

▼ Introduction to Electronic Customer Relationship Management Minitrack

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Electronic Commerce (eCommerce, i.e. the execution of business processes using Internet technologies) continues to be a significant, pervasive issue for both enterprises and customers. Management of relationships between enterprises and customers has often been referred to as Customer Relationship Management (CRM). We define CRM as an interactive process that achieves an optimum balance between corporate investments and the satisfaction of customer needs to generate the maximum profit. Fundamentally CRM concerns attracting and keeping “economically valuable” customers and repelling and eliminating “economically invaluable” ones. The amount of information relevant in CRM processes can only be handled effectively when information technology is applied. Due to the lack of personal contact, CRM is of particular importance in eCommerce.

Thus, this minitrack focuses on the application of Internet in the field of CRM as well as the application of CRM concepts to electronic businesses. The minitrack covers a variety of CRM aspects, such as customer’s online risk perception, governmental surveillance of online behavior, or the business value of CRM systems.

In the first paper of this minitrack, Gabriel and Nyshadham point out the increasing risks of online environments and customers’ individual perceptions of online risks. Based on empirical research, the authors present a cognitive map of customers’ online risk perception and attitudes. This research aims at supporting researchers in predicting customer’s reaction to online risks. In the second paper, Dinev

explores the surveillance attitudes regarding online behavior in the post-9-11 U.S. society. The research provides significant results for future developments of security protection policies and civil liberties. In the third paper, Kundisch, Sackmann and Ruch emphasize that customer portfolios are often based on a number of separated loyalty or acquisition initiatives instead of deliberate planning processes. Thus, they propose to use portfolio theory in order to identify the optimal configuration of a customer portfolio. In the subsequent paper, Dong and Zhu develop a conceptual model to evaluate the business value of CRM systems. The model is based on resource-based view and process-oriented view, and is evaluated with a dataset of 150 U.S. banking firms. The authors’ findings provide important implications how the resources in competitive environments influence the business value of CRM systems. In the final paper, Makatsoris and Chang identify the still existing gap between the customer and the global supply network. To decrease this gap, the authors present a system that aims at a seamless integration of demand processes and supply processes. The paper presents a design framework and design requirements of the system.

The authors of each of the five papers, which made it through the rigorous review into this minitrack, make valuable contributions to research and practice alike. Especially, the applicability of concepts to ‘real world’ situations is illustrated by means of case studies and linkages to business issues. The co-chairs wish to thank the anonymous reviewers for their input and guidance to improve the quality of the paper even further.