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## Customer Experience Management Using Social Media

by Lynn Hunsaker

Social media introduces excellent tools and customer feedback data streams for companies to monitor perceptions and trends. Best practices in customer experience management:

- Use social media listening first to determine how best to interact with customers.
- Recognize the importance of making emotional connections with customers via social media.
- Blend social media with other voice of the customer sources to create a holistic view of customer priorities.
- Leverage customer stories from social media to energize employees enterprise-wide in continual improvement of customer experience.

### Emotional Connection with Customers

In my online interview with Kimarie Matthews, vice president of customer advocacy and loyalty at Wells Fargo Bank, she explained: “We look at customer loyalty as a pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid, you need to meet customer expectations consistently — mastering the basics. If you do that right, your customers will be satisfied. The next step up is: how to delight customers by meeting un-met needs, innovating new products, services, features and functions. The result is that they recommend you to their friends and family. The tip of the pyramid is: customers will step up and defend you when they hear a negative comment about your brand. How do you get there? By connecting with the customer on an emotional level, showing you care and appreciate them. When we look at our customer loyalty program, we strive to meet the basic needs and un-met needs, and make them feel valued.”



“The social web is becoming a very human place where people are connecting with other people in an emotional way. Only humans can make other humans feel valued — computers can’t do that. We have been listening to our customers for many years via surveys, user tests for interaction with our website, database for bankers to record customer comments they hear - we constantly integrate this data to design and upgrade our services. Customers probably have no idea that we have all this going on, and every time we do a good job it’s only known by one customer at a time. Social media is an opportunity to engage and communicate with customers, listening to them, showing them how we’re acting on their feedback, and giving them feedback on what we’re doing. My team cares about answering customer questions and supporting them anytime they’re online talking about their accounts and Wells Fargo.”

### **Listening is Greater than Talking**

“There are other companies further along in managing social web, and we’re evolving. This is one of many ways of listening to our customers, and we believe it’s important to be where our customers are. We’ve been listening to customers on social media for the past 18 months, and for the past 9 months we’ve been engaging with customers. For the past 6 months we’ve had a Twitter channel and found that’s the place where the most conversations occur. By beginning slowly we set up the necessary pipeline to fully serve our customers. If we engage with a customer we want to be sure we can get back to them promptly with a quality answer through a secure channel. Twitter has an immediacy factor, but sometimes we let customers know we’ll get back to them within a day or two, so we can give them the best answer. We have a dedicated team that understands the nuances of the social web; we want to make sure we get it right when we reach out to customers. We had to set up processes and training on the back end to set up rapid response capability. We’re still constantly learning; the customers are running the show. We gained a lot by first listening before we began interacting.”

### **Clear Priorities for Acting on Customer Feedback**

“One of the bigger issues of running a voice-of-the-customer program is that customers’ comments have a lot of power within the organization for a lot of activity and energy around each issue. It’s important to have a larger way of looking at all customer issues so that each squeaky wheel is always seen with the context of all our priorities. The social web is one very important source, and we combine it with surveys, customer emails, and other issues that we know may be causing frustration even without customers voicing it.”

“To prioritize issues, we use a tool called issue occurrence severity. We gather a comprehensive list of issues, and ask 2 questions: did you experience this issue in the past 12 months, and if so, how much did this issue affect your customer satisfaction? We randomly select about 10 issues to ask any one customer to prevent survey fatigue. The social web can bring the issues to life. It’s so important to read or hear the customer’s words; it provides richness to our organization’s understanding, and also gives an opportunity to respond, which we don’t typically have through other customer listening activities. If we have a fix we’re thinking of launching, we can ask customers what they think; everyone benefits from that immediate feedback turnaround.”

### **Power of Customer Stories**

“We have customer loyalty scorecards for each area of our business, and the leader presents their scorecard and speaks to the satisfaction and driver metrics, including customer comments - those are what the leadership team hones in on. For example: “I love BillPay, but why can’t I make payments faster?” This was very valuable to open a dialogue from the customer’s perspective and create a solution to better serve the customer.”

“Our next step is likely to be a Q&A community that allows customers to ask and answer one another’s questions, with our moderation. Customers are always asking these questions at our site as well as other sites. Our community can provide a balance of expert advice and unbiased answers from fellow customers. It’s important to listen to customers and be there to reach out, and provide solutions whenever possible.” *Access entire interview at [Customer Experience Management Using Social Media \(www.blogtalkradio.com/BTR-CEM\)](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/BTR-CEM).*

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