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Customer Relationship Management with Special Reference to Higher Education Institutions

Harish Kumar*

The best way to find you is to lose yourself in the service of others.

—Mahatma Gandhi

Education is a global industry. India as a country represents meaningfully in the global education industry. Education falls under service sector. Education market in India is well perceived. A higher education institution particularly operating under the umbrella of private sector can be defined as an organization with a motto to provide quality education by earning sensible profits. Education is treated as a pious profession. Therefore, it does not appear to be genuine to club it with profit making. However, the changing nature of the profession paves a path to put an educational institution in the category of a marketable organization. When a business organization can be characterized as consumer/customer oriented, an educational institution can also be regarded as same. The educational institutions are covered under Consumer Protection Act-1986. Government keeps the control of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) specifically those operating in private sector so as to put checks and balances on them and persuade them not to resort to unethical ways to make undue profits. The foregoing text vouches for the fact that a student can be regarded as a consumer/customer.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is an arrangement for managing an organization's relations with its present and potential consumers/customers. CRM refers to the endeavours made by an institution to arrange, document and evaluate the interactions with its consumers so as to enrich relations with them and serve them in an improved manner. Information technology can play a vital role in the forging and sustaining strong relations with consumers/customers if aptly used. Mobiles and computers with the help of messages, e-mails etc. can keep you connected with your consumers/customers all the time. Social sites are another way to be close to ones consumers/customers so as to communicate with them purposefully.

Many of the organizations are quite successful as they inquire from consumers about their needs, tastes and preferences before manufacturing and launching a product or service. Their products and services are sold like hot cakes and they enjoy the upshots of the virtuous cycle. While there are several others which fail to identify the real needs of consumers/customers and produce or launch a product or service as per their convenience. When they find the demand low they strive to sell the product/service by hook or by crook and get trapped in a vicious circle.

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