Customer Relationship Management in the Context of Digital Marketing on Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty and Profitability Enhancement at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia

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ABSTRAK

Kata kunci:
Manajemen
Hubungan
Pelanggan;
Pemasaran Digital;
Kepuasan
Pelanggan;
Loyalitas
Pelanggan;
Teknologi
Pemasaran.

Dengan transformasi digital yang mengubah lanskap bisnis global, perusahaan menghadapi tantangan kompleks dalam mengelola hubungan pelanggan di era digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh atau dampak implementasi Customer Relationship Management (CRM) dalam strategi pemasaran digital terhadap hubungan pelanggan di era digital. Dengan perkembangan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi, perusahaan kini menghadapi tantangan baru dalam mengelola interaksi dengan pelanggan melalui berbagai platform digital. Penelitian ini menjadi semakin relevan mengingat penetrasi internet di Indonesia mencapai 79,5% pada tahun 2024, yang menunjukkan pergeseran signifikan perilaku konsumen menuju platform digital. Konteks Indonesia menjadi penting karena karakteristik pasar yang unik dengan adopsi teknologi mobile-first dan pertumbuhan e-commerce yang pesat. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan analisis deskriptif melalui survei kepada perwakilan tim pemasaran perusahaan yang mengimplementasikan CRM berbasis digital dengan variabel kepuasan pelanggan, peningkatan loyalitas pelanggan, peningkatan kinerja penjualan, dan peningkatan profitabilitas perusahaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi CRM berbasis digital dapat secara positif meningkatkan efisiensi komunikasi, personalisasi layanan, dan manajemen data pelanggan yang lebih optimal, yang pada gilirannya berkontribusi pada peningkatan kepuasan, loyalitas, kinerja, dan profitabilitas. Selain itu, temuan juga mengungkapkan bahwa penggunaan alat pemasaran digital, seperti media sosial, email marketing, dan chatbot, semakin memperkuat hubungan perusahaan dengan pelanggan. Penelitian ini menyarankan agar perusahaan memanfaatkan teknologi CRM digital yang terintegrasi dengan platform pemasaran digital untuk memaksimalkan pengalaman pelanggan dan mencapai tujuan pemasaran yang lebih efektif.

ABSTRACT

Keywords:
Customer
Relationship
Managemen;

With digital transformation reshaping the global business landscape, companies face complex challenges in managing customer relationships in the digital era. This study aims to analyse the effect or impact of implementing Customer Relationship

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Digital Marketing; Customer Satisfaction; Customer Loyalty; Marketing Technology.

Management (CRM) in digital marketing strategies on customer relationships in the digital era. With the development of information and communication technology, companies now face new challenges in managing interactions with customers through various digital platforms. This research becomes increasingly relevant given that internet penetration in Indonesia reached 79.5% in 2024, indicating a significant shift in consumer behavior towards digital platforms. The Indonesian context is particularly important due to unique market characteristics with mobile-first technology adoption and rapid e-commerce growth. This research uses a descriptive analysis approach through a survey to representatives of the Company's marketing team who implement digital-based CRM with customer satisfaction variables, increasing customer loyalty, improving sales performance and increasing Company profitability. The results show that the implementation of digital-based CRM can positively improve communication efficiency, service personalisation, and more optimal customer data management, which in turn contributes to increased satisfaction, loyalty, performance and profitability. In addition, the findings also reveal that the use of digital marketing tools, such as social media, email marketing, and chatbots, further strengthens companies' relationships with customers. The research suggests that companies leverage digital CRM technology integrated with digital marketing platforms to maximise customer experience and achieve more effective marketing goals.

INTRODUCTION

In this era of modernization, information is easily obtainable and can be disseminated within seconds to any part of the world. This phenomenon is certainly driven by rapid technological advancements and the increasingly widespread use of the internet in society. Moreover, numerous internet-based software applications and platforms are emerging that require an internet connection to operate. This further strengthens the position of the internet as one of the necessities of modern society. The internet serves as a barrier-free information center because it connects one information site to another in a short time. Rustam (2017) argues that the internet concerns human communication worldwide through electronic communication networks enabled by computer network connectivity.

Globally, the implementation of digital-based CRM faces multifaceted challenges that extend beyond technological adoption. Companies worldwide struggle with data privacy regulations such as GDPR in Europe and various data protection laws across jurisdictions, creating complexity in managing customer information across borders. Additionally, integrating CRM systems with existing legacy systems, the need for significant organizational change management, and substantial investments in both technology and human capital training present considerable barriers (Dewnarain et al., 2019). Cultural differences in customer expectations and communication preferences across markets further complicate the standardization of CRM approaches. In developing markets like Indonesia, these challenges are compounded by varying levels of digital literacy among consumers, inconsistent internet connectivity in certain regions, and the need to balance global best practices with local market nuances. Furthermore, the rapid evolution of digital channels and customer touchpoints requires companies to continuously adapt their CRM strategies while maintaining data security and building customer trust in

an increasingly privacy-conscious global environment (Almassawa, 2018; Triandewo & Yustine, 2020).

The internet (*Interconnection Networking*) is a globally interconnected network that creates a world system through telecommunication networks such as telephone, radio, satellite, and other sources (Astianita & Lusia, 2022). According to Sadjiarto (2015), the internet has numerous uses, including serving as a platform to access and exchange information with others, a medium for publishing research, observations, and personal matters, a place to communicate and socialize, and a source of entertainment. Therefore, in carrying out daily activities, the internet has become an indispensable need for most people.

The penetration and behavior of internet users in Indonesia, based on a survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), indicate that in 2024, internet users numbered 221,563,479 out of a total population of 278,696,200, with a penetration rate of 79.5%—meaning nearly three-quarters of the population use the internet.
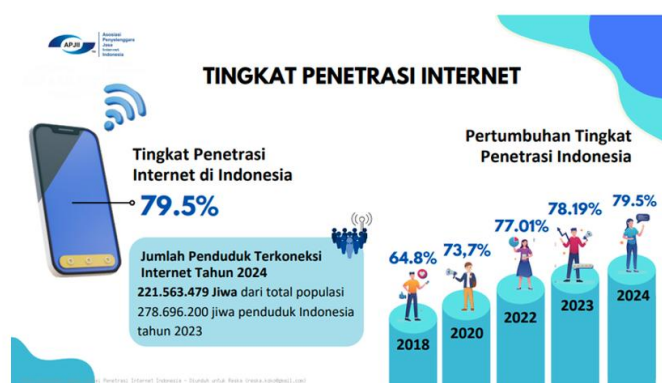

Figure 1. Internet User Penetration in Indonesia
Source: Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association Survey

This figure shows an increase compared to 2018, which only reached 64.8%. Therefore, there was an increase of 8.9%, where this figure is equivalent to 25,537,353.7 users. From the percentage described above, it can reflect that Indonesian society is increasingly literate in technology, especially in the use of the internet.
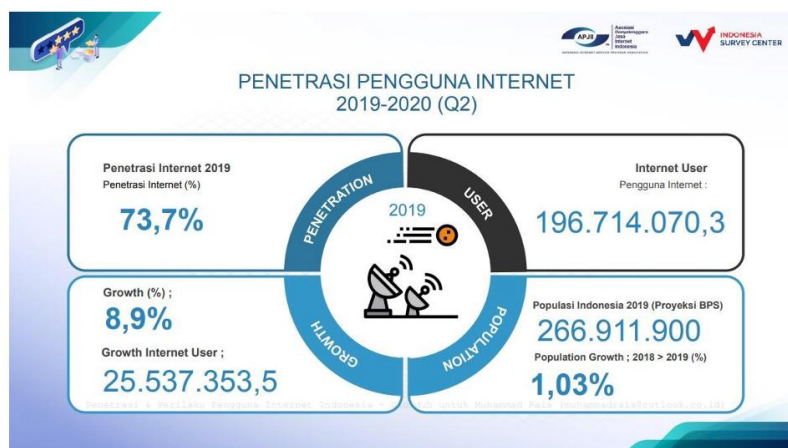

Figure 2. Internet User Growth in Indonesia

Source: Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association Survey

The survey conducted by APJII also examined what devices are favored by Indonesian society in accessing the internet daily. Smartphones or mobile phones lead with 95.4% usage, followed by laptops/tablets with 19.7% usage, and lastly desktop computers with 9.5% usage.
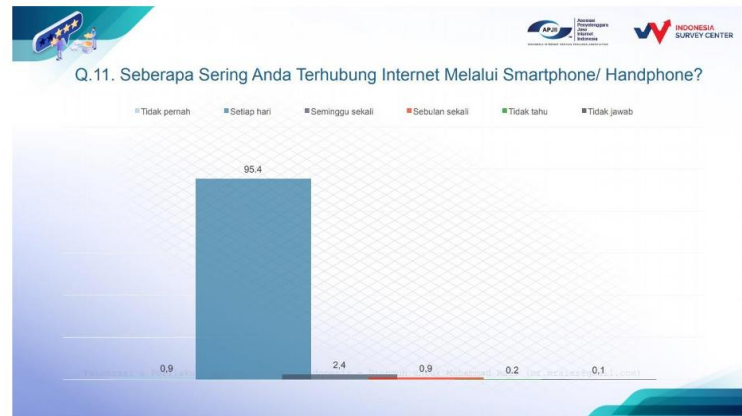

Figure 3. Smartphone Users in Indonesia
Source: Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association Survey

Based on these factors, the telecommunications industry has great opportunities to continuously develop new innovations to better meet consumer needs as the era becomes increasingly modern (Indrasari, 2019). Telecommunication companies compete fiercely to lead the market through various product-service offerings and other strategies. Market-leading operators always strive to improve themselves with the aim of becoming the customer's first choice (Ferrer-Estévez & Chalmeta, 2023; Foltean et al., 2019; Guerola-Navarro et al., 2021). In addition, they adopt and establish appropriate policies to retain existing customers and maintain their position amid increasingly tight competition (Jamil et al., 2022).

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a strategic approach that aims to create growing shareholder value through good relationships with key customers and customer segments. CRM combines the potential of relationship marketing strategies and information technology (IT) to create profitable long-term relationships with consumers and other stakeholders. Meanwhile, according to Shaw (1999), CRM is defined as an interactive process that achieves an optimal balance between company investment and satisfaction from meeting consumer needs to generate maximum profit.

Research conducted by Attas (2018) shows that CRM has a significant positive effect on customer loyalty and has great potential for development in banks and other companies. Furthermore, Ratnasari et al. (2021), in their research entitled "The Effect of E-CRM and Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty at Matahari Department Store Karawang," show that the influence of E-CRM and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty has a positive and unidirectional effect. When E-CRM increases, customer satisfaction also increases, as does customer loyalty.

However, these previous studies predominantly focused on traditional retail and banking sectors, with limited examination of technology-driven companies operating in Indonesia's unique digital ecosystem. Moreover, while existing research has established the general relationship between CRM and customer outcomes, there remains a significant gap in understanding how CRM specifically functions within integrated digital marketing frameworks in the Indonesian context. This research builds upon previous findings by investigating not only the direct effects of CRM on customer satisfaction and loyalty but also its mediating role in enhancing company profitability through digital channels—an aspect that has received insufficient attention in prior Indonesian studies.

The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive examination of CRM implementation within a digitally native Indonesian company, offering insights into how CRM strategies must be adapted for markets characterized by high mobile penetration, social media dominance, and rapidly evolving consumer digital behaviors. Furthermore, this study contributes new empirical evidence on the specific mechanisms through which digital CRM tools influence customer relationships in emerging markets, addressing a critical gap in the literature that has predominantly focused on developed market contexts.

Customer loyalty is a psychological characteristic formed by continuous consumer satisfaction paired with emotional attachment to service providers, leading to a state where consumers are willing and consistent in maintaining relationships with preferred brands, subscriptions, and premiums. In line with Sanjaya and Sawitri (2017), who state that customer loyalty is a customer's commitment to adhere to the same brand, product, or supplier in a positive relationship—demonstrated by positive perceptions, customer satisfaction, and repeat purchases or subscriptions to a specific product or service consistently.

Creating customer loyalty is a key concept in today's business, as loyal customers form a core component of organizational success. Consumers who use a product or service can certainly determine whether the benefits obtained are commensurate with what they sacrifice. Therefore, after consuming the product or service, users provide their own assessments and decide whether to repurchase it.

Consumer satisfaction is a feeling or emotional assessment of consumers toward the use of products and services where their expectations and needs are met. Customers who are satisfied with a company's product or service delivery will spread positive information to potential new customers by providing recommendations about the company's services. Satisfied consumers generate positive reactions toward the company in the future. Service quality is also one of the keys to customer satisfaction; if a service provides good quality, customers will tend to continue using it.

Speaking of customer loyalty and satisfaction, it is highly unlikely that both suddenly appear in consumers' hearts (Khan et al., 2022). Both must be built, where the creation and implementation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM)—including interaction or communication management, service quality, relationship development, and employee behavior—plays a key role (Meena & Sahu, 2021). Customer loyalty is one of the indicators that enables companies to achieve long-term sales. Obtaining loyal customers requires an effective approach to identify and meet desired consumer needs.

The urgency of this research is particularly pronounced in today's Indonesian digital landscape, where the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated digital transformation across industries, fundamentally altering consumer behavior and expectations. With e-commerce transactions in Indonesia projected to reach USD 77 billion by 2025 and the

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country ranking among the top markets for social media usage globally, companies face unprecedented pressure to develop sophisticated digital CRM capabilities (Li et al., 2023). The rapid shift toward omnichannel customer engagement, combined with increasing customer expectations for personalized experiences and real-time responsiveness, makes effective CRM implementation not merely advantageous but essential for competitive survival.

In the Indonesian context specifically, where personal relationships and trust play crucial roles in business transactions, understanding how to translate traditional relationship-building practices into digital CRM frameworks becomes critically important. This research addresses this urgent need by examining how companies can leverage digital CRM technologies while maintaining the relational authenticity valued in Indonesian business culture. Furthermore, as Indonesian companies increasingly compete in regional and global markets, insights into effective digital CRM implementation provide strategic value for enhancing international competitiveness while navigating local market specificities.

The method needed to retain customers involves taking an approach by establishing relationships with them, more commonly known as relationship marketing. Recognizing that high customer satisfaction affects customer loyalty, companies must ensure that they meet and exceed customer expectations. According to Setyaleksana et al. (2017), advances in the business world require companies to make customers feel satisfied; if customers are satisfied, they will indirectly become loyal and increase company profitability. Based on this, this research identifies the urgency of customer relationship management in the context of digital marketing on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and profitability enhancement at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia.

The objectives of this research are to explain: 1. The effect of Customer Relationship Management on customer satisfaction at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia. 2. The effect of Customer Relationship Management on customer loyalty at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia. 3. The effect of Customer Relationship Management on company profitability enhancement at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia.

Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a temporary answer regarding the problem formulation in a research study. This hypothesis cannot yet be considered an empirical fact because it is only a temporary answer based on research relevant to this study (Sugiyono, 2016). A hypothesis is a researcher's statement about the relationship between variables in the research. In other words, a hypothesis is a temporary answer formulated by the researcher, which will then be tested for its validity through the research conducted. The hypotheses in this research are as follows:

H1: Customer relationship management (CRM) affects customer satisfaction

Customer Relationship Management is a strategy where internal and external factors are connected to satisfy consumers and can increase the company's profit. Meanwhile, customer satisfaction is a feeling of pleasure or disappointment of a person that arises from comparing the perceived performance of a product or result against their expectations.

Research relevant to this study is research conducted by Setyaleksana et al. (2017) which shows that there is a positive influence of the CRM variable on the Customer Satisfaction variable. CRM has proven successful in making customers feel satisfied with PT. Telkomsel's product results. A customer may experience various degrees of satisfaction. If product performance is less than expectations, the customer will be disappointed. If performance matches expectations, the customer will be satisfied, and if performance exceeds expectations, the customer will be very satisfied or very pleased.

Other relevant research is research conducted by Dewi and Semuel (2015) which concludes that CRM has a positive influence on customer satisfaction. This means that when a company implements appropriate and good CRM, it will automatically increase consumer satisfaction. Good CRM implementation makes consumers feel more valued and more comfortable.

H2: Customer relationship management (CRM) affects customer loyalty

Customer Relationship Management, usually abbreviated as CRM, integrates people, process, and technology so as to create good communication with customers, especially to foster customer loyalty to the company (Safira, Saleh, and Remmang, 2020). Meanwhile, customer loyalty is a customer's deep commitment to subscribe again or make repeat purchases of selected products or services consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause behavioral changes.

Research results relevant to this study are research conducted by Maftuhah, Yulisetiarini, and Halim (2014) which shows that Customer Relationship Management (CRM) consisting of employees, technology, sales, products, and performance has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. This shows that if CRM is good, then customer loyalty at PT. Bank BNI Syariah Jember Branch Office will also be better. In line with research conducted by Iriandini, Yulianto, and Mawardi (2015) which shows that the coefficient of determination of the three CRM variables, namely commitment, communication and service quality on the customer loyalty variable is 87.2%. This result explains that there is a significant influence of these three variables on the customer loyalty variable with a contribution of 87.2%.

H3: Customer Relationship Management affects Company Performance

Team performance in one vision is closely related to how we treat customers. The better we are able to provide good performance will bring consumer satisfaction to their desires, or satisfaction between expectations and reality, will cause consumers to come back to buy the product and become loyal consumers to the seller's product (Rachmawati, 2014). Research conducted by Panjaitan et al. (2018) shows the results of simultaneous hypothesis testing with the F test that there is a positive and significant influence between customer satisfaction variables and customer perception on Company Performance at UD PN Silitonga Serbelawan. In line with research conducted by Molle, Mandey, and Kojo (2019) which concludes based on the results of the Hypothesis test conducted that the Consumer Satisfaction variable (X) affects Company Performance (Y) with a regression coefficient β value of 0.717 units. This shows that each unit of the consumer satisfaction variable will affect Company Performance by 0.717 units if other variables remain constant. In other words, every increase in consumer satisfaction will affect the increase in Company Performance at Royal's Resto and Function Hall in Ternate City.

H4: Customer Relationship Management affects company profitability enhancement

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Customer Relationship Management has a positive influence on Company profitability in terms of revenue. This means that when a company implements CRM well, it will automatically increase income significantly. Good CRM implementation makes consumers feel more valued, more comfortable and gives priority to using the product (Ersi and Semuel, 2014). In line with research conducted by Padmavathy, Balaji, and Sivakumar (2012) which shows that CRM has a positive influence on Company profitability. In relation to customer loyalty and satisfaction being a result of successful CRM conducted by the company, good CRM efforts will be able to create strong relational bonds between the company and customers and can increase customer loyalty.

RESEARCH METHOD

The seven-step scientific method was used in the problem-solving and improvement process to resolve issues systematically, effectively, and efficiently from planning to evaluation. Positive improvements and changes were actual results based on data. The stages began with theme determination and background analysis of the business situation at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia, particularly in marketing, where customer relations were identified as the main pillar for successful product and business development. Targets were then set using the SMART method (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) as indicators.

Improvement ideas, or countermeasures, included creating a CRM concept and expanding to a Content Management System (CMS). In the implementation stage, strategies and ideas were applied according to the background, targets, and existing business problems. Results were evaluated through weekly and monthly assessments at the end of the project period, analyzing performance against predetermined targets. Successful strategies were standardized as operational procedures across all digital marketing aspects at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia.

For next steps, unmet targets were addressed with follow-up strategies to achieve predetermined goals. Primary data were collected via surveys with marketing team representatives from Riviera Publishing, a holding of PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia, using convenience sampling; respondents completed a Google Form on CRM implementation and its impact on customer loyalty, satisfaction, sales growth, and profitability.

Research instruments included direct observation of staff CRM system usage in daily work, recorded using observation sheets or field notes, as well as case studies incorporating primary data (interviews, observations) and secondary data (company reports, sales data, CRM analyses). Data analysis involved content analysis to systematically examine text content from documents or transcripts for patterns related to CRM implementation, and framework analysis to organize qualitative data using a structured framework mapped to CRM stages in the customer journey, such as acquisition and retention.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Description

Data related to Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in the context of digital marketing can include various types of information related to customer interactions and behavior (Rachmad, 2022). This data can be divided into several main categories that are directly related to customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profitability enhancement. The following are relevant data points in this research:

Customer Demographic Data

Figure 4. Customer demographic data

This demographic data aims to examine which gender is most easily collaborative in the CRM system. This data is used to tailor marketing messages, product offerings, or more relevant content, which can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.
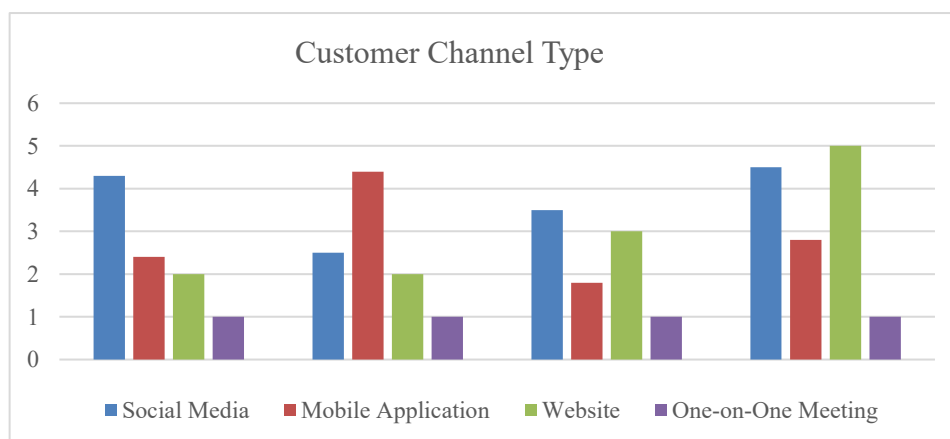
Customer Channel Data

Figure 5. Customer channel data

Based on the graph data above, it shows where customers come from; among all online channels, application usage is still the most dominant and effective. With this information, companies can identify the most valuable customers and offer special deals to increase loyalty and profitability. Also, this information helps in customer segmentation based on their purchase frequency or volume.

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Customer Satisfaction Data (surveys, reviews, ratings)

Figure 6. Customer satisfaction data

Based on the graph above, instruments in customer satisfaction are still rarely reached by marketers or customers. In this case, there is a need for encouragement from the Company to be more reactive to customers. Satisfaction data is very important in assessing the success of CRM strategies. Positive feedback can strengthen customer relationships, while complaints or negative feedback can be used for product and service improvements, which in turn can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The Influence of Customer Relationship Management Variables on Customer Satisfaction at Riviera Publishing as a Holding Company of PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia

Based on the results of data processing that has been conducted, it shows that Customer Relationship Management does not have an influence on customer satisfaction in this study, as evidenced by interview results revealing that digital marketing is only cut-off in nature, meaning there is no influence on customer satisfaction, and the hypothesis in this study is rejected because there is a negative influence between Customer Relationship Management and customer satisfaction (Achmad & Supriono, 2017; Ariyanti & Safaâ, 2022).

Kotler and Keller (2007) state that CRM is an appropriate solution that can help maintain valuable customers. CRM can fulfill customer satisfaction and make customers loyal. However, the results in this study prove that indicators in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) such as human resources, processes, and technology do not have an influence on customer satisfaction, as evidenced by sales trends that only occur once. These research results are not yet in accordance with the theory by Kotler and Keller that "Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is the process of managing detailed information about each customer and carefully managing all customer 'touch points' to maximize customer loyalty." CRM also has no influence because Riviera Publishing has

not yet utilized its customer database to build long-term relationships with customers properly.

This supports research (Iriandini, 2015; Kasih et al., 2021; Mamahit et al., 2022; Pradana, 2018; Saibudin et al., 2022; Santoso et al., 2017; Victor et al., 2015; Yulinda, 2014) where several of these studies have results stating that the Customer Relationship Management variable does not affect customer satisfaction, which means that not all customer loyalty can be increased or influenced by relational relationships with customers.

The Influence of Service Quality Variables on Customer Loyalty at Riviera Publishing as a Holding Company of PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia

Based on interview results and marketing database sources, this means there is a significant relationship between service quality and customer loyalty of Riviera Publishing customers. The positive relationship shows that the higher the service quality provided by Riviera Publishing customer service, the more it will increase customer loyalty.

The results of this study are consistent with the theory proposed by Lewis and Booms in (Wijaya, 2011), that service quality is a measure of how well the level of service provided can match customer expectations. If the service quality provided by the company matches expectations and performance, consumers will be pleased because the expectations and performance of the service are already good, and consumer loyalty will directly arise for the company. According to research results conducted by Prasetyo (2007), the hypothesis stating that "service quality has a direct effect on loyalty" is accepted as true.

The results of this study are consistent with research conducted by Adhitya Akbar, (2019); Avitisna, (2021); Lindung Bulan, (2016); Nurhikma et al., (2022); Priasmoro and Iskandar, (2016); Saputri, (2019), where their research results show that service quality has a positive effect on customer loyalty. This service quality has a positive impact on customer loyalty, which means that if the service quality provided is better, it will increasingly enhance consumer loyalty to the products offered. Therefore, it can be concluded that service quality affects customer loyalty.

The Influence of CRM Variables on Riviera Publishing's Profitability

Based on interview results in the research, it shows that implementation with the CRM scheme has a positive and significant effect on Riviera Publishing's Profitability. The estimation results of this research are evidenced by the increase in Riviera Publishing's income over the last 3 (three) months, meaning there is a significant relationship between CRM implementation and company profitability.

The results of this study are consistent with the theory proposed by Aswar et al., (2022) that customer loyalty can be developed through several types of promotion. Promotion is one of the important marketing activities for companies in efforts to maintain continuity and improve sales quality to enhance marketing activities in terms of marketing goods or services from a company. In general, service companies conduct promotions so that consumers are interested in using and reusing these services.

The results of this study are consistent with results from previous research conducted by (Insani and Madiawati, 2020; Hanjaya and Setiawan, 2022; Hutabarat and Prabawani, 2020; Kartini, 2021; Septiani and Nurhadi, 2020) showing that promotion has an influence on customer loyalty. In the results of several previous researchers, it is revealed that the promotion variable has a positive influence on customer loyalty, which means that if the level of promotion given to customers increases, the level of loyalty will

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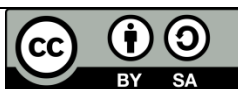also improve or increase. Therefore, it can be concluded that promotion has a positive influence on customer loyalty.

CONCLUSION

After testing the hypotheses, CRM in the context of digital marketing significantly boosted customer satisfaction, loyalty, and company profitability at PT. Syntax Corporation Indonesia by enabling personalized interactions, resource optimization, and long-term relationships that enhanced competitiveness in the digital market. Despite these benefits, limitations such as data issues, implementation variability, external factors, and challenges in measuring long-term impacts were noted, underscoring the need for researchers to address them for more valid findings. For future research, a longitudinal study tracking CRM's sustained effects over 3–5 years in diverse Indonesian tech firms, incorporating advanced analytics like AI-driven sentiment analysis, could provide deeper insights into long-term profitability and adaptability to evolving digital trends.

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