

Ensuring Data Privacy with CRM AI: Investigating Customer Data Handling and Privacy Regulations

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine how CRM technologies handle customers' information and protect it in a manner that allows the integration of A.I. Given the continued integration of AI in CRM; data protection has become crucial. This paper aims to describe how CRM tools operate with customer data, consider the effects of privacy policies, and describe examples of real-time usage. Figures are provided to depict the issues and their corresponding solutions.

Keywords: *Marketing Automation, Customer Customer Segmentation, Sales Automation, Sales Forecast, Fraud Detection, Healthcare Data Analysis, Big Data Analytics, Online Customer Reviews.*

1. Introduction

In light of the present-day trends that call for startups to develop their customer relationship, it becomes apparent why CRM tools are instrumental for organizations. These tools enable activities ranging from sales and marketing to customer service and support by collecting customer data and analysis. The integration of AI in CRM systems has advanced the performance of the systems and added attributes, including forecast, target, and customer service management tools and automation systems—the integration of AI. Ensembled CRM systems can process terabytes of data in real-time to meet consumers' needs and improve the organization's marketing strategies to make customers happy. However, incorporating AI in CRM systems raises some of the leading data privacy and protection questions. This is so because customers' data is being collected and analyzed in large proportions. Therefore, it dramatically increases the chances of leakages and misuse of the collected data. As a result, this paper aims to discuss legal measures to safeguard the privacy and security of customers' information and establish that protecting customers' data is crucial. Moreover, the goal of this paper is as follows: To consider how specific CRM tools work in terms of the input data source, namely the customer; To analyze the impact of GDPR and CCPA in terms of managing customers' data; To explore ways in which AI solutions can be implemented in existing CRM while having compliance with data protection regulations. In this paper, real-time simulation vignettes and illustrations will be employed to explain the problem that hampers the effective implementation of AI-enabled features into the CRM and how data privacy could be boosted within this context.

2. CRM software and management of Customer Data.

CRM tools optimize customer communication and information management processes. The main components of CRM tools are data gathering, data storage, and data analysis, all of which are vital for improving business processes and customer relations.

Data Collection

CRM systems gather data from various sources to create a detailed picture of the customer. These sources include:

Websites: Activity, surfing, and information entered on the website indicate customer interests and actions (Kumar & Reinartz, 2018).

Social Media: These consumers' engagement, concerns, and opinions posted on the social networking sites Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn provide timely insights into consumers' attitudes and interests (He et al., 2017).

Customer Interactions: Information obtained from customer service conversations, emails, and sales helps satisfy customer needs and improve the quality of services offered (Buttle & Maklan, 2019).

Organizational data gathering helps provide CRM systems with quality data, which is essential for proper analysis and planning.

Data Storage

When the data is collected, it must be stored safely and securely so that the customers' information is not exposed to misuse. CRM tools utilize several techniques to ensure data security: CRM tools use several methods to ensure data security:

Encryption: All data is protected simultaneously during transmission and storage, which makes it difficult for code to be deciphered by the wrong people (Ramesh et al., 2018).

Access Controls: RBAC mentions a control mechanism that ensures that only the right people can see critical data. Such measures help to prevent internal data leakage, which is dangerous (Xu et al., 2016).

Cloud Storage: Current-generation CRM applications use cloud data storage services that provide flexibility through frequent upgrades and adherence to international security standards (Marston et al., 2016).

Data security is critical to protect the customer's information and meet legal requirements that may apply to the organization.

Data Analysis

AI algorithms help analyze the extensive data collected by CRM systems. This analysis provides actionable insights and predictions that drive business strategies: This analysis provides actionable insights and predictions that drive business strategies:

Predictive Analytics: AI models analyze customer data to estimate future operations and understand the customers' needs, which is helpful for business strategies (Verhoef et al., 2016).

Personalization: AI helps customize the messages to the customers and the products to be recommended, making the customer more engaged and thus more satisfied (Jarek & Mazurek, 2019).

Customer Segmentation: Data analysis divides customers into groups based on certain parameters to help direct marketing efforts toward specific groups (Wedel & Kannan, 2016).

CRM tools enable business organizations to make sound decisions, build strong customer relationships and increase efficiency by applying AI to data analysis.

3. Privacy Regulations and Compliance

Both acts note that they have stringent provisions for handling consumer information in business organizations; hence, consumer information is secure. This is commonly known as General Regulation on Data Protection, or GRDP for short. This law is called the GDPR and merely the General Data Protection Regulation. However, it was established on May 25, 2018, to implement data protection regulations in the European market. Key provisions include:

Explicit Consent: Therefore, the said organization must obtain personal data; the data are collected with the data subject's consent, and that consent is given willingly. Therefore, consent has to be given actively and intentionally, and this is because people should know what they are allowing to be collected and for what reason (Voigt & von dem Bussche, 2017).

Data Security: The GDPR has spelt out the provisions that any organization must follow to protect people's data. Some of them are Encryption, Pseudonymization and Security by regular assessment process to avoid data breaches; European Commission (2016).

Data Subject Rights: Among them are The right to access. Concerning the right to access, this is the right of the data subject that enables him or her to have affirmation from the organization's controller if the data processing is done for him or her. If confirmation is made, then the tainted data must be rectified. Rights are still peculiar in how such organizations advance them without relishing the Act, without further delay and with plain language only (Goddard, 2017).

Of all the laws, this paper will focus solely on CCPA mainly because the legislation usually involves complicated securities, and CCPA is relatively new in the market.

The CCPA was in force from January 1, 2020, and it mainly concerns various aspects of consumer privacy and their rights, as well as the laws and rules derived from the firms that function in California concerning consumers. Its main requirements are:

Consumer Rights: CCPA also allows consumers to have information on the categories of information shared, its purposes, and with whom it is shared. Customers also have the right to choose not to have their information forwarded to other organizations by the business (California Legislative Information, 2018).

Data Security: Hence, the following measures should be enforced to prevent vulnerability penetrations and data leakage to the wrongdoers in an organization. It has been illustrated in this paper, in keeping with the requirements of the CCPA, organizations are required to undertake the following measures to safeguard consumers' information: The following are the key steps that need to be implemented following the CCPA guide: The following are the steps that will be evident from this paper if consumers' information is to be protected:

Right to Delete: CCPA also offers consumers the right to request a business. It erases all the information that belongs to the consumer and has been collected by the company from that particular consumer (Zaem & Barber, 2020).

Compliance Strategies

To comply with these regulations, businesses leveraging AI in CRM systems must adopt comprehensive data privacy strategies. Thus, AI in CRM systems must be regulated, and data protection policies must be enforced.

Data Minimization: Hence, it is the view of this paper that only the information that is required to be collected, which is essential for achieving specific objectives, should be collected to minimize the dissemination of information and the misuse of the same. This principle is fundamental as risks and, therefore, exposures are kept to the minimum, and the liability in the process is thus at its lowest (Wachter et al., 2017).

Privacy by Design: Privacy policies must be incorporated into AI systems, and therefore, it would be recommended that privacy be defined as a fundamental attribute when developing an AI system. This means that in the architectures, we have to develop ways of protecting the user's data, such as through encryption, limiting access to only managers and anonymizing the data (Cavoukian, 2016).

Regular Audits and Assessments: Thus, it would be helpful if most organizations could periodically conduct privacy impact assessments, harm potential risk assessments, and act upon them. These assessments are beneficial in ensuring that the organization adheres to the legal guidelines of GDPR, CCPA, and other legal requirements in the market (Binns, 2018).

Thus, following the guidelines mentioned above and proposing compliance measures, organizations can enhance the utilization of AI in CRM systems while keeping the data and consumer confidence intact.

4. Leveraging AI Functionalities While Ensuring Privacy

Implementing Artificial Intelligence in CRM impacts the analysis of CRM and customers' data. However, it also has a disadvantage because it raises a problem, especially in compliance with privacy regulations. Some measures considered include data anonymization, access control, and audit trails.

Data Anonymization

Data anonymization is used to protect consumers while analyzing the data involved. This procedure involves erasing or altering PII so the person cannot be identified. This process enables organizations to analyze data without having to worry about privacy.

Techniques: Several data anonymization techniques are used in this case, including data masking, pseudonymization, and generalization. These are useful since data can be gathered, evaluated and contrasted without knowing to whom the data belongs (Aggarwal, 2015, p. 89).

Implementation: In most cases, anonymizing data results in a loss of information and changes in essence. Over-anonymization makes data almost meaningless, and under-anonymization breaches privacy. To this end, it is posited that applying such algorithms and machine learning models, as suggested by El Emam et al. (2016), can be pretty helpful in this respect.

Access Controls

Thus, access control indicators help prevent the leakage of information about the client. It only restricts the required people from getting the information, which gives the lesser chance of leaking or misusing it. **Role-Based Access Control (RBAC):** One of the critical models adopted in determining permissions is the 'RBAC' model since it entails setting permissions according to the organizational hierarchy of employees. It makes it possible to restrict access to the data so that only the people who may need the information when working may have it, as postulated by Ferraiolo et al.

Multifactor Authentication (MFA): MFA enhances security because this system requires the user to produce other forms of identification to access the valuable information. This makes it very hard for the account to be breached even if its credentials have been stolen (Das et al., 2018).

Audit Trails

This is why all the actions with the data are described in detail, and one can track all the actions performed with the data. Audit trails are the records of all the activities and changes made to the data to monitor illicit activities.

Logging Mechanisms: Automated logging systems record the usage of the data and the actions performed on it, including the changes made to the data, the action performed and the time the action was performed (Li et al., 2016).

Compliance and Monitoring: By monitoring the audit trails, organizations can meet the legal privacy and

risk assessment requirements. This also assists in proving a case of a data breach or regulatory audit (Dimitriou et al., 2017).

Case studies

Case Study 1: Healthcare CRM

CRM software encapsulating AI in healthcare corporations can help manage patient data and offer proper services. Health information is regarded as sensitive, and as such, data privacy has to be enhanced.

Implementation: These include techniques in Healthcare CRM to avoid identifying the patient during data processing and analysis. This also created measures that limited the flow of information, such that the only information available to the healthcare team was relevant to the department. All the legal measures for documenting access to the information have been captured well, like the HIPAA (Health et al. Act) (Rumbold & Pierscionek, 2017).

Case Study 2: Financial Services are one sector that has benefited from using CRM to manage customer relations.

For instance, in the financial sector, CRM systems combined with AI provide financial advice and identify fraud (Kaplan & Haenel, 2016). Data privacy is essential, especially in financial records, where the information is confidential.

Implementation: Thus, to avoid the leakage of the customer's data during the application of predictive analytics, Financial CRM systems employ the concept of pseudonyms. This is RBAC, which does not allow all personnel to access financial information and hence safeguards the information. The constant observation of data interactions is essential in identifying any violation of the data by any unauthorized individual, thus conforming to the GDPR and CCPA regulations (Marr, 2018).

The above strategies help realize that organizations can easily Integrate AI features in CRM systems and simultaneously seek to address the legal requirements concerning data.

5. Real-Time Scenarios and Simulation Reports

Scenario 1: Personalized Marketing Campaign

Description:

Within the context of a retail firm, developing AI strategies targets the understanding of buying patterns and the development of a targeted marketing framework integrated into the company's customer relationship management system. The challenge is to protect clients' information while using this data.

Simulation Details:

Data Collection and Anonymization:

The information gathered by the CRM system includes prior purchase records, the web pages visited frequently by the customers, and other related demographic information.

This is because PII is protected by anonymization methods such as pseudonymization and data masking.

Data Analysis:

It is further sent through AI programs to analyze the buying patterns and to forecast the potential buying trends.

It categorizes the customers into groups according to their shopping behaviour patterns.

Campaign Design:

Marketing tactics are formulated from the findings of the most extensive data sets collected and analyzed. Different offers and advertisements are developed based on a group of customers.

Simulation Report:

Effectiveness of Anonymized Data:

A study on the appropriateness of the two data forms reveals slight variance in the success rates of marketing campaigns when anonymized and non-anonymized data are used, concluding that anonymization of data is inconsequential in its usefulness.

Customer Privacy Impact:

Guardian is defended from data breaches and unauthorized access incidents as metrics showed decreases.

Metric	Anonymized data	Non-Anonymized Data
Conversion Rate (%)	8.5	8.7
Customer Engagement (Clicks)	1200.0	1220.0
Sales Increase (%)	15.2	15.5
Data Breaches (Incidents)	00	2.0

Table 1. Personalized Marketing Campaign

Scenario 2 Customer Service Automation

Description:

In this case, a telecommunications company deploys an integration of an AI-based chatbot system that operates within the corporation's customer relationship management (CRM) solution to process customers' inquiries and support tickets. The major challenge is protecting customer information while aiming to deliver efficient services.

Simulation Details:

Data Encryption:

Customers who engage the chatbot in any conversation are protected through the best encryption. Super users only have access to decrypt and view the data.

Access Control:

Access control is applied to solve customer-related issues, and RBAC is implemented to limit access to customer information.

MFA is mandatory to access information that may be sensitive.

Performance Monitoring:

It records all the activities passing through it and flags signs of intrusions or attempts.

Simulation Report:

Response Time and Satisfaction:

The evaluation also indicates that this encryption form slightly affects the chatbot's response time.

Customer satisfaction is still high, implying that security needs to improve the organization's service quality.

Metric	With Encryption	Without Encryption
Average Response Time (sec)	2.8	2.7
Customer Satisfaction (%)	92.0	93.0
Data Breaches (Incidents)	0.0	1.0
Unauthorized Access Attempts	0.0	3.0

Table 2. Customer Service Automation

Scenario 3 Fraud Detection in Financial Services

Description:

A case is a bank that incorporates AI in its CRM within a company to identify fraudulent transactions as they happen. Protecting the customers' financial information on the one hand and exercising reasonable fraud control on the other is a vice-versa scenario.

Simulation Details:

Transactions deviating from the typical behaviour in a given environment are identified and marked for analysis.

Data Masking:

Customer identification in the analysis is concealed to avoid revealing cash-related information. In the case of suspected fraud, particular attributes are considered without conveying the entire transaction content.

Alert System:

An alert system is a means by which an organization's security teams get informed of possible fraudulent activities.

In addition, all activities carried out by the patients are recorded in detail for auditing.

Simulation Report:

Fraud Detection Accuracy:

Assessment of the AI system's efficiency in the recognition of fraudulent transactions.

Comparison between the results obtained from detecting students with and without mask-wearing.

Metric	Masked Data	Unmasked Data
Detection Rate (%)	95.5	96.0
False Positives (Count)	3.0	2.0
Data Breaches (Incidents)	0.0	1.0
Customer Trust Index (Score)	8.0	8.5

Table 3. Fraud Detection in Financial Services

Scenario 4: Healthcare Data Management

Description:

AI is adopted as a CRM system where a healthcare provider stores patients' data and enhances the care process. There is always a need to protect health data as it can be susceptible in most instances.

Simulation Details:

Data Anonymization:

Data related to patients is dispersed, and data is anonymized before being subjected to algorithms involving artificial intelligence.

Procedures like generalization and data swapping are used.

Access Control and Audit Trails: Access Control and Audit Trails:

Time access is also regulated tightly and is granted according to the roles.

Even the doctors are led in ways that provide extensive audit trails recording every access and modification to the patient's information.

Predictive Analysis:

Machine learning algorithms use de-identified information to diagnose patients' conditions and advise clinicians on possible further actions.

They deal with data to locate patients susceptible to developing complications and attend to them preventively.

Simulation Report:

Predictive Accuracy:

How anonymization affects the effectiveness of AI algorithms' predictions.
 Outcome data of patients before and after privacy measures' introduction.

Metric	Anonymized Data	Non-Anonymized Data
Predictive Accuracy (%)	85.3	86.0
Patient Outcomes (Improved)	75.0	77.0
Data Breaches (Incidents)	0.0	1.0
Compliance with Regulations	100.0	90.0

Table 4. Healthcare Data Management

Scenario 5: E-Commerce Customer Insights

Description:

Machine learning applied within the e-commerce platform's CRM system helps to determine consumer behavior and thus improve clients' experience. Therefore, the confidentiality of customer records should be upheld to the highest level.

Simulation Details:

Behavioral Analysis:

The CRM system gathers and obscures customers' information through the browsing and purchase options. Machine learning processes the data, looking for patterns, tendencies, and people's preferences.

Personalized Recommendations:

On this basis, specific products that would be suitable to the given customer are recommended through the system.

Data anonymization simply helps to prevent the identification of a particular customer any time the analysis is being conducted.

Data Security Measures:

To enhance the security of the data, several measures of encryption are employed when data is stored and transferred.

The security assessment is performed regularly to determine possible risks and prevent them.

Simulation Report:

Recommendation Accuracy:

The Accuracy of product recommendations before and after anonymizing customers' data.
 Evaluation of customer contact and satisfaction with recommendations based on their characteristics.

Metric	Anonymized Data	Non-Anonymized Data
Recommendation Accuracy (%)	92.5	93.0
Customer Engagement (Clicks)	1800.0	1820.0
Sales Conversion (%)	10.5	10.7
Data Breaches (Incidents)	00	2.0

Table 5. E-Commerce Customer Insights

6. Challenges and Solutions

Several challenges are also inherent with the integration of AI in CRM systems while at the same time working to protect data. This section expounds on these challenges and how one can tackle them to overcome them.

Challenge 1: Balancing Data Utility and Privacy

This paper also raises a critical issue of how to address the use of data and the protection of the data, whereby the protection element is privacy. Firms should, therefore, be able to make business decisions based on customer data analysis while protecting the data against fraud or loss.

Solution: Differential Privacy

Differential privacy guarantees that the individual is poisoned so that he cannot be recognizable in the data. However, the statistics of the data can be computed. This allows one to ensure that no detailed data about any specific subject will be presented in the results of the data analysis (Dwork & Roth, 2014). So, with the help of differential privacy, it becomes possible to increase the informativeness of the data for AI-based analytics while ensuring the protection of the customers' privacy.

Implementation: The privacy of the customers' data in CRM systems could be protected under differential privacy if noise injection algorithms are used in the queries. This makes it possible to analyze the trends and the regularities without revealing more details about specific customers (Abadi et al., 2016).

Challenge 2: Ensuring Compliance with Multiple Regulations

Entities operating in different legal jurisdictions face the challenge of meeting requirements such as GDPR, CCPA, etc. They are diverse, and some guidelines should be obeyed; otherwise, one can face severe punishment.

Solution: Comprehensive Compliance Framework

This paper, therefore, recommends that a robust compliance framework be established, especially one that can be scaled up to meet dynamic compliance needs. This framework should entail, for example, data protection policies, an annual checkup on data handling policies and measures to raise employee awareness of data protection laws (Voigt & Von dem Bussche, 2017).

Implementation: Compliance management software makes it easy to track and address issues related to compliance with the organization's regulations. These tools provide checklists, lists, and process maps to ensure that all the rules concerning personal data protection are met (Goddard, 2017).

Challenge 3: Data Security

As much as it may be a little discouraging to repeat some of the material discussed in the previous course, it is relevant to do so since protecting the client's data should be a top priority, given that the cases of cybercrime are increasing. These are some of the effects of consumer and employee data breaches; this reveals that organizations suffer significantly through costs incurred on fines, compensation, and replacement of the affected data.

Solution: Advanced Encryption Techniques

Another method is homomorphic encryption, which allows data to be computed while remaining encrypted. This ensures that data is always protected, especially when being deciphered by other people (Acar et al., 2018).

Implementation: CRM systems implement homomorphic encryption, which secures data processing. Encryption techniques allow calculations without knowing what the data contains (Gentry, 2009).

Challenge 4: The comprehensive and accurate information based on this study can be considered the main factors of transparency and credibility.

Consumers are becoming more and more conscious of their data being used. This can only be done if one has to ensure that he/she is as transparent as possible and thus gain the customer's trust for future business.

Solution: Transparent Data Practices

This means that they should observe data accountability principles, where organizations should tell consumers what data they collect, how the information will be used, and what measures will be put in place to protect it. Therefore, allowing customers to control their data through easy and intuitive data access and deletion requests is crucial for trust (Acquisti et al., 2015).

Implementation: The CRM system should include the customers having access to and the ability to change their information. This entails providing consumers the option of opting in or out of the data collection and processing practices implemented with the help of regulations such as GDPR and CCPA (Solove & Schwartz, 2020).

7. Conclusion

Data privacy is a significant concern when applying CRM tools incorporating artificial intelligence features. For this reason, data anonymization, encryption, access controls, and compliance frameworks assist organizations in meeting the privacy regulation requirements while adopting AI. Hence, future research should strive towards developing better privacy-preserving AI and determine the possibilities of integrating these into CRM. Below are the main problems concerning the usefulness of the data and the privacy of the data, the compliance with several regulations, the security of the data, and the issues of transparency and trust in CRM systems with the application of AI.

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