

## **Electronic Customer Relationship Management (E-CRM) and its Effect on Customer Retention of Selected E-Retail Companies in Lagos State, Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** Customers as the greatest asset of any organisation need effective relationship management to remain loyal with such organisation. Electronic-customer relationship management (E-CRM) is a technological innovation that enables organizations to communicate and maintain cordial relationship with customers thereby enhancing retention. Despite the potentials of E-CRM, some organisations still have not imbibed it as a result of its cost implication and inadequate technological knowledge by customers leading to noncompetitive advantage and poor performance. This study investigated the effect of e-crm on customers' retention in selected e-retail companies in Lagos State Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design. Population of the study consisted of 172 staff of Konga and GT sme Market hub from which 120 sample size was drawn using Taro Yammane formula. A well-structured questionnaire was validated and used to elucidate data. The data were further analyzed using linear regression under statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Findings revealed that there is significant effect of e-crm on customer retention of Konga.com and GT sme Market hub, Lagos state Nigeria. In conclusion, the recent shift by major companies to develop e-commerce platforms is a significant development. This constitutes recognition by the companies of the importance of e-crm. The significant technological advancement has yielded organisational relationship management with associated customer retention. E-crm impacts organizations positively through improved communication. The study therefore recommends that e-tailing organisations should invest more in E-crm facilities in order to enhance performance through customers' relationship and retention.

**Key words:** Customer • E-commerce • E-crm • E-retail • Internet • Retention

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### **INTRODUCTION**

On line shopping globally has been on the fast lane due to technological progression on the use of internet which has posed challenges to most firms to fix their products/services on line to survive and remain sustained in this trend of stiff competition. Globally, Electronic retail sales summed up to 2.3 trillion United State dollars with the e-retail revenues growth being projected to 4.88 trillion U.S dollars in 2019 [1]. In 2016, through internet an estimation of 19% of all retail sales in China occurred while the share in Japan was only 6.7%, online orders placed from a tablet had an average value of 106.98 U.S dollars while PC devices orders averaged 143.35U.S. dollars in the last quarter of 2016 [2]. There is no doubt that the rapid expansion on internet commerce couldn't

have been possible without electronic customer relationship management (E-CRM) hence to leverage on the online merits factors of low cost, ease of use, time saving, relationship management and customer retention activities.

From year 2000 to 2010, there was a periodic rise of online user's rate of 21, 891.1%. According to the Internet World Start (2010), there were 200,000 internet users in Nigeria in year 2000. This number is however less than 1% of the national population (precise 0.1%). In the year 2006 – the number has grown to 5,000,000 (again just 3.1% of the national population). This figure doubled in 2008 with 10million people having access to the Internet. In 2009, the figure went above double as 23,982,000 million people used Internet in Nigeria. By June 2010, the number of internet users in Nigeria has grown to

43,982,200 representing 29.5% of the country's population. The increasing users of internet in Nigeria from 0.1% in 2000 to 29.5% of its population in June 2010 is an indication that the use of internet in the country is growing at a sporadic rate and still has the possibility to advance more. Despite all perceived cybercrime in Nigeria, online transactions continues to mark its existence in the market as the retail shops become more sophisticated. This shows that there is now dramatic revolution in the way customers patronise products as well as services [3]

The concept of relationship marketing has its strength on customer relationship management with the drive to enhancing extended success by flowing from business based marketing to customer retention through effective management of customer relationships [4]. Customer retention as stated by [5] refers to activities that organisations imbibe to limit the number of customer turnover. It costs much to hire new employees than to retain present ones [6]. Service excellence being close to customers and effective customers' relationship are some of the factors that enhance customer retention. When customers are retained in an organisation for a long period, it creates and boosts cordial relationship between the customer and organisational staff which invariably leads to enhanced performance. [7] stated that restriction is one of the advantages of customer retention. Customer relationship management (CRM) is about identifying a company's best customers and maximising the value from them by satisfying and retaining them. It has currently been approved that by imbibing ICT, organisation's interactions with customers can be greatly upgraded [8]; [9] which can enable and augment customer associations in various ways but mainly enables companies to attain customisation, which is the reason of a customer-centric organisation [10]. [11] suggest that the swift development of online shopping has transformed business strategy persistently as well as rapidly that where once it was innovative; now, it is simply advancement to stay longer with their organisations.

[12] was of the opinion that customers feel insecure as well as not being sure of getting back their funds or associated risk of loss via electronic business. Other associated risk are; substandard goods, breaching of trust, over promising and under-delivering, non-confidentiality. According to the Internet Crime Complaint Centre (2009), Nigeria is ranking 3<sup>rd</sup> place with 8% in the universe as a fraudster's country participating in internet crimes. Followed by UK ranking 2<sup>nd</sup> with 9.9% and USA ranks 1<sup>st</sup> position of world crime country with wolfing 65.4%.

There is need for customer encouragement in the buying process and this can be intensified by new e-networks and needs to be handled by the formation of on-line communities, on-line shop assistants, customer testimonials and general reassurance about buying strategies and procurement selections for customers [13]. [14] endorse the value of producing more contact potentials between customers, in this case banking customers, within the context of virtual groups in which customer involvements can be swapped. Mixing data from numerous bases, both online and off-line networks, is a serious matter in assisting fruitful and appreciated e-CRM analytics but will represent a trial for even the most broad-minded of firms originally [15].

Another challenge associated with electronic transaction is the electronic payment system which is a main condition for e-commerce operation, but the Nigerian economy is largely cash-based with over 90% of funds in circulation. Thus payment for goods and services is mostly by cash due to reasons largely attributed to ignorance, illiteracy and lack of adequate infrastructure to guarantee availability and security of transactions [16] [17]. Image problem has a negative impact in that it is responsible for the low level of e-commerce participation in Nigeria [20], [21]. Most of the times, Nigerians and their internet instruments are not accepted due to perceived experiences on crime rate.

**Objective of the Study:** The objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of e-crm on customer retention on selected retail companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. To achieve this objective, the paper addressed the research question.

**Research Question:** What is the effect of e-crm on customers' retention on selected retail companies in Lagos State Nigeria?

#### Literature Review

**E-CRM (Electronic Customer Relationship Management):** In the last decade, CRM has become a popular marketing Strategy, effectively managing customer relationships and boosting companies' profitability. Identifying, satisfying and retaining company's best customers and maximizing the value from them is the underlying objective of CRM [22]. Service quality is as excellence or near-perfection of what is rendered to the consumers' interims of products or services. The higher an organizations quality of service, the better the organizations success [23].

To attain a competitive edge in the market, it is evident to implement CRM strategies that enables better customer service, allows better management of customer expectations, increased profitability and improves customer loyalty [24], [25].

E-CRM is the latest system firms are adopting to enhance their marketing services and capabilities [26]. It is combination of software, hardware, application and management commitment [27], which is concerned with fascinating also being in control of economically valuable customers and eradicating less profitable ones as well as building loyalty and profitability, increased customer satisfaction, simplified processes and lower costs, better insight and decision making of the organization [28].

E-CRM is one of the emerging tools in this era of modern marketing that organisations imbibe to achieve sustainability. [29] posit that variables for measuring sustainable marketing include modern marketing, association marketing, green marketing, and social media marketing among others. Internet and email as part of electronic and interactive media are playing significant role in operationalizing CRM and support effective customized information between the organization and customers [30]. Whereas, [31] argue that the main driver behind e-CRM adoption is commonly shared belief that improves customer loyalty and retention through the enhancement of customer satisfaction. Technology adoption to optimize communications with customers, companies can create a 360-degree view of customers to learn from previous connections to optimize future ones [32]. [33] in his study affirms that despite the negative perceptions of internet transactions regarding mistrust and cybercrime in Nigeria, it is still a very paramount trading activity to be imbibed to boost the nation's economy. All that is needed is building credibility and trust through effective customer relationship management strategy.

[34] identifies that CRM is the core business strategy that integrates internal processes and functions and external networks to create and deliver value to targeted customers and, finally, increase profits. Organizational performance captures outcomes of the relationship of e-crm through measures of customer satisfaction [35]. [36] [37] perceive performance, customer retention, customer loyalty as measures of CRM while relationship performance is measured separately as a consequence of relationship [38]. [39] believes an organization can Develop time of product modification for a customer compared to competition and increase a number of newly introduced products compared to the competition.

**Customer Retention:** Customer retention is when customers stay with the firm without switching as a result of satisfaction. It is also possible for customers to switch from the current segment to another segment depending on the degree of market stability [40]. Switching has a huge negative impact on organisations; hence, minimizing customer churn is becoming a priority, especially for financial service providers [41]; [42]. Organisations should guard their customers and employees with utmost good faith as not to lose them to competitors. [43] stated that disadvantages of customer retention include when cost of retaining these customers does not add any value to the organisation profitability.

Good leaders are shown in the qualities they display, one of which is cordial relationship with employees that gives birth to employee retention and enhanced productivity [44]. Employees of some organisations are their customers which means when your employee is satisfied, it will translate to customers' retention [45] preach that satisfaction is the post-purchase evaluation of products or services taking into consideration the expectations. When these expectations are met, customers stay firm with the organization, else they switch to other competitors.

[46] identify that customers may be more forgiving when they receive poor services if they have already formed brand loyalty towards their service providers. Even if the customers occasionally receive poor services from their current bank, their overall service quality evaluations may still remain positive due to the perceptions of a good corporate image among the customers. While the precise meaning and measurement of customer retention can vary between industries and firms, there appears to be a general consensus that focusing on customer retention which can yield several economic benefits [47]; [48]; [49]. As customer tenure lengthens, the volumes purchased grow and customer referrals increase. Simultaneously, relationship maintenance costs fall as both customer and supplier learn more about each other.

[50] studied to make use of the pre-employment application demographics to reduce employee turnover. [51] [52] noted that the literature was also immersed with recommendations to undertake turnover and reduce retention.

Theoretically, this study adopted Technology acceptance model (TAM) which was the philosophy added with hi-tech concept which Davis formulated in consistence with [3] endorsement. This model was a twin type of set that consisted of two variables, Perceived

Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU). PU is described by [7] as that rate at which one acknowledges that adopting a specific kind of data structure will surely impact positively on his productive level. Davis in the other hand described PEOU as that level of understanding at which adopting same type of data structure will definitely be less cumbersome. TAM is one of the most widely used models of information systems which describe the instigator towards acceptance of technology and invention and TAM was argued as one of the most widely used and empirically upgraded models imbibed in the information systems context [2]. [6] listed four constructs that have been consistent in literature: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Behavioral Intention and Actual Usage. TAM is supported by [11] by adopting it to online shopping in an emerging economy due to the associated features as stated earlier.

Online investigation proved that the technology acceptance model reinforced by joining purchasers' buying delight to Perceived Usefulness as well as Perceived Ease of Use as determinants of online return intention for upcoming buying. Both sets including buying delight indicated 54% marks as the discrepancy in online return intention for upcoming buying. In electronic trading, it was affirmed that the earlier investigation outcome of TAM regarding the need of PU in forecasting aiming to adopting a scheme [14].

[13] stated that TAM was reinforced with the addition of customer belief in internet dealer as a predictor of aiming to e-marketing. Aiming to adopt online shopping was defined as the aim of the person to make available his or her online instruments details to the internet practitioner. No assessment was made of the real purchasing attitude. There was tougher prediction of PU on online shopping than PEOU.

From the customer's point of view, Assimilation Theory was discussed. Anderson discovered this theory of Assimilation in 1973. The theory is based on dissonance, suggesting cognitive comparison made by customers between expectation about a product or service and real product performance. This theory presumes that the consumers are motivated enough to adjust both their expectations and their product performance perceptions; thus asserting that the consumers will try to minimize the expectation-performance discrepancy. [15] the Theory of Assimilation-Contrast posits that satisfaction is a function of the magnitude of the discrepancy between expected and perceived performance. According to [18], customers seek to avoid dissonance by adjusting perception about a particular product or service, in order to align it with their expectations.

The negative aspect of this theory is that marketers knowing that consumers are motivated to the extent that they can adjust both their expectations and their product performance perceptions may not live up to expected performance standard by not giving appropriate value to customers' price thereby discouraging industry best practice.

Organisation customers as e-tail shops are also increasingly looking for a clear demonstration of value in product features and expect a proportionate reflection of pricing to value (KPMG, 2014). As reported in [16], there has been a shift from mere advertising as a result of stiff competition brought about by reforms, to more aggressive marketing strategies as perceived by e-retail shops about marketing. Customers by the tenet of assimilation theory need continuous relationship management by the e-tail shoppers staff to avoid after purchase dissonance, in case of any service failure or performance goes below expectation, it will not translate to customer switching rather, customers shall try to adjust by minimizing their earlier service expectation to align with actual performance and retention.

**Methodology:** The design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey design. It gives the opportunity of describing existing conditions through the collection of primary data. The research design allows the study an opportunity to describe the situations in details as they existed. It is useful in the description of "what exists" in relation to variables or conditions under investigation. In this study, the adoption of survey design was because the study is based on collection and analysis of data from an identified population which consists of managers and some random employees in Konga.com and GT SME Market Hub in Lagos State, Nigeria via well-structured and designed questionnaire

#### **Research Population, Sample Size and Sampling**

**Technique:** The study population comprised of some group of employees in the headquarters of Konga.com which has its headquarters in No 24, Isaac John street, Lagos Nigeria, and GT SME Market Hub which has its headquarters in 635 Akin Adesola street, Victoria Island, Lagos State Nigeria. The study selected 172 employees from both headquarters of each organisation. Lagos is so Chosen because of it being the hub commercial nerve and financial Centre of Nigeria.

The sample size for the research was derived from the population of 172 using Taro Yamane method for selecting a precise sample size with 5% as the error margin using as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

where;

N = Study population

n = Sample size

e<sup>2</sup> = Error margin

Therefore:  $n = \frac{172}{1 + 172(0.05)^2}$

$$\frac{172}{1.0.43}$$

$$\frac{172}{1.43}$$

n = 120

120 becomes the working figure as generated.

The research instrument was self-structured questionnaires which were validated. The reliability was tested with internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. The items were constructed to elicit response from the respondents. The questionnaire consist of sections A and B, Section A was for demographic data of the respondents while section B seeks information on the variable selected for the study. The questionnaire format chosen to carry out this research was on 6 point likert scale type of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Fairly Agree (FA), Fairly Disagree (FD), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). The pilot study was carried out with the administration of 12 (10% of sample size) copies of the questionnaire on Jumia staff which is a similar major E-tailer in Lagos State-Nigeria. The reliability test was determined via Cronbach Alpha coefficient.

The study adopted a Primary method of data collection which involves the elucidation of data through the usage of the research instrument from the respondents who are employees of Konga.com and GT SME Market Hub and a response rate of 92% (110) was recorded. The study adhered to research ethics of confidentiality, anonymity, self-consent among others.

**Data Analysis and Findings:** For the analysis of data, frequency and percentage tables were firstly used to assess the responses of the respondents as shown below;

From Table 1, it is depicted that 93.7% of the respondents agree that the crm structure is of competitive advantage to the firm while 6.4% of the respondents disagreed with that. It was also depicted that 91.8% of the respondents agree that their company has an efficient

customer-seller feedback structure while 8.2% of the respondents disagreed that it is inefficient. More also 93.7% of the respondents agree that the company crm's structure helps to improve customer satisfactions, while 6.3% of the respondents disagree with that. 86.4% of the respondents agree that the effectiveness of their company's customer-seller relationships has helped to increase brand loyalty while 13.6% disagree with that.

From Table 2, it is depicted that 91.9% of the respondents agree that their organisations' customer retention activities are very efficient in keeping customers while 8.1% of respondents disagreed. More also 91.8% of the respondents agreed that their company's complaint handling process is very efficient while 8.2% of the respondents disagreed. It was also shown that 92.8% of the respondents agree that their organisations quality of service is improving from time to time while 7.2% of the respondents disagreed. It also showed that 89.1% of the respondents agreed that the segmentation strategies imbibed by their company has really encouraged customers loyalty while 10.9% of the respondents disagreed with that.

The gathered data were analysed using the simple linear regression under statistical package for social science (SPSS) for its test of hypothesis. Customer retention is not significantly affected by E-CRM.

**Interpretation of Result:** The regression equation is as follows:

Customer Retention = 15.761 + 0.147 E\_crm + μ From the regression analysis carried out on the variables, the coefficient of the independent variable (e-crm) is 0.147, which is positive. This shows that there is a strong positive relationship between e-crm and customer retention. This essentially means that e-crm has a significant impact on customer retention.

The R<sup>2</sup> is the overall coefficient of determination or the explanatory power of the variable is 0.065 or 6.5%, therefore R<sup>2</sup> = 0.065 this indicates that 6.5% of the variations in customer retention are due to e-marketing. The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> which is 0.056 or 5.6% gives us an idea how well model generalizes and ideally we would like its values to be the same, or very close to the value of R<sup>2</sup>. In this model the difference is fair a bit (.065 - .056 = 0.008 OR 0.9%). This shrinkage means that if the model were derived from the population rather than a sample it would account for approximately 0.9% less variance outcome. The entire model is significant in explaining the effect of E-crm on customer retention as depicted by the F-statistic of 7.484 and with a p-value of 0.007.

Table 1: E-CRM Descriptive Analysis

Statements	SA N %	A N %	PA N %	PD N %	D N %	SD N %	Total N %
The CRM structure is of competitive advantage to the firm	19 17.3%	55 50.0%	29 26.4%	7 6.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	110 100.0%
My company has an efficient customer-seller feedback structure.	18 16.4%	49 44.5%	34 30.9%	8 7.3%	1 0.9%	0 0.0%	110 100%
My company's CRM structure helps to improve customer's satisfaction.	17 15.5%	57 51.8%	29 26.4%	5 4.5%	2 1.8%	0 0.0%	110 100%
The effectiveness of our Customer-Seller relationships has helped to increase brand loyalty.	26 23.6%	40 36.4%	29 26.4%	12 10.9%	1 0.9%	2 1.8%	110 100%

Sources: Researchers' Field Survey (2019)

Table 2: Customer Retention Descriptive Analysis

Statements	SA N %	A N %	PA N %	PD N %	D N %	SD N %	Total N %
My Organisation's customer retention activities are very efficient in keeping customers.	19 17.3%	53 48.2%	29 26.4%	4 3.6%	4 3.6%	1 0.9%	110 100%
My company's complaints-handling process is very efficient	15 13.6%	51 46.4%	35 31.8%	7 6.4%	1 0.9%	1 0.9%	110 100%
The organisation's quality of service is improving from time to time.	20 18.2%	53 48.2%	29 26.4%	5 4.5%	2 1.8%	1 0.9%	110 100%
Segmentation strategies imbibed by my company has really encouraged customers loyalty.	19 17.3%	37 33.6%	42 38.2%	9 8.2%	1 0.9%	2 1.8%	110 100%

Sources: Researchers' Field Survey (2019)

Table 3: Effect of E-CRM on Customer Retention

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	15.761	1.061		14.859	.000
	Ecrm	.147	.054	.255	2.736	.007

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Retention

F=7.484 R=0.255 R<sup>2</sup>=0.065 ADJ R<sup>2</sup>= 0.056 P-VALUE=0.007<0.05

Sources: Researcherscomputation of data (2019) using SPSS version 23.0

The Coefficients table gives us the values for the regression line .In e-crmrow the B column provides the gradient of the regression line which is the regression coefficient (B). This means that for every e-marketing increase the model predicts an increase of 0.147customer patronage. Notice how there is also a standardized version of this second B-value which is labelled as Beta (β). This becomes important when interpreting multiple explanatory variables. Finally, the t-test in the second row tells us whether the variable is making a statistically significant contribution to the predictive power of the model

The level of significance of 0.007 or 0.7% is less than the normal level of significance 0.05 or 5% which shows that the relationship between the variables is positive.

$Y = \alpha_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \mu$   $p < 0.05$ ;  $H_{01}$  will be rejected.

$Y = \alpha_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \mu$   $p > 0.05$ ;  $H_{01}$  will be accepted.

From this result the level of significance of 0.07 or 0.7% is less than the normal level of significance 0.05 or 5%; we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant impact of E-crm on Customer retention.

## DISCUSSION

The result of the regression analysis carried out on the variables indicate that the coefficient of the independent variable (e-crm) is 0.147, which is positive. This shows that there is a strong positive effect of e-crm on customer retention. This essentially means that e-crm has a significant effect on customer retention. This is consistent with [21] who opines that CRM is the core business strategy that integrates internal processes and functions and external networks to create and deliver value to targeted customers and, finally, increase profits.

Organizational performance captures outcomes of the relationship of e-crm through measures of customer satisfaction [25]. Agreeing with this is that 93.7% of the respondents agree that the company crm's structure helps to improve customer satisfactions, 86.4% of the respondents agree that the effectiveness of their company's customer-seller relationships has helped to increase brand loyalty which leads to customers' retention.

[26] [27] perceive performance, customer retention, customer loyalty as measures of CRM. [32] argue that the main driver behind e-CRM adoption is commonly shared belief that improves customer loyalty and retention through the enhancement of customer satisfaction. E-CRM has become a requirement for survival these days, not just a competitive advantage but allows customers to access company from more and more places, since the internet access points are increasing day by day.

Theoretically, this study adopted Technology acceptance model (TAM) which was the ideology and technological concept that was generated by Davis in consistence with Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) recommendation. In research on E-commerce, the TAM was applied and extended [4] by adding consumer shopping enjoyment to Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) as predictors of intention to return to a web site for future shopping. The Assimilation theory is based on dissonance, suggesting cognitive comparison made by customers between expectation about a product or service and real product performance. This theory presumes that the consumers are motivated enough to adjust both their expectations and their product performance perceptions; thus asserting that the consumers will try to minimize the expectation-performance discrepancy as loyal customers whose retention level is high due to E-crm adoption.

**Contributions to Knowledge:** The findings of this study obviously made important contributions to knowledge in various aspects. The literature review brought out various points from the concept of e-crm and its effect on selected e-retail companies. This study provides chances for managers and other top personnels in the e-retail industry to spread the effect and knowledge of the study variables and exposing their importance both at individual level and as a combined effect (e-crm having positive effect on customers' retention).

The study empirically established the effect of e-crm on the performance of selected e-retail companies. This empirical investigations of the study show that there

are existing studies done on e-crm worldwide, but to the best of the researchers' knowledge, none has been on to the current topic stating the same variables, same companies, and same location. Those that were done only covered one leg of the variables and didn't impact the two. The study theoretically contributed to knowledge by adopting two related theories; Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) and Assimilation Theory (AT) and their relevance to the study.

The Study has some implications to organisations. Since the major aim of most organization is how to make profit and also serve their customer better to be able to lead them from normal customer level to customer loyalty and retention level, e-crm provides many opportunities to create better business economics. This study would help the e-retail companies to understand their customers better, to have the capacity to retain them and also have a way to serve them better. To the Government, E-commerce as a lead way to E-CRM has proven to be an economic development indicator in the developing countries, because of its impact on Gross Domestic Product(GDP) by nations who embrace it. Government would be able to help the e-retailers by developing good policies that would facilitate ease of internet access which is being done already in Nigeria and it would also help them to check the security of buying online as to make it safer for customers to buy online and to increase their confidence in e-tailing stores.

E-Commerce creates some benefits to customers firstly the establishment of cordial relationship, enabling them shop and imbibe other transactions 24 hours a day, all year round irrespective of the location, provides customers with more choices, provides customers with less expensive products and services by allowing them to shop in many places and conduct quick comparisons, allows quick delivery of products and services in some cases, especially with digitized products, customers can receive relevant and detailed information in seconds, rather than in days or weeks, makes it possible to participate in virtual auctions, allows customers to interact with other customers in electronic communities and exchange ideas as well as compare experiences, electronic commerce facilitates competition, which results in substantial discounts.

**Conclusion and Recommendations:** The discoveries of this study show that there exists a significant relationship between e-crm and customers' retention of selected e-retail companies (Konga and GT sme market hub) in Lagos State Nigeria. The recent shift by major companies

to develop e-commerce platforms is a significant development. This constitutes recognition by the companies of the importance of e-crm and also the need to take action to eradicate potential threats to consumers. The significant technological advancement has yielded organisational relationship management with associated customer retention. E-crm impacts organizations positively through improved communication, marketing research, sales performance, customer retention as well as effective analysis and planning.

The study recommends that the e-tailers in Nigeria must attract a growing segment of customers who are technologically empowered, place a high emphasis on convenience, and are willing to pay a premium price if they find the product they are looking for. The e-tailers of Nigeria need to improve convenience and value for consumers and aid them in eradicating their fears around security. The limitations of the system paradigm also need to be acknowledged and mitigated for. A comprehensive political/legal framework with high level government support will assist in the adoption of electronic commerce which is a lead way to e-crm by a lot of retailing companies in Nigeria.

Government should also see to the provision of ICT infrastructure in all part of the country, as ICT is pathway for appreciation of e-commerce. They should sensitize Nigerians on the importance and benefits of adopting the Internet in all aspects of our lives and not only as a tool for shopping. All stakeholders such as financial institutions, governmental bodies, at all levels, as well as Internet Service Providers (ISP) could play active role in educating, encouraging and practicalising the importance of electronic commerce to various retailers and these will ultimately assist in its adoption. E-tailers should be sincere and honest enough to provide on time delivery while delivering the exact products shoppers have ordered and paid for.

Finally, through e-crm, the act of cultivating trusted, cordial and beneficial business relationship that culminates to customers' retention will be upheld.

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