UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

The Role of the Customer Management System at an Automotive Retail Multifranchise Operation in KZN

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration

College of Law and Management Studies
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2015

DECLARATION

I, Dayalan Naidu declare that:

(i) This research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was with great sacrifice, determination and perseverance that I have successfully completed my MBA studies. With great honour and a heavy heart I would like to dedicate my studies to my ma Amba Naidu, my late dad Rally Naidu, and my late in-laws Mr & Mrs Jhinwa. I know how proud you would be of my achievements.

The past three years has been an epic journey of learning, hard work and time away from my loving family. I couldn't have achieved this without your unwavering support. To my dear wife Deo, your undying love and support down this MBA path has been truly amazing. I am truly blessed to have such a pillar of strength and a wonderful life partner in you. To my precious girls Alycia and Symane, mum and I admire the way you have flourished into beautiful young ladies and we hope that this MBA will be an inspiration to you both.

Throughout this journey I have always sought guidance from the supreme power above. I would like to thank God Almighty for always guiding our family and giving us the strength to persevere.

Not forgetting my loving family who have always stood by my side throughout this time – my brothers, sisters, brother-in-laws, sister-in-laws, nephews, nieces, cousins, aunts and uncles. You are one remarkable family that's always there for each other.

To our dear friends that have always been with us, I wish to thank you from the depths of my heart.

Additionally I wish to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following individuals whose assistance made this study possible:

- My supervisor, Prof Anesh Maniraj Singh, for his guidance throughout this dissertation
- Group 8, my brothers and sisters for life
- Desiree, Mark, Luis and the rest of the management team for all their support and providing the means for me to pursue and complete this MBA.
- All the participants that took the time in their busy schedules and responded to my questionnaire. Your most valued responses have added tremendously to this body of knowledge.

ABSTRACT

Information plays a critical role in any organisation today no matter what their core business entails. Information Systems have transformed from a basic support service to a critical function impacting a firm's daily operations and strategic business plans. The explosion in innovation surrounding Information Technology and communications has led firms to continuously transform the way they do business to remain relevant. Business is at risk if they do not innovate. However innovation of Information Systems can disturb existing work practices and staff may resist the new technology. Therefore it is imperative that staff understand the role of the Information Systems within the overall strategy of the organisation. The results of this study can assist organisational decision-making processes and provide a basis for review.

The aim of the study was to examine the various factors that impacted the effective use of the Customer Management System by motor vehicles sales persons at XYZ Company. Furthermore the study aimed to establish management support of the CMS system and the effectiveness of the system. Since the study was descriptive in nature, a quantitative research approach was taken.

The overall results of this study revealed that sales executives found the CMS system easy to use, easy to understand and used it as a vital tool to manage their customers. However it was noted that sales executives had various concerns regarding the privacy of their customers' details, duplication of customer records, over-burdened data input processes and lack of follow-up reminders on the system. Furthermore Internet leads management was highlighted as a persistent issue that needed to be addressed by management. Also noted in the study was a call for the workshop and finance departments to be linked to the CMS system to increase sales leads and pre-qualify customers for finance. The sales executives also suggested having access to their CMS system via a mobile application so as to alleviate the problem of not being at their workstations when a lead comes in. The findings from the research presented recommendations for improvements to the CMS system for example upgrading the CMS system and developing a leads management system. Further recommendations include linking the finance and workshop departments to the CMS system. The limitations of the study have been discussed and recommendations for future research provided.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

TPS	Transaction Processing System
ES	Expert Systems
OAS	Office Automation Systems
WGSS	Work Group Information Systems
MIS	Management Information Systems
DSS	Decision Support Systems
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
IS	Information Systems
IT	Information Technology
CSF	Critical Success Factors
UTUAT	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
PC	Personal Computer
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
IDT	Innovation Diffusion Theory
CMS	Customer Management System
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Hilbert and L´opez (2011) and Pentland (2014) cited in Van Knippenberg et al. (2015; p649) stated that the global economy is living in an information age triggered by the digital revolution of recent times. Organisations all around the world have no choice but to adapt to these advances in technological innovations. The growth in technology-based industries has also brought about new developments regarding storage and dissemination of information, which is ultimately changing the way individuals, groups, organisations and industries operate.

Ada and Ghaffarzadeh (2015; p260) commented that information has developed into a vital resource to manage modern business. The massive amount of information available today provides both opportunities and challenges to organisations across the globe. Therefore the investment in Information Systems is undertaken to simplify the process of collecting, storing, analysing and disseminating information in a practical and secure way.

Premkumar and King (1992; p100) related how Information Technology (IT) has transformed the nature of products, processes, and competition, further impacting organisations and industries on a strategic level. Organisations have realized the importance of Information Systems due to advancements in Information Technology. Firms now rely heavily on Information Systems as a critical support function to the firm's daily operations as well as its organisational strategies and plans. Obara (2013) spoke of information being a critical resource to drive decision making processes in today's volatile and turbulent business environment. The CMS system implemented at XYZ Company can realize major advantages for the organisation, if used effectively and managed properly.

The focus of this research project was on the challenges faced by sales executives at a group of multifranchise dealerships in embracing the Customer Management System as a tool to increase efficiency and productivity. This chapter will present a motivation for the study followed by the problem statement and focus of the study. The aim and objectives are then described along with the research questions.

Thereafter a brief explanation of the research methodology used is discussed followed by limitations of this study. The chapter is concluded by an outline of the study per chapter.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The need for the study arose to identify challenges faced by motor vehicles sales persons at the XYZ Company Multifranchise Division (KZN) in effectively using the CMS system, with the prospect of improving efficiency, effectiveness and overall productivity.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

XYZ Company has recently introduced a customer relationship management (CRM) program in its' Multifranchise Division named Customer Management System (CMS), intended for motor vehicles sales persons to log daily activities and capture customer details (referrals, walk-ins, telephone-ins, Internet leads, cold calling and fleet customers) onto the database. In this way management can better manage motor vehicles sales persons' activities and populate the customer database, which is further utilized for marketing campaigns like sms and email. With this populated database, the possibilities are endless. The problem encountered is that motor vehicles sales executives do not fully embrace the CMS system as a tool to improve efficiency and productivity, but merely do the minimum for commission payment and avoiding disciplinary measures from management for not achieving daily targets.

1.4 FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Multifranchise dealerships are no different from most other dealerships except that they retail more than one brand on the same premises. The various brands may be located on the same dealership floor divided by specified areas. The focus of this study was confined to motor vehicles sales executive based at six motor vehicle dealerships in the Durban Area. These six dealerships form part of the Kwa Zulu Natal region of XYZ Company.

1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to examine the various elements that impact the effective use of the Customer Management System by motor vehicles sales persons at XYZ Company, whereby recommendations will be made regarding motor vehicles sales persons' embracement of the

CMS system, management's role in supporting the CMS system and the effectiveness of the CMS system.

The following objectives will be explored:

i. To assess motor vehicles sales persons' perceptions of the Customer Management System (CMS)
ii. To evaluate management support of the Customer Management System (CMS)
iii. To appraise the effectiveness of the Customer Management System (CMS)

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

a) How do motor vehicles sales persons feel about the CMS system?
b) What do motor vehicles sales persons understand regarding the value of information being loaded by them on the CMS system?
c) How adequate is the training and support provided to motor vehicles sales persons in effectively using the CMS system?
d) What level of encouragement and drive is afforded to motor vehicles sales persons to effectively use the CMS system?
e) How effective is the CMS system in achieving the organisation's goals?
f) What improvements can be made to the CMS system?

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was quantitative in nature. Due to this erratic staff turnover, motor vehicle sales persons at XYZ Company – KZN Multifranchise Division fluctuated between 55 and 65 at any given moment in time. However at the completion of the study the total number of motor vehicle sales persons employed were 60. The administration of questionnaires was selected as the data collection method for the study and consisted of 28 questions with the first 25 questions being linked to the three objectives of this study. The remaining three questions related to respondents' suggested improvements to the CMS system. Questionnaires were emailed to 65 motor vehicles sales persons based at the six motor vehicle dealerships in the Durban and surrounding area. Arrangements were made to hand deliver questionnaires to around 5 to 10 sales persons that did not have electronic mail due to erratic staff turnover in the motor vehicle sales department. However that need never arose.

In this study the sampling frame was the organograms of each dealership detailing each staff member per department. Only motor vehicles sales persons' details were extracted from these organograms.

Due to the erratic nature of staff turnover in the motor vehicle sales department, as stated above, the researcher was forced to use the most current organograms available. Coverage errors were ignored as the difference between the target population and the sampling frame was negligible (motor vehicles sales persons employed fluctuating between 55 and 65). Furthermore a sampling design was unnecessary as 100% of the population was used as the sample size. The sample size for a population of 60 provided by Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p 268) is 52; however 100% of the population was selected as the sample size in this study; equated to 60 participants.

The detailed breakdown of the methodology used is set out in Chapter Three. The data presented in this study was primary data. The results of the data analysis was then summarised and presented in graphs and tables in Chapter Four relating the results to each objective.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

With the lack of academic literature on Information Systems in the motor retail sector, it proved difficult to make comparisons to other studies. Another limitation was the researcher's involvement in administering the electronic survey questionnaire and clarifying respondents' problems with answering the questionnaire, which could have led to biasness. Furthermore the study was restricted to the sales executives only in the Durban and surrounding geographical area. If the study was extended to areas outside of Durban and included sales managers in the study, the results could provide deeper insight into the problem. These limitations are discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The research project was carried out in a systematic structured manner and is documented in five chapters as can be found in Table 1.1

Table 1.1: Structure of this study

Chapter	Content
Chapter 1	This chapter provides an overview of the study as well as the motivation, the problem statement and the aims and objectives of the study. It also documents the research methodology used, along with any limitations of the study
Chapter 2	Chapter two begins by introducing the concept of information and then exploring the importance and characteristics of information. Thereafter the discussion revolves around the management of information and how Information Systems have evolved in improving organisational performance and competitiveness. Importance is placed on its vital role in supporting decision making. Further focus is on technology adoption and non-adoption models to demonstrate the willingness/reluctance of staff to embrace technology and innovation.
Chapter 3	This chapter describes the complete research process along with a description of how the research methodology adopted was arrived at, exploring further the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods. This is followed by discussion around sampling methods, data collection strategies and data collection methods used in this study. The objectives of this study as well as the ethical considerations are clearly outlined in this chapter.
Chapter 4	Chapter four provides a presentation of the data collected. This is presented in two segments; starting with the demographic profile of the motor vehicle sales executives that participated in the research project and followed by the presentation of the findings relating to the objectives set out in Chapter two.
Chapter 5	This chapter summarises the entire study and provides the specific conclusions that can be drawn from the data analysis, highlighting recommendations based on these key findings. Limitations of the study are highlighted, followed by recommendations for future research.

1.10 SUMMARY

The Information Technology and communications arena has experienced an explosion on a global scale. Organisations nowadays have access to vast amounts of information due to unprecedented technological advancements and capabilities.

Therefore this valuable resource needs to be harnessed and transformed to give organisations the competitive advantage demanded in a highly volatile business environment. This chapter was concluded with the structure of the complete study (per chapter) outlined. The following chapter reviews the available literature sources on the broad area of information and Information Systems, delving into its role in decision making and gaining further insight into technology acceptance and non-acceptance models.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The global economy has experienced an explosion in technological advances and innovations in the field of Information Technology that has taken the business world by storm since the late 1980's (Mirescu, 2011). With this boom, organisations all around the world have realised the importance of information and its crucial role in decision making processes. Ada and Ghaffarzadeh (2015) have identified the burgeoning quest for precise, relevant, timely, complete and cost-effective information to alleviate the burdensome pressures of decision-making in this difficult and turbulent economic climate (Mirescu, 2011).

This chapter will begin by defining information and then exploring the importance and characteristics of information. It will then delve into the management of information and how Information Systems have evolved in improving organisational performance and competitiveness and its vital role in supporting decision making. Further it will look at technology adoption and non-adoption models to demonstrate the willingness/reluctance of staff to embrace technology and innovation.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF INFORMATION

Various authors share similar opinions on the concept of information. Kaye (1995; pp6-16) stated that information is used by the human mind in skills development, knowledge enhancement and ultimately wisdom creation. Information only adds meaning to a human recipient when it is perceived and interpreted. Kaye (1995; pp6-16) further related information to "numerical data, factual knowledge, narrative accounts, opinions and evaluations". Meadow and Yuan (1997) spoke of information being used to describe data sets and data streams. Madden (2004) stated that the nonprofessional person will most probably define information as:

- An item of information or intelligence;
- A fact or circumstance of which one is told. (OED)

(Madden, 2004)

2.2.1 The importance of information

Information forms the basis of all decision making processes across a spectrum of business functions. It can further improve the efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness of an organisation by providing insight into the internal and external environments of the organisations, whereby the organisation is better equipped to adapt and respond to opportunities and threats (Kaye, 1995).

Kaye (1995) commented that it may be common knowledge to some, but others still don't realise that all organisations are compelled to process information no matter what their core business entails. Information acquisition and processing is vital for any organisation to exist and function effectively.

Van Knippenberg et al. (2015) commented that organisations can create a competitive advantage by analysing available information better than its competitors.

2.2.2 Types of information

In Table 2.1, Kaye (1995) clearly displays types of information, information processes and information uses. Attention is drawn to the key uses information (column 3). The uses of information does not come without its negative influence of persuasion, manipulation, domination, deceit and betrayal, but for the purposes of this document attention is focused on the positives of decision making, problem solving, training, operation, marketing, and image creation.

Table 2.1: Information types, processes and uses

Main Types of Information	Processes to which Information may be Exposed	Main Uses for Information
• mathematical data and by-products thereof; • factual data; • directives and instructions; • requests, orders and requisitions; • reports and records; • codes and procedures; • descriptions and explanations; • promotions, image management and marketing; • ideas and analyses; • assessments and criticisms; • opinions, discussions and deliberations	• recording, filing and storage; • editing and publication; • replication, reprography and printed formats; • tabularization; • collection; • examining and deduction; • critiquing and assessing; • categorizing, classification and sorting; • conceptualizing and condensing; • recovery; • collaboration, dissemination and distribution; • estimation and costing; • limiting; • erasing and destroying; • misrepresenting and corruption; • theft, pilfering; • copyrighting, protecting	• education and knowledge; • tutoring, instructing and coaching; • inventing and discovering; • problem solving; • selecting and decision making; • educated action and operation; • qualifying, clarifying and accounting; • marketing, sales and advertising; • image conception; • coaxing, persuading and influencing; • dominance and subordination; • deception and betrayal

Source: Adapted from KAYE, D. (1995). The importance of information. *Library Management,* 16**,** p15.

2.2.3 Information and knowledge

Hayes (1997, p. 120) considered information synthesized with other information to shape new theories and create new knowledge; Fattari and Afshar (2006) considered information

being synthesized with existing knowledge to create new knowledge. Knowledge can be quite effective in the strategic decision-making process, where some organisations are focusing their attention to transform information into knowledge. Information and knowledge share a close relationship and can be utilized side by side (Fattahi and Afshar, 2006).

2.2.4 Capabilities and values of information

In their study on the value add provide by information and Information Systems, Fattahi and Afshar (2006) identified exchange, analysis, reproduction, interpretation, refinement, synthesis, transfer, and regeneration of information" as processes that added value to information. Some of these processes will be briefly discussed in Table 2.2 below:

Table 2.2: Added value of information

Value Add Properties of Information	Discussion of Properties
Information can be purchased and sold	Information like any other purchasable commodity can be bought or sold more than once. The more it is traded, the more its value increases.
Information can be used and reused repeatedly	Information has potential to be used and reused many times over, for different purposes and by different users, which leads to the value add of the original information.
Information can be shared	Information is a resource that can be shared by multiple users simultaneously without depreciating its value no matter the number of users or the level of usage. This sharing is substantially expedited by the latest technology and data network options available in this current digital age. "Resource sharing" has permitted the use of information resources at its optimal level, which provides economic value.

Source: Adapted from FATTAHI and AFSHAR (2006). Added value of information and Information Systems: a conceptual approach. *Library Review,* 55**,** 132-147

2.2.5 The Management of information

Kaye (1995) stated that with the vast importance placed on information, it is vital that information is managed. The cost-benefit analysis of gathering, analysing and processing information proves difficult yet there is a dire need to manage the information processing function because of its importance to the organisation, irrespective of the overhead cost. He further stated that firms have engaged in various activities in managing the information process flow efficiently so as to have policies and procedures, specifically designed systems and designated specialist information managers or management teams.

Some organisations have further investigated their current information resources to improve their information flows and identify gaps and shortcomings in the system. Van Knippenberg et al. (2015) commented on the statutory requirement surrounding the protection and security of data, that may divert management attention to focus on meeting regulatory standards and compliance, rather than exploring different avenues of using the data to its full potential (Van Knippenberg et al., 2015).

2.3 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Fattahi and Afshar (2006) stated that the capabilities and value of information has been enhanced by advancements in Information Technology. This led to the development of Information Systems where systems design revolved around quick and easy access to information, with data storage and retrieval forming the foundation of the Information System. Doinea et al., (2011) stated that an efficient Information System would not capture and store data more than once.

Attention will now be drawn to the five eras of Information Systems to describe how Information Systems has evolved over time and how its' use has become more global, sophisticated, and multifaceted (Petter et al., 2012).

2.3.1 The five eras of Information Systems

Petter et al. (2012) discussed the five eras of Information Systems aligned to literature by Dahlbom (1996), O'Brien (1999), and Kroenke (2007), however more reliance was placed

on the framework developed by O‟Brien. The five eras of Information Systems are briefly described below:

- ***Data Processing Era (1950s – 1960s)***

  In this era computers were mainly used to handle intricate ballistic calculations for the military and perform volumes of calculations as well produce reports for the financial industry. As the era progressed, the transaction processing system was developed to automate work processes. However focus was to automate work processes, so management was not impacted by Information Systems at that stage (Petter et al., 2012).

- ***Management Reporting and Decision Support Era (1960s–1980s)***

  In this era staff increasingly started using computers to monitor and control production and for automating administrative functions. Although some managers struggled to use Information Systems, further managers began to realize the benefit of Information Systems in decision making processes, placing lesser reliance on staff and their skills levels. More users became exposed to Information Systems in this era (Petter et al., 2012).

- ***Strategic and Personal Computing Era (1980s – 1990s)***

  In this era, the alignment of Information Systems to the strategic goals of the organisation became increasingly important. This era also saw a boom in personal computing with users interacting directly with Information Systems, with minimal training (Petter et al., 2012).

- ***Enterprise System and Networking Era (1990s – 2000s)***

  Hirschheim and Dibbern (2009) spoke of this era witnessing many organisations outsourcing vital IT and IT-related operational functions in an attempt to increase efficiency. Robey et al. (2009) mentioned that this era also witnessed the adoption of inter-organisational Information Systems that linked organisations to partners and suppliers (having a direct impact internally on governance issues and externally on strategy, operations and social interactions (Petter et al., 2012).

- ***Customer-Focused Era (2000s and Beyond)***

  This era indicated the continuous dynamic sophistication of Information Systems that has brought about organisations' focus shift onto their customers. Some organisations have customized customer experiences based on customers' interests, hobbies, previous choices or job functions. Pariser (2011) spoke of Amazon.com recommending products to customers based on their individual purchase history and website viewing habits. In a similar fashion other entities like Google, Facebook, Microsoft Bing and Yahoo! latched onto the same concept (Petter et al., 2012).

  In the customer-focused era, customers make lesser contact with organisational staff but increasingly interact directly with Information Systems. In some instances, users order merchandise, track their deliveries and get customer service with no physical contact made with staff at an organisation (Petter et al., 2012).

2.3.2 Types of Information Systems

Laudon and Laudon (2009) have classified Information Systems into six categories namely Transaction Processing System, Expert System, Office Automation System, Personal and Work Group Information Systems, Management Information System and Decision Support System, which is discussed as follows:

- Transaction Processing System (TPS)

  This system involves data processing which serves the operational level of the organisation by collecting and processing daily transactions like sales invoices, orders, payments, shipping and so forth.

- Expert System (Specialist) (ES)

  These systems are usually enhanced with Artificial Intelligence (AI) to simulate the thinking and actions of experts to make programmed decisions and assist users with less skill.

- Office Automation System (OAS)

  These systems support business activities typically in the office environment where the system can handle and manage documents, schedule work and communicate with various internal and external users across the organisation. Their design centres on improving users workflow and communication irrespective of physical sites.

- Personal and Work Group Information Systems (WGSS)

  A personal information system satisfies the needs of an individual user whereas the work group system satisfies the needs of a workgroup with the intention of increasing productivity in the group.

- Management Information System (MIS)

  The description and definition of MIS has progressively developed over the last decade or two. Davis et al. (2004) included the Information System, the Information and Decision System and the Computer- based information System as descriptions for MIS. Various other authors attempted to define MIS. Barton et al. (2005) defined MIS as "a system which provides information support for decision making in the organisation". Bendoly (2008) defined MIS as "an integrated system of man and machine for providing the information to support the operations, the management and the decision making function in the organisation". Bresfelean et al. (2009) defines MIS as "a Computer based Information System".

- Decision Support System (DSS)

  Decision support systems (DSS) deliver information support for semi-structured and unstructured decision making processes in organisations. It is not designed for individual decision making and favours group decision making. The system generally requires no expert knowledge to generate reports from the system and is fairly easy and convenient to use.

(Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015)

Decision making is an integral part of the organisation at different levels. Decision makers receive and analyse information for various purposes. Figure 2.1 below depicts the type of information system required at different levels of the organisation that would best suit the decision maker.

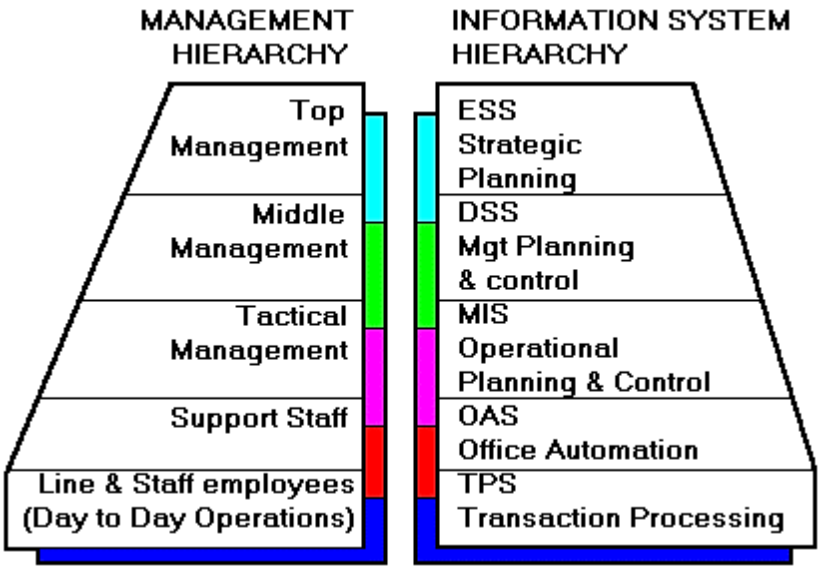

Figure 2.1: Types of Information Systems and organisational hierarchy

Source: Adapted from Gabriel, (2013): The Systems Concept: An unpublished Lecture note giving to B.sc Year 3 Students of Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt (cited in Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

2.3.3 Management Information Systems and decision support systems

The two key Information Systems are Management Information Systems (MIS) and Decision Support Systems (DSS). Asemi et al. (2011) have discussed the attributes and associations of MIS's and DSS's with decision making. A recent study found the dynamic nature of MIS to impact the decision making process on senior management to such an extent that a framework was introduced into the systems development life cycle to cater for decision making needs (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

Smithson and Hirschheim (1998) cited in Petter et al. (2012) stated that research in the ***Enterprise System and Networking Era (1990s – 2000s)*** found the benefits of Information Systems to exist at multiple levels of organisations locally and abroad. DeLone and McLean (2003) further recognized that the impact of Information Systems went beyond the individual or the organisation, to include society at large.

Jessup et al. (2011) stated that MIS aids the decision making process by providing knowledge and information to assist the organisation control, plan and operate more effectively. Ada and Ghaffarzadeh (2015) further stated that decision support systems aid in modelling and analysing systems, recognizing decision opportunities and constructing

decision problems, where the quality of decisions can be determined by constructing decision problems and recognizing innovative decision alternatives (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

2.4 DECISION MAKING

Alvani (2012) defined decision making basically as choosing a "way between different paths". Decision making is a key component and the essence of all management activities including determining organisation's policies and developing objectives (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

Ada and Ghaffarzadeh (2015) described decision making in its simplest form as "a problem of choice among several alternatives", but added that more complexity would include a problem statement along with a list of alternative choices. Managers may face decisions with various options ranging from clear cut straightforward decisions, to a creative decision or even an operational decision to improve the production process (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

George and Jones (1996) spoke of decision making as a process where a specific strategy is conceptualised in response to opportunities and threats. A lot of an organisation's success or failure depends on the decisions made by its stakeholders. Daft (2001) stated that decisions "can be risky and uncertain without success".

Simon (1984), a prominent expert on management decision-making, divided decision making into four stages namely intelligence, design, choice and review. The process begins by using intelligence to search the environment for decision making needs. This is followed by the design phase where the problem is analysed and possible solutions are generated. Subsequently a choice is made from the options available. Lastly an assessment of the choice selected is carried out to ascertain if the decision taken was effective (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

The importance of the information management arena is seen against the backdrop of decision making processes. Bakewell (1994) considered Fayol's (1916) six classic management principles of forecasting, planning, organizing, coordinating, commanding and controlling, together with his six activities of technical, commercial, financial, security, accounting and managerial activities. He then asked the question whether information should

be the seventh management function. Bakewell (1994) suggested that information be the first management function as none of the other functions could take place without appropriate information for decision-making (Bakewell, 1994).

Quality of decisions is improved by Information and Communication Technological advancements, including strategic and leadership changes. With the explosion in Information and Communication Technology advancements, many organisations are preparing themselves to embrace the effective and efficient mechanisms that have affected and continue to support decision making by managers. The benefits include easier access to information and greater opportunity for organisations competing in the global environment. Feizi and Moghadassi (2012) concurred that management across several levels of organisations continue to receive support from information and communication technology. Alvani (2012) stated that it's no wonder that this has led to the information management system, where information can be collected, analysed, evaluated and transmitted from one source to another, thereby granting immediate access to information. Reduced costs, better production, better coordination, shorter lead times and improved control lead to better services (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

2.4.1 Types of information

Simon (1984), distinguished between decisions made following standard courses of action, procedures or quantitative techniques referred to as Programmed Decisions and decisions made in response to unplanned or unique occurrences referred to as Non-programmed Decisions. George and Jones (1996) described Programmed Decisions as decisions made using a performance program, where users follow a standard sequence or routine when faced with a specific type of problem or opportunity. Examples include decisions involving stock control, equipment scheduling, planning, etc. Examples of Non-Programmed decisions given by Lucey (2005) include mergers, acquisitions, launching of new products, personnel appointments, etc. These decisions usually involve a high level of uncertainty and cannot be delegated to lower level staff (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

Ada and Ghaffarzadeh (2015) stated that decision making depended heavily on inputs from Management Information Systems, irrespective of the decision being a programmed or non-programmed one.

Vittal and Shivraj (2008) and Jawadekar (2006) agreed that worthy decision alternatives guarantees good decision making in organisations. Rhodes (2010), cited in Ada and

Ghaffarzadeh (2015), claimed that MIS gave managers speedy information access that included communication with further DSS's, information analyses, counter inspection of outside information and prospective data mining methods.

Lucey (2005) spoke of routine operational decisions taken by the MIS placing lesser burdens on the manager. Jarboe (2005) mentioned how MIS's have transformed decision-making processes through automation where machines are programmed to make routine decisions thereby reducing managers' reliance on human workforces (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

2.4.2 MIS and the decision making process

According to Obi (2003), cited in Ada and Ghaffarzadeh (2015), the decision making process is supported by the MIS that can identify errors in a system by itself, determine a solution and take corrective action to bring the system under control again. Even in the non-programmed decision making arena, MIS provides information supporting the decision making process. Adebayo (2007) cited in Reddy et al. (2009), emphasized the importance for MIS in decision making to support better decision making regarding human and material resources at organisations (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

Lucey (1997) viewed MIS as a means of transforming data into information used in the decision making process. Asemi et al. (2011) stated that although MIS is an enterprise-wide task to deliver information that supports decision making, the key feature behind MIS is to ensure an uninterrupted flow of information to management. Thereafter decisions are made from data and information received from the MIS (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

Strategic decision making necessitates information that supports forecasting, whereas lower level management requires information that supports budgeting. Cost control initiatives can be achieved by collecting and analysing production-related information (Doinea et al., 2011).

Manian (2011) stated that MIS assists with problem solving and decision making at lower management levels. This set of information processing functions use transaction processing results and other relevant information to address queries as they occur. The database is a significant component of MIS (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

DSS is used by senior management to assist in strategic decision making, where decisions can vary from semi-structured or unstructured to recurring, infrequent or once-off. Some decisions may need to be made where there are no clear procedures or guidelines at hand or

information is not readily available to make decisions. The DSS has to be flexible to allow the user to produce reports for different scenarios (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

2.5 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM) PROGRAMMES

The use of data mining and advanced analytics to identify trends and shopping patterns in CRM programmes enables businesses to make strategic market decisions for the future, while also understanding the change in the markets. The hotel industry has successfully used data mining, direct mail, and loyalty programs to profile customers, thereby offering them travel products in different ways, including competitive room rates (Inversini and Masiero, 2014).

Usage of Information Systems are also on the increase in government sectors and their agencies. Citizens in certain municipalities have access to government services online, including the filing of tax returns online. Information systems are further used by government departments to reduce overheads, reduce inaccuracy, enhance service levels, improve operational efficiency, and encourage policy making participation by constituents. Research has been carried out by various authors evaluating the success of e-government, government websites and healthcare Information Systems (Petter et al., 2012).

2.6 EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The information era we live in, has been triggered by the digital revolution of current times. Today information is considered a vital resource for internal and external organisational processes. The significant role of information is clearly reflected in huge monetary investments made annually in Information Systems (Kaye, 1995).

Petter et al. (2012) spoke of the dynamic nature of Information Systems in organisations, with the constant demand on management to monitor its' effectiveness or success and evaluate the benefits of their investment in IS. Investment in IS is usually made to address a business need or opportunity, therefore irrespective of the market fluctuations, organisations need to ascertain whether organisational goals are being met by the IS (Petter et al., 2012).

During the ***Enterprise System and Networking Era (1990s – 2000s)***, there was continued concern for the benefit that Information Technology investment provided to organisations, as firms continually increased the complexity of organisational Information Systems. As per

Carr (2003), similar to the "productivity paradox" debate of the 1990s where the tangible benefits of investment in Information Technology along with the Information System's ability to provide strategic value were of concern, the issue still exists as to whether Information Systems provide competitive advantage to firms to achieve strategic goals (Petter et al., 2012).

The Information Technology arena has certainly evolved since its initial development in the 1950's. There can be additional difficulty in the evaluation of the "effectiveness" or "success" of IS due to the dynamic nature of Information Technology, the volume of information and the ease of accessibility to this information, yet the basic elements of information quality, system quality, use and outcomes are still present to simplify the evaluation process. Researchers can lose sight of the basics due to the sophistication of Information Systems and increase in the number of users, however accuracy, timeliness and relevance of information is still crucial (Petter et al., 2012).

2.7 CHALLENGES FACED BY USERS IN ACCEPTING TECHNOLOGY

Petter et al. (2012) stated that although society has learnt a lot in terms of IS success research, they still have a long way to go regarding the speedy adoption rate and innovative ways of using Information Systems. Kaye (1995) mentioned the "creation of a genuine information culture" at an organisation. He advised that it is dependent on changing employee behaviour, improving information quality on the system and promoting a new culture of a learning system at the organisation (Kaye, 1995).

Chen et al. (2013), contended that although Information Systems (IS) are designed to assist individuals in their tasks, the creation and management of new systems becomes more complicated due to the human, organisational and environmental components connecting internal and external users (Chen et al., 2013).

Li and Xie (2012) spoke of e-commerce disturbing existing work procedures and practices. Similarly innovation in the Information Systems arena disturbs existing work practices. Therefore management commitment is required to ensure the successful execution of new technology and innovation (Li and Xie, 2012).

There is a responsibility from the management of the business when driving innovation. Humphreys et al. (2005), cited in Thompson et al. (2013), suggested that the culture of the organisation regarding innovation is vitally important. Successful innovation implementation lies with the organisation having an open culture that 'feeds into product and process development management within the organisation'. Staff should be provided with management guidance and resources made available for strategies to be effected (Thompson et al., 2013).

Bartis and Mitev (2008) noted that perceptions of an Information System may vary between individual users and user groups, with the opinion of success at one end and failure at the other. Alter (2008) believed that management should evaluate the level of user support provided by the Information System in terms of for example data entry, information access or hedonistic capabilities. These observations may lead the organisation to identifying positive or negative effects of the Information System on the single user, multiple users or the entire organisation. Furthermore it can be assessed if these effects are as a result of the environment or the work process (Petter et al., 2012).

Selim (2007) stated that Critical Success Factors (CSF) was documented during literature reviews on the elements impacting e-learning embracement in Higher Education. Mcpherson and Nunes (2008) said that this Critical Success Factors (CSF) were originally proposed by Rockhart (1979) and developed into an extensively used phenomenon in probing elements impacting organisations' success in implementing change. As per Legris et al. (2003), Bruner (2007), Gwebu & Wang (2007) and Mahdizadeh et al. (2008), academics named these factors as "lack of time, training and infrastructure".

However these CSF's placed a lot of emphasis on external factors to be addressed by organisations in effecting change, thereby ignoring the individual's attitude towards the change (Petit Dit Dariel et al., 2013).

This leads to theories on adoption and acceptance of innovation and technology.

2.8 THEORIES ON ADOPTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Since the early 1970s, the Information Technology sector has been probed to understand behaviour towards adoption of innovation and technology, using different theoretical models. Bonera (2011) spoke of theories that examined the association amongst users'

attitudes, perceptions and beliefs and the level of technology they use. Liu and Forsythe (2011) spoke of theoretical models that explained users' adoption behaviour but contended that most of the theoretical models focused on the users' intentions to initially use a system by predicting attitudes towards the new system. While Liu and Forsythe (2011) leapt directly in to the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), Bonera (2011) said that among all the research and studies conducted, the following theories were included:

- The Theory of Reasoned Actions (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980)
- The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen and Madden, 1986)
- The Model of PC utilization (Thompson et al., 1991; Triandis, 1977)
- The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989)
- The Motivation Model (Davis et al., 1992)
- The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003)
- The Innovation Diffusion Theory (Rogers, 1995)
- The combined the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Taylor and Todd, 1995b), and
- The Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986; Compeau and Higgins 1995a, b; Compeau et al., 1999). (Bonera, 2011) (Liu and Forsythe, 2011)

Discussion will first briefly look at the theories mentioned above to build into UTAUT.

2.8.1 The theory of reasoned action (TRA)

As per Bonera (2011), the TRA arose through social cognition research and explained human behaviour as centred on individuals' beliefs and intentions, which was followed shortly by the TPB (Bonera, 2011).

2.8.2 The theory of planned behaviour (TPB)

The TPB was developed as a second model, enhancing the TRA. These theories suggest that the belief of success or failure is vital for the execution of an action, so much so that the most difficult task can be accomplished if success is perceived to be attainable. Bonera (2011) reasons that because the beliefs of the subject strongly determine his behaviour, the root of behaviour lies in subjective belief and not in objective reality (Bonera, 2011).

2.8.3 The technology acceptance model (TAM)

As per the TAM, people choose to use or not to use new technology depending on their initial perceptions of the technology, with perceived ease of use (Pavlou, 2003) and usefulness (Dalberg et al., 2003 and Pavlou, 2003) of the new technology being seen as strong indicators of attitudes (Chen and Tan, 2004 and Suh and Han, 2002) and behavioural intentions of potential users (Gefen and Straub, 2003, Pavlou, 2003 and Suh and Han, 2002). Bonera (2011) stated that some of these attitudes and intentions are developed prior to even considering utilizing the new technology. Davis et al. (1992) went further to present the perception of hedonism as an aspect impacting the acceptance of technology (Bonera, 2011).

2.8.4 Unified theory of acceptance and use of technology theory (UTUAT)

The UTAUT (Venkatesh et al. 2003) combines various models, including TRA, TAM, TPB, and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). Performance expectance, effort expectance, social influence, and facilitating conditions have been identified as the four main predictors of intention and behaviour toward a new system. Experience, age, gender, and voluntariness of use are suggested to facilitate the effect of the four main predictors above. Others authors include product risk and early versus late adopters as key predictors as well (Liu and Forsythe, 2011) (Bonera, 2011).

Tsoukas (2005) said that little is known regarding individuals' underlying mental processes when making decisions and the manner in which they reflect these changes in their behaviour (Petit Dit Dariel et al., 2013).

With reference to Critical Success Factors (CSF) documented during literature reviews on the elements impacting e-learning adoption in Higher Education, academics' common explanations given as hurdles to e-learning were technological challenges, time constraints, lack of training and restricted access. Mahdizadeh et al. (2008) and Cornford and Pollock (2003) argued that these explanations may be superficial and profounder tensions may exist. Schnekenberg (2009) suggested that academics' reluctance to exit their comfort zones could provide a reason for their failure to embrace technology. Petit Dit Dariel et al., (2013; pp1289-1300) found this 'resistance to change' argument too basic and concurred that understanding e-learning adoption was complex (Petit Dit Dariel et al., 2013).

2.8.4.1 Experience as indicator of acceptance

The UTAUT suggested that experience was a good moderator of theorized relationships. Liu and Forsythe (2011) assumed a positive relationship between adoption period (i.e., time since the initial adoption) and experience (Liu and Forsythe, 2011).

2.8.4.2 Performance expectancy as a predictor of intention and behaviour toward a new system

The UTAUT concentrates on fundamental relationships between different attitudes toward using a new system (e.g., performance expectancy), intentions to use the system, and actual use of the system. Performance expectancy has been recognized as the leading factor impacting usage intentions and actual usage. Venkatesh et al. (2003) described performance expectancy as a user's level of confidence that the use of a system will assist them in attaining job performance gains (Liu and Forsythe, 2011).

2.8.4.3 Facilitating conditions as a predictor of intention and behaviour toward a new system

The UTAUT model identified facilitating conditions as a central determining factor of system usage. However, the theory is passively theorized as the level of confidence that a person has in the existence of an organisational and technical infrastructure to support the use of the system (Liu and Forsythe, 2011).

2.8.4.4 Early versus late adoption as a predictor of intention and behaviour toward a new system

Goldsmith and Flynn (1992), Huh and Kim (2008) and Rogers (1995) stated that earlier research suggested that early adopters have a tendency to use the new products more actively and tend to engage more with the innovative and technologically advanced options of the new product. Mahajan et al. (1990) found early adopters of personal computers likely to use technological products more often. (Rouse, 2007) (Liu and Forsythe, 2011)

Busselle et al. (1999), Dickerson and Gentry (1983) and Rogers (1995) said that studies conducted on innovation diffusion suggested that users have unique innovative tendencies and therefore adopt innovative technology at varied times.

Rogers (1995) described innovativeness as how early an individual is in adopting innovation compared to other individuals in their social structure. Rogers (1995) distinguished five classes of adopters - innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Rouse (2007) included a sixth class called luddites who is described as persons who hate technology, especially technological equipment that interfere with their existing jobs or threaten personal privacy or someone that displays incompetent behaviour when engaging new technology.

Busselle et al., (1999), Donthu and Garcla (1999) and Foxall (1995) described innovators as more inventive, but at the same time more inclined to taking risks in adopting new technology prior to others. Rouse (2007) described early adopters as individuals who eagerly welcome new technology prior to others. Rouse (2007) went further to compare early adopters to innovators and said that early adopters didn't generally display the characteristics of risk-takers whereas innovators were brave and more willing to take risks, thereby conceiving new methodologies and technologies.

On the opposing end there are laggards and luddites, where laggards are reluctant or lazy to try new technology due to monetary limitations or absence of curiosity, and luddites profusely fear or dread new technology, particularly those they consider to threaten their current employment (Rouse, 2007) (Liu and Forsythe, 2011).

Gatignon and Robertson (1985) and Moreau et al. (2001) stated that early adopters tend to be quick learners and require lower cognitive effort to navigate their way through new products and systems.

Armstrong and Sweeney (1994), Gatignon and Robertson (1985) and Huh and Kim (2008) agreed that early adopters are more inclined to use the innovative functions of a new system and also find ways to work around the intricacies of a new system before late adopters. Compared to late adopters, early adopters tend to perceive less risk with the new system and therefore anticipate more functional and hedonic performance. They are also likely to respond more positively to available functions of the new system.

2.9 CONCLUSION

Information has become a valuable resource to manage organisations of today in a volatile, dynamic and turbulent business environment. It forms the basis of all decision making and if properly harnessed, information can improve efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness by providing insight into the internal and external environments of the organisations, whereby the organisation is better equipped to adapt and respond to opportunities and threat.

The development of Information Systems has led to quick and easy access to information which supports decision making at all levels of the organisation. Information Systems have evolved to deliver precise, relevant, timely, complete and cost-effective information, as demanded by the decision making process which further enables the organisation's planning, controlling, and operations functions to be executed successfully.

From the literature review above, it is clearly evident that Information Systems provides significant support in the decision making arena of an organisation, but little is said about staff's comprehension of the impact of Information Systems to improve efficiency, effectiveness and productivity in the workplace. This gap in literature will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Sekaran and Bougie (2013) defined business research as "an organized, systematic, data-based, critical, objective, inquiry or investigation into a specific problem, undertaken with the purpose of finding answers or solutions to it." Although Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002) said that research requires preparation, execution and examination to find answers to particular questions, they also caution the researcher to conduct the investigation in a systematic manner so that answers to questionnaires are reliable. This adds credibility to the report and is easy for others to understand (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

This chapter will build on the literature review of the previous chapter where the researcher has highlighted the academic requirement for research to be conducted on the role of Information Systems at a multifranchise motor vehicle dealership operation. Research into this subject matter is scarce and inadequate to provide explanations and answers to the current challenges encountered, therefore the need for this research project.

This chapter begins by explaining the reasons for non-disclosure of details regarding the organisation being investigated. Thereafter focus will shift on the complete research process along with a description of how the research methodology adopted was arrived at and further comparing qualitative to quantitative research methods. In the sections to follow, discussion will be around sampling methods, data collection strategies and data collection methods used in this study. The objectives of this study as well as the ethical considerations will be clearly outlined in this chapter.

3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANISATION

Due to the embargo placed by the gatekeeper on this research study, the researcher unfortunately could not divulge details of the organisation being investigated. For the purposes of this study, the organisation will be referred to as XYZ Company.

3.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

3.3.1 Aim

Information Systems play a fundamental role in the organisation from the daily operations to the business strategy plan. The aim of the study was to investigate whether sales executives understood the role of the CMS system within the overall strategy of the organisation.

3.3.2 Objectives

The objectives listed below were developed to answer the research questions stated in Chapter One:

1. To assess motor vehicles sales persons perceptions of the Customer Management System (CMS)
2. To evaluate management support of the Customer Management System (CMS)
3. To appraise the effectiveness of the Customer Management System (CMS)

3.4 SAMPLING

Bless et al. (2006) described sampling theory as an investigation of the relationship between a population and the samples extracted from that population. A sample is a chosen set of subjects that represent a larger group called a population. The trick is to sample in such a way that your sample fairly represents the whole population. A *population* is the entire set of objects or persons that the researcher wants to study. A *sample* is a portion of the whole population that is used to generalise the characteristics of the population, for example 200 secondary school learners selected from a list of scholars attending an Information Technology seminar. In this case each learner is referred to as the *unit of analysis*. *Population parameters* refer to specific values or quantities that relate to the population for example the average age of all secondary school learners. The subsequent values or quantities that relate to the sample, such as the average age of the 200 secondary school learners constituting the sample, are called *sample statistics* or just plain *statistics*. Statistics are estimates of population parameters (Bless et al., 2006).

Bless et al. (2006; p53) went further to state that samples chosen need to be truly representative of the population, for researchers to arrive at conclusions that are generalizable.

Researchers that find it difficult to get representative samples, need to be rigorous and honest in judging to what extent the nature of their samples enables them to generalise from their findings.

3.4.1 Probability and non-probability sampling

Once you have defined your population, you can embark on the sampling process. You have an option to choose between probability and non-probability sampling processes. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) distinguished between probability and non-probability sampling. In the case of probability sampling, all the elements in the population have an equal chance of being selected as a sample subject whereas in non-probability sampling, the elements of the population have an unknown chance of being selected as a sample subject. However discussion will only be on probability sampling as used in this research study.

3.4.1.1 Probability sampling

In this study a simple random sampling technique was adopted because every subject of the 'population' had an equal chance of being in the sample and every possible combination of individuals from within the 'population' was equally likely to be included (Davies, 2007).

Stratified random sampling was ignored because there was no need to combine simple random sampling with different subgroups within the population and cluster sampling was ignored because there was no need to group respondents into clusters.

3.5 THE SAMPLING PROCESS

Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p244) described the sampling process as selecting the adequate number of correct elements from a population, in such a manner that the elements chosen enables us to generalise the properties and characteristics of the entire population. The major steps involved are as follows:

i. Define the population

   This study was conducted specifically on motor vehicles sales executives employed at 6 multifranchise dealerships selling various motor vehicle brands including new and pre-owned motor vehicles. The motor vehicle retail sector is dominated by a males. Whittaker and Reeb-Whittaker (2009; p275) and Cato (2013) found the industry to be highly male-dominated from the dealership floors up to executives levels.

ii. Determine the Sampling Frame

Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p245) stated that a sampling frame is "a representation of all the elements in the population from which the sample is drawn". In this study the sampling frame was the organograms of each dealership detailing each staff member per department.

iii. Determine the Sampling Design

In this study, the researcher resorted to unrestricted probability sampling design (simple random sampling) as each element of the population had a 'known and equal' chance of being selected as a subject in the sample. However it must be noted that a sampling design wasn't absolutely necessary in this study as 100% of the population was taken as the sample size.

iv. Determine the Appropriate Sample Size

The sample size for a population of 60 provided by Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p 268) is 52. However in this study, 100% of the population was selected as the sample size which equated to 60 participants.

v. Execute the sampling process

The total (100%) population was selected as the sample size, so there was no further action required to execute the sampling process in this study.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002; pg85) referred to research methods as the orderly, focused and systematic gathering of data with the intention of extracting information from the data, to explain or solve research questions or problems'. They stated that researchers have to choose between qualitative or qualitative data collection and analysis methods, however the choice depends on the nature of data required for a specific research project. Quantitative research methodology is said to be scientific as it relies upon measurement and scales while Qualitative relies on data in worded formats for example interview records, transcripts of video recordings or focus groups, responses to open-ended enquiries and so forth. Qualitative is more reflective or experiential (exploratory) in nature. Although both methods serve a different purpose, they both use identical research skills, not necessarily in the same order and deliver valuable and useful results if conducted properly. Some researchers may combine both methods depending on the type of question to be answered (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2002) (Davies, 2007).

Table 3.1 below compares qualitative to quantitative methods:

Table 3.1: Differences between qualitative and quantitative methods

Qualitative Methods	Quantitative Methods
Importance on understanding	Importance on testing and authentication
Importance on understanding from participant's\informants viewpoint	Emphasis on facts and\or explanations for social occasions
Clarification and coherent approach	Common-sense and critical methodology
Explanations and evaluations in regular environment	Controlled evaluations
Subjective 'insider view' and nearness to data	Objective 'outsider view' away from data
Explorative focused	Hypothetical-deductive; concentration on hypothesis testing
Process focused	Result focused
Holistic orientation	Particularistic and systematic
Generalization by comparing features and contents of single organisms	Generalization by population participation

Source: Adapted from GHAURI, P. & GRONHAUG, K. 2002. *Research Methods in Business Studies - A Practical Guide,* Essex, England, Pearson Education Limited.

Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p3) noted that the quantitative approach involves data gathering in numeric form generally gathered through structured questions. Since the research approach for this study comprised of a structured questionnaire furnishing numerical data, a quantitative approach was undertaken (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

3.7 DATA COLLECTION APPROACH

Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p112) noted that the information source and the manner in which the data is gathered can have a profound effect on the results of the study conducted. Discussion will begin with the sources of data, followed by data collection methods.

There are two types of data sources, namely primary data and secondary data.

Primary data is data collected first-hand by the researcher specifically for the research problem at hand, while secondary data refers to information collected by someone other than the researcher, for purposes different to the current research problem (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2002).

The data presented in this study is primary data, as information collected is first-hand from motor vehicles sales person specifically for the study at hand.

Several data collection methods exist but each has its own advantages and disadvantages. Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p116), regarded "Interviewing, administering questionnaires, and observing people and phenomena" as the three foremost data collection methods in survey research. . The administration of questionnaires was chosen as a data collection method in this study.

Saunders et al. (2003; p280) stated that when questionnaires are used as a data collection instrument, each participant is requested to answer the same set of questions. They found this an efficient way of gathering replies from a large sample prior to quantitative analysis (Saunders et al., 2003).

As per Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p158), the different ways that questionnaires may be administered are:

- Personal administration
- Inserted in newspapers, magazines, or periodicals
- Postal
- Electronic administration using email

Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p116), stated that the value of the research is greatly enhanced by using the appropriate data collection methods. As this study was self-administered and completed personally by the respondents, the most economical and efficient method was to

administer the questionnaire electronically using the company's electronic mail domain. Personal administration and postal questionnaires would have proven both uneconomical and inefficient as the population in this study was easily accessible via the company electronic mail domain. Special arrangements were made to hand deliver and collect questionnaires to and from those respondents who did not have electronic mail accounts setup at the time of the study, however that need never arose.

3.8 CONSTRUCTION OF INSTRUMENT

Varying factors make a questionnaire effective and successful. Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p149), considered the language and phrasing of the questions, the arrangement of matters with regard to how the variables will be sorted, scaled and coded, and the overall appearance of the questionnaire, to be the three key areas in sound questionnaire design. Partington et al. (2002; p102) stated that by the use of a questionnaire, '*you only get the answers to the questions that you ask*.' This may seem obvious but is often taken for granted. Researchers also need to know what the 'right' questions are, to ask the respondents in the study (Partington et al., 2002).

The questionnaire design was based on the purpose of this study, which was to collect data from motor vehicle sales executives to answer the research question and address the research objectives stated in the literature review. The questionnaire followed a logical sequence (a copy of which is provided in Appendix 3).

Refer to Table 3.2 for a detailed description of how the various questions link to the respondents' demographics details and the formulated research objectives.

Table 3.2: Questions linked to demographics and research objectives

Objective Number	Objectives	Question Numbers
	Demographics details	1 to 6
1	To assess sales persons perceptions of the Customer Management System (CMS)	7 to12
2	To assess management support of the Customer Management System (CMS)	13 to 18

3	To assess the effectiveness of the Customer Management System (CMS)	19 to 25
	Respondents opinions on whether the Customer Management System (CMS) can be improved or not, with suggestions for improvement	26 to 28

As reflected in Table 3.2, the range of questions from the questionnaire sufficiently addressed all the research objectives. Guidelines considered as suggested by Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p149), were accurately worded questions, no double-barrelled or vague questions, no recall-dependent questions, no leading or loaded questions, no questions of social desirability and questions of appropriate length. However there was one open-ended question at the end of the survey for respondents to elaborate on their suggested improvements to the system being studied.

3.9 THE MEASUREMENT PROCESS

An experimental psychologist, Stevens (1951), cited in Salkind (2014), described measurement as the allocation of numeric digits to objects or events as per set rules. The measurement process entails making a judgement about a specific result according to rules. The significance of measurement cannot be overstressed in the research process. Salkind (2014; p159) noted that all the research work conducted would be meaningless if the data collected cannot be 'evaluated, assessed, classified, measured, ranked, gauged, graded, appraised, surveyed ordered, rated, sorted, estimated, arranged, or weighted' and so forth (Salkind, 2014).

Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p211), discussed two forms of attitudinal scales as follows:

- Rating scale - which has numerous response classifications which are used to prompt responses relating to the person, event or object studied
- Ranking scale - which compares between or among persons, events or objects, prompts the desired selections, and requires ranking between them

However these two forms of attitudinal scales must not be confused with the four forms of scales discussed below.

Sekaran and Bougie (2013; p212), further discussed four different forms of scales as follows:

- Nominal scale – permits the researcher to allocate subjects to certain groups or categories

- Ordinal scale – classifies the options in such a manner as to indicate differences among the numerous classifications and further rank-orders the classifications in some significant manner
- Interval scale – permits the researcher to execute certain arithmetic calculations on the data collected
- Ratio scale – measures the degree of the variance between two points and also taps the proportions in the variances

The varieties of scales used in this study are displayed in Table 3.3. A copy of the research questionnaire for this study is included in Appendix 3.

Table 3.3: Types of scales used in the questionnaire for this study

Scale	Type	Data Type	Question Numbers
Rating	Dichotomous	Nominal	16,19,21,23,26
	Multiple Choice, single response	Nominal	1,2,4,5,12,15,17,18, 20,24,25,27
	Likert Scale	Interval	7,8,9,13,14
	Multiple Choice, single response	Ratio	3,6,22
Ranking	Forced Choice	Ordinal	10,11

3.10 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In this case Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability of the questionnaire, however the Cronbach's Alpha calculation kept varying. Therefore the questionnaire was considered unreliable. Hence the data is not generalisable to the broader population of XYZ Company. However it illustrates the trends being experienced at XYZ Company.

3.11 PRETESTING OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Researchers should pilot test their questionnaire prior to actual data collection. Davies (2007; p47) stated that targeted research subjects must understand and be able to relate to the language and

phraseology used in the questionnaire. Saunders et al. (2003; p308) stated that pilot tests are used to streamline the questionnaire so that respondents don't experience difficulties in responding to the questionnaire and no difficulties will be faced in recording the data. Amendments can be made along the way until the researcher is satisfied that the questionnaire is close to perfect as possible.

The questions were loaded on the Questionpro program and the electronic hyperlink to the website was emailed to the pilot test group. The pilot test group consisted of three motor vehicles sales executives, the Regional Internet Sales Manager, the Regional Finance Manager and three accountants.

The following issues were raised by the pilot test group:

a) The Regional Internet Sales Manager initially commented that the questionnaire was too lengthy but she changed her mind once she actually completed the survey
b) One of the motor vehicles sales executives commented that the ranking questions were confusing. Unfortunately there was no other way to ask the question, however guidance was offered upon request during the administration of the questionnaire.

Overall there were no errors or problems identified in the pilot test that required changing. Problems were anticipated with the branching logic questions; however these were rectified prior to the pilot testing phase. All the data collected during the pilot test phase was deleted before the actual final data collection stage commenced.

3.12 ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTRUMENT

After the questionnaire has been designed, pilot tested and corrected the data collection can commence. This final phase is called '*administering*' the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2003)

The Internet self-administered questionnaire was chosen as the most economical and effective for this research project. The questionnaire was administered via an online survey program called Questionpro, where the electronic hyperlink to the website was emailed to each respondent on the email list provided by the Regional Internet Sales Manager. However most of the respondents did not receive the electronic hyperlink from Questionpro, in which case the researcher emailed the electronic hyperlink to all the respondents on the list provided. The respondents merely clicked on the hyperlink and they were directed to the survey webpage on Questionpro. The Questionpro program included a covering letter encouraging participants to take the survey. Motor Vehicle Sales Managers were emailed by

the researcher to encourage their staff (sales executives) to take the survey. The researcher minimised direct contact with respondents so as to not influence the survey or encourage any bias. The researcher did however assist telephonically with clarity required on ranking questions.

3.13 ANALYSIS OF DATA

Once data collection is complete, the data needs to be coded, keyed in and edited. The first step is for a categorisation scheme to be setup before the data can be typed in.

Then, outliers, inconsistencies, and blank responses need to be considered in some manner (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

The data preparation stage begins by coding data by allocating a numeric digit to the participants' responses so that data can be captured onto the database. Provision must also be made for non-responses. Once the responses have been coded, the raw data can be captured into a software program for analysis (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013).

Data editing entails identifying and rectifying inconsistent, illogical, or illegal data or omissions in the data collected. Data transformation may also be required to avoid problems in the future stages of the data analysis process.

Questionpro hosted the electronic survey questionnaire for this study. This survey program automatically saved the responses by respondents onto the database. Questionpro assigned a numeric code to each variable which was exported to Microsoft Excel and SPSS for further analysis.

3.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Neumann (2009; p62) stated that 'researchers are to have a solid professional and ethical obligation to act honestly at all times and in all circumstances. Salkind (2014; p149) commented further that the most important consideration to remember in research is that human beings serve as respondents. These human beings must be treated with respect and dignity irrespective of the outcome of the research project.

The researcher has taken the following actions in this study to remain ethical:

a) A letter of consent was obtained from the Regional Director of XYZ Company to go ahead with conducting this research project (Appendix 3)
b) Ethical clearance was granted from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in the form of an ethical clearance letter (Appendix 4).
c) Participants were given a covering letter detailing the aims of objective of the study and an informed consent was requested from all respondents in the preamble to the questionnaire (Appendix 1).

3.15 CONCLUSION

This chapter described in detail the steps involved in research methodology. The researcher went further to describe and motivate choices made with regards to sampling, questionnaire design, data collection and so forth. The presentation and discussion of the results of the data collected with follow in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a presentation of the primary data collected, following the research methodology guidelines set out in Chapter three. The data which was analysed using the SPSS software package will be presented in two sections; the first being the demographic profile of the motor vehicle sales executives that participated in the research project and second being the presentation of the findings relating to the objectives set out in Chapter two.

A total of 60 respondents started the survey and all 60 completed the entire questionnaire, resulting in a 100% completion rate. The average time taken to complete each was thirteen minutes, which was within the estimated range of fifteen minutes.

The primary data was exported to SPSS after incomplete questionnaires were deleted. The data is presented in graphical and table formats so as to make the understanding and interpretation of the results easier.

4.2 RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Cronbach's Alpha is a reliability coefficient test used to test the consistency of respondents' answers to all the items in a measure. However the result of the Cronbach's alpha kept varying therefore the questionnaire was considered to be unreliable. Future research should ensure that the questionnaire is subjected to reliability testing prior to the administration thereof.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

The demographic profiles of all the participants, all of whom are motor vehicles sales executives employed across six multifranchise motor vehicle dealerships in the Durban and surrounding area, are presented in this section. The demographic characteristics listed in Table 4.1 are age, gender, race, education level, length of employment as a motor vehicle sales executive and location of current employment (name of multifranchise motor vehicle dealership).

Table 4.1: Demographic data of respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	**48**	**80%**
Female	12	20%
Dealership based at		
Pinetown Multifranchise	12	20%
Durban Multifranchise	**16**	**26%**
Umhlanga Multifranchise	15	25%
Renault Pinetown	7	12%
Durban Central Multifranchise	6	10%
Kia Hillcrest	4	7%
Age		
Less than 21 years old	2	3%
21 - 30 years old	20	33%
31 - 40 years old	**22**	**37%**
41 - 50 years old	12	20%
51 – 60 years old	3	5%
Older than 60 years old	1	2%
Race		
Black	14	23%
White	15	25%

Coloured	2	3%
Indian	**29**	**49%**
Education level		
Less than Matric	2	3%
Matric	**38**	**63%**
Diploma	13	22%
Degree	6	10%
PGDip\Honours\Masters\Phd	1	2%
Length of employment as motor vehicles sales executive		
1 – 5 years	**44**	**73%**
6 – 10 years	9	15%
11 – 15 years	7	12%
Longer than 15 years	0	0%

4.3.1 Gender

Male participants comprised 80% of the population (Table 4.1) while females were 20%. This is line with male dominated workforce in the motor vehicle retail sector. In their study on the motor vehicle collision repair industry, Whittaker and Reeb-Whittaker (2009; p275) found the industry to be highly male-dominated. Similarly Cato (2013) found males to dominate the workforce from the motor vehicle dealership floors all the way up to the executives at motor vehicle companies (Whittaker and Reeb-Whitaker, 2009) (Cato, 2013).

4.3.2 Location of dealership

According to Table 4.1, 20% of the respondents were based at Pinetown Multifranchise, followed by 26% at Durban Multifranchise, 25% at Umhlanga Multifranchise, 12% at

Renault Pinetown, 10% at Durban Central Multifranchise and 7% at Kia Hillcrest. This is in line with the business requirement of each dealership, based on sales volumes and the number of brands at each dealership.

4.3.3 Age group

The majority (80%) of the respondents in Table 4.1 were found to be in the 21-50 years age group, followed by 51-60 years old at 5%, less than 21 years old at 3% and older than 60 years old at 2%. With the majority of the respondents in the 21-50 years age group, this indicates a mature workforce that may have responded to the study in a meaningful manner.

4.3.4 Race

According to Table 4.1, 49% of the respondents were Indian followed by 25% White, 23% Black and 3% Coloured. The greatest number of respondents being Indians at 49%, is in line with the demographics of the city of Durban and surrounding areas where the majority of Indians reside. While Mukherji (2011) stated that the highest concentration of overseas Indians are found in Durban, The South African History Online website found the largest Indian population in South Africa to reside in Durban (2011).

4.3.5 Education level

With regards to levels of education obtained by the respondents, it was found that the majority of respondents (63%) had matric qualifications, followed by 22% with diplomas, 10% with degrees, 3% with less than matric and 2% with Post-Graduate Diploma\Honours\Masters\Phd.

4.3.6 Length of employment in the motor industry as a sales executive

This result of 73% of the respondents being the 1-5 years range is somewhat deceptive. Most of the respondents have been motor vehicle sales executives for most of their working lives. With 57% of the respondents in the age group of 31-50 years old (37 % in 31-40 years old range and 20% in 41-50 years old range), the researcher expected the majority of respondents to lie between 6-10 years employment and 11-15 years employment range.

It also raises a concern that not a single respondent indicated ‘longer than 15 years’ employment, since 7% of the respondents were between the ages of 51-60 years old (5%) and ‘older than 60 years old’ (2%). The researcher noted that the respondents may have

misunderstood the question to be length of employment at the current dealership, instead of length of employment in the motor industry.

4.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Sekaran and Bougie (2013) stated that the objectives of the study explain why the research is being conducted. Although the objectives should clearly communicate the focus of the study, the objectives should remain as brief as possible. Each of the objectives of the study were linked to various questions in the questionnaire, therefore ensuring that there was sufficient and adequate data collected to answer the research question. The presentation and discussion of the results of the data analysis will be set out below.

4.4.1 Objective One – Sales executives' perceptions of the customer management system (CMS)

The first objective of the study was to assess the sales executives' perceptions of the CMS system. This objective measures perceptions like ease of understanding and ease of use. Further measures include assessing the CMS system as a tool to increase productivity, followed by advantages and disadvantages of loading customer details on the CMS system.

4.4.1.1 Level of ease of understanding the CMS system

To determine whether the CMS system was understandable to all users, respondents were requested to indicate their level of ease or difficulty understanding the CMS system.

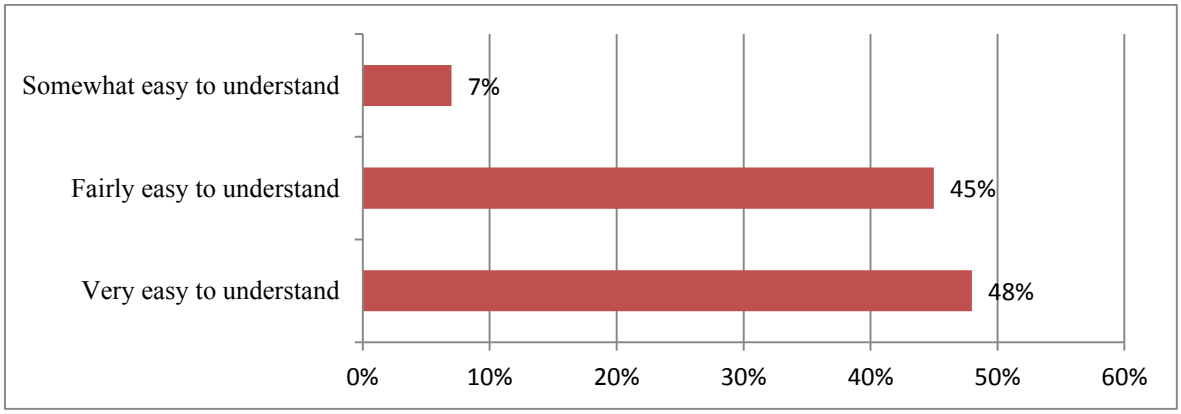

Figure 4.1: Levels of ease of understanding the CMS system

According to Figure 4.1, 93% of the respondents believed that the CMS system was very easy to understand and fairly easy to understand, while 7% believed it to be somewhat easy

to understand. Alter (2008) believed that management should evaluate the level of user support provided by the Information System in terms of for example data entry, information access or hedonistic capabilities. These observations may lead the organisation to identifying positive or negative effects of the information system on the single user, multiple users or the entire organisation. In this case the majority of the respondents found the CMS system very easy to fairly easy to understand, which leads to positive impacts on the individual users and the organisation (Petter et al., 2012).

4.4.1.2 Level of ease of use of the CMS system

To determine whether the CMS system was easy to operate and navigate through, respondents were requested to indicate their level of ease of use of the CMS system.

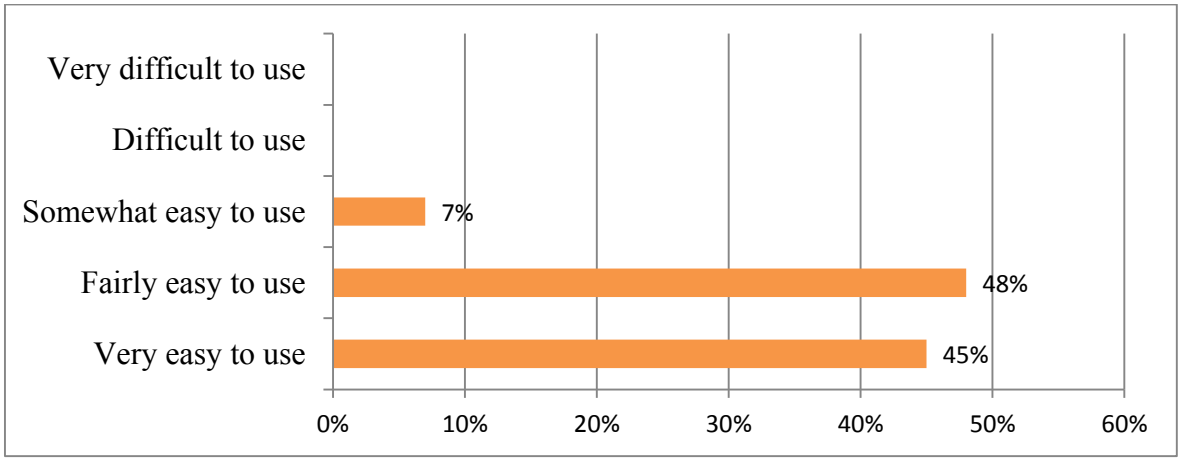

Figure 4.2: Levels of ease of use of the CMS system

Bonera (2011) used the technology acceptance model (TAM), to describe users' choices to use or not to use new technology based on their initial perceptions of the technology, with perceived ease of use and usefulness of the new technology being seen as strong indicators of attitudes and intentions of potential users. According to Figure 4.2, 93% of the respondents believed that the CMS system was very easy to fairly easy to use. Based on the TAM, this positive result is welcomed against a backdrop of acceptance of innovation and new technology at a workplace (Bonera, 2011).

4.4.1.3 CMS system as a tool to assist sales executives in their jobs

Respondents were asked to indicate if they found the CMS system to be a useful tool to assist them in their jobs.

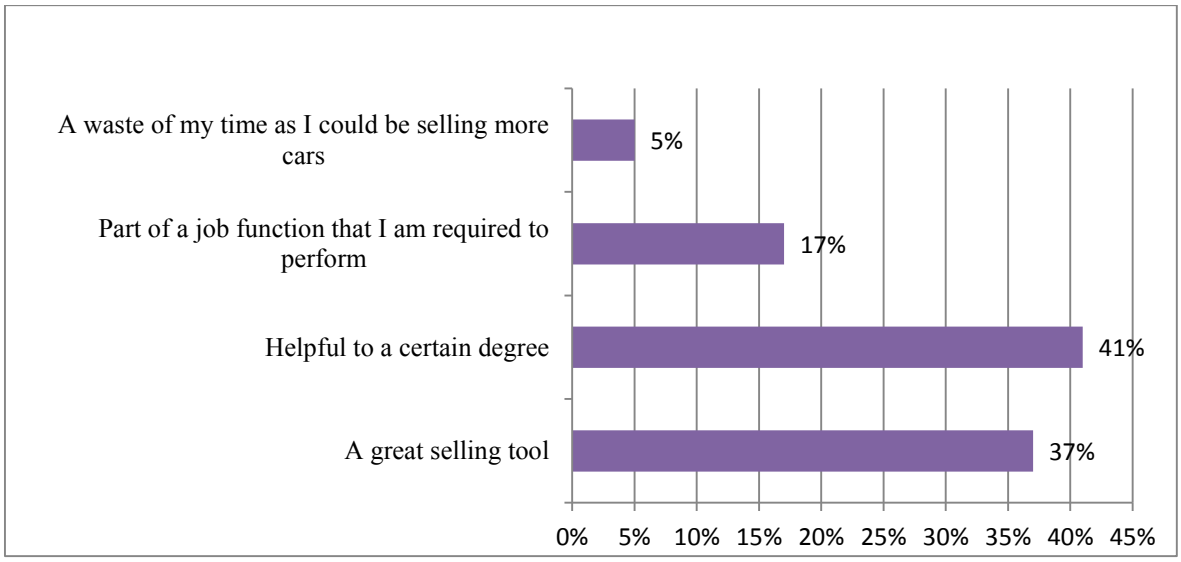

Figure 4.3: CMS system as a tool to assist sales executives in their jobs

As a tenet of the UTAUT, Liu and Forsythe (2011) recognised performance expectancy as the most important element to influence intention to use the system and actual usage of the system. Venkatesh et al. (2003) described performance expectancy to be the extent to which an individual perceives the system to assist him or her to accomplish achievements in job performance. According to Figure 4.3, the majority (78%) of the respondents believed the CMS system to be a great selling tool and helpful to a certain degree. Respondents believe that the CMS system is a tool that will assist them to achieve job performance.

4.4.1.4 Ranking of advantages to sales executives of loading customer details on the CMS system

In this case, respondents were requested to rank what they believed were the advantages of loading customer details on the CMS system. Their opinions on the most valuable advantages are illustrated in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Ranking of advantages to sales executives of loading customer details on the CMS system

Rank	Advantages	Mean
1	I can track my customers	2.03
2	I have a database of all my customers	2.32

3	It keeps my superiors happy	2.60
4	It meets my commission payment criteria	3.05

The data in Table 4.2 has been listed in order of their mean scores of each grouping, where the closer to 1 each mean score is for that category, the more the advantage was valued by the respondent. It is evident that sales executives being able to track their customers (with a mean score of 2.03), was the most valuable followed by having a database of their customers (mean score of 2.32). Keeping their superiors happy (with a mean score of 2.60) was the next most valuable advantage, while meeting commission payment criteria (mean score of 3.05) was ranked as the advantage of least value.

The response above is indicative of the respondents' attitude towards the CMS system as a tool to effectively manage their customers, instead of purely satisfying management & commission payment criterion.

4.4.1.5 Ranking of disadvantages to sales executives of loading customer details on the CMS system

Respondents were asked to rank what they believed were the disadvantages of loading customer details on the CMS system. Their opinions on the most disadvantageous options are illustrated in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Ranking of disadvantages to sales executives of loading customer details on the CMS system

Rank	Disadvantages	Mean
1	My manager can take disciplinary action against me for not updating CMS daily	2.20
2	It is purely an administration function	2.43
3	Other persons have access to my customer details and can steal my deals	2.45
4	It wastes time that I could be using to sell cars	2.92

The data in Table 4.3 has been listed in order of their mean scores of each grouping, where the closer to 1 each mean score is for that category, the more prominent the disadvantage was regarded by the respondent. It is evident that manager taking disciplinary action against the respondent for not updating CMS daily (with a mean score of 2.20), was the most disadvantageous followed by it being purely an administration function (mean score of 2.43). Other persons having access to their customer details and can steal their deals (with a mean score of 2.45) was the next least disadvantageous, while the system being a waste of time when they could be selling more cars (mean score of 2.92) was ranked as overall least disadvantageous.

With regards to the response of the manager taking disciplinary action against the respondent for not updating CMS daily as well as the response of it being a purely administrative function, management needs to educate the sales executives on the role of the CMS system in the overall organisational strategy. In this way sales executives will better understand that they are being managed in a particular manner to make the CMS system more effective.

Regarding the respondents concerns about the clients' details being 'stolen' by other users of the CMS system, management needs to review the security parameters on the CMS system, restricting customer details access to all users, only allowing management access.

4.4.1.6 Advantage to manager when customer details are loaded on the CMS system

Respondents were requested to indicate their perception of the advantage to their manager when they load customer details onto the CMS system.

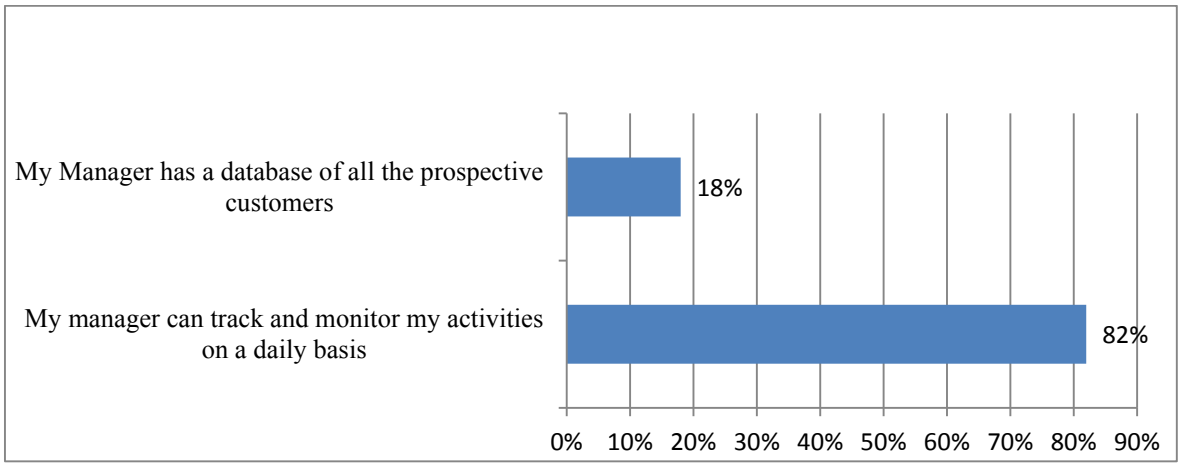

Figure 4.4: Advantage to manager when customer details are loaded on the CMS system

According to Figure 4.4, 82% of the respondents indicated that the advantage to their manager when customer details are loaded onto the CMS system is that the manager can track and monitor their activities on a daily basis, while the remaining 18% indicated that the manager has a database of all the prospective customers.

Respondents have failed to see the importance of the customer database to the decision making process; instead the CMS system is viewed as a measure to track and monitor staff's productivity on a daily basis. Decision makers receive and analyse information at various levels of the organisation and for different purposes. Once the database is populated with customer details, managers can extract vital information to make operational and strategic decisions. Lucey (1997) viewed management Information Systems as a means of transforming data into information for decision making.

4.4.2 Objective Two – To evaluate management support of the customer management system (CMS)

The second objective of this study was to evaluate management support of the CMS system. This objective measures the adequacy of computer equipment and training provided followed by measurement of management support in driving the CMS system

4.4.2.1 Adequacy of computer equipment

To determine if respondents had the necessary resources to perform their job function, respondents were asked to indicate if the computer equipment allocated to them to perform their job function on the CMS system was adequate.

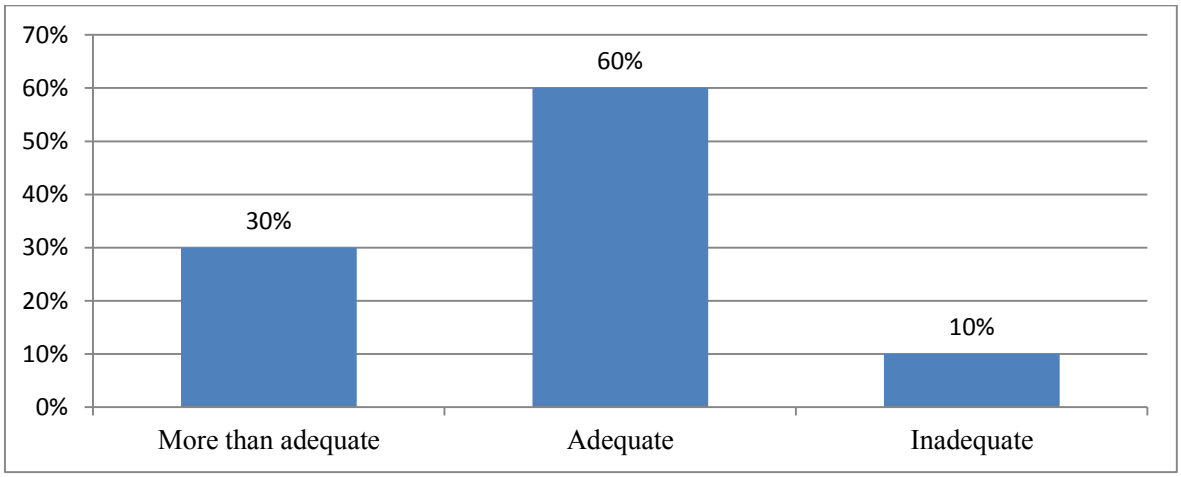

Figure 4.5: Adequacy of computer equipment provided to perform job function on the CMS system

Liu and Forsythe (2011) stated that the UTAUT model identified facilitating conditions as a central determining factor impacting system usage. However, the theory was passively theorized as the extent to which an individual trusts that an organisational and technical structure exists to support use of the system. The majority (90%) of the respondents in Figure 4.5 believed that the computer equipment allocated to them to perform their job function on the CMS system was adequate and more than adequate. None of the respondents chose the extreme of very inadequate. Therefore it is evident that the computer equipment as part of the organisational and technical infrastructure of the organisation, is regarded as adequate to facilitate the respondents' use of the CMS system (Liu and Forsythe, 2011).

4.4.2.2 Adequacy of training provided on CMS system

Respondents were asked to indicate if the training received on the CMS system was adequate.

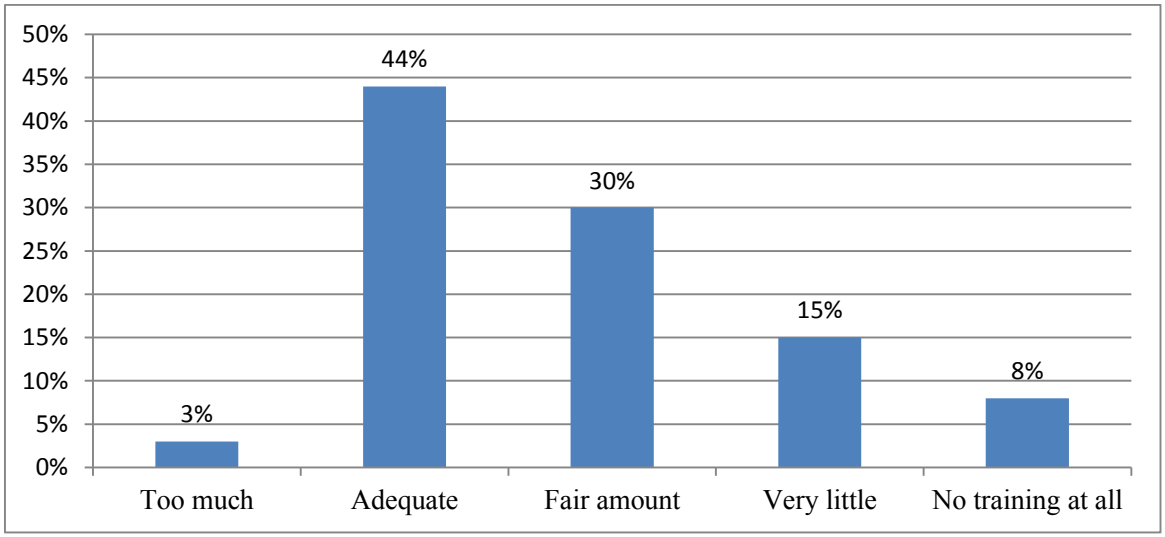

Figure 4.6: Adequacy of training provided on the CMS system

Thompson et al. (2013) stated that staff should be guided by management and provided with the necessary resources to roll out strategies. Similarly in this case, training should be afforded to all staff as a necessary resource to perform their job functions. According to Figure 4.6, 77% of the respondents believed that the training received on the CMS system was fair to adequate. There does not seem to be a dire need for training although the remaining 23 respondents had indicated that they have had little to no training. This could be due to the erratic staff turnover at multifranchise motor dealerships where training may not be carried out immediately on commencement of employment. Training is usually

gradual on-the-job training unless specific training sessions are arranged (Thompson et al., 2013).

4.4.2.3 Responsibility of driving the use of the CMS system

Respondents were asked to indicate who they regarded as the person that should be driving the use of the CMS system.

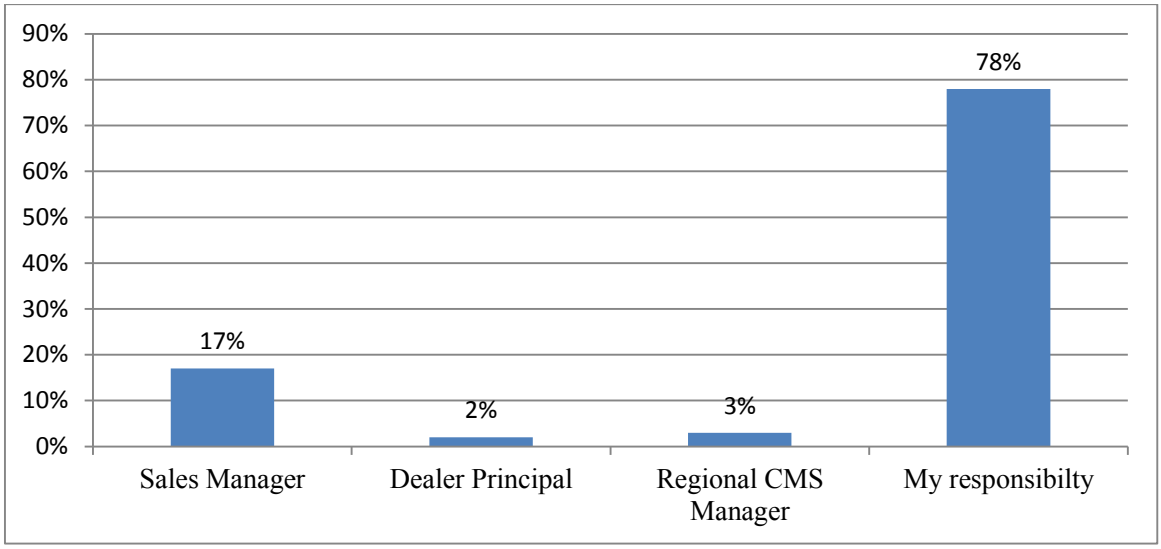

Figure 4.7: Person responsible for driving the use of the CMS system

According to Figure 4.7, 17% of the respondents believed that the person responsible for driving the use of the CMS system was the sales manager, while 2% believed the person to be the Dealer Principal, followed by 3% that believed the person to be the Regional Internet Sales Manager and the majority (78%) believed that person to be themselves. This result finds that management is not driving the use of the CMS system, therefore the sales executive take it upon themselves to drive the use.

4.4.2.4 Does the person chosen really drive the use of the CMS system

Respondents were requested to indicate whether whomever they regarded as the person that should be driving the use of the CMS system (in previous question), is really driving the use or not.

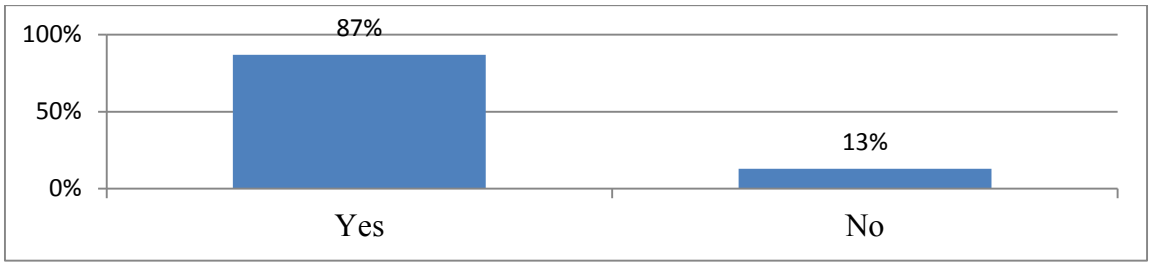

Figure 4.8: Does the person chosen as responsible for driving the use of the CMS system, really drive the CMS system

According to Figure 4.8, 87% of the respondents believed that the person chosen as responsible for driving the use of the CMS system is really driving the use.

This result links with the previous question where respondents indicated themselves to be driving the use of the CMS system, therefore it makes sense that they would believe that they are personally driving the use of the system

4.4.2.5 Does the person chosen really drive the use of the CMS system

Respondents were requested to indicate the reason why they regarded the person chosen to drive use of the CMS system (in previous question), really drives the use of the system.

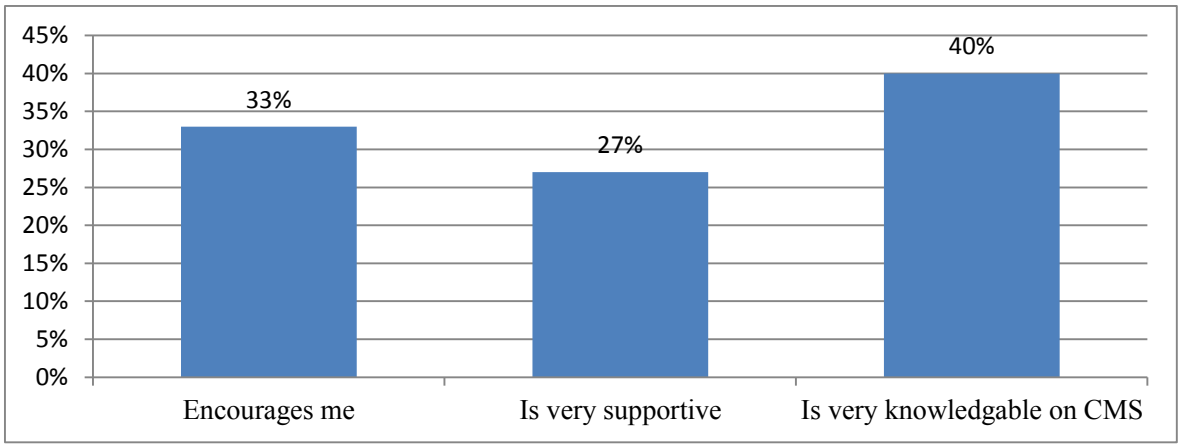

Figure 4.9: Reason why person chosen as driver of use of the CMS system

According to Figure 4.9, 33% of the respondents indicated that the chosen person encourages them, while 27% indicated that the person is very supportive and 40% indicated that the person is very knowledgeable on the CMS system. This result is not very conclusive as the majority of the respondents are describing themselves

Further investigation was required to determine if a relationship existed between respondents' indication of the person that should be driving the use of the CMS system and the respondents' indications of the CMS system as a tool to increase productivity. These results are illustrated in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Cross tabulation between respondents' indication of the person that should be driving the use of the CMS system and the respondents' indications of the CMS system as a tool to increase productivity

		I believe that the responsibility of driving the use of CMS belongs to….				
		Sales Manager	Dealer Principal	Regional CMS Manager	My Respons-ibility	Total
Loading customer details on CMS is	A great selling tool	8%	0%	2%	26%	36%
	Helpful to a certain degree	3%	0%	2%	37%	42%
	Part of the job function that I am required to perform	5%	0%	0%	12%	17%
	Another way of creating extra work for me	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	A waste of my time, as I could be selling more cars	0%	2%	0%	3%	5%
	Total	16%	2%	4%	78%	100%
	n = 60	Chi-square = 23.269			p = 0.03	

As depicted in table 4.4, the p value is 0.03 which means that the finding in the table is significant and is not due to chance. This relationship implies that the majority (37%) of the respondents believed that it was their personal responsibility to drive the use of the system and that the system was helpful to a certain degree, followed by 26% believing that it was

their personal responsibility to drive the use of the system and that the system was a great selling tool. This finding indicates that respondents value the CMS system as a helpful tool to carry out their job functions as well as a great sales tool, but also believe that it is their personal responsibility to utilize the CMS systems to their advantage and not rely on management to drive the use thereof.

4.4.2.6 The reason the person chosen as responsible for driving the use of the CMS system, really does not drives the CMS system

Respondents were requested to indicate the reason why they regarded the person chosen to drive use of the CMS system (in previous question), really does not drive the use of the system.

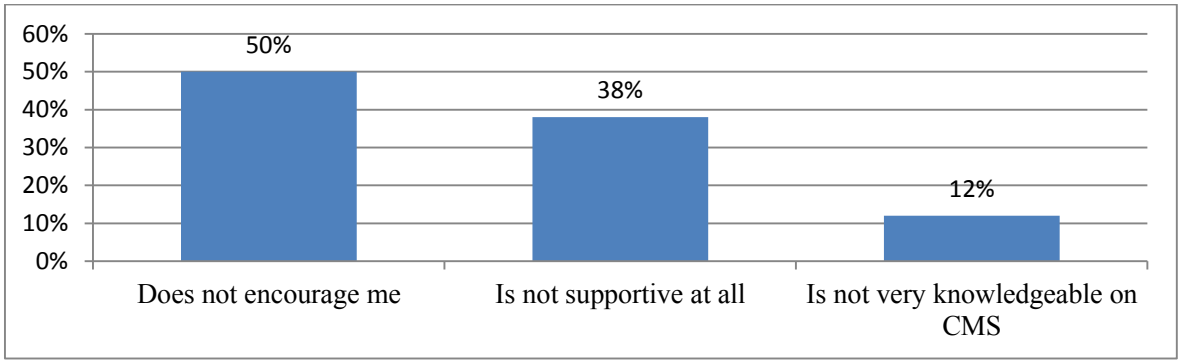

Figure 4.10: Reason why person chosen as driver of use of the CMS system

According to Figure 4.10, 50% of the respondents indicated that the person chosen did not encourage them, while 38% indicated that the person is not supportive at all and 12% indicated that the person is not very knowledgeable on the CMS system.

4.4.3 Objective Three – To appraise the effectiveness of the customer management system (CMS)

The third objective of this study was to appraise the effectiveness of the CMS system. This objective measures the accuracy of information loaded onto the CMS system, the sales executives' awareness of CMS information used for sms and email, the number of deals concluded from CMS advertising specials and sales executives' perceptions of the effectiveness of CMS.

4.4.3.1 The accuracy of customer information loaded onto the CMS system

Respondents were asked to indicate whether customer information loaded onto the CMS system is accurate or not.

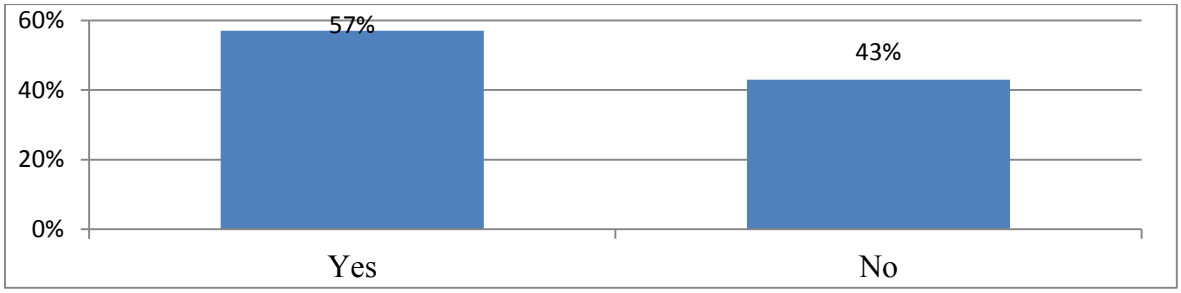

Figure 4.11: Accuracy of the customer information loaded on the CMS system

Leonard (2008) stated that MIS aids the decision making process by providing knowledge and information to assist the organisation control, plan and operate more effectively. Ada and Ghaffarzadeh (2015) stated that decision making depended heavily on inputs from management Information Systems. According to Figure 4.11, 57% of the respondents believed that the customer information loaded on the CMS system is accurate, while 43% believed that it is inaccurate. Although this is the minority response, this raises a major concern that 43% believed the information loaded to be inaccurate. The accuracy of information affects the quality of decisions (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015).

4.4.3.2 The reasons why customer information loaded onto the CMS system is sometimes inaccurate

Respondents were requested to indicate why they indicated on the previous question that customer information loaded onto the CMS system was sometimes inaccurate.

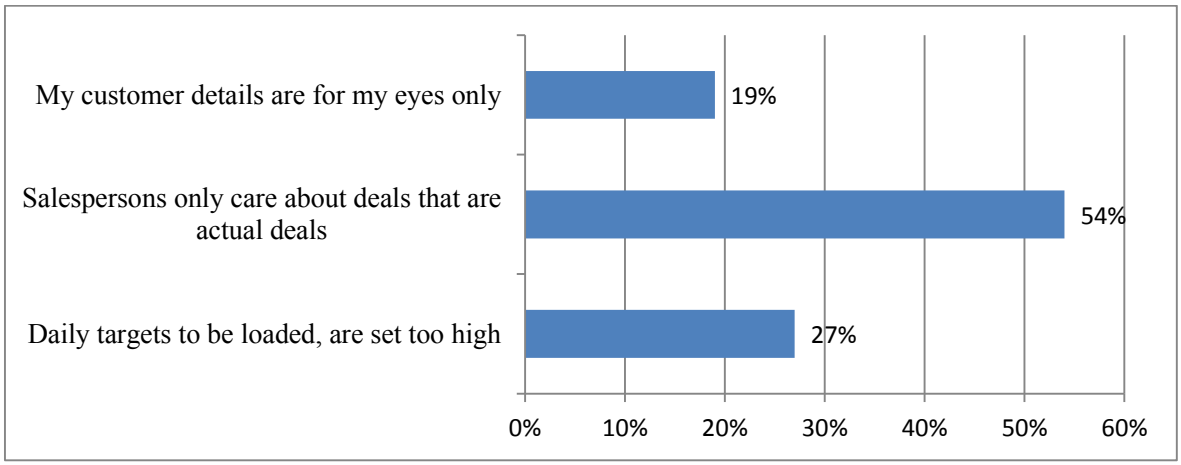

Figure 4.12: Customer information loaded on the CMS system is sometimes inaccurate

According to Figure 4.12, 54% of the respondents believed that sales executives only care about deals that are actual deals, followed by 27% that believed that daily targets are set too high, and while 19% believed that the customer details are for the respective respondent's access only.

Asemi et al. (2011) stated that although MIS is an enterprise-wide task to deliver information that supports decision making, the key feature behind MIS is to ensure an uninterrupted flow of information to management. Thereafter decisions are made from data and information received from the MIS. It is clear that respondents concentrate more on the customers that they have concluded deals with and little care is taken to populate the database with all other customers including 'lost deals'. Furthermore because daily targets are set too high, respondents may resort to loading inaccurate information on the CMS system to avoid disciplinary action for non-performance. This inaccurate and incomplete information could adversely affect decision making efforts (Ada and Ghaffarzadeh, 2015)

4.4.3.3 Awareness of customer information on CMS used to do advertising specials via sms and email

Respondents were requested to indicate whether they were aware that management utilizes the customer information that is captured on CMS to do advertising specials via sms and email.

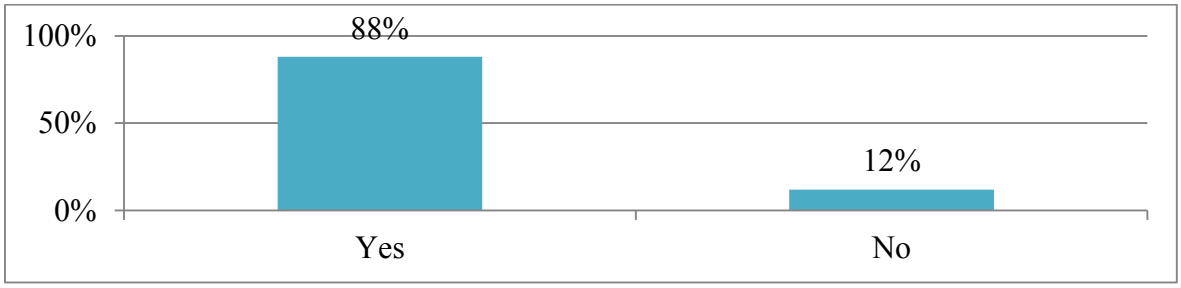

Figure 4.13: Awareness of customer information on CMS used to do advertising specials

According to Figure 4.13, 88% of the respondents were aware that management utilizes the customer information that is captured on CMS to do advertising specials via sms and email. This positive response reflects the users' awareness of the usefulness of a populated database. Petter et al. (2012) spoke of the 'Customer-Focused Era' of the 2000s and beyond, where organisations' focus shifted onto the customer.

Companies like Amazon.com, Google, Facebook, Microsoft Bing and Yahoo! have resorted to customizing customers' experiences by offering them products based on their individual purchase histories and website viewing habits. Similarly the data on the CMS system can be channelled for sales and marketing purposes.

Further investigation was required to determine if a relationship existed between respondents' perception of the effectiveness of CMS and the respondents' knowledge of managements' use of information captured on the CMS system to affect such advertising campaigns. These results are illustrated in Table 4.5

Table 4.5: Cross tabulation between respondents' indication of the effectiveness of CMS and respondents' knowledge of managements' use of information captured on the CMS system, to effect advertising campaigns

		Do you believe that the CMS system is effective…		
		Yes	No	Total
Are you aware that management utilizes the customer information that you capture on CMS to do advertising specials…	Yes	80%	8%	88%
	No	5%	7%	12%
	Total	85%	15%	100%
	n = 60	Chi-square = 11.039		p = 0.00

As depicted in Table 4.5, the p value is 0.00 which means that the finding in the table is significant and is not due to chance and that a significant relationship exists between the two variables.

This relationship implies that the majority (80%) of the respondents that believed that the CMS system was effective were aware that management utilized the information captured on the CMS system to effect advertising campaigns via sms and email. This significant

positive relationship can encourage management to further explore the CMS system as a marketing channel.

4.4.3.4 Number of deals concluded on average per month by sales executives from the CMS advertising specials via sms and email

Respondents were asked to indicate on average (per month), how many deals they concluded from the CMS advertising specials via sms and email

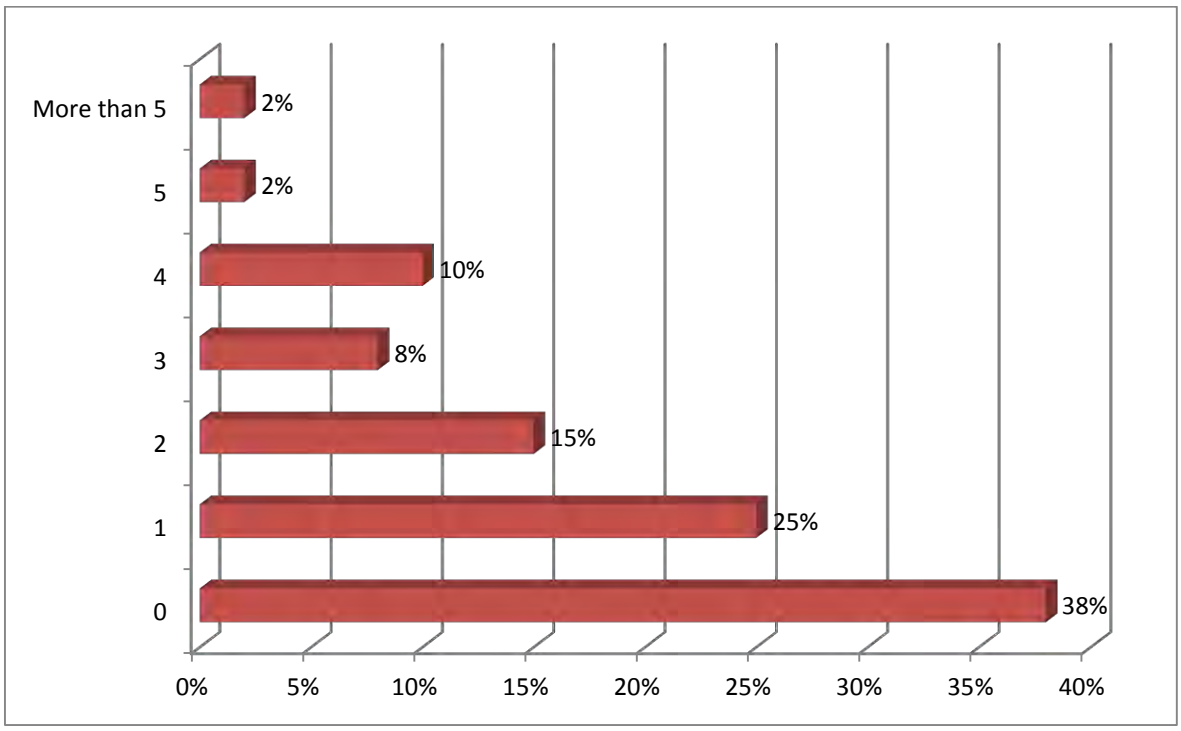

Figure 4.14: Number of deals concluded on average per month by sales executives from the CMS advertising specials via sms and email

Attention is drawn to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), where the belief of success or failure plays a vital role in the execution of an act. The most difficult task may be attained if success is perceived to be attainable. With the majority (38%) of the respondents indicating that they did not conclude any deals from the CMS advertising specials, the question that needs to be raised is "Do sales executives believe they can close deals from CMS advertising specials?" The success of the result depends on sales executives' beliefs that they can achieve the result (Bonera, 2011)

4.4.3.5 Sales executives' perception of the effectiveness of the CMS system

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the CMS system was effective or not.

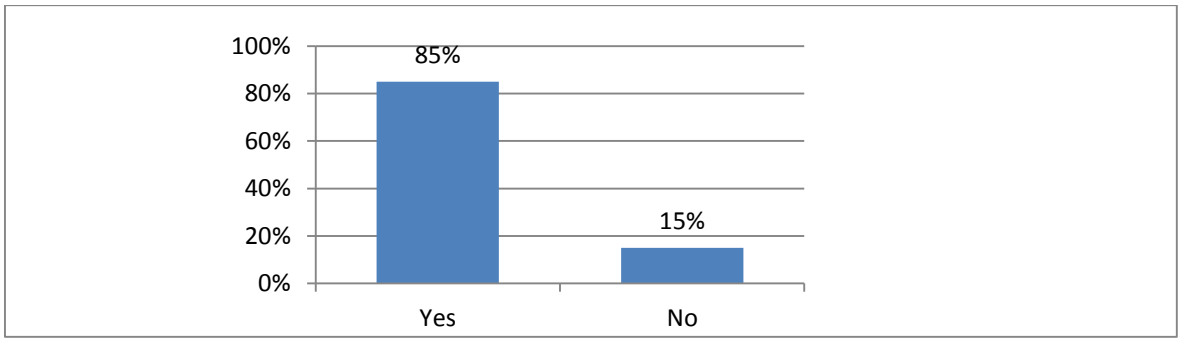

Figure 4.15: Sales executives' perception of the effectiveness of the CMS system

According to Figure 4.15, majority (85%) of the respondents indicated that the CMS system was effective

4.4.3.6 Reasons for CMS system indicated to be effective

Respondents were asked to indicate why they indicated CMS system to be effective

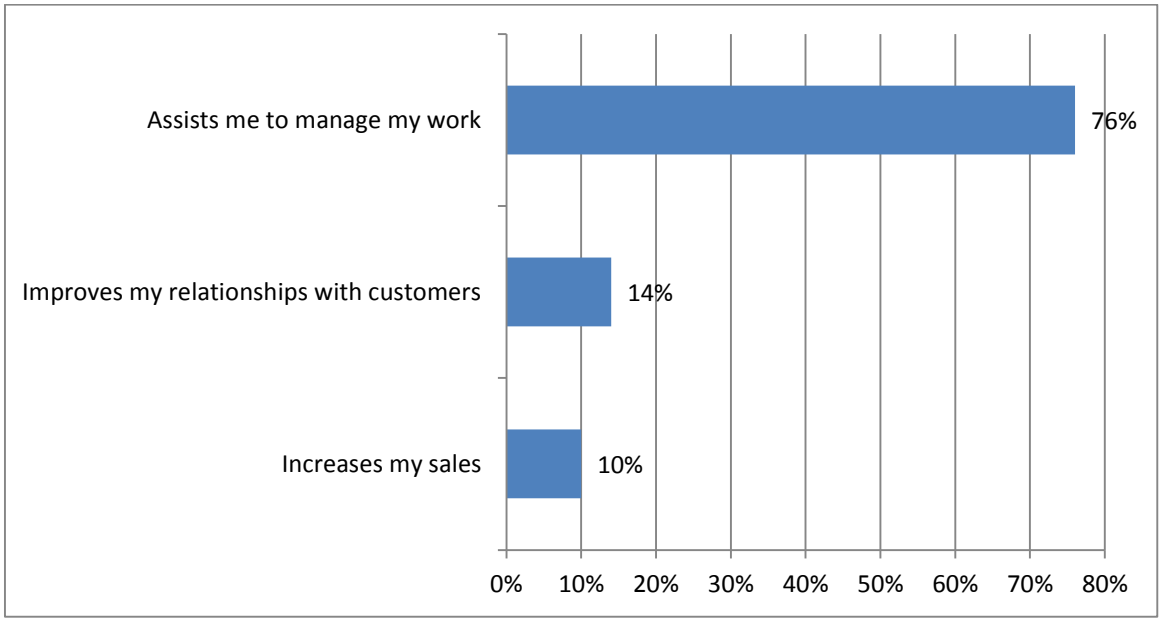

Figure 4.16: Sales executives' perception of the effectiveness of the CMS system

Bartis and Mitev (2008) noted that perceptions of an information system may vary between individual users and user groups, with the opinion of success at one end and failure at the other. These responses according to Figure 4.16, relate to the users' perceptions of the value of the CMS system.

From the previous question, 51 (85%) respondents indicated that the CMS system was effective, with 76% indicating in this question that the CMS system assists to manage their work, followed by 14% who indicated that the CMS system improves relationships with

customers, while 10% indicated that the CMS system increases their sales. Majority of the users of the CMS system believe the system to be effective.

4.4.3.7 Reasons for CMS system indicated to be ineffective

Respondents were asked to indicate why they indicated CMS system to be ineffective.

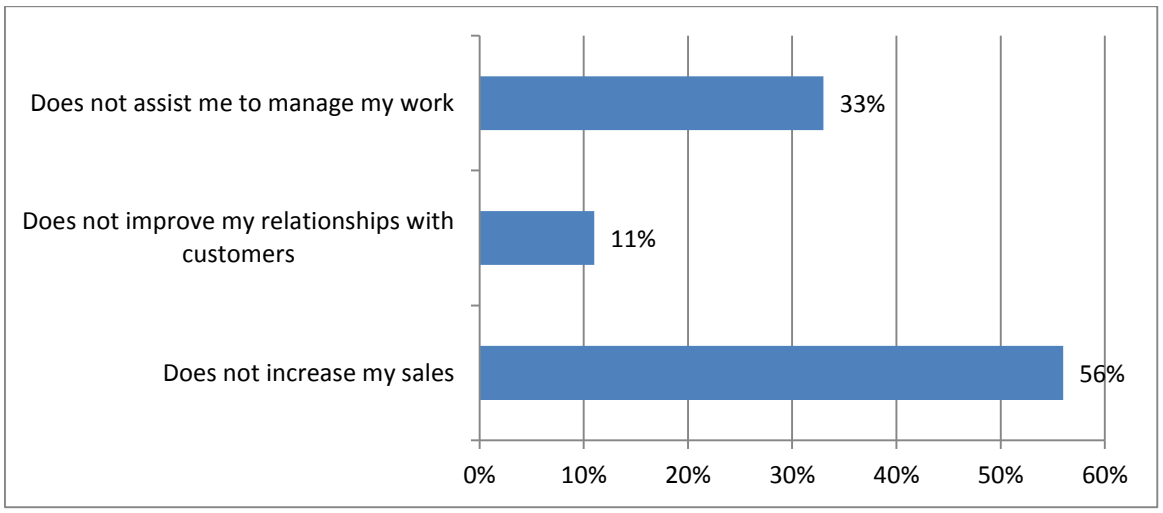

Figure 4.17: Sales executives' reasons for the ineffectiveness of the CMS system

This 15% of the population that indicated that the CMS system is ineffective should not be ignored. This is an opportunity for management to improve efficiency and productivity by training and educating users on the possible value add of the CMS system.

According to Figure 4.17, the majority (56%) indicated that the CMS system was ineffective because it did not increase their sales. The question that needs to be raised is "is this due to resistance to change?" In this case, management needs to ascertain if the sales executives are reluctant to move out of their comfort zones or alternatively assess the calibre of sales executives for future training initiatives to upskill them.

4.4.4 Suggested improvements to the CMS system

4.4.4.1 Can the CMS system be improved?

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the CMS system could be improved.

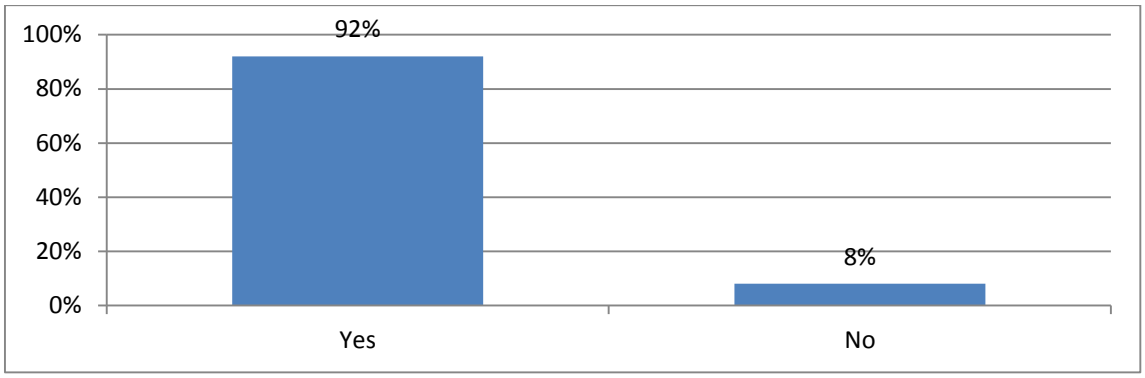

Figure 4.18: Can the CMS system be improved?

According to Figure 4.18, 92% of the respondents indicated that the CMS system could be improved, while 8% indicated that it could not be improved. This is clearly indicative of the respondents' appeal to improve the system.

4.4.4.2 Ways in which the CMS system can be improved

Respondents were asked to indicate how the CMS system could be improved.

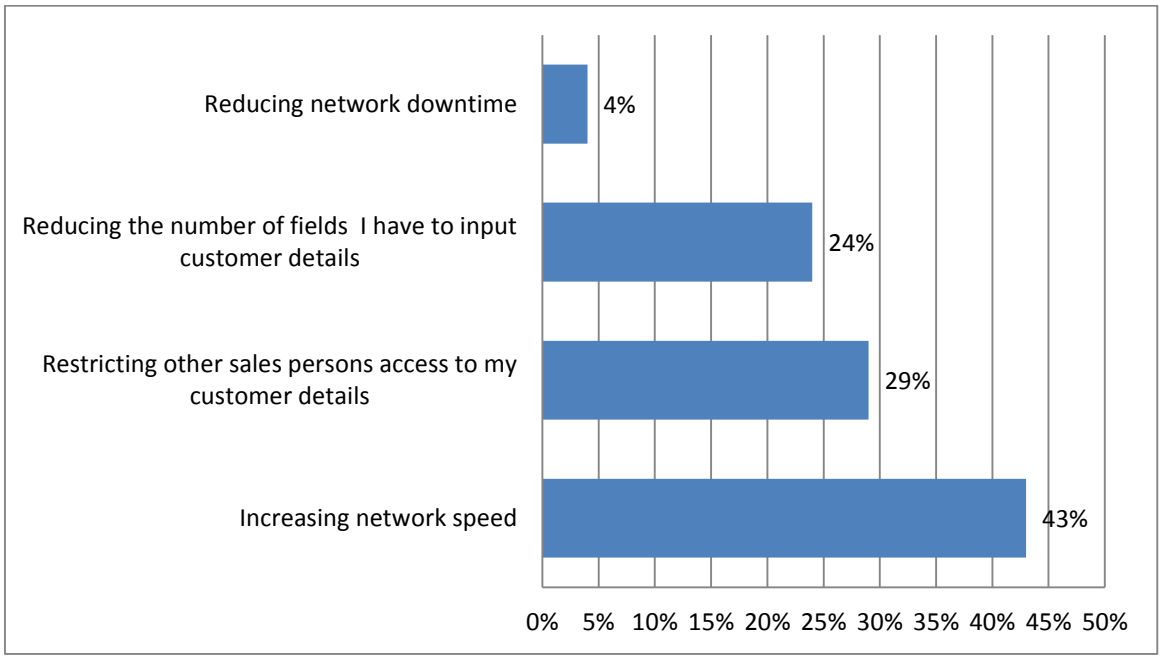

Figure 4.19: Can the CMS system be improved?

According to Figure 4.19, 29% of the respondents indicated that one of the ways in which the CMS system could be improved is by restricting other sales persons access to each other's customer details, while 24% indicated reducing the number of input fields to capture,

followed by 43 % indicating increasing network speed and 4% indicating reducing network downtime.

Although 43% indicated network speed was too slow which needs to be addressed by management, the researcher's concern is focused on the 29% that indicated restricting users' access to each other's customer details. Respondents fear that other users may steal their customers, which may lead to respondents capturing incorrect customer information onto the CMS system to evade theft. As mentioned earlier, management needs to review the security settings on the CMS system to ensure confidentiality of customer's details and improving confidence that all data is secure on the CMS system.

4.4.5 Further suggestions for improvements to the CMS system

This was an open-ended question where respondents were given an opportunity to provide details of any further improvements that were not covered in the research questionnaire. The suggestions were taken directly from Questionpro, with minor corrections done for spelling, grammar and sentence construction. The edited version was then taken to Nvivo where the 'Word Cloud' below was extracted from the raw data

Figure 4.20: Word Cloud on suggestions to improve the CMS system

From the word cloud above it is evident that the respondents have many suggestions that need attention, however focus will be on the top three.

4.4.5.1 Sales leads

Kotler and Keller (2012) stated that sales staff may be overwhelmed with too many leads or become frustrated with too few or low quality leads. They also spoke of the marketing department finding the right balance between the quantity and quality of leads thereby managing sales leads. In this study, middle management is tasked with the responsibility of effectively managing sales leads control and distribution.

In this category, respondents suggested a leads management system be integrated into the CMS system. The respondents concerns are that the Internet leads are not being evenly distributed and not being managed effectively to increase sales. Currently Internet leads are being allocated to more than one person. One respondent stated that "Internet lead distribution is not monitored properly and can lead to inconveniencing the client as multiple people might contact the same customer." Furthermore, access to leads is limited to the respondents' desktop computers and laptops (for a handful of staff only). A respondent stated "with regards to Internet leads, if you aren't near your computer and cannot click received, your lead is reallocated to someone else, even if you have contacted the client via your cell phone". Another respondent suggested "an easier process to allocate leads, where we can acknowledge leads on our mobile devices". From the suggestions above, it is evident that sales may suffer due to the poor management of leads distribution and customer follow up. Management needs to further consider access to mobile devices in order for respondents to access their leads timeously.

Another factor that surfaced, as noted by a respondent was the duplication and integrity of Internet leads. Respondents suggested that "the CMS system should restrict users from loading duplicates as it is not a true reflection of current or lost leads". The call for the eradication of duplication is quite valid as the 'integrity' of the database is being compromised; duplicate records will distort management reports and adversely affect decision making.

Further suggestions were for the workshop and finance departments to be linked to the CMS system to source more leads and qualify customers for credit worthiness. This suggestion is valid as it creates an avenue to increase sales leads that can be converted into sales transactions and improves effectiveness by giving customers 'financial clearance' for vehicle financing options, prior to official bank finance applications.

4.4.5.2 Information

In an attempt to save time and effort, a respondent suggested to "copy and paste customer information on the CMS system." Another responded called for "decreasing the number of windows to one, to complete the information." This area calls for management to streamline the data input process to reduce unnecessary data input fields and improve the ease of use. However due consideration must be given for data input fields that are deemed absolutely necessary for operational and strategic purposes.

4.4.5.3 Follow ups

This area suggests building a customer follow up system into the CMS system. The respondents stated that "follow ups do not carry over to the following month". Another respondent suggested "the CMS system must remind sales executives to follow up with customers every 90 days". This suggestion stems from the lack of the CMS system to track and monitor customer follow ups required. Respondents feel that more sales can be concluded if customer follow ups are carried out effectively.

4.5 KEY FINDINGS

This study endeavoured to provide answers to the question on the role of the Customer Management System (CMS) at a multifranchise motor dealership operation. The question was divided into three objectives. Table 4.6 below provides a summary of the key findings for each objective.

Table 4.6: Summary of key findings per objective

	Objectives Set	Findings	Section
1	To assess sales persons' perceptions of the Customer Management System (CMS)	• The majority of the respondents indicated that the CMS system was easy to use and understand and also indicated that the CMS system was a great selling tool and helpful to a certain extent. • When respondents were asked to rank the advantage of loading customer details onto the CMS system, the majority chose as their first and second choice, that they can track their customers and have a database of their customers. • When asked to rank the disadvantages, respondents believed that other persons	4.5.1

		having access to their customer details and management taking disciplinary action against the respondents, came up high.	
2	To evaluate management support of the Customer Management System (CMS)	• The majority of respondents found the computer equipment and training adequate to perform their job function. • The majority also indicated that it was their personal responsibility to drive the use of the CMS system, • From those respondents that indicated that the chosen person really did not drive the CMS program, the majority indicated that they were not encouraged by the person	4.5.2
3	To appraise the effectiveness of the Customer Management System (CMS)	• The majority believed that the information loaded onto the CMS system was accurate • The major reason cited for believing that information on the CMS system is sometimes inaccurate is because sales executives only care about deals that are actual deals • The majority of respondents indicated that they were aware that the information captured onto the CMS system was utilized for advertising specials via sms and email. • When questioned on the number of deals concluded on average on a monthly basis from CMS advertising specials the majority indicated zero • The majority believed the CMS system to be effective, with the major reason being cited as the CMS system assists them to manage their work • From the respondents that believed that the CMS system was ineffective, the major reason cited was because it does not increase their sales	4.5.3

All the objectives as listed in Table 4.6 that were set for this study have been accomplished, indicating that the research question can be answered in Chapter 5 as part of the recommendations from this study.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The data collected using the research instrument has been analysed, interpreted and presented in this chapter. The data was presented in two segments beginning with the demographic profile of respondents followed by the main findings in relation to each

objective. Thereafter a summary was presented showing how each research objective was met.

The chapter to follow will present the limitations of this study along with recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from the findings above. Further recommendations for future research will also be presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Information systems (IS) give organisations easier access to information and create opportunities for global competitiveness. Therefore significant financial and managerial investment is made to implement policies and strategies to extract the optimum benefit from available information. However, this investment would prove fruitless if management do not assess the impact of information and Information Systems on operations, decision making and ultimately the strategy of the organisation. This study sought to identify what factors influenced sales executives' embracement of the CMS system as a vital tool to improve efficiency, effectiveness and productivity. The research objectives that were determined for the study were designed to answer the research question directly. Data collected from sales executives, were linked to the objectives, intended to provide answers to the research questions. Chapter Four was the analysis and presentation of the data. This chapter will highlight the key findings of each objective, identify limitations of this study and make recommendations for future research.

5.2 KEY FINDINGS

This study discussed the concepts of information and Information Systems, and why organisations are compelled to manage their information resources to improve efficiencies, effectiveness, performance and competitive advantage. It must be noted that the results of the study can be generalised to the entire population because the researcher took 100% of the population as the sample size. The conclusions arrived at below is based on empirical findings extracted from the statistical data analysis of this study.

5.2.1 Objective one

This objective was developed to assess motor vehicles sales persons' perceptions of the Customer Management System (CMS). The results of this objective indicated that the majority of respondents found the CMS system easy to use, easy to understand, a great selling tool and helpful.

When probed about their major advantages and disadvantages of loading customer details onto the CMS system, the majority of the respondents indicated advantages as they could track and have a database of their customers, while major disadvantages indicated were other persons having access to their customer details and their manager could take disciplinary action against them. When probed further about advantages to the manager, the majority of the respondents indicated that the manager could track and monitor their activities on a daily basis

5.2.2 Objective two

This objective was developed to evaluate management support of the Customer Management System (CMS). Thong et al. (1996) commented that support from senior management was a crucial element vital for the effective and successful implementation of Information Systems. The findings in this study showed that the majority of the respondents felt that they had adequate training on the CMS system and that the computer equipment provided to work on the CMS system was fair to adequate. The majority of the respondents also considered themselves to be the persons responsible for driving the use of the CMS system, although a small minority did indicate the sales manager to be that person. The respondents may have considered themselves as drivers of the system because management never drove the effective use of system, besides using it as a disciplinary tool.

5.2.3 Objective three

This objective was developed to appraise the effectiveness of the Customer Management System (CMS). The findings here show that the majority of the respondents believed that the information loaded on the CMS system was accurate. Regarding those respondents that believed that the data was inaccurate, the major reason cited was that sales executives only care about deals that are actual deals. However the daily targets being set too high as well as the protection of customer details surfaced as minority reasons for the inaccuracy. It was further found that majority of the respondents were aware of management using the information loaded on the CMS system to do advertising specials via sms and email, however the majority of the respondents rarely conclude deals emanating from the sms and email advertising specials. When probed on the effectiveness of the CMS system, the majority of the respondents felt that the CMS system was effective indicating that it assisted them to manage their work. Those respondents that felt that the CMS system was ineffective cited no increase in sales as a reason for its ineffectiveness.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

From the research findings it can be seen that the majority of the sales executives are embracing the CMS system as a vital tool in doing their jobs. However there are still concerns regarding the use of the CMS system to improve overall organisational effectiveness, efficiency and productivity. Therefore recommendations will be made below to address these concerns.

5.3.1 CMS system upgrades

5.3.1.1 Privacy of customer details

With immense pressure to achieve individual sales targets, sales executives feel the need to safeguard their customer details out of fear that other unscrupulous sales executives may 'steal' their customers. A recommendation would be to set additional security parameters within the system to restrict sales executive's access to each other's customer details, allowing only management access.

5.3.1.2 Duplicate customer records

Duplicate records can negatively skew the results required for decision making. Users should be restricted from loading duplicate customer details or management can go onto the CMS system and delete duplicated records. It is recommended that the CMS system has filters installed to notify management of duplicate customer records. In this way the integrity of the database is maintained and management reports are more accurate for proper decision making.

5.3.1.3 Streamline data input process

Respondents have suggested a facility to "copy and paste" customer information from Internet leads into the CMS system. Another suggestion from respondents was to decrease the number of data input fields. Although due consideration must be given for information deemed absolutely necessary for operational and strategic purposes, recommendation would be for management to streamline the data input process. These improvements can save time and improve efficiency.

5.3.1.4 Follow-ups

Respondents claim that follow up reminders do not carry over into the next month. The suggestion from respondents is that the CMS system sends out reminders to do follow-up

calls and keeps flagging the sales executives until the follow-up is ticked off the system even if it goes into the next month. A further suggestion is that a reminder is automatically system generated every ninety days to do second and third follow-up calls on 'lost deals' or 'deals in suspense'. Regular follow-up calls should lead to more deals concluded. A recommendation would be to build a customer follow-up system into the CMS system.

5.3.2 Training and communication

Although training has been indicated as adequate, a recommendation would be that management addresses the issue of persons that require training and re-training based on staff turnover or lack of understanding. Management further needs to communicate the overall organisational strategy regarding the CMS system to the staff as a part of the training, which would make staff more aware of the holistic role of the system. In this way staff may understand the importance of the CMS system and not merely view the system as management's arsenal for disciplinary action against non-performers.

5.3.3 Internet leads

The respondents in this study very strongly criticized the poor management of Internet leads. A recommendation would be to develop a leads management system integrated into the CMS system. The leads management system should be responsible for evenly distributing leads, ensuring that leads get attended to timeously and ensure that necessary follow-ups are taken care of. This should lead to better leads management which could lead to improved sales volumes.

5.3.4 Linking of workshop department to the CMS system

The workshop department where customers bring their vehicles in for servicing and repairs is a great source of sales leads for the dealership. A recommendation here is for the booking-in system to give the customer the option of receiving marketing communication, with a preferred contact method of phone, email or sms.

This additional feature should be linked to the CMS system giving the sales executive access to customer personal details from the workshop system as well as full details of the work being carried out on the vehicle brought in for servicing or repairs. This information would be vital for sales executives to give customers different options of structuring a new deal.

5.3.5 Linking of finance department to the CMS system

A fully integrated information system can achieve great efficiencies across the spectrum of the organisation. It is recommended that the Finance department also be linked to the CMS system. Firstly the customer can be financially pre-qualified prior to the official bank finance applications. Secondly the sales executive has already captured quite a bit of the details of the transaction, therefore avoiding unnecessary duplication and time wasting.

5.3.6 Mobile application

Respondents have indicated that access to the CMS system is restricted to their desktop computer and laptops (selected staff only). This is a limitation in that sales executives need to be at their desks all the time to manage their clients. A recommendation here would be to develop a mobile application that allows sales executives access to the CMS system via their mobile devices. In this way leads could be attended to more timeously which should result in improved efficiency and productivity.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The limitations encountered in this research project are documented below:

- The calculation of the Cronbach's Alpha rendered the survey questionnaire unreliable.
- There was a lack of academic literature on information systems in the motor retail sector. This made it difficult to make comparisons to other studies.
- Owing to the researcher being a senior member of staff at the organisation concerned, this may have influenced the responses from participants. However the researcher minimised direct contact with respondents so as to not influence the survey or encourage any bias. The researcher did however assist telephonically with clarity required on ranking questions.
- Most participants did not receive the email sent from Questionpro with the electronic hyperlink to access the survey questionnaire, in which case the researcher emailed the electronic hyperlink to all the respondents on the email list provided by the Regional Internet Sales Manager. This could have led to bias creeping in.
- This study was restricted to operations in the Durban and surrounding area. While the researcher appreciates the benefits that could have been derived from a wider

area, the researcher would have had limited access to that wider area. Therefore the results of this study may not hold true for other geographic regions.

This study was limited to testing responses from sales executives. Testing on managerial staff could have provided deeper insights into the problem.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

The following are recommendations for future studies on information systems in the motor retail sector:

- The study should be extended to other geographic areas extending beyond the greater Durban and surrounding area.
- The study should include managerial level staff. This will provide a holistic view of the challenges faced.
- Similar studies should be conducted at other motor dealership groups in order to make comparison.
- Studies should be conducted to assess the effect of training and communication on the effective use of information systems in the motor retail sector.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The objectives of this study have been achieved. The perceptions of the CMS system have been confirmed as well as the management support and effectiveness of the CMS system; however commitment is still required from sales staff and management. This study has identified various gaps in the operations of the CMS system and several recommendations have been made to address these challenges. This should provide a useful starting point to review these gaps.

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APPENDIX 1: INFORMED LETTER OF CONSENT

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

Dear Respondent,

MBA Research Project

Contact Person	Contact Number	Email Address
Researcher: Dayalan (Raven) Naidu	083 415 1108	ravenn@multifranchise.co.za
Supervisor: Professor Anesh Maniraj Singh	(031) 260 7061	
Research Office: Ms M Snyman	(031) 260 8350	

I, **Dayalan (Raven Naidu)**, am an MBA student, at the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, of the University of KwaZulu Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled **The Role Of The Customer Management System At An Automotive Retail Multifranchise Operation in KZN**. The aim of the study is to investigate factors that influence the embracement of the Customer Management System by sales persons at the operation whereby recommendations will be made regarding sales persons' adoption of the CMS system, management's role in supporting the CMS system and the effectiveness of CMS.

Through your participation, I hope to understand the challenges endured by sales persons in effectively using the CMS system at the operation, with the prospect of improving efficiency, effectiveness and overall performance. The results of the surveys are intended to contribute to this body of knowledge on information systems.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this survey. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, UKZN.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participating in this study, you may contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above. The survey should take you about **15** minutes to complete. I hereby request that you please complete the questionnaire within TWO (2) weeks of receipt of the questionnaire. This will greatly assist in meeting the timeline deadline of this study.

Sincerely

_____ _____

Investigator's Signature Date

APPENDIX 2 : CONSENT LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

MBA Research Project

Contact Person	Contact Number	Email Address
Researcher: Dayalan (Raven) Naidu	083 415 1108	ravenn@multifranchise.co.za
Supervisor: Professor Anesh Maniraj Singh	(031) 260 7061	
Research Office: Ms M Snyman	(031) 260 8350	

CONSENT

I……(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

_____ _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

APPENDIX 3

Questionnaire to respondents

1. Please indicate your gender
    - Male
    - Female

2. Please indicate the dealership that you are based at
    - Pinetown Multifranchise
    - Durban Multifranchise
    - Umhlanga Multifranchise
    - Renault Pinetown
    - Durban Central Multifranchise
    - Kia Hillcrest

3. Please indicate your age group
    - Less than 21 years old
    - 21 - 30 years old
    - 31 - 40 years old
    - 41 - 50 years old
    - 51 – 60 years old
    - Older than 60 years old

4. Please indicate your race group
    - Black
    - White
    - Coloured
    - Indian

5. Please indicate your level of education
    - Less than Matric
    - Matric
    - Diploma
    - Degree
    - PGDip\Honours\Masters\Phd

6. Please indicate your length of employment in the motor industry as a sales executive
    - 1 – 5 years
    - 6 – 10 years
    - 11 – 15 years
    - Longer than 15 years

7. The CMS system is…….
    - Very easy to understand
    - Fairly easy to understand
    - Somewhat easy to understand
    - Difficult to understand
    - Very difficult to understand

8. The CMS system is…….
    - Very easy to use
    - Fairly easy to use
    - Somewhat easy to use
    - Difficult to use
    - Very difficult to use

9. Loading customer details on CMS is……
    - A great selling tool
    - Helpful to a certain degree
    - Part of the job function that I am required to perform
    - Another way of creating extra work for me
    - A waste of my time, as I could be selling more cars

10. Please rank what you believe is an ADVANTAGE to you loading customer details on CMS, where 1 is the greatest benefit and 4 is of least benefit. Please do not repeat any numbers.
    - It meets my commission payment criteria
    - It keeps my superiors happy
    - I can track my customers
    - I have a database of all my customers

11. Please rank what you believe is a DISADVANTAGE to you loading customer details on CMS, where 1 is the greatest disadvantage and 4 is the least. Please do not repeat any numbers.
    - Other persons have access to my customer details and can steal my deals
    - My manager can take disciplinary action against me for not updating CMS daily
    - It wastes time that I could be using to sell cars
    - It is purely an administration function

12. Loading customer details on CMS, is an advantage to my Manager because …..
    - My Manager can track and monitor my activities on a daily basis
    - It meets my Manager's commission payment criteria
    - My Manager has a database of all the prospective customers

13. The computer that is allocated to me to perform my duties on CMS is…..
    - More than adequate
    - Adequate
    - Inadequate
    - Very inadequate

14. I believe that the amount of training I received on CMS was…..
    - Too much
    - Adequate
    - Fair amount of training
    - Very little
    - No training at all

15. I believe that the responsibility of driving the use of CMS belongs to…..
    - The Sales Manager
    - The Dealer Principal
    - The Regional CMS Manager
    - My responsibility

16. Do you believe that the person you chose in question 15 above, really drives CMS
    - Yes
    - No

17. I believe the person chosen in question 15 above really drives CMS because he\she….
    - Encourages me
    - Is very supportive
    - Is very knowledgeable on CMS

18. I believe the person chosen in question 15 above really DOES NOT drive CMS because he\she….
    - Does not encourage me
    - Is not supportive at all
    - Is not very knowledgeable on CMS

19. Do you believe that all customer information loaded onto the CMS system by salespersons is accurate?…..
    - Yes
    - No

20. I believe that customer information loaded on CMS system is sometimes inaccurate because…..
    - Daily targets (walk-ins, phone-ins, Internet leads, fleet\cold calling,) to be loaded, are set too high
    - Sales persons only care about deals that are actual deals
    - My customer details are for my eyes only

21. Are you aware that management utilizes the customer information that you capture on CMS to do advertising specials via sms and email blasts…..
    - Yes
    - No

22. On average (per month), how many deals do you conclude from the CMS advertising specials via sms and email blasts……
    - Zero
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5
    - More than 5

23. Do you believe that the CMS system is effective…..
    - Yes
    - No

24. The CMS system is effective because it…..
    - Increases my sales
    - Improves my relationships with customers
    - Assists me to manage my work

25. The CMS system is not effective because it…..
    - Does not increase my sales
    - Does not improve my relationships with customers
    - Does not assist me to manage my work

26. Do you believe that the CMS system can be improved…..
    - Yes
    - No

27. The CMS system can be improved by…..

- Restricting other sales persons access to my customer details
- Reducing the number of fields where I have to input customer details
- Increasing network speed
- Reducing network downtime

28. Are there any other improvements than can be made to CMS? Please provide details

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX 4

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

23 February 2016

Mr Dayalan Naidu 9147669
Graduate School of Business & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Naidu

Protocol reference number: HSS/1405/015M
New project title: The role of the Customer Management System at an Automotive Retail Multifranchise Operation in KZN

Approval notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application for an amendment dated 22 February 2016 has now been granted **Full Approval**.

- Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Supervisor: Professor Anesh Maniraj Singh
Academic Leader Research: Dr Mahammad Hoque
School Administrator: Ms Zarina Bullyraj

APPENDIX 5

Proof Reading and Editing

This letter serves that I have proofread and edited the following documents:

MBA Dissertation: Mr Dayalan (Raven) Naidu (student no 9147669)

'The role of the customer management system at an Automotive Retail Multifranchise Operation in KZN'

I have made corrections to the text and the reference list and have submitted suggested changes to the author which he may choose to implement or not.

The scope of the proofreading included:

- Correction of spelling errors
- Correction of grammatical errors
- Re-structuring of sentences
- Check that all in-text referencing is correct and corresponds with the authors listed in the reference list (where provided)
- Correction of table numbering
- Advice on improvements in layout

Yours sincerely

Michelle Dixon