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Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) and Information Ethics in Call Centres - 'You are the Weakest Link. Goodbye!'

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Abstract

This paper catalogues the rise and rise of call centres in the North West of England, UK and their use of CRM systems. CRM systems often imply new technologies and new ways of working. However, in this account we explore the historical development of the telegraph and work in early telephone exchanges and find the same old story. Our consideration of the ethics of CRM system use and some inherent contradictions are in terms of privacy, communication richness, management methods and computer ethics in an organizational context. Call centres today are viewed by some as offering satisfying employment of intrinsic value, for others, they are the 'new sweatshops of the 21" century' (Belt et al 2000). Our interpretative field study makes a contribution to this debate.

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