itself.

In the following sections we will describe each of the main aspects of SCRM in order to find archetypal characteristics of this concept. The 'Internet environment', as presented in the Figure 1, is not a distinguishable aspect and therefore will only interlude in the following sections.

2. Relationship aspect

The relationship aspect of SCRM explains origins of the way SM users create, enhance, prolong or end their relation with other users. Therefore understanding the change that occurred between the previous marketing theories of relationship building and the most recent ones, the set of universal 'rules of engagement' can be created. In order to present the marketing roots of relationship usage, one should start from brief description of service marketing (Rogozinski, 2000a). *Service relationship* is a special bond, introduced by Rogozinski, that connects 'receiver' and 'provider' of a given service and results in creation of a mutually dependable value in a form of unique offering. Both sides of this 'transaction' work in a symmetric relation where they share information and material goods to achieve their common goal (Rogozinski, 2000b).

The benefits of service relationship have been soon spotted by practitioners and theorists from fields of marketing other than service (e.g., industrial marketing). Thus more general theory of relationship usage in marketing emerged expanding initial symmetrical mutuality concept to a whole paradigm shift known as the relationship marketing. Among many others, Berry and Parasuraman (1991), Grönroos (1990), Tzokas and Saren (1996), Christopher et al (1991), Gummesson (1994), Rydel and Ronkowski (1995), Fonfara (2004), and Rogozinski (2000b); managed to define and study RM to a point where clear set of determinants of this concept could be indexed (Table 14).

Table 1. Relationship Marketing Determinants

Determinant	Researchers recognizing given determinant in their relationship marketing definition
Acquiring the client	Berry and Parasuraman, Grönroos, Tzokas and Saren, Fonfara;
Enhancing relationships with partner	Berry and Parasuraman, Grönroos, Tzokas and Saren, Konfara, Rogozinski;
Long-term relationships	Berry and Parasuraman, Grönroos, Tzokas and Saren, Christopher et al, Fonfara, Rogozinski;
Relations with partner's contacts as well	Grönroos;
Partnership	Grönroos, Christopher et al, Rydel and Ronkowski;
Trust	Grönroos, Tzokas and Saren;
Communication, dialog	Tzokas and Saren, Fonfara, Rogozinski;
Mutual understanding	Tzokas and Saren;
Interest in external markets (outside the organization)	Tzokas and Saren, Christopher et al, Fonfara;
Interest in internal markets (inside the organization)	Christopher et al, Fonfara, Rogozinski;
Quality	Christopher et al;
Loyalty	Rydel and Ronkowski, Rogozinski.

The determinants form Table 1 constitutes the sole essence of the concept known as RM – a clear set of values crucial to its success. However, without a ‘binder’ in a form of literary definition, those values might get lost or misinterpreted. Therefore we have chosen to cite of the RM definitions constituting a guideline to our understanding of this concept. “[Relationship] marketing is a process including several parties or actors, the objectives of which have to be met. This is done by a mutual exchange and fulfillment of promises, a fact that makes trust an important aspect of marketing” (Grönroos, 1994).

The RM is a broad concept which can be used in majority of enterprises, business models and strategies. However, the mutuality of relationships lying at its foundations seemed to underperform in some of the cases. Customer relationship management, as an approach focused strictly on transaction (Cho, 2010), found it more beneficial to exploit its superiority over customers in order to fulfill their needs and wants better than competitors. Although altered by the power shift, some of the elements building RM can still be found in CRM’s definitions. Kotler and Keller (2008) described this concept as the process of cautious management of clients’ in-depth data through maximizing their loyalty (RM determinant) towards the company. Also in Baran et al’s (2008) distinction of five general fields of CRM’s interest (*software package, system or technology; data storage and analysis; cultural change within the organization; management practice focusing on relationships as opposed to transactions; managing demand and strategy focused on current customers*) elements such as the need for adapting firm’s internal market (employees) to their new functions, and even to solely stress out the importance of relationships between company and client, indicates that both RM and CRM are not completely independent approaches, but simply variations caused by some additional factors. After analyzing Baran et al’s first three fields of CRM’s interest, and taking into consideration Greenberg’s (2001) statement that technology is a success factor for CRM’s business strategy – we believe that CRM technology (divided into operational, analytical and collaborative) is one of those variety-forcing factors. Especially after considering that although operational and analytical technology seemed to ‘push’ CRM away from RM’s roots, the collaborative technology – perceived as one of the most essential aspects of relationship usage in not only service marketing, but RM, and even SCRM as well – helped the concept to ‘stay closer’ to its origins.

Some of the above-mentioned variety factors helped the first ‘versions’ of the CRM to evolve in different directions (e.g., SCRM), and therefore decided to create a base-concept of CRM referred to as “*traditional CRM – a data-driven, process centric methodology, strategy, and business model that gave senior leadership new transparency into their internal customer-facing organizations and activities*” (Greenberg, 2010); or simply explaining its base purposes to manage customer relationships so as to maximize their life-time value for the organization (Ang, 2011) or create integration with other business activities and increasing the customer loyalty and retention (Askool and Nakata, 2011).

The transaction-driven approach towards CRM can be characterized by many contradictions to determinants of RM. However, in our opinion it is those contradictions that lead or directly cause some of the SCRM’s deficiencies and incoherencies. Therefore the comparison between them (Table 2) could lead to finding archetypal characteristics of SCRM from its relationship aspect.

Table 2. Differences between RM and transaction-oriented CRM

RM’s determinant (potential archetypal characteristics of SCRM)	Transaction-oriented CRM approach
Acquiring the client	important
Enhancing relationships with partner	important
Long-term relationships	important if customer value is high enough

Relations with partner's contacts as well	important
Partnership	customer and company should not be treated equally
Trust	one-sided as company depends on customer data
Communication, dialog	important
Mutual understanding	important but optional as clients do not have to understand the process behind LTV, cross/up selling
Interest in external markets (outside the organization)	important
Interest in internal markets (inside the organization)	important but limited
Quality	important
Loyalty	important

As in Table 2, more than half of the determinants of RM are equally important in both RM and CRM. In fact the major differences occur in the approach towards partnership, trust and mutual understanding – which may indicate that those are the most important fields contemporary SCRM's issues originated from. For now we would like to propose the determinants from left column to represent the potential archetypal characteristics of SCRM from the relationship aspect, and move forward to analyzing the technological evolution aspect of SCRM.

3. Technological evolution aspect

The evolution of hardware and software possibilities established the sole platform of SM-based communications. Not only did it allow users to share their own opinion, but due to its constantly evolving character IT taught them that the change is an agent of good, by introducing and engaging more and more people in the social communities' collaborations. What is more, the technology helped its user establish what is perceived as a novelty (bonus), and when is it moved to either 'unhelpful/abandoned' or 'standard' section of expectations. By understanding the premises of technological evolution aspect of SCRM, one may determine which factors are responsible for users' archetypal requirements and general behavior in the SM-based collaboration schemes.

The foremost basic technology enabling users to create and engage in the social communities is the world wide web. Like any other means for firms to communicate with their customers, also Internet has its own unique characteristics facilitating the process. From marketer's perspective Internet is above all *interactive, information-driven, immediate, and involving* (Roberts, 2008). Those four characteristics, however, do not limit their value only to marketing, but have a broad impact on the Internet economy as a whole (Table 3).

Table 3. Drivers of the Internet Economy

Information produces the greatest value, either as added value for existing products or services or in the form of information products.
Distance does not matter in many types of communications and transactions.
Speed is of the essence.
People are the key assets in Internet enterprises.
Growth in the network causes exponential increase in value.
Marketers can deal with customers on a one-on-one basis.
Demand can be predicted with greater accuracy.
Cost patterns change as transaction and coordination costs shrink for business, and consumers recognize the switching costs are low.
Consumer has power in information-rich channels.
An information economy is characterized by choice and abundance.

Although the data from Table 3 refer mostly to the so-called *electronic commerce* (e-commerce), many of their conclusions apply to the general Internet communication and collaboration as well. Firstly, the notion that the geography (e.g., distance) is irrelevant implies that users can come from all around the world – i.e. the time zones and special reach of information do not apply to the Internet-based communication scheme (e.g., posts and comments ‘live’ and grow constantly regardless of the time, the reach of a given information should be measured in time rather than geographical distance and thus the most important messages should be repeated so as not to be ‘lost’ within the past communiqués). Secondly, the time measures not only ‘distance’ but also reduces the speed of communication – i.e. the slower are the answers to given posts or comments, the less valuable and beneficial is the sole communication they are building. Thirdly, discussions in the SM are created, lead and viewed by people. Thus failing to personify company’s profile, avatar, or any other agent of communication brings unnecessary ‘noise’ to the collaboration, as users want to listen and engage in personalized, ‘individual’ opinions and thoughts within ‘their own’ communities. Fourthly, technology enabled its users to choose between one-to-many, many-to-many, and one-to-one communication. All of those types should be used at specific situations (e.g., congratulations or thanks/acknowledgments could be sent in a one-to-many ‘Thank you all’ form or one-to-one ‘Thanks [user_name]! It couldn’t have been done without you’ communiqué). Lastly, what and how is done is determined by the Internet users. In terms of the community, this power statement implies that it is better to be perceived as user than outside entity.

The above-proposed conclusions, when combined with marketer-centered characteristics of the Internet, create a descriptive set of values and features of Internet based communications: immediate (time and speed), interactive (individually or interactively), personified, involving (internally or externally towards communication), and information-driven. The sole technology enabling existence of world wide web did not facilitate nor start the SM’s evolution. This leap into the next generation of Internet has been initiated by the introduction of Web 2.0. Newly discovered possibilities enabled users to generate their own content, control their actions in a real-time, interactive environment, and simply enjoy participation in social activities such as sharing information (Laudon and Laudon, 2012). The nine major possibilities of the Web 2.0 have been listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of Web 1.0 to Web 2.0

Web 1.0	Web 2.0
Programmer-created web pages, graphics, Flash	User-created Web pages, pictures, user reviews, blogs, wikis, YouTube, social networks
Experts create content	Everyone creates content
Individuals visit web pages, read content	People construct shared information
Tightly controlled “sites”	Loosely controlled communities
One-way (one-to-many)	Many-to-many (peer-to-peer)
Britannica Online	Wikipedia
Publish	Participate
Firewalls, hierarchies	Dynamic, non-hierarchical
Static, stable content, few changes	Constantly updated content (Twitter, Wikipedia)

Analysis of the comparison from Table 4 strongly indicates that above all Internet became more open and user-friendly communication and collaboration platform enabling its users to create, share and control their content based on what they (the users) see the fittest. Individuals have been changed into leaders, influencers, participants or spectators – i.e. the

communities as strong as the goals and users that create them. Since the Web 2.0 technology merged users into communities, some of the generic rules affecting group behavior should apply to the Internet-based interactions as well. The general theory of consumer behavior states that family, friends, social class, selected subcultures, one's own culture and other cultures constitute a set of major groups able to influence one's perception of values, his actions and attitudes (Shiefman and Kanuk, 1991). In online communities and SNS, however, the principles of influence and interactions have been refined to *being transparent, being a part of the community, adapting marketing efforts to fit the nature of the sites and taking advantage of the unique capabilities of each venue* (Hawks and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

In our opinion both of the above-mentioned values and features of Internet based communications as well as the principles of influence and interactions within online communities and SNS can be perceived as potentially archetypal to the contemporary SCRM. Upon completion of the set of universal characteristics of SCRM originating in its technical evolution aspect, we may now move to the last part of our research – the augmentation aspect of SCRM. The general understanding and characteristics of the augmentation aspect have been presented in the next section of this paper.

4. Augmentation aspect

While both relationship and technical evolution aspects of SCRM focused the changing conditions that resulted in the rise of SCRM, the augmentation aspect is strongly related to company's actions undertaken in order to adjust and exploit those alterations. Since the augmentation aspect of SCRM is built upon 'company-client' communication scheme, three correlated main fields of its interest can be distinguished: company's expectations and responsibilities, client's expectations and responsibilities, and terms and characteristics of conversation/engagement of new technology users. Further explanations and characteristics of those fields can be found in the following paragraphs of this section.

The so-called *word of mouth* (WOM) marketing has been introduced in order to influence the consumer-to-consumer communications (Kozinets et al, 2010), i.e. it is marketers' response to increasing importance of certain individuals leading their communities, encouraging them to some actions, and convincing to abandon the others. While the size of 'traditional' WOM communities tends to be relatively low, when transferred to the SM backgrounds (e.g., blog, Youtube, or Twitter) the numbers might grow exponentially. Therefore researchers found it specifically important to affect and manage online influencers by implementing triplex strategy depending on "*the way [WOM] (1) is consistent with the goals, context, and history of the communicator's character narrative and the communications forum, or media;(2) acknowledges and successfully discharges commercial-communal tensions or offers a strong reason an individualistic orientation is suitable; and (3) fits with the community's norms and relevant objectives*" (Kozinets et al, 2010). Id est, the success of online WOM marketing depends on: consistency of user-platform, individual-communal approach, and consistency with community's goals/objectives – whose set potentially addresses the universal characteristics of SM collaboration.

The introduction of Web 2.0-based communication forced companies to change their brand-related activities. While general rules – reaching points of parity and establishing points of differentiation, focusing on creating strong brand identity, and pulling offline customers towards online meetings should be treated as guidelines as important as selecting proper brand partnerships for company's site and maximizing advantages from relationships with firm's clients (e.g., ability to customize and interact) (Keller, 2008) – managed to kept their value, some of the scholars demanded more specified and Internet-focused tools for their branding: personification tools – creating communicates (e.g., newsletters, marketing campaigns)

personalized with the obtained data describing individual consumers; purchase-process streamlining tools – enabling customers to freely manipulate (e.g., pause and resume whenever convenient) the time of their online purchases; self-service tools – giving the customer a freedom of choice whether and when to ask for company’s support (e.g., by commencing live chat with consultant); customization tools – adjusting offered goods or services to customer’s individual demands; dynamic-pricing tools – offering products or services for prices varying according to a given market conditions (e.g., bonuses for frequent buyers); creating community and encouraging consumers to co-create site’s content (Roberts, 2008). Although quite long, the list of tools and rules of Internet branding can be simplified to their archetypal versions: consumer-desired personalization, ease of communication, community engagement.

Unlike in mostly external-client focused communication concerning company’s branding, the SM can also be used to facilitate the employees (perceived as internal customers of a given firm). Some scholars claim that such collaboration “...allows for work units, professions, colleagues, and whole organization to better connect, share, and learn, all while spanning space and time. Helping leaders in organizations view knowledge as belonging to the collective good, rather than as proprietary pieces of data, and encouraging movement toward a culture of sharing will benefit you, your training department, and your organization.” (Bozarth, 2010). The practical representation of this philosophy can be found in variety of corporate business solutions, e.g., Oracle’s Social CRM application (Table 5), proving its usefulness and importance. Taking all of the above into consideration, the main value of both Bozarth’s understanding on SM-based communication and Oracle’s Social CRM application comes down to three basic elements: collectivity, knowledge share, internal orientation.

Table 5. Oracle Social CRM Applications

OVERVIEW
The biggest source of influence for customers today is their peers and communities. By bringing social interactions into a CRM environment, Oracle Social CRM products provide a more accurate and complete view of the customer by extending CRM capabilities to enhance collaboration and provide relevant, real-time insight from both internal and external sources.
FEATURES AND BENEFITS
Increases user productivity by providing relevant insight based on analytics and real-time collaboration
Elevates employee performance by leveraging the collective knowledge a social network
Improves customer interaction and satisfaction by providing customer engagement on social media from within Oracle CRM On Demand

Last of the major augmentation is that companies needed to implement to their strategies in order to balance the consequences of SCRM’s power shift, affected the sole understanding of customer. Thus the term *social customer* (SC) has been introduced. “*Social customers are not the customers of yore. They trust their peers, are connected via the web and mobile devices to those peers as much of a day as they would like. They expect information to be available to them on demand and at the same time have the tools and the desire to share and socialize that information with those same trusted peers – whether they actually know them or not. They require transparency and authenticity from their peers and the companies they choose to deal with. They get a feeling of some connection to the company and, most likely, rewards for their efforts on behalf of the company. Their loyalty is attitudinal, not just behavioral. If things go well, they become advocates. The core driver of this relationship is trust*” (Greenberg, 2010). In order to exhibit full potential of SC’s influence on corporate marketing strategies, we would like to refer to Cho’s (2010) understanding of claims and expectations they are authorized to solely due to the power leverage they have over the firms (Table 6).

Table 6. Social customers' claims towards company

Social customer's claims	Additional expectations
Interact with companies "when, where and how" the customer chooses"	Collaborative relationship
Expect ethical behavior from brands with which they choose to interact	Marketing relevancy
Transparency in their dealings with your company	Choice
Trusted purchase and operational advice from the customer's social network not just your company sponsored sources	Good value
Expect that companies for which the customer is engaged will provide that customer with what's important to the individual customer	Prompt dispute resolution
	Consistent presence
Expect the company to perform to the companies published or implied service levels and have a repeatable process for interactions that are individualized to the customer's needs	Feeling of importance
	Two way communication
Choose not to engage with your brand	Personalization
Expect your company to respect and abide by the customer's privacy settings and choices	Accountability

As presented above, the social understanding of client's characteristics is complex and delicate. Without a doubt his claims and expectations can be treated as archetypal to SCRM's augmentation aspect: transparency, trust, mutuality, choice (when, where and how), continuity of discussions, constant presence, feeling of importance, personalization, and privacy. The combination of items from this list can be perceived as the minimal, standard requirements to engage in and maintain the SCRM collaboration.

5. Social Customer Relationship's aspect-based archetypal characteristics

The descriptions of SCRM's aspects covered in the previous sections presented the important essence and guidelines to their understanding. While complex and diverse, all of the authors' views share a common vision of characteristics not only archetypal, but also crucial when it came to fulfilling and exceeding both clients' and company's hopes and expectations. The complete list of those items has been presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The archetypal characteristics of SCRM

Relationship	Technical evolution	Augmentation
<i>Acquiring the client</i>	[dispersed]	[dispersed]
<i>Loyalty and long-term relationships</i>	[dispersed]	[dispersed]
<i>Partnership and relations with partner's contacts as well</i>	taking advantage of the unique capabilities of each venue, being a part of the community	individual-communal approach, collectivity
<i>Quality and enhancing relationships with partner</i>	personalization, adapting marketing efforts to fit the nature of the sites, immediate (time and speed)	personalization, community engagement, feeling of importance, choice (when, where and how)
<i>Trust</i>	transparency	transparency, trust, privacy, knowledge share
<i>Communication, dialog</i>	immediate (time and speed), information-driven, involving	ease of communication, constant presence, continuity of discussions
<i>Mutual understanding</i>	interactive (individually or	consistency with community's

	interactively)	goals/objectives/context/platforms, mutuality
<i>Interest in both external and internal markets (inside the organization)</i>	involving (internally or externally towards communication)	internal orientation

The data from Table 7, although built considering all three aspects of SCRM, is based on an assumption that 'relationships' have the highest importance to this marketing concept and therefore determine both categories (rows) and backgrounds (columns) of the characteristics. However, due to the fact that all of the presented items are mutually dependable, entries from second and third column should be considered as the general guidelines to understanding how technology and company's initiatives influenced given determinants of relationship-building, rather than the complete and fixed list of characteristics entirely independent from each other. Therefore, e.g., communication cannot be solely characterized by being immediate, information-driven and involving - and although those values constitute big part of dialog's essence, the concept of trust or quality is of crucial importance as well. Thus, the above-presented set of items creates a holistic approach towards SCRM - characterizing all of its aspects, functions and interests - and examining only some part of it without consideration of the rest will lead to results distortion.

While majority of the categories has been addressed with a group of characteristics crucial to their understanding, 'acquiring the client' as well as 'loyalty and long-term relationships' functions of SCRM have been marked as dispersed. This situation is a reflection of different power distribution between relationship-focused and transaction-focused approach towards RM. In the second case the initiative (and in some cases decision as well) of finding and keeping given customer lies in the hands of power-strong company. However, in case of traditional RM defining company's client is a much more broad and complex problem. Especially in the case of SCRM answering even the simplest question 'who is the customer?' might be very hard. Without the ability to identify the client also the concept of his acquisition and retention is blurred, while still remaining very important to the company. Therefore addressing those functions had to be dispersed between other (partnership, quality, trust, etc.) in order to successfully fulfill company's expectations in SCRM's consumer-driven environment of SM.

6. Conclusion

In our understanding, the complete collection of all characteristics potentially archetypal to SCRM has been presented in this paper. Those characteristics can be used to assess the issues of contemporary SCRM approaches and benefit to creation of coherent, holistic model or its implementation to corporate marketing strategy.

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