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Customer relationship management and its impact on entrepreneurial marketing: a literature review

Vicente Guerola-Navarro[1] · Hermenegildo Gil-Gomez[1] · Raul Oltra-Badenes[1] · Pedro Soto-Acosta[2]

Abstract

Entrepreneurship is one of the business forces with the greatest power to transform today's society, due to its ability to discover and take advantage of new opportunities to satisfy customer new and changing needs and expectations. Customer relationship management (CRM) has proved to be both a highly influential business management strategy and a powerful business management technology solution, with a particularly relevant impact in the area of entrepreneurship. CRM has helped drive growth and future expectations and has had excellent results in terms of return on investment wherever it has been implemented. An exhaustive review of previously published findings in a specific subject area can uncover new lines of research. This paper uses semi-systematic review to the study of the reality of the link between CRM and entrepreneurial marketing in business. This approach is used to comprehensively describe the state of the art of the impact that CRM can have in the modern business environment, through the empowerment of entrepreneurial marketing. In a structured manner, the present paper reviews the 86 most relevant studies of how CRM affects entrepreneurial marketing policy development through its alignment with relationship marketing and customer-centric business models. The growing use of CRM in companies is one of the pillars of technological and social change in entrepreneurship, being a clear example of how big data can benefit society. The study focuses on the period from 2015 to 2019.

✉ Vicente Guerola-Navarro
   viguena@upv.es

Extended author information available on the last page of the article

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Introduction

In a globalized commercial world such as the current one, markets are dynamic and changing, and the customer lies at the beginning and end of the value chain. One of the greatest values that entrepreneurship provides in an environment like this is the ability of entrepreneurs to take advantage of opportunities and discover new ways to meet customer expectations, and thereby transform the world in general and the market in general particular, all due to the unstoppable process of digital transformation. One of the consequences of globalization is the greater ability of customers to access both information and the acquisition of products and services offered even beyond the borders of countries (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2019). This means that the needs, desires, and expectations of customers are changing and increasingly demanding, with which the market has become so dynamic that only companies that manage to adapt to said dynamism survive. And for this it is necessary to invest in innovation and development, and to have an entrepreneurial spirit that is open to discovering and taking advantage of new opportunities and ways of satisfying those needs, desires and expectations. Entrepreneurship thus becomes one of the engines of change and transformation of society, which justifies the growing research interest in this area (Hills et al., 2008).

The area of entrepreneurship is being the center of study for various researchers from different perspectives due to its important role as an engine of economic and social development, reaching the point of being able to affirm that the entrepreneur is the single most important player in a modern economy (Sánchez, 2011). It was not too long ago that the field of entrepreneurship was considered little more than an applied trade as opposed to an academic area of study and there was no research to be accomplished because it was thought that those who could not attend college would simply "practice" the concept of new business start-up (Hills et al., 2008). The role of entrepreneurship in society has changed drastically in the last quarter century, to the point that, in recent years, entrepreneurship has been viewed as the engine of economic and social development due to the power it has developed to provide a better quality of life to society. society through its impetus and its transformative potential. Entrepreneurs are those who work on transformative environments, discover or identify opportunities, or create and exploit them to add value to society. Entrepreneurship is nowadays regarded as the study of the processes of identifying, evaluating, developing and exploiting opportunities, as well as of the resources and conditioners that influence these processes, as part of one of the most powerful tools that business has for bringing better customer experiences. (Frederick et al., 2018).

Nowadays, the customer is also considered the engine of business success (Díez de Castro et al., 2002). In such a world, companies must have the right tools to collect the necessary management information so that they can meet the needs and expectations of customers and thereby mold their productive, logistic, and commercial efforts to match these needs and expectations (Gil-Gomez et al., 2021; Ochoa Laburu, 1996; Vicedo et al., 2020). This makes the development of entrepreneurial businesses especially difficult, which is why it is shown that all

those tools and technological solutions that can have a high impact on customer management and entrepreneurial marketing are key, an area in which Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) has proven to have a special impact.

In the current business environment, and especially evident in its entrepreneurial part, where the client appears as the key and determining figure for any decision making (de Guzmán Miranda, 2014), it is essential to evaluate the impact that any strategy and tool may have on the management of the client's knowledge available to the company (Alfaro Faus, 2004), in order to be able to adapt its commercial and marketing actions towards the most efficient and appropriate target. Marketing (understood as the management of commercial relationships with customers within the market), and more specifically entrepreneurial marketing (as a powerful association of marketing tools and the innovative and transforming power of entrepreneurship) is therefore one of the great forces that promote the economic development of society. Along these lines, CRM has emerged in recent decades as the most widely disseminated strategy and management tool in terms of a tool designed and focused on managing the powerful marketing strategies through the management of the relationships with customers, and consistently and efficiently managing information and actions aimed at the clients (Al-Omoush et al., 2021), which is especially important in the field of entrepreneurship. This study tries precisely to analyze the previous and relevant studies that unify these important aspects of business management: the management of customer relationships, and marketing as a strategy for reaching customers, specifically in the field of entrepreneurship. The ultimate objective is to identify the dimensions that other previous studies have highlighted as more relevant and with the greatest impact in these fields of business management, to draw conclusions from the results obtained, and to propose future lines of research consistent with the results obtained.

For most entrepreneurial marketers, marketing is a social, personal activity and not only an organizational function. Marketing to achieve growth is what many entrepreneurs are passionate about. Marketing from the perspective of an entrepreneur is not just one of the functions of the business that must be carried out such as accounting, finance, or HRM; but is often considered by entrepreneurs as the core function of the firm (Hills et al., 2008). Regarding marketing area impactful tools, Customer relationship management (CRM) is one of the leading business strategies and business management tools (Al-Omoush et al., 2021), and it has been shown to be crucial in developing sales, marketing, and production planning strategies. This key role of CRM is a consequence of the customer-related information that can be obtained from all CRM sources of value, in the sense of providing the overall efforts of companies with the appropriate sense of customer service and customer needs (García Moreno et al., 2001). CRM refers to both a customer relationship management philosophy and the technological solutions or methodologies required for its implementation because each tool and each level of implementation of CRM is a true reflection of the CRM philosophy or strategy itself (Chen et al., 2020). Value chain management, together with the resulting strategy for producing goods and providing services, thus becomes meaningful and effective when it is based on the knowledge of the vital business

reality of customers (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2020c; Ochoa Laburu & Arana Pérez, 1997). This feature is one of the most highly valued characteristics of CRM's action points.

Menguzzato and Renau (1991) established the principles that should be followed by business decision makers of successful firms that seek to achieve high levels of business performance and endure over time as model companies and shining examples of business success. In this sense, the presence and relevance of entrepreneurial marketing as part of business success is crucial to the study of any business management methodology (Miquel Peris et al., 1994). Therefore, any tool such as CRM, which supports the collection of customer management information and its use in planning strategies, is essential in management (Hills et al., 2008).

Hills et al. (2008) points out that entrepreneurs are characterized by creating and exploiting turbulent markets, something that other economic actors tend not to do. Economic theory suggests that entrepreneurs are seen as creating imbalances by introducing innovations to drive markets or as firms that attempt to move economies away from equilibrium by exploiting previously unidentified opportunities. The use of knowledge management and innovation, empowered by the use of CRM technologocal solutions, to create entrepreneurial rent has important implications for marketing (Gil-Gomez et al., 2020). In this way, entrepreneurial marketing proves not to be the direct consequence of specific managerial decisions but more the outcome of entrepreneurial processes and culture (Hills et al., 2008). The aim of studying the reality of CRM through scientific research in the areas of business, sociology, and technology is to effectively demonstrate that CRM is one of the most powerful business tools for managing sales, entrepreneurial marketing, and services (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2021b).

In this paper, and during the following sections, the impact of CRM on entrepreneurial marketing will be studied. First, a Literature Review section is presented in which what has been ascertained from previous studies on the relationship between CRM and marketing in general is referenced, particularizing on the entrepreneurial aspect of business marketing. In the following sections, the methodology followed in the study is explained, as well as the results obtained and the conclusions derived from this scientific study.

Literature review

Marketing is one of the areas in which the expectation of impact is greatest through the use of CRM technological solutions and the culture of customer relationship management itself. Specifically, and within the general concept of marketing, entrepreneurial marketing is one of the areas with the greatest projection both at the business level and at the research level. This section initially analyzes the concept and relevance of entrepreneurial marketing, and then the concept and evolution of CRM solutions, to later proceed to establish the marketing approach to the CRM customer-centric management theory, all of it as previous stages for finally stating the state of the art on the impact of CRM on entrepreneurial marketing specifically.

Entrepreneurial marketing

Marketing is the discipline concerned with studying the behavior of markets and the needs of consumers. Entrepreneurial marketing, as part of the global discipline of marketing, but with the special characteristics of entrepreneurial agents, analyzes companies' commercial management in attracting, capturing, and retaining end customers by fulfilling their wishes and resolving their problems all with the aim of transforming society by discovering opportunities and paths not explored by other business agents (Hills et al., 2008; Bennett, 1995). Regarding entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs' tactics for using the marketing strategies differ from the traditional business brand, where product development, pricing, promotion, and distribution are the key marketing mix pillars (Martin, 2009). Entrepreneurs prefer direct interchanges and building personal relationships, being the entrepreneurs' tactics clearly based on personal observation and contact information, rather than formal research and global marketing initiatives.

Kraus et al. (2010) establishes that, within the business field of discovering and taking advantage of new business opportunities that can transform society and improve the overall customer experience, entrepreneurial marketing can be understood as the combination of marketing with an entrepreneurial mindset, which leads to a definition of entrepreneurial marketing as the "organizational function of marketing by taking into account innovativeness, risk taking, pro-activeness and the pursuit of opportunities without regard for the resources currently controlled". Smart and Conant (1994) suggests that entrepreneurial firms have a different set of marketing competencies that typically includes a superior understanding of customer needs, market trends, and market positioning. Hills et al. (2008) indicate that entrepreneurs engage in marketing in ways that differ the classical marketing theory.

Jones and Rowley (2011) suggest that marketing in SMEs is intertwined with other activities and behaviors in small business and argue that to understand marketing in SMEs it is essential to understand its context, specifically in relation to customer engagement, the innovation. and business approaches to marketing. Given the relevance of the interaction between entrepreneurship and marketing, the concept of "entrepreneurial business" has gained significance in the research and business sphere. While some authors argue that entrepreneurial business is important to all organizations (large and small), there is a general recognition that the concept is particularly appropriate for the context of small businesses (Jones & Rowley, 2011).

Stokes (2000) establishes how marketing adapts to entrepreneurial contexts and proposes a conceptual model of the marketing processes undertaken by entrepreneurs. This study explores how entrepreneurial marketing differs from traditional marketing theory, concluding that entrepreneurs tend to be innovation-oriented, driven by new ideas and an intuitive feel for the market, rather than rigorous evaluation of business needs.

Customer relationship management (CRM)

The origins of CRM date back to the 1970s, when CRM emerged as a technological solution for companies to automate the management of the internal sales force (Buttle, 2004). Recent bibliometric studies assessing the evolution of the hubs of

productivity and influence in terms of the eminent authors, countries, and institutions in the field of CRM have shown the exponential growth of interest in CRM since 2010 (Liu et al., 2020), being a definite complement for the recent extensive literature reviews performed about CRM impact on entrepreneurial marketing and innovation areas (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2021a).

CRM is one of the most modern business management tools to establish effective channels and methods of customer-centric information management, in conjunction with Enterprise Resource Planning solutions (Vicedo et al., 2020; Oltra-Badenes et al., 2019). Its primary goal is to improve organizational performance to enable firms to achieve better business results (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2020a). This modern approach differs considerably from earlier approaches such as the one described by Chen and Wu (2016), who proposed a basic definition of CRM as "a combination of people, processes and technology that seeks to understand a company's customers." This definition has become obsolete given the recent evolution of CRM tools toward a global vision of comprehensive management of information in relation to customer knowledge to achieve more effective interactions with clients. Modern studies of business management and the use of information technology consider the necessity of the comprehensive management of key information for business decision makers. Payne and Frow (2005) established a global conceptual framework for this modern approach to the comprehensive management of customer information and expectations, leading to successful decision making and the planning of coordinated and effective entrepreneurial marketing strategies to attract and retain the company's most profitable customers. For this purpose, CRM is a fundamental tool (Ayyagari, 2021).

Recent studies corroborate the importance of CRM as a key tool in the digital transformation of society and the current globalized and dynamic market (Gil-Gomez et al., 2020). The role of CRM is stressed not only because of its potential to improve current management (or exploitation), but also because of its potential in developing innovation (or exploration) capacity. This potential makes CRM one of the most powerful management technology solutions in the field of modern business management (Adiwijaya et al., 2017).

Marketing approach to the CRM customer-centric management theory

Having established the importance of CRM as a business management technology solution with a major impact in the field of marketing, and especially on entrepreneurial marketing, it is important to identify the marketing approach that is most closely aligned with the CRM customer-centric management theory. This marketing approach is used in this study to ensure that the results are consistent and relevant for future studies. Of all current theories and trends in marketing, the definition of relationship marketing (or relational marketing) is of greatest interest because of its close match with CRM objectives. Specifically, relationship marketing is defined as the integrated effort to identify and maintain a customer network, with the aim of continually reinforcing it for the benefit of both parties, through individualized contacts and interactions that generate value over time (Harker, 1999).

This concept of relational marketing is especially important in the area of entrepreneurship, since maintaining a long-term relationship with loyal customers empirically shows that it favors the creation of a financial cushion and a culture of confidence in the future of the company, which they are the basis for every entrepreneurial agent to continue taking risks and facing new challenges. In short, a loyal customer base allows entrepreneurs to be what they are, agents who pour all their energy and capacity for innovation into transforming society through previously undiscovered or untapped opportunities. Loyal customers are defined as those who always buy a specific type of item in the same store, who always consume the same brands, and who always carry out their business operations through the same entities (de Guzmán Miranda, 2014). In terms of its basic principles, relationship marketing (Alfaro Faus, 2004):

- is based on segmented or customized marketing,
- tries to generate long-term benefits,
- represents a commitment to the development of a mutually beneficial relationship continued over time,
- is based on continuous improvement and the creation and contribution of value to the client,
- orients and coordinates the entire company toward the client,
- requires complex and continuous internal marketing,
- directs the training, motivation, and evaluation of employees toward increasing customer satisfaction,
- seeks customer satisfaction with each relationship through an emphasis on customer service.

In the entrepreneurial business environment, there is therefore a link between CRM technology solutions, relationship marketing based on customer centered focus and business success. To achieve the expected benefits of relationship marketing, CRM is a key tool for business management. In a globalized, dynamic, and changing market, like today's, the principles of relationship marketing are critical to the success of any entrepreneurial marketing strategy adopted by any company hoping to succeed. CRM is one of the technologies that has aroused the most interest in the last decade. This interest is reflected by numerous bibliometric studies. Its market share has increased dramatically in recent years, especially with the development of cloud computing platforms. CRM is a technology that has only relatively recently attracted interest. Also, its scope of development is closely linked to relationship marketing. Therefore, it was considered both interesting and novel to conduct further research on this subject, hence the motivation for the present literature review.

State of the art on the impact of CRM on entrepreneurial marketing

Given the relative newness of CRM technology solutions as a focus of scientific research, there are few studies of the state of the art in terms of its impact on the current business reality. Following the theory of the duality and complementary

nature of the qualitative and quantitative studies of the realities under investigation (Hernández Sampieri et al., 1996), the state of the art should first present quantitative analysis of the publications and citations in this area and should then offer in-depth analysis of the most relevant publications.

The first approach to the study of the state of the art is to examine the quantitative reality of the subject. This approach is reflected in CRM bibliometric studies such as the study by Tsai (2011) and the more recent study by Guerola-Navarro et al. (2020b), who reviewed the most important and well-recognized databases in scientific research to graphically analyze the evolution of the number of publications and citations and determine the hubs of greatest productivity and influence. The origin (author, country, entity, etc.) of the research articles stored in these databases was considered in terms of productivity. The origin of articles whose publications had most citations were considered to be of greatest influence.

Regarding the second, this approach to the state of the art of CRM, scholars have conducted systematic reviews of the literature on CRM, identifying lines of investigation that have been proposed for future research. Ngai (2005) reviewed the academic literature on CRM from 1992 to 2002, providing a comprehensive bibliography and proposing a method of classifying the literature. Subsequently Ngai et al. (2009) built an academic database of literature for the period 2000 to 2006 and proposed a classification scheme to classify these articles. More recently, Soltani and Navimipour (2016) systematically reviewed the state-of-the-art literature on CRM mechanisms and offered recommendations for future research.

Considering previous research and the intention to establish a complete state of the art for CRM technology, there is a lack of studies that specifically address the entrepreneurial marketing side of CRM. The decisive influence of a good entrepreneurial marketing strategy on successful business activity has been verified. Similarly, CRM has also been cited as one of the most relevant technological solutions in obtaining the key management information for the development of such a marketing strategy. Therefore, a study that reflects the state of the art of CRM in the specific field of entrepreneurship marketing can prove valuable for subsequent research. This future research on the role of CRM in improving marketing strategies is expected to be vital to enhance company performance.

Therefore, through an extensive literature review, this paper complements the existing bibliometric studies of CRM by adopting a semi-systematic review to studying the business reality of CRM, focusing specifically on the entrepreneurial marketing side. This approach, together with the quantitative approach of bibliometric analysis of the productivity and influence of the scientific research community, establishes a complete state of the art that can be used to support future research on the impact of CRM as a tool and its marketing applications in the modern business environment.

This paper thus offers a comprehensive review of the literature on the potential of applying CRM technology solutions through their impact on companies' management of entrepreneurial marketing strategies. All research articles published since the birth of CRM to the present day (end of 2019) are reviewed. This paper has the following structure. First, the research methodology is described. Then, the method to classify articles on CRM in entrepreneurial marketing is presented. Next, these

articles on entrepreneurial marketing in CRM are reviewed and analyzed. Finally, conclusions are drawn in relation to future research on CRM and its impact on marketing management.

Methods

Research methodology

There are several types of literature review research. However, certain elements are common to all of these, namely analysis of the most important papers on a given topic of study, categorization of these studies under the proposed taxonomy or conceptual framework, and the establishment of the basis for the future research agenda. Snyder (2019) notes that a "literature review can broadly be described as a more or less systematic way of collecting and synthesizing previous research," raising questions about the quality and trustworthiness of classical literature review studies and establishing guidelines for new methods. Systematic review papers may be of several types: structured reviews focusing on widely used methods, theories, and constructs (Canabal & White, 2008; Paul & Singh, 2017; Kahiya, 2018); framework-based studies (Paul & Benito, 2018); hybrid-narrative studies with a framework for setting the future research agenda (Kumar et al., 2019a); theory-based reviews (Gilal et al., 2018); meta-analyses (Knoll & Matthes, 2017); bibliometric reviews (Randhawa et al., 2016); and reviews aiming at model or framework development (Paul, 2019; Paul & Mas, 2019). Torraco (2005) and Callahan (2010) argued that an integrative literature review should offer a research agenda, a classification of concepts, conceptual frameworks as the way of thinking resulting from the study, and the basis for developing future research. In line with the indications of Snyder (2019), the present study follows a semi-systematic review, with the following four phases: 1) design, 2) conduct, 3) analyze, and 4) structure and write the review. The elements followed in each phase of this study are detailed below.

Phase 1. Design the review

The purpose of this study is to categorize the most important papers on CRM and entrepreneurial marketing. The goal is to provide a map of studies and conclusions that can help establish a focused research agenda. The purpose of the study is to support the empirical testing of models of the impact of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing on firm performance. Previous bibliometric studies show that CRM is a business management technology that has been growing since 2000. This growth has been especially pronounced in the last decade, particularly in the last five years, with the development of cloud computing platforms. Therefore, the present review was deemed necessary. The potential audience for this study is growing as it is shown in the bibliometric studies confirming the growing interest and influence of papers on CRM (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2020b). The same growing interest is shown in the literature around entrepreneurial marketing, as one of the most powerful forces to transform the society and the market itself. The search strategy is based on

bibliometric studies carried out with the same research criteria. This study follows and complements these previous studies by describing the state of the art. Therefore, as explained in this section, the Web of Science Core Collection database for the period 2015 to 2019 was used.

Phase 2. Conduct the review

The present study provides a review of the literature on the interaction between CRM and entrepreneurial marketing. Therefore, the selection procedure was designed to identify articles based on all the keywords related to these two concepts that provide meaningful results. Certain adjustments were foreseen to eliminate articles that were not impactful or whose content was not intrinsically relevant to the study. The selected articles were carefully read to ensure the quality, representativeness, and applicability of the study in the scope described in the future research agenda.

Phase 3. Analyze

In order to obtain the needing information for carrying out this study, three sources have been explored: complementary bibliometric studies, previous literature reviews, and methodological studies of literature review processes.

Phase 4. Structure and write the review

The paper begins with the description of the scope and objective of the study, followed by the description of the methodological basis followed on it. The information regarding the impact of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing has been reviewed, considering Its importance, representativeness, and relevance for future research. The conclusions are presented with the aim to bring the most interesting points to other researchers and to open new researching lines in the future.

Following these propositions (Snyder, 2019), the starting point has been to determine which database to use to identify scientific research articles published in prestigious journals. The database chosen in this study was the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection, which is owned by Thomson Reuters. The journal's own page contained the citations from any journal (Mulet-Forteza et al., 2019), but we only wanted to take into account the citations from the most relevance journals in the research fields, and this was why we have used only this database. WoS core collection covers most of the known scientific disciplines, hosting more than 50,000,000 papers across more than 15,000 journals (Merigó & Yang, 2017). In the field of scientific research, it is generally assumed that WoS contains only high-quality journals characterized by timely publication and review of papers, scientific criteria for the peer review process, and broad dissemination through the Internet and the most widely used channels for the publication of scientific research (Martínez-López et al., 2020). Therefore, WoS was considered the most appropriate database for this study, both due to the specific interest of our study, as well as the prestige, completeness and relevance of this database in the scientific field.

In the WoS refine categories, there is no specific section for CRM and entrepreneurial marketing. Therefore, the search had to be refined by filtering the results depending on the primary focus of the journals and the papers included in these journals. The Web of Science Core Collection database was the core database used for this study, as it has been explained previously. The initial period used in the literature search for this study was 1900 to 2019, with the intention of covering all completed and closed years in terms of publications (at the time of the study, the year 2019 was not yet closed and it continued to receive publications). It was based on the search strings "customer relationship management", ("Customer relationship management*"), "CRM" ("CRM*"), "entrepreneurial marketing" ("entrepreneurial marketing*"), "entrepreneurship" ("entrepreneurship*") and "marketing" ("marketing*"). With these refine filters, it has been observed that the database obtained contained a sample of the entire spectrum and range of topics that were intended to be analyzed in this study, so it was not considered necessary to expand, reduce, or change these parameters for others (in fact, it has been found that introducing other parameters deviated the database from the sample that was intended to be used in the research). The search returned 1,034 results from the Web of Science Core Collection in these areas for this timeframe.

To consider the most relevant research papers for a comprehensive literature review, an important field in WoS is *Document Type* (Vallaster et al., 2019). The document types of interest in this study were article, review, and letter (Merigó et al., 2015; Vallaster et al., 2019). The original data set of 1034 was reduced to only articles, reviews, and letters, being the number of results of the search reduced to 646 articles.

The focus of this study is the relationship between CRM management technology solutions and the management of marketing strategies, all within the scope of business management. Therefore, filters were applied to select articles in the WoS categories of Business, Management, Operations Research Management Science, Computer Science Information Systems, Information Science Library Science, Computer Science Interdisciplinary Applications, and Economics. This process gave a total of 541 results.

Analysis of the timeframe of previous literature reviews shows that the most recent state of the art was created in 2016 by Soltani and Navimipour (2016). Therefore, to ensure the originality of the articles and choose the correct timeframe in this study, these results were filtered for the years 2015 to 2019. The reasons for selecting this timeframe are given below.

- The period 2015 to 2019 covers the last five years for which data are available. Therefore, this period best reflects the most up-to-date approaches and trends in this area.
- The bibliometric study by Guerola-Navarro et al. (2020b) to examine the evolution and trends in scientific research on CRM shows that the recent rise in the number of publications on CRM (and, by extension, the interest in this topic) began in 2015.

- After applying this filter in WoS, the search returned 197 articles, covering the type, content, and magnitude of research database that was looked for the research.

The full text of these articles was reviewed to eliminate those that were unrelated to the application of CRM marketing tools in the planning and development of business marketing strategies. All articles where the primary focus was not the inextricable relationship between CRM and marketing were eliminated, considering not only the existence of a marketing module within the CRM technological solution itself but also (and even more importantly) the impact of CRM strategy on the development of effective marketing strategies and policies.

Thus, the number of relevant articles was 86 following the elimination of those that were not considered relevant to this study or that were not considered important articles in relation to the application of marketing techniques to CRM. These 86 articles were classified according to the dimensions of CRM and its elements and according to the dimensions of marketing and its elements.

Other items were discarded for the following reasons (research studies that appeared as search results in the WoS Core Collection with the strings used in this study, but that for different reasons have been analyzed but are not part of the sample from which the results and conclusions were obtained of this study):

- Some articles were found in WoS using the filters for this study. However, their content was not entirely relevant to the concepts represented by these filters. Examples of these articles are those by Hu et al. (2019), Naudé and Sutton-Brady (2019), Skarmeas et al. (2019), Mosavi and Afsar (2018), and Di Benedetto (2017).
- Some articles were relevant to CRM but not to entrepreneurial marketing. Examples are those by Cricelli et al. (2020), Cruz and Vasconcelos (2015), Garrido-Moreno et al. (2015), and Mohammadhossein et al. (2015).
- Some articles were relevant to entrepreneurial marketing but not to CRM. Examples are those by Coda and de Castro (2019), Levin et al. (2019), Mehrabi et al. (2019), and Alnawas and Hemsley-Brown (2019).
- Some articles were mostly technical and focused more on the technological side of the CRM tool than on its impact on business management. Examples of these articles are those by Cu et al. (2019), Yang and Shieh (2019), Ullah et al. (2019), and Ivan and Popa (2015).
- Some articles focused exclusively on applicability to a specific environment or situation and were not general enough to be extrapolated and to be considered representative of a general case. Examples are the articles by Sota et al. (2020), Junaid et al. (2019), Rahimi and Gunlu (2016), and Siems et al. (2015).

With the results of the literature review and with the bibliometric research, it is hoped that the most relevant areas of research interest and focus can be detected. The future research agenda (Paul & Rosado-Serrano, 2019) will be defined by these research trends. It will help reveal the most relevant and influential studies of the expected benefits of the implementation and use of CRM in the field of

entrepreneurship. This study aims to achieve a model to measure the impact of the use of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing on firm performance.. For this purpose, it is crucial to have a study of the state of the art as a starting point. This study of the state of the art consists of a solid bibliometric study and a thorough literature review.

Following this description of the selection of these articles, the methodology that was used to classify them is now developed. The first step to classifying the articles that explore the links between CRM and entrepreneurial marketing (i.e., the articles whose content is relevant to the present study) and to building a comprehensive state of the art was to identify the dimensions and elements that characterize CRM and those that characterize entrepreneurial marketing.

CRM dimensions

When performing an extensive search for previous studies of literature reviews or the creation of a state of the art of CRM, different CRM dimensions and elements can be used to classify the articles. The literature review shows that CRM can be defined in terms of four dimensions with the following elements (Kracklauer et al., 2004; Ngai, 2005; Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2001; Swift, 2001):

1. Customer identification:

    a. Target customer analysis
    b. Customer segmentation

2. Customer attraction:

    a. Direct marketing

3. Customer retention:

    a. Loyalty programs
    b. One-to-one marketing
    c. Complaint management

4. Customer development:

    a. Customer lifetime value
    b. Upselling/cross-selling
    c. Market basket analysis

Ngai (2005) analyzed the concept of CRM as a tool to identify the most valuable clients, attract them as trusted clients, retain them with loyalty policies, and develop a lasting partnership with them. For this process, four dimensions are used: customer identification, customer attraction, customer retention, and customer development. These dimensions are a true reflection of the potential of CRM technology solutions to reinforce the business value chain based on knowledge of the needs and expectations of clients and to achieve the goal of customer

satisfaction. This goal is client focused, and the needs of clients offer the starting point in this business value chain (Li et al., 2006, 2019; Lin et al., 2010).

Kracklauer et al. (2004) defined customer identification as any effort by the company to turn as many individuals as possible into customers as per the business aims of the company for a given time and under given circumstances. This phase has two elements or stages that are central to its success in customer acquisition.

- Target customer analysis is where a company studies its capabilities and possibilities for development in the short and medium term, analyzes what its target market may look like based on its circumstances and surroundings, and identifies its target customer to direct its recruitment efforts (Hult & Ketchen, 2001).
- Customer segmentation is where a company tries to identify and analyze its target customers, and after establishing its global potential market, the company segments or divides its target market according to the characteristics of the homogeneous segments that are of interest for its commercial activity (Huang & Lin, 2005).

Customer attraction is defined as any effort by the company to get customers interested in the goods and services it offers. Customer attraction is the next step after segmentation during the previous step of customer identification (He et al., 2004). This stage consists of one primary activity.

- Direct marketing is the principal tool to overcome challenges and grasp opportunities associated with the need for customer attraction. Companies must address target audiences both directly and indirectly, always keeping in mind that reaching the right customers is the key to business success (Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009).

Customer retention is the most difficult objective to achieve in the current globalized, changing, and dynamic market. Econometric studies show that it is considerably more efficient for companies to retain their best existing clients than to secure new clients whose long-term performance is unknown (Reinartz et al., 2004). Establishing the fundamental elements for customer retention is therefore crucial for business success.

- Loyalty programs involve creating a global structured plan composed of synchronous actions in which all efforts are focused on retaining the best clients (Kracklauer et al., 2004), especially through customer service and support programs.
- One-to-one marketing is important because in markets as competitive as today's globalized environment, personalizing marketing efforts to suit the clients (or segment) that these efforts target is the only way to match marketing campaigns to customers and expected results (Miquel Peris et al., 1994).
- Complaint management is important because in the current market, customer retention is not viable without an adequate customer service and support policy.

This policy describes how to accept, process, and respond to all feedback and complaints from customers (Karimi et al., 2001).

Finally, customer development refers to all efforts to strengthen and develop commercial activity with long-term clients. This activity occurs through attempts to expand and strengthen profitable lines of business with existing loyal customers (Aggarval & Yu, 2002). Three key elements are considered at this stage.

- Customer lifetime value analysis refers to the prediction of the total net income a company can expect from a customer (Drew et al., 2001).
- Upselling and cross-selling are promotion activities that aim at augmenting the number of associated or closely related services that a customer uses within the company (Prinzie & Poel, 2006).
- Market basket analysis means maximizing customer transaction intensity and value by discovering patterns in the purchase behavior of customers (Aggarval & Yu, 2002).

Each of these four dimensions of CRM has several elements, which are used in this study to classify the selected articles in the field of marketing in CRM.

Entrepreneurial marketing dimensions

Following the same research approach as for CRM, previous literature reviews or state-of-the-art analyses of marketing and entrepreneurial marketing, specifically relationship marketing, were reviewed. Interest in this form of marketing is due to its growing importance, its alignment with CRM technology solutions, and its efficiency, which has been shown in recent studies (as mentioned in the introduction).

Harker (1999) synthesized the definitions of relationship marketing. The following dimensions or conceptual categories and their corresponding elements were identified:

- Creation/birth: attracting, establishing, getting
- Development/develop: enhancing, strengthening
- Maintenance/maintain: sustaining, stability, keeping
- Interactive/interaction: exchanging, mutually, co-operating
- Long term/temporary: lasting, permanent, retaining
- Emotional content: commitment, trust, promises
- Output: profitable, rewarding, efficiency

Despite being the most extensive and most specific of any research on this topic, the aforementioned study is also the oldest. Therefore, these categories were taken as a conceptual reference, but a more recent study was sought to identify the dimensions that are most pertinent to the current economic and business environment.

Samiee and Walters (2003) studied and classified the most important articles on relationship management in an international context. This approach is

especially interesting because the current market is characterized by increasing globalization. Therefore, the international business approach is considered up to date and relevant to this study. Samiee and Walters (2003) concluded that the following constructs can be used to classify articles (in order of appearance in the studied articles):

- Trust
- Power
- Commitment
- Conflict
- Relationship quality
- Reciprocity
- Investment in the relationship
- Information exchange

The third literature review considered on relationship marketing is the most recent one. Das (2009) presented an adaptation of the study by Samiee and Walters (2003) to a more up-to-date environment. This adaptation is concise and simple, reducing the categories under study to the following five constructs:

- Trust
- Commitment
- Cooperation
- Closeness
- Relationship quality

The list of constructs compiled by Das (2009) is the most recent list and is consistent and well aligned with that of Samiee and Walters (2003). Thus, the dimensions defined by Das (2009) are used in this study. These dimensions are the most well recognized in the recent scientific research on relationship marketing. They are also accepted as suitable for the study of international business. Therefore, the marketing dimensions used in the classification of the selected articles are trust, commitment, cooperation, closeness, and relationship quality.

Trust depicts the concept of relationship management as emotional and behavioral, focusing on concepts such as bonding, empathy, reciprocity, and trust (Sin et al., 2005). This concept is linked to the current trend of customer-centric marketing and thus to CRM as a tool to achieve this goal.

Adamson et al. (2003) focused on the joint impact of a strategy combining trust and commitment on retail customer management, where the relationship with the customer and the customer service and support strategy is fundamental to business success.

Also central to the success of the business marketing strategy is the cooperation between the different components of the value chain, starting with clients and their needs and expectations, passing through all internal departments of the company including the outsourced external services (logistics, supply, etc.), and ending again with the client and client satisfaction (Vazquez et al., 2005).

Closeness refers to the interest and familiarity with which the company deals with clients. The aim is to meet their needs and expectations while giving them the highest degree of satisfaction possible, thereby establishing a long-term partnership that is beneficial for both customer and company (Nielson, 1998).

The last dimension is relationship quality, which is the most general of all and involves characteristics of all the previous dimensions. It brings together all the efforts of the company (within its relationship marketing plan and strategy) to establish a relationship of trust, cooperation, customer service, and support that guarantees customer loyalty and a long-term partnership with customers (Bennett & Barkensjo, 2005; Storbacka et al., 1994; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006).

Classification process

Once the dimensions of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing had been established, the articles were classified according to these dimensions and their elements. The first step was to read each article carefully and evaluate whether it was related to CRM. If the article was considered to be related to CRM, then the dimensions of CRM that were relevant to the study were identified. The second step was similar to the first step, except this time for entrepreneurial marketing. In this case, the dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing that were applicable to the study were identified. Once the dimensions of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing had been identified for each selected article, the third step was to organize the results in a table to analyze the results and draw useful conclusions for future entrepreneurial marketing studies in CRM.

Results

Once the selection process of the articles considered in this study had been carried out and the methodology and classification process had been defined, the 86 selected articles were classified according to the following factors:

1. the four dimensions and nine elements of CRM and the five dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing
2. the year of publication of each selected article
3. the journal where each article was published
4. the number of citations of each article according to WoS.

From these classifications, a clear and concise picture about the state of the art was expected to form. This picture can be used to focus and develop future studies in which the primary topic of study is CRM in entrepreneurial marketing in general or, more specifically, the impact of CRM on company performance through its strategic potential in entrepreneurial marketing.

Next, and as support for the discussion of results and presentation of conclusions of the study, the results are presented concisely and in a table format that allows an easy identification of the key arguments of discussion.

To analyze the results of the study, classification of the 86 selected articles was first necessary. The detailed distribution of these articles classified according to the proposed classification framework is shown in Table 1.

In this table (Distribution of the selected articles according to the proposed classification framework) it has been identified which are the determining dimensions and elements (of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing) in each of the studies analyzed, in order to establish new classifications a posteriori that make it possible to identify the most relevant research focuses for future research, as well as to identify in which areas CRM and entrepreneurial marketing coincide decisively in terms of powerful business management tools. Following the four specified distribution criteria, this classification was analyzed to determine the most important selection criteria in this field.

Distribution of the selected articles by CRM dimension and entrepreneurial marketing dimension

From the results obtained in Table 1, it has been analyzed and taken a further step in their interpretation based on the distribution of the selected articles by CRM dimension and entrepreneurial marketing dimension. The aim is to identify which are the dimensions of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing that have aroused and arouse more interest in recent years, so that conclusions and recommendations can be drawn on relevant aspects of both tools that help to improve business management strategies, and with it to improve organizational performance and business results.

The quantitative distribution of the selected articles by CRM dimension and entrepreneurial marketing dimension is shown in Table 2. This table was created once the CRM dimensions, CRM elements, and entrepreneurial marketing dimensions that are crucial for business decision makers had been highlighted for each selected article shown in Table 1.

The overall distribution in Table 2 shows that customer retention is the most common CRM dimension where marketing is used to support decision making. Table 2 shows 32 results out of a total of 86 selected articles, representing a percentage of 37.21% of the total. The next most common CRM dimension by number of results is customer development, with 23 results, representing 26.74% of the total. Next are the CRM dimensions of customer identification, with 17 results (19.77%), and customer attraction, with 14 results (16.28%). Summing the results of customer retention and those of customer development gives a total of 55 results, representing 63.95% of the total of 86 selected articles. Therefore, these are the most influential CRM dimensions.

The most commonly used CRM element for assisting business decision makers is loyalty programs (within the CRM retention dimension), with 23 results, representing 26.75% of the 86 selected articles. The CRM elements with the next highest numbers of results are customer lifetime value (within the CRM development

Table 1 Distribution of the selected articles according to the proposed classification framework. Source: the authors

CRM dimension	CRM element	Entrepreneurial Marketing dimension	Reference(s)
Customer Identification	Target customer analysis	Trust	Gu et al. (2016)
		Commitment	Roopchund (2019), Ascarza et al. (2017)
		Cooperation	Diffley et al. (2018)
		Closeness	
		Relationship management	Chierici et al. (2018), Kantorová and Bachmann (2018), Lau et al. (2016a), Singh and Saini (2016), Rodriguez and Trainor (2016)
	Customer segmentation	Trust	Kumar et al. (2019a, b)
		Commitment	Ravasan and Mansouri (2018)
		Cooperation	Barac et al. (2017)
		Closeness	Ben Rhouma and Zaccour (2017)
		Relationship management	Mau et al. (2018), Oh and Ma (2018), Wali et al. (2016), Lau et al. (2016b)
Customer attraction	Direct marketing	Trust	El-Gohary et al. (2013)
		Commitment	Powell et al. (2018), Wang and Kim (2017), Singh et al. (2017)
		Cooperation	Fu and Chang (2016), Chung and Chen (2016)
		Closeness	Foltean et al. (2019), Kashani and Shahmirzaloo (2017), Matikainen et al. (2015)
		Relationship management	Nemati et al. (2018), Kim and Kumar (2018), Bucic et al. (2017), Charoensuk-mongkol and Sasatanun (2017), Marolt et al. (2015)

Table 1 (continued)

CRM dimension	CRM element	Entrepreneurial Marketing dimension	Reference(s)
Customer retention	Loyalty programs	Trust	Hitka et al. (2019), Hu et al. (2018), Galvão et al. (2018), Ashraf et al. (2017), Mehta and Tajeddini (2016b), Ozuem and Thomas (2015), Venturini and Benito (2015)
		Commitment	Oumar et al. (2017), Brockman et al. (2017), Kamboj et al. (2016), Mehta and Tajeddini (2016a), So et al. (2016)
		Cooperation	Aliyu and Nyadzayo (2018)
		Closeness	Yang and Hu(2015)
		Relationship management	Lu and Miller (2019), Alhakimi and Ghaleb (2019), Haenlein (2017), Kang and Kim (2017), Jaber and Simkin (2017), Chang and Zhang (2016), Gupta and Aggarwal (2016), Breugelmans et al. (2015), Hutchinson et al. (2015)
	One-to-one marketing	Trust	Yoon and Sims (2014)
		Commitment	Budiman et al. (2019)
		Cooperation	
		Closeness	
		Relationship management	Miell et al. (2018), Dukić and Gale (2015)
	Complaint management	Trust	Marino and Lo Presti (2018), Swarts et al. (2016)
		Commitment	Pesonen et al. (2019)
		Cooperation	
		Closeness	Kaptein (2018)
		Relationship management	Cheng et al. (2019)

Table 1 (continued)

CRM dimension	CRM element	Entrepreneurial Marketing dimension	Reference(s)
Customer development	Customer lifetime value	Trust	Dewnarain et al. (2019), Orantes Jiménez et al. (2017)
		Commitment	Al-Zadjali and Al-Busaidi (2018), Olavarría-Jaraba et al. (2018), Youssef et al. (2018)
		Cooperation	Canhoto et al. (2017), Pedron et al. (2016)
		Closeness	
		Relationship management	Pohludka and Štverková (2019), Alizadeh Zoeram and Karimi Mazidi (2018), Bojanowska (2017), Afèche et al. (2017), Duggal and Verma (2017), Williams et al. (2017), Fidel et al. (2015)
	Upselling/cross-selling	Trust	
		Commitment	
		Cooperation	Nawaser and Jahanshahi (2018)
		Closeness	Filip et al. (2016)
		Relationship management	Hamidi and Safareeyeh (2019) Law et al. (2018), Serebrennikova (2016)
	Market basket analysis	Trust	
		Commitment	
		Cooperation	Morgan et al. (2018), Stone et al. (2017)
		Closeness	
		Relationship management	Denizci Guillet and Shi (2019), Chen and Wu (2016)

Table 2 Distribution of the selected articles by CRM dimension and entrepreneurial marketing dimension. Source: the authors

CRM dimension	CRM element	Entrepreneurial Marketing dimension	Number per entrepreneurial marketing dimension	Number per CRM element	Number per CRM dimension
Customer identification	Target customer analysis	Trust	0	9 (10.47%)	17 (19.77%)
		Commitment	1		
		Cooperation	2		
		Closeness	1		
		Relationship management	5		
	Customer segmentation	Trust	1	8 (9.30%)	
		Commitment	1		
		Cooperation	1		
		Closeness	1		
		Relationship management	4		
Customer attraction	Direct marketing	Trust	1	14 (16.28%)	14 (16.28%)
		Commitment	3		
		Cooperation	2		
		Closeness	3		
		Relationship management	5		

Table 2 (continued)

CRM dimension	CRM element	Entrepreneurial Marketing dimension	Number per entrepreneurial marketing dimension	Number per CRM element	Number per CRM dimension
Customer retention	Loyalty programs	Trust	7	23 (26.75%)	32 (37.21%)
		Commitment	5		
		Cooperation	1		
		Closeness	1		
		Relationship management	9		
	One-to-one marketing	Trust	1	4 (4.63%)	
		Commitment	1		
		Cooperation	0		
		Closeness	0		
		Relationship management	2		
	Complaint management	Trust	2	5 (5.83%)	
		Commitment	1		
		Cooperation	0		
		Closeness	1		
		Relationship management	1		

Table 2 (continued)

CRM dimension	CRM element	Entrepreneurial Marketing dimension	Number per entrepreneurial marketing dimension	Number per CRM element	Number per CRM dimension
Customer development	Customer lifetime value	Trust	2	14 (16.28%)	23 (26.74%)
		Commitment	3		
		Cooperation	2		
		Closeness	0		
		Relationship management	7		
	Upselling/cross-selling	Trust	0	5 (5.83%)	
		Commitment	0		
		Cooperation	1		
		Closeness	1		
		Relationship management	3		
	Market basket analysis	Trust	0	4 (4.63%)	
		Commitment	0		
		Cooperation	2		
		Closeness	0		
		Relationship management	2		
		TOTAL	**86**	**86 (100%)**	**86 (100%)**

dimension) and direct marketing (within the CRM attraction dimension), both with 14 results, each representing 16.28% of the 86 selected articles. Aggregating the results from these three most common CRM elements gives a total of 51 results, representing 59.31% of the total. The rest of the CRM elements in descending order are target customer analysis (10.47%), customer segmentation (9.30%), complaint management (5.83%), upselling/cross-selling (5.83%), one-to-one marketing (4.63%), and market basket analysis (4.63%).

Table 3 shows the importance of the entrepreneurial marketing dimensions according to their prominence in the decisions of business decision makers. The results were obtained by classifying the 86 selected articles. To avoid overlaps, the most relevant dimension is considered. These dimensions are shown in descending order.

Relationship management is the most commonly used entrepreneurial marketing dimension, with 38 results of the 86 selected articles, representing 44.19%. With less than half this number of results are commitment (17.44%) and trust (16.28%). Following these are cooperation (12.79%) and closeness (9.30%).

Distribution of the selected articles by year of publication

Table 4 shows the distribution of the selected articles by year of publication. In this table, the 86 selected articles are sorted according to the year in which they were published.

Clear growth can be observed since 2015, which, as previously stated, is the year in which scientific research interest in this subject began to rise (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2020b).

The decline in publications in 2019, based on the recent trend and experience, is most likely to have occurred because some articles have been approved for publication but are still in the editing and production process. The calendar year 2019 had just ended at the time of this study, so there is still the possibility of more papers being published with the reference year of 2019.

Table 3 Distribution of the selected articles by entrepreneurial marketing dimension. Source: the authors

Entrepreneurial Marketing dimension	Number of publications	Percentage
Relationship management	38	44.19%
Commitment	15	17.44%
Trust	14	16.28%
Cooperation	11	12.79%
Closeness	8	9.30%
Total:	**86**	**100.00%**

Table 4 Distribution of the selected articles by year of publication. Source: the authors

Year	Number of publications
2015	12
2016	19
2017	20
2018	21
2019	14
Total	**86**

Distribution of the selected articles by journal

The selected articles were also classified according to the journal where they were published. This analysis shows which journals are most focused on this topic. This distribution is presented in Table 5.

The first noteworthy conclusion arising from the distribution of articles by journal is that this distribution has a broad spread, with the 86 selected articles published across 62 journals. Therefore, many journals can be used to search for information on this topic. The second striking conclusion is that no journal stands out over the others.

Table 5 Distribution of the articles by journal. Source: the authors

Journal	Number of publications	Percentage
JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & INDUSTRIAL MARKETING	5	5.81%
JOURNAL OF STRATEGIC MARKETING	4	4.65%
MIDDLE EAST JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT	4	4.65%
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT	3	3.49%
JOURNAL OF INTERACTIVE MARKETING	3	3.49%
JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH	2	2.33%
EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF MARKETING	2	2.33%
INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT & DATA SYSTEMS	2	2.33%
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN THE SERVICE SECTOR	2	2.33%
IRANIAN JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES	2	2.33%
COGENT BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT	2	2.33%
JOURNAL OF MARKETING RESEARCH	2	2.33%
MARKETING AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: CONCEPTS, METHODOLOGIES, TOOLS, AND APPLICATIONS	2	2.33%
MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT OF INNOVATIONS	2	2.33%
TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS EXCELLENCE	2	2.33%
OTHERS (47 JOURNALS)	1 (×47 Journals)	1.16% (×47)
Total:	**86**	**100.00%**

Table 6 Distribution of articles by number of citations. Source: the authors

Number of citations	Percentage of citations	Author(s) of article(s)
39	11.27%	Fidel et al. (2015)
31	8.96%	Breugelmans et al. (2015)
29	8.38%	So et al. (2016)
27	7.80%	Wang and Kim (2017)
14	4.05%	Morgan et al. (2018)
13	3.76%	Charoensukmongkol and Sasatanun (2017)
10	2.89%	Fu and Chang (2016)
9 (×3 articles)	2.60% (×3)	Ascarza et al. (2017), Hutchinson et al. (2015), Yoon and Sims (2014)
7 (×5 articles)	2.02% (×5)	Youssef et al. (2018), Stone et al. (2017), Chang and Zhang (2016), Chen and Wu (2016), Marolt et al. (2015)
6 (×5 articles)	1.73% (×5)	Kim and Kumar (2018), Marino and Lo Presti (2018), Rodriguez and Trainor (2016), Matikainen et al. (2015), Venturini and Benito (2015)
5 (×3 articles)	1.45% (×3)	Law et al. (2018), Diffley et al. (2018), Kang and Kim (2017)
4 (×4 articles)	1.16% (×4)	Dewnarain et al. (2019), Haenlein (2017), Bucic et al. (2017), Lau et al. (2016a)
3 (×9 articles)	0.87% (×9)	Olavarría-Jaraba et al. (2018), Galvão et al. (2018), Oumar et al. (2017), Afèche et al. (2017), Barac et al. (2017), Gu et al. (2016), Wali et al. (2016), Swarts et al. (2016), Gupta and Aggarwal (2016)
2 (×7 articles)	0.58% (×7)	Kantorová and Bachmann (2018), Jaber and Simkin (2017), Singh et al. (2017), Kamboj et al. (2016), Pedron et al. (2016), Lau et al. (2016b), Ravasan and Mansouri (2018)
1 (×19 articles)	0.29% (×19)	Foltean et al. (2019), Kumar et al. (2019a, b), Pesonen et al. (2019), Pohludka and Štverková (2019), Cheng et al. (2019), Ben Rhouma and Zaccour (2017), Hu et al. (2018), Alizadeh Zoeram and Karimi Mazidi (2018), Aliyu and Nyadzayo (2018), Miell et al. (2018), Nawaser and Jahanshahi (2018), Kaptein (2018), Ashraf et al. (2017), Brockman et al. (2017), Filip et al. (2016), Mehta and Tajeddini (2016a), Mehta and Tajeddini (2016b), Singh and Saini (2016), Chung and Chen (2016)
0 (×24 articles)	0.00% (×24)	Chierici et al. (2018), Lu and Miller (2019), Hamidi and Safareeyeh (2019), Roopchund (2019), Denizci Guillet and Shi (2019), Hitka et al. (2019), Budiman et al. (2019), Alhakimi and Ghaleb (2019), Al-Zadjali and Al-Busaidi (2018), Nemati et al. (2018), Mau et al. (2018), Powell et al. (2018), Oh and Ma (2018), Bojanowska (2017), Dukić and Gale (2015), Duggal and Verma (2017), Orantes Jiménez et al. (2017), Kashani and Shahmirzaloo (2017), Canhoto et al. (2017), Williams et al. (2017) Serebrennikova (2016), Yang and Hu (2015), Ozuem and Thomas (2015), El-Gohary et al. (2013)
346	**100.00%**	**Total**

In the period under study, the *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing* published the most articles (five), representing a percentage of 5.81% of the total of 86 selected articles. With four published articles each (4.65% of the total), the *Journal of Strategic Marketing* and the *Middle East Journal of Management* were the

next most prolific journals. Two journals published three articles each (3.49% of the total): *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* and *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, and 10 Journals published two articles each (2.33% of the total). The rest of the journals published only one article each (47 journals with 1.16% of the total).

Distribution of the selected articles by number of citations

Table 6 was used to study the articles with the greatest influence in this field of scientific study. Table 6 shows the distribution of articles by number of citations of each publication in the WoS.

The most cited article has a much higher number of citations than any other article. It can therefore be considered the most influential of the selected articles. This article, by Fidel et al. (2015), had received 39 citations when this study was conducted, representing 11.27% of the total citations of all selected articles. In second place is the article by Breugelmans et al. (2015), with 31 citations (8.96% of the total). This article is followed by the article by So et al. (2016), with 29 citations (8.38% of the total), and then the article by Wang and Kim (2017), with 27 citations (7.80% of the total citations).

Discussion and conclusions

After reviewing the most recent literature on the impact of the use of customer relationship management strategy and systems in the field of entrepreneurial marketing, the general conclusion is that effectively a good efficient use of these tools appears in these studies as a strong link between business management and company results. The second important conclusion is that this is due to the fact that the use of CRM favors the adaptation of entrepreneurial marketing efforts to the most effective and relevant needs and focuses of action in the environment of the company's customers.

Looking at the results of the study, it has been identified which entrepreneurial marketing and CRM dimensions are the most relevant in previous studies. The main contribution of this study has been to identify these dimensions, as a result of the points of interest raised by previous studies, and therefore covering the gap in the literature as no previous study has been found that followed the parameters used in the present investigation. This contribution provides interesting ideas about what future lines of research can be undertaken by researchers interested in the impact of the use of CRM combined withentrepreneurial marketing in the search for a joint and powerful impact on the effective management of customer relationships within the current changing and dynamic world in which entrepreneurship finds its greatest asset to demonstrate its power to transform the market and society as a whole..

The most important conclusion for future research is that the field of scientific research on the use of CRM as a strategy and technological solution that accelerates and stimulates the entrepreneurial marketing, is developing and growing, as reflect by most of the recent bibliometric studies on the subject. In this study, after a process of careful selection, a detailed and exhaustive analysis of 86 scientific research articles was conducted, providing valuable information for business decision makers in this area. The timeframe for selection of these articles was 2015 to 2019. In 2015, scientific research interest in this year began to rise. Although the timeframe spanned the period up to the year 2019, some articles approved for publication in that year are still awaiting publication.

The second conclusion is that CRM retention and CRM development are the key CRM dimensions for business decision makers looking for tools to create successful entrepreneurial marketing strategies. Regarding the distribution of articles by CRM dimensions, customer retention is the most common CRM dimension where marketing is used to support decision making, with 32 articles focusing on this dimension (37.21% of the selected articles). Within customer retention, loyalty programs represent the CRM element addressed by most of these articles, with 23 articles (71.88% of the articles on customer retention). The second most influential CRM dimension was identified as customer development, with 23 articles (26.74% of the total). Customer lifetime value was the most highly valued CRM element within this dimension, with 14 articles (60.87% of the customer development articles). These two CRM dimensions (CRM retention and CRM development) are addressed by 55 (63.95%) of the 86 selected articles, so they may be considered the most influential CRM dimensions. This conclusion was expected and does not imply any contradiction with what CRM systems and strategies have been designed for, since (as seen in the articles reviewed) modern marketing theories indicate that the best business success policy is the retention of good existing customers. Although it was an expected conclusion, this study has shown that it is indeed true and demonstrable, and that the desired and expected benefits of the use of CRM confirm the initial hypotheses. On the other hand, and as can be seen in the following conclusion, it has been more specifically identified which CRM elements (directly related to these most relevant dimensions identified in this case) are the ones that have the greatest impact on good management of the business. business marketing.

The third conclusion of the study, in relation to the CRM elements with the greatest impact on decision making in entrepreneurial marketing, is that the most decisive CRM elements are loyalty programs, customer lifetime value, and direct marketing. The most commonly used CRM element for assisting business decision makers is loyalty programs, with 23 results (26.75% of the total), followed by customer lifetime value and direct marketing, each with 14 results (16.28% of the total). These three categories account for a total of 51 of the selected articles, representing 59.31% of the total. The third conclusion is fully consistent with the second conclusion because loyalty programs, customer lifetime value, and direct marketing are essential values in any retention and development program targeting a company's most profitable customers. Once again, it is confirmed that the empirical results of the study are in line with those expected, which gives the researchers the necessary

security to assume that a good use of CRM can lead to an improvement in the degree of organizational performance and with it the results of the company. Specifically, the use of loyalty programs is presented as the most effective tool for companies in the marketing area, with CRM being the most efficient support available to companies to design such loyalty programs.

Fourth, regarding the key entrepreneurial marketing dimensions for business decision makers, relationship management was identified as the most commonly used marketing dimension, referenced in 38 of the selected articles (44.19% of the total). Commitment, with 15 articles (17.44%), and trust, with 14 articles (16.28%), are less common. Again, these results are consistent with the previous conclusions because relationship marketing, commitment, and trust are the relationship marketing dimensions upon which the concept and working strategy of CRM are based. The findings obtained from the study, referring to the predominant dimensions in the field of marketing, and more specifically in the field of entrepreneurship, confirm that a good management of the information on customers (their needs, tastes, characteristics, priorities, etc.) is essential to business success, and this is achieved most efficiently through the use of CRM systems and strategies. Collecting and managing in a centralized and consistent way the history of interactions with clients, helps to design new and impactful marketing actions aimed at capturing, maintaining, and expanding the partnership with clients.

All these conclusions are aligned with the initial expectations for this scientific research. The review of the highlighted key entrepreneurial marketing dimensions for business decision makers, CRM dimensions and CRM elements shows that the greatest commitment of the joint between CRM and entrepreneurial marketing is to retain and develop relations with the most profitable existing customers. This strategic focus was observed to be much more prominent than the identification, acquisition, and attraction of new customers. Promoting and establishing a culture of customer loyalty and customer lifetime value is crucial to business success. Within this area, customer relationship management is the key marketing factor, along with the development of an environment of trust and cooperation with customers.

In addition to the first objective of identifying and ranking the primary focus in the area of CRM in entrepreneurial marketing, the second objective of this study was to offer suggestions for future research. The findings of this study regarding the quantitative evolution of the selected studies over time lead to recommendations for future studies to further research in this area. Based on the content and key indicators obtained in this study, the areas of customer retention and customer development are those of greatest interest and opportunity for future research. The elements that are most valued in this study and that may provide the fundamental pillars for future research are relationship management, supported by trust and commitment toward customers.

In line with the initial expectations of this study, the most influential papers, authors, and journals in relation to the study of CRM were detected. CRM is a high impact technological solution in entrepreneurial marketing and can have a strong influence on firm performance. In fact, given its powerful link with marketing in the area of entrepreneurship, and as previous studies on the growing influence of CRM among the most relevant Information Technologies within the field of business

management show, the growing use of CRM in companies is one of the pillars of technological and social change in Business spirit, which is precisely one of the most obvious consequences of the use of marketing in the area of entrepreneurship and in its commitment to take advantage of unknown opportunities to offer new and better goods and services to society. The transformation power that CRM is exerting on the client's commercial management capacity is being a clear example of how big data can benefit society through a greater and more efficient adaptation of the offer of companies to the needs of customers, which clearly results in customer satisfaction and the overall good of society.

Based on the state of the art, which is jointly illustrated by the bibliometric studies and literature review, the following future research agenda is proposed. The recommendation is to evaluate the current (exploitation) and future (exploration) benefits that make CRM a key tool for achieving a sustainable impact on business performance, and this in coordination with the impact area of entrepreneurial marketing as an unstoppable force for development and transformation of society through its unlimited source of inspiration to find new ways and paths to take advantage of opportunities to satisfy customer needs. It will thus be possible to identify and evaluate the key factors for success from among the paths that lead from CRM and entrepreneurial marketing to firm performance. Once these key factors have been identified and evaluated, a measurement model should be proposed. This model should show the relevant constructs for the use of CRM and entrepreneurial marketing (directly linked to Innovation capabilities) to improve business management. The validity of the model and of the associated hypotheses can then be empirically tested. More specifically, and following the particular findings of the study, it is proposed to analyze which specific entrepreneurial marketing actions are empirically demonstrated as the most effective, aligned with the identified elements (loyalty programs) and the identified dimensions (customer retention), and supported by the dominant dimensions identified (relationship management).

The combination of this review of the literature on CRM as a business management solution in entrepreneurial marketing, together with the bibliometric study of CRM, provides a crucial foundation for subsequent studies of the impact of CRM on firm performance through the use of powerful entrepreneurial marketing strategies. This research enables identification of the most relevant previous studies. Previous conclusions can be used to formulate the most accurate research models. These models can be empirically tested in different sectors or areas of business activity. The main value of this study therefore lies in its review of previous results and conclusions to establish new research models for testing. In the literature review, a gap has been detected regarding the existence of generic models and global empirical studies on the impact of the use of specific CRM components on specific entrepreneurial marketing elements. Consequently, the empirical design and testing of models in concrete and real environments that provide valuable decision criteria to business decision makers is proposed as a line of research.

Finally, the main limitation of this study (but also its greatest virtue) is that it was performed using the Web of Science Core Collection database. This database is one of the most prestigious and complete databases of scientific research publications. Another limitation is that it reviewed high-impact publications for the period 2015

to 2019. This period corresponds to the last five years prior to conducting this study. It also coincides with years of strong growth in interest in research on this subject. Therefore, the study is restricted to the content contained in this database, leading to the possible exclusion of articles that are not recorded in the database. The study is also restricted to this period, even though publications on this topic have also appeared outside this period. Furthermore, the study suffers from a gap left by articles approved for publication in 2019 (appearing as articles published in 2019) but still pending publication at the time this study was conducted.

Declarations

Conflict of interest N/A.

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Authors and Affiliations

Vicente Guerola-Navarro[1] · **Hermenegildo Gil-Gomez[1]** · **Raul Oltra-Badenes[1]** · **Pedro Soto-Acosta[2]**

Hermenegildo Gil-Gomez
hgil@ai2.upv.es

Raul Oltra-Badenes
rauloltra@doe.upv.es

Pedro Soto-Acosta
psoto@um.es

[1] Departamento de Organización de Empresas, Universitat Politècnica de València, Valencia, Spain

[2] Departamento de Organización de Empresas Y Finanzas, Universidad Murcia, Murcia, Spain