# The evolving landscape of CRM: Why data management matters more than AI



The future of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) as we approach 2025 will hinge primarily on how businesses manage their data, rather than an overemphasis on advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and automated agents. This perspective was shared by a panel of leading industry analysts during a recent discussion for the "What is CRM in 2025?" series held by Destination CRM Magazine.

Key figures in the field, including Michael Fauscette, Sheryl Kingstone, Liz Miller, and Rebecca Wettemann, participated in this insightful dialogue, expressing a collective view that the foundational challenges related to data management are paramount. Kingstone, serving as Vice President for Customer Experience and Commerce at 451 Research, articulated that "it's about the data. It's not about the bot. It's about how are we training and how are we using and how are we gathering our most important asset in our organization - which is about the data." She underscored the crucial need for effective governance surrounding data utilization, asserting that this will define the CRM landscape in 2025. "We've had CRM for 2 decades and still haven't solved the problem… 3 decades now," she noted, highlighting the ongoing struggles with traditional CRM systems.

Wettemann, the CEO and Principal Analyst at Valoir, introduced the concept of "incrementalism" versus "exponential" advancements in AI's capabilities. She emphasised, "How do I get from the incremental to the exponential promise of what AI can do? And I think we can all agree it is not about the AI at this point. To Sheryl's point it's about the data." This underscores a common theme wherein technology, while transformative, is ultimately dependent on the quality and accessibility of underlying data.

Michael Fauscette, Founder and CEO of Arion Research, further reinforced the notion that without rectifying data management issues, the potential benefits offered by AI systems will be severely limited. "If you don't fix the data, you can't do any of these other things anyway," he stated, indicating that the efficiency and functionality of AI applications will falter if the foundational data is not addressed.

Liz Miller, Principal Analyst at Constellation Research, added another layer to the discussion by stressing the importance of acknowledging the human element in data management. "You have to acknowledge the human before you can fix the data," she stated, pointing out a long-standing oversight within CRM strategies. She elaborated on the fact that the data should reflect the customer accurately, indicating that a disconnect has existed since the inception of CRM technologies.

The collective insights presented by these experts suggest a significant shift in focus for businesses towards data strategies as we transition into a new era of CRM, amidst the rising prominence of AI technologies. Instead of prioritising AI solutions, organisations are encouraged to resolve their data challenges to fully capitalise on the potential of CRM systems. The conversations surrounding these developments indicate an industry poised for significant evolution, driven primarily by data management enhancements.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.lionobytes.com/blog/top-5-crm-trends-to-watch-in-2025> - This article supports the importance of data analytics and AI in CRM, highlighting that effective data management is crucial for leveraging AI and machine learning capabilities.
2. <https://www.getclarify.ai/blog/which-crm-is-best-a-comprehensive-guide-for-2025> - This guide emphasizes the role of data analytics in CRM, reinforcing the idea that robust data management is essential for driving decision-making and improving customer interactions.
3. <https://syncmatters.com/blog/top-crm-trends-for-2025> - This article discusses the integration of AI and other technologies in CRM, but also underscores the need for reliable and accurate data to support these advancements.
4. <https://www.scratchpad.com/blog/crm-data-entry> - This blog post highlights the critical importance of accurate and efficient CRM data entry, aligning with the experts' views on the foundational need for good data management.
5. <https://www.lionobytes.com/blog/top-5-crm-trends-to-watch-in-2025> - This article mentions the growth of the CRM market and the role of AI and data analytics, supporting the notion that data management is key to leveraging these technologies.
6. <https://www.getclarify.ai/blog/which-crm-is-best-a-comprehensive-guide-for-2025> - This guide discusses the importance of customer experience and how CRM tools gather feedback, which is dependent on good data management practices.
7. <https://syncmatters.com/blog/top-crm-trends-for-2025> - This article mentions the shift towards low-code/no-code solutions and the emphasis on security and mobile accessibility, all of which require robust data management.
8. <https://www.scratchpad.com/blog/crm-data-entry> - This post emphasizes the benefits of accurate CRM data entry, including improved decision-making and efficiency, which aligns with the experts' focus on data quality.
9. <https://www.getclarify.ai/blog/which-crm-is-best-a-comprehensive-guide-for-2025> - This guide highlights the role of cloud-based CRMs, which rely heavily on effective data management to provide flexibility and accessibility.
10. <https://syncmatters.com/blog/top-crm-trends-for-2025> - This article discusses the integration of IoT and AI in CRM, which is only effective with proper data governance and management.
11. <https://www.destinationcrm.com/Articles/ReadArticle.aspx?ArticleID=167480> - Please view link - unable to able to access data