Customer Relationship Management Strategy in Swedish Football Clubs

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Abstract

Title: Customer Relationship Management Strategy in Swedish Football Clubs

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Keywords: CRM, Customer Relationship Management, Fan Relationship Marketing, Implementation Process, Football Clubs and Supporter Loyalty

Aim of the Thesis: To investigate the practice of using a CRM strategy in football clubs by comparing earlier successful and unsuccessful CRM implementations by football clubs and study fan relationship theories in a large Swedish football club, thereby presenting guidelines on how to further develop a CRM strategy in a Swedish football club.

Methodology: A quantitative approach and a qualitative approach have been used, first collecting empirical data on supporter views through a questionnaire further strengthened by gathering empirical data through an interview. The quantitative data has been presented with descriptive statistics and the qualitative data has been analyzed using a realist approach.

Theoretical Perspectives: A literature review has been conducted and resulted in a theoretical framework illustrating the concepts of benefits and risks with CRM, fan relationship marketing, CRM implementation process, CRM systems in football clubs, and supporter loyalty. A research model, “FRM implementation process” has been developed from the theoretical findings.

Empirical Data: The quantitative empirical data has been collected by distributing a questionnaire to supporters of AIK Fotboll. The qualitative empirical data has been collected through interviews with the head of sales and marketing within AIK Fotboll AB.

Conclusion: A CRM strategy can benefit Swedish football clubs in areas such as to better capture customer data, better communication between the club and its supporters and provide customized offers as long as the supporters are informed about the changes in strategy. In order for Swedish football clubs to successfully implement a CRM strategy they need to ensure adequate financing and management commitment since an unsuccessful implementation can be devastating to a Swedish football club’s finances.
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Samuel Sölgén
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Disposition of the Thesis

1 Introduction
In this paragraph we present the background to the chosen problem, our purpose with the thesis and the delimitations we have selected.

2 Theoretical Frameworks
In this paragraph we present the theory behind CRM with an emphasis on football clubs. This is followed by a presentation of our research model, FRM implementation process and CRM benefits and risks.

3 Method
Here we discuss the choice of method and how we conducted the quantitative and qualitative study, and account for its validity and reliability. Additionally, the quality of the thesis is discussed.

4 Presentation of AIK and Empirical Findings
In this section we present information on AIK, the findings of the quantitative supporter survey and present the findings of the qualitative study at AIK Fotboll AB.

5 Analysis
In this section we use the theoretical framework and empirical findings to the characteristics of AIK Fotboll’s fans, AIK Fotboll AB’s current FRM implementation status and the benefits, risks and obstacles with a CRM strategy for Swedish football clubs.

6 Final Discussions and Conclusions
In this paragraph we account for and discuss what we have concluded from our studies. We present the main findings from our analysis that answers the purpose of the thesis.
1 Introduction

In this section, the background of the thesis is presented along with a description of the problem that this study focuses on. The study aim and the delimitations of the thesis are also presented.

Customer Relationship Management (from now on referred as CRM) “is a comprehensive approach for creating, maintaining and expanding customer relationships” (Kerr and Anderson 2001, pg 2). It is a strategic business initiative which aims at treating every customer differently depending on their preferences and it is an enterprise-wide program which can be implemented incrementally. CRM is considered a philosophy and at the same time a business strategy, supported by a system and technology which is designed to improve human interaction in a business environment (Greenberg 2004). During the IT bubble, CRM was considered vital to success, however many companies invested a lot of money on grand technical solutions instead of developing the CRM as an integrated part of their organization. “Implemented in the right way, CRM delivers powerful benefits. It markedly improves the efficiency and effectiveness of sales, service and marketing. But even more importantly, it can strengthen strategy and help generate enduring returns” (Turk and Bligh 2004 xiv). Businesses all over the world have implemented CRM strategies with mixed success, and in recent years major football clubs have opened their eyes to this opportunity. Clubs such as Manchester United Football Club, Chelsea Football Club, Football-Club Bayern München, Paris Saint-Germain Football Club (PSG) and AC Milan all integrated CRM systems into their business models (Adamson, Jones and Tapp 2006; Furuholt and Skutle 2007; Thompson 2004).

As one of the largest and most popular football clubs in Sweden, AIK Fotboll AB has the customer-base and the platform to become the Swedish market leader in merchandise sales and customer relationships. One important CRM tool is the use of IT to collect customer data, and AIK Fotboll AB has recently developed a web project which focuses solely on their
supporters and customers (www.aikfotboll.se). This gives them a good base to utilize the functionality of CRM, and with increased focus on web sales, the potential for accessing customer information is virtually unlimited.

1.1 Problem Discussion

There are both similarities and differences between football clubs and companies. The major difference is that football supporters/customers will not change allegiances to other clubs, just because of poor performance of the product or disappointing customer service, as customers to a regular company might do. The general consensus is that some fans may choose to spend less of their time and money on their favorite team, yet still remain loyal to the club (Adamson et al 2006). In the recent years the view of football supporters as customers has gained recognition in Sweden, and although clubs are cautious with categorizing their supporters as customers, considering the amount of money that is exchanged between the supporters and clubs via e.g. ticket sales, merchandise sales and membership fees, supporters are in fact customers from a business perspective. Therefore, when the terms supporters and fans are used in this thesis they are comparable with customers and hence theories regarding regular commercial company customers applies.

CRM has been successfully implemented in many major European football clubs and large Swedish football clubs should be able to benefit from it in the same way. We therefore intend to conduct a study of AIK Fotboll AB’s organizational system and marketing strategies, and investigate if it’s possible and/or profitable to implement or further develop a CRM strategy in a Swedish football club like AIK Fotboll AB. The reason the study investigates AIK Fotboll AB is because the club is one of the largest clubs in Sweden with a solid supporter base, combined with the fact that it is a corporation.
1.2 Research Questions

The research questions this thesis will answer are:

- What are the characteristics of AIK Fotboll fans and how can the relationship between the club and its fans improve through a CRM strategy, and what are the prospects for a CRM strategy in a Swedish football club like AIK Fotboll AB?
- What are the Critical Success Factors (CSF) for a successful CRM implementation in a Swedish football club?
- What benefits, risks and obstacles will a Swedish football club face with a CRM strategy and how should these issues be handled?

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the practice of using a CRM strategy in football clubs, by comparing earlier successful and unsuccessful CRM implementations and strategies in football clubs and study fan relationship theories in a large Swedish football club, thereby presenting guidelines on how to further develop a CRM strategy in a Swedish football club.

1.4 Delimitations

This thesis will investigate CRM strategy and implementation in football clubs and more specifically in a Swedish football club; AIK Fotboll AB. The reason the thesis focuses on football clubs and not all sports clubs is because the vast majority of research on CRM in sports has been conducted on football clubs. Therefore, in order to be as specific as possible this thesis will be based on CRM in football clubs theories, although some parallels will be drawn with the sports industry as a whole.

As mentioned, the reason the study investigates AIK Fotboll AB is because the club is one of the largest clubs in Sweden with a solid supporter base, combined with the fact that it is a corporation. Also, AIK Fotboll AB’s head office is geographically more suited for the authors as it is located within one hour from Mälardalen’s University, while most of the other large
Swedish football clubs are located on the west and south coasts of Sweden. The study itself will solely focus AIK’s first team squad and exclude the women’s team, youth teams and collaboration clubs, since the main revenue sources and supporter interest revolves around the first team squad.
2 Theoretical Framework

In this section the literature framework is presented, to provide as solid foundation to the study conducted later in the thesis.

2.1 Customer Relationship Management

Bligh and Turk (2004) define CRM as an initiative that organizes the firm into a more customer focused, attractive and individual customer tailored service, by ensuring the best practices for managing and integrating sales, services and marketing processes. They further state that the use of software technologies is needed to integrate the sales, service and marketing processes and activities, and to capture and centralize customer-related information.

One of the most important changes the organization must go through when deciding to implement a CRM strategy is to get their primary focus on the customer. To succeed in this the company and organization as a whole must change their way of thinking, and how it acts towards the customers. The management must adopt new strategies to ensure that the new way of thinking is the general attitude throughout the organization (Roberts-Phelps 2001).

To ensure the best practices when implementing a CRM strategy there are three elements to reflect upon according to Roberts-Phelps (2001); the first element is customer retention, which is to keep the current customers loyal because obtaining a new customers is usually more expensive. The second element is to develop customer potential, turning a casual customer into a higher spending loyal consumer whom promotes the company and its products. The final element of CRM is the de-selection of customers, which is the process of targeting the customers with the most potential and letting the ones with the least future long-term value go to the competition.
2.1.1 Critical Success Factors and the Benefits of CRM

In order to implement a CRM strategy in a company, there are a lot of different factors which need to be considered. The following four Critical Success Factors are a combination of Loftis, Geiger and Imhoff (2004), Mankoff (2001) success factors which they consider vital for a successful CRM implementation:

- Implement a coordinated, customer-focused business strategy and establish measurable business goals
- Establish a CRM-savvy organizational culture and get executive support up front
- Create a CRM-friendly organizational structure and invest in training to empower end users
- Implement an integrated customer information environment and measure, monitor, and track the development

When companies follow these guidelines, they can gain the benefits a successful CRM strategy gives, which according to Tourniaire (2003), Chen and Chen (2004) are; cost savings, based on the idea that CRM technology will boost employees’ productivity and make it easier to reach potential customers, sell products and improve service. Increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, through increased customer options of self-service, allowing them to get what they need faster because of increased employee efficiency, or by receiving targeted information. Increased profits, which is the best tool for measuring success and is a direct consequence of cost savings and increased customer loyalty. Increased internal accountability, by making it possible for everyone to track the company’s information flow, including transactions and deliveries; this is especially useful to managers evaluating team performance and increases the ability to coordinate with other teams or departments. Employee satisfaction, since the availability of good tools helps employees, in particular those who want to deliver better value to customers. Satisfied employees are more likely to remain at the company which reduces costly personnel turnover, and are prone to be more productive. Better business intelligence, this is based on the fact that CRM tools stores
massive quantities of customer data and provides in-depth analysis of their habits, preferences and finances, giving companies the possibility to adapt products, marketing strategies and customer service after the customers’ needs.

Chen and Chen (2004) further review and expand the CRM benefits and divide them into tangible and intangible benefits in their table “eCRM benefits”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tangible Benefits</th>
<th>Intangible Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased revenues and profitability</td>
<td>• Increased customer satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quicker turnaround time</td>
<td>• Positive word-of-mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduced internal cost</td>
<td>• Improved customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Higher employee productivity</td>
<td>• Streamlined business process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduced marketing (e.g. direct mailing) costs</td>
<td>• Closer contact management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Higher customer retention rates</td>
<td>• Increased depth and effectiveness of customer segmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protected marketing investment with maximized returns</td>
<td>• Acute targeting and profiling customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Better understanding/addressing of customer requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 eCRM benefits (Chen and Chen 2004, pg 338)

Both the tangible and the intangible benefits may serve as an internal control function to evaluate how successful both an implementation process and a fully functional CRM strategy has succeeded, and a lack of success on one particular benefit may be used as a guideline on what needs to be further developed.

2.1.2 CRM Risks and Failures

As previously stated, implementing a CRM strategy in an organization certainly has benefits which are sought after by the management. However, when implementing a CRM strategy the whole organization changes, as it affects the way the company interacts with its customers and it changes the work habits of the employees in the whole business. So there is no surprise the costs of a CRM failure can be enormous. According to Bligh and Turk (2004) the failure of a CRM implementation can be dramatic in several areas of the business.
Financial performance can suffer, such as market share losses, budget overruns and high post-implementation running costs. The customer service quality can also suffer in areas such as lower service towards customers; customers can feel confusion and frustration which may lead to a negative brand perception. They may also be cultural impacts within the company, such as low morale in the different departments and disbelief about the company’s ability to adapt towards change.

Bligh and Turk (2004) further states that one of the most common reasons why a CRM initiative fails are poor objective setting which relates to the overall aims of the initiative. When the goals are poorly defined, the process complicates the efforts down the management line and undermines the end results.

Lack of senior leadership is also a major reason why CRM initiatives fail, “when top management is either not engaged at all, loses interest once the initial high-level decisions have been made, or doesn’t focus long enough to ensure successful post-implementation operation” (Bligh and Turk 2004 pg 38). Gentle (2002) further add to this by stating that a CRM initiative will probably fail when the allies or advocates for a CRM solution are not in the right places in the organization.

Inadequate planning and scope setting refers to the critical planning stage after the objectives have been set, which companies often stumble upon “Attempting too much, not addressing vital changes to business processes, and not removing organizational roadblocks are typical failings” (Bligh and Turk 2004, pg 40). There are also other implementation issues, such as improperly staffed teams and the risk to fall into the technology trap which means they company treats the technology as the entire solution and ignores the organizational and cultural aspects of a CRM strategy. Zarbrock (2006) adds that during the implementation process, there is a risk that the CRM system does not match the organizations day to day functions.
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*Information silos* are also a concern when companies decide to integrate their systems, as too much focus can be laid on the front end systems, design and usability issues. Companies often have different systems already in place and the transition into a fully integrated system can be painful, which can result in huge piles of information spread over different departments with little or no linkage between them (Gay, Charlesworth and Esen, 2007).

When the process of implementing a new CRM strategy is done successfully, it is tempting for the company to sit back and relax. A CRM strategy is an ongoing process, not a single event. "*It must be carefully managed over time, even after a successful rollout. Even if excellent user adoption is at first achieved, success will fade if CRM is not nurtured*" (Bligh and Turk 2004, pg 48).

In the study "*A turning point for CRM*” conducted by Ernest-Jones (2004), all these problems and risks are validated. The study was carried out by surveying 172 UK executives on a range of issues concerning CRM, the responses showed that the largest barriers when implementing a CRM strategy are: Difficulties in capturing the right customer data, failure to analyze data properly and integrate software and back-office systems properly, lack of training for people using CRM applications and insufficient input in CRM design from business units and customers, failure to measure customer satisfaction and inadequate corporate networks.

**2.1.3 CRM Systems**

There are many different CRM systems available; however the basic design of the CRM software systems has two elements, which are referred to as front- and back office systems which integrate sales, service and marketing processes. Front office system is the direct customer contact and is all about the method of merging customers with products and/or services. Sales automation provides efficient contact management systems, order entry transactions and handling of account relationships. The customer service function supports two way communications between the seller and the buyer which provides a convenient and
easily accessible communication channel. The key points for these functions are the quality of service, relevance and simplicity of the content (Gay et al 2007).

Back office systems acts like a supporting function and involves collecting, recording and analyzing all the customer activities. They also include administration processes such as accounting, invoicing and shipping information and analyze tools which can be used to make forecasts, predictions and help the management to observe current performance (Gay et al 2007).

2.1.4 Choosing a CRM System

As there are many hundreds of CRM systems available, a careful selection needs to be done to find the CRM system best suit the business strategy and company resources. Tourniaire (2003) suggests that a company should choose a system from the following categories; Traditional or New-Wave, Suite or Point Solution, Vertical or General Solution and Package solution or renting it from an Application Software Provider (ASP).

The difference between Traditional and New-Wave system is traditional systems often offer a rich functionality and can be integrated with many other systems, but the features of this system is often not presented in the most effective manner and it often takes a lot of time to implement new features because of the architecture of the system. A New-Wave system on the other hand are streamlined, and focuses exactly on the essential features, but the limitations to tailoring the system can make it difficult to implement new features.

A Suite solution gives the user an integrated solution with different modules which addresses each of the business functions. This solution can be tempting for companies who want a pre-integrated solution and an easier implementation and maintenance process. Point solutions offers specific focus on one area and are often the best of the systems if the company have limited requirements.
Choosing a Vertical which is a CRM system with specific templates can greatly reduce time and better the maintainability if the company works in a specific industry in which the vertical system have been applied to before, but if the needs of the company are fairly straightforward, a general purpose system which is functional in all industries will do.

CRM systems have gone from licensed software to software which is rented rather than bought by an ASP. The benefits with renting it from an ASP is that the initial costs are much lower, the startup time is shorter and it can also support fluctuations in the user base to a higher degree. However, a packaged solution is cheaper in the long run so if the company knows it will use it for a long time, this option is preferable.

2.2 Sports Industry and Football Club Economics

The sports industry is comparable with other industries, Downward (2000) presents the following similarities; the athletes and the manager/coach can be seen as the labor input. The sporting field and equipment is the capital invested and the team then produces a product with other teams in the league, the fixture, which is then sold to consumers whom are the spectators and supporters.

As the football industry have evolved to a multimillion dollar market, football clubs nowadays must to a greater extent see themselves as companies who operate in a competitive market. There are some differences however, and while companies strive to eliminate competition and position itself as a monopoly supplier, football clubs will not pursue monopoly power on top players according to Dobson and Goddard (2001), since the whole competition of football would suffer as their ability and sheer dominance would make it unattractive to consumers. They further state that if teams are rational profit maximisers, the distributions of player talent should be reasonably even. Furuholt and Skutle (2007) further add to this and state that sporting competition is more profitable than sporting monopoly. There is however a need to distinguish the economic and sporting competition
and when it comes to economic competition they argue that the teams co-operate in order to create a joint product.

Dobson and Goddard (2001) argue that when looking at the economics of football, there is a direct linkage between a football club’s sporting and economic performances. They state that at the micro level, the team success on the pitch determines the club’s capacity to generate revenue, and at a macro level, the ability to maintain a reasonable competitive balance to keep the attractiveness of the sport.

2.2.1 How do Football Clubs Generate Revenue?

Ticket revenue on match day has historically been the largest source of revenue for most football clubs and it’s was not until the beginning of 1990s that the clubs revenue became more diversified into other areas such television revenue, merchandise and sponsorship (Dobson and Goddard 2001). Some of the larger clubs such as Manchester United, Real Madrid and FC Barcelona have actually surpassed the match day revenue and most of their income today comes from television broadcasting deals (Parks et al 2009). In Sweden, one of the largest clubs in terms of revenue, AIK’s match day revenue is equal to its merchandise and sponsorship deals while the broadcasting is about 20 percent of match day revenue (Bokslutskommuniké 2008, www.aikfotboll.se).

2.2.2 Supporter Loyalty

According to Rein, Kottler and Ryan-Shields (2006) the competition for fans has never been higher than on today’s market. The largest sports in the USA; American football, baseball, hockey and basketball are all under great pressure from new emerging sports like lacrosse, paintball, NASCAR, poker and more extreme sports to retain their market share. In order for established sports to stay competitive and up to date they have to constantly adapt to new conditions such as emerging distribution channels and changes in the audience. Further, sports must identify decline problems and develop strategies to connect with the fans, retaining and increasing the fan base.
One of the major differences between the football industry and other industries is the loyalty from the customers; one unique aspect of sport clubs is the importance to identify themselves as loyal supporters and in certain cases increase the commitment when their club is underperforming. Further on, fan loyalty cannot be relied upon, as the support can be attributed to many different loyalty belief systems, including; self-image, community belonging and backing the underdog (Tapp 2004). There are also different levels of loyalty, as shown in the figure below;

**Figure 2 Differing levels of loyalty - key factor** (Tapp 2004, pg 213)

Given that there are different levels of loyalty it becomes important for the sports club to analyze a supporter database by establishing the size and validity of the different segments (Tapp 2004).

Regarding football supporters, Adamson et al (2006) concludes that some segments have more loyalty than commercial customers, but the different levels of loyalty needs to be understood, and their needs differs from commercial customers due to the emotional and
intense nature of the game and surroundings. Regarding the clubs view on supporters and the relationship between clubs and fans Adamson et al (2006) concludes; “The football industry needs to understand that supporters need to be treated as customers but recognized as fans” (Adamson et al 2006 pg 167). Therefore, in this study it is interesting to see how the Swedish football clubs perceive their fans and if this affects the implementation of a CRM strategy.

2.3 CRM in Football Clubs

Adamson et al (2006) have developed conceptual framework for CRM in football clubs called “fan relationship management” (FRM). The reason behind developing a new CRM concept for football clubs is to describe the unique nature of football and at the same time incorporate theories and lessons from traditional CRM. The football industry is behind other industries in implementing CRM strategies which gives them the opportunity to learn from other companies’ successes and failures with CRM (Adamson et al 2006). Many of the largest football clubs in Europe uses CRM strategies, including; Manchester United Football Club, Chelsea Football Club, Football-Club Bayern München, PSG and AC Milan (Adamson et al 2006; Furuhol and Skutle 2007; Thompson 2004). A successful example of using a CRM strategy in a football club is PSG, which has increased their revenue and fan base through their CRM strategy, despite a lack of success on the pitch (Thompson 2004).

2.3.1 Implementation of CRM in Football Clubs

Adamson et al (2006) conducted a study during ten weeks in 2004 were the researchers got the opportunity to closely monitor one English championship league football club’s CRM system implementation process. The club had decided to replace all their IT systems with an enterprise-wide modular solution, consisting of; ticketing systems, corporate sales, merchandising and a CRM module. The implementation process proved to be very complicated and errors were made both from a management perspective and an IT perspective. One problem detected was that the project team seemed to focus on the
technology-led rather than customer-led approach. There were gaps of communication and guidance between the managers and the staff. The communication with the supporters was also lacking and very little information was given to the supporters explaining the new approach which led to even more grievances when the ticket sale system experienced difficulties and some fans were left without ticket due to slow processing. After the planned ten weeks of implementation, the CRM strategy was not yet fully implemented and the club’s reputation had diminished among the supporters. Learning from this CRM system implementation process, the researchers developed a new implementation model; a fan ‘relationship marketing’ implementation tool for football clubs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRM Characteristics</th>
<th>Implementation Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Strategic vision and leadership</td>
<td>• Is FRM part of a company strategy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fan loyalty strategy</td>
<td>• Is there commitment from the appropriate business leaders?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fan-centric approach</td>
<td>• Is the vision consistent with the brand values aspirations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Integrated and holistic</td>
<td>• How will loyalty be developed, nurtured, recognized and rewarded?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Understanding fan needs</td>
<td>• How will fans be recognized and rewarded, e.g. loyalty card?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Database marketing</td>
<td>• Is organizational wide approach to FRM including a review of all customer touch points?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Life time value</td>
<td>• Are there human resources structures in place to support FRM?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Appropriate technology</td>
<td>• Are cross functional project teams in place with agreed plans?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have the relevant change management issues been considered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have fans been consulted regarding the implementation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is there a methodology in place to collect information regarding fans’ and potential fans’ needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is the customer data accurate and consistent?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Will there be the ability to specifically segment, target and communicate to different groups of fans and measure success?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is there ability to measure lifetime value of fans?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is the technology appropriate for the overall strategy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is the technology part of the overall solution rather than leading it?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3 A fan ‘relationship marketing’ implementation tool for football clubs (Adamson et al 2006, pg 167)
This model can be used to investigate what organizational changes, software solutions, and supporter and employee communication clubs have to focus on, in order to make a CRM strategy implementation as effective and successful as possible.

A study conducted by Thompson (2004) investigated Paris Saint-Germain Football Club’s CRM strategy implementation. PSG started with a phased plan consisting of four steps:

- **Simplify, improve and expand customer service**: Introduced standard customer service processes and functionality in its call center.
- **Improve customer loyalty**: Created a customer loyalty card called “Esprit Club” with benefits for customers.
- **Extend the depth and breadth of business-to-business relationships**: Focused on improving the sales processes with other businesses, for example sponsors.
- **Reduce delivery channel costs**: Developed a new subscription system for their newsletters and integrated it with their financial system.

Organizational changes were also made, including; shifting the culture toward a common interest in the supporter and standardized service practices. Another change was to not be focused on products (merchandise and tickets) but instead focus on customer satisfaction. The last organizational change was to adopt a new IT system.

### 2.3.2 CRM System Requirements in Football Clubs

When looking at a football club as a business, before implementing a CRM system the club has to ask itself what kind of functions do they need from the system. According to Tourniaire (2003) there are many different functions of a CRM system and many of them are not needed for a successful system. He states that the simplicity often wins because convoluted solutions are often not the best, since they can be too complex for the users. Furuholt and Skutle (2007) explains in their study that football clubs all have different strategies when choosing a CRM system, but none of the clubs they studied choose a
straight of the shelf package, or traditional solution. Furuholt and Skutle (2007) further states that a CRM system implementation is an ongoing improvement process and many clubs choose a system which can be easily customizable such as a Suite Solution.

In Paris Saint-Germaine’s case (Thompson 2004) the first thing they did was to consolidate its customer service. They cut their multiple phone numbers into one number for ticket sales and game information. Tourniaire (2003) calls this phone integration, and it is possible with the use of a CRM tool called computer-telephone integration software. This tool allows the call centre to get a popup on the computer screen with information about the customer when he calls, so the call center knows how to service the customer as effective as possible. PSGs second step was to improve its customer loyalty and to achieve this they launched a loyalty card. This is an excellent way of getting customers into your database. Tourniaire (2003) explains that this is a key element of a CRM system, but the question is what information do the Football clubs need? PSG used this information to target loyalty customers with merchandise kits and less attractive tickets. The database needs to have comprehensive records of important customer data, but also linkage between the database is useful, since different departments then can easily access the information required (Tourniaire 2003). PSGs final phase was to extend the depth and breadth of relationships and reduce delivery channel costs. The extended relationship program focused on improving the sales processes to handle business-to-business relationship, one of them being sponsorships. PSG also created a new subscriptions system for its newsletter, which included integration to its financial systems. Tourniaire (2003) refers to this as E-mail integration, and PSG used this to automatically send out news about the club and marketing campaigns to those customers who had signed up.

When Everton football club choose to implement a CRM strategy, they required a system which covered the management of ticketing and memberships, online and automated telephone sales, marketing and customer services, corporate sales and merchandising. The software chosen also brought a new dimension to Everton’s online ticket store, enabling the
club to prioritize online ticket sales to its most loyal supporters (IBM 2008). The case studies concludes that the most important factor for the football club is the supporter, and therefore the CRM system implemented in the club must support functions which handles communication with the supporters as smoothly as possible.
2.4 Research Model

With the intent to provide step-by-step guidelines for football clubs on how to implement a FRM strategy, the following implementation process was developed by applying CRM implementation steps from the theoretical framework to the considerations and characteristics in Adamson et al (2006) A fan ‘relationship marketing’ implementation tool for football clubs:

| 1. Strategic vision and leadership | • Prepare to carry out the three elements: retention, customer potential development and de-selection of customers  
| 2. Fan loyalty strategy | • Ensure that the key personnel/leaders are prepared to make a long-term commitment on the strategy  
| 3. Fan-centric approach | • Make sure the club is prepared and capable to treat the supporters as customers but recognize them as fans  
| 4. Integrated and holistic | • Define a strategy on how to identify the different segments of supporters and how to categorise them  
| 5. Understanding fan needs | • Prepare to recognize and reward fans, by creating a feasible and effective loyalty system  
| 6. Database marketing | • Ensure a system is in place to continuously receive feedback on all customer-related operations  
| 7. Life time value | • Consolidate or simplify customer service systems  
| 8. Appropriate technology | • Ensure all the departments are willing to work together as a unit when implementing the strategy  

Figure 4 The authors’ step-by-step FRM implementation process
2.4.1 CRM Benefits and Risks

In order to provide a clearer understanding of the possible outcomes of a CRM strategy a table of the benefits and risks of have been constructed based on the findings in the theoretical framework, this table is intended to provide support in the analysis and conclusion sections of the thesis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Risks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased revenues and profitability</td>
<td>Financial performance may suffer due to miscalculated costs of CRM project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced marketing and internal cost</td>
<td>Budget overruns and high post-implementation running costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher employee productivity</td>
<td>Negative cultural impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher customer retention rates</td>
<td>Insufficient input in CRM design from business units and customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected marketing investment with maximized returns</td>
<td>Poor objective setting undermining end results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased customer satisfaction</td>
<td>Failure to measure customer satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive word-of-mouth</td>
<td>Customer frustration/confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved customer service</td>
<td>Lowered customer service quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closer contact management</td>
<td>Lack of training for people using CRM applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased depth and effectiveness of customer segmentation</td>
<td>Failure to integrate software and back-office systems properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute targeting and profiling customers</td>
<td>Difficulties in capturing the right customer data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better understanding/addressing of customer requirements</td>
<td>Failure to analyze data properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamlined business process</td>
<td>Treating CRM system as a single event and not as an ongoing process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5 The author’s compilation of benefits and risks with a CRM strategy
3. Method

In this section the choice of method is presented, and also explanations on how the study will be conducted and assessment of its validity and reliability. Methods for collecting and analyzing data are also discussed and critically evaluated.

3.1 Research Approach

The thesis will be based on a quantitative and a qualitative approach. In order to investigate how a Swedish football club relates to their supporters viewpoints, a brief quantitative study is conducted among the fans of AIK Fotboll AB with the help of a questionnaire which investigates their preferences and perceptions of the clubs current CRM strategies. Further questions are developed for the qualitative study from the findings from the quantitative study. The qualitative study was conducted by interviewing the head of the marketing and sales department of AIK Fotboll AB, to be able to scrutinize and evaluate earlier research on CRM with an emphasis on CRM implementation and utilization in football clubs. The qualitative approach also allows an analysis on how AIK Fotboll AB can develop their CRM strategy.

![Research Approach Model](image)

Figure 6 The authors research approach model
3.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the thesis is based upon prior research results collected from various sources such as books regarding CRM and football economics, studies on CRM in football clubs and marketing journals. These references were then used to construct the theoretical framework and develop the enhanced FRM implementation model which is the foundation of the thesis.

3.3 Empirical Data

In this thesis, empirical data is collected through a structured interview with AIK Fotboll AB’s head of sales and marketing; Johan Cederbrant and with one follow-up phone interview, in order to obtain information about the organization, market strategies and current state of AIK Fotboll AB’s CRM strategy. Empirical data is also collected from fans of AIK Fotboll through a questionnaire, investigating their personal preferences and their view on AIK Fotboll AB’s communication with the supporters and the clubs operations.

3.4 FRM vs. CRM

In order to be as clear as possible the terms CRM and FRM need to be clarified; even though the name of the research model is FRM implementation process, the theories are based on CRM. Therefore, the usage of the terms CRM strategy and CRM system still applies in the method, analysis and conclusions of the thesis and the term FRM is only used for the name of the research model, as the model was developed specifically for football clubs and takes into account the aspects of fan relationship rather than the usual commercial company term customer.

3.5 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is defined as collecting numerical data and using the data to explain phenomena and analyze using mathematically based methods, in particular statistics (Mujis 2004). In this thesis, quantitative research is conducted by creating a questionnaire and
samples a small population of AIK Fotboll AB’s fan base. This research is conducted in order to gather primary data regarding the fan view on AIK Fotboll AB’s current marketing strategies and fan relationship. This data is used to account for and strengthen the research question, given that a CRM initiative affects the supporters and cannot be thoroughly investigated through the qualitative research.

Advantages of quantitative research include that the data is easily understood and trustworthy as statistical presentation gives credibility to the researcher (Denscombe 2000). One disadvantage of quantitative research is the importance of well prepared questions as the data risks being useless if the questions do not correspond well with the research question (Denscombe 2000).

3.5.1 Questionnaire Approach

Mujis (2004) presents the following necessary steps when constructing a quantitative research; Defining the research objectives, formulating hypotheses or making a descriptive survey, define what information is needed, decide what the population is, decide how to sample from the population, design your research instruments, collecting the data and analyse the data. A descriptive survey is used in order to find the general view of the supporters on AIK Fotboll AB’s current marketing strategies and fan relationship. The thesis’s research model includes a characteristic involving understanding fan needs which includes fan consultation and communication, therefore it is necessary for the study to gather information on the current relationship between AIK Fotboll AB and their fans. From a broad perspective the population includes every person whom identifies him/herself as a fan of AIK Fotboll. The study is however conducted amongst parts of the population with a medium-to-high level of commitment to the club. By using the research model and theoretical framework as a base, a questionnaire was constructed on the survey website www.surveymonkey.com. The questionnaire was made available through the much visited and active forum on the AIK Fotboll section on Sweden’s largest non-official fan site
www.svenskafans.com, a website by supporters for supporters were the fans themselves write news articles, columns and produce web based television-programs with news and discussions regarding the clubs (www.svenskafans.com). The questionnaire was posted in the forum during three hours on two different dates. The reason the questionnaire was made available for such a short amount of time was that the number of respondents was very high, during these six hours total we received 190 responses, this was deemed more than a sufficient number of respondents and as the results showed a clear consensus between the two surveying occasions, more respondents would not have changed the results. The raw-data was then transferred to pie-charts to increase the understandability of the data and simplify the analysis (Denscombe 2000). On each question the option of commenting was available; the comments received will provide the reasoning to some of the answers and give a more detailed view on the supporters’ opinions.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

The questions asked in the questionnaire are intended to establish the level of commitment of the respondents to AIK Fotboll and their view on AIK Fotboll AB’s current and past operations based on the research model; FRM implementation process:

1 How much do you follow AIK Fotboll AB? This question is intended to establish the level of commitment the supporter has to the club which is helpful to understanding the level of behavioral loyalty

2 Are you a member of AIK? And a comment opportunity on the question; what do you perceive as benefits from being a member and what do you feel is missing? Intended to investigate if the supporters view membership as something important, and even more importantly what makes/would make them want to be members

3 Do you as a supporter feel appreciated by the club? This question will from a supporter perspective answer how the club treats their fans, which can be connected to Adamson et al (2006) regarding customer vs. fans view
4 Are you satisfied with the communication channels (phone/email) AIK Fotboll AB provides the supporters? Intends to investigate AIK Fotboll AB’s available communication channels towards the supporters, and what can be further developed.

5 Do you think AIK Fotboll AB is open to you as a supporter? This question investigate if AIK Fotboll communicate sufficiently with their supporters

6 How often do you visit www.aikfotboll.se? This question will show what interest AIK Fotboll AB’s internet homepage has generated, and if the site and its functions must be further developed

7 How often do you buy AIK merchandise? Intended to investigate the respondents’ commitment to merchandise purchases, and in effect how much AIK Fotboll AB’s marketing and sales departments are able to generate merchandise sales

8 Are you satisfied with the product range AIK merchandise offer? Intended to investigate if AIK Fotboll, or more specifically AIK merchandise AB are able to fulfil the supporters merchandise needs

9 Are you prepared to give away personal information about yourself (such as income, family status etc.) to AIK Fotboll AB so they can customize special offers to you? Investigates if the supporters are willing to share personal information with AIK Fotboll, which would allow the club to offer more customized products and if the respondents trust AIK Fotboll to handle personal information

10 How would you like to receive information on new products, special offers and discounts? This question will show through what communication channel the supporters prefer to receive information on new products, special offers and discounts
3.6 Qualitative Research

A qualitative research approach is research that involves analyzing and interpreting texts and interviews aimed at discovering meaningful patterns descriptive of a particular phenomenon (Auerbach and Silverstein 2003). When conducting qualitative research, the most commonly used tool is to interview a subject while at the same time maintaining an empathic demeanour, accepting the subjects’ frame of reference, whether it is in terms of feelings or in relevance (Thietart 2001).

Qualitative research will be conducted in this thesis through an interview with a key person within AIK Fotboll AB using the research model as a base for questions. The data will be analysed by using the theoretical framework as a reference base with the purpose of answering the research question.

One distinct advantage of using a qualitative research approach in this thesis is that it provides the investigators with flexibility in allowing the possibility to move back and forth adjusting the research design as the discovery of internal insights into AIK Fotboll AB’s CRM operations prompts adjustments (May 2002). A qualitative research approach also gives the advantage of detailed data gathered from AIK Fotboll AB as the research will be in-depth and arise from a social situation through interviewing (Denscombe 2000).

Possible disadvantages of a qualitative research in this thesis is that there is a higher risk of facts being taken out of context and the risk of simplification of the interpretation, as the data is retrieved from interviewing and discussions and not official records (Denscombe 2000).

3.6.1 Interview

According to Yin (1994), interviews are one of the most important sources of information and the most commonly used in case studies. The interviews can take many different forms, and the most common is of an open-ended nature. The interview method used in this thesis
is semi-structured, which means that the interviewers’ do not influence the respondents’ answers or give explanations about the questions asked, but at the same time allow open ended answers which permits the interviewers to ask follow up questions and minimize the risk of misunderstandings during the interview. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) states this kind of interviewing forces the authors to play a neutral role, and never interject their own opinions of the respondent’s answers and keep a casual but directive tone throughout the interview. The main interview was face to face and the questions asked were in accordance to the thesis theories, and this personal interview was recorded with an audio capturing mobile phone and the key points written down on notepads. The interview data recorded was accurately transcribed shortly after the interview.

3.6.2 Respondent

The respondent Johan Cederbrant was recommended by AIK Fotboll AB as the person with the most insight and competence in the organization regarding the subject of customer relationship. He was contacted via email and phone, and arrangements were made regarding the date and place of the interview and he was informed about the subject of the interview such as the current state of AIK Fotboll AB’s CRM strategy, marketing strategy and organization. He was also sent a short draft of the questions a few days before the meeting, in order for him to be prepared for the interview. The interview took place in a conference room at AIK Fotboll AB’s headquarters which is located at the home ground Råsunda national arena in Solna. The respondent answered each question in detail and had a lot of insight into the organization and processes of the club. The main interview took 45 minutes and was later followed up with a five minute phone interview to clarify certain issues.

3.6.3 Interview Questions

The following questions were asked based on the research model FRM implementation process and the questions derived from the quantitative study, which will be further elaborated in 4.2.1 Interview Questions Derived from the Supporter Survey.
These questions intended to investigate the *Strategic vision* AIK Fotboll AB has towards their supporters, and determine if the *leadership* is in the organization to implement a CRM strategy.

- *Do you have an internal customer relationship policy?*
- *How do you recognize your supporters from a business perspective?*
- *Do you have the organizational capabilities to plan and execute a long-term customer relationship project?*
- *Are you focusing on developing the relationship with the current fans/customer or is it more important or profitable to reach new fans/customers?*

These questions investigate the *Fan loyalty strategy* of the club, to examine how AIK Fotboll AB currently handles and perceives fan loyalty.

- *How do you identify/segment the most loyal fans?*
- *What do you do to reward the most loyal fans/customers?*
- *What does it mean to be a member of AIK?*
- *Do you have plans to start a membership solely for the football section?*

Investigates AIK Fotboll AB’s *Fan-centric approach*, how the club communicates with its supporters and the *integrated and holistic approach*, to determine if the organization is ready for a CRM strategy implementation.

- *What is the largest/most important channel in getting the supporters view on the clubs operations?*
- *Are there plans to develop additional information channels?*
- *Have you considered a centralized customer service unit?*
- *How do you perceive the cooperation between the different departments within AIK Fotboll is functioning?*
- *Is AIK Fotboll AB ready to go through the necessary organizational changes that a CRM strategy requires?*
- *What do you perceive as the difficulties with such an action?*

These questions are intended to investigate AIK Fotboll AB’s understanding of *Fan needs*, the current state of their *Database marketing* and their ability to determine the *Life-time value* of their supporters.
Are you prepared to ask the fans/supporters to share with you personal information such as marital status and income to increase the possibilities of more tailor-made offers? Are you prepared to handle such a database?

Do you presently have a customer database?

How do you collect this data and how reliable is the data?

Are you able to segment the fans/customers into different groups and how is the information handled?

Do you have the ability to forecast supporters’ future value?

These questions investigate if AIK Fotboll AB’s has the appropriate technology, including their views on technology based solutions and strategies.

Is it realistic for AIK Fotboll AB to implement a CRM system in terms of technology?

When you earlier investigated a CRM system, which criteria’s did you start from? Was it a tailored-made or a finished program?

Do you have ways to measure the effectiveness of a CRM system?

3.6.4 Analysis of the Qualitative Data

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggests a realist approach can be used when analyzing the respondent’s answers, which means the authors confirms the accuracy of the data provided by other empirical sources such as financial statements, press-releases and information on the homepage. Although some aspects can be verified in these sources, the majority of the answers cannot be verified, so the authors perceive the answers received by the respondent as an accurate description of the situation. The answers the respondent provides are analysed by comparing the respondents’ answers with the FRM implementation process model and CRM benefits and risks.

3.7 Validity

According to Grönmo (2006) validity is defined as the legality of the collected data in relation to the problem specifications the researchers is set to study. Yin (1994) explains that the researchers must make sure the selected measures are indeed the correct measures to meet the test of construct validity. However with the use of triangulation, “the potential problems with construct validity also can be addressed” (Yin 1994) in this thesis. The multiple sources
of evidence provide more measures of the same phenomenon, and with the documents read, surveys and interviewing conducted in this thesis, the authors believe they have selected the most appropriate measures.

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)

**Figure 7** Part of Convergence of Multiple Sources of Evidence (Yin 1994 pg 93)

As for external validity, the question is if the results of the study are applicable in other similar areas. Since the study is about CRM in Swedish football clubs, and specific to AIK Fotboll AB, careful considerations are needed when coming up with conclusions for football clubs in general. However, the authors believe that AIK Fotboll AB’s size and operations is comparable with many similar football clubs, and their possibilities and issues with a CRM strategies can be useful and linked to these football clubs.

Internal validity corresponds to whether the researchers can draw the conclusions from the factors investigated and indeed have considered all the possibilities and different factors. “Primary data is generally considered to be a superior source of internal validity, because the researcher will have established a system of data collection suited to the project and the empirical reality being studied” (Thietart 2001, pg 74). The measures selected in this thesis are subjective from the quantitative research approach, because the respondents cannot be thoroughly accounted for, since it is an anonymous questionnaire. However, the answers from the interview with AIK Fotboll AB and the documents studied may further strengthen the findings this thesis presents.
3.8 Reliability

“Reliability is defined as the degree of consensus between different collections of data, in the sense that you are able to reproduce results” (Grönmo 2006, pg 222). In order to increase the ability to reproduce the results, the study has been performed with a structured approach involving interview protocols and questionnaires, which is well connected to earlier studies. Although the interview was made with a specific person within the organization, his role is predefined. “As the goal of reliability is to minimize errors and biases in a study” (Yin 1994), every step is documented in this study, so a later investigator could do the same study again and they should arrive with the same findings and come to the same conclusion.

3.9 The Quality of the Thesis

The risk of subjectivity can be directed at the authors, as we both identify ourselves as supporters of AIK Fotboll, giving rise to the risk of being bias. This can however be disputed by the fact that the thesis focus is CRM strategy in Swedish football clubs, and AIK Fotboll AB is merely a test subject for investigating the research model i.e. the thesis objective is not written on the behalf of AIK Fotboll AB even though if they so choose, they may use our findings to further develop their CRM strategy.

On a more general level, the use of primary data always produces certain risks on the research as the researchers both gathers and analyze the data and de facto acts as both “defendant and jury” giving problems involving the interpretation of the data (Thietart 2001). The apparent risk is that the questions constructed may have been based on the authors own interpretations on the theoretical framework, as well as an overestimation of the general knowledge on the subject, that is; certain aspects of the subject may have become obvious to the authors while the interviewee may not have the same knowledge, leaving a gap between the theoretical framework and primary data.
When constructing the theoretical framework mainly books and articles were used, as they all have been subject to academic review before publication it increases the credibility of the thesis. Naturally, there is always a large pool of data not accounted for in the thesis; however, the authors are of the opinion that the theoretical framework sources used cover a broad spectrum of research and account for the main theories on the subject matter.

From a research perspective concerning the interviews with AIK Fotboll AB there is a risk that certain information may not be shared with the researchers, alternatively not be allowed to be published in the thesis, as AIK Fotboll AB is a corporation and certain aspects of their strategies are not to be shared with the public. Fortunately, the respondent did not leave any information out nor declined to answer any of the interview questions. The respondent had no issues with the transcription except for one faulty year reference which was immediately corrected.

Critique can be directed against the research method since the qualitative interview is only conducted with one respondent followed up with further questioning. This is outweighed by that fact that the respondent has a lot of responsibilities and insight in the club and acted as a representative for AIK Fotboll AB, and confirmed that the transcribed interview presented in this thesis is a correct reflection of AIK Fotboll AB’s view on the subject. Additionally the questionnaire adds a better understanding on how a CRM strategy can help a football club like AIK Fotboll AB, since the results of the study shows where the fans priorities lies.
4. Presentation of AIK and Empirical Findings

In this section the empirical findings from the studies are presented. A presentation of AIK is also available. The findings from the supporter survey are presented in the form of pie-charts, while the interview findings are presented in text under relevant headlines.

4.1 AIK

Allmänna Idrottsklubben (AIK) (roughly translated into English as “The public sports club”) was founded in Stockholm the year 1891, in 1896 the football section was founded and in 1900 the club became Swedish champions for the first time (www.aikfotboll.se). In 1999 the football section became the publicly held corporation AIK Fotboll AB (www.aik.se).

AIK huvudförening is the main association and handles the membership of the club and is controlled by the members, under AIK huvudförening there are several different sports sections, including: AIK Fotboll, AIK Ishockey (ice hockey), AIK Innebandy (floorball), AIK Bowling, AIK Bandy, AIK Handboll (handball) and AIK Golf (www.aik.se).

AIK Fotboll is divided into two main categories, AIK fotbollsförening (AIK football association) and AIK Fotboll AB. AIK fotbollsförening is the main stockholder of AIK Fotboll AB and contains the board and the board election committee as well as control over the youth sections of the club. AIK Fotboll AB is a subsidiary to AIK fotbollsförening; it contains its own board and board election committee and is in charge over the men’s team, women’s team and the men’s U-21 team on behalf of AIK fotbollsförening. AIK Fotboll AB has a subsidiary in charge of merchandise sale; AIK merchandise AB.

Since 1937 the club plays their home games at the Swedish national stadium Råsunda football stadium with a capacity of 36 800 (www.aikfotboll.se). AIK Fotboll AB is one of the most successful football clubs in Sweden, with ten Swedish champion titles and seven Swedish cup titles (www.svenskfotboll.se). Historically and in modern times AIK Fotboll is one of the largest clubs in Sweden in regard to both attendance figures and revenue, in fact
during the last three season AIK Fotboll has been the largest team in terms of average home attendance: 2006: 21 434, 2007: 20 465 and in 2008: 15 535 (www.svenskfotboll.se). In revenue terms the club was fourth in the league in 2006 with 91, 7 million SEK, first in 2007 with 125, 6 million SEK and third in 2008 with 103, 4 million SEK (www.svenskfotboll.se). AIK Fotboll AB’s current fan communication channel consists of a recently started homepage for the football department aikfotboll.se which opened in 2008, unfortunately there were a lot of problems with the launching and financial issues, so this project was shut down and in 2009 the website was re-launched under the same address but with a new software provider and new management (www.aikfotboll.se). Previously the club shared a homepage with all other sections of AIK (www.aik.se). The merchandise sales are made through the homepage aikshop.se and the store AIK shop which lies in proximity to Råsunda football stadium (www.aikfotboll.se). Merchandise is also sold via the derby shop, which is a store in central Stockholm and is run in collaboration with the two Stockholm rivals Djurgården IF and Hammarby IF (www.aik.se).
4.2 Supporter Survey

The following pages consist of the collected supporter opinions from the questionnaire posted on www.svenskafans.com and it is thereby a representation of AIK’s fans opinions. There were a total of 190 respondents and the result is presented in pie-charts for an easy overview. The multiple choice questions are not visually presented as they are functioning as support to the questionnaire in terms of level go commitment to the club and personal communication preferences.

How much do you follow AIK Fotboll AB?

This was asked to determine if the respondents were low- medium- or high level supporters. 80% of the respondents answered that they went to every home game or all games AIK Fotboll plays. 20% of the respondents went to a few games a year. This shows that a large majority of the respondents has a high-level commitment to AIK Fotboll.

Club membership

![Pie chart showing 60% Yes and 40% No for Are you a member of AIK?]

Figure 8 Are you a member of AIK?

60% of the respondents are members of AIK huvudförening (main association). The majority of the respondents who are members states that they pay for a membership for supporting and belonging to the club they love, have the ability to make their voices heard at club meetings and receive more information about the club. However, there were also many respondents, whom do not see any tangible benefits with the membership and these
respondents would like to have more offers directed to members and something unique for their membership.

Supporter appreciation

![Supporter appreciation chart]

**Figure 9** Do you as a supporter feel appreciated by the club?

Over 61% of the respondents feel appreciated by AIK Fotboll AB, and the 35% who responded there is room for improvement thinks AIK Fotboll AB is failing to premier its loyal members and yearly ticket holders, and feel that the club should be more open to its supporters.

Communication channels

![Communication channels chart]

**Figure 10** Are you satisfied with the communication channels (phone/email) AIK Fotboll AB provides the supporters?

Over 62% of the respondents are satisfied with the current communication channels, and positive comments were that it’s easy to find the corresponding contacts, and they get reasonable fast answers to their questions. However, the people responsible for tickets were subject to some criticism, but the respondents didn’t give any reasons for this issue.
**Perceived openness to the supporters**

![Pie chart showing 78% yes, 22% no]

**Figure 11** Do you think AIK Fotboll AB is open to you as a supporter?

78% of the respondents think AIK Fotboll AB is open to the supporters, and a clear majority of the comments were positive on how much better AIK Fotboll AB have become in sharing information with them. Many of the respondents also understand that because AIK Fotboll AB is a corporation, they aren’t allowed to be completely transparent to its supporters.

**Popularity of homepage**

![Pie chart showing 60% 5 or more times a week, 33% 1-4 times a week, 5% once a month, 2% never visited]

**Figure 12** How often do you visit www.aikfotboll.se?

33% of the respondents visit AIK Fotboll AB’s homepage at least 1 time a week, and almost 60% visit the homepage more than 5 times a week. Due to the problems the earlier version of the site, a lot of comments were directed to its functionality and design. There were also a significant number of respondents who disliked the fact that AIK Fotboll AB decided to leave www.aike.se and create their own site.
Merchandise purchases

Figure 13 How often do you buy AIK merchandise?

80% of the respondents buy AIK merchandise on occasion, and in principal they often make their purchase when they visit the AIK Shop at Råsunda on Match day, since some of the respondents complained that the full product range from the AIK shop is not available at the e-store www.aikshop.se.

Merchandise product range

Figure 14 Are you satisfied with the product range AIK merchandise offer?

Almost 59% of the respondents are happy with the current selection of AIK merchandise, the 41% who are not, complains about the lack of discrete and in-style merchandise and a broader range of products to children.
Supporters’ willingness to share personal information with AIK Fotboll

Figure 15 Are you prepared to give away personal information about yourself (such as income, family status etc.) to AIK Fotboll AB so they can customize special offers to you?

Over 61% answered that they are willing to give away personal information about themselves in order to receive special offers directed to them. The 39% who didn’t wish to share their personal information had reasons such as personal integrity, they see no meaning for them to provide AIK Fotboll AB with their personal information and also some of the comments were that they didn’t trust AIK Fotboll AB with their information.

How would you like to receive information on new products, special offers and discounts?

This was a multiple choice question meaning the total percentage is higher than 100%. A clear majority 80% choose to receive new products, special offers and discounts through the AIK Fotboll AB homepage, the second most popular choice was to receive offers through email which accounted for 30%. Only a small number of the respondents would like to receive offers through instant text-message and newsletters 10% and 14% respectively, and some respondents chose other channels, such as recommendations through websites and friends which accounted for 16% of the respondents. These results shows that the majority of the respondents prefers to find the information themselves on the homepage, and several of the respondents want information on new products, special offers and discounts through multiple channels, both directly from AIK Fotboll through e-mails, text-messages etc, and the homepage.
4.2.1 Interview Questions Derived from the Supporter Survey

The results from the quantitative survey gave the authors a general consensus of the supporter’s opinion concerning the relationship, membership and communication with AIK Fotboll AB. Some of the results were used in the qualitative interview, giving the authors a more stable foundation for the questions. As the majority of the supporters think that AIK Fotboll AB fails to premier its loyal members and ticket holders, and that they want more benefits, the three following questions for the interview were derived to further add information on the clubs Fan loyalty strategy:

- What do you do to reward the most loyal fans/customers?
- Do you have plans to start a membership solely for the football section?
- What does it mean to be a member of AIK?

Further on, as the result of the quantitative study showed that the majority of the fans did not see any obstacles of giving away any personal information to AIK Fotboll AB, as long as they know why and how the information will be handled, the following two questions were developed to see if AIK Fotboll are ready to adopt to their Fans needs and utilize Database marketing:

- Are you prepared to ask the fans/supporters to share with you personal information such as marital status and income to increase the possibilities of more tailor-made offers?
- Are you prepared to handle such a database?

Although the results showed that the supporters of AIK Fotboll AB were overall content with the current communication channels, the final question for the interview were derived from the supporter survey to see if AIK Fotboll AB intends to further develop the channels, to expand their Fan centric approach.

- Are there plans to develop additional information channels?
4.3 Interview

The respondent in the face-to-face interview was Johan Cederbrant; he is the person in charge of sales and marketing within AIK Fotboll AB, he also has responsibilities within the youth section of AIK fotbollsförening. The following chapters consist of the answers received from the face-to-face interview and the follow-up phone interview with Johan Cederbrant.

4.3.1 AIK Fotboll AB's Fan Relationship

AIK-stilen (The AIK style) is an initiative from AIK that describes “a way to be” for players, leaders and youths within AIK Fotboll’s organization. The three keywords for the initiative are; attitude, responsibility and respect. Included in this initiative is an education program directed at current and future supporters in schools. There is also a supporter contact person: Jimmy Wallingstam, whom works with strengthening and developing the cooperation between supporter organizations as well as the individual supporter and AIK. AIK Fotboll AB perceives that they have a good supporter relationship and considers it important, but are aware that it cannot always be perfect.

There is no official policy on what a supporter should be, as all are welcome to AIK. Since the target group is between the ages of 0 up to 90 years old, or as long as a person is capable there is no defined primary target group. A new campaign was recently started, announcing the supporters as “player number 1 in the club”, this is a way to show appreciation towards the supporters and demonstrate that they are a very important part of the club.

When asked whether the club focuses on developing current supporters’ relationship or acquiring new supporters, Johan Cederbrant considers it to be a combination of the both. It is important to nurture the relationship with current fans, but at the same time the club cannot be completely satisfied until the stands are full of supporters during every game. However, if the club officially announces a targeting of a specific group, the effect will be that other categories of supporters feel unappreciated and overlooked, which is not the intent as the club wants an increase of all categories of supporters. There have been
occasions when bad wording have given perceptions of such operations. The prime example was in September 2008 when the club agreed to play a game against long time rival IFK Göteborg at 12.30 in the afternoon one Saturday (matches usually starts at 16.00 on Saturdays). When asked why the club agreed to this, the CEO at the time and the person in charge of events both said that the early starting time could attract new types of fans and in particular children families. This aggravated the more standard types of fans whom on forums like www.svenskafans.com and other channels voiced their frustration. Johan Cederbrant explained that it is important to be careful how representatives of AIK Fotboll express themselves in official statements and the news media as the goal is to increase the number of all types of fans and not to replace one existing fan with another.

The way the supporters are generally categorized within the stadium today, is that the most committed supporters are on the northern stands and the club has a good communication with these fans through the different supporter groups. The southern stands consist mostly of families, and the western and eastern stands consist of a large mix of supporters from low-levels to high-levels of committed supporters whom the club has a decent contact/relationship with.

There are approximately 83% men and 17% women on average in the stadium today, and the club does not want to change this to 50/50 on the expense of anyone, but instead increasing the number of women in attendance.

Fan relationship in general has changed a lot over the years and has moved from, what I as a supporter can do for the club to what can the club do for me; naturally there still exist supporters whom will do “anything” for the club. This has added pressure for more entertaining football, better facilities and better supporter treatment.

Concerning whether the club segments different supporters for easier communication and targeting, Johan Cederbrant answered yes and no. There is a lot of self-identification from the supporters on for example the northern stands where the members of AIK-alliansen (an
alliance between the four largest supporter groups) are in attendance and these supporters are ideologically strong. There is also a clear natural circle for supporters in the stands: Young supporters are on the northern stands, and as they get older they move to the eastern or western stands, when they have children they move to the southern family stands, and as these children get older they move to the northern stands, and so on in a full continuous circle.

The club has conducted traditional surveys to categorize clusters of fans; Johan Cederbrant explained that these surveys are conducted every year with a random large group of people in the Stockholm area with no predetermined set of club allegiance, age, gender or social status. The respondents whom identify themselves as AIK Fotboll supporters are further surveyed; this data is then used within the organization as a generalization of the fans.

4.3.2 Club Membership

On the issue of club membership Johan Cederbrant explained that club membership is the AIK huvudförening (main association) responsibility, AIK Fotboll does not take part in the process and do not receive direct revenue from the earnings. There is an option of choosing what section of the club the member supports the most when signing up for membership, but this has no direct connection to the membership, instead it is more of an learning purpose to investigate which section draws the most members. There has been no discussion within AIK Fotboll to start their own membership solely for football supporters. Even though Johan Cederbrant has no direct involvement in the membership area, he is of the opinion that there is room for improvement, in giving more benefits back to the members. One aspect of membership is that in general, membership in different associations all over society has diminished in power and numbers, and it is important to continuously develop the rewards and structure of the membership organization.

AIK Fotboll does have an offer for supporters to sign up for a “AIK MasterCard” which is a credit-card with the AIK crest on it, this card gives certain benefits such as the option to
amortize a season ticket purchase interest free, and discount bonuses with purchases on the card.

4.3.3 Supporters Views of the Club

Regarding the topic of getting the supporters view on the club, Johan Cederbrant said that the largest forum for receiving the supporters view is the communication with AIK-alliansen. It is however equally important to get the view of other supporters, the club is able to get the opinion of supporters in different sections through for example stewards in the stands. Another interesting aspect is that the football industry as a whole generates a lot of interest and people involved in the club always receives a lot of feedback by people “on the streets” and in the surroundings. There are naturally a lot of experts in the stands that may even work within certain relevant fields of business whom give their opinion on a certain operation of the club.

4.3.4 Consolidated Customer Service System and Information Channels

When asked about the possibility of consolidating the customer service system, Johan Cederbrant said he really liked the idea, and that he believes the reason AIK Fotboll do not have such a system is because of short-term financial savings reasons. With unlimited funds the club would probably already have such a system. On the other hand, the homepage (www.aikfotboll.se) is an important supporter service unit as a source for questions and answers. Specific questions can always be asked to AIK Fotboll directly via phone. The homepage consist of AIK Fotboll AB’s own opinions and together with newsletters and to a certain degree the match program, functions as the most important message- and sales channels.

4.3.5 Customer Database

On the issue of databases on customers Johan Cederbrant said that AIK Fotboll has several databases which he describes as “Several islands”, including; Season tickets purchasers,
commercial partners, members, event customers and merchandise customers and all these databases are separated from each other. There is a wish to consolidate these databases and the club has looked for solutions that would enable them to access all the information when in contact with a supporter, so they know who they are talking to and how to approach the person with the right information.

On the subject of CRM there are several different answers on how one should solve the technological aspect, everything from web solution with one firm to a billion Swedish Krona project. At a certain point an organization must draw the line and ask oneself what their demand specification looks like: What do we want? What is the value? What do we want the database for?

There have been plans for a CRM system recently, however it is not only about gathering customer data in one place, it is also about how to communicate with the supporters from that tool, if one want to send a message only to the people with season tickets it should be only two clicks away. “We are not there yet, but within these walls are the thought processes and a wish to do it”, with a CRM system it is possible to combine different databases, which AIK Fotboll cannot do at the moment, and instead it is the person who sits behind the databases who has the information.

When asked if AIK Fotboll is willing to ask the supporters for private information in order to easier customize offers to them, Johan Cederbrant said that the club is definitely willing to do so, the problem however, is how to handle the information, if you launch a service the club must have the resources to handle it, if you do not have the resources you might as well not launch it.

Johan Cederbrant said that a while he had no opinion if a CRM system could help them with the collection of data, such a function could definitely be useful in order to compile and access supporter data and generalizations when dealing with different collaboration partners, for example sponsors.
4.3.6 Earlier CRM Endeavors

On the topic of earlier CRM plans AIK Fotboll has looked at, Johan Cederbrant spoke about a Norwegian system developed from a union lead system into a web platform and CRM system, in the year 2006 AIK Fotboll investigated the possibilities of using this system, but came to the conclusion that the financial investment it would take to purchase it did not make it worth to acquire, even though it had good functions. The club wanted a system that also had ties to the internal financial system, which this system had, however this also increased the risk as a collapse of the internal financial system, which would cause huge damage to club. In the end, the club was not ready at that moment, and if one is not ready one should not do it.

4.3.7 Organizational Structure

Johan Cederbrant perceives the cooperation between the different departments of AIK Fotboll is excellent. Concerning how earlier organizational changes within the club have transpired, Johan Cederbrant said that the club have gone through several organizational changes over the last years, including a complete overhaul of the whole organizational structure and that even though it took a lot of hard work, the changes increased the internal knowledge of the organization and the clubs operations. On the issue of the organizations capabilities of a long-term CRM commitment, Johan Cederbrant said that that AIK Fotboll lacks the financial resources to do it, but the desire and willingness exists within the organization and that the return must be investigated. When considering a long-term project, the ROI must be considered as it could take a long time before such a project breaks-even financially. It is easy to forget that even though AIK Fotboll is one of the largest football clubs in Sweden, the financial resources is probably equal or even less than at a local retail store. If a commercial partner wants to provide a free CRM system, then the club would absolutely be willing to commit to a project.
The next step for the organization is consolidating the databases. As for other future operations, the club is for example examining the companies that purchases season-tickets from the club, but other than that does not have any exchange with AIK Fotboll. If the club were to start building a relationship with them and offer high-quality packages, even a small increase in purchases from these companies would increase the revenues considerably.

4.3.8 Respondent’s Final Thoughts on CRM

Johan Cederbrant’s believes that one should not overwork a CRM system, but rather decide what parts a company wants to use. There is no point for AIK Fotboll to buy a tailor-made system when the club “only” turnover 100-150 million SEK per year. Large multinational companies have the budget and resources to have a system tailor-made. The club does not want to get caught in “the consultant trap” with special solutions were they are in control of the system and its operations and leave the club outside the loop.

Johan Cederbrant’s final thought on the subject of a CRM strategy for AIK Fotboll was that when the “old web project” was cancelled, so was the “new CRM system”. In the future he would like to see a separate project for a CRM strategy implementation and that the club finds a finished solution system, which may not provide exactly everything what is wanted but still is the best option.
5 Analysis

In this section the empirical findings from the studies are analyzed. The fan characteristics and the specific implications for AIK Fotboll AB with a CRM strategy are analyzed in the perspective of the FRM implementation process and the supporter survey. Additionally, an analysis is made by investigating the benefits, risks and obstacles Swedish football clubs may encounter with a CRM strategy, based on the theoretical framework and the interview findings.

5.1 Fan Characteristics

The supporter survey showed that medium- to high level committed supporters of AIK Fotboll in general are satisfied with the relationship they have with the club, but a significant number of respondents believes there is room for improvement in areas such as appreciation, communication channels, openness and merchandise product range. This corresponds with the interview as AIK Fotboll AB perceives that they have a good relationship with their supporters, but that there naturally are areas which can be further developed. One interesting characteristic of the fans of AIK Fotboll is that a majority of the survey respondents are willing to share personal information with AIK Fotboll in order to receive more customized offers, the study also showed that the specific channels the fans’ prefer is to receive offers from is the clubs homepage and via direct e-mail.

5.2 FRM implementation process in AIK Fotboll AB

The following step by step analysis will determine AIK Fotboll AB’s current fan relationship marketing operations and their prospects for a CRM strategy, derived from the supporter study and the interviews with AIK Fotboll AB.
5.2.1 Strategic Vision and Leadership

- Prepare to carry out the three elements, retention, customer potential development and de-selection of customers

AIK Fotboll AB has no de-selection of current or potential supporters, as everyone is welcome to be a part of the club. AIK Fotboll AB does not want to replace one type of supporter for another, but instead increase the total number of supporters in all categories. AIK Fotboll AB cannot openly announce targeting of a specific group as this will make other categories of supporters feel unappreciated and overlooked, which has happened in the past. There are however plans to develop certain customer potential, as AIK Fotboll AB intends to start building relationships with companies who purchase season tickets from the club but has no other exchange with AIK Fotboll AB, in order to be better capable to customize and offer them high-quality packages much like PSG did when they extended the depth and breadth of business-to-business relationships (Thompson 2004).

- Ensure that the key personnel/leaders are prepared to make a long term commitment on the strategy

There is a desire and willingness in AIK Fotboll to make a long term CRM commitment, but due to financial reasons and difficulty in projecting return on the investment, it is not currently feasible for them to pursue such a project. If the club and management are not prepared to make a long term commitment there is no gain in doing it, as a lack of commitment is likely to lower personnel moral and belief in the management (Bligh and Turk 2004). What AIK Fotboll AB needs to do if they decide to pursue a CRM strategy implementation is to ensure that the entire organization is knowledgeable concerning CRM and that when a CRM project is started they set up clear objective settings and see it through all the way, both during the implementation process and keep focus to ensure successful post-implementation operations (Bligh and Turk 2004).
• **Make sure the club is prepared and capable to treat the supporters as customers but recognize them as fans**

AIK Fotboll does not have an official customer relationship policy, nor do they want to label their supporters as customers. They do however recognize that there are different levels of supporters within AIK Fotboll, all who needs different levels of attention. AIK Fotboll AB perceives that they have a good supporter relationship and considers it important, but are at the same time aware that the relationship cannot always be perfect. Since AIK Fotboll AB is aware of that certain supporter clusters have more loyalty than commercial customers (Adamson et al 2006), it is important for the club to continuously make the supporters feel understood and appreciated in order to avoid frustration and a disbelief in the clubs operations.

### 5.2.2 Fan Loyalty Strategy

• **Define a strategy on how to identify the different segments of supporters and how to categorize them**

AIK Fotboll AB does not really have a clear strategy to segment and identify different supporters other than membership, season ticket holders and online merchandise customers. There is however a lot of self-identification from the supporters on for example the northern stands where the members of AIK-alliansen (an alliance between the four largest supporter groups) are in attendance and these supporters are ideologically strong. There is also a clear natural circle for supporters in the stands: Young supporters are on the northern stands, and as they get older they move to the eastern or western stands, when they have children they move to the southern family stands, and as these children get older they move to the northern stands, and so on in a full continuous circle. AIK Fotboll AB occasionally conduct traditional surveys with a large group of random people and those who are identified as AIK Fotboll supporters are further surveyed, and those findings are then used as generalizations of the fans. Ensuring a functional system is in place to capture the
right supporter data would make it easier for the club to understand the needs, size and validity of different supporters segments (Tapp 2004), this data could also be useful when dealing with different collaboration partners, for example sponsors.

- **Prepare to recognize and reward fans, by creating a feasible and effective loyalty system**

Since AIK Fotboll AB does not have an exclusive membership, they do not receive direct revenue from members of AIK Huvudförening (main association). They do believe however, that there is room for development in order to give more benefits to members, and they are aware of the fact that even though there are still supporters who will do anything for the club, the paradigm has shifted more to what the club can do for its supporters.

AIK Fotboll AB offer its supporters to sign up for a “AIK MasterCard” which is a credit-card with the AIK crest on it, this card gives certain benefits such as the option to amortize a season ticket purchase interest free, and small discount bonuses with purchases of merchandise with the card. However, AIK Fotboll AB sees this mostly as just a bonus card, for the supporter who wants a card with the AIK crest on it.

In the survey, there were many respondents whom do not see any tangible benefits with the membership and these respondents would like to have more offers directed to members and unique offers for their membership and they think AIK Fotboll AB is failing to premier its loyal members and season ticket holders. AIK Fotboll AB could create a more large-scale and clear loyalty system for the fans, similar to PSG’s Espirit card (Thompson 2004), which in turn could increase the customer satisfaction, retention rates and direct marketing options, as long as the fans’ needs is the main objective.
5.2.3 Fan-Centric Approach, Integrated and Holistic

- **Ensure a system is in place to continuously receive feedback on all customer related operations**

AIK Fotboll receives supporter views from the stands, supporter relationships and e-mails, also supporters are often very vocal about their opinions. However, since AIK Fotboll AB lack a CRM system, the technical aspect of collecting and systemize all this data received from the supporters cannot be fully utilized. Although AIK Fotboll AB sees the homepage as the most important communication tool to its supporters, the communication is only one way and AIK Fotboll AB could benefit more if the homepage allowed feedback from the supporters.

- **Consolidate or simplify customer service systems**

The majority of the respondents in the survey were pleased with AIK Fotboll’s current customer service. They state it is easy to find the corresponding contacts, and they get reasonable fast answers to their questions. However, AIK Fotboll AB believes that a consolidated customer service system would be very beneficial, and increase the customer service quality, unfortunately due to financial reason they do not have such a system in place. AIK Fotboll does have other channels, such as the homepage www.aikfotboll.se which is an important source of communication along with newsletters and to a certain degree the match programs. The completion of a consolidated customer service system similar to PSG’s call center (Thompson 2004) would definitely improve the service quality, and a lot of the benefits a CRM strategy provides are utilized at call centers/consolidated service systems. It would therefore be optimal to ensure such a system is developed if a CRM strategy is to be implemented Tourniaire (2003).

- **Ensure all the departments are willing to work together as a unit when implementing the strategy and make sure the management is prepared to adopt new strategies and encourage a new way of thinking throughout the organization**
AIK Fotboll AB’s different departments have excellent cooperation and understanding of each other and have undergone large scale organizational changes in the past. However, if AIK Fotboll AB different departments does not fully commit to the CRM project, the continuous internal analysis of its operations and the post implementation process will suffer (Bligh and Turk 2004). Therefore it is essential the management is prepared to adopt new strategies and encourage the employees to the new way of thinking. In AIK Fotboll AB, the CRM thinking is already in the management and organization, what lacks is the financial resources and technology to fully implement it. Naturally, a realistic plan for implementation and follow-up must be developed in order for a CRM strategy to be successful.

5.2.4 Understanding Fan Needs, Database Marketing, Lifetime Value

- Make sure that the fans are informed regarding the planned changes and that they accept the new strategy

Communication with the fans about the clubs large scale projects has come under criticism, the supporter survey shows that there was a lack of communication, as a significant number of respondents disliked that AIK Fotboll AB decided to leave www.aik.se and create their own site, and not informing their supporters the reasons for it. However, most supporters do believe AIK Fotboll has become more open to them recently, and are aware of AIK Fotboll AB being a corporation and therefore unable to share all its information with the supporters. It is important that AIK Fotboll AB, if they decide to pursue a CRM strategy, is open to their supporters and explain what changes they plan to make and why they chose to do so, as a lack of information are likely to lead to grievances amongst the supporter if they do not fully understand the new approach (Adamson et al 2006).

- Define how the club will communicate with fans, ensuring a continuous dialog

The communication with the fans is essential as the supporters are a very important part of a football club (Adamson et al 2006; IBM 2008) and a clear definition on what channels will
be used to communicate with them is needed. AIK Fotboll AB considers the homepage www.aikfotboll.se to be the most valuable tool in order to communicate with its fans, along with the relationship with AIK–alliansen ensuring a continuous dialog. However, as stated earlier it could be more beneficial for AIK Fotboll AB to develop the homepage so that the supporters can also give their opinion directly to AIK Fotboll AB on the different news and published material, so AIK Fotboll AB get a continuous dialog with all its fans.

- Make sure there is a system in place to crosscheck the customer data between different departments

AIK Fotboll AB presently do not have such a system, instead all departments data is only available in the corresponding department, making it hard to crosscheck the data. The reason AIK Fotboll AB does not have such a system is mainly because of financial reasons, but they consider the next step for the organization is to consolidate the databases in order to access all customer information when in contact with a supporter. Such a system was one of the most important aspects of PSG’s phone integration system (Thompson 2004) and a similar system could definitely be useful to AIK Fotboll AB.

- Create a system on how the different segments of supporters will be targeted and communicated with, and how the systems success will be measured

AIK Fotboll AB realises that it is not only about gathering customer data, it is also an issue on how to communicate with supporters from that tool. AIK Fotboll is willing to ask supporters for personal information and the majority of supporters are willing to provide it as long as AIK Fotboll is open with its purpose, but AIK Fotboll AB presently feels that they lack the system to handle such information and are unclear about the return of the investment with such a system. If AIK Fotboll AB decides to implement a CRM strategy, these issues needs to be addressed, the most feasible solution is to ensure the CRM system includes functions such as e-mail integration and a database with comprehensive records of customer data, which would allow the club to automatically send out club news and product offers to those
customers that are likely to be interested (Tourniaire 2003). The success of the system could be measured with an analysis of the revenues and costs of the specific functions (Tourniaire 2003).

- **Ensure technology is in place to forecast a customer’s future value for the club**

AIK Fotboll AB must consider what parts of a CRM system they want to use, and if it is possible to ensure a system with a forecasting function, and as long as the information is reliable, easily accessible and cost effective, it might be possible to predict customers’ future value. The ability to forecast customer’s future value is attributed to being able to receive better business intelligence (Tourniaire 2003), made possible through certain CRM tools functions that allows massive amounts of customer data to be stored and can be in-depth analyzed in regards to habits, preferences and finances of the costumers, such a system would allow AIK Fotboll AB to adapt products, marketing strategies and customer service after the supporters’ needs. If it is financially feasible for AIK Fotboll AB to obtain a CRM system with these functions, it could definitely be beneficial for the club.

### 5.2.5 Appropriate Technology

- **Consider different CRM systems, and choose the best software that best fits the clubs strategy**

AIK Fotboll AB does not have the financial resources to buy a tailor made system considering they are a relatively small corporation, and does not want to risk paying high consultant costs and be left outside the development and daily operations, which leaves renting a system from an ASP (Tourniaire 2003) out of the question. The club wants to find a finished solution system (Suite solution), which may not provide everything that is needed, but still provide the best solution from an organizational and financial standpoint. However, as larger football clubs have implemented CRM systems there are finished Vertical solutions specifically designed for football clubs available, and AIK Fotboll AB can both make a
financial sound investment and an easier implementation process if they collaborate with a club who already has a CRM strategy in place.

- Provide control functions to ensure that the strategy is customer-led rather than technology-led

AIK Fotboll AB needs to know how to handle the information, and not just focus on how to collect information, and they are aware of risk with just looking at the technical aspects of CRM. There is a wish to begin a project solely focusing on CRM system implementation and organizational change and education. There is always a risk that a CRM strategy falls into the “technology trap” (Bligh and Turk 2004), the company treats the CRM functions as the solution and fails to handle the organizational and cultural aspects of a CRM strategy. In order to prevent this, AIK Fotboll AB would need to ensure that the project team is aware of these risks and continuously make certain that procedures are made which best suites the customers, and that the organization as a whole has a common interest in the supporters and standardized service practices. It is also important to focus on customer satisfaction rather than focus on products (Thompson 2004).

5.3 Benefits, Risks and Obstacles with a CRM Strategy in Swedish Football Clubs

Two benefits of a successful CRM strategy are improved customer satisfaction and closer contact management. When PSG implemented their CRM strategy one of the first operations they did was to introduce standard customer service processes and functionality in its call center (Thompson 2004). AIK Fotboll AB does not have a call center or a consolidated customer service center; they do however believe such a center would be beneficial for the club. In the supporter survey, a large majority of the respondents whom have been in contact with AIK Fotboll were satisfied with the current available communication channels. Considering the results in the supporter survey and the financial implications a call center implementation would give rise to, it may not be vital for Swedish football clubs to consolidate their customer service centers. With that said, if a CRM strategy
is to be fully implemented and the benefits maximized in a Swedish football club a call center would be very beneficial as phone integration and computer-telephone integration software makes it possible to get pop-up’s with customer information on the computer screen when a call is received, increasing the service quality and effectiveness (Tourniaire 2003). This technological availability would help employees in Swedish football clubs communicate with customers and increase employee productivity and satisfaction as the availability of good tools helps employees, especially those who want to deliver better value to customers and as satisfied employees are more likely to remain at the company it reduces costly personnel turnover (Tourniaire 2003; Chen and Chen 2004). One requirement for a call center to be as effective as possible is to consolidate the databases, this would allow Swedish football clubs to not only improve the customer satisfaction an enable closer contact management, but also increase the depth and effectiveness of customer segmentation. A CRM strategy can also help Swedish football clubs to have better and closer communication with the fans so the clubs can better understand and address their supporters’ requirements. AIK Fotboll considers the homepage www.aikfotboll.se to be one of the most valuable tools in order to communicate with its fans. With a CRM function that allows the storing and analysis of this kind of supporter data and input, a Swedish football club could handle a larger amount of data and use it to capability for acute targeting and profiling of customers which in turn can lead to higher customer retention rates. These operations should increase the revenue and profitability as the clubs are more capable to customize and offer high-quality packages to company customers who purchase season tickets similar to what PSG (Thompson 2004) did in their third step when they implemented a CRM strategy, the clubs will also be able to target loyal supporters with merchandise kits and less attractive tickets (Thompson 2004). By implementing a CRM strategy, Swedish football clubs can increase their customer’s satisfaction by creating a more large-scale and clear loyalty system, similar to PSG’s loyalty card (Thompson 2004) for the fans. This could increase the customer satisfaction, retention rates and direct marketing options, as long as the fans’ needs are the main objective. In the survey, the major complaint was that AIK
Fotboll fails to premier it’s members and season ticket holders. The respondents wanted more tangible benefits with a membership and to be able to address this problem football clubs may need to shift their organizational focus towards customer satisfaction instead of merchandise and tickets sales (Thompson 2004).

Naturally there are risks with implementing and maintaining a CRM strategy in Swedish football clubs, the main risk is that financial performance may suffer due to miscalculated costs of CRM project which can be largely attributed to the fact that a CRM strategies and systems in general are costly and the more customized functions a system has the higher the price is, and since Swedish football clubs generally are not financially strong an unsuccessful CRM implementation can be devastating for a company’s finances (Bligh and Turk 2004). A CRM strategy may also lead to customer frustration/confusion if the club does not explain and inform the fans about the planned changes and new strategies (Adamson et al 2006). The clubs also needs to be careful how representatives express themselves in official statements and the news media as there is a risk that new strategies can inadvertently give perceptions of a willingness to substitute current fans with more potentially lucrative fans.

Further on, if for example a call center were to be started and the implementation process does not run smoothly a Swedish football club may encounter the same difficulties that company’s encounter such as lack of training for people using CRM systems (Ernest-Jones 2004) and therefore a lowered customer service quality (Bligh and Turk 2004). There are also other general risks with CRM strategies that also holds true for Swedish Football clubs, such as; Failure to integrate software and back-office systems properly, which can result in information silos as when companies integrate their systems, too much focus can be laid on the front end systems, design and usability issues, and since clubs usually already has a system in place, the transition into a integrated system can be difficult as a lot of information risks being spread over different departments with a lack of linage between them (Gay et al 2007). There is also a risk of difficulties in capturing the right customer data (Ernest-Jones 2004) as it is one thing to gather information, and whole other thing to handle the
information, if a club does not have the resources to handle certain data there is no point in gathering the data in the first place. Another risk Swedish football clubs must be aware of is budget overruns and high post-implementation running costs similar to commercial companies (Bligh and Turk 2004), especially if a club decides that a tailor-made CRM system is the best option, as this increases the risk of getting caught in the “consultant trap” as the club risks being left out of the loop regarding the system and be forced to pay expensive consultant fees in order to keep the system running.

The largest obstacle for Swedish football clubs to implement a CRM strategy seems to be the financial issue, because even though some of the football clubs have tens of thousands of fans, their turnover and profits are relatively small. In order to stay competitive in the league and offer an attractive product (Furuholt and Skutle 2007) it may seem more logical for the clubs to aim at buying players for the money they have, instead of spending it on a high cost CRM strategy. However if clubs were to implement a CRM strategy it could help the clubs’ finances in the long-run. If they choose to invest in a CRM system, the next obstacle is to choose the right CRM system. The clubs may want to stay away from specialized solutions such as tailor-made systems, as the cost of these systems can be larger than the return of investment. The ideal solution for Swedish football clubs would be vertical systems, which has been used in larger football clubs, but the clubs must then again calculate if it is feasible to implement such a system in terms of the functionality against price. The most reasonable answer for Swedish football clubs seems to be a general finished solution, which may not be exactly what the club needs but are the most financial sound decision.
6 Conclusions

In this section the analysis of the empirical findings is discussed and reviewed. General thoughts concerning CRM strategy in Swedish football clubs and AIK Fotboll is presented along with discussions and conclusions concerning the research questions.

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the practice of using a CRM strategy in football clubs by reviewing successful and unsuccessful CRM implementations from other football clubs and thereby present guidelines on how to further develop a CRM strategy in a Swedish football club like AIK Fotboll AB. Our studies showed that Swedish football clubs has knowledge about CRM systems and strategies, yet our research object do not have a CRM system in place. They are aware of the benefits such a system could provide and the risks they may encounter. In the following chapters we will answer the research questions of this thesis and conclude what the authors have discovered and suggests on the issue of CRM in Swedish football clubs.

6.1 Characteristics of Fans and AIK Fotboll AB’s Prospects for a CRM Strategy

The supporters of AIK Fotboll has divided opinions on how the club is currently operating and treats them, some feel neglected as loyal supporters while the majority are satisfied with the current relationship. This could be attributed to the different levels of commitment and the contact each supporter has with the club, and their individual perception of the club. The fact that many of the respondents in the supporter survey are willing to share personal information with AIK Fotboll shows that there definitely is a potential to utilize many of the functions a CRM strategy and system provides, in AIK Fotboll AB and most likely in other Swedish football clubs as well. AIK Fotboll AB seems to have a clear vision on what steps they want to take in the future in regard to a CRM implementation and the reason for this can be attributed to their earlier experiences on the subject. The fact that AIK Fotboll AB once conducted a large scale investigation on whether it was sensible to purchase an offered web platform and CRM system and came to the conclusion that a purchase would not be worth
the financial cost, shows that the club has a sound view on CRM strategy and they are in no rush to purchase a system without proper research. However, their latest “CRM project” did not seem very well-planned as it was incorporated into the clubs web-project. If the club is to implement a CRM strategy it definitely should be its own project, which the club also has expressed wishes about. The authors feel that the AIK Fotboll AB has a good view on the subject and are relatively clear what they want from a CRM system but because of financial reasons the club wants to obtain a finished solution system which may not have all desired functions. The authors feel that the club should focus on finding a vertical system which has been developed specifically for football clubs which provides more desired functions, since there are differences between commercial companies and football clubs. The authors see no point in buying a finished solution CRM system which lack specific functions and has other functions that cannot be fully utilized in football clubs. In order to find a effective vertical system, the authors suggests that AIK Fotboll AB can collaborate with larger clubs who have successfully implemented a CRM strategy, in order to learn about different systems and be provided with directives on how to implement and maintain a successful CRM strategy. Such collaboration could possibly help AIK Fotboll AB to find external funding from sponsors or other collaborative partners, if the cost for the selected system is deemed too high for self financing, as the system has been proven successful in the past.

6.2 Critical Success Factors for CRM Implementation in Swedish Football Clubs

In the theoretical framework four Critical Success Factors were presented which applies to regular companies. In order to implement a CRM strategy in a Swedish football club, the authors present their own Critical Success Factors which are derived from the analysis of this thesis.

Open communication with the fans regarding a CRM implementation is one of the major Critical Success Factors since the fans are one of the most important assets the clubs have. If the fans do not understand what the club is currently doing and why, they may not support
the clubs decisions and supporter frustration and confusion can affect the clubs revenue and reputation in a negative way.

The second Critical Success Factor is to ensure financing is adequate for implementation of a CRM strategy, since the implementation of a CRM system can be very costly. The return of investment of such a system must also be calculated and a careful strategy is needed on how to monitor the budget. In AIK Fotboll AB’s case, even though they are one of the biggest clubs in terms of revenue and supporters, their financial condition compared to other industries are relatively poor, so the undertaking of unsuccessful CRM project can be devastating to its finances.

Managements and the organizations commitment to the CRM strategy is the third Critical Success Factor, as it is a long term project and a constant evaluation of the process by the organization is needed. The management has to ensure the entire organization has extensive knowledge of CRM and that they have stated a clear objective for the strategy otherwise the CRM project may fail due to internal differences and miscommunication. The objective setting must therefore be consistent both during the implementation and the post-implementation process.

Choosing the appropriate technology is the final Critical Success Factor, and as there are a lot of different CRM systems to choose from, every department needs to have a clear vision of what the CRM system needs to achieve. Since Swedish football clubs seems to have financial constraints they refrain from buying a tailor-made system because of the high costs. Renting the system from an Application Service Provider is not an option either, as they are often cheaper to buy, but the expenses are reoccurring and the club can be left out of the development. As AIK Fotboll AB explains it, the best option for them is a Suite solution, which may not be exactly what they need, but the low costs and the ease of use makes such a system the best option.
6.3 Maximizing Benefits, Decreasing Risks and Overcoming Obstacles with a CRM Strategy in Swedish Football Clubs

The results from this study showed that there are many perceived benefits with a CRM strategy in Swedish football clubs; a CRM system provides clubs with the ability to better capture the right customer data making it easier to understand the needs of the different supporter segments. A CRM system that provides technology to consolidate the club’s databases would help the club be better equipped to provide supporters with two-way communication. Having a database with supporter information would also help the club create and provide customized offers to the supporters. Specific for the football industry as opposed to commercial companies is the self-identification by the supporters, as they themselves generally wants to be categorized as a certain type of supporter; this is especially true for the most ideologically strong supporters. This unique aspect of loyalty and self-image makes the clubs able to easier utilize the technological aspects of a CRM strategy.

As for the risks and obstacles of a CRM strategy, the largest risk is the financial commitment a CRM strategy usually requires. Swedish football clubs in general do not have very strong financial resources and in combination with difficulties in projecting returns on the investment and the obstacles with implementing a CRM system and strategy, it is difficult to start and fully implement a CRM strategy. The financial issue also makes it difficult or even unfeasible to purchase a tailor-made system, instead Swedish clubs must look at standard solutions that may not provide all that is wanted but is the soundest financial solution. However, careful considerations has to be made as to whether it is better to invest time and money on an limited CRM system or if it is better to make larger investments on a more complete system with functions specifically developed for football clubs. These systems are purposely developed to handle the unique aspects of CRM in football clubs and the nature of football fans making it the most rational long-term decision. One obstacle football clubs unlike commercial companies in general has to face is the appreciation supporters’ wants to feel from the club, as an open targeting of a specific group can lead to other groups feeling
unappreciated and overlooked, thereby minimizing some of the possibilities CRM strategy provides in regards to targeting and maximization of supporter value. This obstacle can be overcome by communicating with the supporters through effective communication channels and with explanations of why and how targeting specific groups can be beneficial for both the club and all the fans.

6.4 Additional Recommendations for AIK Fotboll AB

As for specific customer relationship recommendations, the authors suggest a few possible actions for AIK Fotboll which can be handled in AIK Fotboll’s current state, but would be more easily managed with a CRM strategy and system. To begin with, AIK Fotboll could benefit from creating a specific membership for football supporters, in order to gather more information on specific supporters. This membership can be free of charge, this way the membership does not have to “compete” with AIK huvudförening in getting members. As the main objective of such a membership would be to gather information and more accurately provide customized offers to the supporters a membership fee is not needed consequently attracting more members and supporter information. If the club does not wish to start a membership specifically for the football section, one other possibility could be to start a membership on the homepage; this would allow the club to reach the same goals as with our suggestions with a football membership, one way to get supporters to sign up for such membership could be to offer merchandise discounts and benefits on the match tickets, which will be validated if the person registers online. This would also allow the club to develop their current communication channels for receiving supporter feedback on for example the merchandise selection as our supporter survey showed that several supporters feels AIK Fotboll should have a broader category of products. The authors also suggests AIK Fotboll should make it easier for the fans to give feedback on the clubs current operations and strategies, for example by surveying the fans on the homepage of AIK Fotboll or a function for registered users to comment articles and press releases on the homepage.
7 Further Research

In this section suggestions about further research possibilities in this area which has arisen during the work with this thesis are presented.

While writing this thesis several ideas for further research on this subject has been discussed, both other viewpoints on the same overall issue of CRM in football clubs and further research on a specific subject within CRM in football clubs. One idea is to conduct research that investigates all professional Swedish football clubs, their present CRM status, thoughts and future operations. This could be interesting and give a more precise overlook of CRM in Swedish football clubs. Another possible research subject could be to do a technical analysis of different CRM systems for football clubs and by doing so provide guidelines on what type of system fits a type of club best, in regard to fan-base, finances and strategy. A more difficult yet interesting research subject would be to gain access to a clubs implementation process, either by attending and be involved in a CRM implementation or by getting all the facts after a CRM implementation process. This could provide deep knowledge on the obstacles and day-to-day operations of a CRM implementation.
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Appendix
Appendix 1 Questionnaire

1 How much do you follow AIK Fotboll AB? (Multiple choice question)

1. Follow the team in the news and other media
2. Attend a few games each season
3. Attend all home games
4. Follow the team wherever they go

Comments:

2 Are you a member of AIK?

1. Yes
2. No

What do you perceive as benefits from being a member and what do you feel is missing?

3 Do you as a supporter feel appreciated by the club?

1. Yes
2. No
3. There is room for improvement

Suggestions for improvement:

4 Are you satisfied with the communication channels (phone/email) AIK Fotboll AB provides the supporters?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Never been in contact with AIK Fotboll AB

Comments:

5 Do you think AIK Fotboll AB is open to you as a supporter?

1. Yes
2. No

Comments:
6 How often do you visit www.aikfotboll.se?

1. Never been there  
2. Once a month  
3. 1-4 times a week  
4. 5 or more times a week  
   Comments:

7 How often do you buy AIK merchandise?

1. Occasionally  
2. Once a month  
3. Every chance I get  
   Comments:

8 Are you satisfied with the product range AIK merchandise offer?

1. Yes  
2. No  
   Comments on the product range:

9 Are you prepared to give away personal information about yourself (such as income, family status etc.) to AIK Fotboll AB so they can customize special offers to you?

1. Yes  
2. No  
   Comments:

10 How would you like to receive information on new products, special offers and discounts? (Multiple choice question)

1. On the homepage www.aikfotboll.se  
2. Through e-mail  
3. Through instant text messages  
4. Through newsletters/regular mail  
5. Other channels:
Appendix 2 Interview Questions

1. Do you have an internal customer relationship policy?
2. How do you recognize your supporters from a business perspective?
3. Do you have the organizational capabilities to plan and execute a long-term customer relationship project?
4. Are you focusing on developing the relationship with the current fans/customer or is it more important or profitable to reach new fans/customers?
5. How do you identify/segment the most loyal fans?
6. What do you do to reward the most loyal fans/customers?
7. What does it mean to be a member of AIK?
8. Do you have plans to start a membership solely for the football section?
9. What is the largest/most important channel in getting the supporters view on the clubs operations?
10. Are there plans to develop additional information channels?
11. Have you considered a centralized customer service unit?
12. How do you perceive the cooperation between the different departments within AIK Fotboll is functioning?
13. Is AIK Fotboll AB ready to go through the necessary organizational changes that a CRM strategy requires?
14. What do you perceive as the difficulties with such an action?
15. Are you prepared to ask the fans/supporters to share with you personal information such as marital status and income to increase the possibilities of more tailor-made offers? Are you prepared to handle such a database?
16. Do you presently have a customer database?
17. How do you collect this data and how reliable is the data?
18. Are you able to segment the fans/customers into different groups and how is the information handled?
19. Do you have the ability to forecast supporters’ future value?
20. Is it realistic for AIK Fotboll AB to implement a CRM system in terms of technology?
21. When you earlier investigated a CRM system, which criteria’s did you start from? Was it a tailored-made or a finished program?
22. Do you have ways to measure the effectiveness of a CRM system?

Follow-up Questions Asked in the Phone Interview

23. Regarding the mentioning of certain supporters feeling unappreciated and overlooked when the club officially targets a specific type of supporter, how have you experienced this in the past?
24. You also mentioned that the club has carried out traditional supporter surveys in the past, how were these carried out and used in the club?
Appendix 3 Enkät på Svenska

1 Hur mycket följer du AIK fotboll? (flervalsfråga)
   1. Följer laget i media och nyheter
   2. Går på ett par matcher per säsong
   3. Går på alla hemma matcher
   4. Följer AIK vart de än går
   Kommentar:

2 Är du medlem i AIK?
   1. Ja
   2. Nej
   Vad får du ut/vill ha ut av ett medlemskap i AIK?

3 Känner du dig som supporter uppskattad av AIK fotboll?
   1. Ja
   2. Nej
   3. Jag tycker det finns saker som kunde förbättras
   Vad?

4 Är du nöjd med kommunikationsmöjligheterna (mail/telefon) du har som supporter med AIK fotboll?
   1. Ja
   2. Nej
   3. Har aldrig varit i kontakt med AIK fotboll
   Kommentar:

5 Anser du att AIK är tillräckligt öppna till dig som supporter?
   1. Ja
   2. Nej
   Kommentar:
6 Hur ofta besöker du www.aikfotboll.se?

5. Aldrig varit där
6. En gång i månaden
7. 1-4 gånger i veckan
8. 5 eller fler gånger i veckan
   Kommentar:

7 Hur ofta köper du AIK produkter?

4. Aldrig
5. Ibland
6. En gång I månaden
7. Så ofta jag kan
   Kommentar:

8 Är du nöjd med sortimentet av AIK produkter?

1. Ja
2. Nej
   Kommentarer angående produktsortimentet:

9 Är du beredd att dela med dig av personlig information (civilstatus, inkomst o dylikt) för att AIK Fotboll ska kunna specialanpassa sina erbjudanden till dig?

1. Ja
2. Nej
   Kommentar:

10 På vilket sätt väljer du helst att få nyheter om nya produkter, erbjudanden och rabatter? (fleervalsfråga)

1. På hemsidan www.aikfotboll.se
2. Via din E-post
3. Via SMS
4. Via nyhetsbrev (direktreklam)
5. Andra kanaler:
Appendix 4 Intervjufrågor på Svenska

1. Har ni en intern kundrelationspolicy?
2. Hur ser ni på era supportar från ett affärsperspektiv?
3. Anser du att ni har organisatoriska förutsättningar för att planera och genomföra ett långsiktigt kundrelationsprojekt.
4. Fokuserar ni på att utveckla kundrelationer med de nuvarande kunderna/fansen eller är det viktigare/lönsammare att nå nya kunder?
5. Hur identifieras/segmenteras de mest lojala supportrarna?
6. Vad gör ni för att belöna de mest lojala supportrarna/kunderna?
7. Vad innebär det att välja att vara medlem i AIK:s fotbollförening?
8. Har ni planer på att ha medlemskap specifikt för fotbollen?
9. Vilken är den största/viktigaste kanalen för att få supportrarnas syn på klubbens handlingar?
10. Finns det planer på att utveckla flera informationskanaler?
11. Har ni övervägt en centraliserad kundserviceenhed?
12. Hur anser du att samarbetet mellan de olika inom AIK Fotboll fungerar?
13. Är AIK Fotboll AB redo att genomgå de organisatoriska förändringar som krävs för en CRM strategi?
14. Vad ser ni som svårigheter med att genomföra en CRM implementering i AIK Fotboll AB?
15. Skulle ni kunna tänka på att be medlemmar/supportar dela med sig av personlig information såsom civilstånd, inkomst & dylikt för att öka möjligheterna till specialanpassade erbjudanden?
16. Har ni någon kunddatabas för tillfället?
17. Hur samlas informationen in och tillförlitlig är denna data?
18. Kan kunderna segmenteras i olika grupper och hur hanteras informationen?
19. Har ni möjligheter att beräkna en supporters framtidens ekonomiska värde?
20. Är det realistiskts för AIK Fotboll AB ur ett teknologiskt perspektiv att implementera ett CRM system?
21. När ni undersökte ett CRM system förut, vilka kriterier utgick ni ifrån? Vad för typ av system var det, skräddarsydd eller en färdig lösning?
22. Har ni möjligheter att kunna mäta hur effektivt ett CRM system är?

Följfrågor Ställda per Telefon

23. Angående nämndet av att vissa supportrar kan känna sig icke uppskattade och förbisedda ifall klubben officiellt försöker attrahera en specifik typ av supportrar, hur har ni märkt av detta tidigare?
24. Du nämnde även att klubben tidigare har genomfört traditionella supporter undersökningar, hur gjordes dessa och hur användes resultaten av klubben?