

Social CRM - 4 Strategies to Engage Customers and Generate Sales with Social Media

Social media. This phrase has quickly evolved from being a trendy buzzword to become the primary method of online communication today. According to Nielsen, a global information and media company, unique visitors to Twitter increased 1,382 percent year-over-year since 2009.

But how can businesses use social media at the enterprise level? Enter Social CRM, a mixture of social media and CRM (customer relationship management). Social CRM is loosely defined as “the business strategy of engaging customers through social media for building trust and brand loyalty.” This article will explore four Social CRM practices that businesses should incorporate into their sales and marketing strategies: personal connections, brand monitoring, citizen marketer tracking, and enhanced support.

1. Personal Connections

Personal connections are one of the most obvious and important CRM applications. A common practice is for sales people to note personal details about their clients in their sales management database. This allows for information to be called at will, such as a client’s birthday, favorite bottle of wine, children’s names, hobbies, and more. But this information can become stagnant and out of date, quickly.

To solve this problem, CRM professionals have begun integrating, or syncing, CRM systems with social media applications such as FaceBook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. For example, the [GetSocial Twitter Pro Module](#) allows a salesperson to open up a client record and view the client’s last 20 tweets he or she posted to Twitter. If a client posts “I’m still in bed trying to get over the flu,” a salesperson can immediately send a get-well note and set a follow up within a week to inquire about the client’s health.

2. Brand Monitoring

Brand monitoring is an important activity for every marketing department. 25 percent of search results for the world’s top 20 largest brands are links to user-generated content, according to a recent study from Marketing Vox and Nielsen BuzzMetrics. Understandably, companies want to monitor conversations around their brands to gain valuable insight into customer sentiment and to understand the effect of marketing messages.

Customers take to social media avenues to praise, criticize, review, and give feedback. The companies who pay attention and interact with these clients have the opportunity to create favorable impressions and therefore increase the amount of leads they can input into their sales funnel.

3. Citizen Marketer Tracking

Identifying citizen marketers is one of the most cost effective and beneficial ways companies

can boost promotions and marketing in the social landscape. Citizen marketers are users and consumers who love a product so much they are spreading the word without any tie to or request from the product's company. Most businesses fail to leverage, track and measure these consumers.

Companies who identify citizen marketers can link the messages spread across social media platforms to a grading system which highlights the most active and positive consumers. This data typically consist of tweets, FaceBook messages, blog posts and any other data that can be used for ranking the consumer. Tracking this activity in a CRM system allows for a manageable method of integrating these citizen marketers into marketing and sales promotions and programs.

4. Enhanced Support

Support is an area where Social CRM can be easily leveraged to enhance a consumer's view of a product or service. The integration of Twitter with a CRM allows support teams to easily search and monitor for keywords and convert those posts to support and customer service departments. Two main areas where Social CRM impacts support are in pacifying angry customers and supporting in presales.

The phrase, "the squeaky wheel gets the grease" is multiplied exponentially on the internet. Companies that quickly identify an unhappy customer can act swiftly to rectify the situation and alleviate the anger. This can reduce damage that potentially would have had a significant impact if it went viral throughout social media outlets.

Social CRM also allows businesses to go one step further in the presale process. For instance, one prevalent problem in presales is that a consumer uses a trial, can't figure out how to do something, then gets frustrated and abandons the product. With Twitter for instance, consumers can easily post questions about a product. Enhanced support through monitoring for these questions will increase the likelihood of a sale and increase positive perception.

Marketers and sales managers have barely touched on the potential of using social media during the sales process. CRM integrations help to narrow this gap and shorten the technology learning curve. As the web (and how people use it) continues to evolve, CRM systems and integrations will as well.

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Bio:

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Blurb:

How can businesses use social media at the enterprise level? Enter Social CRM, a mixture of social media and CRM (customer relationship management). This article will explore four ways Social CRM effectively engages customers and increases sales through personal connections, brand monitoring, citizen marketer tracking, and enhanced support.