

# THE EFFECT OF MARKETING AUTOMATION ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's Thesis  
Tiia Rae  
Aalto University School of Business  
Marketing  
Fall 2016

---

<b>Author</b>	Tiia Rae	
<b>Title of thesis</b>	The effect of marketing automation on customer experience	
<b>Degree</b>	Bachelor of Science in Economics and Business Administration	
<b>Degree programme</b>	Marketing	
<b>Thesis advisor(s)</b>	Essi Pöyry	
<b>Year of approval</b>	<b>Number of pages</b>	<b>Language</b>
2016	32	English

---

**Abstract**

Marketing automation has gained marketers attention as an ideology that enables to automate traditionally manual marketing tasks. It enables automated, timely and personalized communications to customers. However, as marketing automation is still a young phenomenon, there is very limited amount of academic research about it. Successful customer experiences, on the other hand, have become more and more important as value creators for both customers and organizations. Superior customer experiences create clear competitive advantage.

This research discusses the two phenomena and studies the effect of marketing automation on customer experience. Customer journey perspective and the transition from customer relationship management (CRM) to customer experience management (CEM) are discussed regarding customer experience. Furthermore, the concepts of database marketing, personalization, content marketing and lead management are studied for a better understanding of marketing automation.

The findings of the research suggest that marketing automation affects customer experience with automated and personalized interactions along customer journeys. Furthermore, the findings indicate that marketing automation has both positive and negative effects on customer experience. Some of the suggested positive effects are personalized and timely customer interactions and increased trust and intimacy of customer relationships. Some of the negative effects are privacy risks and inaccuracy of customer data.

---

**Keywords** marketing automation, customer experience, customer journey, customer relationship management, customer experience management, database marketing, personalization, content marketing, lead management

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION..... 2**
- 2. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE..... 4**
  - 2.1 History and definition of customer experience..... 4**
  - 2.2 Customer journey perspective..... 5**
    - 2.2.1 Brand and product experience ..... 8**
    - 2.2.2 Shopping and service experience ..... 8**
  - 2.3 Management of customer experience ..... 9**
    - 2.3.1 Customer relationship management (CRM) ..... 10**
    - 2.3.2 Customer experience management (CEM)..... 11**
- 3. MARKETING AUTOMATION ..... 13**
  - 3.1 Definition of marketing automation ..... 13**
  - 3.2 Core concepts of marketing automation ..... 14**
    - 3.2.1 Database marketing..... 14**
    - 3.2.2 Personalization ..... 15**
    - 3.2.3 Content marketing..... 18**
    - 3.2.4 Lead management..... 19**
  - 3.3 Future prospects of marketing automation ..... 19**
- 4. DISCUSSION ..... 21**
- 5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH..... 25**
- 6. REFERENCES..... 26**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing automation as an ideology has become more and more utilized by marketers to automate traditionally manual tasks, to manage and deliver content-based and personalized marketing communications and to improve conversion rates by actively influencing customers' purchase process (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). According to Bucklin et al. (1998), automated processes that support marketing decision-making have various benefits as they improve productivity, make decision-making more efficient and claim a better return on marketing investment. Both marketing and sales units may benefit from the use of marketing automation, and it is also suggested that it increases integration and collaboration between these two units (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). However, as marketing automation combines several tasks and technologies (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016), it challenges organizations in regards to its contribution on customer experience. While the effects of the related concepts as a such on customer experience may be recognized, the influence of them as an integrated entity still shows lack of research. Furthermore, marketing automation is a young phenomenon (Wood 2015), and while its definition (Heimbach et al. 2015) and use (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016; Wood 2015) have been studied, there is no research that addresses its effect on customer experience.

Customer experience, on the other hand, refers to experiences that customers have across all interactions with an organization or its offerings (Meyer & Schwager 2007; Shaw & Ivens 2002: 6). According to Frow and Payne (2007), customer experience perspective is receiving increasing attention from both academics and managers. Already in 1998, Pine and Gilmore stated that customer experience creates significant competitive advantage. Zomerdijk and Voss (2010) underline that especially service organizations are concentrating on creating experiences that differ from those of competitors to attain customer loyalty. However, according to Pine and Gilmore (1998), all companies should shift from offering products and services to offering experiences. Still, many organizations seem to have problems in finding ways to improve (Meyer & Schwager 2007), implement and deliver (Johnston & Kong 2011) superior customer experience. Furthermore, according to Verhoef et al. (2009) and Johnston and Kong (2011), there is too little academic marketing research about the subject, regardless of its significance in the field. In addition, previous studies have mainly focused on the

managerial point of view instead of having an academic perspective (Meyer & Schwager 2007; Berry et al. 2002).

The objective of this research is to indicate the effect of marketing automation on customer experience by reviewing academic literature of both concepts.

The main research question is:

***What is the effect of marketing automation on customer experience?***

Sub-research questions are:

***What are the key factors of customer experience?***

***What is marketing automation and what are the core concepts related to it?***

## 2. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

In this chapter, first, the history and definition of customer experience is discussed. Second, the chapter discusses the key factors of customer experience.

### 2.1 History and definition of customer experience

Customer experience is not a young phenomenon, in fact, discussion about it has occurred for a long time. In the 1950s, Abbott (1955, cited in Palmer 2010) presented that people don't in fact desire products but instead products are purchased to receive experiences. The increased discussion of experiences resulted in further research and later, Dewey (1963, cited in Palmer 2010) discussed the importance of emotional aspects and uniqueness to experiences.

Customer experience perspective was later introduced in the 1980s, as an advocator of experiential point of view to customer decision-making (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982). Before, customers were viewed simply as rational decision-makers and emotions were not regarded significant (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982; Addis & Holbrook 2001). The new perspective presented that customers don't necessarily always make rational decisions as they are also affected by their emotions. Eventually, in 1999 the perspective became current and customer experience as a value creator became established (Gentile et al. 2007).

Regarding the definition of customer experience, there seems to be slight variations of it. According to Meyer and Schwager (2007), customer experience is created in the minds of customers due to interactions with an organization or its offerings. Ghose (2007) defines customer experience as the user's interpretation of interactions with the brand while LaSalle and Britton (2003), find that it is rather a provoked reaction and that it is a comparison between expectations and interactions. According to Mascarenhas et al. (2006) and Verhoef et al. (2009), customers have experiences before, during and after the use of a product, while Meyer and Schwager (2007) find that experiences occur during and after interactions. However, there seems to be an agreement on the interaction perspective to customer experience (Meyer & Schwager 2007; Ghose 2007; LaSalle & Britton 2003; Shaw & Ivens 2002: 6). The definition of Shaw and Ivens (2002: 6) is further used in this research as it underlines all interactions as well as physical and emotional aspects to customer experience. *"Customer experience is a blend of a company's physical performance and emotions evoked,*

*intuitively measured against customer expectations across all moments of contact”* (Shaw & Ivens 2002: 6).

A superior customer experience has multiple benefits for both the organization and its customers, and it creates clear competitive advantage (Pine & Gilmore 1998; Meyer & Schwager 2007; Gentile et al. 2007). A great customer experience is found to improve customer satisfaction (Liljander & Strandvik 1997), affect expectations that customers have for the brand, its products or competitors’ products as well as set standards for competitors (Flanagan et al. 2005). By offering unique experiences organizations can also achieve long-term differentiation compared to competitors and develop emotional relationships with customers (Shaw & Ivens 2002: 10; Pullman & Gross 2004; Mascarenhas et al. 2006; Berry & Carbone 2007). Thus, an organization that offers great customer experience can profit from better satisfied customers as well as highlight its superiority compared to competitors. Also, the intentions of new competitors to enter the market may decrease as customers’ expectations are set high and may thus be hard to reach. When it comes to the mentioned emotional relationships, they can create unique bonds between the organization and its customers. Emotions are hard for competitors to copy (Mascarenhas et al. 2006).

## **2.2 Customer journey perspective**

A concept that is discussed in most customer experience-related studies is a customer journey (Nenonen et al. 2008; Richardson 2010; Rawson et al. 2013; Edelman & Singer 2015; Frow & Payne 2007; Mascarenhas et al. 2006; Verhoef et al. 2009; Berry et al. 2002). A customer journey can be characterized as a process that starts from the first contact that a customer has with an organization or its products and lasts until post-purchase activities. It is formed of touch points, which refer to interactions between a customer and an organization or its products (Zomerdijk & Voss 2010; Gentile et al. 2007). Furthermore, touch points (i.e. interactions) generate experiences along the journey, and the evoked total experience is a combination of all those experiences (Mascarenhas et al. 2006; Verhoef et al. 2009). Touch points define what type of experiences are created.

Touch points along the customer journey may differ a lot from each other and they may occur across various channels (Rawson et al. 2013; Shaw & Ivens (2002: 63); Prahalad 2000; Frow & Payne 2007). Online touch points could include social media posts, internet advertisements,

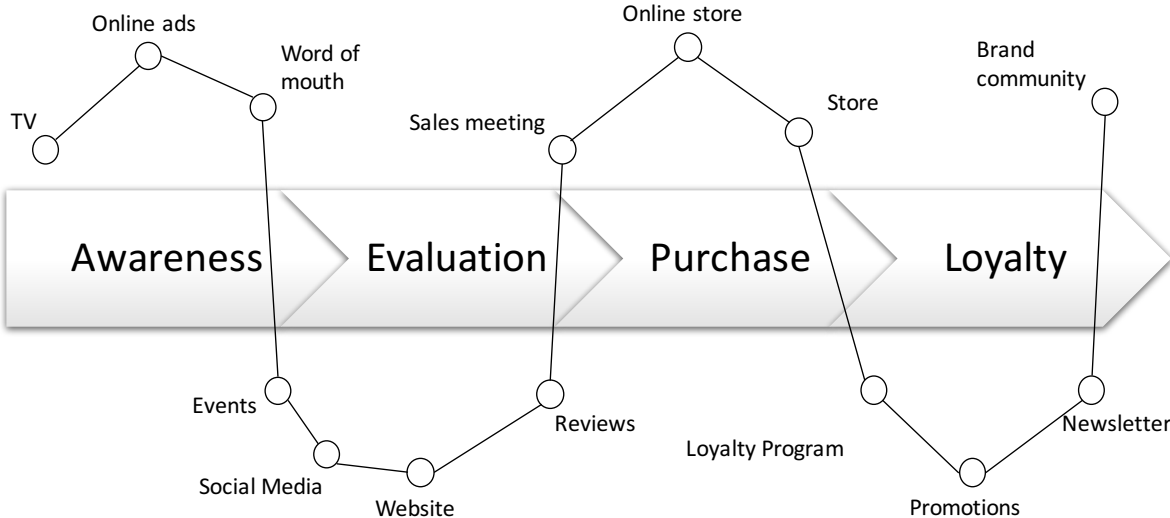
reviews, emails, website content or online store services. Offline touch points, on the other hand, could include service interactions in a store, maintenance service, billboards, word of mouth or the actual use of a physical product. Every touch point or interaction offers a new experience, and one greatly positive experience can thus compensate some badly performed ones. To aim for the best total experience, the whole customer journey and its individual touch points should be managed and perfected to maximize value for both customers and the organization (Mascarenhas et al. 2006; Nenonen et al. 2008). If all touch points create rather positive than negative experiences, the better the results naturally are.

Furthermore, touch points occur during different phases of a customer buying process (Richardson 2010). A customer buying process refers to different phases that customers undergo before, during and after a purchase, and which organizations aim to affect (Richardson 2010). Richardson (2010) refers to the buying process as a funnel that is divided into phases of awareness, research, purchase and OOB (out-of-box-experience). Out-of-box-experiences refer to experiences of “unboxing” a product. Kotler et al. (2006), on the other hand, discuss the buying process as a funnel that organizations aim to affect with both marketing and sales processes. According to them, the marketing unit affects the phases of awareness, consideration and brand preference while the sales unit influences purchase intention, purchase, loyalty and advocacy. This research unites the slight differences of the two frameworks and combines their most important functions to one framework. The first phase of the created framework, awareness, is included in both Richardson (2010) and Kotler et al.’s (2006) frameworks. It describes the phase where customers become aware of a brand or its offerings. The second phase, evaluation, combines research, consideration and brand preference as all of them can be viewed as functions that are related to customers’ evaluation of information and available options. The third phase is purchase which combines purchase and purchase intention. Finally, the fourth phase is loyalty which is a combination of out-of-box-experience, loyalty, advocacy, which all are post-purchase actions that can be related to either initiation or realization of loyalty to the brand. Figure 1 illustrates the presented buying process and some examples of touchpoints along the customer journey. Touch points as an attached entity create a customer journey throughout the whole buying process.

Furthermore, a customer journey may be simple or complex, short or long, depending on how many interactions there are and what type of a brand, product or customer is in question (Richardson 2010). Touch points and customer journeys of different products and different



customers can hence differ a lot from each other and vary along the alternatives that an organization offers to use. For example, one customer may prefer to shop in an actual store and use call centers if any problems occur while another customer may prefer to use online stores and emails.



**FIGURE 1.** The customer buying process and an example of touch points on a customer journey. The customer buying process (awareness, evaluation, purchase, loyalty) is adapted from the frameworks of Richardson (2010) and Kotler et al. (2006).

It may be perceived from Figure 1, that touch points and experiences are in fact often related to the considered organization or brand and its product. Advertisements, events, word of mouth, purchase situations and promotions may all be certain types of interactions that customers have with a certain brand or its products. On the other hand, one of the most significant phases for customers and organizations could be viewed as the purchase which contains often shopping and service situations. In addition, the possibility of loyalty

programs, special promotions and newsletters can all be viewed as good service. Next, brand and product experience as well as shopping and service experience are discussed more in detail.

### **2.2.1 Brand and product experience**

Customer experience is highly affected by a brand and its products (Brakus et al. 2009). Brand experience refers to experiences related to a brand-related stimuli and product experience refers to experiences that customers have when they are interacting with products (Brakus et al. 2009). Without any interactions with a brand's products, a customer may still have many interactions with the brand. A sponsored sports jersey or an event where the brand is present in some terms doesn't necessarily contain any contact with its products. However, all kinds of brand experiences can influence expectations about future experiences with products (Shaw & Ivens 2002: 139). Product experience is divided into searching for a product, shopping for a product, receiving service regarding the product and finally consuming the product (Holbrook 2000). Mascarenhas et al. (2006) and Verhoef et al. (2009) present further the phases of searching, finding, using and post-usage of the product. A product that functions as expected or exceeds customers' expectations is naturally more likely to generate a better customer experience than a non-functional one. Research indeed highlights the importance of physical and functional aspects of product-related customer experiences (Berry et al. 2002; Mascarenhas et al. 2006; Frow & Payne 2007; Shaw & Ivens 2002: 15). Berry et al. (2002) find that customers can receive clues of the offering's level of functionality; whether it signals to be able to perform the purpose it was designed and offer the expected experience. Different signals could include brand image, advertising, sales interactions and word of mouth (Shaw & Ivens 2002: 23). Also, simply the appearance or the price of the product can signal a certain level of quality and functionality. Sometimes there isn't any physical contact with the product and customers assess functionality indirectly (Hoch & Ha 1986). A product that is presented virtually or in an advertisement is an example of an indirect product experience (Hoch & Ha 1986; Kempf & Smith 1998).

### **2.2.2 Shopping and service experience**

Shopping and service experience refers to customers' interactions with a store and its personnel as well as the defined policies and practices (Hui & Bateson 1991; Kerin et al.

1992). An experience with a store can refer to its amenity as well as its design, functionality and size. The term store, on the other hand, may refer to an online store besides a physical store. When it comes to personnel, research suggests that the majority of the greatest customer experiences are in fact those where customers deal with people (Shaw & Ivens 2002: 101). Thus, interactions with personnel as well as other customers can both affect the shopping and service experience. Policies and practices, on the other hand, could include returns, billing and opening hours to mention a few.

In addition to physical and functional aspects, emotional aspect is widely discussed in customer experience literature as well (Gentile et al. 2007; Frow & Payne 2007; Shaw & Ivens 2002: 65). Berry et al. (2002) find that organizations that combine both functional (i.e. physical) and emotional aspects to experiences are in fact the most competent. Singh and Saini (2016) suggest that customers indeed appreciate and value emotional aspects higher than ever. Personnel can further provide unique face-to-face elements and influence customers' emotions by the manner that they interact with them during shopping and service situations, in contrast to e.g. online services. Indeed, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2006) find that authenticity of an employee's emotions during service encounters affects customers' emotions and increases customer satisfaction. They suggest also that smiling has a positive impact on customer-employee relationships. As a consequence, organizations that are able to perfect interpersonal relationships between customers and the personnel, and offer functionality as well as emotional sensitiveness during service, are likely to succeed in creating valuable shopping and service experience. The personnel can also affect the way that they serve a single customer and thus guarantee that for example an elderly customer as well as a younger customer are both satisfied.

### **2.3 Management of customer experience**

When aiming to create superior customer experiences, the management of them is an important aspect. Customer experience management (CEM) is indeed highly discussed in many research (Gentile et al. 2007; Palmer 2010; Meyer & Schwager 2007; Berry & Carbone 2007). Before the customer experience perspective and its management became current, the focus was however on customer relationships and customer relationship management (CRM) (Gentile et al. 2007). Along the increased attention on experiences, nowadays many researchers argue, that to succeed all companies should implement a CEM system alongside a CRM system (Meyer & Schwager 2007; Palmer 2010). Indeed, by using both CRM and

CEM, organizations may receive highly valuable customer insights compared to using only either one. To better understand CEM and its differences to its predecessor, CRM, the following chapter discusses both of these perspectives.

### **2.3.1 Customer relationship management (CRM)**

As the focus of marketing shifted from managing pure transactions to building relationships, the concept of customer relationship management (CRM) was introduced (Kotler et al. 2005: 476; Gentile et al. 2007; Buttle 2009: 3). CRM could be viewed as a mutual strategic decision of the organization. It is a perspective that concentrates on the management of strategically important customers and on the development and application of customer relationship objectives (Puusa et al. 2012: 168). According to Parvatiyar and Sheth (2001), “*customer relationship management is a comprehensive strategy and process of acquiring, retaining, and partnering with selective customers to create superior value for the company and the customer*”. CRM is thus a strategy of the whole organization, with an aim of longer and more valuable customer relationships. Furthermore, it is based on a collaborative relationship that is created between the organization and its customers (Parvatiyar and Sheth 2001).

Customer data and its management is an important factor of CRM. CRM builds on the management of transactional customer data and aims to enable better customer relationships by analyzing and utilizing this information (Gentile et al. 2007). With specific information about customers, better performance and relationships can be enabled with them in the future. This type of information can help marketing and sales people to know what kinds of products could interest a certain customer in the future and what could be suggested (Buttle 2009: 6; Meyer & Schwager 2007; Parvatiyar and Sheth 2001). In addition to information about people, CRM stores also data about processes and operations (Frow & Payne 2005). This kind of data can be further used by e.g. supply-chain functions. Thus, CRM can be used in many contexts and in various departments of the organization.

One of the core themes of CRM is customer lifetime value (CLV) which measures the present net profit of a customer (Buttle 2009: 35). It's the remainder of all revenues and costs of a single customer during his or her entire relationship with an organization (Kotler et al. 2005: 474). The bigger CLV the better. The length and nature of the relationship, on the other hand, is often referred to as a customer lifecycle, which is present in most CRM-related studies

(Ansari & Mela 2003; Kamakura et al. 2005; Nenonen et al. 2008). Customer lifecycle consists of customer acquisition, customer development and customer retention processes, which refer more in detail to activities of attracting prospects, assuring their value growth and retaining them (Buttle 2009: 227). With CRM, customer data and insights may be analyzed over the whole customer lifecycle. Furthermore, satisfied customers are more likely to have longer and more profitable lifecycles (Buttle 2009: 43).

### **2.3.2 Customer experience management (CEM)**

As the number of interactions between organizations and customers has increased and the focus of marketing has moved from relationships to emotional aspects and experiences, customer experience management (CEM) has become central (Gentile et al. 2007). The discussed CRM is in fact viewed as the predecessor of CEM (Palmer 2010). As the term customer experience management indicates, it is the management perspective to customer experiences.

To better understand CEM and its functions, there's a need to indicate its differences from CRM. CRM enables to create and develop relationships with customers (Osarenkhoe & Bennani 2007) while CEM focuses on the management of emotional features related to experiences (Berry & Carbone 2007). Whereas CRM is reactive and it collects information after interactions with customers, CEM's focus is in real-time, during interactions (Meyer & Schwager 2007). CEM can enable companies to get more insights on what customers feel or think during different occasions, e.g. in service situations or during a purchase in a store. It can help to track whether customers are satisfied with the experience related to the offered interaction or not. It may also help to address what the possible problems in certain interactions are and facilitate their future planning. In contrast to CRM, CEM offers information from customers' point of view, and it helps to manage and improve experiences related to customers' interactions (Meyer & Schwager 2007; Singh & Saini 2016). CRM, on the other hand, is transaction-based and it analyzes data that is created after interactions (Gentile et al. 2007; Meyer & Schwager 2007). It thus focuses on tracking and saving data of customers' and actions related to them. Table 1 presents the main differences of CRM and CEM (Meyer & Schwager 2007).

**TABLE 1.** Differences of CRM and CEM (Meyer & Schwager 2007).

	<b>What</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>How Monitored</b>	<b>Who Uses the Information</b>	<b>Relevance to Future Performance</b>
<b>Customer Experience Management (CEM)</b>	Captures and distributes what a customer thinks about a company	At points of customer interaction: "touch points"	Surveys, targeted studies, observational studies, "voice of customer" research	Business or functional leaders, in order to create fulfillable expectations and better experiences with products and services	Leading: Locates places to add offerings in the gaps between expectations and experience
<b>Customer Relationship Management (CRM)</b>	Captures and distributes what a company knows about a customer	After there is a record of a customer interaction	Point-of-sales data, market research, Web site click-through, automated tracking of sales	Customer-facing groups such as sales, marketing, field service, and customer service, in order to drive more efficient and effective execution	Lagging: Drives cross selling by bundling products in demand with ones that aren't

Table 1 indicates that CRM and CEM have in fact differences regarding the subject, timing, monitoring, audience as well as purpose. While CEM is mostly designed for business leaders to manage and improve experiences, CRM is used by sales, marketing and other customer-facing groups to support their future processes. They are also monitored differently. To monitor experiences, customer reviews, product ratings, and surveys can be used. To build and improve customer relationships, data about customers, their purchase history or online behavior can be utilized.

### 3. MARKETING AUTOMATION

The following chapter defines marketing automation and discusses its core concepts. It also discusses future prospects of marketing automation.

#### 3.1 Definition of marketing automation

Marketing automation has gained a lot of attention among marketers as an ideology to automate traditionally manual marketing tasks (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). It saves marketing departments' time from manual and time-consuming chores (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). Automated tasks may include e.g. personalized pricing, promotion and customer journeys that are enabled with automated communications across channels (Heimbach et al. 2015).

Marketing automation is a recent phenomenon and there is only a limited amount of academic research about it. Hence, the definition of marketing automation isn't academically established either. One of the first suggested definitions of marketing automation was "*the automated marketing decision support on the internet*" (Little 2001). Marketing automation is indeed found to support marketing decision-making (Bucklin et al. 1998). Both marketing and sales units may benefit from the use of it, and it is also suggested to increase the integration and collaboration between the two units (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). This research uses the following definition of Heimbach et al. (2015), as it refers to marketing automation as an ideology that uses database to further execute automated communications in customer interactions.

*"Marketing automation intends to utilize multiple data sources to design communications on-the-fly (in real time) for all kind of touch points (e.g. website, smartphone app, email, etc.)."*

One of the objectives of marketing automation is active participation in customers' processes and enabling of increased customer engagement (Järvinen and Taiminen 2016). Van Doorn et al. (2010) define customer engagement as the behavioral manifestation from a customer toward a brand or an organization. The following examples describe some of the possible uses of marketing automation. After a certain number of completed online purchases, personalized

discounts may be automatically offered to the customer. Or, after a purchase of flight tickets, a confirmation with tourist information and suggestions related to the destination may be automatically sent. In fact, the use of marketing automation is often based on actions that trigger a certain, predefined action that marketers have designed (Heimbach et al. 2015). In the first example, the completed online purchase triggers an automated and personalized discount. In the second example, the purchase of flight tickets triggers an automated confirmation with information about the destination. Various automated actions may be designed to suit different situations, depending on the wanted outcomes.

Another objective to use marketing automation, especially in B2B context, is efficient conversion of potential customers to customers (Järvinen and Taiminen 2016). It may be referred to as lead management. Leads are people or companies that may be potential customers for the organization (Morey & McCann 1983). Lead management refers naturally to the management of leads and their processes and it is later discussed more in detail. Furthermore, marketing automation is a software-based service and there are several vendors that offer marketing automation software. Some examples are Hubspot, Marketo, Pardot and Silverpop.

## **3.2 Core concepts of marketing automation**

The following chapters introduces and discusses in detail the core concepts of marketing automation.

### **3.2.1 Database marketing**

Customer database is a collection of data about prospects and customers, and it may include information about geographics, demographics, psychographics and buying behavior (Kotler et al. 2005: 832). With data, marketers can analyze and extract various information about segments and customers from the mass data (Kotler & Keller 2012: 144). Data may originate from various sources. In addition to customer database as CRM, data may also originate from online behavior as cookies, IP addresses or clickstream data on a website (Bucklin et al. 2002; Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). A grocery store, on the other hand, may receive most of its customer data from loyalty programs and the use of loyalty cards. Also, a hairdresser whose



information about customers is on a piece of paper, can be regarded to have some sort of customer data as well.

Database marketing is a practice of using data to develop, test, implement, measure and create customized marketing (Batra et al. 1995, cited in Ha & Park 1998). The term data in database marketing not only refers to customer data but also to other related data that may be used for further analysis and use in marketing practices. Indeed, according to Kotler and Keller (2012: 143), database marketing builds, maintains and uses customer databases as well as other related databases (products, suppliers, sellers) to further contact, transact, and build customer relationships. As a result, database marketing is about the use and analysis of various data to develop and execute marketing strategies and tasks. Even though the discussed hairdresser may utilize the ideas of database marketing in some terms, database marketing is most used by organizations that collect and exploit a lot of customer data, mainly saved in CRM systems (Kotler & Keller 2012: 145). These kinds of organizations could include hotels, banks, airlines, and insurance, credit card, and telecom companies (Kotler & Keller 2012: 145).

The exploitation of customer database and further the principles of database marketing are a significant part of marketing automation. Data remains as one of the fundamentals of marketing automation as all automated marketing actions are “*a direct response to existing, incoming or changing customer or user information*” (Heimbach et al. 2015). As discussed before, in marketing automation, a certain action triggers a predefined and automated action (Heimbach et al. 2015). A change in data often serves as the initiator of automated actions. Furthermore, many researchers discuss the integration of marketing automation and CRM (Xu et al. 2002; Tan et al. 2002; Buttle 2009: 6). They find that marketing automation is in fact one of the features or even a technical part of CRM, and that it is often integrated with data in CRM (Xu et al. 2002; Tan et al. 2002; Buttle 2009: 6). Also, personalization builds on data and it is a significant part of marketing automation (Vesänen & Raulas 2006; Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). Personalization is discussed next.

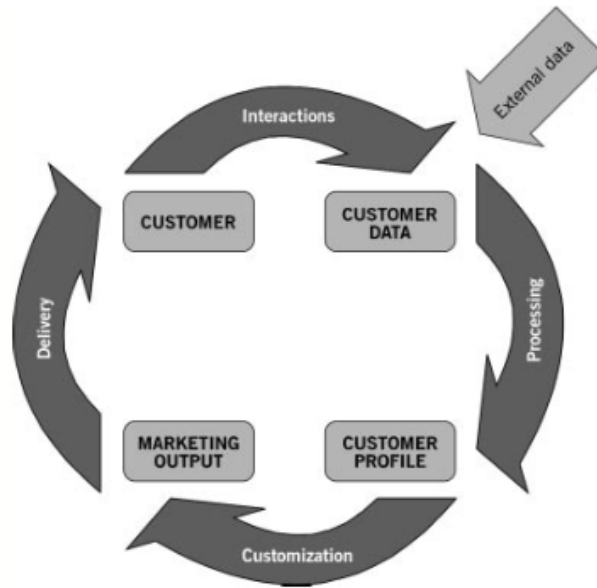
### **3.2.2 Personalization**

According to Personalization Consortium (2005), personalization is a method that is based on technology and customer information to execute unique electronic commerce interactions with individual customers. The viewpoint of Personalization Consortium is modern and

technology-based (Vesanen 2007). An example of a technology-based personalization could be suggestions of a customer's preferred product labels in an online store, based on previous purchases. Referring to the discussed database marketing, in personalization, data about customers is used to further tailor and personalize communications, offerings, service or other interactions to individual customers.

In addition to technology-based personalization, personalization may however be used without technology and in offline contexts as well (Vesanen 2007). It could include personalized communications in offline service situations (Imhoff et al. 2001). The discussed hairdresser that has information about customers on a piece of paper may also personalize some factors of the provided service, tailor the price for all loyal customers. However, nowadays personalization is mostly regarded as a method that builds on both technology and database (Vesanen 2007). According to Montgomery and Srinivasan (2002) and Heimbach et al. (2015), personalization is a concept of personalizing and customizing computer-enabled factors, such as online product, price, place and promotion.

To better understand the nature of personalization, Vesanen and Raulas (2006) present it as a circular process. Figure 2 illustrates how customer interactions and other external data first create customer data. After customer data is analyzed and processed, customer profiles are established. Depending on the profile information, customization can be offered and delivered. Furthermore, future interactions create more data and the circular process can be repeated.



**FIGURE 2.** A framework of personalization (Vesanen & Raulas 2006).

Marketing automation concentrates a lot on technology-based personalization and it has in effect its roots in the personalization of marketing mix elements (Heimbach et al. (2015). Automated personalization offers many alternatives for its use. Some examples of it could be the following. A customer interrupts an online store purchase regarding certain products in the shopping cart. If the purchase still remains incomplete for a certain period of time, the customer could receive an automated special offer of those products (Kantrowitz 2014). A personalized and automated message could also be sent to inquire why the purchase process was interrupted and how simple it would be to complete it. Heimbach et al. (2015) discusses an example of a cinema. A customer purchases tickets to a movie, starring a famous actor. As the purchase history is saved, an automated newsletter can be sent when the same actor features again, in a new film. Heimbach et al. (2015) suggest also, that marketing automation is significant in a sense of enabling personalization to targeted customers at the right time. Timely personalization is indeed important, as personalized offers of coats during summer or an information about tourist attractions after the return of a purchased city break are rather useless.

### **3.2.3 Content marketing**

Inbound marketing, also known as pull marketing (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016), focuses on creating natural customer demand (Rimlinger 2011). It uses techniques that encourage customers to request a product voluntarily, rather than pushing it to customers (i.e. outbound marketing or push marketing) (Rimlinger 2011; Lusch & Vargo 2009). It is about attracting customers and making them desire the product.

Content marketing is an inbound marketing technique that has been recently gaining more and more attention, especially in B2B digital marketing forms (Holliman & Rowley 2014). The core of content marketing isn't about selling or pushing products to customers, but instead content is created to help, inform and attract (Holliman & Rowley 2014). It is based on the idea of creating informative, relevant and meaningful content across channels (Holliman & Rowley 2014). This kind of content aims to attract potential customers towards the brand and its offerings and pulls them further in the purchase process (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). In addition to attracting potential customers, content may encourage current customers to repurchases.

There are various ways of using content marketing as a marketing technique. Chaffey et al. (2013: 243) find that the main formats of digital content marketing are videos, e-books, podcasts, webinars, infographics, Q&As, FAQs, blogs and social media posts. These types of contents serve as value creators to customers and can further lead to increased brand awareness, brand building, lead generation, customer engagement and relationship building (Holliman & Rowley 2014). As discussed, leads refer to people or companies that may be potential customers for the organization (Morey & McCann 1983). Lead generation is naturally the idea of establishing a greater lead base.

Järvinen and Taiminen (2016), find that especially in B2B contexts, the use of content marketing and marketing automation together is one of the main factors that enables increased lead generation and influence customers' buying process. An organization that offers appealing content may attract the attention of potential customers and further use marketing automation and personalization to guide them further in the buying process. Next, these processes are discussed more in detail.

### **3.2.4 Lead management**

The discussed concepts of data marketing, personalization and content marketing enable together efficient conversion of leads to customers and active guiding of them through the buying process (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). Especially in B2B context, the management and efficient conversion of potential customers to customers is important (Järvinen and Taiminen 2016). By using marketing automation, nurtured leads may be seamlessly guided from the responsibility of marketing unit to further processes of the sales unit (Järvinen and Taiminen 2016). Marketing automation enables also lead scoring which helps marketing and sales to recognize which leads are ready for further actions or, on the contrary, which should be withdrew back from sales processes to marketing processes (Kantrowitz 2014; Järvinen & Taiminen 2015). Lead scoring could be characterized as a process of arranging leads depending on their potential.

Furthermore, Järvinen and Taiminen (2016) characterize the process of using marketing automation in B2B lead generation and sales context as follows. The selected marketing automation software first collects and segments customer data depending on differentiated factors. Then, leads are nurtured by offering valuable and meaningful content (i.e. content marketing) and personalized processes. Finally, the software scores the leads depending on their response to the generated marketing actions. The leads that are qualified are further transferred to sales team, who aim to close the deal. However, if the lead still seems hesitant, it can be led back to the nurturing phase to marketers. Kantrowitz (2014) refers to this kind of lead nurture as smart engagement.

### **3.3 Future prospects of marketing automation**

As marketing automation is still a young phenomenon (Wood 2015), it has a lot of opportunities. In general, as businesses become more acquainted with it, the use of it may highly increase in a short period of time. According to Bucklin et al. (1998), marketing automation offers indeed efficiency and customization of marketing tasks as well as it enables even better decisions than managers could make themselves, as the number of tasks amplifies. In addition to online contexts, there are indications that marketing automation can be used in offline contexts as well (Heimbach et al. 2015). Offline use could include personalized paper

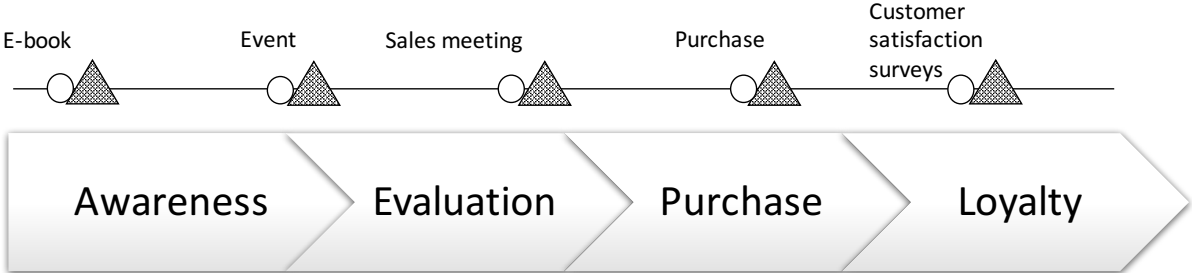
invitations, brochures or advertisements. Customers could e.g. have unique advertisements in their personal magazines or newspapers that are delivered to them.

Marketing automation could also include more exploitation of geographic information and location of customers in the future. As Heimbach et al. (2015) suggest, a restaurant may automatically personalize their mobile application's discounts depending on the city where a customer uses the application and what type of weather there is at the moment. If it's rainy and cold, coffee discounts could be displayed. If on the other hand it's sunny, smoothie discounts could be offered. Also, by locating and identifying customers through a mobile application, individual offers or certain advertisement could also be displayed on a digital billboard screen as soon as the identified customer enters an offline store.

Another interesting and related future use of advanced technology and automated marketing processes are "supercomputers" as for example IBM Watson. These kinds of computers can process natural spoken or written human language, use analytics to offer automated solutions (High 2012). The computer could be asked to create specific actions as an entire marketing campaign (High 2012).

# 4. DISCUSSION

As discussed already in its definition, “marketing automation intends to utilize multiple data sources to design communications on-the-fly (in real time) for all kind of touch points” (Heimbach et al. 2015). Customer experience, on the other hand has its fundamentals on capturing emotional and physical experiences during real-time interactions along customer journeys (Richardson 2010; Kotler et a. 2006; Gentile et al. 2007; Frow & Payne 2007; Shaw & Ivens 2002; Mascarenhas et al. 2006; Verhoef et al. 2009). Customer journeys occur along a customer buying process. Marketing automation enables further to manage and influence customers along the buying process (Templeman 2015). It can add value to customer journeys and to experiences along them with automated communications and services. Figure 3 illustrates how marketing automation can affect a figurative customer journey with automated and personalized actions. Again, the circles on the figure represent touch points which as an attached entity create a customer journey. Triangles represent personalized and automated actions that marketing automation generates.



**FIGURE 3.** Marketing automation and its effect on a figurative customer journey and the experiences along it.

Figure 3 could be an example of an B2B organization that sells complex IT solutions. It offers blogs, e-books and other information about the subject as content on its website. Interesting content attracts an online visitor to download an e-book about the subject. He or she is asked to provide contact information to receive the document. An automated message is sent to thank for the download and to invite the lead to an upcoming event about the subject (1<sup>st</sup> automated action i.e. triangle). In the event, the lead discusses with the personnel and becomes more interested in the available products. An automated email is sent for all the participants to provide more information and to encourage them to contact for more details (2<sup>nd</sup> triangle). The lead contacts the suggested person who suggests a meeting. Automated and personalized information and a proposal is sent after the sales meeting, as well as information about how the process may proceed (3<sup>rd</sup> triangle). The lead decides to complete the purchase online and receives an automated confirmation (4<sup>th</sup> triangle). Finally, the customer receives a customer satisfaction survey and by its completion, he or she is automatically invited to a breakfast seminar (5<sup>th</sup> triangle).

Marketing automation enables more insights on customers and their preferences during different phases of the buying process and along the customer journey. With data analytics and personalization, customers can be better served and their personal needs may be better fulfilled (Kotler & Keller 2012: 144; Vesanen 2007). Customers can experience more personalized and timely touch points which may lead to better experiences along the customer journey. They can also receive help or assistance in real-time (Järvinen & Taiminen 2016). When a customer executes a certain action, he or she can receive a response, suggestion, or other service instantly. According to Kantrowitz (2014), marketing automation has significant power as it enables automated and tailored communications depending on the exact phase of the buying process that prospects or customers are at. Customers can be contacted in the right time, in a right manner depending on the phase of the purchase process. They can also enjoy of less irrelevant sales attempts, as marketing and sales units can interpret when the right time for further processes is. Personalized communications and content may be automatically delivered to customers not only in the right time but also in their preferred format and through the preferred channels. Also, unique and personalized interactions can increase trust and intimacy as well as create closer relationships (Ball et al. 2006). Personalization may also result in better perceptions of service quality (Mittal & Lassar 1996). Content, on the other hand, may increase meaningful ways to become acquainted with information, brands and available products (Halligan & Shah 2010; Holliman & Rowley 2014). In addition, the



increased attention to use data analytics may result in better innovations and offerings in the future, as customers' needs and wants can be better analyzed. Table 2 presents further how these discussed benefits for the customer are divided between the core concepts of marketing automation.

**TABLE 2.** The core concepts of marketing automation, their benefits and challenges for the customer.

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Benefits for the customer</i>	<i>Challenges for the customer</i>
Database marketing	Preferences are saved - May result in more suitable offerings in the future	Privacy risks  Possible inaccuracy of the data
Content Marketing	Access to meaningful and attractive content, i.e. blogs, videos e-books, storytelling etc.	Large amount of information can be overwhelming
Personalization	Better preference match, products, service and communications  Better perception of service quality  Increased trust, intimacy and a closer relationship	Privacy and spam risks  Unawareness of some products
Lead Management	More help and involvement during the buying process  Customized sales processes  Can reduce irrelevant contacts from sales	Involvement may feel disturbing

As Table 2 illustrates, marketing automation can also challenge customers and their experiences. Privacy and spam risks as well as inaccuracy of data may serve as examples (Kotler & Keller 2012: 144-146; Heimbach 2015; Vesanen 2007; Kalyanaraman & Sundar 2006; Chellappa & Sin 2005). Privacy issues are indeed found to be one of the greatest challenges of marketing automation (Sheehan & Hoy 2000). Not everyone necessarily wants a relationship with an organization and may feel vulnerable about the collected data. Some may also feel disturbed about the increased involvement during the buying process or even overwhelmed about the amount of information and content that is available. Also, technology

and data may not always cover all important information. Data and technology may not be able to analyze what a customer thinks, feels or wants at some particular moment. Also, if there is too much concentration on data analytics and further personalization, customers may even become unaware of all the available options. For example, a customer who has bought certain types of products and is repeatedly suggested about similar ones, may not acknowledge all the other alternatives that are available.

Furthermore, as an entity, marketing automation may create a certain kind of “robot” feeling to it and it may in some cases distance customers rather than strengthen relationships. As mentioned before, the majority of the greatest customer experiences are those where customers are dealing with people (Shaw and Ivens 2002: 101). Hence, automated tasks may result in lack of the important elements that customers experience during interactions with people as intimacy, emotions and face-to-face contact. *“Marketing automation should enable, rather than replace, human interaction with clients and customers”* (Wood 2015). When it comes to organizations, while marketing automation leaves more time to strategy work, content marketing and personalization strategies can also be time-consuming and require a lot of planning and maintenance. Also, marketing automation requires a large amount of data to work properly. Thus, the term marketing automation may in some terms be misleading.

## **5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

As there is very limited academic research done of marketing automation, the perspective of this research is limited to those few sources that were available. More research in marketing automation in general would provide more points of view and enable more comparison in detail. The findings of this study should further be verified with an empirical research. This research discusses marketing automation and customer experience in general, without concentrating specifically on B2B or B2C context. The core of marketing automation is suggested to be in B2B but it can also be applied in B2C contexts (Heimbach et al. 2015). Indeed, according to Kantrowitz (2014), it is becoming more and more popular in B2C contexts as well. Future research could thus indicate more in detail how marketing automation differs in B2B and B2C and whether there are differences in their effect on customer experience. In addition, the study covers customer experience by reviewing factors that are regarded important in regards to marketing automation and thus, it doesn't cover all important themes of customer experience. Future research could also address what is the optimal level of using marketing automation in regards to privacy. It could also be interesting to study how customers perceive automated interactions compared to interactions with people and whether automated content is viewed more or less valuable than face-to-face interaction. In addition, future research could study how the use of marketing automation affects the work of management and expand the research from its effect on customer experience to its effect on CEM.

## 6. REFERENCES

- Abbott, L. (1955). *Quality and Competition: An Essay in Economic Theory*. Columbia University Press, New York, NY.
- Addis, M., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). On the conceptual link between mass customisation and experiential consumption: an explosion of subjectivity. *Journal of consumer behaviour*, 1(1), 50-66.
- Ansari, A., & Mela, C. F. (2003). E-customization. *Journal of marketing research*, 40(2), 131-145.
- Ball, D., Coelho, P. S., & Vilares, M. J. (2006). Service personalization and loyalty. *Journal of services marketing*, 20(6), 391-403.
- Batra, R. (1995). *The new direct marketing: How to implement a profit-driven database marketing strategy*. Burr Ridge, IL, Irwin.
- Berry, L. L., & Carbone, L. P. (2007). Build loyalty through experience management. *Quality progress*, 40(9), 26.
- Berry, L. L., Carbone, L. P., & Haeckel, S. H. (2002). Managing the total customer experience. *MIT Sloan management review*, 43(3), 85.
- Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: what is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty?. *Journal of marketing*, 73(3), 52-68.
- Bucklin, R., Lehmann, D., & Little, J. (1998). From decision support to decision automation: A 2020 vision. *Marketing Letters*, 9(3), 235-246.
- Bucklin, R. E., Lattin, J. M., Ansari, A., Gupta, S., Bell, D., Coupey, E., ... & Steckel, J. (2002). Choice and the Internet: From clickstream to research stream. *Marketing Letters*, 13(3), 245-258.
- Buttle, F. (2009). *Customer relationship management: Concepts and technologies*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Elsevier, Oxford.

- Chaffey, D., Smith, P. R., & Smith, P. R. (2013). *eMarketing eXcellence: Planning and optimizing your digital marketing*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Routledge, Abingdon.
- Chellappa, R. K., & Sin, R. G. (2005). Personalization versus privacy: An empirical examination of the online consumer's dilemma. *Information Technology and Management*, 6(2-3), 181-202.
- Dewey, J. (1963). *Experience and Education*. Macmillan, New York, NY.
- Edelman, D. C., & Singer, M. (2015). *Competing on Customer Journeys*. <https://hbr.org/2015/11/competing-on-customer-journeys> (Accessed 7 November 2016).
- Flanagan, P., Johnston, R., & Talbot, D. (2005). Customer confidence: The development of a "pre-experience" concept. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 16(4), 373-384.
- Frow, P., & Payne, A. (2005). A strategic framework for customer relationship management. *Journal of marketing*, 69(4), 167-176.
- Frow, P., & Payne, A. (2007). Towards the 'perfect' customer experience. *Journal of Brand Management*, 15(2), 89-101.
- Gentile, C., Spiller, N., & Noci, G. (2007). How to sustain the customer experience: An overview of experience components that co-create value with the customer. *European Management Journal*, 25(5), 395-410.
- Ghose, K. (2007, April). The strength of the brand value chain is the strength of the brand anchor. In *Thought Leaders International Conference on Brand Management, Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham. Conference Paper* (pp. 24-25).
- Ha, S. H., & Park, S. C. (1998). Application of data mining tools to hotel data mart on the Intranet for database marketing. *Expert Systems with Applications*, 15(1), 1-31.
- Halligan, B., & Shah, D. (2010). *Inbound Marketing*. Wiley, Hoboken, N.J.
- Heimbach I., Kostyra D. S., & Hintx O. (2015). Marketing automation. *Business & Information Systems Engineering*, 57(2), 129.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Groth, M., Paul, M., & Gremler, D. D. (2006). Are all smiles created equal? How emotional contagion and emotional labor affect service relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(3), 58-73.

High, R. (2012). The era of cognitive systems: An inside look at IBM Watson and how it works. IBM Corporation, Redbooks.

Hoch, S. J., & Ha, Y. W. (1986). Consumer learning: Advertising and the ambiguity of product experience. *Journal of consumer research*, 13(2), 221-233.

Holbrook, M. B. (2000). The millennial consumer in the texts of our times: Experience and entertainment. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 20(2), 178-192.

Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of consumer research*, 9(2), 132-140.

Holliman, G., & Rowley, J. (2014). Business to business digital content marketing: marketers' perceptions of best practice. *Journal of research in interactive marketing*, 8(4), 269-293.

Hui, M. K., & Bateson, J. E. (1991). Perceived control and the effects of crowding and consumer choice on the service experience. *Journal of consumer research*, 18(2), 174-184.

Imhoff, C., Loftis, L., & Geiger, J. G. (2001). Building the customer-centric enterprise: Data warehousing techniques for supporting customer relationship management. Wiley, New York, NY.

Johnston, R., & Kong, X. (2011). The customer experience: a road-map for improvement. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 21(1), 5-24.

Järvinen, J., & Taiminen, H. (2016). Harnessing marketing automation for B2B content marketing. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 54, 164-175.

- Kalyanaraman, S., & Sundar, S. S. (2006). The psychological appeal of personalized content in web portals: does customization affect attitudes and behavior?. *Journal of Communication*, 56(1), 110-132.
- Kamakura, W., Mela, C. F., Ansari, A., Bodapati, A., Fader, P., Iyengar, R., Naik, P., Neslin, S., Sun, B., Verhoef, P. C., Wedel, M. & Wilcox, R. (2005). Choice models and customer relationship management. *Marketing Letters*, 16(3-4), 279-291.
- Kantrowitz, A. (2014). The CMO's guide to marketing automation. *Advertising Age*, 85, 17-24.
- Kempf, D. S., & Smith, R. E. (1998). Consumer processing of product trial and the influence of prior advertising: A structural modeling approach. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 325-338.
- Kerin, R. A., Jain, A., & Howard, D. J. (1992). Store shopping experience and consumer price-quality-value perceptions. *Journal of Retailing*, 68(4), 376.
- Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Wong, V., & Saunders, J. (2005). Principles of marketing. 4th European Edition. Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh Gate.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. (2012). Marketing Management. 14<sup>th</sup> Edition. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Kotler, P., Rackham, N., & Krishnaswamy, S. (2006). Ending the war between sales and marketing. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(7/8), 68.
- LaSalle, D., & Britton, T. (2003). Priceless: Turning ordinary products into extraordinary experiences. Harvard Business Press.
- Liljander, V., & Strandvik, T. (1997). Emotions in service satisfaction. *International Journal of service industry management*, 8(2), 148-169.
- Little, J. D. (2001). Marketing automation on the Internet. In *Presentation at the UC Berkeley Fifth Invitational Choice Symposium, Monterey, CA*.

- Lusch, R. F., & Vargo, S. L. (2009). Service-dominant logic—a guiding framework for inbound marketing. *Marketing Review St. Gallen*, 26(6), 6-10.
- Mascarenhas, O. A., Kesavan, R., & Bernacchi, M. (2006). Lasting customer loyalty: a total customer experience approach. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 23(7), 397-405.
- Meyer, C., & Schwager, A. (2007). Customer Experience. *Harvard business review*, 1-11.
- Mittal, B., & Lassar, W. M. (1996). The role of personalization in service encounters. *Journal of retailing*, 72(1), 95-109.
- Montgomery, A., & Srinivasan, K. (2002). Learning about customers without asking. *Tepper School of Business*, 324.
- Morey, R. C., & McCann, J. M. (1983). Estimating the confidence interval for the optimal marketing mix: An application to lead generation. *Marketing Science*, 2(2), 193-202.
- Nenonen, S., Rasila, H., Junnonen, J. M., & Kärnä, S. (2008). Customer Journey—a method to investigate user experience. In *Proceedings of the Euro FM Conference Manchester* (pp. 54-63).
- Osarenkhoe, A., & Bennani, A. E. (2007). An exploratory study of implementation of customer relationship management strategy. *Business Process Management Journal*, 13(1), 139-164.
- Palmer, A. (2010). Customer experience management: a critical review of an emerging idea. *Journal of Services marketing*, 24(3), 196-208.
- Parvatiyar, A., & Sheth, J. N. (2001). Conceptual framework of customer relationship management (pp. 3-25). New Delhi, India: Tata/McGraw-Hill.
- Parvatiyar, A., & Sheth, J. N. (2001). Customer relationship management: Emerging practice, process, and discipline. *Journal of Economic and Social research*, 3(2), 1-34.
- Personalization Consortium. (2005).  
[www.personalization.org/personalization.html](http://www.personalization.org/personalization.html) (Accessed 6 November 2016).



Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy. *Harvard business review*, 76(6), 97-105.

Prahalad, C. K., & Ramaswamy, V. (2000). Co-opting customer competence. *Harvard business review*, 78(1), 79-90.

Pullman, M. E., & Gross, M. A. (2004). Ability of experience design elements to elicit emotions and loyalty behaviors. *Decision Sciences*, 35(3), 551-578.

Puusa, A., Reijonen, H., Juuti, P., & Laukkanen, T. (2012). *Akatemiasta markkinapaikalle. Johtaminen ja markkinointi aikansa kuvina*. Talentum, Helsinki.

Rawson, A., Duncan, E., & Jones, C. (2013). The truth about customer experience. *Harvard Business Review*, 91(9), 90-98.

Richardson, A. (2010). Using customer journey maps to improve customer experience. *Harvard Business Review*, 15.

Rimlinger, C. (2011). Push and pull marketing strategies: Using them to your advantage. *Franchising World*, 43(12), 15-16.

Shaw, C., & Ivens, J. (2002). Building great customer experiences. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Sheehan, K. B., & Hoy, M. G. (2000). Dimensions of privacy concern among online consumers. *Journal of public policy & marketing*, 19(1), 62-73.

Singh, J., & Saini, S. (2016). Importance of CEM in CRM-CL framework. *Journal of Modelling in Management*, 11(1), 91-115.

Tan, X., Yen, D. C., & Fang, X. (2002). Internet integrated customer relationship management a key success factor for companies in the e-commerce arena. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 42(3), 77-86.

Templeman, M. (2015). Which marketing automation software is the best? <http://www.forbes.com/sites/miketempleman/2015/07/14/which-marketing-automation-software-is-the-best/#ca9b69614eec> (Accessed 6 November 2016).

Van Doorn, J., Lemon, K. N., Mittal, V., Nass, S., Pick, D., Pirner, P., & Verhoef, P. C. (2010). Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(3), 253-266.

Verhoef, P. C., Lemon, K. N., Parasuraman, A., Roggeveen, A., Tsiros, M., & Schlesinger, L. A. (2009). Customer experience creation: Determinants, dynamics and management strategies. *Journal of retailing*, 85(1), 31-41.

Vesanen, J. (2007). What is personalization? A conceptual framework. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(5/6), 409-418.

Vesanen, J., & Raulas, M. (2006). Building bridges for personalization: a process model for marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 20(1), 5-20.

Wood, C. (2015). Marketing automation: Lessons learnt so far.... *Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice*, 16(4), 251-254.

Xu, Y., Yen, D. C., Lin, B., & Chou, D. C. (2002). Adopting customer relationship management technology. *Industrial management & data systems*, 102(8), 442-452.

Zomerdijk, L. G., & Voss, C. A. (2010). Service design for experience-centric services. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(1), 67-82.