

Question: What's CRM, SCM, SEM, BW? and how're they related to ERP? What're the functionalities and benefits of them?

Answer:

CRM = Customer Relationship Management - *empowers companies to deliver customer value -- and achieve profitable growth. The solution connects front- and back-office or ERP functions into a single, customer-centric operation, enables collaboration across the value chain by providing access to relevant, personalized information from multiple data sources and business processes. CRM solution connects your employees, partners, processes, and technology in a closed-loop customer interaction cycle. So you can convert prospects into first-time buyers. And first-time buyers into long-term customers. This solution delivers functionality throughout the customer engagement cycle, providing all the capabilities you need to manage marketing, sales, service, analytics, field applications, interaction centers, e-commerce, and channel partners. Good CRM enables real-time availability checks, contract management, billing management, fulfillment visibility, and order tracking. And it gives you the features and functions necessary for marketing planning, campaign management, telemarketing, lead generation, and customer segmentation*

SCM = Supply Chain Management - *Organisation of the overall business processes to enable the profitable transformation of raw materials or products into finished goods and their timely distribution to meet customer demand. Supply chain management involves the planning and control of all tasks along the business value chain. The goal of supply chain management is to reduce the inventory levels, lower costs, hasten time to market, and ultimately to provide better customer services and satisfactions. ERP enables the integration of all business processes and areas into coherent and well-structured supply chain management. ERP stores the valuable information that pertains to every aspect of the enterprise. From sales and distribution to production planning, ERP incorporates logistical and operational areas into an integrated workflow of business events. ERP also automatically links together logistically and operationally related areas, eliminating the need to repeat time and resource-intensive procedures.*

SEM = Strategic Enterprise Management – *Many enterprises have installed integrated Enterprise Resource Planning Systems (ERP). They have succeeded in making their operational business processes more efficient and customer oriented and, as a result, increased their competitiveness. As a byproduct of ERP system implementations these enterprises have got a wealth of information at their disposal that can also be utilized to effectively support strategic management processes. Harnessing this information is currently one of the top priorities for most enterprises. This requires new types of information systems, namely analytical applications for Strategic Enterprise Management. These systems must support the management processes themselves and also, through close integration with the ERP system, guarantee continuous feedback with the operational business processes.*

BW = Business Warehouse – *In the fiercely competitive business environment that exists in every industry, the ability to make quick decisions based on complete, reliable, and consistent information is the key success factor. The information that end users are looking for is quite often hidden somewhere in some kind of operational application or in huge amounts of detailed data, which does not mean anything as it is. It is critical that companies be able to gather and understand information from different sources. To address these issues, many companies built data warehouses. These data warehouses were supposed to gather and transform the data into information by providing analytical tools. Although this sounds quite simple, in practice, many companies are still struggling to achieve the positive business results from their data warehousing efforts because of fragmented and inconsistent data, and the variety and complexity of tools and applications required for data warehouse maintenance. Companies are looking forward to a single, ideal corporate information factory (CIF) solution. A corporate information factory consists of applications running on top of data stored in a data warehouse, an operational data store (ODS), data marts, and decision support systems. BW is the only product available on the market that provides all of these components. Business Warehouse is a special purpose application that summarizes data from ERP applications and external data sources and support retrieval and analysis of the enterprise business data. This new application aims to improve ERP's lack of OLAP reporting capabilities, and signifies a major shift from transaction processing to business analytic. Business Warehouse is the component at the heart of the Business Intelligence solution. It delivers enterprise-wide data warehousing, a business intelligence platform, and a suite of business intelligence tools.*