PART 1
Customer Engagement at Scale

Building a Customer Experience Team
UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Think about the last new restaurant you visited. What was your reason for going there?

More than likely, you visited a specific restaurant because you heard good things. Whether it was good things about the food, the wait staff, or just the overall atmosphere, your perception was impacted by word-of-mouth. The restaurant could have claimed premier service with the best selection of spirits in town; but it wasn’t about what the restaurant said, it was about what their customers said that enticed you to try it out.

Like good restaurants, brands have to create a unique experience. One that is to be talked about and shared with others to earn trust, build loyalty, and influence buyers. In order to develop an experience, brands need to build social community engagement by listening to their audience.

In this eBook, you’ll learn how to build social community. From understanding social engagement as a strategy, to choosing with which voices to engage, to building your own customer experience team and center, this guide will provide you with the necessary information to create and maintain brand affinity, establish a connection, build relationships, and influence your audience through social community engagement.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>The secret to customer engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Engagement at scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Building a customer experience team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>The next steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

@bizco Just spoke to a rep... Great customer service! #goldstar

Sounds like #tech2017 is gonna be huge for @bizco!

@bizco is teaming up with @CatWars! #HYPE
Customer engagement—more than just a tactic.

Customer engagement is a strategy. It is an understanding, a connection with your audience that gives you the opportunity to assist them through a willingness to observe and learn. Listening allows you to better understand your different audiences and what they care about.

Think back to the restaurant scenario. Let’s say you are a restaurant specializing in wholesome, farm-to-table meals. For the past ten years, customers have raved about your variety of food options and your family-friendly environment. However, in order to attract the local college crowd, you decide to take the kids menu away and make your establishment 18 and up.

Sure, you could argue that you will be attracting a wider variety of customers in college students, but have you thought about your largest customer base? Have you listened to the families that appreciate a farm-to-table option located in a city inundated with fast-food joints? Have you thought about the fact that you may be alienating moms and dads who have spent the most money at your restaurants with their kids? By making rash decisions without listening to your audience, you are negatively impacting your brand’s perception. Before making these changes, you stood out as something different, a unique experience for the consumer. Now, customers log onto social media and review sites, questioning your trustworthiness and loyalty to your consumer base. And that has a profoundly negative impact on your business.
Chapter 1 | THE SECRET TO CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Today, audiences play a bigger role in shaping the brand voice and experience, which means you should always remember to put their needs at the forefront. Part of putting their needs and wants at the forefront means being proactive in your approach to social engagement. Your brand, company, or organization has to engage your audience and have what it takes to earn trust, build loyalty, and ultimately influence buyers.

So what does customer engagement take?

**Listening**
Understand what your customers are saying and open your company up to new insights. How are customers using your products or services? How do they feel about them? How are they influenced by them? Gain authentic feedback from customers that can help shape your marketing strategy.

**Identifying an Opportunity**
Look for authentic way to resolve customer satisfaction issues, shift perceptions of your brand, and even influence prospects who are making buying decisions.

**Engaging**
Consider different ways to engage your audience (reactive messaging, proactive messaging, paid social media, etc.) and build a better relationship with consumers.

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Customer loyalty statistics

The cost of bringing a new customer up to the same level of profitability as an old one is up to 16x more.

Lowering your customer churn rate by 5% can increase your profitability by 25-125%.
ENGAGEMENT AT SCALE

Be selective with your customer engagement.

It may seem impossible to connect with every single member of your audience. Choosing which voices to engage with from millions can be overwhelming; however, with a test-and-learn approach, you can scale customer engagement. Being selective with your customer engagement means you are able to be mindful of your social community, allowing you to represent your brand voice to the fullest.
Chapter 2 | ENGAGEMENT AT SCALE

What to listen to
Start small with keywords and topics you care most about. Listening queries allow you to:

• Keep a finger on the pulse of conversation trends and brands.
• Identify engagement opportunities.
• Ride the momentum of trends.

What to engage
It’s okay to prioritize engagement opportunities. Develop a process for categorizing engagement opportunities based on where people are in the customer journey. Next, it’s important to prioritize messages based on:

• Time sensitivity
• Perceived impact
• Business priorities

How to engage
Community management is key. Each engagement is a conversation, both with an individual and a community. Remember, every experience has the potential to be amplified. Therefore, it’s important to:

• Get to know your community.
• Understand the right context and set the right tone.
• Follow up with leads and handle contact information with care.

Things to consider

• Don’t take yourself too seriously.
• Engage in authentic ways.
• Invite interaction.

7 | Customer Engagement at Scale: Part 1
BUILDING A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TEAM

Improve collaboration and communication with a new generation of marketers.

How do you build a customer experience team?
Start by creating a fun and inclusive work environment.

Social media is second nature to younger talent and they are highly committed to using it as a tool to positively impact others. The modern workplace must support this new generation of marketing talent.
Chapter 3 | BUILDING A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TEAM

Hiring and developing your social team are arguably the most important investments you will make. People with diverse experiences who can work collaboratively will help your brand connect with audiences. Once you start developing your team, there are five essential roles you will want to have covered:

**Leadership**
Establish strategies and guidelines for listening, engagement, and content development.

**Community Management**
Engage directly with customers on behalf of your brand.

**Paid Media**
Direct media placement and monitor its performance.

**Creative**
Produce and manage content.

**Data Analytics**
Measure and learn from performance of both the team and the media channels.

As part of the hiring process, ask candidates for written responses to actual inbound customer messages. While subject-matter expertise is typically developed on the job, candidates should be able to demonstrate a familiarity with your audience and an ability to follow the unspoken norms and tone of the various social communities.
CONCLUSION: NEXT STEPS

Remember, at the forefront of a good customer experience strategy is the ability to listen to your audience.

From there, be selective with your customer experience and work to empower your community management team. Once you understand how to implement and embrace customer engagement as a strategy, it’s time to look at building another team that’s equally important to that strategy: the creative team.