

A note from publishers

When we started India CRM News, we were expecting it to grow slowly. However, we underestimated the need for such a service. From a mere 150 copies in the first month, we received a large number of requests, resulting in the numbers jumping to over 350 in February. During March, the number has risen to over a thousand.

In view of the large numbers, we have decided to send out the newsletter by email also. If you wish to receive this newsletter by email, please send us your request at info@inzacrm.com

We are also delighted at the feedback that we have received from our readers. Mr P Jeer (jeer@satyam.net.in) writes "Although India CRM News is one page in length, it is one mile in depth for a discerning person".

We look forward to receiving your support and continuous feedback to keep up our effort of creating awareness of CRM in India.

With best wishes,

AK

Think About it

Would you rather your spouse be just 'satisfied' or would you prefer 'loyal'?

● Jeffrey Gitomer, *Customer Satisfaction is Worthless – Customer Loyalty is Priceless* (P.53)

Is it not true of your customers too?

CRM IN INDIA**IS IT POSSIBLE IN INDIA? DOES IT PAY FOR ITSELF ?**

These are some of the questions that most companies normally ask. The understanding of CRM in the country is limited and most corporates assume that to operate a CRM program, it is absolutely necessary to have an ERP system operating in the company. True, that an ERP system would increase the efficiency of a CRM program manifold, but given the limitations of database availability and telecom infrastructure in the country, what is needed is to develop a CRM model that is suited to Indian infrastructure realities. It is also important to remember that while an ERP system improves the efficiency of the company, a CRM system improves the effectiveness of the organization. Even though CRM is a highly IT dependant system, it is still possible to take steps to be a CRM focussed organization, with minimal IT enablement.

Given the fact that Indian companies have been operating in a sellers market, the mindset is still of distributing products rather than satisfying consumer needs or developing business from the same consumer. **The first critical step in being a customer focussed organization is the commitment of the top management to being customer focussed. Lip service will just not do any longer.** Developing customer relations is a long-term process and benefits of these types of programs accrue only over a period of time. Most managers at the operational level are judged by and are focussed on immediate benefits and would find it extremely difficult to start a CRM initiative on their own. It would be the vision and commitment of the top management that would allow managers at the operational level to start and support a CRM initiative.

With a clear message flowing from the top about a company's commitment to being customer focussed, it is critical to do the following :

- a. Understand who your customer/consumer is.
- b. Provide an opportunity/avenue for your customer/consumer to talk to you.
- c. Keep talking to the customer / consumer one to one.

To understand and profile the customer, the company would have to capture customer information from every point that the customer comes in contact with the company. These points could be the packaging, retail outlets, call centres, mail rooms as well as the web site. Obviously, in order that the customer gives his/her feedback and information, the customer has to be made aware of the locations at which they can send in their feedback.

Once the information is available, the same can be analysed and fed to all the departments within the company to take the necessary action. And what is required now is a firm resolve to act decisively and fast on the feedback received. This could just be the beginning of the journey to a successful CRM program implementation.

As far as the cost is concerned, its evident that it is totally within the company's domain as to how deep it wants to go and how much it is interested in investing in the future. But what is most needed is just the attitude to be customer focussed.