

Full Length Research Paper

Impact of customer relationship marketing on customer value creation in mobile service providers – a Sri Lankan experience

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Marketing has always been based on customer relationship; customer relationship marketing is thought to be a new phenomenon in the province of marketing (Webster 1992). Main purpose of the study is examining the impact of customer relationship marketing on customer value creation. Customer relationship marketing can be measured through following ten variables trust, commitment, communication, promise, cooperation, power, empathy, rapport, duration of relationship and accuracy. Data were collected through a seven points Likert type summated rating scales of questionnaire. A sample of one hundred and seven customers was surveyed from three mobile service providing companies such as Airtel, Dialog, and Mobitel. Correlation and regression analyzed has been used. The results revealed that the correlation value between customer relationship marketing and customer value creation 0.722 which is significance at 1% levels. According to that regression analysis, fifty two percent of customer relationship marketing on customer value creation. Hence, customer relationship marketing impact on customer value creation in mobile service providing companies. These companies should to polish their customer relationship marketing programme among their customers.

Keywords: Customer relationship Marketing, Customer value creation, Trust

INTRODUCTION

Customer relationship marketing is very important concept to attract and keep the customers in organizations. In modern business world, marketing focus reflect the move away from transactional marketing to relationship marketing. Establishing, maintaining and enhancing customer relationships have always been an important aspect of business. However, over the last few years there has been a significant increase in customer relationship marketing (CRM) related researches (Kamakura, 2005; Ngai, 2005). The concept of customer relationship marketing (CRM) is widely understood, both academically and professionally. Its goal is to bolster strong relationships and convert indifferent customers into loyal ones (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991). Customer relationship marketing is determined by trust, commitment, empathy, power, cooperation, financial bonds, social bonds, dependency, duration, and rapport.

Customer value is synonymous to attributes of particular offering and signifies the trade-off between benefits received and sacrifices made by a customer (Ulaga and Eggert, 2005). Customer value comprises three key dimensions of customer value; self oriented, reactive, and extrinsic (Holbrook 1996). Organizations are vastly different in the ways they interact with their customers; there are some basic recurring themes in those interactions. Every business organizations try to build the customer value in several ways such as create positive attitude and feelings, product differentiation, product quality, service support, delivery, time to market, customer satisfaction, availability of services, feature and their usability, security, and process cost. Payne and Holt (2001) dealt in to diagnosing customer value: integrating value process and relationship marketing. They argued that value creation was a dynamic element to existing value concept. Value creation shall be looked over a time on multiple transactions. Creation of mutual value will become focus of both customer and the firm, value is jointly shared among all the parties involved on

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relationship. Customer value is the overall benefit derived from the product, however the customer defines it, at the price the customer is willing to pay. Information about customer value allows the firm to adapt its offerings to meet customer value expectations. Customer value influences customer attitudes and correspondingly customer choice behavior.

We selected the Jaffna district for this study. For the reason that in Sri Lank Jaffna district were affected by continuous war (Thirty years). In this situation there is no mobiles service providing companies in Jaffna district but 2001-2008 period, there were two number of cellular mobile service providing companies such as Dialog Mobitel were established. Nowadays, five companies such as Dialog, Mobitel, Hutch, Airtel, and Erislate are providing services for the people in Jaffna peninsula. They are using different strategies to attract and retain the customers because of the competition. So, that these companies highly focus on customer relationship marketing which is important in general with the concept of "you satisfaction is our satisfaction". In a view present study is initiated how to customer relationship marketing impact on customer value of mobile service providing companies in Jaffna district.

Research Problem

Some researchers expressed that customer relationship marketing is one of the aspects to determine the customer value (Wilson, 1994; Ravald and Gronroos, 1996). Need for the measurement of customer value proposition is reflected in different interpretations of customer value concept. Value could be interpreted as satisfaction, which customer receives from the offer delivered (Tzokas, Saren, 1997) or as customer attitude towards the ability of product to satisfy his/her needs (Kuvykaite, 2001). Some other researches indicate that customer relationship marketing applications are not uniformly delivering anticipated business improvements (Reinartz 2004; Berry (1995), Gwinmer (1998), that the problem may stem because of lack of customer orientation (Rigby, 2002). But customers may be suspicious of customer relationship marketing implementations (Bhattacharjee, 2002; Hoffman, Novak, and Peralta, 1999) and customer relationship marketing applications may not actually assist in the creation or maintenance of customer relationships (Peters and Fletcher, 2004). But sometimes customer relationship marketing initiatives are not only failed to deliver profitable growth, but also had damaged long – standing customer relationships (Bain, 2001). CRM is not only one strategy to retain customers towards companies regardless of its size (Nor Azila, 2011). In some situation, CRM fail to maintain certain limits, taking into consideration the consumer's need for privacy. Sometimes, the CRM can be quite a stressful experience

for the customer. In this situation; customers have not good relationship with organization. So, this leads to damage of profit earning atmosphere of the business. In Jaffna district, there are five companies such Dialog, Airtel, Mobital, Hutch and Ericiate are providing their mobile services however; degree of customer relationship of the companies is differing from each companies. Actually these kinds of companies are facing more competition and also they are using the customer relationship marketing as strategically tools to gain the competitive advantage and customer value creation. Therefore the present study is initiated to find out that to what extent the Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) impact on Customer Value Creation in mobile service providers?

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The present study has the following objectives

1. To identify the impact of customer relationship marketing on customer value creation of mobile company;
2. To find out the relationship between the customer relationship marketing and customer value creation of the mobile service providing company;

Literature Review and Hypotheses

Customer relationship marketing and customer value creation are interrelated with each other. Generally, a number of terms have been used as substitutes for relationship marketing or to describe similar concepts (Buttle, 1996). These include direct marketing, database marketing, customer relationship marketing, data driven marketing, micro marketing, one to one marketing, loyalty based marketing, segment of one marketing, customer partnering, dialogue marketing and interactive marketing. All this suggests that customer relationship marketing is also an umbrella philosophy for rational approaches in marketing.

Customer relationship marketing goal is to provide increased value to the customer and results in a lifetime value for the service provider (Liu, 2000).

Trust has been defined as "a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence" (Moorman 1993). In addition trust provides the basis for loyalty, relationship enhancement (decreased perception of risk), and yet is mediated by customer perceived value of the relationship (i.e., perceived net benefits) (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Selnes, 1998; Sirdeshmukh, 2002). Trust is an important and necessary attribute for a strong and robust relationship and contributes to relationship performance (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Narayandas and Rangan, 2004). Trust contributed to shared values (Morgan and Hunt, 1994), perceived value (Sirdeshmukh,

2002), and customer satisfaction (Leuthesser and Kohli, 1995; Selnes, 1998). Commitment typically has been defined as “a channel member’s intention to continue the relationship” (Geyskens, Steenkamp, Scheer, and Kumar, 1996). Anderson and Weitz (1992) defined commitment to a business relationship between two parties as the “desire to develop a stable relationship, a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to maintain the relationship, and a confidence in the stability of the relationship. Verhoef (2003) found that commitment is an antecedent both to customer retention and customer share development. Other empirical studies of commitment indicate a strong relationship between perceived commitment of both parties and their ability to overcome difficulties (conflict) in order to achieve mutual gain (Lewin and Johnston, 1997; Narayandas and Rangan, 2004). Communication is used to initiate and build relationships; mediate ideas, thoughts and feelings, transfer information, solve problems and simply connect people (Bordia, 1997; Rix, Buss, and Herford, 2001). Communication is “defined broadly as the formal as well as informal sharing of meaningful and timely information between firms on the efficacy of information exchange rather than the quantity or amount, and inherently taps past communications” (Anderson and Narus, 1990). Customer relationship marketing researchers view communication effectiveness and quality as important factors in relationship development, maintenance and performance and customer value (Anderson and Narus, 1984, 1990; Berry, 1995; Dwyer, 1987; Fontenot and Wilson, 1997; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Selnes, 1998), if not the key factor (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998), significantly affecting the initiation and development of trust and commitment directly (Geyskens, 1998). Key dimensions of communication quality appear to include timeliness, frequency, openness and accuracy. Communication enhances the relationship, and influences trust and commitment (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Lewin and Johnston, 1997; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Selnes, 1998). Power refers to the ability of one channel member to induce another channel member to change its behavior in favour of the objective of the channel member exerting influence (Wilemon 1972). It appears that the power to control or influence the other resides in control over the things that one value.

Cooperation is defined as actions taken in order to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes between the firms or independent singular outcomes with the expectation of reciprocation over time (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Lewin and Johnston, 1997). Anderson and Narus (1990) found that firms meeting or exceeding performance objectives through cooperation with other firms (partners) cultivate trust and satisfaction. Morgan and Hunt (1994) disclosed that commitment and trust leads to cooperation. Young and Wilkinson (1989) showed that in certain instances cooperation is coerced by the more powerful member and justified by the desired outcomes.

Duration of the relationship is thought to affect the ongoing relationship dynamics including trust, commitment and satisfaction (Gruen, 2000). Reynolds and Beatty (1999) identified that long-term satisfied customers perceive additional social benefits and are more loyal to sales people as well as to the firm it.

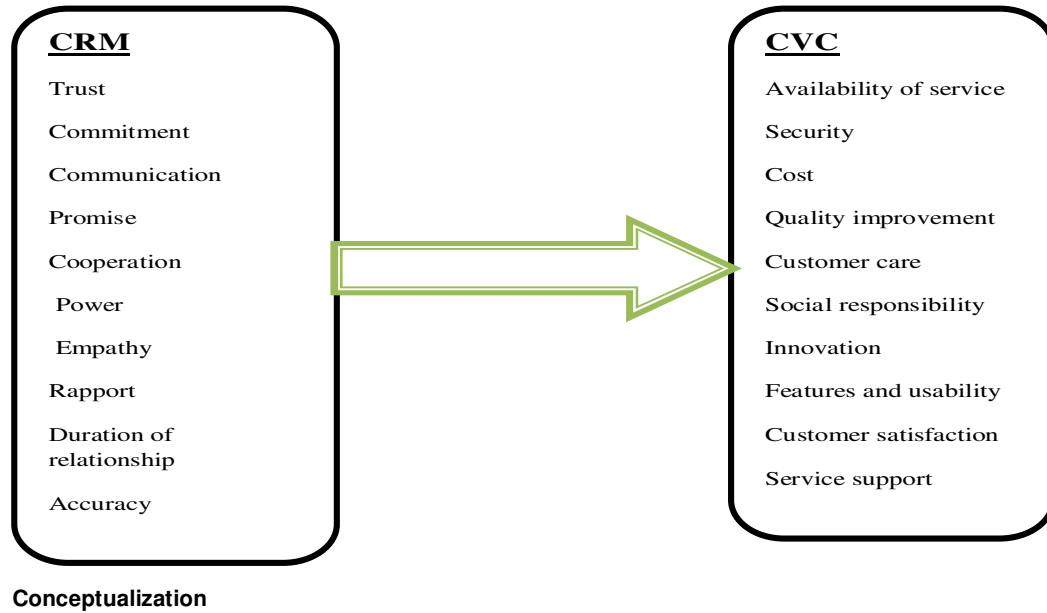
Rapport or the chemistry between customer and supplier has been shown to aid the development of trust between buyers and salespeople, as well as positively affect the ongoing relationship dynamics between individuals and firms (Doney and Cannon, 1997). Dependency within a relationship relates to the relative power and therefore the extent one party depends on (or must trust) the other party (Anderson and Narus, 1990). Kumar, Scheer, and Steenkamp (1995) demonstrated that relationships with greater total interdependence exhibit higher trust, stronger commitment, and lower conflict than relationships with lower interdependence, although perceived mutual benefit may moderate feelings of asymmetrical dependence (Lewin and Johnston, 1997). Similarly Geyskens (1996) found evidence that interdependence enhances commitment, but that the type of commitment will depend on trust.

Empathy can be viewed as the ability to share, understand and feel another person’s feelings in a relational situation. Thus, Sin (2002) described empathy as dealing with a business relationship that enables two parties to see the situation from the other’s perspective i.e. seeking to understand somebody else’s desires and goals.

Lemon, White, and Winer (2002) investigated actual customer “service” purchase versus intention to buy. The results also revealed that customers incorporate an adaptive expectations approach to repurchase services, that is, customers consider not only past and current business performance measures of service but also project future expectations and benefits of performance into their decision-making of retaining or changing service providers. The Gruen (2000) study found that performance of the supplier positively affected customer participation and retention in professional associations, without necessarily being mediated by commitment. Given the inclusion of Sako’s (1992) competence trust construct, the performance of duty construct is considered redundant for this study. Bonus includes the offer of price reductions, gifts, or free services to existing customers (Izquierdo, 2005). Bonus is one of the activities to shape customers’ long relationship.

Customer value is very significant concept in marketing but many scholars deal with concept in different ways. Woodall (2003) has pointed out that customer value has many meanings. Customer value is a boarder, more systematic view of the entire value delivery network, not just the value “added” by a particular piece of the network.

Zeithaml, Parasursman, and Berry (1991) has defined



customer value as customer overall assessment of the utility of a product based on a perception of what is received and what is given.

Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey (1999) defined as Customer value creation (CVC) is manifested by the development of the new customer solutions, enhanced acquisition of inputs that lead to desired customer outputs and development of linkages and relationships to entities in the external market place. Zeithaml (1988) stated that Customer value can be conceptualized as a tradeoff between benefits and sacrifices. Customer value creation is at the heart of relationships between services recipients and service providers (Batiz-Lazo, 2001). Based on above literature, hypotheses were formulated.

H1: There is no relationship between customer relationship marketing and customer value creation

H1: There is relationship between customer relationship marketing and customer value creation.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data collection

The primary and secondary data were collected for the survey. Primary data were collected through questionnaires and secondary data were collected from books, journals, magazine and etc.

Sampling

The total population of Jaffna district is six hundred and fourteen thousand (614,384). Systematic quasi - random sampling technique selected every second customer to enter to reload center and mobile service providing

companies on a day of the survey, starting with first to come through the doors at start of the business, at 9.00 am. a total of 130 respondents were selected as a sample of the study. One hundred and seven respondents completed the questionnaire and the rest did not return it for unknown reasons.

Questionnaires

An instrument/questionnaire was used to collect data.

This questionnaire consists of three sections A, B, and C. section A consists personal details such as sex, status, age, education, monthly income, company name, and length of time customer has been in brand, kinds of packages.

Sections – B consists of ten statements such as trust, commitment, communication, promise, cooperation, Power, empathy, rapport, duration of the relationship and accuracy to measure the customer relationship marketing.

Sections – C consists of ten statements to evaluate customer value with the help of the following variables availability of service, security, cost, quality improvement, customer care, social responsibility, innovation, feature and usability, customer satisfaction and service support.

Above information/ data were collected through the questionnaire which is prepared with seven point Likert scale ranging from excellent to poor. Then data were converted into quantitative manner and then the analyses were made. Using the above information the following model was formulated.

$$CVC = f(CRM)$$

$$CVC = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \beta_7X_7 + \beta_8X_8 + \beta_9X_9 + \beta_{10}X_{10} \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Table 1. Model summary; impact of customer relationship marketing on customer value creation

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of The estimate
1	.722(a)	.521	.516	7.373

a Predictors: (Constant), TCRM

Table 2. Coefficients for Customer Relationship Marketing

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	12.974	4.376			2.965	.004
Trust	1.169	.860	.110		1.360	.001
Commitment	.693	.787	.060		.882	.000
Promise	.448	.570	.054		.787	.003
Communication	.711	.541	.102		1.314	.192
Cooperation	.703	.576	.091		1.221	.000
Power	2.724	.645	.373		4.222	.000
Empathy	5.588	.664	.799		8.420	.000
Rapport	2.829	.634	.428		4.461	.000
Duration	2.958	.520	.378		5.688	.000
Accuracy	1.810	0.624	.197		2.900	0.005

a. Dependent Variable : CV C

Where,

CRM- Customer relationship marketing

CVC – Customer value creation

X₁. Trust

X₂ – Commitment

X₃ – Communication

X₄ – Promise

X₅ – Cooperation

X₆ – Power

X₇ – Empathy

X₈ – Rapport

X₉ – Duration of relationship

X₁₀ – Accuracy

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Reliability

The internal reliability of the items was verified by computing the Cronbach's alpha. Nunnally (1978) suggested that a minimum alpha of 0.6 sufficed for early stage of research. The Cronbach alpha estimated for customer relationship marketing was 0.841 and customer value creation was 0.879. As the Cronbach's alpha in this study were all much higher than 0.6, the constructs were therefore deemed to have adequate reliability.

Validity

Factors were identified through the literature review and

also factors were derived from famous model construct. Therefore validity of customer relationship marketing and customer value creation was very satisfactory.

Regression analysis

Regression model was applied to test how far the customer relationship marketing had impact on customer value creation. Coefficient of determination- R² is the measure of proportion of the variance of dependent variable about its mean that is explained by the independent or predictor variables (Hair et.al, 1998). Higher value of R² represents greater explanatory power of the regression equation. (Table 1)

Above table shows the R² value of 0.521. It means that the customer relationship marketing is contributing to the customer value creation by 52.1% and remaining 47.9% can be attributed by other factors like customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, customer retention and service quality which are not studied, because they are beyond the scope of study. Anyhow hypothesis -01 is accepted.

Above 2 table shows the beta value of the each types of variable of customer relationship marketing. Using the above value the following formula can be formulated.

$$CVC = f(CRM)$$

$$CVC = 12.974 + 1.169(X_1) + 0.693(X_2) + 0.448(X_3) + .711(X_4) + .703(X_5) + 2.724(X_6) + 0.558(X_7) + 0.2.829(X_8) + .2.958(X_9) + 1.810(X_{10})$$

Table 3. Correlation analysis for mobile service providing companies

Variable	Customer relationship marketing	Customer value creation
Customer relationship marketing	1	0.722
Customer value creation	0.722**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 – Tailed)

The above formula shows that, if trust increases by 1 unit, customer value creation will increase by 1.169. Further the model shows that empathy has the greater impact on customer value creation as compared to other components. According to the above table, empathy has highest beta value (5.588) that means empathy highly contributed to the customer relationship marketing of the mobile service providing companies. Promise has lowest beta value. Companies fail to full fill their promises and also companies have effective plans to fulfill their delivered promises.

The “t” value for each variable revealed that all have a significant impact on customer value creation.

Relationship between customer relationship marketing and customer value creation

Customer relationship marketing and customer value creation are interrelated. Customer value creation and exchange has been identified as foundation stone of the concept of customer relationship marketing which has evolved and has been identified as strategic approach directing all marketing activities toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchange (Morgan and Hunt, 1994).customer value creation is manifested by the development of new customer solutions, enhanced acquisition of inputs that lead to desired customer outputs and development of linkages and relationships to entities in the external market place(Srivastava,Shervani,and Fahey,1999).

Table 3 shows the relationship between the variables (customer relationship marketing and customer value creation). Correlation value is 0.722 which is significant at 0.01 levels. It indicates that as the customer relationship marketing increases the customer value creation increase. So, the hypothesis – 2 is accepted.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

Ho: There is no relationship between CRM and CVC

Ho: There is relationship between CRM and CVC

Null hypothesis has to be rejected when p value is 0.05 as a rule. Here, researcher has tested in 1 % of the significant level. However, p value is less than 0.05 at 1 % of the significant level. There is chance to reject null and accept alternative hypothesis. Therefore, researcher rejects null and accept alternative one. There refers to that researcher rejects there is no relationship and

accepts that there is relationship between CRM and CVC.

Limitation of the study

1. This study is confined among the mobile service providing companies in Jaffna district.
2. Only three companies such as Dialog, Airtel, and Mobitel are taken for the present study.

Finding

Regression analysis and correlation have been employed to analyses the data collected from respondents. The internal reliability of the items was verified by computing the Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally, 1978). The Cronbach alpha estimated for customer relationship marketing and customer value creation was 0.841 and 0.879 respectively.

Regression analysis has been employed to investigate the impact of customer relationship marketing on customer value creation in mobile service providing companies. Thus customer relationship marketing is contributing to the customer value creation by 52.1% and remaining 47.9% can be attributed by other factors like customer satisfaction, service quality Therefore hypothesis one is accepted.

Correlation analysis was carried out to find out the relationship between customer relationship marketing and customer value creation. Thus customer relationship marketing is correlated with customer value creation with the value of 0.722. Therefore hypothesis two is accepted. In this study two hypothesis (H1, H2) were accepted.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study has demonstrated the impact of customer relationship marketing on customer value creation. Based on the finding of the study, there are a few key points that can be used to conclude this research paper. It is very important that the mobile service providing company understands the needs of its customer and provide what is best for the customer. Finally, this study concludes that customer relationship marketing is contributing to customer value creation.

Companies need to implement well designed customer relationship and public relation scheme.

Companies have to maintain high level relationship between the customer relationship marketing and customer value creation. In this study, contribution of customer relationship marketing to build the customer value creation are low. So companies have to increase the contribution of customer relationship marketing on creation of customer value.

Future research

Several suggestions that fruitful for future research emerged from this present study. In order to validate the findings of this study, case study is another interesting approach that can be done by future research. Additionally, the research model of this study can be retested in business organizations, so that the research model can be generalized to other sector. This study mainly focused on impact of customer relationship marketing and customer value creation. Other factors like service quality, customer satisfaction (excluding CRM) have not been taken to consideration

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