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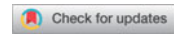
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What's Behind CRM Research? A Bibliometric Analysis of Publications in the CRM Research Field

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ABSTRACT

The diversity of approaches to customer relationship management (CRM) brings about the need for systematic reviews. The objective of this article is to identify and categorize the most used publications in the CRM field. We conducted a bibliometric analysis using the Web of Science database. To identify and categorize the subfields, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis. The most used publications were categorized into: (1) methodology in the CRM research field; (2) relationship marketing; (3) service quality and customer loyalty; (4) implications of market-oriented strategy; (5) CRM theory and its practical implications; (6) strategic management; and (7) customer value.

Introduction

CRM is defined as a strategic approach that combines people, organizational processes, and information technology (IT) to build and improve relationships with profitable customers and segments (Chen & Popovich, 2003). CRM gathers the potential of IT and relationship marketing to develop relational connections with customers and other stakeholders (Payne, 2005).

The prominence of CRM in academia is caused by different factors: (1) the shift from transaction marketing to relationship marketing; (2) the prioritization of customers in an organization's strategy; (3) the change from function-based to strategy-based structures; (4) the expansion of information technology; and (5) the development of one-to-one marketing (Payne, 2005).

In parallel, the volume of scientific research has increased greatly. Therefore, it has become very difficult for academicians to draw a precise overview of publications in their specific fields. In this scenario, bibliometric methods have turned out to be helpful tools to filter the relevant publications as well as to identify underlying existing structures within research fields (Zupic & Čater, 2015).

Some bibliometric studies have been conducted to investigate the tendencies and characteristics of the scientific literature on CRM. Tsai, Wang, Huang, and Yang (2009) conducted a bibliometric analysis based on the SSCI (Social Science Citation Index) database to identify the research trends in CRM. In this same study, Tsai et al. (2009) identified which countries and educational institutions are more active regarding CRM research. Another bibliometric analysis on CRM (Tsai, 2011), considered the publications trends in CRM and data mining research.

Since previous bibliometric analyses of CRM research have not used the bibliometric method of co-citations analysis, we observed a potential opportunity for research. For this reason, the objective of this article is to identify and categorize the most used publications in the CRM research field. We intend to contribute to the enhancement of the CRM research field by presenting a detailed analysis of CRM co-citations and their relationship.

To achieve this objective, we conducted a bibliometric analysis on the CRM publications extracted from the Web of Science (WoS) database. In this process, we extracted 3974 articles on CRM from the WoS database. The extraction of CRM publications covers the time period between 1983 and 2016. Then, we generated a matrix of co-citations using the BibExcel tool. Finally, using SPSS software, we performed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to group these co-citations into factors (categories).

From this analysis, we concluded that the most used sources in CRM publications can be divided into seven categories: (1) methodology in the CRM research field; (2) relationship marketing; (3) service quality and customer loyalty; (4) implications of market-oriented strategy; (5) CRM theory and its practical implications; (6) strategic management; and (7) customer value. We also found out that the CRM research field is deeply grounded in marketing strategy, in which the goal is to acquire and retain customers. Furthermore, findings indicate that CRM strategy can help organizations in anticipating marketing demands and building awareness in order to achieve competitive advantage.

After this introductory section, this article reviews the literature on CRM and provides a detailed description of the research methodology. Next, we present a session with the main results and our final considerations.

Theoretical background

CRM research is grounded in the values of relationship marketing (Reinartz, Krafft, & Hoyer, 2004). To improve the understanding of CRM, we present relevant concepts of relationship marketing. Basically, relationship marketing "refers to all marketing activities directed towards establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges" (Morgan & Hunt, 1994, p. 22).

Relationship marketing research started gaining more relevance in academia as the mass-market approach became less effective and new technologies began to be used in marketing communication. In addition, factors such as the continuous growth of competitiveness among brands and the advent of new business models

based on technology also boosted the study of relationship marketing (Brito, 2011). It is also important to mention that the prominence of relationship marketing grew as globalization stimulated organizations to become more service-oriented and to introduce information technology systems into their processes (Hunt, Arnett, & Madhavaram, 2006).

The shift from transactional marketing towards relationship marketing implies a deeper change in the marketing strategy of organizations. By adopting a relational approach, marketing strategy is no longer focused on a specific functionality, but rather on cross-functional relationships. Furthermore, with the adoption of relationship marketing strategy, marketing activities are not only focused on customer acquisition, but also on both customer acquisition and on client retention (Payne, 2005).

With the growing complexity of market demands and the appearance of new technologies, CRM has emerged as a technological answer to the demands of relationship marketing strategy (Payne, 2005). The prominence of CRM is caused by different factors: (1) the shift from transaction marketing to relationship marketing; (2) the prioritization of customers in an organization's strategy; (3) the change from function-based to strategy-based structures; (4) the expansion of information technology; and (5) the development of one-to-one marketing (Payne, 2005).

As CRM is based on the values of relationship marketing, building relationships implies using knowledge to generate value for customers (Garrido-Moreno, Padilla-Meléndez, & Águila-Obra, 2010). CRM allows organizations to personalize their products and services according to their clients' needs. Organizations can use CRM to involve customers in the creative process. As customers share their insights, complaints or suggestions, they become co-generators of product value (Garrido-Moreno et al., 2010).

The newness and the broadness of CRM research have encouraged many researchers to write their own definitions of CRM. For Chen and Popovich (2003), CRM is a combination of three components of CRM: people, technology, and processes. A successful CRM business approach requires the integration of these three elements along with marketing competencies. In turn, according to Reinartz et al. (2004), CRM is a customer-facing and systematic process that manages customer relationships at initiation, maintenance, and termination phases in order to maximize the value of these customer relationships. For other authors, CRM is a business strategy established to build and maintain strong relationships with customers in order to gain their loyalty and preference (Garrido-Moreno et al., 2010). These relationships are built upon the knowledge gathered through CRM systems that enable the organization to understand their customers' consuming behavior, preferences, credit history, and other relevant data.

Pedron and Saccol (2009) conducted a revision of research on CRM to analyze the different definitions of CRM, proposing the classification of CRM definitions into three approaches: CRM as a philosophy, CRM as a strategy, and CRM as a technological tool. CRM as a philosophy implies that CRM is a philosophy of doing business to build profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders.

Viewing CRM as a strategy implies that implementing CRM means that organizations develop a market- and customer-oriented strategy that will impact processes and resource management. Finally, analyzing CRM as a technological tool implies implementing information systems, databases, and other technological tools to enhance customer knowledge and customer services (Pedron & Saccol, 2009).

As organizations adopt a CRM strategy, they become market oriented. Since they are market driven, organizations are able to develop specific capabilities. Day (1994) explains that market-driven organizations can develop capabilities such as diagnosing current capabilities, market sensing, redesigning of processes and organizational structure, and using information systems to achieve marketing and business goals. CRM capabilities can be sorted into direction capability, learning and market orientation capabilities, integration capability, analytical capability, and operation capability (Plakoyiannaki and Tzokas, 2002). *Direction capability* refers to the ability to make customer-oriented strategy clear to the whole organization and to make sure that it is followed. *Learning and market knowledge* are closely related to CRM strategy. The customer knowledge that is retained through CRM channels can be transformed into valuable knowledge that can assist top management in strategic decisions. *Integration capability* means the capacity to align all members and sectors of the organization towards CRM strategy. *Analytical capabilities* are related to the organization's ability to maximize, as much as possible, its relationship with customers to maintain their fidelity and generate positive results. *Operational capability* is an organization's ability to use CRM resources and knowledge to add value to customer service and product offering (Plakoyiannaki & Tzokas, 2002).

Methodology

Bibliometrics is a quantitative method used to analyze scientific production in order to identify fundamental aspects, such as trends, dissemination of academic publications, authors' and institutions' productivity, and differences of technological and scientific production among countries (Vanz & Stumpf, 2010; Macias-Chapula, 1998).

Bibliometric methods are appropriate to conduct a systematic and reproducible literature review of previous research in a specific field. In addition, bibliometric methods provide very useful results that can lead researchers to the most influential publications in their fields (Zupic & Čater, 2015).

Bibliometric methods have two main uses: performance analysis and science mapping. *Performance analysis* evaluates the publication performance of individuals and institutions. On the other hand, the goal of *science mapping* is to identify the structure and dynamics of research fields, which is very appropriate when researchers aim to review a particular research area.

The five main bibliometric methods are: citation, co-citation, bibliographic coupling, co-author, and co-word (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Citation analysis, co-citation analysis, and bibliographic coupling use citation data to identify influences and similarities. In turn, co-author analysis uses co-authorship data to measure collaborating

among researchers; co-word analysis identifies connections among concepts that co-occur in titles, keywords, and abstracts. Co-citation analysis uses co-citation counts to evaluate similarities between documents, authors, or journals (Mccain, 1990). In this research, we used the bibliometric method of *document co-citation analysis* to do a science mapping of the CRM research area.

Document co-citation analysis connects documents in accordance with how authors use them. A fundamental premise of co-citation analysis is that "the more two items are cited together, the more likely it is that their content is related" (Zupic & Čater, 2015, p. 431). Even though co-citation analysis (document, author, journals) is the most used and validated bibliometric method, it is not appropriate to map research new agendas, as publication process takes time to consolidate. Co-citation analysis is recommended to identify the most used works in an earlier time.

To conduct this bibliometric analysis, we first extracted a list of all publications on CRM from the WoS database (database maintained by Thomson Reuters), which is the most frequently used database for studies in management and organization (Zupic & Čater, 2015). In this search process, we used the key phrase "customer relationship management." In order to limit the set of data to a manageable size (Zupic & Čater, 2015), we focused search on articles, excluding other publication sources (e.g., books, manuals). The search results on WoS shows 3974 article references covering the time period between 1983 and 2016.

A matrix of co-citations with those search results was created using BibExcel, a tool developed by Olle Pearson (Vanz & Stumpf, 2010). Along with the software Sitikis, BibExcel is the most used software in bibliometric analysis (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Before generating this co-citation matrix, we performed some corrections in the text-formatted files generated by BibExcel. First, we classified the references of the co-citations according to the number of citations (in the sample of 3974 articles). Second, since there were too many references, we selected the 100 most referenced sources. Third, since the files generated by BibExcel contain mistyped references, the references are not sorted correctly. For this reason, we calculated the total number of citations of each reference in order to ensure that the number of co-citations is accurate. Finally, we generated the matrix of co-citations of the 100 most cited sources.

One of the biggest advantages of using a bibliometric method is the possibility of identifying subfields. To do so, researchers can use several techniques to reduce dimensions. The most used dimensionality reduction techniques are exploratory factor analysis (EFA), cluster analysis, multidimensional scaling (MDS), and network analysis community finding algorithm (Zupic & Čater, 2015). In this study, we conducted an EFA to identify and categorize the subfields within the most used references in CRM research. As described by Zupic and Čater (2015), we used the software BibExcel to build a co-occurrence frequency matrix in which the elements of the matrix are co-citations. In the sequence, we used this matrix to perform the EFA using SPSS software. In fact, when we applied the EFA to identify and categorize the publications, we followed the example of Quevedo-Silva, Santos, Brandão, and Vils (2016).

Based on the matrix of co-citations, we performed an EFA using SPSS software to determine patterns in a specific group of variables (Silva & Simon, 2005). Using EFA, we identified the patterns of co-citations in CRM publications and grouped these co-citations into factors (categories). In this context, each variable refers to a reference from the sample of the 100 most cited sources.

In order to evaluate the appropriateness of the sample to apply the EFA, we performed a Kayser-Meyer-Olkin test (KMO) (Williams & Brown, 2010). The value of KMO ranges from 0 to 1, in which a value closer to 1 indicates that the sample is valid for factorial analysis (Silva & Simon, 2005). After executing the KMO for the whole sample, the KMO test is calculated for each variable (item) of the sample. We also performed the Barlett's Test of Sphericity to evaluate the strength of the relationship between the variables (Beavers et al., 2013). To ensure the suitability of the sample, the recommended value for the Barlett's test of sphericity is $p < 0.0001$, for the KMO test for the whole sample it is $p > 0.6$, and for the KMO test of each variable it is $p > 0.5$ (Beavers et al., 2013; Williams & Brown, 2010).

Additionally, the communality of each variable was calculated. The closer the communality value is to zero, the lower is the correlation between the variable and the factor. According to the recommendations of Fávero, Belfiore, Silva, and Chan (2009), we excluded the variables (items) with communality value lower than 0.5. It is worth mentioning that we excluded the variables one at a time and that, after excluding one variable, the EFA was re-executed. In this process, from the 100 variables of the sample, nine were excluded. Table 1 presents the variables that were excluded during the EFA and the respective justification.

Table 1. Variables excluded during EFA and respective justification for exclusion.

Excluded Variable	Justification
Grant_1996	Factorial Loading > 0.5 in more than one factor
Miles_Huberman_1994	KMO < 0.5
Gupta_etal_2004	
Eisenhardt_1989	
Reinartz_Kumar_2003	
Blattberg_Deighton_1996	
Reinartz_Kumar_2000	
Rust_2004	
Venkatesan_Kumar_2004	

After these adjustments, the KMO value for the whole sample was 0.769 and the value for the Barlett's test was 0.4095 with $p < 0.0001$, meaning that our sample was appropriate to perform the EFA. The value of the KMO of each of the 91 remaining variables is detailed in Appendix 1. We also calculated the percentage of the total explained variance. In our data, the cumulative percentage of variance in the statistical analysis is 81%, above the recommended threshold of 50–60% (Hair et al., 1995, cited by Williams & Brown, 2010).
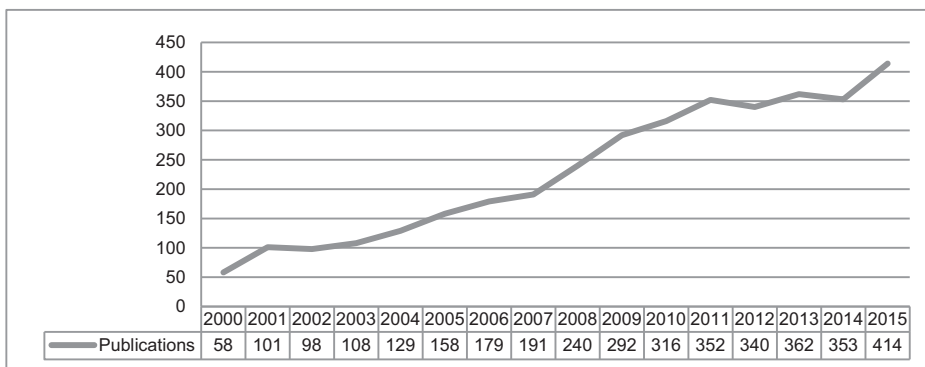
Finally, the EFA with the orthogonal VARIMAX rotation method (Beavers et al., 2013) shows that the 91 variables were grouped into seven factors (we later named these factors as categories). Appendix 2 presents the rotated matrix of components

generated by performing the VARIMAX rotation method. BibExcel was used to elaborate the descriptive statistical analysis of the analyzed database (CRM articles and co-citations).

Data analysis and results

In this section, we present data analisys and results. First, we present a descriptive analysis of the research, in which we present some graphs to illustrate the distribution of citations in CRM publications. Second, we present the statistical analysis and results.

Figure 1 presents the number of publications in CRM, which has been increasing since the beginning of 2000. It is important to point out that the publications listed for the year of 2016 are not static, since this analysis took place in March 2016.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Publications	58	101	98	108	129	158	179	191	240	292	316	352	340	362	353	414

Source: Authors

Figure 1. Number of CRM publications per year.

Table 2 presents the 50 most ranked journals according to the number of publications in CRM. Even though there are many articles, those publications are concentrated in considerably few journals. The 50 first journals in the ranking account for 73.87% of the 3974 articles.

Among the journals listed in the ranking, 39 focus on business and management, 11 on marketing, and 8 on information systems. Nevertheless, some of these journals focus on more than one area. For example, the scope of the *Industrial Management and Data Systems* journal covers management of industries and information systems.

Interestingly, journals that published more articles related to CRM are not necessarily the ones with more citations on CRM. Figure 2 illustrates the ranking of journals with more citations. Appendix 3 details the ranking of the journals within the sample of the first 100 most cited articles in the CRM field.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of citations of the top 100 most cited articles in the CRM field. The top 100 most cited articles in the CRM field have gained many of their citations in the 2000s.

Table 3 lists which journals are more cited for the 3974 articles in CRM.

Table 2. Ranking of first 50 journals according to the number of publications on CRM.

Ranking	Journal	Number
1	*INDUSTRIAL MARKETING MANAGEMENT*	197
2	*EXPERT SYSTEMS WITH APPLICATIONS*	111
3	*INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT & DATA SYSTEMS*	86
4	*JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & INDUSTRIAL MARKETING*	86
5	*JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH*	83
6	*TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS EXCELLENCE*	83
7	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PRODUCTION ECONOMICS*	78
8	*SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL*	76
9	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF OPERATIONS & PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT*	74
10	*EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF MARKETING*	64
11	*SERVICE INDUSTRIES JOURNAL*	63
12	*JOURNAL OF MARKETING*	62
13	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PRODUCTION RESEARCH*	61
14	*JOURNAL OF PRODUCT INNOVATION MANAGEMENT*	53
15	*JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF MARKETING SCIENCE*	51
16	*JOURNAL OF SERVICES MARKETING*	50
17	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SERVICE INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT*	48
18	*JOURNAL OF OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT*	46
19	*JOURNAL OF SERVICE RESEARCH*	43
20	*AFRICAN JOURNAL OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT*	41
21	*DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS*	38
22	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT*	38
23	*DECISION SCIENCES*	37
24	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT*	35
25	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PHYSICAL DISTRIBUTION & LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT*	35
26	*JOURNAL OF SERVICE MANAGEMENT*	32
27	*PRODUCTION PLANNING & CONTROL*	29
28	*MANAGEMENT SCIENCE*	28
29	*MANAGEMENT DECISION*	27
30	*MANAGING SERVICE QUALITY*	27
31	*EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF OPERATIONAL RESEARCH*	26
32	*JOURNAL OF BUSINESS ETHICS*	25
33	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN MARKETING*	24
34	*INFORMATION & MANAGEMENT*	23
35	*JOURNAL OF BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MARKETING*	23
36	*JOURNAL OF MARKETING RESEARCH*	23
37	*MARKETING SCIENCE*	23
38	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT*	22
39	*JOURNAL OF RETAILING*	22
40	*JOURNAL OF CLEANER PRODUCTION*	21
41	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT*	20
42	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT*	20
43	*JOURNAL OF COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS*	20
44	*JOURNAL OF INTERACTIVE MARKETING*	20
45	*COMPUTERS & INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING*	18
46	*TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT*	18
47	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT*	17
48	*PRODUCTION AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT*	17
49	*TOURISM MANAGEMENT*	17
50	*JOURNAL OF BUSINESS LOGISTICS*	16
Total		**2197**

The most cited references on CRM publications were published in the 1990s, as shown in Figure 4. It is interesting to note that, even though CRM publications have risen during the 2000s (see Figure 4), 55% of the publications in the sample refer to publications in the 1990s. As we go through the abstracts of these publications, we see that those are about core aspects of CRM research, such as competitive advantage, marketing orientation, relationship marketing, service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and dynamic capabilities. This evidence shows that CRM
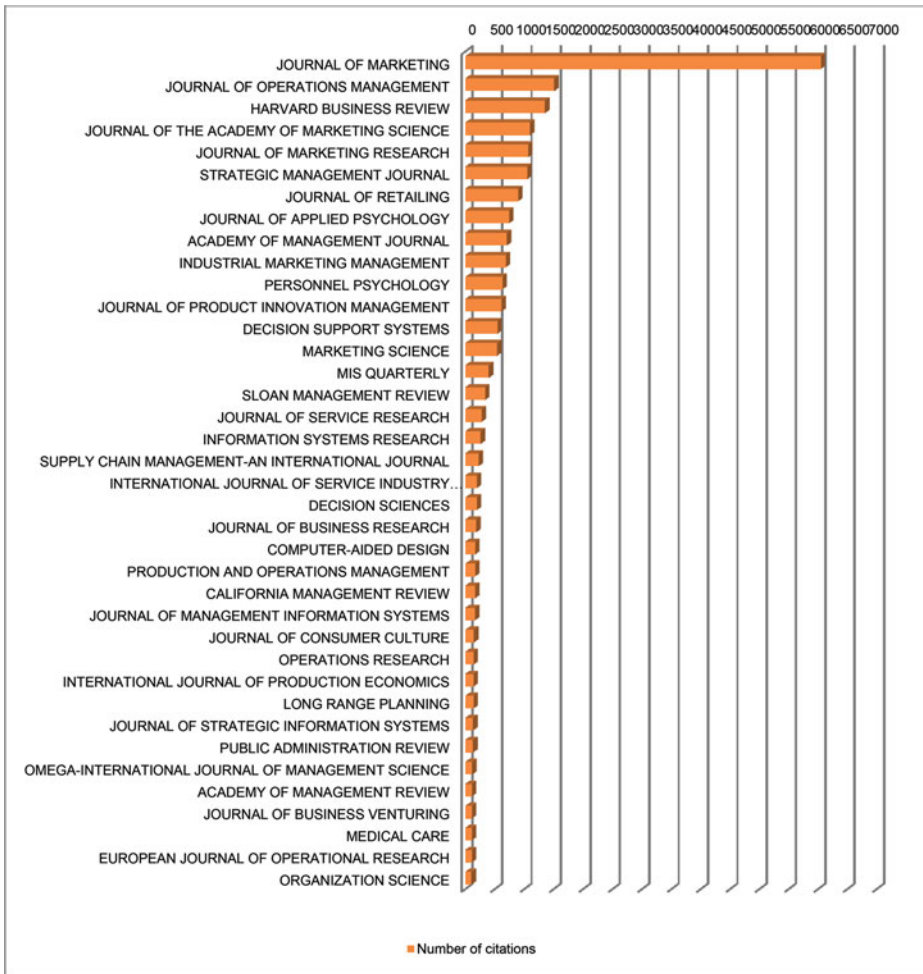
Figure 2. Ranking of journals according to the number of citations of their publications in the CRM field.

scholars have been interested in studying the linkage between CRM strategy and core organizational results, such as competitive advantage, service quality, and customer satisfaction. Another explanation for this result is that the CRM theoretical foundation is based on themes already covered in the 1990s: relationship marketing and marketing orientation.

We performed the EFA to categorize the co-citations of CRM publications. The EFA resulted in seven categories. Based on the analysis of the abstracts, we divided the references into: (1) tools to develop new models and theory; (2) relationship marketing (buyer-seller, organization-customer relations), as well as the relationship between an organization and its suppliers; (3) antecedents and consequences of service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and customer perceptions; (4) implications and consequences of market-oriented focus; (5) theoretical conceptualization of the customer management relationship and its implication for organizational performance; (6) resource-based view (RBV); and (7) customer

Graph of 100 most cited articles on CRM in the period of time

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of citations	614	379	1205	229	1106	412	1534	1175	814	2570	3055	1678	1896	1901	1751	506	483	129	403
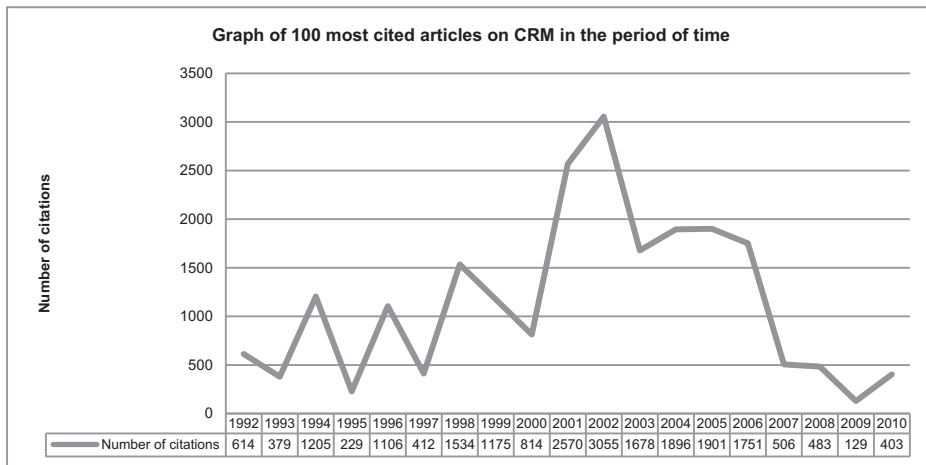
Source: Authors

Figure 3. Distribution of citations of the 100 most cited articles in the CRM field.

Table 3. Ranking of the journals that are more cited by CRM articles.

Source	Number of cited publications (in the sample)
Journal of Marketing	37
Books*	13
Journal of Marketing Research	12
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	5
Harvard Business Review	4
Strategic Management Journal	4
Administrative Science Quarterly	2
Journal of Management	2
Journal of Operations Management	2
Journal of Retailing	2
Marketing Science	2
Industrial Marketing Management	1
Journal of Applied Psychology	1
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology	1
Psychological Bulletin	1
Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal	1
The Academy of Management Review	1
Total	**91**

value. Appendix 4 presents the list of the 91 references distributed into these respective categories.

The first category is called methodology in the CRM research field. This category contains 26 out of the 91 references of the sample. It included seminal works in statistics such as Fornell's and Larcker's article (1981) entitled "Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error," and the classic book "Multivariate Data Analysis" (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 1987). As we analyze these 26 works further, it is clear that works about development and application of statistical data analysis have grounded the methodology definition of CRM papers, whereas the works related to business and marketing have been referred to as a theoretical foundation for new theory, models, and frameworks. As the name of the category suggests, studying these 26 works may allow CRM scholars to understand the statistical methods most used in this research area (PLS, SEM,
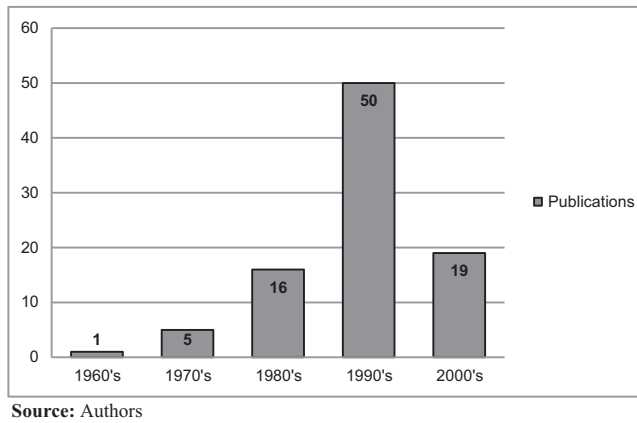
Source: Authors

Figure 4. Distribution of references per decade.

multivariate data analysis, instrument development), as well as to oversee the CRM relationship with fundamental organizational factors such as knowledge management, dynamic capabilities, relationship with customers, and competitive advantage.

The second category, relationship marketing, includes 21 works. Among them, there are four highly cited publications: "The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing" by Morgan and Hunt (1994); "Exchange and Power in Social Life" (Blau, 1964); "Markets and Hierarchies: Analysis and Antitrust Implications: A Study in the Economics of Internal" (Williamson, 1975); and "International Marketing and Purchasing of Industrial Goods: An Interaction Approach" (Hakansson, 1982). The number of citations of these books is amazingly expressive: 18810, 19746, 33791, and 3537, respectively (data from Google Scholar). The 17 articles included in this category cover relationship-marketing-related themes such as service quality, distribution channels, buyer-seller relationship, and partnership with manufactures and providers. This suggests that CRM research is grounded in the shift from traditional marketing to a more sophisticated and complex marketing strategy in which the goal is to acquire and retain customers at an individual level. This reinforces the theory that CRM focuses on allowing organizations to gain knowledge about their customers and to customize products and services to better meet customers' needs (Payne, 2005).

The third category is service quality and customer loyalty, which includes 21 articles. The importance of relationship marketing grew as globalization motivated organizations to become more service oriented. This also boosted the introduction of information technology systems to support organizational processes (Hunt et al., 2006). As we analyzed these 21 articles, we found that CRM research, such as relationship marketing research, discusses the inefficiency of transactional marketing, based only on production (Gwinner, Gremler, & Bitner, 1998). CRM has been studied and implemented in the organizations as a way to increase the participation of consumers, not only in the process of consumption, but also in the production process (Gwinner et al., 1998).

The next category, implications of market-oriented strategy, clearly refers to the consequences of market orientation on organizational performance. It includes seven articles. Day's (1994) article "The Capabilities of Market-Driven Organizations," cited 6408 times according to Google Scholars, describes the capabilities that organizations should build in order to become market oriented. Day (1994) suggests that organizations need to develop skills to sense the market so they can quickly and efficiently answer market demands. This reinforces the theory that customers must play a central role in an organization's strategy. An individualized and customized marketing strategy creates a collaborative and mutually profitable relationship with customers (Day, 1994). Indeed, CRM research has been focusing on this perspective, as CRM strategy is often suggested as an answer to these market demands.

The fifth category refers to CRM theory and its practical implications. This category includes eight articles that cover fundamental factors, aspects, and perspectives of CRM. For example, Payne's and Frow's (2005) article presents a framework for CRM strategy. They discuss the organizational, technological, and strategic factors that should be observed in CRM implementation. The articles in this category are extremely helpful for scholars and practitioners to gain a holistic view of CRM and its implication on organizational processes and results.

The sixth category is related to strategic management and includes three articles: "A Resource-Based View of the Firm" by Wernerfelt (1984), "Dynamic Capabilities: What are They?" by Eisenhardt and Martin (2000), and "The Core Competence of the Corporation" by Prahalad and Hamel (1990). These articles have been highly cited (22888, 10604, and 26878, respectively) according to Google Scholar. These articles show that CRM can be used to help organizations to launch new products and to create "products that customers need but have not yet even imagined" (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990, p. 80). It is important to note that RBV is one the theoretical foundations of dynamic capabilities (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). That corroborates the inclusion of Esenhardt and Martin's (2000) article in this category.

The last category refers to works on customer value. It includes one book written by Rust et al. (2000), *Driving Customer Equity: How Customer Lifetime Value is Reshaping Corporate Strategy*, and the article titled "A Dynamic Model of the Duration of the Customer's Relationship with a Continuous Service Provider: The Role of Satisfaction," written by Bolton (1998). This category highlights customer-focused organizations and the implication of customer value on strategy, processes, and organizational structure. This reinforces the idea that the CRM research field is deeply involved with customer-oriented focus, which directs its contributions to academia.

Final remarks

CRM has been gaining more relevance in academia over the last few years. In their quest for answers to solve complex issues in organizational settings, researchers have seen CRM as a strategy to enable organizations to improve their performance and increase their profits.

As we analyzed literature about CRM, we found the need to identify which references are more used in CRM publications, as authors aim to build theories, models, or frameworks about the topic. For this reason, this article identified and categorized the most used references in CRM articles. To accomplish this goal, we conducted a bibliometric analysis of the CRM publications. In this process, we analyzed the co-citations of 3974 articles extracted from the WoS database.

Based on this analysis, we conclude that the most used sources in CRM publications are divided into seven categories: methodology in the CRM research field, relationship marketing, service quality and customer loyalty, implications of market-oriented strategy, CRM theory and its practical implications, strategic management, and customer value.

This study provides an important contribution to academics, since it analyzes and synthesizes the state of the art regarding the literature about CRM. This article also contributes to the practice of CRM as it shows tendencies in the application of CRM strategy and its implications for aspects such as customer value, customer satisfaction, reconfiguration of organizational resources (Resource-Based View theory), service quality, relationship marketing, and management of organization's relationship with other stakeholders (e.g., employees, suppliers).

A limitation of this research is that we analyzed only articles, excluding books, theses, and reports. Suggestions for future research include the analysis of research trends in CRM publications, as well as the identification of more correlations between CRM strategy and organizational outcomes.

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Appendix 1 . KMO test value of each variable of the sample.

Variable	Commun.	KMO	Variable	Commun.	KMO
Aiken_West_1991	0.902	0.844	Hair_et_al_1987	0.901	0.807
Anderson_Weitz_1992	0.902	0.756	Hakansson_1982	0.847	0.722
Anderson_Sullivan_1993	0.822	0.745	Han_etal_1998	0.901	0.739
Anderson_etal_1994	0.768	0.846	Hartline_Ferrell_1996	0.835	0.821
Anderson_Gerbing_1988	0.779	0.801	Heskett_1994	0.755	0.811
Anderson_Narus_1990	0.859	0.793	Heskett_1997	0.768	0.618
Armstrong_Overton_1977	0.819	0.840	Hu_Bentlerb_1999	0.899	0.809
Bagozzi_Yi_1988	0.886	0.804	Hulland_1999	0.785	0.783
Bagozzi_etal_1991	0.889	0.852	Jaworski_Kohli_1993	0.864	0.734
Baron_Kenny_1986	0.890	0.788	Jayachandran_2005	0.818	0.746
Berry_1995	0.829	0.880	Kohli_Jaworski_1990	0.698	0.684
Bitner_1990	0.872	0.750	Mithas_etal_2005	0.843	0.588
Blau_1964	0.911	0.795	Mittal_Kamakura_2001	0.783	0.836
Bollen_1989	0.881	0.824	Moorman_etal_1992	0.904	0.697
Bolton_1998	0.768	0.673	Moorman_etal_1993	0.916	0.799
Boulding_etal_1993	0.865	0.792	Morgan_Hunt_1994	0.594	0.757
Boulding_2005	0.787	0.574	Narver_Slater_1990	0.694	0.592
Cannon_Perreault_1999	0.868	0.827	Nonaka_Takeuchi_1995	0.735	0.781
Churchill_1979	0.890	0.777	Nunnaly_1978	0.932	0.864
Cohen_Levinthal_1990	0.830	0.702	Oliver_1980	0.852	0.784
Cronin_Taylor_1992	0.809	0.664	Oliver_1997	0.868	0.834
Cronin_etal_2000	0.845	0.755	Oliver_1999	0.843	0.858
Crosby_1990	0.891	0.823	Palmatier_etal_2006	0.883	0.788
Day_1994	0.844	0.830	Parasuraman_etal_1985	0.706	0.715
DeWulf_etal_2001	0.837	0.765	Parasuraman_et_al_1988	0.702	0.703
Deshpand?etal_1993	0.910	0.661	Payne_Frow_2005	0.711	0.654
Diamantopoulos_Winklhofer_2001	0.788	0.831	Pfeffer_Salancik_1978	0.795	0.813
Dick_Basu_1994	0.865	0.767	Podsakoff_Organ_1986	0.903	0.825
Doney_Cannon_1997	0.886	0.745	Podsakoff_et_al_2003	0.801	0.831
Dwyer_et_al_1987	0.813	0.833	Porter_1980	0.858	0.767
Dyer_Singh_1998	0.862	0.800	Prahalad_Hamel_1990	0.888	0.641
Eisenhardt_Martin_2000	0.836	0.717	Reichheld_Sasser_1990	0.796	0.856
Flynn_etal_1994	0.735	0.737	Reinartz_etal_2004	0.704	0.622
Fornell_Larcker_1981	0.672	0.747	Rigby_etal_2002	0.843	0.652
Fornell_1992	0.686	0.770	Rust_etal_1995	0,772	0.607
Fornell_etal_1996	0.806	0.814	Rust_etal_2000	0,831	0.514
Frohlicha_Westbrookb_2001	0.876	0.826	Sirdeshmukh_etal_2002	0.878	0.813
Ganesan_1994	0.877	0.753	Slater_Narver_1995	0.902	0.627
Garbarino_Johnson_1999	0.893	0.744	Srivastava_etal_1998	0.785	0.746
Gerbing_Anderson_1988	0.844	0.859	Teece_etal_1997	0.753	0.691
Gwinner_etal_1998	0.848	0.871	Vargo_Lusch_2004	0.754	0.798
Verhoef _2003	0.834	0.762	Woodruff_1997	0.636	0.715
Webster_1992	0.868	0.692	Zablah_etal_2004	0.824	0.660
Wernerfelt_1984	0.844	0.702	Zeithaml_1988	0.760	0.774
Williamson_1975	0.832	0.764	Zeithaml_etal_1996	0.825	0.839

Appendix 2 . Rotated matrix of components (VARIMAX method).

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Frohlicha_Westbrookb_2001	0.896						
Bagozzi_etal_1991	0.879						
Hu_Bentlerb_1999	0.862						
Podsakoff_Organ_1986	0.846						
Nunnaly_1978	0.845						
Aiken_West_1991	0.815			0.408			
Baron_Kenny_1986	0.809						
Hair_et_al_1987	0.805						
Flynn_etal_1994	0.803						
Bollen_1989	0.798						
Podsakoff_et_al_2003	0.795						
Churchill_1979	0.786						
Armstrong_Overton_1977	0.772						
Bagozzi_Yi_1988	0.751						
Diamantopoulos_Winklhofer_2001	0.729						
Gerbing_Anderson_1988	0.728			0.412			
Pfeffer_Salancik_1978	0.714	0.401					
Hulland_1999	0.711						
Anderson_Gerbing_1988	0.695						
Cohen_Levinthal_1990	0.683			0.454			
Dyer_Singh_1998	0.673					0.474	
Barney_1991	0.620						
Teece_etal_1997	0.594					0.492	
Fornell_Larcker_1981	0.582						
Nonaka_Takeuchi_1995	0.524			0.443		0.486	
Vargo_Lusch_2004	0.445						
Anderson_Weitz_1992		0.919					
Moorman_etal_1993		0.917					
Moorman_etal_1992		0.913					
Doney_Cannon_1997		0.884					
Ganesan_1994		0.877					
Palmatier_etal_2006		0.862					
Anderson_Narus_1990		0.857					
Dwyer_et_al_1987		0.856					
Crosby_1990		0.846					
Garbarino_Johnson_1999		0.840					
Berry_1995		0.834					
Hakansson_1982		0.812					
Cannon_Perreault_1999		0.804					
DeWulf_etal_2001		0.803					
Gwinner_etal_1998		0.787	0.405				
Sirdeshmukh_etal_2002		0.776	0.413				
Blau_1964	0.437	0.776					
Webster_1992		0.695		0.443			
Verhoef _2003		0.651					
Morgan_Hunt_1994		0.640					
Williamson_1975	0.463	0.549				0.469	
Bitner_1990			0.890				
Oliver_1980			0.888				
Boulding_etal_1993			0.887				
Cronin_Taylor_1992			0.874				
Cronin_etal_2000			0.859				
Anderson_Sullivan_1993			0.848				

(*Continued on next page*)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Oliver_1997			0.834				
Parasuraman_etal_1985			0.822				
Zeithaml_1988			0.821				
Anderson_etal_1994			0.808				
Heskett_1997			0.800				
Fornell_etal_1996			0.800				
Parasuraman_et_al_1988			0.798				
Heskett_1994			0.796				
Zeithaml_etal_1996		0.415	0.772				
Rust_etal_1995			0.764				
Fornell_1992			0.762				
Oliver_1999		0.462	0.757				
Reichheld_Sasser_1990		0.433	0.744				
Mittal_Kamakura_2001			0.703				0.414
Dick_Basu_1994		0.594	0.696				
Hartline_Ferrell_1996	0.546		0.645				
Woodruff_1997		0.467	0.531				
Han_etal_1998				0.864			
Jaworski_Kohli_1993				0.832			
Slater_Narver_1995	0.412			0.822			
Deshpand?etal_1993	0.416			0.820			
Kohli_Jaworski_1990				0.734			
Narver_Slater_1990				0.730			
Day_1994	0.466			0.715			
Porter_1980	0.539			0.560		0.474	
Rigby_etal_2002					0.899		
Zablah_etal_2004					0.888		
Mithas_etal_2005					0.866		
Boulding_2005					0.864		
Jayachandran_2005					0.806		
Payne_Frow_2005					0.802		
Reinartz_etal_2004					0.764		
Srivastava_etal_1998				0.417	0.487		0.429
Prahalad_Hamel_1990				0.504		0.703	
Eisenhardt_Martin_2000	0.497					0.660	
Wernerfelt_1984	0.535					0.641	
Rust_etal_2000							0.741
Bolton_1998			0.451				0.581

Appendix 3. Ranking of most cited journals in CRM publications.

Journal	Number of Citations	%	# of Articles (in the sample)
Journal of Marketing	6052	27.7%	22
Journal of Operations Management	1513	6.9%	8
Harvard Business Review	1358	6.2%	4
Journal of The Academy Of Marketing Science	1103	5.1%	5
Journal of Marketing Research	1074	4.9%	3
Strategic Management Journal	1054	4.8%	3
Journal of Retailing	898	4.1%	5
Journal of Applied Psychology	745	3.4%	2
Academy of Management Journal	710	3.3%	3
Industrial Marketing Management	686	3.1%	4
Personnel Psychology	630	2.9%	3
Journal of Product Innovation Management	615	2.8%	3
Decision Support Systems	553	2.5%	3
Marketing Science	544	2.5%	4
MIS Quarterly	403	1.8%	3
Sloan Management Review	341	1.6%	1
Journal of Service Research	278	1.3%	2
Information Systems Research	263	1.2%	2
Supply Chain Management: An International Journal	232	1.1%	1
International Journal of Service Industry Management	197	0.9%	1
Decision Sciences	196	0.9%	1
Journal of Business Research	190	0.9%	1
Computer-Aided Design	174	0.8%	1
Production and Operations Management	170	0.8%	1
California Management Review	166	0.8%	1
Journal of Management Information Systems	165	0.8%	1
Journal of Consumer Culture	149	0.7%	1
Operations Research	147	0.7%	1
International Journal of Production Economics	145	0.7%	1
Long Range Planning	144	0.7%	1
Journal of Strategic Information Systems	135	0.6%	1
Public Administration Review	135	0.6%	1
Omega-International Journal of Management Science	120	0.5%	1
Academy of Management Review	114	0.5%	1
Journal of Business Venturing	112	0.5%	1
Medical Care	111	0.5%	1
European Journal of Operational Research	110	0.5%	1
Organization Science	108	0.5%	1
Total	**21840**	**100.0%**	**100**

Appendix 4. The 91 references and their categories.

Author	Title	Type of Source	Number of Citations (in the Sample)	%	Category
Fornell and Larcker (1981)	Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error	Article	609	15.32%	1
Hair et al. (1987)	Multivariate Data Analysis	Book	608	15.30%	1
Nunnaly (1978)	Psychometric Theory (McGraw-Hill Series in Psychology)	Book	549	13.81%	1
Anderson and Gerbing (1988)	Structural Equation Modeling in Practice: A Review and Recommended Two-Step Approach	Article	400	10.07%	1
Podsakoff et al. (2003)	Common Method Biases in Behavioral Research: A Critical Review of the Literature and Recommended Remedies	Article	328	8.25%	1
Armstrong and Overton (1977)	Estimating Nonresponse Bias in Mail Surveys	Article	317	7.98%	1
Bagozzi and Yi (1988)	On the Evaluation of Structural Equation Models	Article	269	6.77%	1
Barney (1991)	Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage	Article	258	6.49%	1
Baron and Kenny (1986)	The Moderator–Mediator Variable Distinction in Social Psychological Research: Conceptual, Strategic, and Statistical Considerations	Article	257	6.47%	1
Churchill (1979)	A Paradigm for Developing Better Measures of Marketing Constructs	Article	195	4.91%	1
Podsakoff and Organ (1986)	Self-Reports in Organizational Research: Problems and Prospects	Article	179	4.50%	1
Teece et al. (1997)	Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Management	Article	165	4.15%	1
Vargo and Lusch (2004)	Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing	Article	160	4.03%	1
Dyer and Singh (1998)	The Relational View: Cooperative Strategy and Sources of Interorganizational Competitive Advantage	Article	160	4.03%	1
Bollen (1989)	Structural Equations with Latent Variables	Book	160	4.03%	1
Hu and Bentlerb (1999)	Cutoff Criteria for Fit Indexes in Covariance Structure Analysis: Conventional Criteria versus New Alternatives	Article	137	3.45%	1
Aiken and West (1991)	Multiple Regression Testing and Interpreting Interactions	Book	117	2.94%	1
Frohlich and Westbrook (2001)	Arcs of Integration: An International Study of Supply Chain Strategies	Article	110	2.77%	1
Gerbing and Anderson (1988)	An Updated Paradigm for Scale Development Incorporating Unidimensionality and its Assessment	Article	98	2.47%	1
Cohen and Levinthal (1990)	Absorptive Capacity: A New Perspective on Learning and Innovation	Article	93	2.34%	1
Bagozzi et al. (1991)	Assessing Construct Validity in Organizational Research	Article	86	2.16%	1

(Continued)

Author	Title	Type of Source	Number of Citations (in the Sample)	%	Category
Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995)	The Knowledge-Creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation	Book	78	1.96%	1
Pfeffer and Salancik (1978)	The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective	Book	75	1.89%	1
Flynn et al. (1994)	A Framework for Quality Management Research and an Associated Measurement Instrument	Article	70	1.76%	1
Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer (2001)	Index Construction with Formative Indicators: An Alternative to Scale Development	Article	68	1.71%	1
Hulland (1999)	Use of Partial Least Squares (PLS) in Strategic Management Research: A Review of Four Recent Studies	Article	68	1.71%	1
Morgan and Hunt (1994)	The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing	Article	463	11.65%	2
Dwyer et al. (1987)	Developing Buyer-Seller Relationships	Article	243	6.11%	2
Ganesan (1994)	Determinants of Long-Term Orientation in Buyer-Seller Relationships	Article	147	3.70%	2
Anderson and Narus (1990)	A Model of Distributor Firm and Manufacturer Firm Working Partnerships	Article	140	3.52%	2
Doney and Cannon (1997)	An Examination of the Nature of Trust in Buyer-Seller Relationships	Article	137	3.45%	2
Crosby (1990)	Relationship Quality in Services Selling: An Interpersonal Influence Perspective	Article	137	3.45%	2
Garbarino and Johnson (1999)	The Different Roles of Satisfaction, Trust, and Commitment in Customer Relationships	Article	117	2.94%	2
Verhoef (2003)	Understanding the Effect of Customer Relationship Management Efforts on Customer Retention and Customer Share Development	Article	116	2.92%	2
Moorman et al. (1992)	Relationships between Providers and Users of Market Research: The Dynamics of Trust within and between Organizations	Article	112	2.82%	2
Anderson and Weitz (1992)	The Use of Pledges to Build and Sustain Commitment in Distribution Channels	Article	111	2.79%	2
Blau (1964)	Exchange and Power in Social Life	Book	107	2.69%	2
Gwinner et al. (1998)	Relational Benefits in Services Industries: The Customer's Perspective	Article	100	2.52%	2
Berry (1995)	Relationship Marketing of Services—Growing Interest, Emerging Perspectives	Article	95	2.39%	2
Palmatier et al. (2006)	Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Relationship Marketing: A Meta-Analysis	Article	92	2.32%	2
Williamson (1975)	Markets and Hierarchies: Analysis and Antitrust Implications: A Study in the Economics of Internal Organization	Book	91	2.29%	2
Cannon and Perreault (1999)	Buyer-Seller Relationships in Business Markets	Article	90	2.26%	2
DeWulf et al. (2001)	Investments in Consumer Relationships: A Cross-Country and Cross-Industry Exploration	Article	84	2.11%	2
Hakansson (1982)	International Marketing and Purchasing of Industrial Goods: An Interaction Approach	Book	76	1.91%	2

(Continued)

Author	Title	Type of Source	Number of Citations (in the Sample)	%	Category
Moorman et al. (1993)	Factors Affecting Trust in Market Research Relationships	Article	75	1.89%	2
Webster (1992)	The Changing Role of Marketing in the Corporation	Article	71	1.79%	2
Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002)	Consumer Trust, Value, and Loyalty in Relational Exchanges	Article	67	1.69%	2
Parasuraman et al. (1988)	A Multiple-Item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perceptions of Service Quality	Article	224	5.64%	3
Zeithaml et al. (1996)	The Behavioral Consequences of Service Quality	Article	192	4.83%	3
Reichheld and Sasser (1990)	Zero Defections: Quality Comes to Services	Article	174	4.38%	3
Bitner (1990)	Evaluating Service Encounters: The Effects of Physical Surroundings and Employee Responses	Article	167	4.20%	3
Parasuraman et al. (1985)	A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and its Implications for Future Research	Article	166	4.18%	3
Zeithaml (1988)	Consumer Perceptions of Price, Quality, and Value: A Means-End Model and Synthesis of Evidence	Article	147	3.70%	3
Anderson et al. (1994)	Customer Satisfaction, Market Share, and Profitability: Findings from Sweden	Article	139	3.50%	3
Oliver (1997)	Satisfaction: A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer	Book	132	3.32%	3
Heskett (1994)	Putting the Service-Profit Chain to Work	Article	126	3.17%	3
Oliver (1999)	Whence Consumer Loyalty?	Article	123	3.10%	3
Cronin and Taylor (1992)	Measuring Service Quality: A Reexamination and Extension	Article	113	2.84%	3
Fornell et al. (1996)	The American Customer Satisfaction Index: Nature, Purpose, and Findings	Article	102	2.57%	3
Fornell (1992)	A National Customer Satisfaction Barometer: The Swedish Experience	Article	101	2.54%	3
Dick and Basu (1994)	Customer Loyalty: Toward an Integrated Conceptual Framework	Article	95	2.39%	3
Heskett (1997)	The Service Profit Chain: How Leading Companies Link Profit and Growth to Loyalty, Satisfaction, and Value	Book	90	2.26%	3
Anderson and Sullivan (1993)	The Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Satisfaction for Firms	Article	90	2.26%	3
Oliver (1980)	A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions	Article	90	2.26%	3
Hartline and Ferrell (1996)	The Management of Customer-Contact Service Employees: An Empirical Investigation	Article	89	2.24%	3
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Porter (1980)	Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors	Book	296	7.45%	4
Kohli and Jaworski (1990)	Market Orientation: The Construct, Research Propositions, and Managerial Implications	Article	216	5.44%	4
Narver and Slater (1990)	The Effect of a Market Orientation on Business Profitability	Article	197	4.96%	4

(Continued)

Author	Title	Type of Source	Number of Citations (in the Sample)	%	Category
Jaworski and Kohli (1993)	Market Orientation: Antecedents and Consequences	Article	196	4.93%	4
Day (1994)	The Capabilities of Market-Driven Organizations	Article	195	4.91%	4
Deshpande et al. (1993)	Corporate Culture, Customer Orientation, and Innovativeness in Japanese Firms: A Quadrad Analysis	Article	121	3.04%	4
Slater and Narver (1995)	Market Orientation and the Learning Organization	Article	97	2.44%	4
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Reinartz et al. (2004)	The Customer Relationship Management Process: Its Measurement and Impact on Performance	Article	158	3.98%	5
Payne and Frow (2005)	A Strategic Framework for Customer Relationship Management	Article	146	3.67%	5
Boulding (2005)	A Customer Relationship Management Roadmap: What is Known, Potential Pitfalls, and Where to Go	Article	101	2.54%	5
Jayachandran (2005)	The Role of Relational Information Processes and Technology Use in Customer Relationship Management	Article	100	2.52%	5
Zablah et al. (2004)	An Evaluation of Divergent Perspectives on Customer Relationship Management: Towards a Common Understanding of an Emerging Phenomenon	Article	83	2.09%	5
Mithas et al. (2005)	Why Do Customer Relationship Management Applications Affect Customer Satisfaction?	Article	80	2.01%	5
Srivastava et al. (1998)	Market-Based Assets and Shareholder Value: A Framework for Analysis	Article	78	1.96%	5
Rigby et al. (2002)	Avoid the Four Perils of CRM	Article	77	1.94%	5
Wernerfelt (1984)	A Resource-Based View of the Firm	Article	120	3.02%	6
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Bolton (1998)	A Dynamic Model of the Duration of the Customer's Relationship with a Continuous Service Provider: The Role of Satisfaction	Article	108	2.72%	7
Rust et al. (2000)	Driving Customer Equity: How Customer Lifetime Value is Reshaping Corporate Strategy	Book	86	2.16%	7