

The Role of Electronic Customer Relationship Management (E-CRM) on Luxury Hotels Performance in UK

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Abstract:

Technology has changed the way of the organisations in performing their assigned tasks in an effective manner. Similarly, luxury hotel industry has also implied many technologies for successfully delivering its operations. From such technology, one use of technology is concerned with electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM). The use of E-CRM has increased the performance of the industry by performing computerised efforts of managing relationship with their target customers through social media applications. Further, the use of E-CRM has helped the luxury hotel industry in developing such offers that are specifically cater the needs of their target customers. Further, the research uses quantitative methods with primary data collection technique for collecting the responses from 250 respondents working in the luxury hotel industry and are using E-CRM services for developing and retaining the relationships with customers. The results of the research were developed through the implication of SPSS software where conducting descriptive, regression and correlation analysis were performed. The developed results accepted the alternative hypothesis of research that explains a positive relationship between the study variables. In the end, the research ends with recommendations for the future research.

Keywords: Electronic customer relationship management, E-CRM, luxury hotel performance, Hotel performance

1. Introduction

Electronic Customer Relationship Management (hereafter E-CRM) is an internet-based technology that employs the use of emails, websites, forums, chat rooms and other social platforms which allows an organisation to manage the relationships with its customers electronically (Navimipour, & Soltani, 2016). According to the study of Saarijärvi, Karjaluoto, & Kuusela, (2013), the author explains that electronic management of customer relationship is an effective and well-structured method to enhance marketing and sales of the organisation and improve their customer relationships. Furthermore, with the use of E-CRM for customers, the organisation is able to be knowledgeable of the customer's needs and requirements and ensure that the future products the organisation aims to launch cater to the demands of the customer, thereby, allowing them to gain a significant competitive advantage in the market they are operating in (Khodakarami, & Chan, 2014). Some of the benefits highlighted by the study of Reinhold, & Alt (2013, June), of using E-CRM are: improvements in customer relations, services and enhanced customer support catering the demands of the consumers, marketing products that match the online shopping trend of customers with suitable offers, increased revenues and profits, significant cost reduction, and improved customer satisfaction and loyalty. According to the study of Rahimi, & Gunlu, (2016), many hotels in the UK are employing the use of different strategies to improve their relationship with customers to sustain their businesses.

Furthermore, in accordance with the study Jawabreh (2014), the authors explain that customer relationship management (CRM) is mostly employed in luxury hotels because the management of luxury hotels focuses on providing their customers with a luxury service that provides a good impression on the luxury services provided. In accordance with the study of Rahimi (2017), many luxury hotels are now employing the use of E-CRM so that they able to collect data and store appropriate customer information, to allow them to further improve their services and the satisfaction of the customers. The aim of this research is to evaluate the role of E-CRM in luxury hotels' performance in the UK. There are many studies available that research on CRM and its implementation in the hotel industry (Rahimi, Köseoglu, Ersoy, & Okumus, 2017; Asaberel, & Doku, 2013; Diffley, McCole, & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2018), however, there is lack of research on the role of E-CRM on the luxury hotel performance in the UK. Not many companies within the hotel industry of UK are not aware of the benefits of employing the use of E-CRM within their business and what is the role of E-CRM in enhancing the hotel performance, thereby allowing them to have a sustainable business. Thus, with successful execution of this study will enable future researchers and concerned personnel within hotel industry of the UK to be knowledgeable of the role of E-CRM on hotel performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Implications of CRM and E-CRM on Hotel Performance

According to Abu Amuna, Al Shobaki, Abu-Naser, & Badwan, (2017), the role of CRM is to acquire customer information so that businesses and organisations within the hotel industry can retain their customers by providing them with products that cater to their needs and requirements. Additionally, CRM is employed so that hotels can manage and coordinate their customer interactions and ensure the maximisation of customer interaction value and consequently enhance their corporate performance (Khodakarami, & Chan, 2014). Hence, in accordance with the study of Tseng (2016), the author explains that E-CRM pertains to formulation of a strategy that integrates the marketing and services strategy adopted by the organisation which they can employ to identify, attract and retain their customers. The study of Bin-Nashwan, & Hassan, (2017) further explains that the implementation of E-CRM enables organisations and hotels to improve and grow communication with their customers and clients by creating an enhanced customer interaction environment with the use of innovative technology. E-CRM provides organisation with a history of all the interactions made between the customer and the organisation, that makes this software, E-CRM software, an important tool for all organisations (Mastorakis, Trihas, Perakakis, & Kopanakis, 2015). Tian, & Wang, (2017) adds that an E-CRM software contains the following selection of features: Customer Management, Knowledge Management, Account Management, Case Management, Back-end Integration, and Reporting and Analysis.

According to the study of Ahmed, Amroush, & Maati, (2019), customer management in E-CRM allows organisations within a hotel industry to gain access to all relevant and important customer information that includes enquiry status and correspondence as well. Furthermore, the study of Ali, Ishaya, & Hassan (2015) describes that knowledge management in E-CRM allows companies to have a centralised knowledge system that can handle and share the information of customers. Account management pertains to the sales and marketing team of an organisation to review customer purchasing information and their history of the purchases made to provide them with relevant products that are based on the customer's purchase history (Tsou, & Hsu, 2017). The feature of Case management enables organisations to be knowledgeable of any unresolved customer issues, any enquiry the customer has made and prioritises urgent cases, such as payment error, so that companies can solve these issues as quickly as possible to ensure customer satisfaction (Mastorakis, Trihas, Perakakis, & Kopanakis, 2015). According to the study of Ahmed, Amroush, & Maati, (2019), back-end integration feature allows companies to integrate other systems within E-CRM system, such as, billing, logistics, and inventory with the aid appropriate customer contact points e.g. call centres and websites. Finally, the feature of reporting and analysis allows the generation of customer behaviour report, which the organisation's management can review and ensure that their businesses objectives are being met along with the satisfaction of customers as well (Ahmed, Maati, & Al Mohajir, 2015).

2.2 The Evolution of E-CRM

Jelonek (2015) explains that in the past, the mantra created that "The Customer is King" was not put into practise at all by the organisations. Instead, the organisations perceived that they were doing a favour for their customers by answering some questions on the telephone. However, Bin-Nashwan, & Hassan, (2017) adds that in the 1990s two concepts were introduced to the business world that changed the way organisations were treating their customers. These concepts pertained to 'Deregulation' and 'Internet'. The author further explains that with the introduction of these two concepts in the business world, it radically brought down the barrier of entry for businesses to enter into a certain market. Thus, this gave rise to intense competition in the market that forced organisation to formulate effective and unique strategies to ensure customer retaining (Kapoulas, & Ratković, 2015). The study of Hendriyani, & Raharja, (2018) describes that organisations were forced to change their business strategies in such a way that they met the requirements of the customer to ensure the sustenance of their business. If a customer was not satisfied with the products being sold or the customer service of the organisation was poor, they would simply choose a substitute for that product provided that the customers were satisfied with the quality and catered to their needs. According to the study of Bugaje, (2015), the author highlights that many companies, in the early days, were forced to shut down their business because the products they were selling did not meet the requirements of the customer and had poor customer services. Thus, by considering the factors which ensured the sustenance of an organisation, the concept of customer of relationship management was introduced and as technology was constantly being innovated and new technological innovation were being introduced, the concept of E-CRM was also introduced recently (Turban, Strauss, & Lai, 2016). According to the study of Rahimi, Köseoglu, Ersoy, & Okumus, (2017), there are more than 200 CRM software vendors that provide organisation with software to manage their customers. The integration of an electronic environment to manage the customer relationships allowed organisation to handle all customer

queries and problems in an effective manner and enabled them to consider the opinions of customers when planning to develop a new product.

2.3 E-CRM and Luxury Hotel Performance

The increased development of the internet has allowed various opportunities for growth in the hotel industry. Many hotels are now employing the use of internet and other platforms to market their hotels so that tourist can come to their hotel and enjoy their services (Safari, & Safahani, 2015). According to the study of Belias et al., (2017) hotels have now adopted the use of digital marketing and other various online marketing strategies to attract customers as much as possible and employ the use of E-CRM to be knowledgeable of the requirements of their customers to provide them with a luxury and satisfactory experience. Managers and concerned personnel of many luxury hotels are employing the use of E-CRM to maintain an interactive communication environment with their customers (Hamid, Mousavi, & Partovi, (2019). The website of luxury hotels allows the management to contact their potential guests and customers in a unique way based on their personal relationship with them. According to the study of Calvo-Aizpuru, & González-Aponcio, (2016, June), E-CRM allows luxury hotels to attract new customers by ensuring the company has a presence on any social media platform which allows them to target a wide range of population and market their luxury hotel in an effective way. Furthermore, Rossidis et al., (2019) explains if the luxury hotel that is employing the use of E-CRM, already has a good reputation with its old customers, have greater chances to attract new customers thereby, promoting and sustaining their business. The study of Nikou, Selamat, Yusoff, & Khiabani, (2016) explains that luxury hotels employing the use of E-CRM in their business perceive increased business performance because they are knowledgeable of their customer's requirements and ensure these requirements are met to improve their overall business performance, ensure efficiency in their internal processes, gain opportunities for growth and learning, and finally improve their financial status.

2.4 Hypothesis

H0: Electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM) has no significant and positive impact on the performance of luxury hotels in the UK.

H1: Electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM) has a significant and positive impact on the performance of luxury hotels in the UK.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology that has been adopted for this study pertains to the use of quantitative methodology. This is because quantitative methodology allowed the researcher to investigate the topic under researcher in a systematic manner and allowed to the researcher to be able to gather quantifiable data on which arithmetical calculations can be performed (Ryan, 2018). This allowed the researcher to gather factual data through which relationships between the variables of this can be evaluated. The philosophy adopted for the purpose of this research is Positivism. This is because the philosophy of positivism allowed the researcher to gain factual knowledge through the observations made (Rahi, 2017) and determine the role of E-CRM on luxury hotel performance in the UK. Additionally, the adoption of positivism allowed the researcher to have minimal interaction with the participants of this study so that the responses obtained were trustworthy and honest. The research approach that was adopted for the purpose of this study in deductive approach. This is justified with the fact that it allowed the researcher to develop hypothesis of the study by observing a real world phenomenon which pertains to the role of E-CRM on hotels performance in the UK, which would then be proved true or false with the results obtained after the collection of data and determine a relationship between the variables (Tjora, 2018). The benefit of adopting a deductive approach for the purpose of this research is that it allowed for the elucidation of the causal relationships between the variables of the study and measure the concepts quantitatively (Antwi, & Hamza, 2015).

3.1 Data Collection

Since a quantitative methodology was adopted for the purpose of this study, the data collection method pertained to the use of survey questionnaires that were distributed to the participants of this study. The questionnaires were developed on a 5-point Likert scale, where the participants answered the questions based on: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The use of questionnaires allowed the researcher to obtain data in a short amount of time and apply different arithmetical formulas to obtain results from different quantitative aspects.

3.2 Data Analysis

The software that was employed for data analysis pertained to the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

The data was obtained through the survey questionnaires was sent to SPSS software and descriptive analysis, correlation and regression analysis were used on the obtained data. The benefit of employing the use of SPSS for this research is that the software allowed the researcher to easily manipulate the data and automatically set up the data for analysis with designated names of the variables, their types, and titles.

3.3 Sample Size and Technique

The sample size for this research was the inclusion of 250 participants who belonged to the hotel industry and worked in luxury hotels and used E-CRM in their business operations within the hotel industry of the UK. The medium adopted for the purpose of survey distribution pertains to the use of an online medium for distribution of survey. The sampling technique adopted was non-probability sampling with snowball sampling for the recruitment of participants.

3.4 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is developed for identifying the particular variables of research and understanding their relationship with each other. Researchers had explained the importance of the conceptual framework by describing it as the road map for the researchers. Current research also follows a conceptual framework that helps the researchers in developing research hypotheses.



Figure 1: Conceptual framework.

The above-developed conceptual framework explains the two main research variables of practising E-CRM by the luxury hotels management for improving their overall performance. The development of the independent and dependent variables of research has to lead the current researchers in making effective research hypotheses that will help the current researchers in reaching towards the research results.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Descriptive statistics

In any conducted research, the determination of descriptive statistics can be helpful in describing the summary of the measures of the collected results. The descriptive results of the current study are as follows:

Descriptive Statistics								
	N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
ECRM1	250	3.87	.045	.717	.194	.154	-1.035	.307
ECRM2	250	4.12	.048	.754	-.195	.154	-1.217	.307
ECRM3	250	4.10	.048	.754	-.161	.154	-1.224	.307
ECRM4	250	3.81	.056	.892	-.442	.154	-.319	.307
ECRM5	250	4.04	.058	.924	-.749	.154	-.102	.307
ECRM6	250	4.11	.045	.714	-.567	.154	.375	.307
ECRM7	250	4.00	.052	.816	-.625	.154	.500	.307
LuxHoPer1	250	4.13	.047	.739	-.389	.154	-.518	.307
LuxHoPer2	250	4.09	.048	.758	-.770	.154	1.313	.307
LuxHoPer3	250	4.11	.043	.673	-.136	.154	-.792	.307
LuxHoPer4	250	4.08	.045	.712	-.117	.154	-1.017	.307
LuxHoPer5	250	4.16	.045	.712	-.249	.154	-1.005	.307
LuxHoPer6	250	4.11	.048	.763	-.466	.154	-.072	.307
LuxHoPer7	250	4.08	.053	.840	-.555	.154	-.226	.307
LuxHoPer8	250	4.14	.049	.769	-.505	.154	-.377	.307
Valid N	250							

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics.

The developed descriptive statistics (Table 1) is based on the statements asked in the survey questionnaire. These statements were measured with the help of Likert Scale measure that explains the findings of research in five main categories of agreement and disagreement. The total number of respondents were 250.

The determined mean values of the collected data are between 3.80 and 4.16; this means that all of the asked statements were agreed by the respondents. Further, determining values of standard deviations in the descriptive statistics were less than one. This means that the deviations in the collected data were manageable (Table 1). Moreover, the value of skewness in the data was in a negative value, which means that the developed normal probability curve will be steeper and shorter. This result was also supported by the values of Kurtosis evaluated in the table (Table 1).

4.2 Correlation analysis

Researchers conduct correlation analysis among the research variables for understanding the level of association among the studied variables. In the current research, the studied research variables are electronic CRM and performance of luxury hotels of the UK. The developed correlation analysis of the study is displayed in Table 2.

Correlations			
		Electronic CRM	LuxuryHotel Performance
Electronic CRM	Pearson Correlation	1	.723**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
LuxuryHotel Performance	Pearson Correlation	.723**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2: Correlation analysis.

From Table 2 it can be observed that the researchers have determined the Pearson coefficient of correlation for conducting the correlation analysis of the collected data. As the value of coefficient was positive 0.723; and was reaching towards positive one, so it can have been analysed that both the variables have positive and strong association among themselves. This also means that with the change in one variable; other variables also observed changes in a positive manner. That is when the E-CRM practices are increased by the luxury hotel management; then their performance is also increased.

4.3 Regression analysis

After conducting a correlation analysis on the collected data. Another important analysis for researchers is regression analysis. The regression analysis helps the researchers in understanding the relationship between the research variables. When the regression analysis of the collected data is performed, two tables hold great value. These two tables are model summary and table of ANOVA. The developed model summary of the test is described in Table 3 and the ANOVA table is described in Table 4.

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.723 ^a	.523	.521	.380	1.668

a. Predictors: (Constant), ElectronicCRM

b. Dependent Variable: LuxuryHotelPerformance

Table 3: Model Summary.

Referring to Table 3, the important value of the table is the value of R-Square, which is 0.523. This means that there are more than 50% chances that a change in the E-CRM practice can change the performance of luxury hotels in the UK. The analysed value of R explains the fitness of the developed model summary. In

this case, the value of R is 72.3%; which means that model is fit. The analysed value of R is also supported by the positive value of the Durbin Watson value of 1.668.

This value is less than two that also means that the variables of research have positive auto-correlation. Such results of model summary displayed in Table 3 are also supported by the 'Sig' value explained in the ANOVA table (Table 4).

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	39.215	1	39.215	271.797	.000 ^b
	Residual	35.781	248	.144		
	Total	74.996	249			

a. Dependent Variable: LuxuryHotelPerformance

b. Predictors: (Constant), ElectronicCRM

Table 4: ANOVA table.

While referring to Table 4, it is observed that the 'Sig' value of the conducted regression analysis in Table 3 is '0.00'. This means that the developed model summary is explaining the correct relation between the research variables. The coefficient table (Table 5) explains the impact of this regression model.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.257	.168		7.492	.000
	Electronic CRM	.701	.043	.723	16.486	.000

a. Dependent Variable: LuxuryHotelPerformance

Table 5: Coefficients table.

From Table 5 describing coefficients for performed regression, it is observed that the value of unstandardized coefficient (B=0.701) is explaining that the electronic CRM practices positively increase the luxury hotel performance by 70.1%. This fact is also acclaimed by the standardised coefficient (Beta) with the value of 0.723. In terms of determining whether there is a significant impact or not, the sig value is referred. With reference to the findings of (), the sig value or p-value must be appeared lesser than 0.5 in order to claim there is a significant impact of independent variable on the dependent variable. On the basis of the aforementioned table, the sig value has been appeared as 0.000 which is considerably lesser than the threshold value. Also, the positive beta value indicates that there is a positive and significant impact of electronic CRM on the luxury hotel financial performance.

4.4 Discussion

It has been identified in the above results that there is a strong relationship between the practices of electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM) and the performance level of the luxury hotels of the United Kingdom. It has been identified by Rahimi and Gunlu, (2016) that there are different factors that can contribute to the revenue generation of luxury hotels. These factors are in the relation of the modern working environment that exists in the hotel management and the availability of different options for making effective customer retention in hotels. Tian, & Wang, (2017) discussed the fact that that the luxury hotels of the UK who perform E-CRM activities tend to retain more customers in comparison of other luxury hotels. It is also explained by Mastorakis *et al.*, (2015) that luxury hotels that did not perform the E-CRM practices are usually left behind in the market competition. Therefore, effective electronic CRM practices performance holds a great value for the luxury hotels so that they can expand their offered products and services in the target market.

Hendriyani & Raharja, (2018) explain their understanding about E-CRM that effective electronic E-CRM practices require an increase in the understanding of the social behaviour of the target market. This can be done by hotel management by making enough practices of social insight. This social insight about the customers can be developed through their demand for services. Further, Jelonek (2015) also discussed that the customers of the luxury hotel industry can be classified into different classes based on their service acquisition practices. These types of classifications can help the luxury hotel management in developing and implementing such customer relationship management services that can also be supported with electronic means of communication. It is also explained by Diffley, McCole & Carvajal-Trujillo (2018) that conducting CRM activities through

electronic means can help the hotel management is classifying the customers in accordance to their needs and can easily increase the satisfaction level.

Rahimi & Gunlu (2016) have also explained the fact that the effective delivery of e-CRM activities can easily increase the success of the business as the level of complaints is reduced. It was also explained by Rahimi & Gunlu (2016) that when e-CRM is applied by luxury hotels, it increases the level of customer loyalty. When customer loyalty is improved by luxury hotels, they tend to repeat the processes of e-CRM so that they can easily contribute to solving other requirements of the clients. In this manner, the customers help the hotel management in collecting and analysing the client data for more tailored products and services. In this manner, the luxury hotel management satisfies and retains more customers and increases the revenue generation that can help in performance adjustments (Nikou *et al.* 2016).

These qualities of the E-CRM application explain the fact that the use of effective E-CRM applications can help hotel management in dealing with their respective customers. It was further explained by Ahmed, Maati & Al Mohajir, (2015) that E-CRM practices are the essential CRM practice extension in the success of business success. The use of E-CRM practices can easily help the hotel business in attaining the right information from the right customer and develop their business practices. It is also explained by Tsou & Hsu, (2017) that the use of E-CRM can easily increase the overall performance of the luxury hotels. This is because; the introduction of technology usage in the CRM practices can bring positive change supporting organisational growth. Moreover, it was explained by the researchers that the use of E-CRM practices in luxury hotel management could help the business in performing effective marketing practices that can result in attracting more customers and thus making retention easy (Kapoulas, & Ratković, 2015).

It was also explained by Jawabreh, (2014) that the use of E-CRM can help the luxury hotel industry of the UK in understanding about their customers; needs and other demands about their offered services. In this manner, luxury hotels can effectively upgrade their performance. Further, the use of E-CRM in luxury hotel management can lead to developing change in the structure of hotel governance. Change in the organisational structure is very important when its goals are not successfully attained (Navimipour & Soltani, 2016). The desired change in the organisational structure can effectively help the hotel managers in developing such offers that are required by the customers for fulfilling their own needs. For successful E-CRM delivery in the luxury hotel industry of the UK, there is no need to use any quality optimisation service; but an idea for assisting the marketing operation can be beneficial for the industry (Jelonek, 2015). Consequently, effectively developed E-CRM practices can be performed when the service staff of the luxury hotel industry performs their duties that are supportive of organisational success. Henceforth, it very well may be said that the E-CRM association must be a basic through which firms influence the central changes in the manner they composed their business forms (Navimipour & Soltani, 2016).

4.5 Hypotheses Summary

S.No	Hypothesis	Status
H0	Electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM) has no significant and positive impact on the performance of luxury hotels in the UK.	Rejected
H1	Electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM) has a significant and positive impact on the performance of luxury hotels in the UK.	Accepted

5. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

With the enhancement of information technology towards digitisation of many organisational processes, the luxury hotel industry of the UK is also looking for different technological practices that can help them to increase their customer retention. It was discussed in the study that electronic management of the customers' information and relationship can be helpful in future for attracting more customers towards the industry.

In the conducted research, it was further discussed that the implication of E-CRM in the luxury hotels industry of the UK can effectively reduce the errors of operations that are demanded by the customers for making their visit in the industry. E-CRM practices had revolutionised the hotel management practices in a

manner that the customers feel satisfied with the attainment of the services and provide their positive responses. The delivery of positivity from the clients results in an increase in hotel performance.

The research further develops a quantitative methodology to determine the desired results in a systematic manner. The research article also develops null and alternate hypotheses for determining the actual results based on the correlation and regression analysis that was based on the primary data collected through a survey questionnaire. In the results section, it was understood that both E-CRM and performance of luxury hotels changes in direct proportion. This direct proportion also helps the researchers in accepting their research alternative hypothesis about the significant positive impact of E-CRM on the performance of the luxury hotels. In the end, the research made certain recommendations about future research so that future research perform comprehensive research.

5.2 Recommendation

As the topic suggests, the research was conducted for analysing the role of electronic customer relationship management in the performance of luxury hotels of the UK. Therefore, there are certain recommendations for the future researchers conducting research on a similar topic:

1. It is recommended for future researchers to determine the role of different organisational practices that can affect the performance of the luxury hotels of the UK.
2. Another recommendation is based on the condition that if the future researchers are examining the role of E-CRM practices for hotels then they must look into the whole hospitality industry for determining the exact role of E-CRM practices that are carried in the industry.

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