

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague
Faculty of Economics and Management
Department of Information Technologies



Bachelor Thesis

**A comparative analysis of CRM systems in the
Commonwealth of Independent States and the European
Union innovation markets**

Khangerey Aidossov

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BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Khangerey Aidossov

Economics and Management

Economics and Management

Thesis title

A comparative analysis of CRM systems in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the European Union innovation markets

Objectives of thesis

The aim of the work will be to compare Consumer relations models between the Russian and European innovation sectors. For example, a comparison will be made of the number of their functions, prices, convenience of the user interface.

A partial goal of the work will be to evaluate the measure of IT usage in the management of firms in Russia, to highlight the main problems to innovation management. This research aims to discern three objectives: (1) What is the comparative usage of Russian based CRM platforms in the Commonwealth of Independent States versus the European Union?

(1) What barriers are there to introducing Russian made CRM platforms in foreign markets?

(2) How competitive are Russian made CRM platforms outside the CIS?" e.g. Do companies use Russian CRMs? or do they prefer known brands like Salesforce?

Methodology

Methods:

-Comparative analysis of selected CRMs, their functions, possibilities of use in management, pluses and minuses from the point of the user's view. These can be found via a survey of company business practices involving CRM and individual interviews followed by a statistical analysis that compares CRM strategies in the EU and Russia-CIS, respectively.

The proposed extent of the thesis

30-40 pages

Keywords

information technology, CRM, business, management, Russia, digital business, user behavior, innovation, Russian innovation, marketing

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The Bachelor Thesis Supervisor

John Phillip Sabou, MSc

Supervising department

Department of Information Technologies

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Ing. Jiří Vaněk, Ph.D.

Head of department

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Ing. Martin Pelikán, Ph.D.

Dean

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled "A comparative analysis of CRM systems in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the European Union innovation markets" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any their person.

In Prague on 15.3.2021

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A comparative analysis of CRM systems in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the European Union innovation markets

Abstract

The aim of the work was to compare selected CRMs in business management from the point of view of the user. A partial goal of the thesis was to evaluate the measure of using CRM in the management of firms in Russia, to highlight the main problems and barriers in this area. The most popular Russian CRM systems – Bitrix24, MegaPlan, AmoCRM and Roistat – were compared in terms of their functions, prices, convenience of the user interface, advantages and disadvantages. It was found that Bitrix24 provides the largest range of functions and is especially suitable for use as a company-wide system, connecting a number of business processes and activities. AmoCRM and Roistat have a narrower focus, but they manage their functions perfectly. The advantage of Russian CRMs is the offer of free and trial versions, a large number of paid tariffs and individual solutions. Tariffs are often tied to the number of site visits or the size of the repository, which is another limitation in the use of systems. The shortcomings of systems are often related to their advantages – for example, the multifunctionality of Bitrix24 can be a problem for understanding the operation of the system and its necessity by all employees of the company. Barriers to the use of Russian CRM systems, regardless of their quality, are language restrictions and ties to other Russian systems in integration. Also, the work will describe possible ways to improve the selected CRMs – so that they become more convenient and accessible for users in the management of firms. Using the example of a selected SkillSett School, the use of the Bitrix24 system was investigated, shortcomings were identified, and recommendations for improvements were made regarding the functions of working with customer contracts and processing customer profiles. The results of the work and suggestions are useful for potential applicants in the use of Russian systems abroad.

Keywords: information technology, CRM system, business, management, Russia, Bitrix24

Komparativní analýza CRM systémů na inovativních trzích Společenství nezávislých států a Evropské unie

Abstrakt

Cílem práce bylo porovnat vybrané CRM v řízení podniku z pohledu uživatele. Dílčím cílem práce bylo vyhodnotit míru využití CRM při řízení firem v Rusku, upozornit na hlavní problémy a bariéry v této oblasti. Nejpopulárnější ruské CRM systémy - Bitrix24, MegaPlan, AmoCRM a Roistat – byly srovnávány z hlediska jejich funkcí, cen, pohodlí uživatelského rozhraní, výhod a nevýhod. Bylo zjištěno, že Bitrix24 poskytuje největší škálu funkcí a je obzvláště vhodný pro použití jako celofiremní systém propojující řadu obchodních procesů a činností. AmoCRM a Roistat mají užší zaměření, ale své funkce zvládají perfektně. Výhodou ruských CRM je nabídka bezplatné a zkušební verze, velké množství placených tarifů a individuální řešení. Tarify jsou často vázány na počet návštěv webových stránek nebo velikost cloudového úložiště, což je další omezení při používání systémů. Nedostatky systémů často souvisí s jejich výhodami – například multifunkčnost Bitrix24 může být problémem pro pochopení fungování systému a jeho nezbytnosti všemi zaměstnanci společnosti. Překážkami v používání ruských systémů CRM jsou bez ohledu na jejich kvalitu jazyková omezení a vazby na jiné ruské systémy při integraci. Práce také popisuje možné způsoby, jak vylepšit vybrané CRM – tak, aby se staly pohodlnější a přístupnější pro uživatele ve vedení firem. Na příkladu vybrané školy SkillSett bylo zkoumáno použití systému Bitrix24, byly identifikovány nedostatky a byla učiněna doporučení pro vylepšení týkající se funkcí práce se zákaznickými smlouvami a zpracování zákaznických profilů. Výsledky práce a návrhy jsou užitečné pro potenciální žadatele při využívání ruských systémů v zahraničí.

Klíčová slova: informační technologie, CRM systémy, podnikání, management, Rusko, Bitrix24

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1 Introduction

The development of information technology is at the same time an important factor, indicator and result of the business development. Huge attention is now being paid to technological innovations, often considered as one of the competitive ability factors. Therefore, the topic of using IT in business is very current.

It is superfluous to talk about how IT simplifies the lives of individuals and, of course, the lives of firms. There are many types of IT in business – for example ERP, CI, MIS, CRM, BI. One of these technologies – CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system with the help of automation processes helps to build a dialogue with the buyer more effectively, prevent mistakes in the work and, as a result, sell him more (Zeithaml, 2018).

How does it work in CRM? Experts from the S2 business tools portal (2021) provide a brief description of CRM as follows: It can be imaged as an Excel spreadsheet with the customer base, but only when you click on the customer's name a convenient card opens. This card contains the entire history of working with this customer – from the first call to purchase. It is possible to listen the calls, to see the purchase history, to create documents by template, to write e-mail or sms, to set a task. When a customer calls, CRM offers to open his card, and the seller immediately greet him by name. Even if another manager worked with this buyer before, the new manager can easily answer customer's questions without any "I'll check and call you back". CRM can send the customer an SMS about the order status itself and will remind the manager about the time of meeting. As a result, CRM helps to save time – both manager's and his customer. So, the customer can become more loyal and purchase-oriented.

Already from such a brief and simple description of the CRM functionality, it can be seen that this is a very useful technology for business. In this regard, the topic of the thesis has the practical significance – especially for managers and marketers.

This work also acquires special relevance in the theoretical field, since quite a bit of professional literature is devoted to the topic of CRM and their modern capabilities. Literature often simply does not keep pace with technological progress, so the development of this work will become a new relevant source of information about CRM in business.

I chose this topic because I would like to learn more about modern technologies, especially about CRM systems, that are used in the management of firms. I want to select some CRM systems, compare them, determine their strengths and weaknesses. As an example, I want to consider AmoCRM, Roistat, CRM Bitrix24, MegaPlan. In the future, I will be able to put this knowledge into practice – in my employment or own business. I want to connect the work with the use of technology in the CIS countries – in particular with Russia.

In Western countries, it is sometimes believed that the CIS countries are backward in various fields. But with regard to technology – this is not so in reality. For example, in 2018, Russia was ahead of Italy and Saudi Arabia in the IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking (Tadviser, 2019). There are a lot of young enterprises that use and ambitiously develop in the field of business technologies, many foreign companies can only envy this. Anyone who lives in these countries will feel how actively IT are used by firms – this applies especially to customer databases, CRM in marketing planning, systems for collecting and analyzing customer opinions, mobile applications for convenient use of company services... On the other hand, there is many old firms, with outdated and inflexible management, insufficiently qualified managers who do not develop technology and lose their competitive position.

The results of the work can be useful for bringing Russian CRM systems for business management to the Czech market. Local entrepreneurs can learn more about the different Russian and other foreign CRMs that can bring them different benefits – for example, in terms of functions, usability, price. Perhaps it will be beneficial for them to order a translation of foreign CRM into their language than to order a CRM here.

2 Objectives and Methodology

The aim of the work will be to compare selected CRMs in business management from the point of view of the user. For example, a comparison will be made of the number of their functions, prices, convenience of the user interface, advantages, and disadvantages.

A partial goal of the work will be to evaluate the measure of using CRM in the management of firms in Russia, to highlight the main problems and barriers in this area. Also, the work will describe possible ways to improve the selected CRMs – so that they become more convenient and accessible for users in the management of firms.

This research aims to discern three objectives:

- *What is the comparative usage of Russian based CRM platforms in the Commonwealth of Independent States versus the European Union?*
- *What barriers are there to introducing Russian made CRM platforms in foreign markets? E.g., do things like sanctions influence the distribution of Russian innovations in EU markets?*
- *How competitive are Russian made CRM platforms outside the CIS? E.g., Do companies use Russian CRMs? Or do they prefer known brands like Salesforce?*

Methods:

- a comparative analysis of four selected CRM systems was performed using SWOT analysis and employing principles or elements of MCDA to organize the criteria by which the analysis was performed. Meaning that the comparisons of the CRMs was performed on the basis of Russian CRM system users employing conceptual elements of MCDA, but not actually performing an MCDA as that goes beyond the scope of this study,
- analysis of the IT usage in company management in U.S., EU and SNS states – based on available secondary research and statistics,
- to highlight the main problems when using selected CRMs,
- to highlight the main barriers that hinder the more extensive use of IT in the management of Russian enterprises,
- to make a interview with an IT specialist – to ask for his opinions on the possibilities of using CRMs in management, on possible ways to improve selected CRMs.

Primary data of the selected company were used for a detailed analysis of the use of the CRM system. To obtain contacts for users of the CRM system the portal Habr.com was used. Habr.com is online portal for IT specialists. After registering on the portal, direct messages can be sent to users of the portal. The authors of the articles on the CRM system and the users who commented on these posts were contacted. Communication was established with the SkullSet language school in St. Petersburg, which agreed to provide some information about its experience with the use of the Bitrix24 system. In the course of online conversations, school staff were asked several questions about the current use of the system, the advantages and disadvantages of the system. Based on the information obtained, areas to be identified were identified and specific measures to improve the system were proposed.

3 Literature Review

„CRM is the management idea of „customer-centered“ and „customer first“
(Ahram, Falcao, 2020, p. 438).

3.1 What is CRM?

The term of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is very often used. Although there is no generally accepted definition of CRM in the current literature, some researchers have tried to describe the concept of CRM and its basic dimensions. Several different approaches to the definition and description of the CRM concept can be found in the literature (Agrawal & Mittal, 2019). Šašek (2014) points out that it is necessary to look at CRM from two points of view:

- CRM as a strategy, philosophy, activity in the field of customer relationship management,
- CRM as software solutions, technologies, systems that are used to collect, store and process important data about customers, their behavior, purchases, fields of activity, staff, situation, payments and many other parameters.

Reinartz et al. (2004) combines these two aspects: according to him, the complete concept of CRM generally consists of two parts, namely management (ie management activities, strategy) and technology (system). Hillebrand, Nijholt & Nijseen (2011) point to the close connection between the technological element of CRM and the management of customer-oriented activities. According to Jamali et al. (2013), technologies are an integral part of the process for developing and managing mutually beneficial relationships between a company and its customers.

In order not to confuse these two concepts of CRM, it is appropriate, in the author's opinion, to use the term “CRM system” to denote the technology, the name “CRM” itself – for management strategy.

3.1.1 CRM as a strategy

According to Debnath et al. (2016), CRM refers to a systematic set of different practices that a business uses to build and keep a long-term relationships with its customers. Wang (2013) explored CRM as a comprehensive set of business practices that are designed to strengthen long-term relationships with existing customers. Chatterjee et al. (2020) considers CRM as a type of competitive strategy that includes various tools: information, technology, people and processes for managing customer relationships through all points of customer involvement.

Kumar and Reinartz (2012, p. 5) offer a business-oriented definition: CRM is a strategic process of selecting the most profitable customers and subsequently establishing interactions between them and the company. The ultimate goal in this case is to optimize the current and future value of the customers for the company.

According to Chlebovský (2005, p. 23), CRM is an interactive process, the aim of which is to achieve an optimal balance between a company's investment and the satisfaction of customer needs. The optimum of equilibrium is determined by the maximum gain of both sides. This definition can be described as marketing-oriented.

Wessling (2003, p. 16) considers CRM as a concept or process, that deals with the ways, how companies can increase customer retention with the highest profitability while reducing costs and increasing the value of business transactions, thereby increasing profits.

From the above definitions, the emphasis on the benefits and usefulness of CRM for business is evident. Chapter 3.4 will be devoted to the discussion of the benefits of CRM. Next, it is necessary to describe a second view of CRM – namely CRM as a technology. It is this aspect that is important for this work, because in the practical part, CRM systems will be examined, not managerial strategies, although there is a certain connection between these two aspects. In addition, studies have shown that software alone is seldom of negligible value to business if it is not combined with appropriate corporate organizational processes (Trainor, Andzulis, Rapp & Agnihotri, 2014).

3.1.2 CRM as a technology

According to Čebišová (2011, p. 90), CRM systems are one of the types of so-called „soft” information technologies (IT). The category of soft information technologies also includes, for example, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Enterprise Application and Information portals (EAP, EIP), Decision Support Systems (MIS, EIS, BI) and Competitive Intelligence (CI). According to Pliskin and Ben-Zion (2005, p. 53) ERPs were used by companies mainly before the year 2000, but since the turn of the century, many businesses are looking to leverage IT, in general, and CRM systems. Čebišová (2011, p. 90) states that all “soft” technologies are not directly connected with production activities, but indirectly help them. These technologies are often associated with the analysis of problems and situations, decision-making and implementation of decisions, their purpose is to increase the efficiency of human activities (Jin, 2010). From this definition, it is clear that CRM can be understood as a significantly broader concept – it concerns not only the management of relationships with external customers, but is associated with a number of other processes and decisions in the company.

CRM systems can be defined as technologies that support the planning, implementation and monitoring of coordinated interactions with customers through all channels and emphasize the integration of organizational processes and functions. (Payne & Frow, 2006).

CRM is the strategic use of information and technology to manage relationships between customers and organizational departments (e.g. sales, marketing, service and support) throughout the customer's life cycle (Gholamreza & Yazdanfar, 2015, p. 192).

Pliskin & Ben-Zion (2005, p. 53) state that CRM systems are mainly used for automating front-office functions – e.g. sales, marketing and customer-service processes. Gholamreza & Yazdanfar (2015, p. 192) also state that the CRM system consists of three main functional areas:

- marketing,
- sales,
- service and support.

These three elements are included to the customer's life cycle. ICT, including CRM systems, supports them.

3.2 Structure of CRM systems

CRM system, like any technology, is constantly evolving, so it is very difficult to say definitively what structure it has or what CRM types are there. Articles and books do not keep pace with technological progress.

According to the latest literature (Danel, 2020), a CRM system can consist of several software components, such as:

- databases, data stocks, BI software, predictions,
- tools for conducting a dialogue with a customer,
- tools for adapting products and services to customers – a layer of two-way communication,
- automation of marketing activities, sales, service activities etc.

From the point of view of functionality, it is possible to find in the CRM system e.g. these modules (Danel, 2020):

- register of business partners and contacts,
- business cases and opportunities,
- marketing,
- related information,
- communication,
- planning,
- analysis and evaluation.

Most modern CRM systems consist of various tools and modules. Their set depends on the business itself. However, there are key functional areas that are basic.

An essential element of the CRM system is the user interface.

„User interface (UI) the point of human-computer interaction and communication in a device. This can include display screens, keyboards, a mouse and the appearance of a desktop. It is also the way through which a user interacts with an application or a website.“ (Rouse, 2020). The examples of CRM user interfaces are sales dashboards, mobile CRM applications, CRM-Outlook integration (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1 CRM user interfaces

Sales dashboards



Mobile CRM applications



CRM-Outlook integration



Source: SearchCRM Staff, 2012.

CRM systems can be used also both in a browser and as an application on the laptop, mobile phone or tablet. The functionality of the browser and desktop versions have to be comparable, so the end users will not notice the difference. The CRM system interface usually consists of a desktop, on which the user can bring the necessary panels, modules and windows. On some systems, it is possible to customize the interface view. This implicitly improves user productivity, as familiar colors make the system more familiar (Megaplan, 2020).

3.3 Types of CRM systems

Basl & Blažíček (2012, p. 90) differentiate three main types of CRM: operational, analytical and collaborative:

- operational CRM arranges the implementation of CRM strategy, sales and marketing support, automation of communication and sales processes. Using this type of CRM, the company delivers on time what the customer ordered, can issue the correct invoice, know if the customer has paid etc.,
- analytical CRM, as its name implies, deals with the analysis of customer data, analysis of their behavior – Data Mining, Web Mining etc. It can provide a unified view of the customer and its development over time, create a profitability forecast, search for new potential sales channels, optimize the effectiveness of marketing campaigns (in terms of their targeting),
- collaborative CRM is designed to quickly arrange the required client information to the appropriate places in the company. This means that it supports cooperation between individual departments and employees, serves the organizational structure of the company.

According to the functional focus, there are these types of CRM systems: contacts management systems (call-center, feedback), marketing (surveys, analysis of results), sales (e.g. online store, ordering by phone) and complex systems (Ledeneva, 2019, p. 67).

Depending on the technology, CRM solutions are divided into:

- SaaS (Software as a service), where the CRM system is accessed as a cloud service,
- Stand-Alone system based on software packages with a license for installation and use.

By the cost of a ready-made software solution, there are budget versions, mid-level systems and expensive solutions. It should be noted that the price of a product depends on the functions of the system (Ledeneva, 2019, p. 67).

3.4 Benefits of using CRM systems in business

Companies invest millions in IT to keep up with the modern world, globalization, growing customer demand, etc. But the question is how effective are these investments – do they bring real benefits to companies – e.g. help increase turnover, optimize costs, increase profitability, etc.?

The research literature does not provide a clear answer on the extent and significance of the impact of the IT use on business (Heim & Peng, 2009).

Šašek (2014) states that the information and data that are stored and processed by CRM systems are very important for strategic management decisions. This information and data are usually very important for companies to decide on how to address target customers, about suitable products and their innovation, about the relationship building etc.

According to respondents from the Capterra survey from 2015, CRM software had the greatest impact on customer retention and satisfaction (Hollar, 2015).

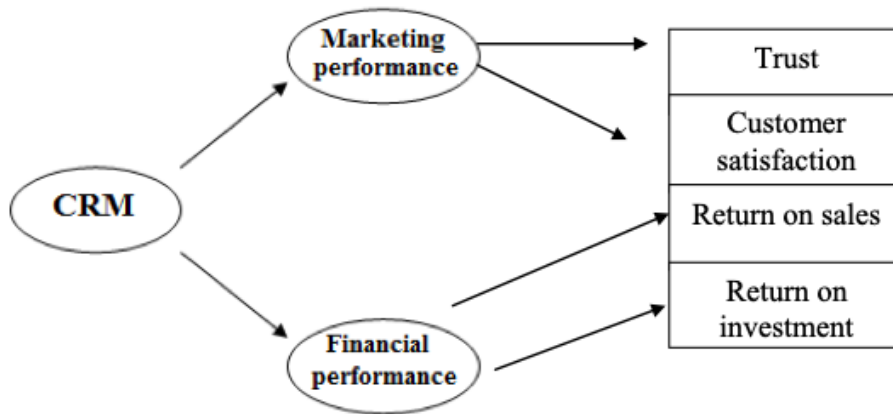
Heim & Peng (2009) examined the impact of IT on the operation of manufacturing companies and concluded that the IT use has clear positive effects in three dimensions: organizational structure, manufacturing processes and performance.

By Chang's research (2007), businessmen believe that the actual implementation of CRM systems contribute to improving the quality of relationships and organizational performance, and agree that the implementation of CRM systems should be preceded by BPR (Business Process Reengineering) and organizational learning.

The study by Sin et al. (2004) confirms the positive correlation between CRM and marketing, financial performance (see Fig. 2). CRM system helps increase customer trust and satisfaction (that is, the marketing level) and increase return on sales and return on investment (the financial level).

Technology not only improves marketing communication channels, but also provides organizations with the tools to adopt a proactive and reactive strategy to products adapting and customer requirements matching. Technologies are used to enable transactions between customers and society, to reduce the cost of such interactivity, to make transactions more efficient and to strengthen the relationship between the parties by creating a degree of (perceived) interdependence (Kaur, 2016, p. 332). All these factors contribute to the positive marketing and financial impacts of the use of CRM technology in business.

Figure 2 Correlation between CRM and marketing and financial performance



Source: Sin et al., 2004 in: Rahimi, Yazdanfar, 2015, p. 193.

The benefits of a CRM system can also be classified as tangible and intangible (Kim, 2010):

- tangible benefits increase profitability, faster turnover period, minimize costs, maximize productivity, reduce marketing costs and increase customer retention,
- intangible benefits, on the other hand, bring greater customer satisfaction, positive word-of-mouth effects, better customer service, organized business processes, increased segmentation efficiency and intensive targeting and positioning.

Opinions can be found in the literature that CRM systems do not bring clearly positive and visible impacts on business. For example, research by Hendricks, Singhal & Stratman (2006) brings mixed results: the author examined the impact of investing in CRM and other systems (Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Supply Chain Management (SCM)) on long-term stock performance and corporate profitability. There were no evidences of improved stock returns or profitability in companies that have invested in CRM systems.

In contrast to this study, the results of research Peštek and Lalović (2015) point to a clear contribution of CRM systems to increasing profitability, through a higher level of customer retention and attraction. However, this research focused only on rent-a-car agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and used structured interviews with managers as the main method. The above-mentioned research by Hedricks et al. (2006) relied on an examination of financial indicators and a larger sample of companies (80 cases of the CRM implementations).

3.5 Measurement of CRM system benefits and its effectiveness

From the exploring of previous surveys that have been devoted to verification of the CRM systems benefits by measuring and evaluating them, two basic approaches in this area can be identified:

- measurement of CRM system benefits from a marketing point of view: e.g., impacts on customer satisfaction, loyalty, perceived quality of corporate communication,
- measurement of CRM system financial benefits: e.g., improvement of selected indicators such as ROI, ROS, profit, sales, etc.

Indicators such as changes in customer satisfaction, loyalty, attitudes, etc. are identified in corporate marketing surveys. It is possible to use questionnaire surveys, in-depth interviews with customers (telephone or field survey).

Financial indicators are simply measured under the conditions of availability of internal company data – financial statements, ledgers, reports on business results in individual periods. It is necessary to have data from at least two periods: before the implementation of the CRM system and after its successful implementation.

According to the author, it is possible to measure the impacts of CRM systems also in terms of process, ie how the efficiency of individual processes changes. These can be the following indicators used in process management (Dvořáček, 2005, p. 66):

- cost-effectiveness,
- productivity,
- reliability (quality) of processes,
- duration.

Cost effectiveness can be measured through the following indicators: product costs, costs as a percentage of revenues, costs as a percentage of the total budget, current costs versus budget (planned) costs, etc. (Dvořáček, 2005, p. 66). This means that when examining the impact of the CRM system use, it is appropriate to determine whether the company's costs have decreased, whether the company is able to meet budget plans, etc.

Productivity indicators will focus on how much output one worker produces. (Dvořáček, 2005, p. 66). In a manufacturing plant, it is simply the number of production units that a worker has created per unit of time. In sales management, it can be the number and value of orders executed by one manager per unit of time. In the customer support department – how many complaints are handled by one employee in a given time, etc. When examining the impact of the implementation of CRM system, it is necessary to find out how the selected indicators have changed over time.

Process reliability (quality) indicators can include, for example, number of errors, system failures, downtime, degree of automation, etc. (Dvořáček, 2005, p. 66). These indicators can be applied for the purposes of evaluating the CRM system: to find out how reliable it is, how it contributed to the automation of processes in the company, etc.

According to Dvořáček (2005, p. 66), the duration indicators express the time required to perform the overall operation. In the author's opinion, indicators in this area are closely linked to indicators of productivity and reliability, and therefore there is no need to measure them separately when examining the effectiveness of CRM systems.

In the author's opinion, there should be two other groups of CRM rating indicators: user interface convenience and price.

There is no need to comment in detail on the price criterion: for many managers, the solution, that requires lower costs is better than other. It is necessary to pay attention to this approach, because the “cheapest” is not always the best, and at the same time in an effort to find the highest quality, the “most expensive” is not always the best. In the author's opinion, it is therefore usually necessary to compare the costs caused by the implementation of CRM system with the expected revenues, with the current financial capabilities of the company, etc. All this is related to the financial efficiency indicators mentioned above.

The convenience of the CRM user interface reduces the cost of training employees (existing and new) – if the interface is simple and “user friendly”, every employee will be able to quickly learn to use it. The CRM system should in no way complicate the work of employees – the implementation of the CRM system should not be perceived by employees as imposing new unnecessary duties (such as creating numerous reports and sheets). CRM system must be functional and bring benefits to the company. According to

SaleRS agency (2020), an “uncomfortable” inconvenience CRM system can cause the following effects:

- working in the CRM system takes time from managers,
- each manager understands in his own way how to fill in the system,
- the manager does not regularly control the filling of the system,
- the shortcomings of the managers’ work become be visible in the CRM system,
- managers work by the usual old way parallely to the CRM system use,
- CRM system does not allow managers to do absolutely everything that they want and need in their job.

Measuring convenience of the user interface is possible according to various criteria. 3 components of successful usability of the system is consistency, simplicity and efficiency (Hidy Group, 2019).

3.6 Overview of the CRM market development

Progress around the world has led to the emergence and constant development of various ways of using information technology in business. The history of the emergence of CRM systems began in the 80s of the last century. Even then the companies allocated a priority group of customers, who were given special attention. The management put the question to the company: “Why do people choose our product or service?” CRM systems became widely known in the early 90s in the West. The rapid development of information technology, computing technology and Internet made it possible to work with significant databases. It was at the end of the 20th century that it became possible to process and analyze large amounts of information for decision-making. Thus, the first developers of CRM systems appeared. (Ledeneva, 2019, p. 66).

CRM software has come a long way in the last 30 years: from corporate databases with contacts and early sales force automation systems, to cloud CRM and surviving the dot com bubble burst. CRM has a long history – at least compared to other software solutions. Today, with the growth of social CRM systems, marketing atutomation

solutions, Big Data and mobile CRM applications, the industry is constantly evolving and meeting the new needs of entrepreneurs in the 21st century. (Hollar, 2015).

3.6.1 Using of CRM systems in the United States

In 2015, Capterra agency conducted a survey of 500 entrepreneurs of various sizes and areas of activity in the United States to compare CRM usage. The main research results included the following findings (Hollar, 2015):

- more than half of the users adopted CRM systems within their company during the first five years in business and 2/3 of the companies had at least 100 customers when they first purchased CRM,
- one third of CRM users use Salesforce, while other software giants in the market – Microsoft, Oracle and SAP with Salesforce control 75 % of the CRM market,
- on average, companies spent 150 dollars per user per month on their CRM system. 61 % of companies spent 50 dollars per user per month,
- despite the growth of social CRM systems, people still wanted more and the most popular features of CRM were the functions of social media monitoring (25 %) and the ability to obtain information about social networks (24 %).

According to Capterra's research, CRM systems were mostly used in retail (18 %), business services (10 %), technology (8 %), banking, finance and insurance (7 %), manufacturing (6 %). Within one company, CRM was mostly used by the sales department, then by the marketing department and the customer service department (Hollar, 2015).

In 2018, CRM systems accounted for almost a quarter of global enterprise application software revenue. According to Gartner, business adoption of CRM software increased 15,6 % to 48,2 billion dollars in 2018 and has been growing steadily in recent years (Navarrete, 2019).

Approximately 72,9% of money spent on CRM systems in 2018 fell on Software as a service (SaaS). The main drivers here were availability and flexibility, along with the need for remote and mobile users.

3.6.2 Using of CRM systems in EU states

In 2019, the survey on EU enterprises' was conducted by Eurostat, based on the national statistical authorities. It included data from 153 500 enterprises in the EU-27 (10,4 % of total number of enterprises' in EU in 2019): 83 % of them were small (with 10-49 persons employed), 13 % were medium (50-249 people) and 3 % were large (250 people) (Eurostat, 2020, p. 8). The production of statistics in the EU on the use of ICT is governed by the rules set out in the Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 of 17 February 1997 on Community Statistics (as amended by current regulations) and also by Regulation (EU) 2018/1798 of 21 November 2018 implementing Regulation (EC) No 808/2004 concerning Community statistics on the information society for the reference year 2019.

The main highlight of this survey was, that on average a third of enterprises' (32 %) used operational CRM systems, defined as "*software applications to capture, store and make available information about the enterprise's customers to other business functions*" (Eurostat, 2020, p. 6). The EU countries where CRMs were most used by businesses were (Eurostat, 2020, p. 2):

- Netherlands (56 % of enterprises'),
- Belgium (46 %),
- Germany (44 %),
- Finland (42 %),
- Austria (41 %).

It is clear that these are the most developed EU countries. It is therefore possible to assume that the use of CRM is related to the degree of economic development of the business sphere in the country.

According to this indicator, the Czech Republic was below the EU average – according to Eurostat survey (2020, p. 2), a fifth of companies use CRM (21 %). Approximately the same level was found in Estonia (22 %), Romania (20 %), Slovakia (22 %), Slovenia (20 %).

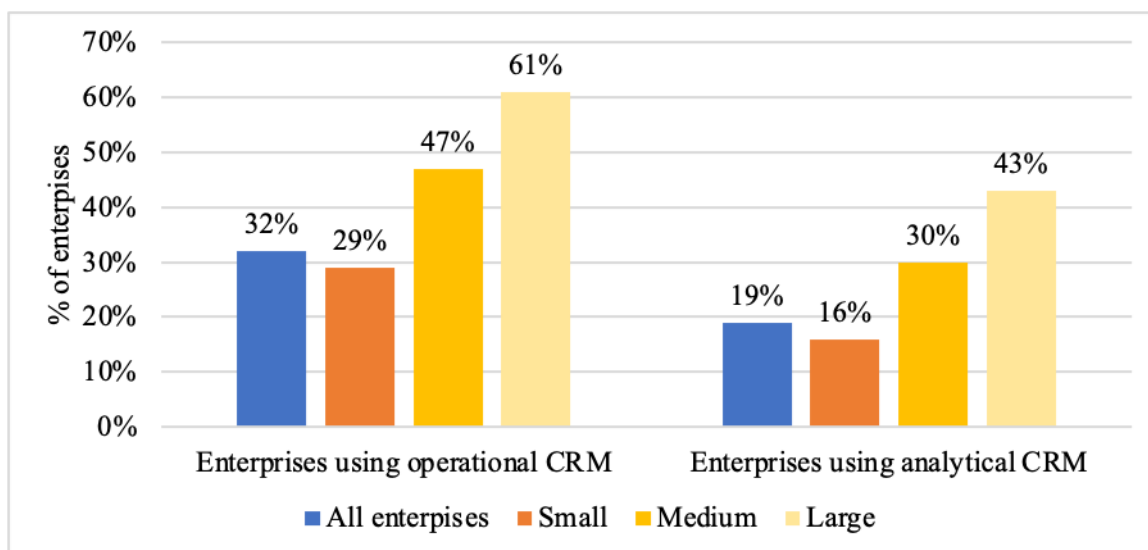
The observed rate of CRM using was approximately the same as the rate of using of another type of ICT in EU companies – Enterprise Resource Planning software (ERP) was used by 36 % of companies (Eurostat, 2020, p. 2).

Interestingly, compared to the previous research from 2017, the using of CRM decreased by 1 %. CRM was used more in large enterprises than in small: 61 % of large enterprises used CRM, 47 % of medium and 29 % of small (Eurostat, 2020, p. 7). From this it is also possible to deduce the assumption that the rate of CRM using increases with the growth of the size of the company.

In addition to operational CRM, companies also used analytical CRM - in the survey was defined as “*software application used to analyze customer information to identify patterns of customer preferences and behavior*” (Eurostat, 2020, p. 6). Analytical CRM was less used by EU companies compared to operational CRM – some 19 % of enterprises used it for sophisticated purposes. Most of this type of software was used by large companies: 43 % of large companies, 30 % of medium and 16 % of small ones used analytical software. This also confirms the assumption of a growing rate of unexpected CRM systems with an increase in the size of the business.

A summary of the main results of this research is illustrated in the graph.

Figure 3 Enterprises using CRM, by size class, EU-27, 2019



Source: Eurostat, 2020, p. 7.

The smallest differences between the using of analytical CRM and operational CRM was recorded in the accommodation sector and the retail trade sector. Overall, the highest rate of use of both types of CRM was logically in the ICT sector. The use of operational CRM was approximately the same in the sectors of wholesale and retail trade, accommodation, professional, scientific and technical activities, real estate activities (40 %).

According to the research “Europe Cloud CRM Market – Growth, Trends, and Forecasts (2020 - 2025)” by Mordor Intelligence LLP (2020), the segment of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is expected to grow significantly in terms of using of investment and innovation, using of ICT and CRM in business. The authors of the research see the main obstacles to greater implementation of CRM in the SME segment, insufficient access to financing of invoices (despite relatively favorable financing conditions – e.g. low interest rates). Improving the use of CRM can be expected, for example, also through a new partnership – CRM provider vCita entered into a partnership with Mastercard in Europe in 2020, which can help SMEs operate in a more digital environment, gain knowledge and ready-made learning and management solutions. Another opportunity is provided by Hubspot – it is a free offer of CRM solutions, providing detailed reports on the use of CRM. The new solution has been provided since February 2020 by Scepter Hospitality Resources – the Maverick CRM guest management system for the hospitality industry. In March 2020, Salesforce announced new innovations for the healthcare industry (Salesforce CRM). Offering new CRM solutions can help expand the use of CRM in business in the EU. According to the estimate (Statista Research Department, 2019), the turnover of the CRM software market will reach in Europe of 13.07 billion US dollars by 2021.

3.6.3 Using of CRM systems in CIS states

According to AllCRM data (2020) the volume of the Russian market of client platforms is estimated at 15 billion rubles in 2018 with an annual 10% growth in demand, which is not enough for the urgent requirement of a breakthrough development of the Russian economy.

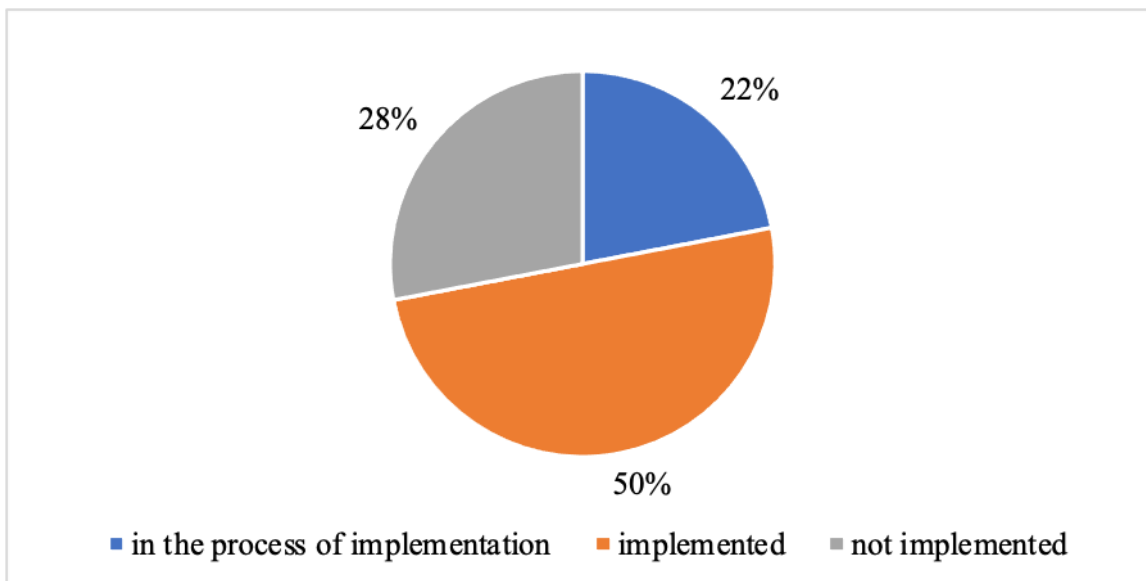
The CIS market does not maintain the same detailed statistics on the use of the CRMs as in the EU. The analysis and forecast of this market is therefore based on many different studies. Most studies come to same conclusion that this market is showing positive dynamics. Let's consider some examples of research in more detail.

During 2016, online portal Habr.com conducted a sociological survey of Russian entrepreneurs. 423 respondents took part in the polls, 156 of whom answered the questions. Thus, most of the surveyed organizations are companies with a high level of automation of

business processes and operations. The aim of the study was to obtain relevant information about the use of CRM systems by Russian entrepreneurs, identify the most popular of them, and satisfaction with the quality of the software offered on the Russian market. The results presented by Habr at the beginning of 2017 are useful to visualize in the form of the following diagrams.

Figure 4 shows how actively Russian entrepreneurs use CRM systems.

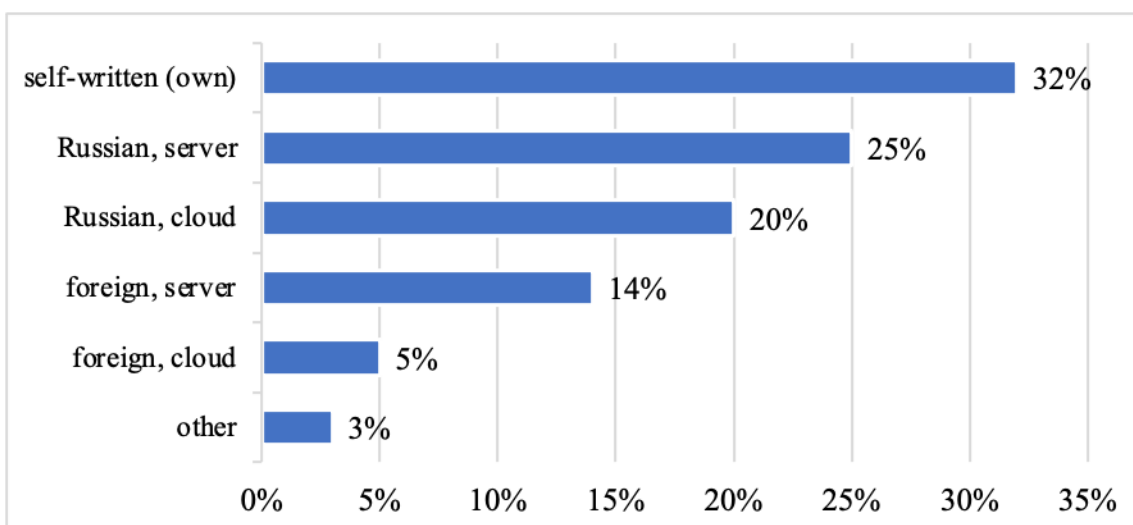
Figure 4 Percentage of the use of CRM systems by Russian companies, 2016



Source: Habr.com, 2017

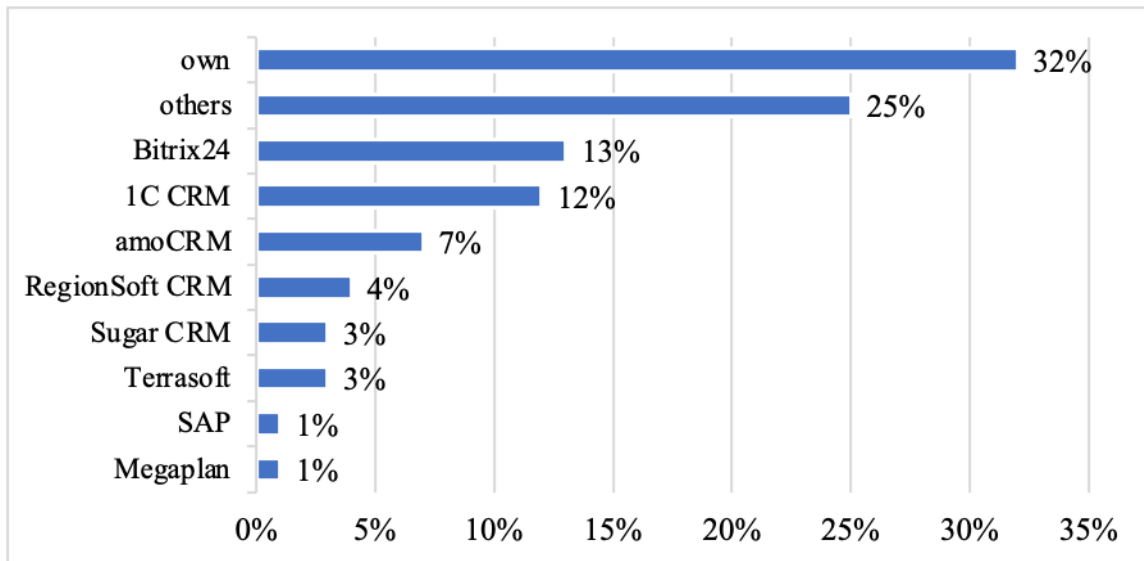
Figure 5 and figure 6 show the preferences of heads of organizations on the implemented CRM systems and those systems that are planned to be implemented.

Figure 5 Types of CRM systems used by Russian companies, 2016



Source: Habr.com, 2017

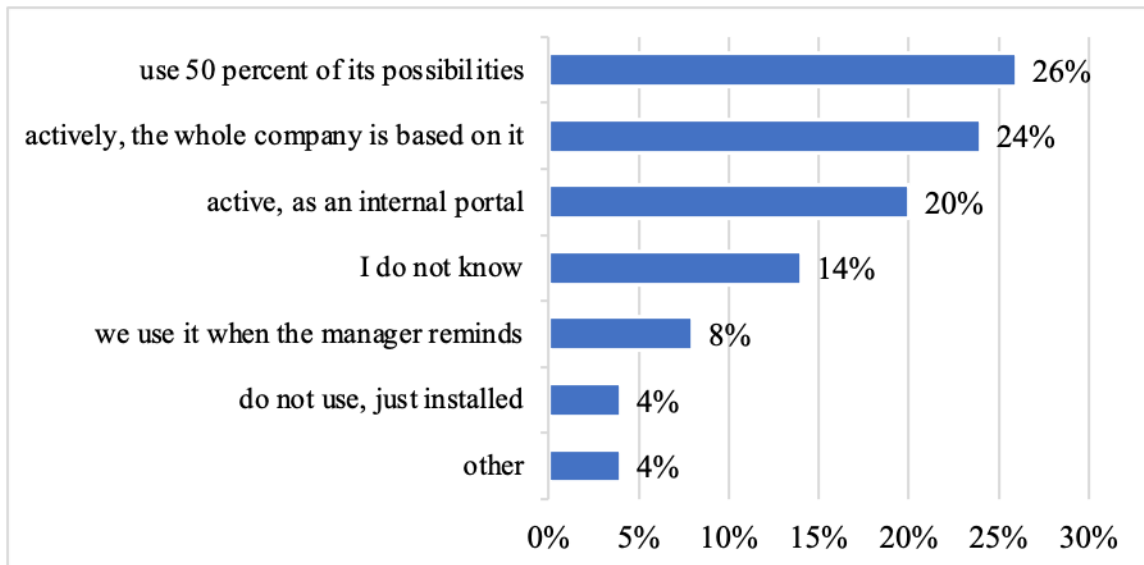
Figure 6 Brands of CRM systems used by Russian companies, 2016



Source: Habr.com, 2017

The most interesting of the results obtained is the data on how fully CRM systems are used in Russian companies, presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7 Evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of CRM-systems by Russian companies, 2016



Source: Habr.com, 2017

Thus, according to the results of the presented study, it can be concluded that CRM systems are quite actively used by Russian entrepreneurs, and the most popular is the Bitrix24 platform.

The market for solutions for working with clients in CIS countries showed positive dynamics: in an effort to optimize their costs, enterprises introduced tools that allow them to increase the productivity of both internal processes and processes of interaction with customers, partners and suppliers.

Explaining the growth in demand, Mikhail Tokovinin, co-founder of amoCRM, suggested that more and more companies are starting to use CRM systems, since it becomes clear what kind of product it is, what is its benefit and idea (Tokovinin in Navicon, 2017). *“From an abstract term, CRM becomes an obvious tool,”* the expert adds. The growing interest in CRM tools on the SMEs market in the past year was noted by other experts. Thus, Mikhail Kadykov (Navicon, 2017), CEO of Monitor CRM, described 2017 as the year of the beginning of the rise of SMEs with a steady increase in interest in CRM solutions. The same trend was noted by RosBusinessSoft Technical Director Gleb Melnikov (Navicon, 2017): *“If earlier, five years ago, medium and large businesses were primarily interested in CRM technologies, then for the last 2 years we have been seeing interest in CRM systems among small and micro businesses”*.

And although the overwhelming majority of large business companies already use CRM tools in one form or another, their interest in this area also influenced the development of the CRM market. It was caused, first of all, by the desire of the business to develop and improve the tools used to increase its efficiency. At the same time, as the head of the development and promotion department of 1C-Rarus, Alexei Chaplygin (Navicon, 2017), emphasized, *“the business has become more demanding and expects maximum functionality in “a box”, since this allows not only to reduce the implementation time, but also the costs of further support”*.

The market of CRMs has become more competitive, information systems are developing more and more actively, and companies are convinced that technology does provide advantages and important tools in the struggle for the client, commented on the situation on the market, Nina Putintseva, head of the pre-project consulting department for business applications of Oracle CIS Navicon, 2017).

Demand for comprehensive CRM products with broader functionality is increasing in CIS markets. This trend is primarily due to the desire of SMEs to implement solutions that cover not only the issues of interaction with customers, but also "accompanying"

processes: document flow, project management, information exchange between departments and employees.

According to the Tagline rating (2020) the most popular CRMs in Russia and all CIS markets are (from the most popular to the least popular): Bitrix24, amoCRM, Directual, Megaplan, Pipedrive, Highrise, Worksection, bpm'online, FreshOffice, Salesforce, Streak, 1C, SugarCRM and Microsoft Dynamics. According to the survey of a sample of 256 russian companies, made by Zaruckiy, COMSmagazine and Workspace (2020) 44 % of enterprises' use Bitrix24. The second popular system is Trello (25 % of enterprises'), the third popular system is AmoCRM (14,5 %). The own IT solution is also used by a fairly large share of companies – 14,1 %.

So, it is obvious that the CRM market in Russia and the CIS countries continues to develop. Global trends, no doubt, have an impact on the development of the domestic CRM market, but will not lead to its immediate transformation.

Furthermore, it is appropriate to focus in detail on the offer of the CRM market – what systems are offered on the market, to make their description and to compare.

3.7 Methods

Researching the problem of the CRM systems evaluation and selection is the point of interest for many authors from different areas. Many methods can be used in this field.

3.7.1 SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis can be used to evaluate the selected problem. It is a very popular method, used especially in management, marketing, economics. The matrix of SWOT factors simplifies the overview of the results of extensive analysis and is a great tool for data synthesis and interpretation.

The SWOT analysis focused on CRM in the company examines the internal strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) of the organization in the field of CRM usage. It also analyzes external opportunities (O) and threats (T). The examples of strengths in case of company's CRM analysis are given in the table 1.

Table 1 Examples of the SWOT factors

<p>Strenghts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employee performance growth - time and cost savings - reducing the number of errors - reducing the risk of loss or misuse of information 	<p>Weakneses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - high costs of obtaining a CRM license / monthly payment - lack of technical skills of employees for effective use of CRM - inability to connect the CRM system with other software of the company
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development of the IT services market - development of cloud solutions - development of mobile applications 	<p>Treats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exchange rate changes and CRM subscription price increases - technical outages - theft of company information - termination of CRM system support by the developer

Source: author, Finance-mangement.cz, 2020

SWOT analysis can serve as a basis for further advanced research – for example, deriving strategies for developing and maximizing strengths, risk elimination strategies, defense strategies, etc. (see table 2). These strategies combine the use of various factors that affect the company to the greatest extent. For example, the SO strategy envisages the use of strengths for the purpose of seizing market opportunities, etc.

Table 2 SWOT analysis and strategy selection

	S (Strenghts)	W (Weakneses)
O (Opportunities)	SO strategy	WO strategy
T (Treats)	ST strategy	WT strategy

Source: Wessling, 2003, p. 67

3.7.2 Multi-criteria selection

Elements of Multiple Criteria Decision Making (MCDM) or Multi Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) were used to distinguish the user requirements of the different CRM systems given in the analysis. Meaning that the basis of the SWOT analysis was conducted on the criteria most compounded by CRM users. Therefore, this study does not perform an MCDA, however its theoretical concept was referred to as a scaffold to organize the comparisons between the CRM systems.

There are studies that are based on very complex mathematical calculations, building matrices and graphs (eg Wang et al., 2020). Montis et al. (2000, p. 2) state, that MCDA methods differ from each other in terms of criteria operationalization, the application of weights and mathematical algorithm, describing the results. The complexity of the method matters on the objectives of the analysis and the information available.

The most well-being developed are the following categories, which are solved with the help of the MCDA (Yatsalo et al., 2014, p. 75):

- selection of alternatives (screening) – process of seeding (alternating) alternatives from the amount of possible / specified. So, it is a forming of lesser amounts of alternatives that include possible or better alternatives.
- alternating ranking (from the most likely pre-accounting to the pre-accounting with all valuations and prices);
- classification / sorting of alternatives by class / category.

Basically, MCDA includes these operational components (Montis et al., 2000, p. 16):

- criteria setting,
- weights setting,
- solution finding procedure,
- issues addressed by results.

Criteria setting make the basis of the method on which the SWOT analysis is performed. Therefore, a list of criteria will be developed, that can be used for the analysis of CRM systems for prospective users. The criteria of the CRM systems are considered the most important from the user's point of view, and they form the basis of the SWOT analysis. These include the following:

1. Interface

The interface is the first and most frequent thing that an ordinary user encounters and on which their selection will be contingent. It is further evaluated for ease of understanding and use (very simple / simple / medium / difficult / very difficult). A simple interface means that the user can easily find the information and functions of interest to him, without spending additional time or effort on it. No specialist assistance or advice is required. A complex interface is the opposite of a simple one in these criteria. It can contain a lot of "garbage" - unnecessary graphic elements that complicate the use and navigation in the system. The interface level can improve or worsen the criterion score – for example, modern design / obviously outdated design.

2. Solution

The Box version is installed on the user's server “forever” or space is reserved for it in the cloud / on the supplier's server. The user usually purchases a license only once with an unlimited period of use. Individual services – system modifications, consultations, installation – are usually specified in the conditions of a particular system.

The cloud version usually uses a specific amount of space on the vendor's server. Access to the use of this version is possible for users in any part of the world. To use the cloud, you usually need to make recurring payments (subscription).

The main difference between the two versions from each other is the ability to flexibly configure the system to fit your needs, customization. The cloud version offers ready-made functionality, and the boxed version assumes that you configure everything the way you need it. In addition, licenses differ in additional tools, storage capacity, and persons who provide technical support and service (Kuc, 2019).

The availability of different versions of the CRM is considered a benefit.

3. Tariffs

Tariffs are the next important criterion. The system can be considered effective if the costs of purchasing and maintaining it are lower than the benefits that come from using it (most often it is the acceleration of employees' work, improving the quality of work, reducing the number of errors and returns). Unfortunately, this information on the effects of using the systems is very specific for every company and is not available. Therefore, a simple comparison of prices relative to each other is used below. The factor of tariff

diversity is also considered, because the more tariffs in the offer is the better (the client can choose the most suitable tariff for his financial capabilities and the expected effect).

4. Communication tools

Communication is an important element that facilitates communication between users of the system (within the firm) and / or with external users. It is clear that employees can use their usual communication methods (their personal phone, messengers, branded email or chat, etc.). However, it is better if the CRM has its own built-in communication functions. This saves time (the employee does not have to switch from one program to another), improves the process of transferring, copying, saving and security of information. For example, it is easier to copy and send a report from the system inside the system than to download it to a computer and send it by mail separately. Also, access to the transmitted information can only be with the users of the program, which will reduce the risk of its illegal use.

The comparison shows a list of possible communication tools in the CRM. The assessment of the CRM based on this criterion may not necessarily depend on the number of tools (although this may be perceived by some clients as important), but also on their quality. For example, an interactive online chat may be quite enough, and it will be more convenient than choosing between one of the tools communications - e-mail, online and phone call, SMS, fax, etc.

5. Possibilities of integration

Since the CRM system is an element of the entire information system of the company, its connection with other programs, processes and areas of work is very important. When comparing the selected CRs, it is considered which systems can be integrated. If these are only Russian programs, then from the point of view of a foreign user, this is a disadvantage. From the point of view of the user in the Russian market – most likely a profit.

6. Advantages and disadvantages

The main findings in comparison with the above criterion, as well as additional characteristics of the CRM systems are considered when describing the benefits and disadvantages in the SWOT analysis.

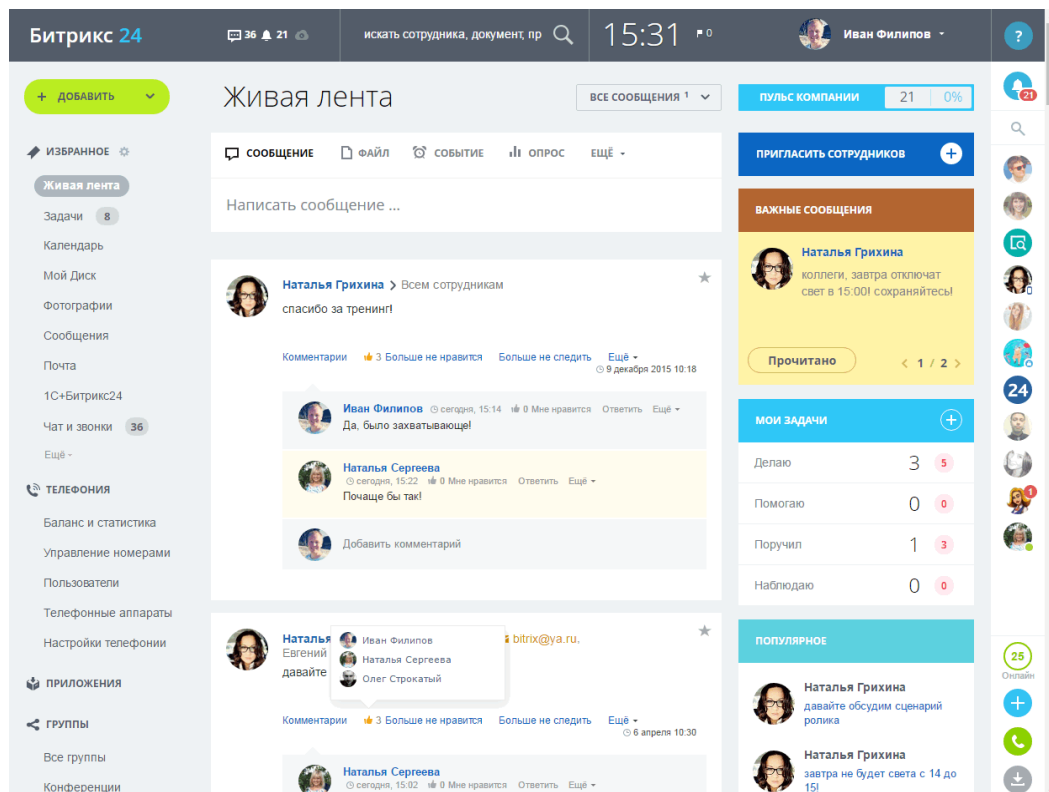
4 Practical Part

This chapter provides a detailed description and analysis of selected most popular CRM systems in Russia: Bitrix24, MegaPlan, AmoCRM and Roistat.

4.1 Bitrix24

CRM Bitrix24 has been operating since 2009 (as “1С-Bitrix: Web management”). Bitrix23 was launched in 2012. Since 2018 many renovation and updates of the system were developed. Now Bitrix24 is focused on the Russian market, and is developing rapidly and confidently. Bitrix24 is a multifunctional CRM system that simplifies work not only with clients, but also helps to manage processes within the company. It offers both cloud solutions and a “box” solution. After registration, the user sees three columns, where the main menu will be on the left, the event feed is in the middle, and notifications are on the right (Figure 8).

Figure 8 Bitrix24 interface



Source: Dokuchaev, 2020.

In 2020, around 8 million companies were registered in the Bitrix system (Bitrix, Chezova, 2020).

4.1.1 Tariffs

As Bitrix24 proposes “clouds” and “boxes” solutions, it is easier to divide the tariffs of the system as follows (Dokuchaev, 2020):

- Online tariffs. The company will purchase a cloud cover (1000-11000 RUB per month). It suits especially for SMEs,
- “Project” – free tariff with minimum of functions. The company will get a 5 GB cloud for each employee (user). It is possible to register up to 12 business users who have more opportunities and functions,
- “Project+” – costs 30 RUB per month for one employee (user). It offers same functions as “Project”, but the cloud is bigger (24 GB for each employee/user). Also it is possible to register more users – up to 24 persons,
- “Team” – an unbounded number of business users, 100 GB of space per user, the price is 135 RUB per month for one employee (user). More possibilities than in the previous tariff, but it is not everything – there is no audit, making a backup copy etc.,
- “Company” – a borderless number of business users and spaces in virtual disks. 265 RUB per month per user. All possibilities of the system are included in this tariff,
- “Offline Tariffs” – designed for large companies, corporations, holds, who want the “box” solution. The average price is about 220 thousands RUB per year per company plus the price of the support during the year according to the tariffs “Corporate portal” or Holding”. The first – “Corporate portal” costs 5 400 RUB, and the second “Holding – 13 200 RUB per year. The difference between the first and the second is in the space size for backup copies – 20 GB or 50 GB.

4.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages

Main advantages of the Bitrix24:

- multifunctional system,
- working with documents (doc, pdf, xls and so on) inside the system,

- interface – it looks like as a social media, very simple and accustomed,
- allows voice-calls (incl. telephony) and video-chats,
- business e-mail service can be made for free,
- integration with social networks, google calendars and other services,
- integration with 1B-bitrix and other known CRM systems,
- offers free and paid tariffs.

Disadvantages of the Bitrix24 include:

- the main advantage – multifunctionality – is also a disadvantage, because it takes a lot of time to know them,
- the interface includes “visual rubbish”,
- do not offer document templates.

4.2 MegaPlan

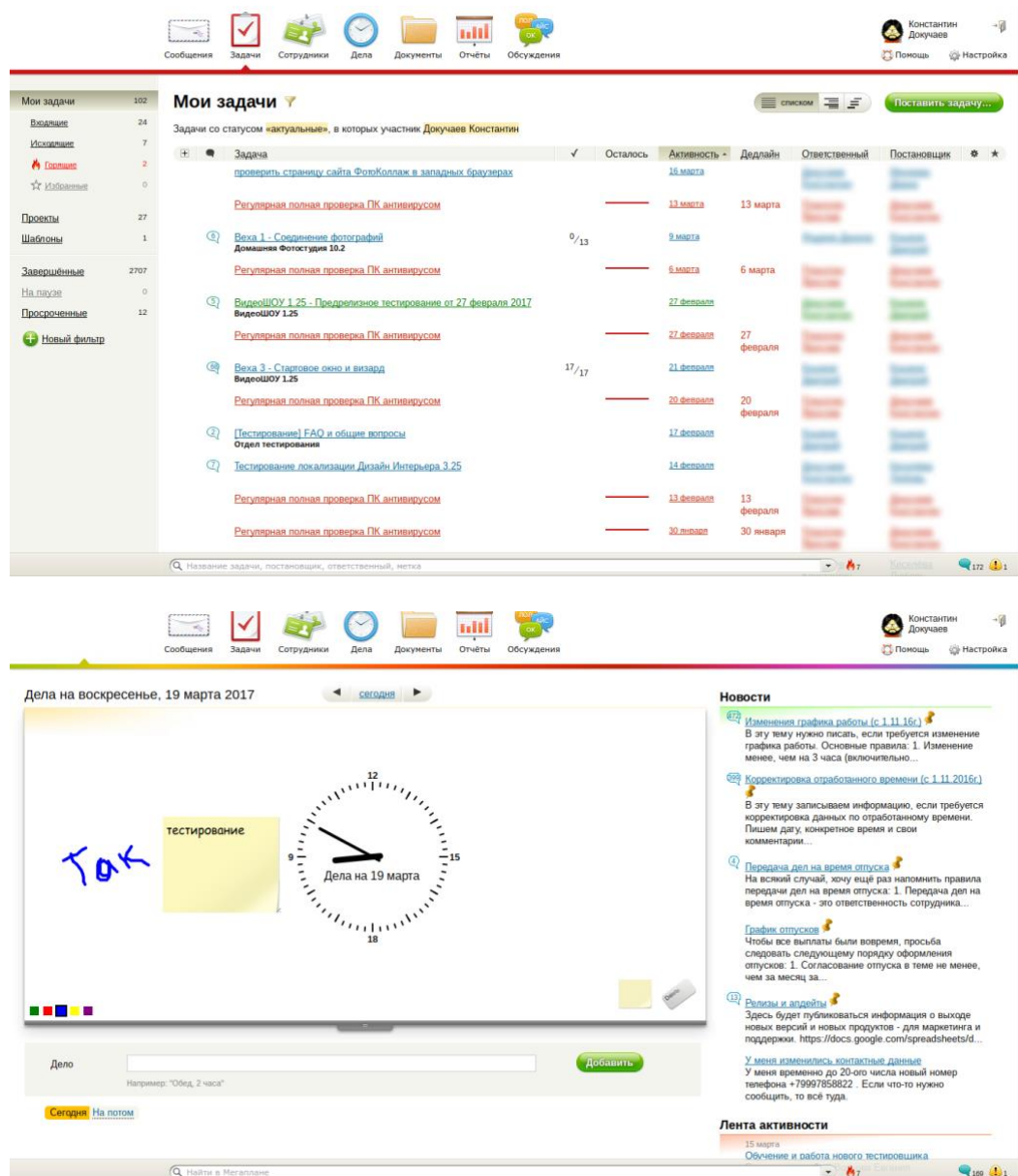
MegaPlan is also the popular Russian CRM. Megaplan has been on the market since 2008. More than 15 thousand companies work with them, mainly in 9 CIS countries (Dokuchaev, 2017).

At first, Megaplan was developed as an admin panel for companies – to increase efficiency, automate processes and manage tasks. But then developers also established CRM (effective management of the client base of companies). Now Megaplan is one of the best solutions for automating and speeding up routine work: documentation, reporting, accounting, etc. The boss sees everything that happens inside the company, controls everything. The employee sees his tasks, task tools and works effectively.

The main page of the Meagaplan CRM is shown by the figure 9. There is also a main page – “desktop”. There is an interactive board with tasks – a “taskwatch”. There are also announcements, the latest actions of colleagues in the forum and other updates. On the board, the user can “glue” stickers and draw. In the middle of the taskwatch there is a clock on which the user can visualize the boundaries of tasks scheduled for today. At the very bottom, there is a search throughout Megaplan. Nearby the icons are: overdue / burning tasks, new messages and tasks. All reminders and notifications are visible online. They can

also be sent by mail or SMS. The filling of the desktop can be changed for the user. Megaplan also includes messages between the colleagues, tasks, users profiles, documents, forums and reports.

Figure 9 Megaplan interface



Source: Dokuchaev, 2017.

4.2.1 Tariffs

Megaplan has several products (tariffs) for different needs. The admin panel may differ for different employees within the same company, depending on access rights. The simplest product is “Collaboration”. For business users who conduct business processes,

there is a more advanced one – “CRM: work with clients”, which, like the first, has a simple version and a “plus”. The only difference is that the second has CRM with sales programs. Both Megaplan products are offered in the form of a “cloud” and a “box”. Cloud is based completely on Megaplan servers (but the client can use his own domain). Box is an offline solution on own servers. Both are flexibly customizable to the needs of the company.

The prices of the Megaplan are:

- trial version: the user can test it for two weeks for free. If the user has a small team (up to 10 people), then he can use the basic product “Start” for free. But if the user want sophisticated CRM, he has to pay. There is a visual calculator for calculating prices,
- “Cloud”: “Collaboration” (330 RUB per month per user) or “Collaboration +” (380 RUB per month per user). The only difference is that the second has a little more business functions: working with documents, questionnaires, evaluating tasks and projects. There is also a version “CRM: work with clients” (550 RUB per month per user) and “CRM: work with clients+” (640 RUB per month per user).
- “Box”: “Collaboration” (5300 RUB per month per user), “Collaboration+” (6200 RUB), “CRM: work with clients” (9500 RUB) and “CRM: work with clients+” (10450 RUB).

4.2.2 Advantages and disadvantages

Main advantages of the MegaPlan are:

- free product for small teams – up to 10 people,
- unlimited storage in the “cloud“ and in the “box” solution (if the server is from Megaplan),
- attention to documents (auto-display, quick preparation according to a template),
- focus on the Russian (and CIS) user,
- price calculator,

- integration with major business services,
- creation of polls inside the corporate forum,
- flexible system that can be quickly adjusted to the needs of the company.

Minuses of the MegaPlan are:

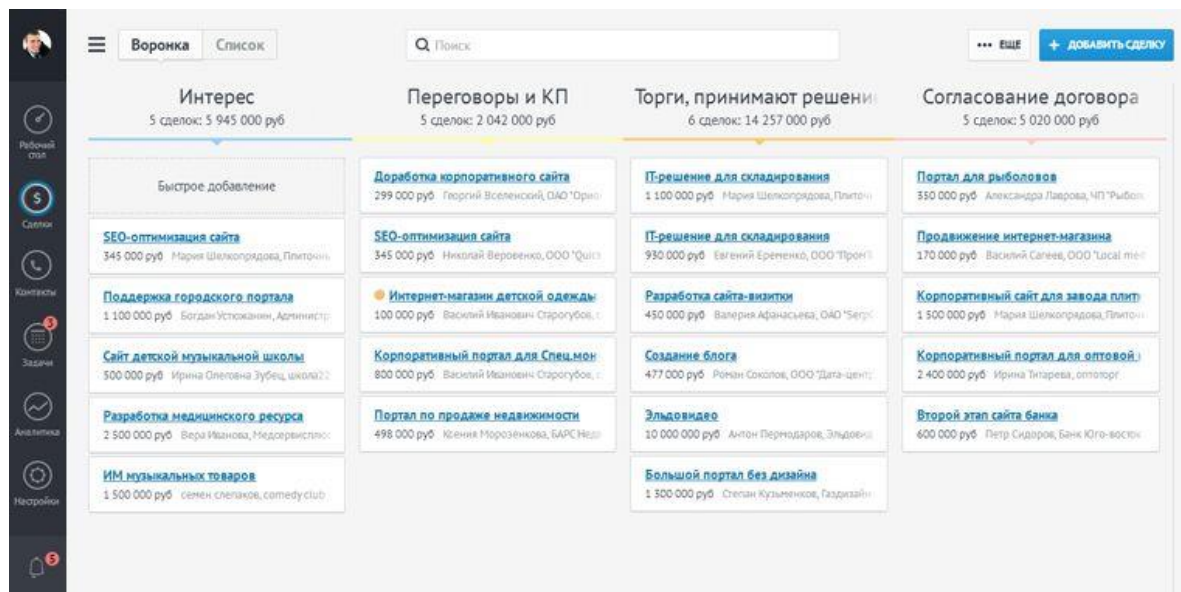
- visually difficult interface (especially difficult for beginners),
- it is difficult or impossible to make sophisticated reports,
- sometimes task formatting fails,
- difficult to create cases with dates and names,
- inconvenient search, difficult to find a task if you don't remember its number or name.

Megaplan has everything the user needs for the effective work of the company. Megaplan paid great attention to the automation of many processes, is focused on the Russian user, but the interface is unusual and visually loaded. Well suited for small teams, whose employees are scattered around different regions, and those who do not want to spend money on a personal admin panel. Also worth mentioning separately is the free course from Megaplan – “doubling sales”, where the developers teach users about the competent sales.

4.3 AmoCRM

AmoCRM is on the market for 9 years. If Bitrix24 is multifunctional and complex, then AmoCRM is the complete opposite: it offers only “cloud” version, only basic CRM functions and simplicity. There is a clear sales funnel and telephony. Figure 10 show the CRM interface.

Figure 10 AmoCRM interface



Source: Dokuchaev, 2020.

4.3.1 Tariffs

The tariffs of the system are (AmoCRM, 2020):

- trial version. There is no free plan, but there is a two-week trial period that shows all the benefits of the service,
- “Basic” (500 RUB per month per user): suitable for companies with a small sales volume. Users can create deals, add contacts. There is integration with Google Universal Analytics. There is also a function of duplicates merging – the system finds cards with the same client and merges them. Work with a sales funnel is also included,
- “Extended” (800 RUB per month per user). As the creators of the system mention, it is perfect for companies looking to optimize conversions. It has the same features as the basic one, plus KPIs, desktop enhancements, and a sales plan for managers,
- “Professional” (1500 RUB per month per user). All the features of the service, including work with leads and their scoring / evaluation, periodic data backup. The data archive can also be received by mail, everything is customizable.

All these tariffs are paid at least six months in advance. Information about the storage for files was not found. The user can only connect the Dropbox cloud widget.

There are also annual tariffs (AmoCRM, 2020):

- “Micro-business” (5000 RUB per year) – for newbies who have recently opened their own business and already have to work with clients,
- “Start-up” (15000 RUB per year) – for young teams, where there is no leader and no big revenue, but the user needs to work with clients.

4.3.2 Advantages and disadvantages

The advantages of the AmoCRM are:

- simple and intuitive interface,
- well-developed CRM functions,
- includes a telephony,
- allows integration with a large number of services, most of them are Russian.

The disadvantages of the AmoCRM are:

- not very functional (less functions),
- only “cloud” solution,
- purchase options only for at least six months of using.

Unique features of the system are its large integration possibilities. The user can import and export own data, that can be transferred from well-known services, tables etc. There is integration with calendars, mail, social networks. It integrates well with every Russian service.

The AmoCRM pays great attention to sales funnels. Each customer has his own card. This card contains all the information about him: the responsible manager, contacts, the status of the transaction. Sales funnels are perfectly implemented – the screen is divided into stages (columns) that show how the trade is going. On the left is the beginning of the process, on the right is the very end of the purchase. Statistics are kept (drawn up in visual infographics) and there is an adequate search for transactions.

The interface is nice and simple. There are mobile apps for iOS and Android that have useful features like a business card scanner that can automatically generate a customer card, and so on.

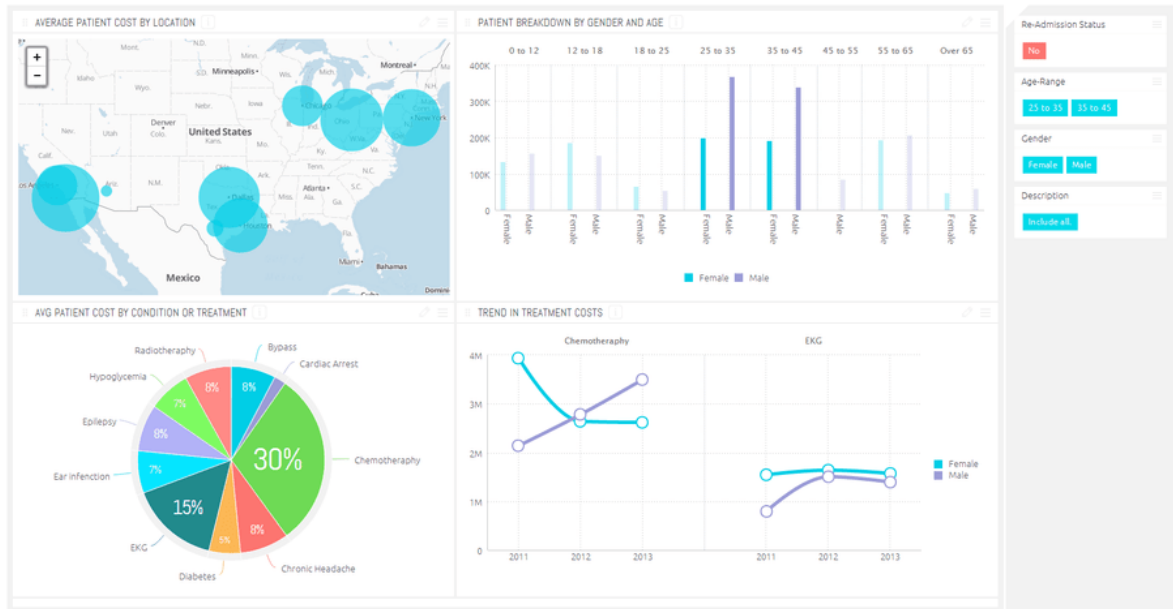
4.4 Roistat

Roistat has created a mega business analytics tool. Almost everything is taken into account: traffic, calls, ROI and a large number of metrics. The service collects data from CRM systems, advertising platforms and the site, helps to find ineffective traffic channels and save advertising budget. Roistat includes these functions:

- end-to-end analytics. Reports and graphs on 66 business indicators, creation the own metrics,
- multichannel analytics. Identification of all traffic channels that were involved in attracting a client, and the distribution of profit from the transaction between them,
- rate management. Automation of bid management in Google Ads, Yandex.Direct and Facebook,
- lead Catcher. A form for collecting contacts, which is displayed on the site pages after a specified time,
- A / B tests. Conducting A / B site tests and analyzing options in terms of profitability,
- call tracking and Email tracking. Tracking from which advertising channel buyers come, even if the application was received by phone or email,
- online chat. A widget that allows users to write to the company manager in the chat interface right on the website pages,
- marketing automation. Setting up automatic events to improve the customer experience. For example, the system sets a task for the manager, if a regular client re-visits the site, sends the client a letter with a promotion, and more.

System can be connected with AmoCRM, Megaplan, WireCRM and other services, and see even more details on the sales funnel. Also, the system sends SMS in the evening, where the key indicators of the business are. The interface of the system – see the figure 7.

Figure 11 Roistat interface



Source: Romanov, 2020.

4.4.1 Tariffs

Roistat has a trial period. Within 14 days, the user can study the service and connect Roistat tools for free. The cost of further use depends on the selected instruments and the period. The tariffs of the system are (RoiStat, 2020):

- “Start” (from 7 300 RUB per month): 1 project, the number of sites is not limited, but number of total visits is limited (up to 50 000 visits on all sites),
- “Basic” (from 19 300 RUB per month): 3 projects, up to 250 000 visits on all sites,
- “Profi” (from 30 300 RUB per month): 7 projects, up to 500 000 visits on all sites,
- “Business” (from 47300 RUB per month): up to 15 projects, up to 2 000 000 visits on all sites.

There is a 15% bonus when paid for a year (applies to any tariff). Every tariff has two variants: Normal and Expanded. Normal variant doesn’t include some functions, such as

lead catcher, email-tracking, split-testing, branding etc. Expanded variant includes all possible functions of the system.

4.4.2 Advantages and disadvantages

The main benefits of the Roistat are:

- the possibility to collect in one interface all data, business indicators, including CPC, CLV, CPO, ROI, profit, revenue, expenses and others. Then the user can understand where and what can be improved in the company CRM processes,
- Roistat allows to create a single dashboard with metrics from all channels,
- integration with CRM systems.

Minuses of the Roistat are:

- not every employee can work with such services (it is more difficult to understand it),
- the high price of products.

4.5 Improvement of the CRM system on the example of the selected firm

This chapter focuses on the analysis of a practical example of using the CRM system in a selected company – SkillSet Language School. Based on the information provided by the employees of the selected company, an analysis of the use of the CRM system is performed and areas in which it is possible to increase the efficiency of this system are defined.

4.5.1 Characteristics of the selected company

SkillSet is a network of English language schools, based in Russia. Children, teenagers and adults study in this school. The first SkillSet branch was opened in St. Petersburg in 2010. At the moment, the school's branches operate in many cities of Russia. The school states that more than 70 thousands of students has already completed their courses.

Figure 12 Logo of the SkillSet School



Source: SkillSet, 2021

The main features of training in SkillSet are its accessibility and an individual approach to each student. The ability to manage a large flow of customers in many cities and at the same time an individual approach to each student is therefore very important for the company. Automating the order of business processes is essential for a SkillSet company.

4.5.2 Use of Bitrix24 in a selected company

SkillSet School is focused on building long-term customer relationships. There are three main stages of working with clients:

- attraction,
- retention,
- development of interaction.

Each stage includes many tasks. Work is considered successful when each student goes through all stages in the course of his customer's life cycle. The main task of the school is to avoid losses of customer at one of the listed stages.

Bitrix24 CRM helps to achieve these goals. The system allows to group and sort the flow of customers, to see and to evaluate work with them, to identify errors in the interaction with customers. The company can customize statistics showing at what specific stage the client was lost. Based on such a comprehensive analysis, the company's management concludes what areas should be improved for more effective growth and functioning.

The employees of one of the brunch SkillSet School "Ladozhskaya" were asked several questions, which helped to find out about the present work with the CRM.

- What are the main areas of work in the Bitrix24 CRM?

The main areas of work in the Bitrix24 CRM are work with clients (collecting information in the process of working with a consumer), sales (transactions), drawing up

reports (“sales funnels”), work of employees (implementation of the plan at each stage of the manager's work), the performance of sources of information about the company (advertising efficiency), cash flows (income, expenses).

- What advantages of working with the system have you noticed?

The first is that the system has helped automate many processes. Second, the system helps to compile a detailed report on the work and its results. Also, using the system, the company can conveniently and quickly generate documents and invoices. The third and very important is the role of the system in the marketing of the company – easy and accurate setting up of advertising based on performance monitoring.

- What shortcomings in working with the system have you noticed?

With the growth of the client base and staff, even such a multifunctional platform as Bitrix24 begins to fail to cope with the tasks assigned to it. Of course, this does not apply to all branches of the school. SkillSet School operates in several cities of Russia. As of today, 9 branches have been opened in St. Petersburg. Each branch works according to franchise, therefore, despite the general policy, it can use something new in its activities. This also applies to the number of customers and, accordingly, the number of employees.

The St. Petersburg branch of SkillSet “Ladozhskaya” faced the following problems in working with the Bitrix24 system.

1. “Heaviness” of the system. The system itself is multifunctional and useful, but when the company increases the number of clients, information about each of which is contained in Bitrix24, the system stops responding and works quickly and efficiently, which is very important when working with a client.

2. Lack of templates for contracts. The main goal of SkillSet school as a commercial organization is to conclude an agreement with a client. Unfortunately, Bitrix24 does not have the ability to create contracts based on customer data. The only way out is to manually create a contract through a third-party application (MS Word). This requires additional time on the part of the employee and does not allow to optimize the work.

3. Unlimited number of tasks. Each employee can set tasks in Bitrix24 and solve many issues remotely and quickly. The number of tasks that a manager can solve during the day should not exceed 30. However, Bitrix24 does not have an option to limit the set tasks per day. This leads to an accumulation of overdue tasks. As a result, the system

automatically reduces the productivity of the employee, and the manager cannot objectively evaluate his work.

4. Lack of a number of business processes important for the organization. In most cases, Bitrix24 meets the company's requirements, but the absence of even one important element can disrupt the systematic process of the school's activities. For example, in Bitrix24 there is no business process for transferring a student to new stages of the transaction. Bitrix24 is a smart system that can help group current students according to "graduation" so that an employee can immediately see who is better working with first. For this, there is a scale with intermediate points, covering the student's learning process from start to finish: "2 months before graduation", "one month before graduation" etc. But Bitrix24 does not have an automatic function of transferring student from one group to another, so the employee has to do it manually. There is a risk of losing a person who must move to the next stage or finish training in the near future.

5. Incomplete application for communication. There is an application that aims to increase the mobility of the system so that an employee of the organization can be in touch at any time and from anywhere in the world. The application only allows chatting with employees; it is impossible to perform the necessary actions directly with the deal (set, change or close tasks), only viewing tasks is possible.

4.5.3 Options to improve the use of Bitrix24

Based on the shortcomings identified in the process of using the Bitrix24 CRM system by the SkillSet School, or rather, discrepancies with the requirements of a commercial organization providing educational services, it became obvious that a CRM system have to be improved. The improving of the CRM system has to be developed taking into account all the individual characteristics and requirements of not only the organization as a whole, but also individual branches.

The improving of Bitrix24 CRM has to allow to solve two important tasks.

Firstly, it became possible to model documents, create templates for contracts. This greatly facilitates the work and reduces the time spent by employees. It should take no more than 2 minutes to create a contract according to the client's data, and the manager only needs to print it.

Secondly, the problem of the business process for transferring students to new stages of education has to be solved. The system has to recognize the remaining period of study and automatically transfers the student from one stage to another. Thanks to this created business process, the quality of work will be improved, and the time spent by both managers and inspectors will decrease. Therefore, there should be an increase in the overall percentage of students who continue to interact with the school after receiving the beginning package of services that they acquired at the initial stage of education.

These two improvements should reduce the time required to work routinely with documents, and help achieve customer relationship goals. Improvements require the cost for the system developing, but will bring the company higher performance and higher revenues.

Further improvements to the systems do not address the company's acute needs, but can help it in future work. The proposals relate to new features that CRM does not currently offer. This is, for example, development of the function of automatic creation of a class schedule, determination of the amount of teacher's time load and assignment to them students, creating a student's personal account in digital format.

5 Results and Recommendations

The analysis in this work shows that there are many CRM systems on the market. Comparison of the selected CRM systems is made in the next chapter. Then the recommendations for the decision process of the selecting od CRM systems are made. Finally, the answers to the stated research questions of the thesis are given.

5.1 Comparison of the selected CRM systém

First, based on the selected criteria, the summary of comparison of the CRM systems is made. The comparison takes into account characteristics that were found out in the analysis. The results of the comparison of the CRM systems are given in the table 3.

The largest functional is definitely provided by Bitrix24, so it is especially suitable for creating a company-wide system and connecting many processes in the company. AmoCRM and Roistat have a narrower specialization, but they master their goals perfectly - such as working with documents and finance (AmiCRM), marketing and analytics (Roistat). Bitrix24's lack of data stems from its multifunctionality – it is quite difficult to understand all its functions for individual specialists, and the interface also contains a lot of visual "rubbish". Roistat has a similar problem – the overview of reports is intended for specialists in the field of marketing and is difficult to understand for non-experts.

Table 3 Comparison of the selected CRM systems

	Bitrix24	MegaPlan	AmoCRM	Roistat
Interface	Simply, customed, but a lot of “visual rubbish”	More difficult, “glue” stickers, clock, tasks, customed	Simple and nice, plus mobile apps	Simple and nice, adapted to analytics and reports
Solutions	Cloud, “box”	Trial, cloud, “box”	Cloud	Trial, cloud
Tariffs	5 types. Per company / per user. Per month / per year. 1000-18 333 RUB per month per company. Can be cheap or expensive; variety of tariffs.	3 types, free for small team, 330-10 450 RUB per month per company. More cheaper then other CRMs.	4 types. Trial, 500-1500 RUB per month per user. More cheaper then other CRMs.	4 types. Trial, 7 300-47 300 RUB per month per company. 15% bonus for year payment. The most expensive

				CRM.
Communication functions	Voice calls, video-chatd, e-mail	Forum, internal communication	Telephony	E-mail, chat
Integration	Social media, Google calendar, 1B-Bitrix and other CRM systems	Major business services	Many services, mainly Russian	AmoCRM, Megaplan, WireCRM and others
Main advantages	Many functions, variety of tariffs, popularity, integration	Work with documents, reporting, accounting. Unlimited cloud in „box“. Free for small team.	Clear sales funnel	Advanced analytics, connection of many channels
Main disadvantages	Complexity due the multifunctionality, no document templates, limited cloud (need to pay)	Visually difficult interface, inconvenient search	Limited functions, no information about storage, only „cloud“ solution, purchase options only for 6 months	Limits in number of visits (need to predict and choose right tariff). Hard to understand for non-specialists in marketing

Source: made by author based on previous analysis

The advantage of all systems is the integration with many other services. However, these are the main Russian systems, so this advantage cannot be appreciated by foreign users.

In terms of price, it provides the most variants of Bitrix24 tariffs. Roistat can be the most expensive system for a company. The AmoCRM system is relatively cheap. The disadvantage of some systems is the tariff's link to cloud content (Bitrix24) or the number of visits (Roistat). The communication options in the systems are different and not perfect – it can be assumed that the company may continue to prefer its own internal communication system, which it is used to.

From a comparison of CRM systems based on some criteria – such as range of their functions, prices, advantages and disadvantages, it is clear that these CRMs are very different and can bring different benefits to the user. The results of a questionnaire survey among entrepreneurs also show that there are different approaches to the use of CRM

systems. Furthermore, it is attempted to define the basic steps and recommendations in relation to the correct choice of CRM system. These recommendations are especially useful for potential customers from outside the Commonwealth of Independent States who are not well acquainted with the Russian CRM offering.

5.2 Recommendations for deciding on the choice of CRM system in the company

1. Determination the company's goals

Choosing of the CRM system must be most adapted to the objectives of the organization. First of all, the management of the company must determine for itself what tasks the CRM system will solve in the organization. There are always many goals, it is important to define strategically the most important ones. The company should to limit the list of goals and tasks that it wants to solve in CRM. It is needed to think about what features will be needed in the near future. If the company sells expensive services / goods and there are no a stream of customers, most likely amoCRM will suit. If it is an e-shop, the company needs to quickly process orders and to manage sales, the best solution is retailCRM. If the company needs a corporate portal, Bitrix24 is the best solution.

2. Understanding the company's resources and processes

It should be also taken into account the number of employees, the complexity of business processes, the need for comprehensive analytics of sales and employee performance and financial capabilities, that is, the amount of funds allocated for the purchase and maintenance of a CRM program. Then it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive analysis of all business processes and optimize them for working with a CRM system.

3. Research the market supply of CRM systems

The market of CRM systems is constantly changing – those systems, which are developing and improving, remain in the market, those, which do not change – are not kept in the market. It is important to choose the system that develops in the direction the company need. For example, if the system develops more in the direction of improving communication with customers, it is not suitable for a company that tries to automate the main processes (eg accounting, management, internal communication) with the help of the CRM system. Conversely, a company looking for a solution for effective marketing and

customer relations should not choose SRM, which develops only the area of accounting or financial management of the company.

4. Evaluation of the CRM costs

Money is always important for the company. As a rule, CRM systems allow to improve the business functionality, but this requires additional costs. The company should find out tariffs, eventual ask for the individual tariff. The estimated cost of CRM must be reconciled with the available resources. It is advisable to make an estimate of how the results of the business will improve when implementing CRM.

5.3 SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis is used for the case of a company (eg on the Czech or other EU market) that will use the Russian CRM system. The table summarizes the strengths and weaknesses that will arise in connection with the implementation of this system. The results of the analysis and comparison of selected Russian CRM systems are used to define the factor of the internal environment, partly also the findings from the case-study of the company, which was presented in Chapter 4.5.

Opportunities and threats related to the use of the Russian CRM system in business practice are also defined. The results of the CRM system market analysis are used to define the factors of the external environment.

Table 4 SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - automation of the business processes - improving work with information, reducing the number of mistakes - possibility to choose from a wide range of tariffs - implementing the CRM will help reduce costs duet he processes optimization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - „heaviness“ of the system in case of the large company and many clients - Lack of templates that company actually needs - high cost of developing personalized functions

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development of the IT services market (due to high competition and globalization, strengthening the position of customers) - development of cloud solutions (unlimited access to storage and work with the system without being tied to location) - linking back-end and front-end business operations - development of CRM usage by companies (opportunity to create connections with partners, suppliers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employees' misunderstanding of the meaning and benefits of the CRM system (use only 50% of the CRM functions) - exchange rate changes and CRM subscription price increases - technical outages - termination of CRM system support by the developer and absence of the possibility of replacement

Source: author

5.4 Answers to research questions

Several research questions were made for this thesis. Here are the answers to these questions.

- What is the comparative usage of Russian based CRM platforms in the Commonwealth of Independent States versus the European Union?

There are many CRM systems on the Russian market, and it is rather difficult for a foreign specialist to get into their offer. Of the advantages of Russian systems, the following can be highlighted: a wide choice (functionality for every taste), many systems offer demo versions for free testing in practice, many individual tariffs are offered, you can agree on the refinement of functions in accordance with the specific wishes of the company. The cost of developing IT solutions in Russia is on average lower than in Europe.

The disadvantages of CRM systems are the already indicated complexity of the choice (especially with a lack of experience in communicating with Russian-speaking specialists). Many systems have been tested in the Russian market and have not been tested

in the European one. Systems are not always available in English, and even more so in more rare European languages.

The popular systems described in this thesis (Bitrix24, MegaPlan, AmoCRM, Roistat) are the best options for starting work of a foreign specialist with Russian CRMs.

- What barriers are there to introducing Russian made CRM platforms in foreign markets? E.g., do things like sanctions influence the distribution of Russian innovations in EU markets?

The main barriers can be regarded primarily as insufficient knowledge of the supply of the Russian market abroad. Also, a subjective assessment of the quality of Russian manufacturers and distrust in this regard can be a barrier. Methods of purchasing and paying for the program unknown to foreign clients (which are common in Russia) can also scare away clients.

There may also be risks associated with changes in the ruble exchange rate – if the system price is based on the Russian currency and the client does not choose to purchase a license "forever", for example, a monthly / annual subscription.

The Russian language in the program interface, the lack of a function for switching at least to English are also disadvantages of some systems (especially little-known ones, from small firms). Problems with the installation of the system or its integration with other foreign programs are possible since the systems are usually more "sharpened" for the Russian market.

Sanctions against Russia in the linking conflicts in Ukraine and in Syria can hardly be a barrier to the development of CRM systems in foreign markets. The sanctions did not apply to the purchase of Russian services and IT products. In fact, no one can control purchases on the internet and it is very difficult to prohibit it. There is also no ban on the use of programs of Russian producers in EU firms.

- How competitive are Russian made CRM platforms outside the CIS? E.g. Do companies use Russian CRMs? Or do they prefer known brands like Salesforce?

The answer to this question is complicated by the lack of statistics on the use of systems in different countries and firms. According to the CRM manufacturers themselves, their products are used abroad. For example, an interactive map Bitrix (Bitrix, 2021) shows the number of online users in different regions. At the moment, in Europe, one can count about 150 thousand active users of the system, which is a significant indicator of the popularity of the system.

6 Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to compare selected CRMs in business management from the point of view of the user. Comparison was made in terms of CRM's functions, prices, convenience of the user interface, advantages, and disadvantages.

A partial goal of the work was to evaluate the measure of using CRM in the management of firms in Russia, to highlight the main problems and barriers in this area. Also, there was made a description of possible ways to improve the selected CRMs – so that they become more convenient and accessible for users in the management of firms.

It can be concluded, that one of the main conditions for maintaining the competitiveness of an organization in the modern socio-economic system is the use of innovative tools that provide the company with competent, systematic, and complex interaction with consumers, as well as work with the most important information resource – the client database. Such an innovative tool is the CRM system: software that allows to track, control and predict further communication between the company and the client, systematize business processes and optimize the use of resources.

As the research results show, CRM systems are actively used by Russian companies. The results of the study of the use of the CRM system on the examples of the SkillSet language school show, that use of CRM systems can reasonably be considered an essential element of effective work (based on the results of a interview with company's managers).

Based on a comparison of the most popular Russian systems, it can be concluded, that CRM systems differ significantly from each other in their functionality and prices. Therefore, choosing the right CRM systems is an important step that affects the company's performance in the future. Proposals for the selection process of CRM systems were created in the work. These proposals can be used by companies in Russia and other countries – for example, in EU countries that do not have enough experience with the offer of Russian CRM systems and their implementation in practice.

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