



brandwatch



Prepare to Respond

CUSTOMER SERVICE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

It's no secret that customer service has slowly been creeping out of the call centre and onto the Internet, with social media networks providing an all new opportunity for consumers to sing praises and vent frustrations either to their friends, directly to the companies in question or simply just to anyone who'll listen.

However, this also presents a giant opportunity for businesses to perform their customer service activities online too, allowing companies to form personal and public relationships with their consumers.

But how can companies use social media for customer service effectively?

Setting up the right team

Establishing which departments will be involved, and how many people will be responsible for social media responding is important.

If you're a tech company, you may need employees that are qualified to answer tricky questions for example, but you may also have a lower volume of complaints and queries than a retail company would.

Finding the conversation

Almost half of all 18-34 year-olds expect a response within 12 hours on social media, and complaints to companies will be no different.

Therefore, it's incredibly important that you are able to locate and isolate these mentions of your brand as soon as possible.

Low-end tools that are freely accessible online can provide you with the means to track such mentions, though become overwhelmed when looking at high volumes and afford very little in the form of categorisation, alerts and graphing.

They may also not have access to Twitter's Firehose, meaning not all mentions are found, and you may find yourself juggling tools to keep track of forum, blog and news mentions, alongside the more commonly found Tweets and Facebook posts.

The top-end tools offer unparalleled data quality from around the web, meaning you can track every mention of your brand in real-time, accompanied by added meta-data, sentiment analysis and powerful analysis features.

Responding

Once your team's roles have been defined, your goals and policies must also be established. Ask yourself:

- How will your business engage with complaints?
- What will be the protocol regarding troll-feeding?
- What targets will you be setting for response time?
- How long will you aim to reach complaint resolution?
- Will the team be responding to direct complaints *and* general negativity?

Whichever tools you decide upon, as well as engaging with the individuals online, make sure you capitalise on their features such as:

- **Categorisation**, allowing filters, tags and rules to be created so that the data is segmented into useful and relevant sections.
- **Sentiment analysis**, splitting the data into positive and negative mentions.
- **Topics**, to understand which keywords and trends are associated with your brand.
- **Workflow**, which will allow you to assign different responses to each relevant individual, team or department.

Keeping this in mind as you move forward with implementing your social media customer service strategy is essential.

You can find out much more on this topic by downloading our new eBook, available to [**download for free here**](#).