CRM in Higher Education in India-A Clinical Approach

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Abstract: *Higher Education has continuously been a matter of discussion from quite sometime.CRM being implemented in every industry finds its application in higher education system as well. The study aims to discuss & analyze how well customer relationship management fits in higher education system .The research methodology used was secondary in nature. Exploratory & Descriptive research design has been made use of with the review of literature. The findings show that a number of CRM software in the form of solutions to various problems are being implemented & used by institutes. Focus has been shifted from manual operations management to automation of such activities and relationship management with all the people concerned are in the prime focus.*
Keywords*: Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Education System, CRM Solutions*

I. Introduction
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CRM consists on a strategy of the organization; it is focused on the efforts of knowing the customers, detecting their needs, increasing the grade of satisfaction and their loyalty to the enterprise, also raising the profitability or the benefits of the costumer to the business. All this is made by means of the extracted information by the customers from the different ways of communication. Customer Relationship management of CRM is an effective tool that allows us to know our customers better by maintaining their personal information, knowing about what type of products or services they demand or expect, volume in which they expect, channels or ways they expect the product should be delivered to them etc. Once the organization knows all the required information, they will be able to produce customized products vest suited to the needs and demands of the long list of customers**.** (www.webandmacros.net**)**

A central goal of every business is to serve its customers. For as long as there have been merchants, success or failure has hinged on this simple rule. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a way of using technology to do just that. (www.wisegeek.com)**.** Education beyond the secondary level, especially education at the college or university level is higher education

Importance of CRM

Higher education institutions worldwide are undergoing fundamental shift in how they operate and interact with their customers', students, Alumni, faculty and staff members.
Kotler and Fox (1995) state, "The best organization in the world will be ineffective if the focus on customer is lost. First and foremost statement of individual student, alumni, parents, friends and each other (internal customers). Every contact counts!"

Today's customer in changing environment requires customer centric approach. Customer centricity in higher education emphasizes plaung the customer at the core of operation and then designing all the process and activities around the customer. CRM applications targeted at higher education allow institutions to build strong relationship with students and other constituents, its technologies enable an education industry to present a single point of contact to its customers.The main components of any CRM solution are Campaign Management, automation of operations and Customer service and support. (Shainesh & Sheth, Trivedi B Uday). Higher education customers are demanding more attention and immediate service through internet. Institutes manage students from enquiry through application to enrollment with one CRM system. it build relationships through cross media communication and increases efficiency and track results. It is also helpful in maximizing budget by doing more with less.

CRM enables the creation of an effective strategy for an Institution to differentiate itself by establishing relationship and gathering data to build those relationships through focused use of Business analysis. It uses various methods to bring students into a relationship with the institution. (www.oppapers.com)

CRM Solutions for Higher Education

It was explored by the review of literature that CRM encompasses many strategies, processes and technologies all working together to get as close to the customer. CRM solutions are built to:

- Aid in building profitable, mutually beneficial and long term relationship with customer.
- Interact with the customer so as to get closer to them at every point of contact.
- Maximize the organization's share of the customer wallet.

The aim of E-CRM solutions is to optimize the combined use of technology and human resources of the business so as to gain insight into the behavior of the customer. CRM solution services consist of the following major segments:

- Consulting Services
- Implementation Services
- Outsourcing
- Training Services (Dawn Suman & Guha Anindya; 2010)

CRM solutions have proliferated in the market with many CRM vendors offering a wide variety and range of products. These products come with various functionalities and support different operations of higher education industry. Most popular and useful CRM solutions in higher education sector are:

II.   Talishma CRM

Talisma's Constituent Relationship Management software for Higher Education is composed of three powerful integrated solutions: Talisma Strategic Enrollment Management, Talisma Student Services, and Talisma Advancement. Talisma helps institutions enhance their recruiting and retention, improve services to students and alumni, and make informed decisions on future strategies using the data and communication history captured and tracked by the Talism technology.
Institutes using Talisma CRM can:

- Stay competitive and achieve recruiting and retention goals.
- Pinpoint the source of most qualified candidates.
- Create highly targeted campaigns.
- Retain students through e-advising.

Delivery on demand services from students' application, financial aid and degree adults to alumni relations and advancement.

Talisma provides best-in-class, flexible, and affordable CRM software, which enables Customer Lifecycle Management across sales, service, and marketing functions, and powers organizations to quickly, effectively, and accurately communicate with customers using a multichannel communication strategy. With Talisma's expertise, thousands of customers across different verticals have accelerated their growth by creating personalized experiences with their clients. (www.talishma.com)

III.   Intelliworks CRM

Intelli-works enables enrollment and admissions professionals to make purposeful connections with students through its Web-based relationship management, marketing and recruitment services. Leading institutions around the globe leverage Intelliworks' relationship management solutions for higher education to increase enrollment, enhance marketing performance and improve operational efficiency. It offers a suite of strategic consulting, support and training and professional services designed to help colleges and universities maximize their return on investment and generate results. (www.intelliworks.com).

IV.   Microsoft Dynamics CRM

With the recent funding issues for Higher Education Institutions competition will increase between institutions. CRM is vital for Institutions sustainability in attracting the best students.
A tailored Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution for Universities and Higher Education from Pythagoras enables excellence in some of the areas listed below:

Student Management

Microsoft Dynamics CRM from Pythagoras gives the power to proactively manage the students throughout the whole student life cycle; from initial open day registrations, course management, clubs and societies, awards and scholarships gained to full Alumni management.

Advanced Alumni Communication

Microsoft Dynamics CRM from Pythagoras for Universities and Higher Education allows advanced Alumni communication; the powerful reporting and drilling down capabilities of Microsoft Dynamics CRM allows Higher Education Institutions to monitor student trends pre, during and post graduation while the marketing elements of Microsoft Dynamics CRM enables improved targeting, communications and alumni retention post graduation.

Improved Internal and External Communications

The workflow system within Microsoft Dynamics CRM for Universities and Higher Education allows cross-communications between faculties and staff to be improved and tracked within the CRM system. Furthermore, the workflows created within the system for staff members vastly improves productivity and streamlines business processes.

Externally, Microsoft Dynamics CRM makes full use of the seamless integration with Microsoft Office; the powerful marketing and mail merge capabilities allow direct marketing materials and email communications to be targeted and timely. (www.pythagoras.com)

V.   SAP CRM

SAP CRM brings a world leading CRM solutions to the higher education sector with students life cycle management. It enables marketers with complete business insights to as to facilitate intelligent business decisions. It reduces the cost of service by enhancing customer satisfaction with support of ancillary services. Following are the constituents of SAP CRM:

- **Partner channel Management:**
  Partners here are the various people who are associated with the Institute in some or the other manner. CRM helps to build and sustain healthy relations with all the people associated.

- **Interaction centre:**
  In education industry interactive sessions could be in the form of online Group discussion and Interview. Also, online classes are arranged for students engaged in DLP courses.

- **Web channel:**
  Virtual presence of the Institute on the web gives flexibility to students as well as everybody who want to utilize any type of information at any point of time.

- **Business communication Management**
  Communication on a regular basis with all the associated people is very important and it finds its major application in CRM. Networking plays a very important role.   (www.ciber.co.uk)

VI.   People Soft CRM

PeopleSoft CRM for Higher Education will allow colleges and universities to ensure consistent communications that are tailored to the student and can be supported throughout the student lifecycle and across multiple communication channels, from initial inquiry, through application and enrollment, to providing support to current student populations and communicating with alumni. It is providing a centralized one stop shop institution wide service solution. With the solution institutes can differentiate them with an outstanding service experience, reduce the cost to serve with streamlined service delivery processes and prebuilt integration and ultimately leverage the positive service interaction to improve higher education institution's brand and retain constituents and employees.

Benefits:
Manage entire constituent lifecycle
- Establish and strengthen relationships through the constituent lifecycle to keep them involved.
- Personalize communications by leveraging real-time information integrated between systems
- Provide a seamless interface for enhanced user experience and improved Productivity.

Maximize recruiting effectiveness
- Deepen knowledge of individual needs and interests through interactive communications Leverage multiple message channels to grow prospect interest Produce more qualified candidates with personalized survey and inquiry management

Improve retention rates

Provide better access and information through the integrated, 24/7 constituent service center. Deliver faster issue resolution with seamless information flow between systems Proactively identify at-risk students for immediate action and issue resolution.

Oracle's PeopleSoft CRM 9.1 release for Higher Education provides colleges and universities with new and enhanced capabilities and delivers the tools and technology they need to develop and manage successful, high-value relationships with all their constituents. New features include:

- Out-of-the box integration with Campus Solutions.
- Comprehensive event planning, management, and results analysis.
- Service center for higher education.
- Constituent 360-degree view. (download.oracle.com)

CRM has emerged as the most important element in all the sectors. Education services also are not apart from it. The growth in the craze and demand of higher & professional education led to the ever increasing growth in the number of institutes offering professional education which in turn led to the emergence of CRM. CRM in higher & professional education starts at the time when a prospect seek to be a member of a institute & it continues till the time the prospect become the alumni.CRM serves two way purpose. On one side it creates a strong bonding between the prospect &the institute which would be beneficial in many forms like recognition to be alumni. Secondly, from the institutes' point of view it helps in maintaining the database which would further help in placements &promotion of the institute.

CRM not only benefits the institutes but it also helps in maintaining healthy relations with the faculty & staff. All the people working in the organization are important asset to it ;so the organization tries to build & sustain healthy relation with all of them. In this new era of information technology demand for automated delivery of services has increased a cot. Online applications are invited & accepted & recruitments are also done online.

Maintaining such a huge amount of data manually is not possible. But keeping all the records online helps the institute to maintain relations with Faculty / staff; existing students, alumni's & governing bodies as well. Online maintenance of books & records also helps in maintaining budget of the organization as well. This also helps to reveal that at what time institute is in need of funds &from where funds have to be raised.

CRM building with the students could also be in the form of providing notes to them online. This has also been seen now-a-days in many distances learning progammes related to higher education where the students submit their assignment online; give exam papers online & papers are also evaluated online. To assist or to guide the students queries of the students are solved through online lectures & demonstration. Rapid growth of technology has revolutionized the whole scenario in the education system. It has provided that level of flexibility to the students that they don't have to move to far off places to update their knowledge .Once they get registered in a course all the queries are solved by the simple click of a mouse. Symbiosis Pune could be one example in this category. They maintain a very high level of CRM with their enrolled students.

VII.   Conclusion

Institutes aspiring to establish a brand name take CRM as an opportunity to recruit and retain the most desirable students. In this era of Information technology Institutes need to adopt practices that enable them to consistently interact with their stakeholders in a highly personalized manner. CRM in higher education implies application of methodology and software's with the help of which Institutes also focus to increase their conversion ratios from prospect to enrollment.

Many higher education Institutes are now focusing on restructuring with the help of cost cutting. To achieve this ERP applications are employed to automate internal business processes like finance, Grants management, student's information, inventory Management and HR. focus is being shifted from improving internal operations to concentrate more on students, Alumni and corporations. To automate the operations and focus on students CRM solutions are implemented so that flexibility and ease could be provided to them at each step.

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