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CRM Implementation in Nonprofits: An Analysis of the Success Factors

Kelly E. Grattan

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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CRM IMPLEMENTATION IN NONPROFITS:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE SUCCESS FACTORS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Kelly E. Grattan

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

May 2012

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of Sociology

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Kelly E. Grattan

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 12, 2012

Signature on File

Mary Jane Kuffner Hirt, Ph.D.
Professor of Political Science

April 12, 2012

Signature on File

David Chambers, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Political Science

April 12, 2012

Signature on File

P. Michael Kosicek, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Management

ACCEPTED

Signature on File

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.

Dean

School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: CRM Implementation in Nonprofits: An Analysis of the Success Factors

Author: Kelly E. Grattan

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Mary Jane Kuffner Hirt

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. David Chambers
Dr. P. Michael Kosicek

Constituent Relationship Management (“CRM”) is defined as an organization-wide strategy designed to enable the organization to better manage, track and steward its constituents. CRM has benefited for-profit enterprises for nearly three decades. In the nonprofit sector, the concept of CRM is fairly new. Despite the increase in CRM implementations and current research, both researchers and practitioners still view CRM as a technology rather than a strategy. Since the concept of CRM was first introduced into the nonprofit sector and the supporting technology made available to these unique organizations, implementation efforts have failed to meet expectations and the deployed CRM systems remain underutilized. This study explored the factors associated with CRM implementation failure and success as defined by the organizations in which they are implemented.

Through interviews of consultants to nonprofits and individuals employed by them who have experience implementing CRM in the nonprofit environment, I was able to gain a better understanding of CRM implementations in nonprofits and to identify the critical success factors (“CSFs”) that lead to success or failure. Due to resource constraints, the interviews were conducted electronically, via email. An interview guide approach was taken and interviewee responses were captured and solicited for additional feedback and/or clarification in real-time.

The research uncovered nonprofit success factors very similar to those found in the expert industry data, with a few exceptions. Adequate resources, training, and change management were top factors identified in both the literature and interviewee responses. Defining and setting proper metrics was one factor that was stressed in the literature but not by the respondents. Additional findings include various differences in the respondents' definitions of CRM and CRM success, all of which may have greatly affected the success and full utilization of past CRM implementations and any future implementations.

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I am so grateful to have been part of such a supportive cohort through this process. Darlene: Thank goodness you live nearby. Three years of commuting followed by 4 years of working happy hours later, here we are. Erin: I have no idea where I would be without you. Between your proofing, wise advice, and encouraging words, I stayed sane. I have no doubt our friendship will be life-long. Bill: You played superman just when I needed it most. Your networking to round up desperately-needed participants is the sole reason I was able to wrap up my study. Ginger, Nicole, and the rest of Cohort 7: I am honored to be among a group that made our three years of course work the most enjoyable academic experience I have had.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND ISSUES

Constituent Relationship Management (“CRM”) is defined as, “a company-wide business strategy designed to reduce costs and increase profitability by solidifying customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy,” (“What is CRM?,” 2010). CRM has benefited for-profit enterprise for nearly three decades; in the nonprofit sector, the concept of CRM is fairly new. Despite the increase in CRM implementations and research currently undertaken, many (both researchers and practitioners) still view CRM as a technology rather than a strategy. Since the concept of CRM was first introduced into the nonprofit sector and the supporting technology made available to these very unique organizations, implementation efforts have failed to meet expectations and the implemented CRM remains underutilized. This study explored the factors associated with successful CRM implementation and those factors that lead to underutilization and potential failure.

Background

For a period of 14 months I had the opportunity to serve as the project manager (“PM”) for an enterprise CRM implementation at a large federated human service nonprofit organization (NPO). Three years prior, the organization attempted to implement its first CRM system only to realize no actual gains from the new system and many frustrations. In addition, the implementation never got passed the pilot phase, and the most influential pilot agency dropped out, opting

for its own stand-alone system. Three years later and well-over \$1 million invested, the entire process had to be repeated. During the time I was the PM, the organization went through the same rigorous software/vendor assessment and implementation readiness phases it did three years prior. The organization chose the software, engaged the vendor, appropriated funds and approved an implementation timeline, or so it seemed. Every implementation kick off date that was set came and went, and the organization and its agencies remained without an integrated enterprise CRM system. To this day, the organization has not actually signed a contract with the chosen vendor.

After some reflection on the effort and resources invested in the project over the past five years at this organization, my curiosity about this topic grew. What went wrong and why was it that the organization has been unable to successfully implement CRM? I could list all the reasons I believe the organization is in the state it is in. However, what I did not have was empirical data on what differentiates NPOs that have successfully implemented CRM from those that have not been able to. I considered the various things we did while I was the PM to ensure a successful implementation as well as what we did not do. I also looked at what was available to us in terms of a “recipe” for success. From experience, I knew that NPOs tend to use whatever information is readily available, whether it comes directly from the software vendor, peers, a contractor/consultant or even the internet, but the available information varies considerably.

CRM implementation is one aspect of these organizations that has not been studied to any extent. With newer, innovative technology offerings breaking into the market at every price point imaginable, an in-depth investigation of technology and the strategies it enables in the nonprofit environment is timely and relevant. Given the significant differences between NPOs and for-profit firms, it is to be expected that they will differ in their use of CRM to raise necessary funds and fulfill their mission. This introduction looks at organizations' strategies for managing its constituents in ways relevant to its mission fulfillment and fundraising initiatives. I will begin with a history of CRM, both as a technology solution as well as a marketing strategy. I will then discuss the purpose, significance and rationale, concluding with the questions I hope to answer in this study.

History of CRM

CRM is a concept that originated in the private sector in such areas as electronic data interchange (EDI) and e-commerce. CRM enables an organization to better create a personalized, one-to-one experience for the customer based on their preferences and history. When optimized, the individualized experience fosters feelings within the customer of being cared for by the organization. New marketing opportunities are created and the organization experiences increased customer satisfaction and loyalty (Croteau & Li, 2003). CRM is a concept that stems from the marketing arena in the form of relationship marketing, but in its earliest days, CRM was adopted by the information technology field and packaged as a technology approach.

CRM as a Technology Solution

In the early years of CRM, the 1980s, tools designed to meet business needs such as salesforce automation (SFA) were only available to the larger, wealthier organizations. The 1990s brought simple, low-cost SFA tools which were made available to small to middle businesses (SMBs), defined as those with annual revenues less than \$500 million. Still, only the larger organizations could afford complex, highly customized solutions built on robust platforms. Today, these powerful systems are available to SMBs and at a fraction of the cost they were when first introduced in the 1990s. In addition, the traditional SFA tools that gave organizations uniform, comprehensive snapshots of their constituents developed into interactive relationship management (IRM) tools. This new set of CRM tools gives organizations a three-dimensional view of their constituents by adding constituent interaction information (Feig, 2003).

The earliest systems (“donor databases”) implemented by NPOs were mostly transactional in nature, with basic functionality such as the storing of biographical data and gift tracking. These systems were relatively costly, especially for NPOs that fell into the SMB category, and required more of the organizations in terms of installation, maintenance and upgrades (“Software as a service: Strategic background,” 2001). Many NPOs did not have the technology infrastructure or skills on staff required to support these stand-alone systems and therefore tended to use spreadsheets, simple databases or homegrown systems instead.

In the 1990s, vendors realized there was a burgeoning market for CRM systems specifically designed for NPOs. This led to a repurposing of for-profit CRM into that which would be used by nonprofits. Traditional Customer Relationship Management became *Constituent* Relationship Management as it migrated to the nonprofit sector. Soon there were many nonprofit-tailored systems on the market, giving NPOs of all sizes more sophisticated options for constituent management. Some vendors seeking new markets, such as *salesforce*, repurposed their more traditionally commercial systems for NPO use.

In recent years, NPOs have engaged in concerted efforts to become relationship-centric organizations. In a recent survey by dotOrganize, over 50% of the SMB NPOs who responded said they store constituent information in more than four different places; 20% said they store it in more than ten places. 58% of respondents store information in Excel, 52% said they use Outlook or other personal contact manager, and 55% said they store information on slips of paper (Hagen, 2006). The result of this chaos is the inability for staff to readily access information needed to better and more efficiently serve their constituents. In addition, administrative time spent maintaining this duplicate information is costly. This chaos exists both *within* a specific department or functional area as well as *between* areas within the organization. As Hagen notes, "Time spent compiling the list is time not spent growing the list," (2006, para. 9). Now, more than ever, NPOs are seeing the value in migrating to CRM solutions.

CRM technology is implemented in such areas as customer support and service (CSS), sales or sales force automation (SFA) and marketing or enterprise

marketing automation (EMA) to optimize profitability and revenue (Croteau & Li, 2003). Today's NPO-specific CRM systems address each of these areas: CSS is similar to the concept of stewardship and builds long-term relationships with constituents. SFA is similar to attracting and retaining donors and volunteers. It uses the added value of tracking interactions and touch points to enhance the experience for current and potential supporters. And last, EMA is similar to the creation of a marketing strategy at the enterprise level for the benefit of the entire organization. It enables customized marketing strategies for different constituent groups, utilizes the power of the internet to reach the masses, and tracks/captures and analyzes constituent activities over periods of time, ultimately converting that knowledge to create more personalized approaches.

CRM as a Marketing Tool

While the notion of CRM as a technology is widespread both at the practitioner level as well as in academic research, the concept of customer relationship marketing that underlies these technologies is a well-researched area of marketing theory (Henneberg, 2006). Boulding et al. (2005) detail the history of CRM which can be summed up as follows:

- 1960s – Focus was on the dual creation of value for the firm and the customer
- 1970s – Exchange occurs only when both parties perceive they are receiving value

- 1980s – Focus was on the building of relationships with three core principles:
 - Long-term relationship value
 - The influence of prior experience on future expectations
 - Different treatment of each customer
- 1990s – Focus was on the shift from brand/product to the customer and the need for good information processes and capabilities within the firm to understand customer needs and wants
- 2000s – Focus was on the development of new CRM solutions and the associated implementation issues as well as more complex concepts such as customer segmentation, cross-selling and multi-channel approaches

In the private sector, customer relationships are the primary constituency with secondary focus on vendor relationships. The NPOs' focus, however, is extensive. The nonprofit sector's primary constituency tends to be the population it serves. In addition, NPOs must rely on donors, such as foundations and government entities, individuals, event participants and members to fund its programs. Its secondary focus is on the advocates, volunteers and other individuals and entities that assist the NPO in carrying out its mission (Hagen & Bernard, 2008).

While CRM had its roots in the commercial enterprise sector, managing constituent relationships is crucial to *any* organization, private firms and NPOs alike. Hagen and Bernard note that, for both sectors, "CRM defines the set of

processes and supporting technologies an organization uses to acquire, retain and enhance relationships with different constituent groups with which it interacts,” (2008, p. 27). This concept of “supporting technologies” is crucial to this study and serves as the bridge between CRM as a technology and CRM as a marketing strategy. At the strategic level, where the implementation is championed by leadership and spans the entire organization, technology and marketing come together to ensure a successful CRM implementation. I will further discuss how CRM implementations must be approached at the strategic level in Chapter II.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of CRM implementations in NPOs. I hoped to highlight the factors that lead to successful implementations, but more importantly, it will serve as the first empirical research on CRM implementations in NPOs that looks at more than the technology itself. A brief analysis of a sample of the extensive practitioner-oriented literature accessible to the public via the web illuminated the notion that the implementation of the actual software is only one small factor in the overall CRM implementation. The analysis can be found in Chapter II and was based on the critical success factor (CSF) framework described in detail in Chapter II.

Significance and Rationale

More and more, NPOs are looking for technology solutions that help them improve their two core functions: mission fulfillment and the fundraising and volunteer recruitment to support it. According to Blackbaud (Blackbaud, 2005), provider of technology solutions for NPOs, there are a number of areas CRM can improve: 1) single, holistic view of constituents, 2) relationship management, 3) analysis reporting, 4) accountability and stewardship, 5) online donor service, 6) direct mail, 7) pledge management, 8) recurring giving, 9) matching gifts and 10) saving time. Therefore, if mission fulfillment, as the ultimate goal of the NPO, requires funding and volunteer recruitment of some sort, then donor/volunteer acquisition and retention is a priority.

Jacobs discusses taking advantage of CRM as a means of survival in our current economic climate. The most important thing to focus on, according to Jacobs, is customer retention which translates to NPOs as *donor* retention. Acquiring new constituents is never as easy as retaining current ones, especially during economic downturns (2009). By focusing (both attention and spending), inward, organizations are using current forces, not fighting them. As Jacobs notes, "The best way to build a loyal constituent base is to recruit constituents most likely to be loyal in the first place," (2009, p. 10). Not only is it easier to retain constituents but it is also cheaper as well; this is the basic tenet of CRM (Roberts, Liu, & Hazard, 2006).

It would not be a stretch to say that those who are most likely to be loyal are those that are the most engaged. In order to engage constituents, experts recommend a multi-channel approach (Kapin, 2009; Lawson, 2007; Olsen, 2009). Multi-channel fundraising refers to utilizing various approaches to cultivate and solicit constituents. The most common approaches include direct mail, the internet, phone or face-to-face (Lawson, 2007). Some nonprofits and experts in the field call this approach implementing a comprehensive direct marketing campaign. The idea is to create various ways for constituents to donate or become more involved, depending on their preferences and what appeals to them as individuals.

In order to implement successful multi-channel or direct market initiatives, identify potential supporters, volunteers and advocates, and build a loyal constituent base, NPOs must have access to their constituent data and the ability to segment it accordingly. Most large NPOs store their online and offline data in different places, making it difficult to implement such an approach and expect good results; CRM systems are a solution to this problem. Therefore, the results of this study have the potential to assist NPOs in determining readiness for CRM implementation and what considerations must be made before commencing the rigorous implementation process, both from a technological standpoint and a broader strategic perspective.

Research Questions

Recognizing the importance of defining a research focus I have outlined three sets of questions I explored in this study. Eisenhardt (1989) explains that establishing a well-defined focus helps keep the researcher from becoming overwhelmed by the volume of data s/he is exposed to. She notes such definition of a research question(s) enables the researcher to specify “the kind of data to be gathered,” (p. 536). Therefore, questions that originally guided this research were:

- How do NPOs define CRM within their environment?
- How do NPOs define CRM success? What metrics are used/ applied? Which, if any, metrics are specific to the NPO environment?
- Are there key generic cross functional processes relevant to CRM within the NPO environment? Can they be applied to the greater NPO setting?

While performing exploratory research identifying research questions and possible constructs early-on is important, it is also important to recognize that these questions and constructs are tentative in this type of research. The research questions may shift during the study once data collection has begun (Eisenhardt, 1989). Did the questions shift? The rationale behind my original research questions will become evident in Chapter II.

Chapter Summary

This chapter served to provide a framework for the study of CRM implementations in large, human service organizations, including my personal reasons for conducting a study on this relatively new practice in the nonprofit sector. In addition to a brief history of CRM and discussion of the background issues, I outlined the purpose of the study, significance and rationale and my research questions. In the next chapter, I will discuss the different CRM perspectives found in the existing literature, further rationale for the approach I planned to use in this study, and propositions developed from the literature. Together, these core concepts served as the conceptual framework for my study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

As mentioned in Chapter I, the purpose of this study was to explore CRM implementations in the NPO setting with a focus on what makes them successful and how success is measured. Given the exploratory nature of this study, this review of the relevant literature utilizes personal experience to cover what I believe are the most important aspects of CRM and those that I feel are the most influential to this study. The goal of the review is to create a conceptual framework using previous literature, common sense, my own personal experience (Eisenhardt, 1989), and questions raised by others in the field. With ten years of extensive experience in the NPO setting, much of the context for which I developed my propositions and assumptions came from my own expertise in the field.

The following sections of this review will focus on the core concepts found in current literature associated with CRM implementation success. In the first section, I will discuss the three most influential CRM perspectives: technology, strategy and people. Then, I will discuss CRM theory as it relates to this study, including an in-depth analysis of CSF practitioner-oriented literature which helped me determine what to look for when it came time to explore the relevant academic literature. Next, I will discuss the definitions of CRM success found in the literature, the importance of a shared definition of CRM within the organization and the various processes that must be aligned for a successful

CRM implementation. I will also develop propositions to be tested. Last, I will discuss how an organization's culture and other characteristics may affect the CRM implementation.

CRM Perspectives

The process of conducting CRM-related research is particularly difficult given the abundance of existing literature on the topic (though mostly stemming from the for-profit sector) as well as the broad range of fields and disciplines it encompasses. Through a better understanding of the history of CRM and the current state of CRM research, I was able to identify the three most prominent CRM perspectives: technology, strategy (sometimes referred to as "process") and people (Hsieh, 2009). Over the last 20 years, the literature typically focused on one or two perspectives. For example, models that determine readiness for implementation typically use both technical and strategic perspectives (Elmuti, Jia, & Gray, 2009; Osarenkhoe & Bennani, 2007; Sumner, 1999). Some models, such as Reinartz et al.'s (2004), include the people perspective (training, organizational structure, employee incentives) while emphasizing the technology to support it. Other perspectives include those found in customer service, learning management, and knowledge management disciplines.

While the most current literature acknowledges that successful CRM implementations require a balance of technology, strategy and people (Chen & Popovich, 2003; Mendoza, Marius, Perez, & Griman, 2007), it is clear researchers do not agree on which of the three factors is most important

(Reinartz et al., 2004). The researcher's chosen perspective tends to be related to the field the research stems from: research from the information technology field continues to focus on aspects of technology (choice of CRM system, level of integration between systems within the organization, quality of the data, etc.) to ensure success, whereas studies stemming from organizational or psychology fields focus on the human factors. For example, Backman notes, "The big theme, cultural and collaboration issues predominate over direct technical or formal project management issues as sources of CRM project failure... it's the social and cultural factors which have the highest risk," (2009, pp. 1, para. 4). The marketing field primarily utilizes a strategic perspective. The key tenet of CRM frameworks that emphasize the strategic perspective is how entrenched the strategy is within the organization. This concept of entrenchment will be further discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

CSF Theory

In order to determine the most relevant approach to my own study, I decided to first examine the information sources most relied upon by those in the field. There is an abundance of practitioner-oriented literature on the web, relating to both the for-profit and nonprofit sectors, and most of it is based on the tenets of Critical Success Factor (CSF) theory. While CSF literature is very accessible and has been utilized more by organizations in the public and private sectors than other resources, in general, organizations tend to either "wing it" and/or refer solely on their software vendor and/or third party contractor/consultant. Emphasis is placed on software selection rather than on

implementation. For example, many NPOs will contact peer organizations as for software referrals and references, but few utilize these organizations for implementation advice and guidance. With large implementation costs running in the millions of dollars, this issue is of great concern.

CSFs

Simply put, CSFs as they relate to the implementation of new technology are defined as the things that must go well in the implementation and adoption processes to ensure success for an organization (Boynton & Zmud, 1984). CSF theory was first introduced by John Rockart in 1979 (Dobbins, 2002). Rockart (1982) defined CSFs as:

The limited number of areas in which results, if they are satisfactory, will ensure successful competitive performance for the organization. They are the few key areas where things must go right for the business to flourish. If results in these areas are not adequate, the organization's efforts for the period will be less than desired, (p. 41).

Dobbins also provides Rockart's second definition: areas of activity that should receive constant and careful attention from management (2002).

CSF Literature Analysis

To gain a better understanding of what practitioners rely on to guide their own implementations to successful outcomes, I conducted an initial qualitative analysis of CSF literature. The analysis provided me with a broad perspective of

issues identified by experts in the field and those most directly involved in CRM implementations. Most organizations look to the extensive practitioner-oriented literature related to CSFs available via the internet, trade journals, conferences, experts, and peers. Therefore, it is important to explore the practitioner-oriented articles that outline various practices and strategies to ensure successful implementation of CRM systems.

This methodical document analysis was conducted by first reading each article and notating CSFs mentioned. Then an assessment of this comprehensive list of CSFs was conducted to uncover emergent themes. 10 categories were then created as a framework (Table 1) for further in-depth discussion of the themes.

Table 1

Content Comparison: Practitioner-Oriented CSF Literature (1999-2009)

Article	Strategy Focus & Alignment	Customer Focus	Change Management	Implementation Strategy	Metrics	Process Design	Implementation Approach	Buy-in & Adoption	Project Management	Due Diligence
Avoiding CRM paths of destruction. (2002).	x	x		x			x	x		x
Backman, S. (2009, March 23). Avoiding technology project failure.	x		x						x	x
Beasty, C. (2005). 11 ways to ensure CRM success.	x	x	x	x				x		x
Boardman, R. (n.d.). CRM success or failure - a question for the board.	x			x	x		x	x		x
Burns, M. (2008). CRM survey 2008.								x		x
CRM implementation - the right way! (2009).	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
CRM implementation - what you should know. (2009).	x		x	x	x	x				x
Eberhardt, C. (2001). A CRM starter pack: Strategic steps to success.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Ganeshram, R., & Myron, D. (2002). The truth about CRM success & failure.	x			x	x		x		x	x
Kane, R. (2009). Straight talk: Advice from the trenches of SaaS CRM.	x			x		x	x		x	x
Lashar, J. D. (2008). Even SaaS requires the right approach.			x				x	x		x
Lay down CRM goals to ensure success! (2009).	x	x			x					x
Lee, D. (2008). Four steps to success with CRM.		x				x				x
Loftis, L., Geiger, J. G., & Imhoff, C. (2004). CRM success requires more than money and a mandate.	x	x	x	x				x		x
Murtha, K., & Foley, J. (2001). Ten steps to CRM success.	x		x		x		x		x	x
Reel, J. S. (1999). Critical success factors in software projects.		x						x	x	x
Sethupathy, A. (2007). Predictive indicators of CRM success.							x	x	x	x
Top reasons for CRM success. (2009).		x	x		x	x	x		x	x
Top reasons for failure. (2009).	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
Turner, K. (2007). A CRM value system: Five metrics of success.	x	x	x		x	x				x
COUNT	14	11	11	10	10	8	11	9	8	20

In order to understand both the importance of analyzing this selection of literature, as well as to better understand its limitations, I will give it some context. First, these articles were selected by conducting a simple search in Google. They are a mix of white papers from software companies and consulting firms, information technology-related blog posts and miscellaneous articles from various websites. Therefore, the credibility of the sources varies significantly and is highly subjective. However, it is very important that an analysis of this literature be conducted because, as I believe from my own experience, it is the source of information most used by organizations seeking to implement CRM software.

In addition, all of the articles were written within the past ten years and the list of articles selected in no way exhausts literature of this nature available to the public. In fact, a subsequent search just six months later yielded dozens of additional articles not included in this review. Overall, selection of these 10 articles was based on a reasonably diligent effort to capture all dimensions of CRM implementations and what I believed was a representative sample of the majority of practitioner-oriented CSF literature.

It is also important to note that the count of how many of the articles contain each theme is not a ranking of importance for these CSFs. This is due to the highly subjective nature of the theme creation process. For example, if I chose to group similar themes such as *Implementation Approach* and *Implementation Strategy* for a particular reason, it would boost the new category's importance. Throughout this analysis I found that my opinion changed daily on how to best organize and categorize the factors into themes. One

struggle that I had when I reviewed these articles was the more I read them the more I realized so many of the themes work hand-in-hand. One example is *Change Management* and how it relates to *Buy-In* and *Adoption*. In fact, in my original analysis I separated *Buy-In* and *Adoption*; after much thought I combined them into one, more-encompassing theme. I could do the same for many other factors such as combining *Process Design* with *Implementation Strategy* or combining *Implementation Strategy* with *Strategy Focus and Alignment*. What can be taken from this observation is that the themes are much less important than the actual success factors they encompass. The focus of this research is CSFs which, as previously noted, are *activities*. Therefore, I believe what is to be gained from this analysis is a raised awareness of the level of emphasis placed on each category of CSFs.

The next sections represent a description of each category that was created in response to the themes that emerged from this set of articles, beginning with the most widespread and working down to the least pervasive.

Due diligence. It is clear the concept of due diligence is the most widespread theme. Most articles in the analysis indicate attention to planning and goal-setting is crucial to a successful implementation. Boardman notes, "...the more rigorous the planning process prior to the project commencing, the higher the likelihood of success," (n.d., p. 2). In fact, most suggest formalizing these processes, acknowledging their importance. The planning and goal-setting processes typically involve gathering and prioritizing requirements and

establishing goals that align with both the organization's implementation strategy and its long-term vision.

The literature also reveals another aspect of the due diligence concept: software and vendor selection. Boardman (n.d.) notes that enterprise CRM software is costly (the software license itself, implementation, training, project management and staff time are all costs that must be factored in), and it can take anywhere from a few months to years to implement. Due to the extensive resources that go into a CRM implementation, it is likely an organization's CRM system will be around for at least five years. Therefore, it is important that the vendor is selected based on reputation and longevity.

Arguably, *all* of the literature contains steps in the implementation process that involve planning and many of the CSFs found in this literature are planning processes (i.e. establishing metrics, creating an implementation strategy, etc.). For those articles that do not specifically mention software/vendor selection, I believe there is an underlying assumption that the organization has already chosen or will choose the best choice in software/vendor. Interestingly, when I conducted my initial search for CSF literature I found an extensive supply of articles that focus solely on software/vendor selection leading me to believe this will be a major factor in the implementation process.

Strategy focus and alignment. "CRM isn't about picking the technology. Technology is a pillar of CRM success, but it's only one pillar. There are other things that are just as important," (Beasty, 2005, para. 9). This concept of

technology as an enabler and not the driver of an organization's CRM strategy is a key point in the majority of literature. Strategy focus refers to leading with the business case rather than the technology. Many organizations fall into the trap of tailoring their business processes to fit the desired technology solution. It is universally accepted in this selection of articles that the technology should simply foster a well thought-out, business strategy. CRM implementations fail or opportunities are missed when the technology is the driver of the CRM strategy. In addition, an organization must ensure wide acceptance of its vision to ensure expectations among stakeholders are consistent ("Top reasons for failure," 2009).

Also important to note in this category is the alignment of the business strategy with the CRM strategy (Boardman, n.d.; Ganeshram & Myron, 2002; Kane, 2009; "Top reasons for failure," 2009; Turner, 2007). For example, if an organization's board strategy includes a focus on donor retention but the CRM strategy focuses on acquisition of new donors, there is a misalignment which will reduce the organization's ability to reach its goals. In this scenario there is an "inconsistency of purpose that needs to be resolved before investment is made," (Boardman, n.d., p. 2).

Customer focus. This category highlights the importance of an organization's shift from a product or service focus to a customer-centric focus. The goal is to enhance experiences across all customer touch points (Beasty, 2005) and leverage two-way communication (Peppers & Rogers, 2002) between the customer and the organization. The ultimate goal is to increase customer

retention and brand loyalty ("Lay down CRM goals to ensure success!," 2009; Lee, 2008).

There is much planning an organization must do in order to make the shift to a customer-centric focus. Often it is the step most overlooked by organizations when conducting an enterprise-wide CRM implementation because it is time-consuming (Lee, 2008). Part of the planning phase should include either consulting your customers (Reel, 1999; "Top reasons for failure," 2009; Turner, 2007), taking advantage of feedback mechanisms ("Top reasons for CRM success," 2009) or at the very least putting yourself in their shoes: find out what the customer wants; anticipate what they may want in the future ("CRM implementation - the right way!," 2009; Lee, 2008). Some even suggest taking a look at what your organization's competitors are doing for their customer that the customers like ("Top reasons for CRM success," 2009; "Top reasons for failure," 2009). By simply investing in discovery, the organization will be better able to prioritize opportunities and put them into play. In order for this approach to work the organization must listen to the customer and plan around customer goals ahead of their own organizational goals (Lee, 2008).

Change management. "Change is inevitable; if you don't experience change, you are not going about CRM the right way," (Murtha & Foley, 2001, para. 6). Beyond the basic premise that organizations must address change when embarking on an enterprise CRM implementation, this CSF category speaks to 1) identification of champions of change within the organization (Beasty, 2005; Eberhardt, 2001; Lashar, 2008), 2) the adaptation of employees

to the changes taking place within the organization ("CRM implementation - what you should know," 2009; Eberhardt, 2001; "Top reasons for CRM success," 2009) and 3) adequate planning in anticipation of the unexpected (Beasty, 2005). It is crucial for the organization to identify individuals, preferably from the top down (executives, department managers), who will sponsor the initiative. If the organization lacks a leader(s) who will champion the initiative, employees will struggle with the changes taking place and the project may fail or take longer than anticipated.

In order to ensure employees are able to adapt to the new changes, the organization must invest in the change management process. It is inevitable that employees will resist change given that they are expected to give up procedures and processes that they are familiar with ("Top reasons for CRM success," 2009). The organization needs to give employees new tools such as training them to properly deliver the customer experience ("CRM implementation - what you should know," 2009), room to make mistakes along the way and the opportunity to learn from them and continue on toward the goal (Eberhardt, 2001).

Last, anticipating that the implementation process will have its share of disruptions is important because it is unrealistic to believe a large-scale software implementation and all the associated changes will go exactly as planned. Given how long CRM implementations of this size can take, staff turnover, CRM project leadership turnover or changes to the very nature of the business are inevitable (Beasty, 2005).

Implementation approach. “Avoid the natural tendency to try to do too much too soon,” (“Top reasons for CRM success,” 2009, para. 17). Taking an incremental approach and setting expectations are the prevailing themes in this selection of literature. First, it is important the organization keep the implementation flexible (“CRM implementation - the right way!,” 2009). Business needs change over time (Ganeshram & Myron, 2002), employees will struggle with change (Kane, 2009) and organizations need to understand the limitations of CRM in the short-term (Sethupathy, 2007). Sethupathy (2007) believes setting these expectations is the single most important factor in the success of an implementation. Employees who understand unforeseen bumps in the road to be a normal part of CRM implementations will make allowances for them (Boardman, n.d.).

Frequent success stories are better than one-time success at the very end (Murtha & Foley, 2001). Phased, multi-tiered approaches to implementations are necessary for a successful implementation (“CRM implementation - the right way!,” 2009; Lashar, 2008; Peppers & Rogers, 2002) and can create frequent quick wins which cultivate necessary buy-in. In addition, breaking the implementation down into stages helps keep to a minimum shortcuts that result from tackling large complex projects and undermine the overall return on investment (Boardman, n.d.). Introducing CRM to a few key employees at a time is also an important strategy to consider. Piloting the system with key employees representing a cross-section of the organization can serve as a way to avoid

many pitfalls that may occur with the larger, organization-wide rollout ("Top reasons for failure," 2009).

Metrics. As previously noted, it is also important to set expectations for all parties involved (vendors, customers, employees, executives, etc.) in order to avoid implementation failure. Ganeshram and Myron note that failure occurs when the organization lacks an understanding of what they want to accomplish and then designing the implementation around delivering results that do not align with its goals (2002). Metrics are used by organizations to avoid this failure as well as measure the success of the effort in terms of the real business value or return on investment (ROI). Calculating ROI and measuring success requires an agreed-upon definition of success (the end objective) (Boardman, n.d.; Ganeshram & Myron, 2002; "Lay down CRM goals to ensure success!," 2009; Murtha & Foley, 2001; "Top reasons for CRM success," 2009) and the quality metrics (measurable objectives) ("CRM implementation - the right way!," 2009; Eberhardt, 2001; Ganeshram & Myron, 2002; "Lay down CRM goals to ensure success!," 2009; Murtha & Foley, 2001; "Top reasons for CRM success," 2009) by which to measure it. Long-term ROI is best determined by using the CRM system itself via key performance indicators (KPIs), dashboards and reporting tools (Turner, 2007) that have been rigorously tested to ensure they measure the real business value of the implementation effort ("Top reasons for failure," 2009).

Implementation strategy. The goal of an organization's implementation strategy should be to project one view of the organization to the customer and one view of the customer to the organization (Eberhardt, 2001). It should include

creating a standard view of its constituents (Peppers & Rogers, 2002) internally and ensuring seamless integration across all customer touch points ("Top reasons for failure," 2009) externally. On the front end, the more areas of the organization that are integrated with an open flow of communication, the better the customer experience. For example, customers expect products bought online can be returned at their local store (Eberhardt, 2001). The only way to enable this convenience is for the retailer to utilize a CRM system that is integrated across all channels.

On the backend, CRM systems are designed to be a unifying solution designed to break down silos across departments and functions within organizations (Boardman, n.d.). The technology should bring together all constituent groups ("*CRM implementation - the right way!*," 2009). Often CRM implementations are championed by one department or functional area (Eberhardt, 2001) such as fundraising. If attention is not given to ensuring CRM adoption by all areas, the system will be underutilized and the organization will fail to meet its goals (Boardman, n.d.). Once all areas have buy-in walls between function units, departments or groups must come down to facilitate effective flow of information (Turner, 2007).

Buy-in and adoption. Adoption and buy-in are concepts that can be discussed together because in many ways these two factors work hand-in-hand. Boardman notes the best scenario to ensure the most successful implementation possible would be the management team being actively involved in the project and then become active users (Boardman, n.d.). It is clear from the literature that

CRM implementations will not succeed without leadership/management buy-in (Beasty, 2005; Eberhardt, 2001; Loftis, Geiger, & Imhoff, 2004; Peppers & Rogers, 2002; Sethupathy, 2007). Buy-in from all stakeholder groups can be achieved with the use of value propositions (Lashar, 2008) and also by including users in the implementation process, from strategy development to application selection (Eberhardt, 2001).

Adoption by users is a difficult concept to put into context because at times it is unclear whether the author is referring to users as customers or internal staff, but both are equally important. Employee resistance to new technology is very common. Two common forms of resistance include employees not entering data into the system because it is time-consuming and employees not sharing their knowledge because they see it as a source of power (Burns, 2008). To foster adoption, sufficient communication and training prior to the implementation is crucial as it sets expectations (Boardman, n.d.). Acclimating employees and getting employee buy-in early on will lead to adoption. Beasty (2005) suggests starting with a single department as CRM success tends to be contagious. As other departments see this success, they will be excited to follow suit.

Project management. From my experience, I believe effective project management is critical to a successful implementation. The project must have a designated PM to keep the team focused and on schedule. According to Sumner, “The sheer size of these projects requires centralized control, strict discipline, and extensive monitoring of project outcomes,” (1999, p. 303). The PM also

deals with any issues that may arise and is held accountable for much of the overall success of the implementation. Surprisingly, project management as a CSF theme is not mentioned in the majority of the articles. It is quite possible that the same authors who leave this factor out do believe it is important but simply feel there are factors more critical. Backman notes, "The big theme, cultural and collaboration issues predominate over direct technical or formal project management issues as sources of CRM project failure," (2009, para. 4).

While only one article clearly notes that organizations must have a good project leader ("Top reasons for CRM success," 2009), Sethupathy (2007) mentions the need to identify a good project leader or advocate to run the project *after* the initial implementation is over. From this point there is the question of how the authors of this selection of literature identify and define CRM implementations and who (the vendor, consultant or staff) is responsible for each stage. Last, two of the articles discussed reasons for failure including not applying good project management skills (Ganeshram & Myron, 2002) and project managers not understanding users' needs (Reel, 1999).

An additional aspect to the Project Management theme is having the right implementation team in place (Murtha & Foley, 2001; Reel, 1999). As with ensuring buy-in and adoption, it is important to include ground-level staff on the project team who represent all functions of the organization ("CRM implementation - the right way!," 2009) as well as a-players, those with technical expertise and those with business acumen (Kane, 2009; Reel, 1999).

Process design. Upgrading or implementing new software does not in and of itself improve the processes and interactions necessary to move to a more customer-centric strategy (Kane, 2009). One of the biggest mistakes organizations make is customizing or tailoring their new CRM system to fit their current/old processes (Eberhardt, 2001; Lee, 2008; "Top reasons for CRM success," 2009; "Top reasons for failure," 2009; Turner, 2007). When an organization implements a customer-centric strategy, it has to work differently. Therefore, in order to see the benefits of the CRM implementation, the organization must look at redesigning their processes with the optimal customer experience in mind ("Top reasons for CRM success," 2009). This can be done with an incremental approach that looks at each department, functional area or business unit and assesses their roles.

CSF analysis summary. The CSF literature analysis found that due diligence was a key success factor for CRM implementations. However, one of the most important findings in the literature that utilizes the CSF approach is that the technology is simply an *enabler* to the broader CRM implementation. This is a crucial concept to understanding where CRM fits in the current literature. There are a number of CRM implementation frameworks found in the literature that stem from this notion of technology as an enabler rather than the driver of an organization's CRM strategy. "CRM isn't about picking the technology. Technology is a pillar of CRM success, but it's only one pillar. There are other things that are just as important," (Beasty, 2005, para. 9).

This concept of technology as an enabler and not the driver of an organization's CRM strategy is a key point in the majority of CSF literature (Roberts et al., 2006). Many organizations fall into the trap of tailoring their business processes to fit the desired technology solution rather than leading with the business case. It is widely accepted in the literature that the technology should simply foster a well thought-out, business strategy. CRM implementations fail or opportunities are missed when the technology is the driver of the CRM strategy.

Reflecting on the history of information technology in the NPO setting, I find reinforcement for the concept of technology as an enabler found in my CSF literature analysis. Just a few decades ago, most NPOs could not afford technology such as computers, networks, and internet connections, let alone the very basic CRM systems that entered the market in the late 1980s and early 1990s. By the time smaller NPOs were able to afford such technology, they had to rely on internal staff expertise to maintain and utilize them. Only larger NPOs were able to afford in-house IT staff or retain outside IT support. While large NPOs may have the benefit of IT expertise in terms of implementation support, programming, and maintenance, rarely does IT understand the needs of the organization in terms of how the data will be used to fulfill the organization's mission. Instead, it is the non-IT staff that drives the use of CRM systems within these NPOs.

In the past, the primary information technology drivers in large NPOs lived within the advancement services function of the development department; to

some extent, they still do. While not every development office has an established advancement services function and/or information technology-specific roles, nearly every development office has at least one person, considered the “accidental techie” by some (Preston, 2005), who serves as the go-to for technology-related issues, questions, and growth opportunities. As non-IT staff becomes more experienced and savvy with CRM systems and IT in general, the role of IT becomes that of the enabler rather than the driver of the technology.

In addition, after much reflection on why certain themes were not more widespread, I believe reference to certain themes is absent from certain articles because the authors consider them underlying assumptions. For example, an author may have left out reference to effective project management because it is something that must be in place for a successful implementation. In layman’s terms we would consider effective project management a “given.” A similar argument could be made for a customer focus. The nature of CRM is such that it is built on the premise that the organization is focused on the customer. Some authors may not feel it is necessary to explicitly state that a shift to a customer focus is critical in the implementation of a CRM system. As with effective project management, it might be another assumption. Keeping this idea of underlying assumptions in mind, I will develop my interview framework to specifically dig into *all* themes represented in this selection of literature as well as to possibly uncover additional themes.

Conclusion

According to Rockart, “a particular company may have a set of CSFs that goes beyond the industry CSFs (due to its particular configuration of environmental, company strategy, and market position factors),” (1982, p. 16). Using this notion, I did not believe it necessary in this review to focus on the relatively sparse NPO-specific literature because it is likely that many CSFs found in the for-profit literature will also apply to NPOs. In addition, an extensive review of the literature on the CSF approach proved that, not only is technology an enabler of CRM strategy, but the same factors emerge over and over again as contributors to the success or failure of CRM implementations. In other words, the approach seemed outdated and redundant.

The CSF literature analysis exercise served to guide the direction my CRM implementation research took. As noted, through the analysis I determined that technology should play the role of enabler and will not serve as the framework for which I will examine CRM implementations. In addition, I acknowledged due diligence as the most widespread success factor, as it would be in any large, complex endeavor. Given my findings, I suspected that more recent literature controls for the technology and human factors in order to focus solely on the less-studied strategic factors – the second most prevalent success factor identified through the CSF literature analysis. The remainder of this chapter will focus on a strategic approach which I used to frame my own study.

Defining CRM and CRM Success

The first aspect of a strategic approach to CRM implementations is an organizational definition of CRM and CRM success. As noted, previous literature has established that CRM is much more than the technology which enables it. One of the biggest challenges to CRM implementations is simply: How does the organization define CRM? And how does the organization define CRM success? An organization's definition significantly affects the way it accepts and practices CRM (Payne & Frow, 2005).

Defining CRM

As discussed in Chapter I, CRM lives both in the technology and marketing realms, and CRM, as depicted in the current literature, unites both to create mutually beneficial relationships with customers and stakeholders (Peelen, van Munffort, Beltman, & Klerkx, 2009). When an organization defines CRM in terms of maximizing each constituent's relationship with the organization and its profitability by effectively using proprietary information to capture a disproportionately high share of value (Ling & Yen, 2001), it defines success by a positive return on investment (Peelen et al., 2009; Reinartz et al., 2004; Roberts et al., 2006).

The most comprehensive definitions live in marketing theory: Boulding et al. posits that "CRM is the outcome of the continuing evolution and integration of marketing ideas and newly available data, technologies, and organizational forms," (2005, p. 156). Peelen et al. provides the most succinct, comprehensive

definition of CRM, explaining that it “unites the potential of relationship marketing strategies and information technology (IT) to create mutually profitable, long-term relationships with customers and other key stakeholders,” (2009, p. 453). These are just two of the many variations of a comprehensive definition of CRM.

Despite the availability and dissemination of comprehensive, strategic definitions of CRM in the literature, organizations still pursue CRM implementations with a technology approach, viewing the implementation as investments in technology and software (Reinartz et al., 2004). And, while the role of IT in the implementation process is vital to its success, it must understand CRM is a process rather than software (Ling & Yen, 2001). When the implementation focus is on the process rather than on the technology, ownership and accountability become success factors and can be controlled at the strategic level.

Given the multitude of definitions for CRM in the literature, it is highly probable that within a particular organization there will be varying definitions as well. CRM is an approach that does not live in IT or in the marketing/communications department (or for NPOs, in the advancement department), but rather it spans the entire organization. Without a common strategic definition of CRM that is communicated, widely-accepted and valued across the organization, the success of the implementation is at risk. “This lack of a widely accepted and appropriate definition of CRM can contribute to the failure of a CRM project when an organization views CRM from a limited technology perspective or undertakes CRM on a fragmented basis,” (Payne & Frow, 2005, p. 168).

Proposition 1: A strategic definition of CRM with a focus on implementation that is communicated, widely-accepted and valued across the organization will have a positive impact on CRM success.

Defining CRM Success

One of the most relevant takeaways from CSF literature analysis in the previous section is that careful attention must be paid to the following concepts: success, metrics and end users. These concepts are discussed at length in this selection of literature, but there is little agreement on how they are defined. In some articles, success refers to the implementation itself. The authors are asking: Is there employee buy-in? Are employees fully utilizing the system? Did the project stay within its projected budget? In other articles success refers more to the entire long-term use of the CRM system. These authors are asking questions such as: Has the CRM system been effective in retaining customers? Are sales up and returns down?

Discussion regarding metrics is related to how the authors are defining success. In some articles metrics refers to those measurements related to the actual implementation efforts; in other articles they refer to measurement in terms of the CRM systems long-term success. In the articles that define success in terms of the CRM *implementation*, the focus is on the internal customer: the organization's employees. In the articles that focus on the long-term success of the CRM from a non-technical standpoint, the focus is on the external customer:

those individuals and firms that purchase or receive the organization's goods and/or services.

Given how generalized CRM success metrics are in the literature, I will focus on success as I know it from my own experience in large NPOs. The ultimate goal of human service NPOs is to fulfill their mission. To do this, they must strive to serve more or *better serve* their constituents. In order to serve more or better serve their constituents, the NPOs need to raise more money from existing donors, acquire *new* donors, and/or recruit more volunteers. As noted in Chapter I, the focus should be on donor retention rather than acquisition, though continuous acquisition is still necessary. NPOs choose to implement CRM to better enable them to raise more money, acquire new donors, and/or recruit more volunteers through maximizing each constituent's relationship with the organization (the very definition of CRM as outlined above).

Volunteer recruitment and fundraising are advancement and marketing functions. Therefore, CRM implementations must be driven from the advancement (fundraising) and marketing functions within the organization. Again, the technology and people perspectives are to be viewed as *enablers*. Therefore, while not to minimize the role of technology and people, the focus should be on a strategic, process-oriented approach, which stems from the marketing field. With this in mind, organizations implementing CRM need to communicate this comprehensive definition of success which ultimately leads to success that is tied to the marketing function within the organizations. The definition must be measurable and widely-accepted.

Proposition 2: A definition of CRM success that is measurable and widely-accepted and communicated will have a positive impact on its achievability.

A deep understanding of the definitions of CRM and CRM success outlined above can only be achieved if CRM is implemented at the strategic level. This level is defined as organization-wide (or “enterprise-wide”) and with strong leadership from the top down. Payne and Frow (2005) developed a CRM continuum (Figure 1) that depicts different levels CRM can be entrenched within the organization. Many organizations continue to treat CRM primarily as investments in technology (Reinartz et al., 2004), subscribing to the Level 1 perspective in this continuum. Another example of a Level 1 implementation includes implementing CRM within the advancement function where it is used by one or a few employees. This type of implementation is still very popular in NPOs who seek the aforementioned “donor database.” Henneberg defines this type of implementation as “hard” and notes that “analysis of the ‘hard’ implementation model shows that companies using this path often have only a vague strategic understanding of the CRM project in place before they define the process and technical requirements,” (2006, p. 85).

In general, organizations implement CRM to varying degrees (Reinartz et al., 2004), and therefore fall anywhere in between Levels 1 and 3. Payne and Frow’s (2005) proposition that organizations adopt a Level 3 definition of CRM that is broad, strategic and “soft” (Henneberg, 2006) not only reflects their own definition of CRM but that of Peelen (2009) and Boulding et al. (2005) among others.

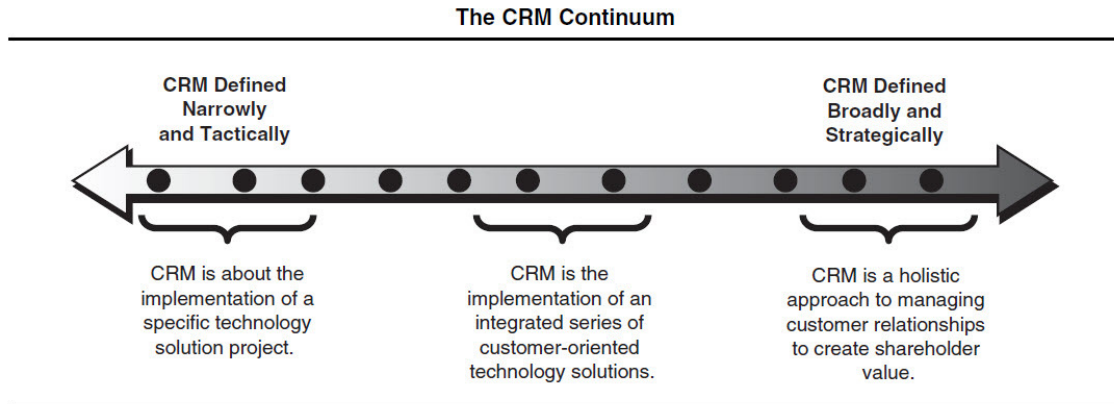


Figure 1. The CRM continuum.

When CRM is defined at the strategic level, a subsequent implementation must also be at this level in order to achieve success. Strategic implementation frameworks require “a cross-functional integration of processes, people, operations, and marketing capabilities that is enabled through information, technology, and applications” (Payne & Frow, 2005, p. 168). However, as highlighted in the CSF analysis in the previous section, change management and employee engagement issues are essential to the successful implementation of CRM (Payne & Frow, 2005) and therefore not included in many of the current strategic frameworks. Instead the focus is on the selection and interactions among the various strategic processes within the organization and with its constituents.

Proposition 3: A CRM strategy that is more entrenched within the organization and more aligned with its definition of success will have a positive impact on its return on investment.

In the next section I will discuss the various processes found in the current strategic frameworks for CRM.

CRM Strategy Framework

The CRM strategy framework is a process-oriented approach to CRM implementation that has become increasingly popular in the last ten years. While the CSF approach to successful CRM implementations was widely used in the 1980s and 1990s, the focus of current CRM research is on the processes that must be in place and aligned in order to ensure implementation success and maximize the return on investment. Most CRM implementation models focus on what Henneberg (2006) calls the “hard implementation” factors. For example, Ling and Yen (2001) outline the following components in their best practices CRM implementation model: a data warehouse, analysis tools, campaign management tools and interfaces to the operational environment and communications channels. Models that incorporate a “soft implementation” component also focus on a decentralized customer experience at the touch point level (Henneberg, 2006).

Henneberg’s (2006) study of CRM implementation projects shows organizations believe successful implementations require elements of both hard and soft approaches, yet few use both in their own implementations. In addition, similar to the argument made in the previous section regarding the necessity of a common definition of CRM and CRM success within the organization, Henneberg found that strategy definition and implementation of select strategy-connected

phases were critical, yet few organizations defined or implemented strategy to any depth or extent. Henneberg concludes that implementations must be front-loaded in terms of strategy development and the implementation approach in order to allow for monitoring of the process during and after implementation. “The most important function of the strategy is to map the road from an organization’s starting point to the realization of its CRM vision,” (Peelen et al., 2009, p. 456).

The decision to use the strategic framework to guide my own research not only stems from my CSF literature analysis findings but also from the first recommendation for future CRM study proposed by Boulding et al. (2005) in the October 2005 edition of the Journal of Marketing. This special CRM section of the journal looks at the overall state of CRM research: what has been studied, key findings, new perspectives and suggestions for future research. The first recommendation states that, “CRM research should focus on the interaction among sub-processes or the interaction among processes, not total CRM systems,” (p. 162). While Boulding et al. warn that particular attention must be paid to any parts of the CRM process pertaining to the relationship(s) of interest (either by modeling the effects or controlling for them), I plan to facilitate the emergence of and capture *all* processes within the organization under study to the greatest extent possible.

The next sections of this chapter will detail the most comprehensive and relevant strategic framework found in the literature: Payne and Frow (2005). The early Peelen et al. (2009) framework is quite similar but stems from the IT field rather than marketing. The Payne and Frow framework focuses on organizing

processes around the customer lifecycle and ensuring customer information is available at all customer touch points. Information technology is used to support these touch points and enable customer centric interactions. It enables the organization to build customer information and to integrate cross-functional front- and back-office processes (Payne & Frow, 2005; Peelen et al., 2009). Overall, adaptation of this framework to the NPO setting has the greatest potential to yield very rich data.

My decision to use this particular CRM strategy framework is based upon Boulding et al.'s (2005) support of Payne and Frow's framework as a best practices template for organizations who have not achieved desired results from their CRM implementation. Boulding et al. suggest an organization "might compare its practices with the best practice template that Payne and Frow provide. This comparison could reveal gaps in how the firm implements CRM relative to best practices," (2005, p. 162). The core tenets of Payne and Frow's framework, and much of Peelen et al.'s, provide a useful depiction of what current research concludes are the processes and interactions that must be in place within the organization to ensure CRM implementation success. While I could supplement this discussion with insights from additional CRM literature, the Payne and Frow framework is the only process-oriented frameworks that does not focus on processes within a single function (i.e. marketing or IT), despite its specific origin within the marketing function. Other useful frameworks include (among others) Srivastava et al.'s (1999) framework for understanding the integration of marketing with business processes and shareholder value and

Roberts et al.'s (2006) process model which focuses more on marketing and organizational issues (such as readiness, culture and segmentation).

As noted, one of the themes in the vast CSF literature is that the human and technology factors (i.e. change management, employee engagement and software selection) are critical aspects of CRM implementations. Proponents of the strategy approach find there is no conclusive evidence these variables are the cause of failed implementations. Therefore, studies using this approach control for these factors in order to focus on the underlying processes and interactions (Payne & Frow, 2005; Reinartz et al., 2004; Roberts et al., 2006). Reinartz et al. (2004) use these factors as moderators of the effects of the CRM process on the organization's economic performance.

Framework Components

Payne and Frow's (2005) framework consists of five generic processes: 1) strategy development, 2) value creation; 3) multichannel integration; 4) information management; and 5) performance assessment; I discuss each of the processes below. In Chapter III, I will discuss how each translates into the NPO environment to create a new framework for which I conducted my investigation.

Strategy development. Strategy development is the development of a business strategy which then drives a customer strategy. Its goal is to provide the organization with a clearer platform on which to develop and implement CRM. The business strategy is typically the responsibility of the CEO. Its development begins with an assessment of the organization's vision, especially as it related to

CRM, and ends with a sector analysis. The organization must address how the business strategy should evolve over time.

The customer strategy is typically the responsibility of the marketing department. It involves examining the organization's existing and potential customer base and identifying appropriate segmentation. This segmentation effort fosters the shift from mass marketing to one-to-one marketing.

CRM is vested in the various functions within the organization but requires a cross-functional approach. Therefore, special attention must be paid to the alignment and integration of the business strategy. The interrelationship between the business strategy and customer strategy deeply affects the success of the organization's CRM strategy.

Value creation. The value creation process creates programs derived from the business strategy that deliver value to the customer. There are three key elements of this process: determining what value the organization can deliver to the customer, determining what value the organization receives from the customer, and maximizing the lifetime value of each customer segment through the successful management of the value exchange. The goal is a co-creation of value between the organization and the customer.

The value the customer receives can be combined into the value proposition which consists of the performance of the product, the fulfillment of the customer's needs, and the total cost to the customer over the customer relationship life cycle. In order for the organization to determine whether the

value proposition will lead to a superior customer experience, it should assess the level of relative importance the customer places on the various attributes of the product. Such an assessment may also illuminate market segments with needs not being met by current offerings.

The value the organization receives comes from many sources, all of which the organization must analyze to maximize the lifetime value it receives from each customer or segment. These sources include customer acquisition, customer retention, and opportunities for cross-selling, up-selling, and building customer advocacy. As mentioned in Chapter I, without neglecting other value sources, an organization's primary focus should be on customer retention. Organizations can greatly benefit from calculating the customer lifetime value of different segments as it enables them to focus attention on the most profitable customers and customer segments.

Multichannel integration. Payne and Frow believe the multichannel integration process is the most important CRM processes because it "takes the outputs of the business strategy and value creation processes and translates them into value-adding activities with customers," (2005, p. 172). This process focuses on which channels and combination of channels is most appropriate and how to ensure customers have positive interactions within those channels. If customers interact with multiple channels, the process ensures the customer is presented in a single, unified view to the organization.

Most organizations today use multiple channels (such as direct mail, internet, business partners, and telephony) in their marketing efforts and many organizations are now using channels in combination with one another to maximize exposure and return. Payne and Frow classify the various channel options (both physical and virtual) into following six categories: 1) sales force, including field account management, service, and personal representation; 2) outlets, including retail branches, stores, depots, and kiosks; 3) telephony, including traditional telephone, facsimile, telex, and call center contact; 4) direct marketing, including direct mail, radio, and traditional television (but excluding e-commerce); 5) e-commerce, including e-mail, the Internet, and interactive digital television; and 6) m-commerce, including mobile telephony, short message service and text messaging, wireless application protocol, and 3G mobile services (2005).

Successful integration of the various channels is highly dependent upon the organization's ability to gather customer information from all channels and integrate it with other relevant information. It is also dependent upon the organization's ability to create and maintain high standards across all channels. Therefore, it is crucial for the organization to establish a set of standards for each channel that defines an outstanding customer experience.

Information management. The information management process serves to collect and collate information about the customer that is collected from all customer touch points to provide the organization with insight about the customer and aid in developing appropriate market responses. The idea is to enable the

organization to replicate the mind of the customer. Payne and Frow stress the importance of IT planning that focuses on creating a seamless customer experience/service rather than planning around the various departmental activities. The key components of this process include the data repository, IT systems, analytical tools, front and back office applications, and CRM vendor(s).

The data repository is an enterprise wide data store that houses the organization's customer data (e.g. contact information, purchase history, preferences) to be used for data analysis as needed. In larger organizations that have full IT departments, the repository may be in the form of a complex data warehouse. The data repository handles data in two primary ways: 1) to store enough information to create a single view of the customer and avoid duplicate records and data; and 2) to house all information on a customer from all areas of the organization in order to present a 360 degree view of the customer.

IT systems refer to the hardware and software necessary to collect, store and retrieve, and use the organization's data. The IT infrastructure must be integrated before the organization's departments (or functional areas) can be integrated at the database level and user access can be provided across the organization. Large, complex CRM implementations require an ability to scale existing systems or migrate to larger systems without disrupting business operations.

Analytical tools enable the organization to effectively use the collected data. Large quantities of data can be analyzed for meaningful patterns and

relationships from which the organization can use to make decisions. These tools should be used to measure the organization's business activities which can then be used to support the performance assessment process. Such tools include campaign management analysis and customer profiling. Many software packages come with analytical tool, and many organizations with robust data warehouses also have business intelligence sub-departments that use complex programming languages to create dashboards, reports and analyses for end users.

Front office applications include all technologies that support the organization's activities involving direct interface with its customers. Back office applications support internal administration activities such as vendor management, human resources, and financial processes. The biggest concern with front and back office applications is that they are adequately integrated with one another to foster better customer relationship management practices and work flows.

CRM technology market participants are both CRM application vendors as well as CRM service providers. CRM application vendors fall into the following categories: integrated CRM and ERP planning suites, CRM suites, CRM framework, CRM best of breed, and "build it yourself." CRM service providers also include consultants who offer implementation support. These providers offer a myriad of support including: corporate strategy; CRM strategy; change management, organization design, training, human resources, etc.; business transformation; infrastructure building and systems integration; infrastructure

outsourcing; business insight, research, etc.; and business process outsourcing. Payne and Frow note that, while many CRM vendors claim to be complete solution providers, few can “provide the full range of functionality that a complete CRM business strategy requires,” (2005, p. 173).

Performance assessment. The performance assessment process is designed to ensure the organization’s strategic goals related to CRM are being met and that a plan for future or continuous improvement is in place. There are two components to this process: 1) shareholder results; and 2) performance monitoring. For-profits consider shareholder wealth to be the ultimate goal of the organization, and therefore increased shareholder results are the goal of CRM for these organizations. Organizations that look to CRM to enable an increase in shareholder results must consider how to build employee value, customer value, and shareholder value and how to reduce costs. A focus on this area requires particular attention to the relationships between employees, customers, and shareholders.

Performance monitoring is concerned with the metrics organizations use to measure and monitor their CRM performance. Payne and Frow (2005) note that metrics used by organizations with CRM are not well developed or communicated. If and when the board receives the information, it is unclear how much time is devoted to the metrics and how well the board understands them. Also, traditional performance metrics tend to be functionally driven and not particularly appropriate for cross-functional CRM.

To gain the most from metrics, they should encompass not only metrics on historical performance but future financial results as well. Metrics, standards, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for CRM should span all five of the generic processes outlined above to ensure proper planning and practice of CRM activities. Last, to maximize continuous improvement and organizational learning, a feedback loop should be in place.

Organizational Culture and Additional Influences

While the preceding frameworks set the stage for assessing the success factors associated with CRM implementations, the organization's culture and the characteristics of individuals (particularly those in leadership positions) cannot be ignored. Based on Downs' definition of a bureau (Downs, 1965), organizations in the NPO sector, one could argue, operate much like the bureaucracies found in the public sector. In fact, the NPOs at the focus of this study share all four of the characteristics Downs believes define bureaus. These include:

1. They are large; that is, the highest ranking members know less than half of all the members personally.
2. A majority of their members are full-time workers who depend upon their employment in the organization for most of their incomes.
3. The initial hiring of personnel, their promotion within the organizations, and their retention therein are at least theoretically based upon some type of assessment of the way in which they have performed or can be expected to perform their organizational roles.

4. The major portions of their outputs are not directly or indirectly evaluated in any markets external to the organizations.

Downs classifies individuals found in bureaus into several groups. The most relevant group to the nonprofit sector is the self-interested which is made up of climbers: those who seek to maximize their own power, income, and prestige, and conservers: those who seek to maximize their own security and convenience. "...conservers favor the status quo. They fear change because it might reduce their present prerogatives; hence they oppose innovations and change in general," (p. 441). Both conservers and climbers can be found in NPOs, but given that most NPOs are slow-growing and provide individuals with little opportunity for advancement, particularly the smaller NPOs, one is more likely to find that conservers dominate these organizations.

The successful CRM implementations found in organizations such as Susan G. Komen may be due in large part to their size: the larger the NPO, the more opportunities for the growth and promotion of its employees. The size of the organization enables it to retain its climbers (those who embrace change) because such change brings with it opportunities for personal and professional aggrandizement. As a slow-growing organization drives out climbers - those individuals who are more likely to embrace the changes that innovation such as enterprise CRM brings to an organization - it leaves behind conservers who fear such change. Therefore, the very nature of NPOs acting much like traditional bureaucracies may have an adverse effect on these new, enterprise-level CRM implementations.

Culture and Innovation

Jaskyte and Dressler's study (2005) on human service NPO culture and innovation gives support for the notion that a strong organizational culture may not foster innovation within that organization. In fact, the results from the study indicate that, "The higher the cultural consensus on such values as stability, security, low level of conflict, predictability, rule orientation, team orientation, working in collaboration with others, the less innovative the organization may be," (p. 35). One belief is that with all the benefits a strong organizational culture brings with it, such as predictability, stability, and security, it also controls any behavior that might disrupt organizational coherence.

In NPOs where the decision to implement CRM has been made but there is no consensus over how entrenched it should be (or to which level it should be implemented), a successful implementation may prove too difficult for organizations with a strong culture. There may be a significant number of employees who understand that CRM should be implemented at the enterprise level but are unable or unwilling to speak up and disrupt the organizational harmony. These same individuals may simply accept the decision and direction from leadership without expressing concerns, posing questions, or sharing insight and ideas. Jaskyte and Dressler note that, "organizations value employee participation and cohesion, emphasize the clarity of goals, and recognize a reward, system and consistent feedback. This helps to develop employees' loyalty and commitment to the organization but does not necessarily foster innovation," (p. 36).

Resource Scarcity and Dependency

According to Pfeffer and Salancik, "... the underlying premise of the external perspective on organizations is that organizational activities and outcomes are accounted for by the context in which the organization is embedded," (1978, p. 39). As previously noted, many NPOs still subscribe to the Level 1 perspective in the CRM continuum (Figure 1) in which they view CRM as simply a "donor database," or at a minimum, place more value on the donor and gift tracking aspects of the system. NPOs rely on donations to such an extent that donors exert an enormous amount of external control over the organization. Therefore, such reliance on donors may inadvertently affect any internal processes and decisions.

At one level, trustees and donors related to the funding of the CRM implementation project may want the majority of focus on the "donor database" aspects of the CRM. It may be difficult for these external groups to see the benefits of implementing the CRM at the enterprise level given the cost to do so and the attention it takes away from the donor tracking piece. On a different level, a dependence on donations and the development side of the organization is likely to prevent development staff from seeing the big picture or the implementation as affecting more than their specific department. Development staff may be reluctant to share constituent information with other departments, participate in organization-wide implementation activities, and much more.

Closed Systems

Related to the idea of external resource dependency and control is the notion that many NPOs, particularly where there is such competition for scarce resources, operate as closed systems. To take it one step further, any attempt to allow a more open system environment to emerge may be in direct competition with other values the organization espouses (Buenger, Daft, Conlon, & Austin, 1996). For example, an NPO is reliant upon donations and therefore must be open to the external environment in order to raise them. At the same time there exists competition for those donations and other necessary resources. NPOs may be reluctant to operate in such an open system if there is risk of losing donations, constituents, and other resources. In the case of CRM implementations, NPOs may not take advantage of best practices, advice, and other assistance if there is an actual or perceived risk involved.

Chapter Summary

This chapter serves to create context for the study, starting with a detailed discussion of my findings related to a snapshot of existing practitioner-oriented literature which provides a starting point for the literature review. Next, I discussed the need for a definition of CRM and CRM success as well as a CRM strategy that focuses on implementation. As support for my decision to adapt the Payne and Frow framework to the NPO environment, I included reference to notable, reputable publications which encouraged future use of this model. Last, I discussed organizational factors that may have a great effect on CRM

implementations. In the next chapter, I will detail the chosen methodology, including my role as the researcher, sampling method, data collection and analysis strategies, ethical considerations, and limitations to the study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

As noted in both Chapters I and II, empirical research on enterprise CRM implementations in NPOs is limited. Therefore, I chose a constructivist, inductive approach to my study. Rockart's study of CSFs of information services (IS) executives used this methodology. He notes, "Any definition of the objectives, critical success factors, and operating methods of a 'model'... must be, by definition, subjective," (1982, p. 4). Therefore, his research was, "case-based and inductive," (1982, p. 4). While it is likely that many of the themes in the for-profit literature are also applicable to NPOs, I wanted to create an environment for NPO-specific themes to emerge rather than using deduction to test those themes applicable to very different organizations.

In this chapter, I will discuss my original decision to utilize the qualitative single-case study approach in greater detail. First, I will discuss the research sample and process through which I originally planned to identify the sample case. I will then detail the proposed research design and data collection strategy. Next, I will discuss the process through which my study changed from single-case to expert interviews. I will then discuss my background and the implications inherent in the researcher's role in qualitative research. I will conclude with the various ethical considerations, limitations of the study and chapter summary.

Original Methodology

Research Sample

I believe the vehicle best suited for the approach outlined above and what I was hoping to accomplish was the single-case study. According to Monette et al. (2005), case studies involve a detailed descriptive account of part or all of an organization to develop a rich, in-depth understanding of the setting and issues. In order to choose a particular case to study, I planned to employ a mixed purposeful sampling method, specifically using critical case and theory-based approaches as well as expert referral to identify a large human service NPO that has implemented or is in the process of implementing CRM. The Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN) defines large NPOs as those with operating budgets greater than or equal to \$3.5 million. Ideally, the sample case would be an organization with a vested interest in participating in this study, and one that is committed to the project.

In addition, I planned to restrict the timeframe of the study to the CRM implementation, from the time the organization determines there is a need for CRM and chooses to pursue an implementation, to present day. The duration of a typical large-scale CRM implementation within human service NPOs is approximately three years. Establishing the parameters of the case or unit of analysis in this manner would increase the external validity by defining the domain to which this study's findings could be generalized (Yin, 2009).

“If it happens there, it will happen anywhere...” (Patton, 2002, p. 236).

The critical case approach was pertinent to this study because I planned to use a single CRM implementation, in one organization. Patton (2002) explains, with such a limited sample it is important the case yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge. Using one organization in this study would not have enabled me to make broad generalizations to the greater population of human service NPOs, but choosing the “critical case” would have enabled me to make “logical generalizations” due to the “weight of evidence produced,” (Patton, 2002, pp. 236-237).

In addition to using a critical case approach, I also planned to employ a theory-based approach. Patton defines the theory-based sampling as sampling “on the basis of their potential manifestation or representation of important theoretical constructs,” (2002, p. 238). Using a critical case approach works well with theoretical sampling because “random sampling is neither necessary, nor even preferable,” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 537). By selecting the critical case I would have also been choosing an extreme situation in which the various constructs I am investigating are “transparently observable,” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 537).

Finally, I planned to use expert referrals to identify which organization fit the criteria of the other two approaches. Upon approval of this research proposal, I planned to solicit personal contacts at one of the most well-known CRM software companies serving NPOs, Blackbaud, for an appropriate organization that was willing to participate in this study. My contacts would then work the

request through the appropriate chain of command both within Blackbaud as well as within the targeted organization.

While I did not use the critical success factor (CSF) approach in this study, I believe many of its tenets apply to studies using a particular CRM implementation model. For example, Rockart (1982) refers to his previous research on CSFs in noting that particular industries have generic sets of CSFs, and I believe this notion also applies to this study. Therefore, all organizations under consideration would be limited to a particular form of NPO: human service organizations.

Rockart (1982), in his CSF research, also notes that more recent research shows that occupational roles also have specific sets of CSFs. It was crucial to my study that I have access to a large cross-section of employees across all levels of and functions within the organization with which to conduct interviews. This would ensure the emergent set of constructs did not show bias toward specific functions or levels within the structure of the organization. In order to better ensure good representation from employees in all functions and levels most pertinent to CRM, I planned to use sub-units of analysis.

Careful attention would have to be paid to CRM ownership within the organization I planned to study. In for-profits, the current CRM literature indicates that, while CRM must be a cross-functional, organization-wide endeavor, it should stem from the marketing function. As Payne and Frow note, "When different departments are involved in the two areas of strategy development

[business strategy and customer strategy], special emphasis should be placed on the alignment and integration of business strategy,” (2005, p. 170). However, in NPOs, CRM systems (or what is known as “donor databases”) typically live within the advancement function. In large NPOs, this may represent a much-needed shift in how CRM is approached, and therefore, a detailed look at the organizational structure and department roles and functions is critical. Attention would have to be paid to how aligned and integrated the advancement, marketing and IT functions are. Therefore, these three functional areas within the organization would have constituted the three sub-units of analysis in my study. Specific questions I planned to ask included: Did the organization conduct an analysis of structure prior to the implementation? How does the new structure differ from the old? What are the integration points between the various functions within the organization?

Ideal Research Design and Data Collection

As the CSF analysis Chapter II indicates, technology is just one factor that affects CRM implementations. However, more and more CRM software vendors (including consultants or contractors) are taking on all aspects of full CRM implementation across organizations while using the prescribed technology as the enabler. What this means is that the vendor(s) will spend a vast amount of time (up to several years for large NPOs) within the organization: analyzing current processes and functions; analyzing needs based on desired outcomes and long-term, strategic goals; and detailing and recommending necessary changes to these processes and functions, in order to move to a completely

customer-centric organization. Due to the extensive role the vendor plays in ensuring implementation success, I planned to include any vendor involved in the organization's CRM implementation in the study to the greatest extent possible. Including the vendor(s) in the data collection strategy aligns with Gummesson's belief that learning from field-based interactions with executives plays an important role in developing and refining CRM strategy (Payne & Frow, 2005).

Conceptual frameworks and theory are typically based on combining previous literature, common sense, and experience (Eisenhardt, 1989). The first aspect of developing the conceptual framework within the organization - looking at the previous literature on CRM implementations - was accomplished in the literature review in Chapter II. Common sense would stem from my own interpretations of the collected data combined with personal experience, industry trends and norms and many more invisible factors.

The last aspect, experience, would come from a triangulated approach designed to increase the construct validity of the study (Yin, 2009). First, I planned to interview individuals and, when applicable, groups of individuals at all levels across the organization as well as the vendor(s) involved in the implementation. I also planned to conduct document analysis which would have enhanced both the exploratory and descriptive aspects of the case study. Included in the document analysis would have been a review of all information pertaining to the organization – its mission, services, strategic plan(s), etc. – to give the study context in terms of where the particular organization fits within the greater NPO environment. In addition, I would have included analysis of any

internal processes, employee job descriptions, meeting minutes and procedures (preferably before *and* after implementation) and implementation plans (created by the organization and/or by the vendor(s)).

The majority of interviews would have been conducted onsite at the organization and at the vendor(s) headquarters. Given the time constraint due to both time spent out of work and the travel expenses, I would have limited the time spent in the organization or with the vendor(s) to one or two weeks. With full support from my current supervisor, I would have used the ample vacation time I had accumulated to leave my full-time job for each week needed. I planned to limit the number of interviews to approximately 30 at one hour each to ensure I was able to complete them within the one-to-two week timeframe. Any interviews I believed were necessary to the study but I was unable to conduct during the week(s), would have been conducted via telephone or by posing the interview guide questions in a written email request for the information.

I planned to combine an interview guide approach with a conversational strategy to give the interviews adequate structure while also keeping them fairly conversational (Monette et al., 2005). Upon receiving an organization chart from the organization, I would have identified questions specific to a certain level, function within the organization, or role in the implementation, but for the most part, I would have used a set of *open-ended* questions that would have been consistent across the participants. Asking participants a standard set of questions would have facilitated a search for: patterns in the responses; differences in perspectives based on function, level and tenure; and much more.

In addition, this type of interview style would have allowed me to probe, rephrase or alter the order of the questions to best fit the participant, or add follow-up questions as necessary.

As Monette et al. (2005) note, the standardized interview method using a guide is useful for less experienced interviewers. Even though I have conducted sets of interviews in various projects required in the *Administration and Leadership in the Nonprofit and Public Sectors* program, I believe it would be more effective to utilize an interview guide containing standard questions. A guide also helps make interviewing a large number of people more systematic and comprehensive (Patton, 2002). The use of the interview guide, in addition to various additional documented procedures I would have employed, would increase the reliability of the study. The interview guide for this study can be found in Appendix A. At the same time, I would have been looking for themes to emerge from the interviews, so the use of the guide would have been supplemented by allowing the conversation to flow in whatever direction it had taken with limited interference.

Revised Methodology

Research Sample

After receiving IRB approval, I set out to identify the sample case. First, I contacted Blackbaud, one of the leading providers of NPO solutions, including the newly developed “Blackbaud Enterprise CRM” or “BBEC”. Blackbaud had an impressive list of early-adopters of this new web-based, organization-wide CRM

specifically designed for large NPOs including but not limited to March of Dimes, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, and Heifer International. I had several high-level contacts within Blackbaud from my work at Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, a few who had, upon hearing about my proposed research, confidently assured me they would secure an organization for me to study when the time came.

As weeks went by and I had received no definitive response from my contacts at Blackbaud, I approached my high-level contacts at two additional well-known CRM providers, SofterWare and Convio. I was still in touch with Blackbaud, receiving responses from each organization along the lines of not wanting to devote staff time to the interviews I was asking to conduct. My promise of limiting interviews to one hour each for a maximum of 30, and to be as unobtrusive as possible did not convince them. Over the course of many months, each and every organization that had implemented CRM or was in the middle of a CRM implementation declined to participate in my study and my contacts at each company became unresponsive.

With no success using contacts from the three most well-known NPO CRM providers, I moved on to my extended network of nonprofit employees that may have or know of someone who has implemented enterprise CRM from an alternative provider. I wrote letters to organizations, sent emails to my LinkedIn contacts, and asked everyone I came in contact with if they might be able to assist me in identifying a suitable organization. This process went on for several months and was unsuccessful.

At this point I decided to revise my research strategy and conduct CRM “expert” interviews using individuals with experience implementing CRM. A CRM “expert” as I define it is simply an individual in the nonprofit sector that has played an instrumental role in at least one CRM implementation, from start to finish. While most would not classify an individual with experience in just *one* CRM implementation as an “expert,” I wanted a wide range of participants. In addition, given the struggles I had already experienced securing participants I did not want to limit my search to a more strict definition of “expert.” Individuals with extensive involvement in one CRM implementation are plentiful. I was fairly confident I could find at least ten individuals with such experience willing to participate. With IRB approval to move forward with this new approach, I reached out to every expert I knew. I also concluded that exploring this complex topic with ten experts with a wide range of experience would provide rich data I could then analyze and draw conclusions from.

Technology Integration

My first positive response was a woman who worked remotely from South Carolina. Without access to video conference technology, we determined I would not be able to interview her. Foreseeing a larger issue handling experts who were not within driving distance, I took a suggestion to conduct the interviews electronically, using email and/or chat programs such as Google Talk. Given the topic of my study, it seemed like the integration of technology would be a good fit.

The interview guide designed for use with the single case study as originally planned was completely transferable to expert interviews because within the case organization, I planned to interview employees at all levels; with expert interviews, as defined in the previous section, I was essentially interviewing a similar sample. The only difference between the participants I originally planned to interview and those I *did* interview is that those in the latter group were from various organizations rather than the same organization. Using this same interview guide, I planned to send the guide to each participant, and in an electronic conversation or email discussion thread, work through each question. Given the real-time nature of these technologies, I knew I could respond with follow-up questions immediately following a response, effectively simulating the interview experience.

Still, I struggled to find willing participants. Essentially, no one I reached out to responded with the exception of one woman who mentioned wanting to assist doctoral students because her husband once struggled to find subjects for his own research. It was this woman who suggested I explain to potential participants that the interview would only last a maximum of one hour. She also agreed with my notion that a cash incentive might yield better results. In addition, she offered to reach out to her network to see if anyone might respond.

I revised my approach to offer \$100 to each participant, ask participants to reach out to their networks (essentially creating a snowball sample), and extended my network even further by posting a call for participants on several listservs such as the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) and two

LinkedIn networks related to NPO technology and consulting. After a year of aggressive work identifying a willing NPO for a case study followed by identifying a minimum of ten NPO CRM experts for interviews, I had my sample: ten complete interviews from individuals in the NPO sector who have been instrumental to at least one major CRM implementation endeavor.

The Researcher

With any qualitative research endeavor, particular attention must be paid to the instruments used. This includes the researcher – their experience, training and perspective (Patton, 2002). I am a Caucasian, middle class woman who, at the time these interviews were conducted, is 30 years old. I have 12 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, eight of which were in supervisory positions at the Director level, and six of those were as the project lead on enterprise CRM implementations. I also served a two year term on a small nonprofit board of directors. Currently, I am employed by a private school in Philadelphia in a fundraising position and am a freelance nonprofit consultant. I have expertise in many aspects of NPO operations but most specifically software solutions, fundraising, and advancement office management.

According to Patton, “The principle is to report any person and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis, and interpretation – either negatively or positively – in the minds of users of the findings,” (2002, p. 566). Therefore, the use of critical reflexivity is crucial in this study. I have no doubt that my professional background influenced my research.

Therefore, the concept of reactivity (Patton, 2002) was also very important in this study, though not so much with the participants as with my own behavior. I originally anticipated my greatest challenge would be abstaining from conversations that involved my own implementation experience, as described in the Introduction, until my interviews were complete. Fortunately, with the move to electronic interviews, I did not feel compelled to add any insight or experience of my own. It is human nature to take advantage of opportunities to network and share similar experiences in the workplace, but doing so in the interview process may have had a negative effect on my results.

Ethical Considerations

As with any research endeavor dealing with or involving people, it is crucial that all ethical implications are considered. For this study there were many important considerations including but not limited to: informed consent by the experts, the anonymity of the interviewees; confidentiality of information provided to me by the interviewees, research methods and my own reflexivity as the researcher; and Internal Review Board (IRB) approval and related changes to the study that occurred. I will discuss each of these considerations in the following sections.

Informed consent. Research participants cannot make a fair assessment of a proposed study without quality information and full disclosure (Walliman, 2005). Before any interviews took place, I obtained signed informed consent from the interviewees. I provided each interviewee with a full written description of the

research to be performed: the purpose and goals; my role; the procedures; ways in which the findings will be used, stored and who will see them; and all provisions for ensuring confidentiality. In addition, I ensured participants they may choose not to participate in the study, and those who do participate may opt out of the study at any time. These documents serve as the letters of cooperation between the interviewees and me. The Informed Consent Form for the interviewees can be found in Appendix B.

Research process. Given the highly personal, intrusive nature of qualitative research methods, there are several things I had to consider. During the interviews it is important not to push too hard for information and take notice of any signs of distress, reluctance, and discomfort exhibited by the interviewee. The interviewee should feel at ease throughout the process, and it is the responsibility of the interviewer to behave in ways that foster a comfortable environment. Fortunately, with expert interviews, and most of whom are independent consultants, I was not working with a group of employees who might be more sensitive to the questions I was asking. If the study proceeded as originally planned (interviews of employees at one specific organization), more consideration would have had to go into the interview process to ensure participants were comfortable. In addition, given the impersonal nature of conducting interviews electronically, I did not have to pay attention to maintaining a professional, yet open and accommodating presence within the organization setting. It also made taking notice of any signs of distress, reluctance, and

discomfort exhibited by the interviewee nearly impossible. Again, I do not feel this group of individuals was at the same level of risk for such distress or discomfort.

As mentioned, part of the consent process included a discussion about the uses, ownership, and dissemination of the data collected and analyzed findings. As stated in the letter of cooperation, the interview transcripts (in this case, the email discussion threads) may only be reviewed by the individual in the interview and no one else. The identity of all parties involved in the research will not be revealed and future use of the information will be at the consent of all interviewees. Copies of these transcripts are currently stored on my personal, password-protected computer and secure network. All personal identifiers have been removed, and the original email discussion threads were permanently deleted. Any paper copies of the transcripts were shredded upon completion of the data analysis.

Limitations of the Study

This is an exploratory case study into a sector whose CRM implementations have not been studied to any extent. Given that this is a first-attempt to gain some insight into these large-scale endeavors in the NPO setting, it is only natural that this study will have its many limitations. The revised approach opened the study up to current “experts” in the fields of marketing/development and information technology. As the researcher, I was able to test my ideas and any emerging themes, concepts, results, and ideas I may have through discussion with the respondents. Given the diverse range of

ages, experience, areas of expertise, and perspectives of the ten respondents in the study, I gained broader insight into these complex implementations than I may have been able to with a single case study.

However, ten participants is still a relatively small sample. With a larger sample, I may have been better able to classify the participants into meaningful groups, comparing and contrasting them. In addition, as I will detail in Chapter V, conducting interviews electronically has its own limitations. With ten open-ended questions to answer as well as follow-up questions for clarification as needed, the interviewees' responses got shorter and shorter as time went on, which may indicate exhaustion with the process. Each answer had to be typed out, sent, read by the interviewer and responded to, making the entire process very lengthy.

Last, given the issues surrounding my ability to attract participants, I believe at least six of the ten who elected to participate would not be classified as "CRM experts" according to a prevailing industry definition. As far as I was able to determine, just four of the ten participants had experience with CRM implementations that were enterprise-wide or "large scale." The majority of individuals in this study had very limited views of CRM in terms of how pervasive it should be within the organization. In my opinion, individuals involved in a CRM implementation whose definitions of CRM best align with the industry definition are those who would have the best understanding of what would and should contribute to the success of the implementation. Ultimately, I believe the

participants' limited experience with *enterprise* CRM implementations greatly affects the outcomes that I discuss in Chapter IV.

Data Analysis

After all interviews were conducted, the “transcripts” were moved to Word documents and all identifying information was removed. Each interview was assigned a unique identifier, and the demographics for each participant were entered on each participant record. Analysis of these interviews was coded using a categorizing data analysis strategy in an attempt to generalize and abstract concepts from the raw data (Monette et al., 2005). Given the inductive nature of this study, the codes were derived from the data and a coding scheme was proposed *after* analysis of the transcriptions and related documents.

Summary

This chapter first describes the methods I set out to employ to conduct a single-case qualitative study of CRM implementations in NPOs. Then, I detailed how I had to change the methodology based on a number of challenges that surfaced along the way. I described the research sample and the method by which I identified the sample population. Next, I outlined the research design and data collection strategy (which includes reference to the Interview Guide in Appendix A), followed by a brief look at my role as the researcher and how my background and experience may have affected the study. Then, I discussed the ethical considerations related to the study, including informed consent, confidentiality, research methods, and IRB approval. I conclude the chapter with the study limitations and the data analysis process utilized. In the next chapter, I will discuss my findings.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter I will describe the results of my study by reviewing the data collected, analyzing it for patterns, themes, and content. In the subsequent chapter, I will take these findings and compare them to what was found in the literature described in detail in Chapter II. I will then apply this new knowledge to my own experience to give it meaning and context and to link it back to my original research questions.

Participant Demographics

Table 2 depicts the basic demographics of the ten respondents. Included are four males and six females, and the ages ranged 33 years, from 25 to 58 with the mean at 43.5. Of the ten respondents, two have their Doctorate, four have Master's degrees, and three have Bachelor's degrees. Interestingly, the four men who participated are the same four respondents who have their Master's. The mean number of years in current position was 5, with a range of 14 years. The mean number of years in the nonprofit sector was 13.4, with a range of 20 years. The mean number of years in the workforce was 22.8, with a range of 33 years. Last, the mean number of years of CRM implementation experience was 8, with a range of 24 years.

Table 2

Respondent Demographics

#	Age	Gender	Highest Level of Education Completed	Position/Title	Years in Current Position	Years of CRM Implementation Experience	Years in Nonprofit Sector	Years in Workforce	Classification
1	49	M	Master's	Senior Implementation Project Manager	15	25	10	30	consultant
2	43	F	Doctorate	President	3	2	18	21	consultant
3	58	M	Master's	President	2	5	8	37	consultant
4	51	F	Doctorate	CEO	10	15	10	26	consultant
5	28	F	Bachelor's	President	3	7	11	15	admin
6	45	F	some college	Database and Direct Mail Administrator	4	1	14	25	admin
7	45	M	Master's	Director of Marketing and Customer Relations	8	6	22	23	fundraiser
8	26	F	Bachelor's	Outreach & Communications Manager	2	2	2	5	admin
9	65	M	Master's	Director of Development	1	15	37	42	fundraiser
10	25	F	Bachelor's	Visitor Center Manager	2	2	2	4	fundraiser

While there are a few less-experienced professionals in the mix, more importantly, there are a number of well experienced, high-level professionals. Based on how the respondents described their current roles, four of the ten respondents indicate they have been directly involved in CRM implementations for numerous nonprofits through their consulting efforts. Three of the ten respondents report database oversight responsibilities within the organizations they work for, and where the remaining three respondents do not report database oversight responsibilities, they are highly involved with the marketing, communication, and fundraising efforts within the organizations they work for. However, because I sought only respondents who had CRM implementation experience, even those respondents who did not report database oversight responsibilities have implementation experience.

The breakdown or categorization of the ten respondents creates a group of taxonomies within the data. These new subgroups will help clarify relationships among the findings. From here on out, I will classify these groups as 'consultants', 'fundraisers', and 'admins' based on their level of CRM implementation experience combined with their level of database experience. The classifications were assigned based on the following criteria:

- Consultant: an individual who works for a for-profit and assists multiple nonprofits.
- Fundraiser: an individual who is employed by a nonprofit and has a primary responsibility to raise money for the organization, either in a marketing role or development role.
- Admin: an individual who is employed by a nonprofit in an administrative role other than fundraiser.

The classification of respondents can be seen in Table 2. There is definitely overlap in this taxonomy, but the general classification on page 72 is one effective way to highlight key differences in perspectives.

Data Analysis

As Monette et al (2005) note, "Content analysis refers to the method of transforming the symbolic content of a document... from a qualitative, unsystematic form into a quantitative, systematic form." By using a comprehensive interview guide and interviewing respondents via email, the

collected data more closely resembles that which might be collected in a survey, and therefore is more quantitative in nature in its raw form.

The series of questions and the order in which they were asked of the respondents was deliberate. Each question builds on the previous one to dig deeper and deeper into their perceptions of CRM to determine how broad this diverse group's understanding of CRM at the enterprise-level is. The interview wraps up with the final question of what, in ranked order, determines or is necessary for CRM implementation success. I thought that if I could correlate: 1) the respondents' demographic information, including CRM experience, role, and education, 2) answers to the series of questions pertaining to CRM use and justification, and 3) respondents' perceptions of CRM success, I would gain a deep understanding of certain phenomena that may be occurring.

Ultimately, it became clear that much work needs to be done on the forefront before organizations decide to implement CRM. Employees of NPOs lack an understanding of CRM as an organization-wide strategy and view it as technology limited to one or a few departments. Organizations dive into implementations without first educating staff, the board, executives, etc. This may be the responsibility of the vendor, and in my experience, the larger, more reputable vendors do a good job with this. If the CRM is developed in-house or by a smaller, lesser-known vendor, the organization may not receive this education. The same can be said for anything that we know from the literature and this study that contributes to the success of the CRM implementation such as training, use of metrics, and change management.

In the following sections, I will discuss how the respondents define CRM and take a look at any differences between their personal definitions and their organizations' definitions. Next, I will discuss how respondents spoke to CRM from both a technology perspective and a development/marketing perspective, where I essentially "forced" respondents to look at CRM in these two, very different ways. Then, I will discuss how data stored in the CRM system is used by their organization(s) and within the different departments. Next, I will examine the key justifications respondents saw for implementing CRM. This discussion will segway into a brief look at which parts of the organization respondents feel were or should be affected by the CRM implementation. This question was another way to dig into respondents' views on how pervasive CRM is or should be within an organization.

The second part of the data analysis will dive into the actual CRM implementation process and any regard to continuous improvement post-implementation and a look at what defines a successful implementation. This part of the analysis, when combined with the first part, will culminate with a look into what respondents feel are the key success factors associated with CRM implementations.

Definitions of CRM

As described in Chapter II, an individual's or organization's definition of CRM may greatly affect the success of the CRM implementation and/or the level of CRM utilization after it is implemented. There were several themes that

emerged from the respondents' definitions of CRM: technology vs. strategy, 360° view, relationship-building, and revenue-generating.

Technology vs. strategy. “The CRM at its purest definition need not necessarily have computer software as one of its components.” Respondents 1 and 2 held this view, as did several others. Surprisingly, Respondents 3 and 4 specifically stated that they and their clients define CRM as a software system/technology tool. Respondent 2 noted that their clients typically think of CRM as a technical solution, and it is their job to help them understand this assumption is incorrect. Specifically, the “technical solution is an enabler of their strategy; it isn't their strategy.” Respondent 2 also noted that CRM “really is a comprehensive and holistic strategy that requires people, process, and technology.”

360° view. The 360° view of an organization's constituents refers to a “complete picture” of every interaction the organization has with the constituent to give a complete, holistic view. “It should encompass their entrance or initial contact with the organization, to every mailing received, email sent, and every phone call made.” Respondent 4 explains this view to be “the basic contact data (name, address, affiliation(s)) about individuals and organizations, as well as the interactions between the client organization and the contacts in the CRM system.” Ultimately, a 360° view will enable the organization “to better know/understand, more personally communicate with, and better track each individual member” of their population. After the organization creates a 360° view it is able to segment its “key target audience.” From there, the organization can

differentiate “its segments from one another... (who they are, what are their needs/expectations, how do we currently communicate with them).”

Relationship-building. Creating a 360° view and segmenting the organization’s constituents will lead to better relationships with them. While several respondents stated they view CRM as a technology tool, nearly all agree it is a tool to enable better relationship-building between the organization and its constituents. The tool, at the micro-level, tracks all interactions between the organization and its constituents which are then used to “provide meaningful discovery, cultivation...” and “impact the quality of the customer relationship.” At the macro-level, the tool facilitates the gathering of “institutional knowledge about client and prospective client relationships.” As Respondent 2 notes, the tool can “help the organization build an authentic relationship” with its constituents. And similarly, Respondent 10 explained their organization “equates CRM to understanding who we work with and how we can better work with that same clientele in the future.”

Revenue-generating. Three of the respondents specifically speak to CRM in terms of it being a tool to enable them to “maximize streams of revenue.” Respondent 3 defined CRM as the “process which will ultimately enhance productivity and increase revenue.” While only three respondents actually mentioned increasing revenue, several others spoke specifically to their donor constituents, so this segment is obviously important to their organization(s). As Respondent 5 explained, the organization should use the tool to “build rapport and cultivate prospects/donors.” The notion that better data enables the

organization to develop better programs was generally seen across the board. “With better appeals and programming, we expect to see higher donations and revenue numbers.”

To go one step further, I then asked the respondents what CRM looks like from both a technology perspective and what it looks like from a development/marketing perspective, essentially forcing them to think about CRM as more than a technical solution. Not surprisingly, when initially asked about how they view CRM, those who responded only in terms of its technical aspects were able to see another side. Though, when talking about the development/marketing perspective, many still talked about the need to store data for easy retrieval rather than using the CRM to enable a broader organizational strategy.

Technology Perspective

From a technology perspective, respondents viewed CRM as a data repository (“database”) for all constituents’ demographic information as well as interactions between the organization and the constituent. Terms such as ‘server’, ‘cloud environment’, ‘web interface’, ‘infrastructure’, ‘records’, ‘data standards’, ‘codes’, ‘data entry’, ‘end users’, and ‘software’ were mentioned. Interestingly, Respondents 1 and 9 discuss the IT department’s responsibility for the relationships *between systems*. This is an indication that these respondents may still view “CRM” as a single database within the organization, used by one department and supported by IT rather than an enterprise-level system that is

shared by *all* departments. In these cases, each department uses their own CRM or database to store their data rather than sharing it (one record for each constituent within the organization).

To take the notion of “CRM” being used by a single department or group of people within the organization rather than by all one step further, Respondent 9 specifically talked about her organization’s two CRM systems: one to store information about their donors and one to store information about the population the organization serves as part of their mission. Given that it is entirely possible for a constituent associated with this organization to be both a recipient of their services as well as a donor, it would be impossible to obtain a 360° view of this group of constituents unless a bridge is build between the systems or manual updates are made to one or both of the systems.

Development/Marketing Perspective

The main theme found in responses that spoke to the development/marketing perspective is having the tools to understand the data stored in the CRM system. “...the composition of the data becomes much more important to them as they sort, sift and process the MEANING that is represented in the data.” Respondent 3 clearly stated one of the most important findings in the literature, “From a Development perspective many organizations view CRM as a gift processing database. Personally I think that is a fool hardy approach that barely scratches the surface of what an organization could and should be doing.”

Many respondents talked about data mining – gathering and assigning meaning from sifting through the data and presenting it in meaningful ways such as giving constituents ratings based on “loyalty and past giving.” Communication, moves management, prospect management, and generally staying on top of the organization’s constituent base are also mentioned as important uses for CRM from a development/marketing perspective.

Data Usage

To dig deeper into the respondents’ experience with CRM implementations as well as their perceptions of its pervasiveness within an organization, I asked respondents to talk about how the data stored within the CRM system is used, by the overall organization as well as by individual departments. Respondents 3, 5, and 6 explained data use across the organization, between various departments such as development, marketing, IT, finance, and whichever department(s) oversees volunteers, events, and members.

Respondents 1 and 2 describe storing data to be used by the organization (presumably colleges and universities based on their responses) to track student demographics, academic information, financial aid, enrollment, and much more. There is also mention of faculty storing courses in the CRM and finance staff processing payroll through it. These same respondents talk very little about the marketing and fundraising aspects of CRM, even though Respondent 1

specifically mentioned that CRM is “potentially used by almost every department on campus.”

The admins and fundraisers, as a group, spoke to a broader use of CRM systems within their organizations. Only Respondent 7 saw data use as being solely for the “sales force” within their organization. The remaining respondents in this group talked about multi-department use, speaking to a great extent about tracking interactions with constituents, recording income/contributions, and using the data to drive marketing efforts. Overall, there is mention of data uses that give clues to a deeper understanding of the full extent to which CRM can be utilized within an organization. While I will go into this more in subsequent sections, I will note that some of these clues include mention of using CRM data to complete IRS Form 990s and producing program or organizational outcomes and evaluation measures.

Implementation Justifications

Several themes emerged from the investigation into what the respondents thought were the key reasons their organization(s) chose to implement CRM. Nearly all the themes that surfaced can be grouped into the following categories: the break-down of silos, need for data segmentation, and a distrust of data – be it data converted from a legacy system or missing data.

Break-down of silos. The most noticeable was the need to break down functional silos within the organization, or in other words create one place to store all data in one central location, reducing redundant data entry. Information

may have been stored in various places between departments or even between individuals or groups within a single department. Respondent 5 noted “there was a disconnect between development and the program department.” Many organizations are “operating in an uncoordinated fashion because one part of the organization doesn’t realize they are interacting with the same people or organizations as another part of the organization.” Ultimately, CRM creates a single record per constituent within the organization, effectively eliminating redundant information, duplicate data entry efforts, and information ambiguity.

Data segmentation. Another key justification mentioned by Respondents 2, 4, 5 and 6 is the need to segment data. Once you have a data repository by eliminating silos, fundraisers and others alike need the ability “to group constituents by criteria in order to strategize new initiatives or existing programs.” Related to the idea of segmenting is the general need for more efficient access to the data. As Respondent 2 explained, there is a need for “easier and more user-friendly access to biographical/academic/interest information” about their prospects. Respondent 5 noted their need to “share information quickly and easily.” Also mentioned was the need for self-service of the information stored in the CRM.

Need for better data. Respondents 3, 4, 5, and 7 expressed distrust in their data and a lack of assurance that they were doing everything possible to cultivate constituents. Having better data would enable staff to identify and cultivate more potential donors, thus allowing them to raise more money. A lack of information, or inaccurate information, about an organization’s constituents

can result in poor relationships, money “left on the table,” and ultimately the inability to meet the organization’s mission. Similarly, Respondent 3 explained the key justification they see with client organizations is getting a better handle on their donor base during times of financial difficulty. Again, an organization may have constituents with the ability to give or give *more*, but without adequate data and the ability to screen constituents this potential funding source will be overlooked. Respondent 7 spoke solely to staff “head knowledge acquired through years of relationships” that was at risk whenever there was staff turnover. If information is not captured in a database or some other “permanent” repository, when staff members leave, the information leaves with them.

Based on the responses gathered, all of the remaining justifications the respondents discussed are the result of having a single data repository, ability to segment data, and having data that can be trusted. When these three things are in place, organizations can recruit more prospective students and increase enrollment, identify more prospective donors and raise more money, track costs, produce reports, evaluate programs, automate communication and better communicate with constituents, and generally improve efficiency. As Respondent 10 explained, CRM also eliminates “uninformed decision-making.”

Functions Affected by CRM Implementations

In an attempt to prod deeper into the respondents’ view of how pervasive CRM is or should be within an organization, I specifically asked which departments/functions/areas of the organization(s) are affected by CRM

implementations. I was looking for two things in the responses: in their experience, which areas *were* affected in the CRM implementations they played a role in and which ones *should* be for any CRM implementation.

Five of the ten respondents explicitly stated that CRM implementations should affect every area of the organization, or “virtually every department and function.” Of the four remaining respondents, Respondents 2, 6, and 9 described specific departments they have seen affected or should be affected by such implementations, departments such as finance, IT, marketing, and development. For Respondent 1 who speaks to higher education, the departments include financial aid, admissions, IT and marketing. Last, Respondent 7 explained “Implementation affects the IT team as well as any departments being selected to utilize the tool being implemented,” and thus the implementation may affect the entire organization if the endeavor becomes enterprise-wide.

Implementation Process

The questions pertaining to the actual implementation process were included to provide more clues into these respondents’ views on what will ensure implementation success, initially and for the long-term. Responses in this area were vague and I found it difficult to get them to talk about what needs to be in place for the implementation to progress smoothly. Rather, they concentrated their descriptions on how they made decision to implement and the approval process.

The implementation process is one of the most critical aspects of CRM adoption and utilization by an organization. Respondent 5 claimed, “This was actually the largest area of weakness” for their organization. A few of the respondents gave detailed, specific descriptions of the issues and must-haves for CRM implementations. The processes included:

- Ensuring organizational readiness
- Assessing the quality of the data in the legacy system(s)
- Adequately planning and prioritizing
- Addressing change management issues and assessing the level of investment at all levels
- Creating an understanding of the goals and aligning them with the organization’s strategic plan
- Developing a specific timeline and using an incremental approach
- Ensuring leadership support
- Communicate throughout the entire organization to build understanding and buy-in
- Secure *adequate* funding
- Assessing current processes and procedures and building in opportunities for improvement

After CRM is implemented, the issue that arises is a need for continuous improvement. As Respondent 3 explains:

... CRM is not a one-time solution, but that the capabilities, processes and procedures of the CRM system need to be able to grow and evolve as the organization does and as people realize how a consistent and uniform knowledge base will drive positive outcomes for the organization as a whole.

Unfortunately, not many organizations adopt this idea of continuous improvement. While Respondent 6 speaks to improvement as solely related to the organization's IT department updating the CRM system with updates and patches provided by the CRM provider, most respondents agree continuous improvement refers to much more than that which relates to the software itself.

Respondents 1 and 2 described in-depth efforts to provide their client organizations with improvement opportunities, both from a system standpoint and a process standpoint. These opportunities include regular calls with their clients "to discuss updates, issues, and best practices." One firm returns to the client post-implementation to reassess how they are using the system. Respondent 1 notes that many times the improvements they deliver to the client have nothing to do with the software "but instead focus on the flow of information between and within departments..." Another firm offers a client portal "for sharing information, posing questions, and accessing product updates." Many respondents mention annual conferences offered by the software vendor where clients can gather to learn from each other.

Respondents 3 and 4 agree there should be provision made for continuous improvement but do not provide anything more than encouragement for it with their client organizations. They also agree that most organizations do not engage in it. Respondents 8, 9, and 10 note that their organizations *do* engage in some continuous improvement efforts including updating records and maintaining a clean database, using focus groups to illuminate areas most in need of improvements, and integrating more functions/areas/departments to the CRM over time.

Defining CRM Success

Not surprisingly, when asked to discuss their definition of CRM success, respondents in the consultants group explained that success to them is whatever the client organization defines it as. However, this group also explained that for them, success can also be seen in the form of the CRM system being delivered and implemented on time and within budget. They also acknowledge that if the client is “happy with and able to use the resulting system,” they believe the implementation was successful. As Respondent 2 notes:

I describe success as a project where the client is able to realize their goals for the project. For instance, did they bring more prospective students to campus for visits? Did they receive more applications? Did they increase yield? Did they grow enrollments for specific student segments? Have they enhanced constituent satisfaction by responding more quickly and meaningfully and personally with constituents? Have

they saved time by reducing the number of manual processes/communications? Are the client end users satisfied and using the new solution? Did we help them develop a clear plan for the why and the how of using their technology? Have we helped them identify and effectively manage any roadblocks/challenges? Would they recommend us to other campuses?

All respondents agree that if the CRM improves *something*, such as the quality of data or a process, the implementation was successful. Respondent 4 put it best by explaining, “User adoption and usage is not a good measure of success. If a system is used by everyone but isn’t making things better it is not a success.” By “things” the respondent is referring to current processes that could be improved such as the number of pieces of mail returned due to bad addresses. Others noted that the CRM must create efficiencies, save time and/or money, and facilitate higher quality work. And still others talked about growing and better understanding the constituent base. Respondent 9 believes success is a moving target, and others agreed that the definition will change over time as organizational goals and objectives change.

Based on the Respondents’ answers to this very complex question, if there were standard measures of success for CRM implementations in NPOs, this group of professionals was not aware of them. One conclusion is that success is always defined by the organization rather than CRM software companies, consultants, and other experts. Success is measured by how well the

CRM enables organizations to meet the goals outlined in their strategic or operating plans and ultimately meet their missions.

Respondent CSF Analysis

As with the non-academic CRM literature, I conducted an analysis of critical success factors (“CSF”) found in the respondents’ responses. The results can be found below, in Table 3. Based on their responses to Question 10, Respondent 9 did not understand the question. I contacted this respondent after the response was received to clarify the question and solicit for a new response, but the respondent did not respond to my two attempts.

Table 3

CSF Analysis of Respondent Responses

Participant	Executive Ownership	Training	Change Management	Data Quality	Shared Goals	Due Diligence	Implementation Approach	Project Management	Continuous Improvement
1	x			x			x	x	
2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3	x	x	x		x	x			
4	x	x	x	x		x		x	x
5		x	x		x		x		
6		x					x	x	
7	x	x	x						x
8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
9	x		x	x		x		x	
10		x	x	x	x				
COUNT	6	7	7	5	4	4	4	5	3

Similar to the CSF analysis in Chapter II, I coded themes found in the respondents' lists of CSFs. Out of all the CSFs mentioned, nine of them could be found in at least three of the respondents' lists. If a respondent mentioned one of the nine themes, it will be marked in Table 3. Descriptions for each of the top nine CSFs identified in the respondent lists are as follows:

- Executive Ownership: executive leadership ownership, support, and buy-in of the project; communication of the overall CRM vision for the organization.
- Training: providing adequate training for end-users.
- Change Management: ensuring interdepartmental cooperation and participation and end-user buy-in and adoption of the new system, goals, and processes.
- Data Quality: ensuring cleanliness of data prior to the data conversion process; putting process and procedure into place that will ensure data cleanliness after the system goes live.
- Shared Goals: establishing early-on understanding and agreement on the project goals and priorities.
- Due Diligence: thoughtful selection of the best, most user-friendly system for the organization; knowing what is needed and what is not.
- Implementation Approach: creating a timeline and roadmap for a well-thought-out, phased-approach; re-engineering work processes and functional activities.

- Project Management: selecting good project management and project teams.
- Continuous Improvement: continued investment in the CRM after it is initially deployed (includes professional development, process improvement, data clean-up, etc.).

From the counts for each theme shown in the table, it is clear there is no specific CSF that everyone agreed upon. The two most popular CSFs (training and change management) can only be found in seven of the nine respondents' lists. In my discussions with the respondents, one CSF that frequently surfaced, though (with the exception of one respondent) was not explicitly stated in the responses to Question 10, pertains to resource availability (human and monetary). Based on my conversations, I would include financial resources under the "Executive Ownership" CSF because typically buy-in from the organization's leadership includes the allocation of sufficient resources for the project. Additionally, Respondent 7 mentioned the idea of metrics – continuously measuring use of and the improvements the CRM facilitates against the original goals set out for the system prior to implementation.

Summary

In this chapter I detailed any insight gained from analyzing the ten interviews. From a synthesized look at the data as it was presented, I was able to develop a list of critical success factors (CSFs). In Chapter V, I will compare this list to the list constructed from the non-academic literature found in Chapter II. In

addition, based on the respondents' detailed descriptions of their definitions of CRM, data usage, implementation justifications, functions within the organization(s) affected by the implementation, implementation processes, and definitions of CRM success, I was able to conclude that:

- it is not likely that implementations in nonprofit sector are enterprise-wide and affecting all or most departments;
- most individuals still view CRM as a technology rather than a strategy;
- organizations often neglect to establish metrics and other methods for measuring the success of the implementation;
- and success tends to be defined by the organization rather than in collaboration with the vendor/consultants which often leads to under-utilization of the system.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In this final chapter, I will discuss the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research, observations worth highlighting from the data, and the contributions to the literature. Given how new the topic of enterprise-wide CRM implementations is to the nonprofit sector, there is still much research to be done. As more and more nonprofits endeavor into the idea of one strategy and one data repository for its constituents, the more data that will be readily available to analyze.

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of CRM implementations in NPOs. I hoped to highlight the factors that lead to successful implementations, with an approach that looks at CRM implementations in NPOs as more than the technology itself. The questions I asked at the beginning of this study include:

- How do NPOs define CRM within their environment?
- How do NPOs define CRM success? What metrics are used/ applied? Which, if any, metrics are specific to the NPO environment?
- Are there key generic cross functional processes relevant to CRM within the NPO environment? Can they be applied to the greater NPO setting?

In the next section, I will discuss how well I was able to answer these research questions as well as any additional observations.

Limitations and Recommendations

Given the struggles I experienced conducting this research I have specific recommendations for future research based on the limitations I experienced with the study. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, as more organizations endeavor into enterprise-level CRM implementations, more data can be collected to standardize those factors necessary for success. And, as organizations and staff begin to shift their thinking on how pervasive CRM should be within the organization, they will see a greater return on their investment in CRM.

Methodology

Unfortunately, given the time constraints for this research as well as funding limitations, I had to use a methodology that was feasible. Given more resources, particularly time, I would prefer to conduct the interviews in person. I believe that I could have gone deeper into certain areas based on free-flowing conversation between the participants and myself. Through email, I was limited by the number of follow-up questions I believed I could ask before the participant grew tired of replying back to me. At the same time, I wanted to make sure all ten questions were answered with the hour or two the participant was willing to give. Basically, I believe more detail and insight would have surfaced had the interviews been verbal and less formal than I was able to achieve electronically and in written form.

Sample

In terms of the participant demographics, I believe my group of respondents contained individuals who were not as involved in the implementation as I requested they be. A few had a limited perspective on the overall implementation due to the level of their position or department they work in. The consultant group had the broadest perspectives and was able to provide the richest data in their responses. Some future recommendations for this area include choosing a homogenous group of participants or, if possible, utilizing the case study approach.

One recommendation I have is to choose a *homogenous* group of eight to ten participants – a group with similar demographics such as nonprofit consultants, fundraisers at the Director of Development level, nonprofit Executive Directors, or CRM implementation project managers. Or, if time allows, I suggest forming homogenous groups of eight to ten participants from two or more of the various groups listed above so that comparisons can be made between the groups. Basically, I recommend holding the current role of the participant in the nonprofit sector constant. This is a similar approach to interviewing employees at all levels within a single organization. Comparisons could then be made between the different levels.

If time had allowed and more nonprofits were through the implementation process, I would have liked to follow-through with the case study approach. Therefore, the sample would be a single nonprofit organization of a particular

size that recently completed a CRM implementation at the enterprise level. This was the original plan but given how new the concept of enterprise CRM is, there are few organizations in existence to approach. Those I was able to identify were unwilling to participate. As detailed in Chapter III, a case study would yield a detailed descriptive account of part or all of an organization to develop a rich, in-depth understanding of the setting and issues.

Research and Interview Questions

Given the perceived and actual time commitment of having participants answer questions electronically, I would recommend reducing the number of questions. Ten open-ended questions that provoke in-depth, detailed responses (which had to be typed) are very time-consuming. By the tenth question, it appeared participants were losing interest. The last question I asked regarding CSFs was the question I was most interested in. I believe asking that question at the end weakened the responses I received because participants grew tired of the process. Additionally, given the importance I placed on the final question so that I could conduct a CSF analysis comparison between the respondents and the non-academic literature found in Chapter II, I should have asked this question first. That way the first nine questions would not have influenced the responses to the CSF question in any way.

Observations

Based on the data collected and analyzed in this study, there are several observations I will highlight. To start, it is clear that organizations still approach

CRM from a technology standpoint rather than first and foremost as a strategy. Also, organizations still struggle to implement CRM at the enterprise (organization-wide) level. As noted in Chapter IV, one respondent said her organization made a conscious decision to use two separate CRM systems: one for financial donors and one for tissue donors. And, as mentioned in Chapter IV, there may be an overlap in constituents; a constituent may make financial contributions to the organization and at the same time donate tissue. Particularly from a fundraising standpoint, knowing if a financial donor or prospective donor donated tissue is critical information and better enables the fundraiser to capture a 360° view of the constituent.

From my own experience with CRM implementations at the enterprise level, I know how important it is to ensure staff at every level understands the organization's strategy for the implementation. This includes a shared understanding of the definitions of CRM and CRM success. If the organization does not have at least one executive with a deep understanding of CRM as a strategy and organization-wide endeavor, it is up to the vendor and/or consultants to educate the organization prior to commencing such an implementation. This ensures success both once the implementation is complete and in the future. The lack of a shared understanding of the implementation strategy appears to still plague NPOs which may explain why most implementations are still conducted at the department rather than enterprise level.

Colleges and universities seem to have the best understanding of enterprise CRM. Those respondents who work for or consult with colleges and universities described CRM (from a technology standpoint) as a repository for student records which would stem from nearly every department on campus (financial aid, registrar, advancement, student life, etc.). Essentially, this means one record per student that is shared by everyone on campus. This is the premise of enterprise CRM.

Contributions to Literature

Critical Success Factors

One of the most valuable outcomes of this research is the critical success factor (CSF) analysis. First, I looked at non-academic literature on CSFs – those articles most likely written by professionals in the consulting or nonprofit sectors. I then conducted a similar analysis using feedback from the ten respondents in my study. This group of individuals is likely to be very similar in terms of profession, years of experience, education, etc. to the group of authors found in the original CSF analysis in Chapter II. Therefore, the lists should have some, if not extensive, overlap.

First, I'll highlight the key differences. Defining and setting proper metrics is a factor that showed up in ten of the twenty non-academic articles. This same factor showed up in just *one* of the respondents' CSF descriptions. In addition, several respondents believed that focusing on continuous improvement after the system and strategy is implemented is very important so that the organization

gets the most out of the investment. This is not a factor explicitly found in the non-academic literature. It is possible that those authors classify continuous improvement under metrics – measuring success based on established goals and milestones and constantly striving to meet them.

The key similarities are much clearer. For the most part, the authors of the non-academic CRM articles and study respondents agree on the remaining CSFs. While the respondents stressed training more so than the authors it was mentioned in nearly half of the articles. Overall, it simply appears as though the CSFs identified by the authors were more comprehensive and all-encompassing than those identified by the respondents. I believe this is due to two main differences in the groups:

1. The article authors devote time to compiling such a list based on the fact that it will be published in some form. More effort and thought would be put into something that may become public.
2. The article authors may have more experience, particularly through years of consulting, and therefore are able to develop more comprehensive lists. Only four of the ten respondents are consultants. By the very nature of the remaining six respondents' positions within their organizations, they may not have had exposure to certain aspects of CRM implementations that would be critical to the process.

Interestingly, there is little mention by either group of having the necessary financial resources approved, allocated, and readily available for the project. As I mentioned in Chapter I, in my experience at Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA), the allocation of financial resources to the CRM implementation was a real barrier to its success. Leadership claimed to be onboard with the project, but at nearly every turn there was a hold up pertaining to funding. In the case of this research, it may be that the authors and respondents categorize financial resources under support and buy-in from the organization's leadership. They may believe that there is assumed financial investment that accompanies leadership approval and buy-in. I would then have to ask myself, "Was the leadership at BBBSA ever fully committed to the implementation project as we defined it?" If so, one would assume the necessary financial resources as outlined in the project plan would be more readily approved as the project progressed.

NPO Culture and Unique Attributes

The difficulty I experienced in my attempt to secure a single NPO in the process of implementing CRM or one whose initial implementation was complete came as a surprise to many, but not necessarily those in the nonprofit sector. The question had to be asked: What, if anything, is unique to these organizations that would prevent them from allowing me to interview staff? Given all the safeguards I put in place to protect employees from any adverse effects of the research and the assurance that I would not take more than an hour of each employee's time, I struggled to understand the phenomenon.

As it turns out, I believe the very same reasons identified in the literature and related to organizational culture that potentially play a vital role in the success or failure of the actual CRM implementation, are those that might close an organization off to an outsider seeking to learn more about them. To start, in order to run my request up the chain of command within these large NPOs, I had to work through non-executive employees. These “conservers” may not be very comfortable doing more than making sure the request made its way to the next higher-up. Any follow-up or persistence might be viewed as disrupting the status quo and risky to their role within the organization. And at the same time, employees, particularly non-executives, will give their job responsibilities and goals higher priority because that is how they will be evaluated.

With the current state of the economy, the issues I faced will probably be the norm for some time. The unemployment rate is up, charitable giving is down, and the competition for resources is fierce. More conservers will crop up, attempting to keep their jobs; nonprofits will close themselves off even more (though some may soon realize that collaboration and shared resources is the way to survival when times are rough); and organizations will devote even more time and energy to fundraising over other priorities.

My experience at Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) may also shed some light on the effects of organizational culture on employees' behavior. BBBSA is a very large, national organization. It has the resources to employ a team of human resource (HR) professionals who focus much of their time on developing corporate culture. While new ideas were certainly valued to an extent,

the culture that was created and developed by leadership with the support of HR did not foster an environment where any amount of risk-taking was promoted. More than likely, the large NPOs targeted in this study also have the resources to actively develop a certain organizational culture which may not encourage the risk-taking necessary to accept outsiders into their organization for research purposes.

I also believe the targeted NPOs were somewhat closed off, and for a myriad of reasons. It has been my experience that NPOs are open to sharing knowledge, expertise, best practices, and experiences in certain forums such as professional conferences. The idea of having an outside researcher interested in learning about an organization-wide, potentially very complex and difficult experience might make the organization very nervous. These types of implementations tend to be very stressful for employees, from the vendor negotiations through the completed implementation. Organizations may not want outsiders to see the organization in a negative light based on what they learn from their implementation process. Despite constant reassurance that I would keep the identity of the organization and its employees confidential, I feel certain executives within the targeted organizations felt apprehension.

Last, there is evidence from some of the responses I received that executives within these targeted NPOs were very reluctant to essentially donate roughly 30 hours of staff time to my research project. As mentioned in Chapter II, NPOs are competing for scarce resources. To many executives in this sector, each hour of staff time is very valuable. The mindset appears to be that of time

spent on my research project is time spent away from raising money or carrying out the mission. Or, as evidenced in my reply from one very large NPO who was in year three of a five year implementation project, time spent on my research project would be time spent away from the implementation tasks and priorities which were critical to the endeavor and needed the full attention of staff at every level.

Leadership

After much synthesis of the findings in this research and combining them with everything I could find in the literature, I have determined that there is one common thread: leadership. This single element appears to be the root of all critical success factors (CSFs) associated with large CRM implementations in nonprofits. And, in my experience, wherever leadership, particularly *transformational* leadership, is missing, there exists a threat to the success of such an implementation.

First, a look back at the CSFs identified in the non-academic literature in Chapter II (see Table 1) shows ten items that are unlikely to be emphasized without the full support of leadership. Each CSF must stem from leadership and pervade the organization. Table 3 in Chapter IV shows *executive ownership* as one of the most important success factors that surfaced in the analysis of respondents' answers to the CSF question in the interview. More importantly, the remaining eight CSFs the respondents identified require buy-in and support from leadership.

While both CSF analyses in my study illuminate just how critical leadership is in organization-wide CRM implementations, it is through my many experiences with these implementations that most fosters this notion that transformational leadership is a requirement for success for large and complex CRM implementation endeavors. Of the two largest implementations I served as the project lead, one was very successful; the other failed, costing the organization \$1 million in software and vendor fees (which does not take into account internal staff time spent on the failed project). A deep look into the factors that differed in these two implementations could be summed up by a noticeable difference in leadership involvement.

In the successful organization, the Vice President for Advancement (“VP”) was chosen by the board of trustees, with their full support, to oversee this campus-wide CRM selection and implementation process. The VP took full ownership of the project and believed he alone was accountable to the board for its success. The VP was a savvy, experienced executive who had a complete understanding of the implications of moving to an organization-wide solution. His first act in the process was to identify project leads from each department on campus to serve as the steering committee. As one of the project leads, I regularly witnessed the VP championing the project in a very visible, transparent way. Any necessary resource the project leads required to accomplish their pieces of the implementation was made readily available by the VP. Regular meetings served to keep the goals and vision in the forefront, and any pushback from staff who had a difficult time embracing the idea of a shared system was

dealt with in an efficient, staff-focused manner. I fully believe the success of this organization's three-year organization-wide CRM implementation was entirely due to three traits embodied by the VP: clear vision, deep understanding of CRM, and ability to communicate both things down through the entire organization (and back up to the board of trustees as needed).

A few years later, I found myself in the same project lead position in a very different organization. From the very beginning the implementation had no defined champion. It appeared the COO was fully-supportive of the concept to the best of their understanding of CRM, but with over \$1 million already sunk into a failed first-attempt, the organization's leadership was reluctant to free up any resources to proceed with the second attempt. The project champion for this second attempt emerged from the IT department which, as indicated in the literature, is not a model for a successful organization-wide CRM implementation strategy. Without the support of the marketing and development departments (the primary end-users), the project could not move forward in a way that set it up for success.

As the implementation progressed, I felt more and more that the organization's executives had very little understanding of what CRM would do for them; there was no CRM strategy that the whole organization could get behind and certainly no vision for a future that included organization-wide CRM. Individual departments had a basic idea of how their internal processes would change and what the CRM might provide them with that they could not already obtain. However, without a champion in a leadership role that spanned *all*

departments, staff remained possessive of their data and reluctant to migrate to an environment where it would be shared with others.

In the first organization, transformational leadership existed where in the second organization, it was missing. In the first organization, the three-year organization-wide CRM implementation was a complete success. The project was on time and on budget, with all staff onboard to embrace the changes, through challenges and big wins in terms of access to better data and tools. In the second organization, the initial three-year implementation failed, costing over \$1 million. The second attempt at a three-year implementation took over three years to even get to a place to commence the project. While I no longer work for that organization, I am told the project is finally on track.

Future Research

This study serves as a cautionary tale for those endeavoring into similar research, whether it be within the nonprofit environment or specifically related to organization-wide CRM implementations. There are many things I wish I had known prior to undertaking this study. To start, we are in a precarious economic environment. The competition for resources forces NPOs to tighten their belts, focus on fundraising, and delay large, expensive projects that are not absolutely necessary to carry out its mission. At the same time, employees are less willing to take risks that may have a negative impact on their jobs. As noted, this conservative approach to handling the current economic climate stifles innovation and may have negatively impacted my ability to secure a willing organization.

Future researchers must be aware of the impact this economic climate has on the nonprofit environment and recognize that it is not something that can be changed.

After much reflection on what I could have done to ensure more success, I came up with several ideas future researchers may take into consideration if attempting to study an NPO or CRM implementation. One thought is to attend some of the more prominent professional conferences such as those targeted to user groups for the large CRM software companies like Blackbaud and Convio. These conferences are ideal networking opportunities which would put the researcher in direct contact with any group they are seeking for either interviews or assistance in identifying a willing organization for a case study. Many CEOs and executive directors attend these conferences, and in an environment that promotes sharing and openness between organizations and staff, it is much more likely that these leaders would be interested in allowing a researcher into their organization. I also believe that explaining the research opportunity in person to the decision-maker(s) would garner a more favorable reaction than working through the organization's chain of command via mail, phone or email.

Summary

The goal of this research was to explore the factors associated with successful CRM implementation and those factors that lead to underutilization and potential failure. The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of CRM implementations in NPOs. Through ten interviews with

individuals who have experience implementing CRM, I was able to gauge current thinking regarding this new trend toward organization-wide constituent management in the nonprofit sector. Yet at the same time, the results of the study must be viewed with a critical lens, given the participants' lack of experience with large-scale CRM implementations. As detailed in this concluding chapter, it is apparent that current perceptions and knowledge about CRM has yet to catch up to the innovative technology available to support a broader CRM strategy.

While I may not have achieved the goals I originally set out to, the most valuable findings were related to the methodology and unique issues I ran into that appear to be specific to the nonprofit sector. In particular, my inability to get a single NPO with CRM to let me interview employees serves to give warning to future researchers endeavoring into this territory. As more and more organizations endeavor to implement CRM and are encouraged by their vendors and consultants to devise a strategy for implementation at the enterprise level, the opportunity to study a single organization may become a possibility.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Highest Level of Education Completed: _____

Position/Title: _____

Years in Current Position: _____

Years of CRM Implementation Experience: _____

Years in Nonprofit Sector: _____

Years in Workforce: _____

1. Describe your role within your organization (job function, duties, and level of responsibility).
2. What is your definition of CRM? How does your organization (or client) define CRM?
3. What does CRM look like from an "IT"/technology perspective? What does CRM look like from a development/marketing perspective?
4. What are your organization/client's reasons or key justifications for implementing CRM?
5. How is the data stored in the CRM system used – both by the overall organization and by individual departments?
6. Which departments, functions, or areas of your organization/client organization do the CRM implementations affect?
7. Describe the CRM implementations your organization/client organization conducts in terms of what is involved, timelines, procedures/processes and expectations.
8. How do you define CRM *success*? Does your definition tend to differ from that of the organization you work for/worked with?
9. Is there a structure in place for continuous improvement of CRM within your organization/client organization?
10. If you had to identify the key success factors associated with CRM implementations, what would they be (in order of priority)?

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Title of Project: CRM IMPLEMENTATION IN NONPROFITS

Principal Investigator: Kelly E. Grattan
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Dixon University Center
Third Floor, Richards Hall
2986 North Second Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110
570.847.6041
kelly.e.grattan@gmail.com

Advisor: Mary Jane Kuffner Hirt, Ph.D.
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Department of Political Science
102 Keith Annex
Department of Political Science
Indiana, PA 15705
724.357.2290
mjk@iup.edu

Responsible Institution: Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA

Purpose of this Study: The purpose of this study is to understand CRM (constituent relationship management) implementations in nonprofit organizations. Insights gained from this study will enable nonprofit organizations to better conduct complex CRM implementations and ensure long-term success.

Procedures to be followed: You will be interviewed through Google Talk and/or email. During this time, you will be asked a series open-ended questions pertaining to your experience with CRM implementations. The discussion thread saved as a transcript. All names and identifying information will be removed from the transcripts. After the interview is complete, you will receive a copy of the transcript for review. You will have three days to reply with any questions, concerns or clarification.

Discomforts and Risks: Depending on your involvement in and experience with implementations of CRM, you may be uncomfortable answering some questions. You will not be required to respond to anything you do not wish to. However, as noted in the above procedure, anything you say will be kept confidential.

Benefits: Your participation in this study will help provide nonprofit organizations with insights into the successful implementation of CRM, saving them time and money and enabling them to better fulfill their missions.

Duration: The interview will last approximately 30 minutes to one hour.

Statement of Confidentiality: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators or your organization. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying the Principle Investigator. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and will have no bearing on your employment. The information obtained in the study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

Right to Ask Questions: Please contact Kelly E. Grattan at 570.847.6041 or Mary Jane Kuffner Hirt at 724.357.2290 with questions, complaints or concerns about this research. You can also call these numbers if you feel this study has harmed you.

Voluntary Consent Form

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

Respondent Name

Date

Respondent Signature

Phone number or location where you can be reached

Best days and times to reach you

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

Investigator's Signature

Date