How Will AI Enhance CRM?

At a recent training session of Texas, A&M Industrial Distribution students, a question came up that I believe is important to a lot of people evaluating the CRM space with possible fit into their enterprise. The question was "how will AI be used in the development of CRM products and solutions?"

An insightful question considering the intense power of AI and how it may directly impact and transform the customer - supplier relationship. According to SugarCRM's 2022 CRM Impact Report, the most use cases for AI are:

- Automated email response and conversational AI
- Account intelligence
- Lead conversion

I agree with these basic points but here is my take on how this technology will impact and even transform the customer /supplier digital experience in the industrial automation and distribution space.

CRM and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI is all about collecting mass amounts of data and organizing it into relevant and actionable packets or requests. Suppliers may get a larger window into their customer's enterprise to anticipate needs and to help focus value added solutions. As the technology develops, AI will

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create greater value by providing enhanced solutions, and ease of use. Integrating AI functions may quickly connect customers to supplier resources to get near real time information regarding basics like order

> "Sellers may get a larger window into the customer's enterprise to anticipate needs and to help focus business solutions." Says Brian Gardner CEO of SalesProcess360

status, delivery information, product and particular configuration availability, but also new product information targeted directly at their unique application needs.

Successful industrial sales people are always trying to educate themselves on the customers process and application. Adding value as a subject matter expert (SME) is important. AI can facilitate that end by organizing data for action. Across the enterprise we can share knowledge of certain applications that are unique to their process and how peers may be solving similar application problems. Then making the information available via video format or through AR VR.

Enhanced call handling is already being used in a broad sense for years. Although reviews are mixed, this function will get much better in the near future. Chatbots collecting customer Q&A to route for optimum assistance including different language facilitation is already underway.
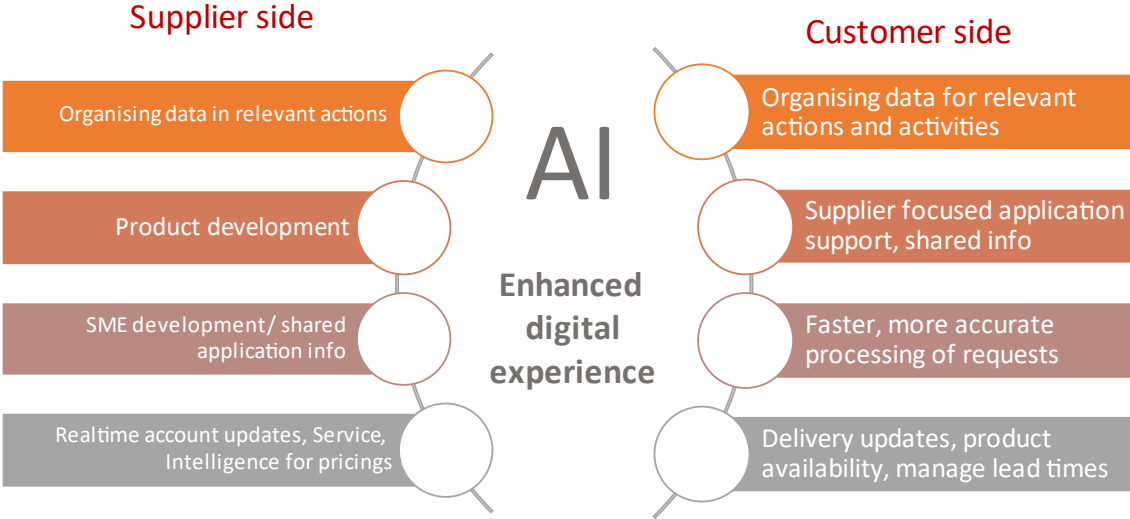
Heads up!
Service information can be updated to inform Sales of impending updates on product repair status prior to the sales call. Via web, users will collect and consolidate industry news or specific industry trends

that impact the customer. Suppliers gain knowledge for Product development decisions. Product or Brand Manager's can organize data to recognize need or market size for new product development.

Competitive metrics can also be tracked, like lead times or project (volume) pricing. Dynamic pricing engines can be incorporated like in the hotel and airline business. Additionally, AI can help businesses respond faster to customer inquiries and provide better answers to requests.

The adoption speed of AI into CRM will likely depend on the value being gained. We know currently that most CRM users are not getting the return they anticipated. Adding higher level functions like AI may not help this. However, as the technology gets more robust and easier to use, value will come quickly for both suppliers and end users. Companies headed down this path may consider doing a detailed audit of needs and requirements. This will ensure proper CRM fit with the right functionality and a path for implementation. Contact CRM consultants at www.SalesProcess360.com . We have lots of resources

and experience to help guide the process.

AI

Enhanced digital experience

Organising data in relevant actions

Organising data for relevant actions and activities

Product development

Supplier focused application support, shared info

SME development/ shared application info

Faster, more accurate processing of requests

Realtime account updates, Service, Intelligence for pricings

Delivery updates, product availability, manage lead times