

Electronic Customer Relationship Management (E-CRM) Features: Comparing Two Football Clubs (Manchester United & Chelsea FC)

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Abstract: *Electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM) is a vital activity of sports marketing that allows building long-term relationship between companies and its customers or fans. This paper examines the content analysis of the websites of two football clubs (FC), Manchester United (MU) and Chelsea, focusing specifically on the e-CRM features on the websites. The different use of e-CRM features in both MU and Chelsea FCs are highlighted. The findings demonstrate that both FC teams utilize some of the e-CRM features.*

Keywords: Electronic customer relationship management, Internet, customers, football

1. INTRODUCTION

Information technology (IT) undertakes an imperative part in numerous organizations these days. One of the major attributes of IT in this era is customer relationship management (CRM). CRM is the combination of business and technological techniques used in fulfilling the requests of customer at any point in time. More precisely, CRM includes procurement, investigation, and utilization of information about clients, keeping in mind the end goal of offering more goods or services effectively (Bose, 2002).

E-CRM refers to marketing activities, techniques, and tools conveyed on the web (using e-mail technologies and websites, warehousing, mining, and information capture) with the objective of finding, constructing, and enhancing long-term customer relationship (Lee-Kelley, Gilbert, & Mannicom, 2003). According to Pan and Lee (2003), E-CRM develops the conventional CRM procedures by merging new technologies of electronic channels, such as voice technologies, wireless, and Web which consolidate them using e-business applications into general enterprise CRM system. Conventional CRM has restrictions in assisting external multichannel customer dealings that join the Internet, telephone,

chat, fax, email, and so on. Despite the conventional CRM, the present e-CRM arrangement (front office suites) supports service, sales, and marketing. E-CRM includes all the procedures expected to secure, form, and keep up customer relationship within e-business operations (Kariofyllas, Papaioannou, Kourtesopoulou, Koronios, & Kriemadis, 2010).

Numerous technologies and software apparatuses guaranteeing clarifications for different parts of CRM have been introduced as commercial or business applications. The greater parts of these devices guarantee to tailor and customize associations with the clients by giving imperative data at each point in time within the boundary of the client. Systems, such as artificial intelligence, collaborative filtering, relational databases, and rule-based expert systems, are progressively being connected to create enterprise level results for overseeing data on client interactions (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2001).

Marketing researchers are concentrating on how and to what extent CRM is creating conceptualizations in regards to the quality and method of collaborative and cooperative oriented connections between the purchasers and sellers. Several researchers with interest in the discipline of advertising (such as business-to-business promotion,

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advertising, services showcasing, and channels) are effectively occupied with concentrating on and investigating the basic foundations of overseeing associations with clients. These researchers are concerned with approaches and methods for grouping of customer and discrimination; one-to-one associations with specific customer; key record management, and client business advancement procedures; recurrence advertising, loyalty packages, up-offering and cross-offering prospects; and different types of cooperating with clients including joint-advertising, co-improvement, and different manifestations of tactical alliances (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2001).

Bose (2002) expressed that making a CRM solution for organizations is usually a substance of multifaceted coordination of software, hardware, and applications. More so, it obliges a careful investigation of business courses of action. Most organizations can get amped up for the thought of a completely executed CRM, however the work included to convey such a framework in reality requests a lot of different knowledge, efficient project management, and an exhaustive plan. Nowadays, customers are kings and have more choice forces than organizations as it is simple for them to click away. It is the significant motivation behind why CRM has turned into the point of convergence of interest (Law, Lau, & Wong, 2003).

Organizations across the globe have executed CRM systems with blended achievement, and in present, many football clubs have come to realize this great opportunity. Example of the clubs that have adopted e-CRM and synchronised CRM frameworks in their business strategies include MU, Chelsea FC, AC Milan FC, Bayern Munchen, and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) FC (Samuel & Daniel, 2009). The clubs use the Internet as a medium to communicate with their supporters, establish relationships with them, and sell products and services (Kriemadis, Kotsovos, & Kartakoullis, 2009).

Nonetheless, there is a little effort (see, for example, Argan, Argan, Kose, & Gokce, 2013; Kriemadis et al., 2009) in regards to comprehending the utilization of e-CRM on the football clubs. Kriemadis et al., for instance, compared the utilization of e-CRM in two football clubs: MU and Liverpool. Argan et al., on the other hand, studied the e-CRM features in English Premier League and Turkish Super League, covering of four teams in each League. None of the prior studies, however, compared the e-CRM features in both MU and Chelsea FC, the focus of our study. These football clubs have a significant potential of

implementing e-CRM due to the large number of fans, economic status, and brand value (Argan et al., 2013).

The objective of the study is to examine the use e-CRM technique in two football clubs, namely, Manchester United (MU) and Chelsea FC. MU and Chelsea FC are the two top European football clubs that take part in the English Premier League. The study's findings provide a better understanding of how the Internet is used as a strategic tool in e-CRM in the football sector.

MU plans to separate itself from their opponent. Their website was created as a fan base, offers a significant competitive benefit than other clubs. The site is easy to understand and no advert contains on their site. It has experienced a far reaching market survey intended to understand the fan's expectancy and desires (Skalli, 2012).

Chelsea FC, a standout amongst the most prominent and effective football clubs on the planet, utilize Blue Venn's innovation to add to a superior understanding of its fans and to efficaciously connect with them with pertinent, convenient marketing information (BlueVenn, 2008). The club will have the capacity to rapidly and effectively get information in order to understand their fans, product relationships and market to arrange, and send superior advertising campaigns.

The remaining of the paper is structured as follows: Section 2 covers literature review on what CRM is, the need for e-CRM in football sector, and prior studies of e-CRM focusing specifically on the e-CRM features in football sector. Section 3 presents the research methodology of the study, focusing on data collection and sample of study. Section 4 presents the study's findings. The final section concludes the study with the limitations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. What is CRM?

Before we present the theoretical background of CRM, describing what CRM is would be beneficial. According to the marketing research, the terms relationship marketing and CRM were used conversely. Parvatiyar and Sheth (2001) argued that the terms have been utilized to mirror a diversity of perspectives and themes. Some of the subjects offer a limited effective marketing point of view, while on the other hand, it is extensive and to a degree paradigmatic in orientation and approach. A slight

point of view of CRM is within the area of database marketing, which put emphasis on special parts of marketing related to database endeavours.

CRM is truly about solidifying long-term, synergistic relations with customer in light of common trust. For some organizations, the approach makes a well profit logic given the lifespan estimation of an unwavering customer and the part of the customer in assisting to market the firm. Short-term revenue and cost efficiency lift were not the essential objectives, but rather welcome by-results of a powerful relationship approach (Crosby, 2002).

Papaioannou, Kariofyllas, Koronios, Kourtesopoulou, and Kriemadis (2004) asserted that the move from a product focus, business approach to customer centred is one of the main agents of change in organization in recent times. Many organizations have financed greatly in IT empowering a customer centered technique. Currently, customers are demanding more, well-educated, and need more consideration. Progressively, corporations are moving their attention to customers, hence, increasing the significance of CRM.

According to Chen and Popvich (2003), CRM has developed from improvements in IT and companies deviations in customer driven processes. Organizations that effectively execute CRM would harvest the booties in customer unwaveringness and in long-run productivity. CRM contains an arrangement of techniques and empowering frameworks assisting a business approach to assemble long-term positive relations with particular customers. IT and customer information apparatuses structure the establishment whereupon any productive CRM strategy. Moreover, the fast development of Internet and its related technologies has extraordinarily expanded the open doors in marketing and has reformed the way company deals with their customers (Ngai, Xiu, & Chau, 2009).

Payne and Frow (2005) describe CRM as a strategic method that deals with making enhanced investor value using improvement of proper relationships with major customers and customer fragments. CRM bonds the prospective of relationship marketing procedures and IT to make productive, long-term relationships with the customers and other major stakeholders.

Samuel and Daniel (2009) states that CRM is an activity that classifies the company into a more client intensive, striking, and customer customized

service, through guaranteeing the best practices for overseeing and incorporating deals, services, and marketing techniques. They further express that the utilization of software expertise is expected to incorporate the income, services, and marketing activities and processes, as well as to exercise, catch, and unify customer-correlated data. Kariofyllas et al. (2010) suggest to consider CRM as a strategy for retention of customer by utilizing a mixed variety of marketing strategies that prompt customer staying in contact with customer after a deal is made.

CRM is seen as a philosophy of marketing and in the meantime a business approach, sustained by a framework and technology intended to enhance human collaboration within a business atmosphere (Samuel & Daniel, 2009). Throughout the IT gurgle, CRM has been viewed as a key to success. However, numerous organizations financed a lot on magnificent technical solutions as a substitute of building up the CRM as a coordinated part of the corporation. Samuel and Daniel (2009) further state that.

"Implemented in the right way, CRM delivers powerful benefits. It markedly improves the efficiency and effectiveness of sales, service, and marketing. But even more importantly, it can strengthen strategy and help generate enduring returns."

2.2. The need for e-CRM in football sector

The football industry falls behind different industries in executing CRM systems. Thus, it has "supporters" points of interest in gaining from missteps made somewhere else. There are, nonetheless, essential contrasts in football compared with conventional organizations; accordingly the excellent CRM models that have been highly examined in the writing need to be adjusted for such a professional area. The exceptional attributes of football and its supporters need attention when creating or actualizing CRM methods (Adamson, Jones, & Tapp, 2006).

In service industries, such as football clubs, CRM is an approach that can be used to enhance customer relationship and gain competitive benefits (Rosca, 2014). To enhance their marketing effectiveness, along with their sporting results, football clubs may need to change their administration from creating football matches for the general population, to more unpredictable plans of action, in view of customer-focused relationships. Adapting Pop's (2006) thoughts on relationship marketing in football sector, one can express that CRM assumes an essential part in the sport industry. This is because

the contact between the merchant (in this case, the football club) and the purchaser (i.e., the supporter) need a more drawn out timespan than the one met in value-based marketing with a specific end goal to age esteem for both fragments.

As football industry developed to a multimillion-dollar business, football clubs these days must do a more noteworthy to see themselves as organizations who work in a highly competitive industry. There are few distinctions notwithstanding, keeping in mind organizations endeavour to take out rivalry and position itself as an imposing business model dealer, football clubs would not seek after syndication control on top players (Samuel & Daniel, 2009), since the entire rivalry of football would endure as their capacity and sheer predominance would make it ugly to supporters.

2.2.1. Manchester United (MU)

MU is an English club and a worldwide club. They are among the first English club to perform in the European Cup and the first club to win. In addition, they are the main English club to have become winner of the world clubs champion. The club used to be MU in 1902 when the collection of entrepreneur's assumed control. That is when they embraced the red shirt in which United would get to be known. They won their first championship under the leadership of Ernest Mangnall in 1908 and 1911, including their first FA Cup in 1909. Later, Mangnall left for Manchester City in 1911. Moreover, there where no significant honors until after the Second World War.

CRM goes beyond the conventional product and service offerings. CRM has turned into a vital component of sports clubs that perceive the significance of understanding and overseeing their supporters. Football brand is an enthusiasm to some fans. Because of their emotional appeal and social ties, football clubs transcend organizations working outside the domain of sports in brand loyalty and adoration. Nevertheless, this brand craze makes an intricate environment and demand attentive administration and expectation. This procedure is particularly troublesome in the football sector where rivalry over supporters is furious. It is obvious that football without fans would not be as it is today; a powerless fan base leads football clubs to rescind. Fans, as clients, are the football's economic model and ought not be underestimated. They top off stadiums, purchase stock, and attract sponsorships (Skalli, 2012).

2.2.2. Chelsea FC

Established in 1905, Chelsea FC plays in the English Premier League and have so far won five noteworthy titles in the past 5 years with the Premier League twice. The club was called The Blues by Nicknamed, Chelsea calls Stamford Bridge in South West London home. Natalie Waddell, the head of CRM at Chelsea FC, said (BlueVenn, 2008):

"As our business continues to grow globally it's important that we maintain close relationships with our fans. With the right tools we will be able to understand our consumers better, communicate and tailor our campaigns more effectively and develop the right products and services to ensure we continue to enjoy long term, profitable relationships with our fans."

He further said:

"Today's most successful football clubs are also major international brands, and what happens off the field is becoming increasingly important alongside the success on the field. By better understanding its supporters and tailoring communications accordingly, Chelsea FC will be able to have a much more intimate relationship with its fan base. It will be able to build on this knowledge to provide new products and services and to successfully market them. We're excited to be able to help one of football's most respected and recognized clubs to keep in touch with its millions of supporters worldwide."

Samuel and Daniel (2009) argued that while considering the finances of football clubs, there is a direct relationship between a football clubs sporting and financial performances. They kept up that at the miniaturized scale level, the club accomplishment on the pitch decides the clubs ability to produce income, and at a large scale level, the capacity to keep up a sensible aggressive offset to keep the engaging quality of the game.

2.3. Prior Studies

Empirical research on e-CRM has been carried out within the sport sector, and more particular in football clubs (see, for example, Argan et al., 2013; Kartakoullis, 2009). However, research that specifically focuses on the features of e-CRM in the football clubs is still limited.

Features of e-CRM help organizations to evaluate customer loyalty and measures, such as repeat purchases, money spent, and longevity. E-CRM is developed on the basis that consumers vary in their needs, preferences, buying behaviour, and price sensitivity (Kriemadis et al., 2009). E-CRM integrates sales, marketing, and service strategies that will create more value propositions for customers. It employs modern IT from relational databases, to data warehousing, data mining, computer telephony integration, and Internet delivery channels to unlock customer profitability (Argan et al., 2013).

Today, many organizations from different industries are considering adopting the concept of e-CRM. Becoming a major strategy of sports marketing, e-CRM plays an important role for creating and developing relationships to sports clubs. There are, however, crucial differences in soccer compared with conventional businesses (Adamson et al., 2006).

In most respect, this evolution mirrors much of what is taking place at present within the football industry. The biggest clubs, such as Chelsea FC, Arsenal, and MU, have reasonably sophisticated channel management systems with, for example, telephone bureau taking inbound enquires and making outbound sales calls. Websites are set up to allow fans chat facilities and to contact with the club, though reply times and quality may be vary. Sports franchises across the spectrum have been transformed by ticketing systems that allow easy sales of match day tickets with the functionality to capture supporter data. Apart from season ticket reminders and merchandise sales pitches, however, few proactive communications tend to take place. Most football clubs including those mentioned above, concentrate on transaction marketing at the expense of relationship marketing (Adamson et al., 2006).

Existing studies of e-CRM have identified several e-CRM attributes. According to Kotsovos and Kriemadis (2002), Internet-based CRM has three general areas: presales information, electronic services, and post-sales support.

Kriemadis et al. (2009) argued that e-commerce success is heavily dependent on the design of the websites. The functions of the organizations' websites are deemed as a part of e-CRM application. Kriemadis et al. emphasized five categories of website design. These are page loading speed (i.e., the amount of time the page takes to load), business content (i.e., quality of

presentation and the usefulness of the content), navigation efficiency (i.e., efficient and user-friendly navigation), security (i.e., security of the website's operation), and marketing/customer focus (i.e., ability to keep the customer in focus).

Rosca (2014) pointed out that electronic service is viewed as an emerging mechanism for achieving customer relationship management strategic outcomes. E-service is largely being implemented through the use of e-CRM software (Argan et al., 2013). Internet can be used to provide considerable consumer services as a part of e-CRM application. In terms of the e-CRM application, Argan et al. (2013) suggested that e-CRM should include placing order, payment option, shipping information, returns, interactive service, and web policy.

The Internet can also be used to provide consistent and comprehensive product and customer service information. Kotsovos and Kriemadis (2002) have defined a framework of customer services that involves the following variables: (1) placing order (number of order methods, order status, and confirmation order by email); (2) payment options (number of credit cards accepted, offline payments, and pay later); (3) shipping information (sales and tax information); (4) returns (return methods, money back guarantee, and convenient return information); (5) interactive service (email, chat, site map, FAQs, toll-free number); and (6) web policy (privacy, security policy, company information).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Considering the nature of qualitative research, it is considered more appropriate approach to collect the required data, as the specific research describes a complete and thorough view and comprehension of a wonder in its substance (Yin, 1994). The research is taking into account the utilization of contextual analyses, as the reason nearly takes after the type of inquiries "how" and "why" (Yin, 1994). Besides, this decision is propelled by the way that the researcher has no influence over the conduct of the subjects under study. In addition, it manages contemporary occasions.

3.1. Data collection

Qualitative research method is used in this study. Specifically, the content analysis was conducted on two websites of soccer teams (MU and Chelsea FC) on March 3, 2015. A list of e-CRM features (to be specific, 20 items) was used during the observation. These e-CRM features were adapted from prior

literature (see, for example, Argan et al., 2013; Feinberg & Kadam, 2002; Kartakoullis, 2009).

Secondary data were collected via documents from various sources to verify the collected data. These include official publications, newspapers, journals, and brochures. Keeping in mind the end goal of building the unwavering quality of the perception in this study, we observed the clubs' sites independently and in successive interims. At last, the utilization of two information-gathering techniques and two distinct cases expanded the build and the outer authenticity of the outcome.

3.2. Sample

According to Yin (1994), a sample edge is a rundown or other record of the population (for this situation, sites) from which all the examining units are drawn. The chose test was the sites of two football clubs, which work on e-CRM, namely MU and Chelsea FC. Argan et al. (2013) argued that football clubs have a significant potential of e-CRM implementation due to the large number of fans, economic status, and brand value.

4. FINDINGS

The objective of the study is to examine the use of e-CRM in the football sector. Our focus is on comparing the e-CRM features in both MU and Chelsea FC websites. Table 1 summarizes the general features of websites that are available on both clubs' websites. The list of features, comprising of 13 items, is adapted from Argan et al. (2013).

Table 1. Features of team websites

Features of team websites	MU	Chelsea FC
Contact info	1	1
Online information	1	1
<i>Form:</i>		
Customization	1	1
Online questionnaire	1	1
Online suggestion	1	1
Membership	1	1
E-surf easy	1	1
Searching	1	1
Visitors number	0	0
Site updating	1	1
Updating date	1	1
Language option	1	1
Flash animation	0	0

Note: 1-Yes; 0-No.

From our observation, we found that there is no significant difference amongst the clubs in terms of the website features. Generally, both clubs have similar features on their websites, such as contact information, online information, online

questionnaire, online suggestion, membership, searching, and language option. Nonetheless, the visitors' number and flash animation are not available on both websites.

The finding is consistent with Argan et al.'s (2013) study who conducted a content analysis of the websites of the most popular soccer teams in Premier League and Super League (English and Turkish, respectively). Argan et al. found that the entire website features, with the exception of visitors' number and flash animation, were provided on the websites. Possibly, the visitors' number is not significant to website owners, as they now have more advanced and credible analytic tools, such as Google Analytics, to tracking their site's visitors and much more traffic-related information. On the other hand, a plausible reason to why the flash animation is no longer relevant on the website is that when people are accessing the web from their mobile phones (e.g., iPhone and Android), as opposed to desktops and laptops, the flash support, in most of these devices, is either non-existent or severely lacking. In addition, in spite of increasing the website's loading time, excessive use of flash might also annoy the visitors.

Other additional features covered in Chelsea FC's website (apart from the one listed in Table 1) include match schedules, videos, and hospitality. Interestingly, a hospitality app is provided to its users or fans to ease them in getting what they require, such as itinerary, travel, and weather updates, at the touch of a button. This app can be downloaded from Apple Store or Google Play.

Other additional features covered in MU's website include details of players and staff, conference and event, and museum and stadium tour. The website also has a specific section on buying match tickets and hospitality (e.g., tour guide to tell the story of MU and complimentary car parking available upon request) online.

Table 2 reports the outcomes of the e-CRM features found in both clubs' websites. The list of e-CRM features is adapted from prior literature (see, for example, Argan et al., 2013; Feinberg & Kadam, 2002; Kartakoullis, 2009). As mentioned in section 3.1, the content analysis of the clubs' websites (MU and Chelsea FC) was carried out on March 3, 2015 to examine the availability of e-CRM features on the websites. Our findings are then compared to other, available studies that cover similar issues: Kartakoullis (2009) for MU and BlueVenn (2008) for Chelsea FC.

Table 2. E-CRM features in football clubs' websites

E-CRM features	MU		Chelsea FC	
	Kartakoullis (2009)	Present study (2015)	BlueVenn (2008)	Present study (2015)
<i>Placing order (PLAC):</i>				
Number of order (PLAC-1)	1	1	1	1
Order Status (PLAC-2)	1	1	1	1
Confirmation of order (PLAC-3)	1	1	1	1
<i>Payment option (PAYM):</i>				
Number of credit card accepted (PAYM-1)	1	1	1	1
Offline Payments (PAYM-2)	1	1	1	1
Pay later (PAYM-3)	0	0	0	0
<i>Shipping information (SHIP):</i>				
Shipping and handling information (SHIP-1)	1	1	1	1
Sales and tax information (SHIP-2)	1	1	0	1
<i>Returns (RETU):</i>				
Money back guarantee (RETU-1)	1	0	0	0
Convenient returning information (RETU-2)	1	1	1	1
Returning methods (RETU-3)	1	1	1	1
<i>Interactive service (INTE):</i>				
E-mail (INTE-1)	1	1	1	1
Toll-free number (INTE-2)	0	0	0	0
Interactive chat function (INTE-3)	0	1	1	1
FAQ (INTE-4)	0	1	1	1
Site map (INTE-5)	0	1	1	1
Shopping help site (INTE-6)	1	1	1	1
<i>Web policy (WEBP):</i>				
Privacy (WEBP-1)	1	1	1	1
Security Policy (WEBP-2)	1	1	1	1
Company information (WEBP-3)	1	1	1	1
Total %	75%	85%	80%	85%

Note: 1-Yes; 0-No.

The findings demonstrate that both of the football clubs have a number of e-CRM features on their websites. For some of the features, there is no significant different between the football clubs, especially in regards to placing order, number of credit card accepted, offline payments, shipping and handling information, convenient returning information, returning methods, the use of e-mail, shopping help site, and web policy. Consistent to the findings reported in both Kartakoullis (2009) and BlueVenn (2008), all of these features are still apparent in both clubs' websites.

The use of e-mail appears in both websites. A possible reason to this finding is e-mail allows users anywhere in the world to communicate with each other (Fenton & Thomas, 2012) and helps the clubs to communicate faster with their fans at lower cost (Kotelnikov, 2007).

In relation to shipping information, sales and tax information is still available in MU's website. Although sales and tax information was not reported in BlueVenn (2008), we found that this information is currently in use in Chelsea FC's website.

Kartakoullis (2009) reported that money back guarantee, a return option that protects consumers against the risk of purchasing, was available in MU's website. Nonetheless, this feature is no longer in use. Consistent with the findings of BlueVenn (2008), we discovered that money back guarantee is still not offered in Chelsea FC's website. A possible explanation to this finding is that money back guarantee carries the risk of goods coming back where customers may take this opportunity to return the goods after using. For both websites, pay later function is not made available to their customers. This may be due to the risk of default payment possibly made by the customers.

Kartakoullis (2009) reported that an interactive service, such as chat function, frequently asked questions (FAQ), and site map, was never been in practice by the MU. However, with the advancement of the technologies these days, these functions, with an exception of toll-free number, are now currently in use. Comparatively, Chelsea FC has fully utilized these functions. Interactive chat function provides users the option of real-time interaction and an immediate response to queries. Lohse and Spiller (1998) argued that customers need a FAQ section for speedy answers on

information, such as about the security of the transactions, company return, payment and credit policies, and shipping and handling costs. Site map, on the other hand, helps visitors to understand the organization and to locate the required information to website (Alam & Rashid, 2014). Hence, having an interactive chat function, a FAQ section, and a site map on website is an essential component to make the website more useful for the users. While Internet makes communication easier and at lower cost, toll-free number facility is not provided to their users by both clubs.

In regards to possession percentage, both of the MU and Chelsea FC have 85% of e-CRM features on their websites (see Table 2 for details). The total percentage of e-CRM features is calculated by dividing the number of e-CRM features currently in use by the total number of features adapted from prior literature (i.e., 20 items) (see Table 2 for the list of e-CRM features). The number of e-CRM usage has increased by 10% and 5% for MU and Chelsea FC, respectively. This result shows how the clubs perceive the importance of using e-CRM as a strategy to get them concentrate on their fans and meeting their fans' needs.

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5. CONCLUSION

The objective of this study is to examine the use of e-CRM strategy in two football clubs: MU and Chelsea FC. Being among the most popular football clubs worldwide, both football clubs make use of the e-CRM features on their websites. In terms of the possession percentage, the e-CRM features are currently utilized at an equivalent level (i.e., 85%). The findings suggest e-CRM as a strategic application, useful for football clubs to learn more about their customers' needs in order to develop stronger relationships with them.

This study contributes to existing literature on the utilization of the e-CRM features in the football clubs. Nevertheless, due to the deficiency of research regarding the e-CRM in the football area, this study demands additional thought by gathering information through consultations with the clubs' managers and supporters. Eventually, the same study can be piloted on a larger scale of the sample websites.

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