



Improving Customer Service with Twitter

How companies are enhancing customer experience and increasing customer loyalty by integrating Twitter into their mainstream customer service platform

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A growing number of customers, especially the younger generation is using the digital space for everything from answers to problem resolution. These customers swap experiences, shares product information and make shopping decisions online.

This is a whole new breed of customers, who are absolutely at home in the digital space, sharing their experiences and opinions with everyone who cares to listen to them. The positive buzz generated for your product or service may turn your business into a force to be reckoned with, though at the same time, any negative feedback may also damage your brand irredeemably.

So what can you do about it? Is there any way that businesses can track, capture and respond to customer requests posted on social media, by doing which you can stay connected to your customers and service their every query? Can a social media tool like Twitter be turned into a customer response tool so effective, it can fundamentally redefine your business and the way your CRM functions?

“ As of 2011, it is estimated that there are 200 million users on Twitter who generate 200 million tweets and 1.6 billion search queries every day. ”

Introduction

Businesses around the world are increasingly using the digital space, especially social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter as a means of marketing, sales and customer service. It is estimated

that there are 200 million users on Twitter as of 2011 who generate a phenomenal 200 million tweets and 1.6 billion search queries every day.

Dell, JetBlue, Bank of America, Starbucks, Comcast, almost every big player in every major industry, have all gone social to harvest the huge potential online. Every company now uses Twitter to at least gauge customer sentiment about their product, service or brand. The smarter, more savvy ones have realized where the true opportunity lies and now use Twitter as a means of responding to

customer queries, feedback and complaints quickly and efficiently, albeit, in real time, thereby impressing their customers and generating immense goodwill, loyalty and word of mouth for the brand. This, translates to big business.

Given that the social media revolution is already upon us and is changing industry trends and practices as we speak, companies serious about their prospects cannot really afford to sit on the sidelines and watch. An active, well managed and strong presence on Twitter could well be a strong differentiator for a business as it moves forward.

WHY TWITTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE?

Twitter is a great tool for customer service as it is instant, provides direct feedback, and is for all intents and purposes, free of cost. Unhappy customers tweet their complaints online, and tracking and addressing them in real time boosts brand image & credibility, as well as improves customer satisfaction by leaps & bounds. Major advantages in using Twitter for Customer Service are

Enable Quick Turnaround on Problem Resolution

The current generation is used to self service & craves instant gratification. Twitter allows businesses to respond to customer problems in real time. Customers become Your Brand Ambassadors.

Cost Effective Customer Service Channel

Of all the existing customer support channels, phone, email, web, etc, Twitter is relatively cost free, and costs little to set up & manage. This makes it very easy to start using as a Customer Support Channel.

“ Customer churn is caused by customer feelings of poor treatment 68% of the time - TARP ”

Customers Become Your Brand Ambassadors

Customers happy with your product or the service they received will talk about it. On Twitter this effect is enhanced several times over, through the network of Twitter users following each other. A survey by Lexis Nexis shows that good news travels fast online, with 62% of survey respondents wanting to share their experiences online, if they are delighted by a product, service or brand.



Happy customers who get their issue resolved tell about 4 to 6 people about their experience -
White House Office of Consumer Affairs

Greater Visibility and Higher Staff Participation

Twitter is an exciting channel for Customer Service & employees are likely to take more ownership & get more involved with the process when they actually see the impact of the service they render in real time.

THE CHALLENGES

Businesses on Twitter need to actively and consistently promote their presence, engage customers in conversation, but imperatively, they need to set up a uniform process whereby customer service staff can track mentions, select the ones requiring responses and address them in a way that solves the customer's problems in a way that the customer is happy, and at the same time, projects the brand image consistently, and well.

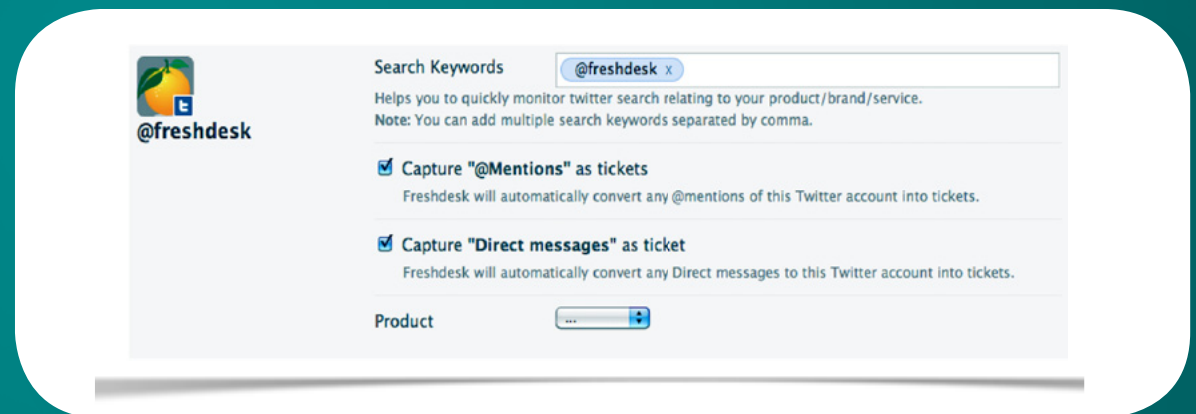
According to conventional thinking, social media has been cast as a marketing tool (which it also is) and it is usually someone in the marketing department who is in charge of the Twitter account. When customers tweet for help, the marketing person usually responds instructing the customer to reach customer support through email or phone, instead of attending to the problem right away, a run around, which, quite understandably, the customer does not appreciate. Again, monitoring and responding manually to an ever increasing number of tweets will never be viable quite simply because of time constraints & the fact that consistency has to be maintained across all the company's channels.

THE SOLUTION

Freshdesk is a tool that allows businesses to track, capture and respond to customer queries and complaints posted on twitter.

Mining messages on twitter provides companies with real time, actionable data on your products and services. Freshdesk will let you use Twitter as a customer support channel, much like the phone, email and the web.

Freshdesk's multi faceted functionality give you options to :



- *Set up a Twitter ID for the company. For e.g. @freshdesk. Some companies also setup a dedicated Support*
- *Automatically convert direct messages and mentions into tickets allowing customer service representatives to view and monitor live Twitter feed.*

- Specify search strings that relate to your market.
- Customer service representatives can easily convert tweets into tickets or they can respond directly to the tweets, if they so choose.

The screenshot shows the Freshdesk interface with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Dashboard', 'Tickets', 'Social', 'Solutions', 'Forums', 'Customers', 'Reports', and 'Admin'. Below the navigation bar, a tweet is displayed with the text: '#79 vijayanands - @freshdesk Are you guys going to let the dashboard refresh on its own so that i dont have to hit refresh manually to see new tickets?'. The tweet is from Vijayanands, created on August 25, 2011, at 07:57 PM. Below the tweet, there is a form to reply to @vijayanands. The 'From' field is set to 'parsurv'. The 'Message' field contains the text: '@vijayanands, Yes that's already on the cards, I'm behind the devs to get this out soon :)'. There are buttons for 'Add note', 'Tweet', and 'Send Tweet'.

The screenshot shows the Twitter search results for '@freshdesk'. The search bar contains '@freshdesk' and the search button is labeled 'Search twitter'. The results are for '@freshdesk' and include three tweets. The first tweet is from vijayanands (@freshdesk) saying '@freshdesk awesome.' with a 'Go to Ticket' button. The second tweet is from vijayanands (@freshdesk) asking '@freshdesk Are you guys going to let the dashboard refresh on its own so that i dont have to hit refresh manually to see new tickets?' with 'Reply', 'Convert to Ticket', and 'Go to Ticket' buttons. The third tweet is from lukecatlin saying 'The essence of great customer service http://t.co/RmgzDW8 via @freshdesk' with a 'Go to Ticket' button.

- Sending a reply to a Twitter ticket posts an @message back to the user on Twitter. When the user responds back using the 'Twitter reply' feature the tweet is automatically added as a conversation to the original ticket.



The Freshdesk Advantage

Freshdesk enables companies to support customers using Twitter by seamlessly integrating Twitter with other support channels like email, phone or the web.

To find out how Freshdesk can help streamline your Twitter monitoring system for improved customer responsiveness and increased customer loyalty,

Please contact

support@freshdesk.com

or go to

www.freshdesk.com

and sign up for a free **30-day trial!**