CRM Evaluation

An Approach for Selecting Suitable Software Packages

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1 Introduction

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)¹ has been discussed in the literature since the nineties. IT evaluation on the other hand dates back to the eighties starting with a more contemporary approach (Farbey et al. 1999, p. 191). As reported by earlier works, the success rate of CRM implementation projects is up to today still not satisfactory (Becker et al. 2009; Finnegan and Currie 2009). Reasons for failing the expectations of involved parties are diverse, but can be summarized under the three dimensions: people, process and technology (Figure 1). Due to the described quality problems and the speed of evaluation results becoming outdated, new CRM solutions or updated versions of established products continuously enter the market.

¹ CRM solutions range from simple address and activity management applications to integrated software packages linking front office and back office functions (Chen and Popovich 2003, p. 673). Hence, there exists a multitude of different characterizations for CRM. For the context of this paper a definition by Goldenberg (2000) is used, who describes CRM as a cross-functional, customer-driven, technology-integrated business process management strategy that aims at maximizing relationships and encompasses the entire organization. This definition thereby incorporates all three already mentioned dimensions of the CRM implementation model (people, process and technology) by Chen and Popovich (2003).