

# Impact of customer relationship management and social media on sales performance by considering moderating effect of sale personnel capabilities

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## Abstract

*In an era of increased competition, companies nowadays are bound to make substantial efforts to manage their sales performance. The purpose of this research is to explore the impact of customer relationship management and social media on sales performance by considering the moderating effect of sale personnel capabilities. Simple random sampling technique was used for gathering data. Adopting the questionnaire survey method, data was collected from Gujranwala. The response rate was 350. All the tests were applied on SPSS and AMOS software. Results showed that customer relationship management increases sale. Findings also showed that social media have significant relation with sales performance. Sale personnel capabilities have a significant relation with sale performance.*

**Keywords:** Customer relationship management, social media, sale performance, sale personnel capability

## INTRODUCTION

Now a days, as customer relationship management theory explained organizations continuing reposition in marketing thoughts and practices, from product centric method to customer centric method and from intent toward selling as much products as possible to acquiring, keeping, retaining and entertaining as numerous customers as possible (Kumar, 2010). This change takes place in the market because of high competition and abundant alternatives available to customers. The globally competitive market place provides today's customers with choices never before imaginable by previous generations (Hoots, 2005). Furthermore customer in the new marketing approach stirred toward topmost of the pyramid with new terminologies like customer is the king and customer is always right.

To compete with all these situations in market organizations follow the concept of customer relationship theory for the purpose of gaining edge from others and giving more intention towards

maintaining relationship with customers to satisfy them. Technology is useful for gaining competitive edge and maintaining customer relationship (Trainor, Andzulis, Rapp, & Agnihotri, 2014). As customer relationship theory explained with the help of maintaining relation with customer, organizations can look up their operating procedure and improve its performance. Organizations maintain their relationship with customer and satisfy them according to their desire which ultimately increases business and sales performance because a satisfied customer makes the business more successful. When organization produce result according to demand of their consumer and consumers show more loyalty for the business then it will be a great success for any business in the current scenario of market (Khodakarami & Chan, 2014).

A new trend is taking place to aware buyers' desires and getting new customers which is social media. Organizations are gathering data from tools such as LinkedIn, Facebook, blogs and attempting to amalgamate this information into their sales practices. Organizations follow the concept of customer relationship management theory and trying to produce customer oriented products to satisfy them which is ultimately increasing sales performance. Customer orientation refers to the extent an organization focuses its efforts in understanding and satisfying its customers' needs for quality and timeliness and building long-term relationships (Luo, Hsu, & Liu, 2008; Rodriguez, Ajjan, & Peterson, 2014).

Furthermore to improve performance, organizations focus on their employee and give them orientation

according to demand of their work. As vroom expectancy theory explained desired results can be achieved from employees through motivating, maximizing pleasant and minimizing pain. Tasks are assigned to employees according to their personality, skills, knowledge and abilities (Hansen & Levin, 2016). Through this employees easily perform their tasks and ultimately organizations easily achieve their goals. Satisfied employees are another competitive edge from other organizations because they perform their duty with keen interest for success of the organization. The purpose of this research study is to determine the impact of CRM and social media on sales performance by considering the moderating role of sale personnel capabilities.

### Research Objectives

Some objectives of this study are

1. To investigate the impact of customer relationship management on sales performance.
2. To verify the influence of social media on sales performance.
3. To observe the moderating role of sale personnel capability between CRM and sale performance.
4. To explore how sale personnel capability moderate the relationship of social media and sale performance.

### Research Questions

Research questions for this study are

1. Does customer relationship management impacts sales performance?
2. To what extent social media influence sales performance?
3. Does sales personnel capability moderate the relationship of CRM and sales performance?
4. How sale personnel capabilities moderate the relationship of social media and sale performance?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Customer oriented technology

In current scenario of market, customers are considered as king of the market. Organizations give more intentions to manage customer information efficiently in order to enhance understanding about their distinctive needs and offer solution that meets

those needs. As following the concept of customer relationship theory, organizations can satisfy their customers more efficiently who are more beneficial for their businesses. According to Trainor et al. (2014) sales technology is any information and communication technology employed by the sales organization to conduct its essential activities. The central focus of CRM is to leverage customer data creatively, effectively and efficiently to design and implement customer-focused strategies (Agnihotri, Dingus, Hu, & Krush, 2016).

Past researches have debated that from company's prospect, CRM is a strategy of how to maintain relationship with customers. The strategy that deals with how to establish developed and increase customer relation from profitability perspective, based upon individual customer needs and potentials. The basic underlying CRM is that the basis of all marketing and management activities should be establishment of mutually beneficial partnership with customers and other partners in order to become successful and profitable (Ghavami & Olyaei, 2006). CRM is integration of customer focuses in marketing, sales, logistics, accounting i.e. in all parts of organizational operation and structure. Those are the activities that businesses perform to identify, qualify, acquire, develop and retain increasingly loyal and profitable customers by delivering the right products or services to the right customer through the right channel at the right time and the right cost (Johanson & Storm, 2002).

According to Zouaoui, Triki, and Ferchichi (2016) CRM can be viewed as application of one to one marketing and relationship marketing. Responding to an individual customer on the basis of what customer says and what else is known about the customers. CRM is a process that addresses all aspects of identifying customers, creating customer knowledge, building customer relationship and shaping their perception of the organization and its products. It is about development and maintenance of long term mutually relationship with strategically significant customers (Carmen & Marius, 2016). To compete in the market, organizations follow the concept of customer relationship management theory and try to give first priority to their customers to satisfy their needs in order to gain ultimate success for their businesses. Researchers have argued in prior studies that CRM systems enhance sales professional's capability to pool resources inside with peers and commune obviously with clients. Sales-based CRM technology tools are planned to assist sales

professionals to handle customer relationships by improving consult, erudition more about customer desires and creating personalized solutions for the customers (Hunter & Perreault Jr, 2007).

To reach new markets and expand understanding about predicted and vacant consumers, organizations use social media. Social media tools obtain fame and are even more exercise in ordinary operations of numerous companies ranging from start-ups and miniature, middle venture to hefty companies (Bell & Loane, 2010; Osimo, 2008). Organizations perform sales related tasks through social media for instance prospecting and distribution of information about products and service. Today, sales-focused firms have amalgamate social media contrivance such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter into their business procedures to diametrically interconnect with potential consumers and generate meaningful discussion. In this way organizations can make their procedure according to their customers (Ballings & Van den Poel, 2015).

Social media instruments whether in the mode of blogs, Facebook or Twitter recommends dealing, involving purchaser and vendor. This new period of establishing banter may grow further significant association with patrons and possibility, consequences in extra worthwhile relationship. In order for these technologies to promote stakeholders, sales professionals must admit and utilize technology inside their job affairs (Rodriguez & Honeycutt Jr, 2011). However, other researchers found that the link to performance is not always direct and can be dependent on environmental settings. There is still need in literature to better understand the impact of customer orientation on firm's benefits.

H1: CRM has a significant relationship with customer-orientation

H2: Use of social media has a significant relationship with sales performance

### **Sale personnel capabilities**

In the era of sky-scraping competition, companies need to produce enough amount of income to continue some organizational procedures. Generally revenue is needed by the organizations to have appropriate assets for expanding and innovating new products and services offer to their customers. The sales function is considered as most important factor for gaining sales revenue (Boyabatli, Nguyen, &

Wang, 2014). Typically sale function consists of sales personnel working in the organization. Generally top management recruit employee as sales manager and sale directors to manage sales operation in the organization. As vroom expectancy theory explained companies recruit employees according to their skills, personality, experience and abilities. Because they are directly interacting with the customers and satisfying them (Kiatkawsin & Han, 2017).

Organizations follow the concept of vroom expectancy theory and helping their sale personnel to gain knowledge about new skills and enhance previous skills. Capability-based organizations have set purpose for the essential expertise that sales people requisite to have and endow with compensation and penalty on the basis of how perfectly the skill level of the salesperson has enhanced. The essential concentration is on constantly providing the channel to develop and assist skills to become a better salesperson (Challagalla & Shervani, 1996). When sale personnel skills are enhanced, it escorts to an advanced native enthusiasm and has optimistic consequences on job associated outputs (Baldauf, Cravens, & Piercy, 2005; Challagalla & Shervani, 1996; Miao, Evans, & Shaoming, 2007). Therefore it can be declared that practices and capability controls have a strong connection, since process managing can be seen to be analogous to behavior control (Baldauf et al., 2005).

However, previous researchers did not pay the attention toward sale personnel capabilities to enhance the business performance.

H3: Sale personnel capabilities has a significant relationship with sale performance

### **Sale performance**

Undoubtedly, the primary motive of every business is to earn maximum revenue. Main source of earning profit is sales function of particular business. Sales function is single of the extra extensively researched productivity in sales force organize practice research. Research indicate that there is an imperative and recognized association among sales force control systems and performance (Chaichee, 2015; Piercy, Cravens, & Lane, 2012; Schwepker & Schultz, 2015; Stewart, 1996; Theodosiou & Katsikea, 2007). Typically sale function consists of employee of the business. As organization ascertains the ambition it desire to accomplish, obviously sale management must manage the sales personnel appropriately. In

this way organizations proficient to manage the operation of the sales personnel and eventually is able to manage the performance of the organization. The performance of a salesperson is to appraise the performance of the salesperson in accomplishing the organization's goals (Rodríguez & Román, 2016; Schwepker & Schultz, 2015). Output performance is calculated by the pecuniary quantity of sales that the salesperson fabricate. It is the concentration of this research to explore the consequences on salesperson output operation, i.e. to the extent in which the salesperson congregate the monetary target and needs that are array by the corporation (Miao et al., 2007).

### **CRM, social media and sale performance**

In the current market situation customer is considered as the king of market. Organizations give more intentions to manage customer information efficiently in order to enhance understanding about their distinctive needs and offer a solution that meets those needs. To handle this situation, organizations used customer-oriented technologies such as CRM and social media which is useful for maintaining the relationship with customer and firm's customer orientation. The authors speculate that the absolute worth of customer-oriented technologies keep in the way customer orientation procedures manage the information endow by the platforms to augment customer's familiarity. Customer orientation ensuring impels recover sales operation because organizations can mold their offerings to match customer requirements. Preceding research illustrate that customer orientation is positively allied with a firm's performance (Bharadwaj, 2000; Uzkurt, Kimzan, & Yilmaz, 2016; Yilmaz, Alpkın, & Ergun, 2005).

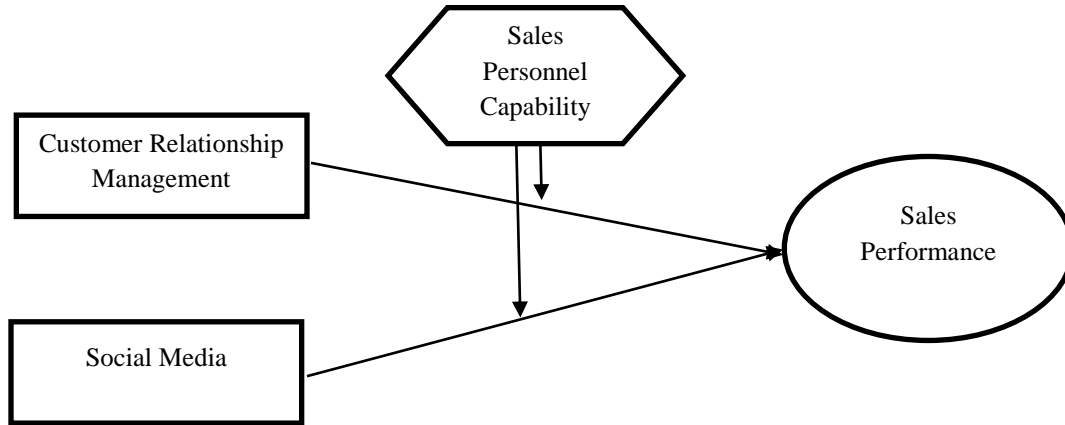
Collectively this customer approach can be utilized to enhance the worth of customer familiarity (Plakoyiannaki & Saren, 2006). CRM and social media applications permit the organizations to modify their offerings for every customer. By accumulating information across customer connection and dispensation this knowledge to find out the obscure imitate, CRM and social media

devotion improve firms modify their offerings to fit the individual preference of their customers and expand customer commitment (Woodcock, Green, & Starkey, 2011). Organizations maintain their relationship with customer through directly interacting with them. And try to satisfy their customer according to their desire which ultimately increases the business and sale performance. Satisfied customer makes the business more successful or increase the sales of their organization (Evanschitzky, Sharma, & Prykop, 2012).

### **Sale personnel capabilities and sale performance**

The primary motive of any organization is to earn revenue. The sale function deem mainly vital factor for the acquirer of sales revenue. Typically sale function consists of sales personnel working in the organization. Organizations follow the concept of vroom expectancy theory and helping their sale personnel to gain knowledge about new skills and enhance previous skills. Capability-based organizations have set purpose for the essential expertise that sales people requisite to have and endow with compensation and penalty on the basis of how perfectly the skill level of the salesperson has enhanced (Akdeniz, Gonzalez-Padron, & Calantone, 2010). As vroom expectancy theory explained the desire results can be achieved from employees through motivating them and with the help of making friendly environment inside the organizations. Tasks are assigned to the employees according to their personality, skills, knowledge and abilities. Through this employees easily perform their task and ultimately organizations improve their performance. According to Meneghel, Borgogni, Miraglia, Salanova, and Martínez (2016) organizations can get competitive edge over others through satisfy their employees because they put their all efforts with an interest to gain success of the organization. Satisfy employee shows more loyalty toward organization and perform their services with the interest to increase the performance of the organization.

### Theoretical framework



### METHODOLOGY

In this paper positivism approach is applied because the data has been analyzed through different software's and the results are projected as these are obtained in their original form. Deductive approach is applied. This paper conducted study about customer relationship management and social media in relation to sale performance. From this study it is obtained that social media and CRM influence the sale performance and checked the moderating role of sale personnel capabilities. Quantitative study and survey method is used in this paper. Through questionnaire distribution, responses of general public were collected and data was analyzed.

Demographic section showed the information about respondents' gender, age, education level and nature

of employment. 370 questionnaires were distributed to respondents of Gujranwala, out of which 350 valid questionnaires were received. 194 were filled by males and 156 were filled by female respondents whose percentage is 55.4% and 44.5% respectively. Mostly respondents 138 were between the age group of 26-35 whose percentage is 39.4%, following to this 38 respondents (10.8%) were below 25 age group, 78 respondents (22.2%) were from 36-45 age group and remaining 96 respondents (27.4%) were above 45 age group respectively. Furthermore 37.6%, 52.6% and 9.8% respondents had bachelor's, Master's and PhD's degrees respectively. 44.3% respondents had public sector jobs while 55.7% had private sector jobs.

### RESULTS

**Table 1**

Construct	Mean	SD	$\alpha$	1	2	3	4
1 Customer relationship management	3.57	.458	.75	--			
2 Social media	3.84	.354	.72	.358**	--		
3 Sale personnel capabilities	3.75	.563	.78	.543**	.283**	--	
4 Sale performance	3.86	.624	.75	.224**	.258**	.273**	--



The above-mentioned table is representing the descriptive statistics, reliability and Pearson correlation among all understudied variables. The highest correlation existed between sale personnel capabilities and customer relationship management which is valued at 0.543. It is reflecting that customer relationship management and sale personnel

capabilities are positively related with each other with a moderate standard deviation. All other variables named as social media and sale performance are also correlated with each other. The mean values are showing the trend of responses that most of them are lied towards agreeableness. Results indicates that alpha values for all variables are under acceptable range to prove data reliability.

### Fit Indices for CFA Model

Table 2

Index of fit	Cmin/df	P	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMR
Value	3.03	.07	.975	.867	.935	.952	.052

Table 2 of Fit Indices Model illustrates the Goodness of Fit Chi Square and other values to determine that weather the choose model has been an appropriate fit for reliability and validity check or not. Goodness of

Fit Index (GFI) should be greater than 0.95, Adjusted Goodness of Fit should be greater than 0.8, CFI should be >0.95, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation should be <0.5. Thus, the results value of our measurement model being GFI=0.975, AGFI=0.867, CFI=0.952, RMSEA=0.052 being in normal range of acceptance proves than our model is fit to check the reliability and validity of scale being used providing a green signal to proceed.

Table 3

Items	Factor Loadings	AVE	CR
<b>Customer relationship management</b>		<b>0.543</b>	<b>0.824</b>
CRM1	.786		
CRM2	.554		
CRM3	.724		
CRM4	.793		
CRM5	.924		
CRM6	.945		
CRM7	.853		
CRM8	.687		
CRM9	.815		
CRM10	.629		
CRM11	.964		
<b>Social media</b>		<b>0.586</b>	<b>0.845</b>
SM1	.841		
SM 2	.886		
SM 3	.837		
SM 4	.879		
SM 5	.914		
SM 6	.577		
SM 7	.841		
SM 8	.623		
SM 9	.899		
SM 10	.783		

Index of fit	Cmin/df	P	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMR
Value	3.07	.06	.925	.871	.965	.945	.052
SM 12				.825			
<b>Sale personnel capabilities</b>						<b>0.657</b>	<b>0.963</b>
SPC1				.952			
SPC2				.735			
SPC3				.889			
SPC4				.823			
SPC5				.863			
SPC6				.726			
SPC7				.713			
SPC8				.734			
SPC9				.726			
<b>Sale performance</b>						<b>0.696</b>	<b>.862</b>
SP1				.763			
SP2				.846			
SP3				.835			

The measurement model has drawn to carry out the Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Table3 illustrates the CFA Model. In order to determine the convergent reliability and discriminant validity of data, this model and its fit indices has been illustrated. In order to check the reliability there are three major steps as being illustrated by Fornell and Larcker (1981), these involve the factor loading constructs value of CFI Model being greater than 0.7, the AVE values should be greater than 0.5 and the Composite Reliability (CR) value should be greater than 0.5. Thus, the

### Model Fit

**Table 4** Index of fit of the model

Table 4 shows the fit indices of SEM. The fit indices determine the fitness between the recommended and the existence variance matrix. The first value proposed by the index of fit beindchisuare (df)=3.07 indicates the fitness of model being used. Moreover, the GFI determines the variance in the model which is 0.925, AGFI value being 0.871 shows quite a good fit, the NFI value indicates the difference between

results shown in Table3 illustrates that the majority values of factor loading are greater than 0.7 and significant at 0.001. While the CR and AVE values are all greater than 0.8 and 0.5. Thus, this result determines our scale convergent being reliable and proves the discriminant validity, which means that the items showing variances are for their own variables that the other. This adds to the reliability and validity factor of the study and relationship of the variables involved.

two models and 0.965 value is good, the RMR value indicating the difference between estimated variance and covariance from observed value being small as 0.052 is better, CFI comparative fit index value 0.945 is considered good. Thus, the results determines that the data is fit accordingly with the model.

## SEM Regression Weights

			Estimates	S.E.	C.R.	P
Sale performance	<---	Customer relationship management	.421	.087	.07	.01
Sale performance	<---	Social media	.397	.085	1.2	.02

Table 4 shows regression weights significance level for relationship hypothesized in H1, H2. The results provide an evidence that have a positive significant impact on sale performance ( $p > 0.05$ ), therefore H1,

H2 are supported. SEM analysis showed the positive estimates and S.E in relation with independent variables to dependent variable. Since H1, H2 are significant in relation with independent to dependent variable, there can be other relation to test.

## Moderation analysis

**Output:** Sale performance

Model

	coeff	se	t	p
int.	.50	.1	3.5	.01

Interactions:

int_1	S_A	X	E_I

R-square increase due to interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
int_1	.08	12.1	1.0	111.0	.01

The model outcome as shown being having coefficient value  $0.50 > p$  value of  $0.01$  and the interaction value of  $r^2$  being  $0.08 > p=0.01$  provides a supportive result for the moderating factor of being involved in the study.

## DISCUSSION

Purpose of this research paper is to study the impact of customer relationship management and social media on sale performance by considering the moderating effect of sale personnel capabilities. It was hypothesized that CRM has a significant relationship with customer-orientation. And use of social media has a significant relationship with sales performance. The results have proved entire hypothesis true. Many previous studies have shown that by maintaining the relationship with customer sale performance can be boost. Previous studies also indicate that in the atmosphere of internet, more customers can be caught on social media. In this way sales volume can be increased. Previous studies mention that organizations maintain their relationship

with customer through directly interacting with them. And try to satisfy their customer according to their desire which ultimately increases the business and sale performance. Satisfy customers makes the business more successful or increase the sales of the organization.

## Conclusion

In this paper the relationship of customer relationship management and social media on sale performance are studied by considering the moderating effect of sale personnel capabilities. Data were collected through questionnaires which were distributed among the general consumers. 350 completely filled questionnaires were collected and the results were obtained by data processing through SPSS and Amos that showed positive and significant relationship between the variables.

## Implications

This study will help the marketing professionals and managers to understand the value of customer



relationship management and social media to enhance the sale of the business. Professionals of marketing will get to know about the knowledge of CRM and social media which attract more customers in this way sales volume boost up. Furthermore, the research will also help to extend the theory. This paper includes the vroom expectancy theory. Similarly, this will enhance the literature regarding the sale personnel capabilities, social media and customer relationship management.

### Limitations and future directions

Like many other studies, this study also carries some limitations that hinder the generalization of the results. As the investigation was conducted just in the area of Gujranwala city and data were collected from just 350 respondents so it cannot be said that the consumers in other cities of Pakistan have the same attitude. Longitudinal study can be designed in future. Some other variables like sales force control systems and sales experience on salesperson performance can be considered in future. Data can be collected through interviews also.

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