

# The impact of new media and technology on customer relationships

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A new media marketing world increasingly dominated by mobile technologies, "shopping bots," recommendation systems and peer-to-peer networks has spawned a radical new online marketplace, challenging the old behaviors of buyers and sellers, according to a new report in the *Journal of Service Research*.

The old straight line that governed customer relationship management has been replaced by a zig-zagging pathway that more closely resembles a game of pinball - with risks and rewards waiting for companies that wade into the online marketplace, according to an international team of researchers in the journal's latest edition.

"Making use of these opportunities and avoiding their respective dangers requires a thorough understanding of why consumers are attracted to new media and how they influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors," the authors write. "New strategic and tactical marketing approaches must match the characteristics of new media and their effects on customers."

[Social networking sites](#) like [Facebook](#), YouTube, [Google](#) and [Twitter](#) give customers a bigger role as market players capable of reaching and being reached by almost everyone, anywhere and anytime, according to the authors. Armed with the tools of the Internet, consumers serve as retailers on [eBay](#), producers on YouTube, authors on Wikipedia and critics on Amazon.com.

Further challenging companies in a fast-changing landscape, a personal

computer is no longer the base from which customers make decisions. Instead, smart phones, laptops and far-reaching personal portals like Twitter and Facebook have made real-time information exchange an integral element of consumer behavior without restriction to time of day or location.

While these new media are displacing long-established [business models](#) and corporate strategies, they also provide new and exciting opportunities for companies to improve customer relationships and expand businesses through strategies that adapt to this constantly changing new media era, according to the international team of authors, which included Thorsten Hennig-Thurau, Bauhaus University of Weimar, Edward C. Malthouse, Northwestern University, Christian Friege, of LichtBlick AG, Sonja Gensler, University of Groningen, Lara Lobschat, University of Cologne, Arvind Rangaswamy, Pennsylvania State University and Bernd Skiera, Gothe University Frankfurt.

Provided by Boston College

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