

# E-CRM Practices in Indian Health Insurance: A Comparative Study of Public and Private Sector Players

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## Abstract

With Privatization and Globalization wave, Indian Insurance Industry has seen a drastic change in terms of better products and services as the Indian customer has become more intelligent and careful in choosing the desired health products at best prices from desired health insurer. CRM technology helps in retaining the customer and reducing overall cost and time of both insured and insurer. CRM with technology has proved to provide better services and products to customers. The paper aims to make a comparative analysis of Indian Health Insurance Companies which are using CRM software/database. The comparative analysis of strategies is based on Customer Relationship Management(CRM) policies, usage and impact on overall organizational performance with respect to profitability, providing services and commitments, maintaining contacts, providing customer satisfaction and thus gaining loyal customers. The results revealed that though both public and private sector companies work on CRM policies, but the companies those have incorporated CRM software in the working system has benefitted more as compared to companies which are not using any such software or database to maintain their customer base. It was found that private sector companies are more concentrating on E-CRM than public insurance companies, and hence they have maintained and focused on large number of customers, have reduced cost, gained market share and thus they are overall profitable.

## Keywords

E-CRM, Indian Insurance Industry, Health Insurance, Customer Retention

## I. Introduction

Privatization and Globalization has increased the competition in almost every sector. Insurance is one of them which is under great pressure of most competitive environment. Therefore, it becomes extremely important to understand the customer preferences and needs, retaining the old customer and attracting the new customer so that one can maintain its large ownership. Customers have become more intelligent and less loyal now as they have number of choices to choose best out of many. Therefore CRM is the most appropriate system to understand and fill the gap between organization and customer's preference and need. Customer relationship management is not a new concept in today world. It has a back history since 1980. CRM before was relationship management. The concept of relationship management was first generated by Theodore Levitt .The concept that sale does not end with the purchase made by buyer, rather it is a long process where the buyer should be inextricable, inescapable and profound (Levitt, 1983). The relationship marketing further was defined in an expanded sense as marketing activities directed to as establishing developing and maintaining the successful relations (Hunt & Morgan, 1994). Based on this theory it was clear that CRM helps in maintaining good relationship with customer which will retain the customer as well as attract new prospective customer. CRM approach rapidly gained acceptance all over the world and

indicator for acquiring, growing and retaining the customers. Also it stressed that customer retention is more profitable and important than customer acquisition and thus the computing power of organization increases exponentially (Rosenberg et.al, 1984; Rehman & Selvaraj, 2012; Kamakura et.al., 2005). Health insurance is a complex structure and it becomes extremely important for the insurance companies to implement CRM in most correct and appropriate way. Customer relationship management had always been believed to be one of the ways to retain profitable customer and gaining new perspective customer. CRM helped in identifying attracting and retaining the most valuable customers to achieve sustained profitable growth Khandekar & Deshmukh (2012). CRM helps in providing and maintaining valuable information of the customers. For improving and upgrading the business. CRM helps in building trust between customers and health providers (Khoshraftar et.al (2011). But in this competitive environment their felt a great need to have technology based CRM for better understanding and advancement in the system. Health insurance is becoming very competitive as large numbers of companies are in the field fighting for their maximum share. They compare the best buy at suitable price with maximum coverage and benefit which make the insurer task more complex and challenging.

## II. Review of Literature

Customer retention ultimately leads to increased market share and bigger profits with the help of 4p's of marketing with complete modern approach from the traditional approach (Lindgreen & Shergill, 2003). Customer perception and customer satisfaction are inter connected to each other therefore it becomes very important to manage the new customer and retaining the old customers (Mohite et al., 2013). Issue of CRM and its determinants in developed countries can be proved as guidelines for fastest growth in service industry (Alamgir et al., 2010). Relationship marketing later became customer relationship marketing and with the help of technology the CRM more effective and time saving. Unlike CRM success in different sectors the CRM had also influenced insurance sector round the world. CRM can be made more effective if used with IT based system, both CRM and IT based when used together become very effective and efficient combination which ultimately leads to profitability as it saves time and money (Rani, 2012). While referring to (Soch & Sandhu, 2008) CRM has four construct-the customer and need sensing, communication, intermediaries and the internal environment of the firms. It is the process that involves organizing and tracking the contacts with perspective and existing customers and further generates alerts for the pending actions to be taken (Pappeswari & Rajalakshmi, 2013). CRM is all about customer lifetime value (CLV) but the managers are facing difficulty in making balance between marketing CRM and achieving customer lifetime value which is important factor in sustenance of any organization (Rehman & Selvaraj, 2012). This gap can be reduced by E-CRM or CRM software. CRM has helped in brand popularity, delivering innovative products, quick and honest response, building relationships and financial security, manage huge database and facilitates online customer interaction

in insurance industry (Biswamohan & Bidhubhusan, 2012) because healthcare has always been serious and challenging issue therefore CRM system namely social CRM or CRM 2.0 is result of web 2.0 technology which offer robustness and openness in sharing information and better relation with customers with healthcare providers (Pappeswari & Rajalakshmi, 2013). CRM technology can detect, report and correct the source of fraudulent activities and improve performance (Dash & Panda, 2011). Insurance companies nearly spend 12 per cent of their IT budget on CRM software and services beside this insurer can deal better with inconvenience and convenience of customers (Sikarwar, 2012). CRM has also been identified as mode of security in case of payments done against claims product knowledge, transparency in sale of product and quality of service (Agariya & Singh, 2012). CRM is an ongoing process and its biggest challenge is proper implementation of CRM software so that it has ability to access all relevant information about sales, customers and marketing automation (Umashankar, 2001; Larpsiri & Speece, 2004). Successful implementation depends upon number of factors that fits between CRM strategy, its programming and marketing strategies within and outside organization (Bohling, 2006). CRM implementation failure is mainly because of limited acceptance among end users with employees, process and technology (Becker et al., 2009; Zablak et al., 2004). Decrease in satisfaction level of customer has strong consequences in long run than in short run (Verhoef et al., 2001). Most of our private insurer in India uses the CRM technology but the public sector undertaking either do not use the software or are using in some particular department. Public sector must be responsive and act faster to compete with private companies in some cases. Though after so much efforts public sector companies need to reassess them and change their psychology as it was in post-reform era (Kumar & Kumari, 2012). In insurance data mining techniques known as K-means is used which comes from CRM system. It is being used to analyze the customer's preferences over the insurance products and thus improves the product selling strategies (Srivatsa & Balaji, 2012) therefore, Customer service management is the most important criteria to detect what is provided to the customer is same as was promised.

### III. Objectives of the Study

1. To study comparative analysis of focus strategies of CRM policies.
2. To study comparative analysis of impact of the CRM policies where CRM software/database is used.
3. To study benefits of usage of the CRM software wherever it is used.

### IV. Scope of Study

In the study 10 companies were taken, 5 each from public and private sector. Companies from public sector involves LIC, The Oriental Insurance Company Limited, The New India Assurance Company Limited, National Insurance Company Limited, United India Insurance Company Limited and companies from Private sector involves Max Bupa Health Insurance company Limited, ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Limited, Royal Sundaram Alliance Insurance Companies Limited, Tata AIG General Insurance Company Limited.

### V. Research Methodology

Study is based on primary data collected from 200 manager

respondents from above mentioned companies taken under study in the state of Punjab and Haryana. Secondary data was collected from different published and unpublished sources. The analysis tools used in the comparative analysis which was primarily based among the public and private health insurance respondents was evaluated with Mann Whitney U test and for it appropriate null hypothesis was considered. Correlation analysis was also performed with Kendall Tau method.

### VI. Data Analysis and Results

Table 1: Analysis of the Managers on the Focus Strategies of CRM Policies

Do you agree that customer retention is more profitable than customer acquisition?					
	Little extent	Some extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	Not at all
Customer Profitability	0.0	5.0	42.0	53.0	0.0
Customer Service	0.0	0.0	16.0	84.0	0.0
Customer Commitments	0.0	31.0	35.0	34.0	0.0
Customer Contacts	1.0	33.0	30.0	36.0	0.0
Customer Loyalty	0.0	16.0	48.0	36.0	0.0
Customer Satisfaction	0.0	12.0	22.0	66.0	0.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of the responses of the managers surveyed about the focus strategies of the CRM policies of their health insurance companies. Initially all managers responded positively that customer retention is more profitable than customer acquisition. In further analysis it was analyzed that largely 84.0% managers responded that customer service strategy is being largely in implementation in their company which was followed by the focus strategy based on the customer satisfaction as responded by the 66.0% managers to large extent and 22.0% managers reported it at moderate extent.

Customer profitability strategy was also the part of the companies customer relationship policies as stated by the 53.0% managers reported to follow it at large extent whereas 42.0% managers reported it to be at moderate level.

On two policies based on the customer commitments and customer contacts strategies 31.0 – 33.0% managers reported that its being followed at some extent in their companies while 30.0 – 35.0% managers said its being followed at moderate level and 34.0 – 36.0% managers reported it to be followed at large extent in their companies.

Lastly, on the customer loyalty policy 48.0% managers reported it to be followed at moderate level while 36.0% reported to follow it at large extent and only 16.0% said its being followed at some extent in their health insurance companies.

Table 2 distributes the comparison analysis of the responses of the managers from the companies where CRM software/ database are in usage and not in usage i.e. 50.0% each (Table 4.3.3). The purpose was to assess is their any difference in the manager's responses about the focus strategies of their companies where the CRM software are in usage or not. The following was the general null hypothesis drafted for the following issue.

$H_{01}$ : There was no significant difference in the responses of the managers from the companies in usage of CRM software/ database and not in usage about the various focus strategies of the CRM policies

Table 2: Mann Whitney Comparative Analysis of the Managers From Companies Where CRM Software/ Database are Used or not, on the Focus Strategies of CRM Policies

Use of CRM Software/ Database in Company	N	Mean	SD	MW Test	P value	
Customer profitability	Yes	100	4.70	.461	3150.0*	0.0001
	No	100	4.26	.630		
Customer service	Yes	100	4.82	.386	4800.0	0.442
	No	100	4.86	.349		
Customer commitments	Yes	100	4.18	.821	3980.0*	0.008
	No	100	3.88	.769		
Customer contacts	Yes	100	4.48	.502	2032.0*	0.0001
	No	100	3.54	.881		
Customer loyalty	Yes	100	4.38	.599	3688.0*	0.0001
	No	100	4.02	.738		
Customer satisfaction	Yes	100	4.52	.541	4284.0*	0.037
	No	100	4.56	.833		

\*implies significant difference between the response; MW= Mann Whitney; SD = Standard Deviation; N= Number; P value is probability, assuming null hypothesis rejected at  $p < 0.05$

The analysis of Table 2 showed the null hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> was rejected for focus strategy of health insurance companies based on customer profitability as (MW = 3150.0,  $p < 0.05$ ); customer commitment as (MW = 3980.0,  $p < 0.05$ ); customer contacts as (MW = 2032.0,  $p < 0.05$ ); customer loyalty as (MW = 3688.0,  $p < 0.05$ ); customer satisfaction as (MW = 4284.0,  $p < 0.05$ ) at different levels as their was significant difference among the responses of the managers, from the different companies where CRM software were in usage and where CRM software was not being used.

The analysis of table 2 showed the null hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> was accepted as MW = 4800.0,  $p > 0.05$  for the focus strategy of the health insurance companies based on customer service. Their was no significant difference among the responses of the managers.

Table 3: Analysis of the Managers on the Impact of CRM Policies

Company uses CRM insurance software/ database?					
	Little extent	Some extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	Not at all
Providing Customer Service	0.0	11.0	6.0	83.0	0.0
Fulfilling Customer Commitments	0.0	0.0	17.0	83.0	0.0
Customer Loyalty	0.0	35.0	26.0	39.0	0.0
Providing Customer Satisfaction	0.0	15.0	10.0	75.0	0.0
Customer Retention	0.0	0.0	33.0	67.0	0.0

Table 3 shows the distribution of the responses of the managers surveyed about the impact of the CRM policies for the health insurance companies. It was analyzed that on the two core issues i.e. providing customer services and fulfilling customer's commitments was being obtained at large extent as stated by the 83.0% of the managers respectively whereas 6.0% and 17.0%

managers responded to obtain it at moderate level respectively. 75.0% of the managers surveyed reported to obtain the larger level of providing customer satisfaction whereas 15.0% managers reported to done it at some extent. Also on another issue concerning customer retentions only 67.0% managers reported to have it at large extent while 33.0% managers reported it at moderate level. Lastly on the issue customer loyalty, 39.0% managers reported to achieve it at larger extent while 35.0% reported to it at some extent whereas 26.0% managers reported it to have at moderate level. Table 4 distributes the comparison analysis of the responses of the managers from the companies where CRM software/ database are in usage and not in usage i.e. 50.0% each (Table 4.3.3). The purpose was to assess is their any difference in the manager's responses about the impact of the CRM policies in their companies where the CRM software are in usage or not. The following was the general null hypothesis drafted for the following issue.

H<sub>02</sub>: There was no significant difference in the responses of the managers from the companies in usage of CRM software/ database and not in usage about the various impacts of the CRM policies

Table 4: Mann Whitney Comparative Analysis of the Managers From Companies Where CRM Software/ Database are Used or not, on the Impact of CRM Policies

Use of CRM Software/ Database in Company	N	Mean	SD	MW Test	P value	
Providing Customer service	Yes	100	4.80	.569	4504.0	0.064
	No	100	4.64	.718		
Fulfilling Customer commitments	Yes	100	4.84	.545	4100.0*	0.001
	No	100	4.48	.882		
Customer loyalty	Yes	100	4.38	.749	2866.0*	0.0001
	No	100	3.70	.835		
Providing Customer satisfaction	Yes	100	4.80	.569	3720.0*	0.0001
	No	100	4.40	.829		
Customer retention	Yes	100	4.82	.386	3500.0*	0.0001
	No	100	4.52	.502		

\*implies significant difference between the response; MW= Mann Whitney; SD = Standard Deviation; N= Number; P value is probability, assuming null hypothesis rejected at  $p < 0.05$

The analysis of table 4 showed the null hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> was accepted as MW = 4504.0,  $p > 0.05$  as the impact of the CRM policies i.e. providing customer services by the health insurance companies was similar among both companies where CRM software was in usage and not. Thus there was no significant difference among the responses of the managers on providing customer services.

The analysis of Table 4 showed the null hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> was rejected for fulfilling customer commitments as (MW = 4100.0,  $p < 0.05$ ); customer loyalty as (MW = 2866.0,  $p < 0.05$ ); providing customer satisfaction as (MW = 3720.0,  $p < 0.05$ ); customer retention as (MW = 3500.0,  $p < 0.05$ ), as there was significant difference among the responses of the managers on different determinants in the companies where CRM software were in usage and where such software are not in use.

Table 5: Response (Degree of Extent) Analysis of the Managers on the Benefits of CRM Software

Attributes	Little extent	Some extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	Not at all
Customer Retention	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Customer Activeness	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Target Marketing	0.0	0.0	21.2	78.8	0.0
Increased Growth	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Increased Policy Sales	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Increased Insurance Market Share	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Efficient Distribution Channels are secured	0.0	0.0	21.2	78.8	0.0
CRM provides the chance to reduce operating expenses	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Provides more affective and efficient communication	0.0	0.0	3.8	96.2	0.0
Improves the response time	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Increases customer satisfaction	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Printing time reduce	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Policy mailing time reduce	0.0	0.0	13.5	86.5	0.0
Decreases overall cost	0.0	0.0	11.5	88.5	0.0
Aids call centre activities	0.0	0.0	9.6	90.4	0.0
CRM decreases the time required to make product changes	7.7	17.3	9.6	65.4	0.0

Table 5 shows the distribution of the responses of the managers surveyed about the benefits' of the CRM policies for the health insurance companies. It was analyzed on the core issues like customer retention, customer activeness, increased growth of the company, increase policy sales, increase in the insurance market share, CRM provides the chance to reduce operating expenses, improvisation in response time, increase in the customer satisfaction and reduction in printing times are such issues on which all surveyed managers i.e. 100.0% reported that its being benefits of the CRM policies at larger extent in their companies.

It was further analyzed that 96.2% managers and 90.4% managers reported that their companies provides more affective and efficient communication and aids call center activities are the few benefits of the CRM policies which is being at larger extent. The other benefits of the CRM policies discussed among managers like mailing time reduce for policies and decrement in overall cost are the issues which at large being reported by the 86.5% and 88.5% managers respectively.

In the survey 78.8% of the managers also reported the benefits of the CRM policies like their marketing is target oriented and secure of the efficient distribution channels of the company were being at large as reported.

Lastly, 65.0% of the managers CRM decreases the time required to make product changes, as the benefits of the CRM policies in their company while contrary to that 17.3% managers on same issue think it at some extent while 7.7% believes it at little extent.

Table 6 distributes the comparison analysis of the responses of the managers from the companies where CRM software/ database are in usage and not in usage i.e. 50.0% each (Table 3). The purpose was to assess is their any difference in the manager's responses about the benefits' of the CRM policies in their companies where

the CRM software are in usage or not. The following was the general null hypothesis drafted for the following issue.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There was no significant difference in the responses of the managers from the companies in usage of CRM software/ database and not in usage about the various benefits of the CRM policies  
 The analysis of Table 6 showed the null hypothesis H<sub>03</sub> was accepted for customer retention as (MW=200.0, p>0.05); customer activeness as (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05); target marketing as (MW = 140.0, p > 0.05); increased growth as (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05) Increased policy sales as (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05); increased insurance market share as (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05); efficient distribution channels are secured as (MW = 140.0, p > 0.05); provides the chance to reduce operating expenses (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05); provides more effective and efficient communication (MW = 192.0, p > 0.05); improvisation in the response time as (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05); improvisation in the customer satisfaction as (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05); reduction in printing time as (MW = 200.0, p > 0.05); reduction in policy mailing time as (MW = 172.0, p > 0.05); decrement in the overall cost as (MW = 176.0, p > 0.05); aids to the call centers activities as (MW = 180.0, p > 0.05); decreases the time required to make product changes as (MW = 166.0, p > 0.05) as the benefits of the CRM policies of the health insurance companies was similar among both companies where CRM software was in usage and not and thus there was no significant difference among the responses of the managers on above mentioned CRM benefit.

Table 6: Mann Whitney comparative analysis of the managers from companies where CRM software/ Database are used or not, on the benefits of CRM software

Use of CRM Software/ Database in Company	N	Mean	SD	MW Test	P value	
Customer retention	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Customer activeness	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Target marketing	Yes	100	4.80	.402	140.0	0.152
	No	4	4.50	.577		
Increased growth	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Increased policy sales	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Increased insurance market share	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Efficient distribution channels are secured	Yes	100	4.80	.402	140.0	0.152
	No	4	4.50	.577		
CRM provides the chance to reduce operating expenses	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
It provides for more affective and efficient communication	Yes	100	4.96	.197	192.0	0.685
	No	4	5.00	.000		
It improves the response time	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
It increases customers satisfaction	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Printing time reduced	Yes	100	5.00	.000	200.0	1.00
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Policy mailing time is reduced	Yes	100	4.86	.349	172.0	0.423
	No	4	5.00	.000		
It decreases overall costs	Yes	100	4.88	.327	176.0	0.464
	No	4	5.00	.000		
Aids the call centre activities	Yes	100	4.90	.302	180.0	0.508
	No	4	5.00	.000		
CRM decreases the time required to make product changes	Yes	100	4.34	1.017	166.0	0.496
	No	4	4.00	1.155		

MW= Mann Whitney; SD = Standard Deviation; N= Number; P value is probability, assuming null hypothesis rejected at p < 0.05

## VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

CRM policies are adopted by almost all companies of public and private sector undertaking and CRM focus strategies are benefitting almost all health insurance companies in retaining their profitable customers and acquiring new perspective customers. It was analyzed that almost all the private companies use the CRM software/database and among Public sector Insurance Companies only Life Insurance Corporation of India have recently incorporated CRM software in the system. Among all other public sector insurance companies, The New India Insurance Company Limited make use of different type of small software like peoples software, etc which increase their overall cost and processing time. It was analyzed that largely managers responded that customer service strategy and customer satisfaction strategy are main focus as satisfied customer is delighted customer who promote the product with positive word of mouth.

Companies those use the CRM software were more focused and committed and benefitted towards, customer retention, customer activeness, increased growth of the company, increase policy sales, increase in the insurance market share, CRM provides the chance to reduce operating expenses, improvisation in response time, increase in the customer satisfaction and reduction in printing time of documentation. Therefore, CRM software helps companies reduce time and overall cost of Companies which ultimately leads to reduction in premiums. With help of CRM software usage insurance companies can increase there sales volume. Companies can focus more on customer based strategies. Therefore, it becomes necessary for the health insurance companies to focus more on CRM and its proper implementation to reduce overall cost. Customer being a prime factor for any organization in this competitive world therefore It has become more necessary for both public and private companies to get focused on CRM technology so that maximum penetration of health insurance could be done at low cost which ultimately benefits the customer as well as the organization.

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