6 STEPS TO TRANSFORMATIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE

INCORPORATING SOCIAL MEDIA INTO YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY
Customer experience is the new marketing.

Consumers gave up snail mail and fax machines long ago – and phone calls are on the way out, too. Social media is quickly becoming the go-to channel for customer service, and it’s easy to see why. It’s fast, it’s easy, and customers are already on it throughout the day. Why not expect brands to keep up?

In fact, when a consumer mentions your brand on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, they don’t just hope for a response. They expect one. Switching brands is easier than ever, but prompt service and real-time engagement can secure customer loyalty. Social media is the stage to deliver.

42% of social media users expect a response within 60 minutes.

Social customer service agents handle 4–8X more interactions than phone support.


Top-performing marketing teams are shifting customer service initiatives to popular social channels. Every social interaction is an opportunity to grow a customer relationship. Social customer service demonstrates company values, culture, and an ability to support customers without ever having to advertise it.

In the following chapters, you’ll learn how to:

1. Define goals and develop a social strategy.
2. Listen in on social.
3. Build an internal network of subject matter experts.
4. Create an engagement playbook.
5. Train teams on assigned roles and responsibilities.

90% of top marketers say their marketing and service departments collaborate regularly.


66% of brands that use social for customer service prefer it over a call center.

Define goals and develop a social strategy.

Social marketing is more than a stand-alone function. The best social marketers work together with people across their entire business, including the rest of marketing, sales, and – critically – customer service. They integrate their processes and technology with service solutions to connect a convenient, impressive brand experience for consumers.

Adopting social customer service means you’ll need a new set of metrics to gauge performance. What are your criteria for success?

Tie metrics to your business goals, and avoid wasting time pursuing numbers that don’t matter. For example, if you’re increasing the number of customer service interactions on social media, set a baseline for what those interactions look like today.

Only with your goals in mind can you develop your social strategy. It outlines how you’ll use channels like Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn to foster relationships that help you meet business goals.
A good social media strategy will address the following:

**Your Target Audience Personas**
Who are you trying to reach? How do they use social media? What do they care about?

**Goals and Objectives**
What are the social media objectives that will support your organization's goals?

**Strategies**
What are the big ideas, changes, or maneuvers that will make this plan work?

**Messaging and Content Strategy**
What are the messages you want your target audience to understand or believe? What content can you create to educate or entertain them?

**Tactics and Technologies**
Which social networks will your organization join? How and where will you publish? What specific apps or technologies will you use to shape the customer experience?

**Measurement**
What are the specific metrics you need to determine whether your social media efforts are helping you meet objectives? How will you measure them?

**Roles and Responsibilities**
Who’s going to write blog posts? Who will monitor social media and respond to customers? Who will develop a social media training program for employees? Define the needs and assign the tasks.
On average, Twitter powers 500 million tweets per day. On Facebook, 510,000 comments are posted, 293,000 statuses are updated, and 136,000 photos are uploaded every minute. It’s no surprise that 89% of social messages to companies go ignored.

But the world’s leading service departments and marketers combine forces to effectively manage social conversations – and it starts with social listening.
Here are three types of listening strategies.

**Brand Monitoring**
Identify keywords in social conversations related to:

- Brand and product names
- Seasonal campaign names and terms
- Names of executives or stakeholders
- Names of specific products and services you offer

**Industry Monitoring**
Understand the larger social landscape that surrounds your business:

- Phrases that define the markets you serve
- Industry keywords or categories
- Professional organizations you belong to or that fit your business profile
- Names of your industry thought leaders
- Keyword phrases that indicate an intent to purchase or learn more

**Competitor Monitoring**
See what competitors promote and who they hire. Search for:

- Competitor brand and product names
- Stakeholders in those companies
- Buzz around competitive campaigns or promotions

**Remember:** Any of the above keywords or terms may also exist as nicknames, abbreviations, or misspellings. Look for those too.
IT'S ALL ABOUT BEING PERSONAL AND INTERACTING WITH PEOPLE THE WAY THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH.

Robert Schmid, CIO, Activision

Build an internal network of subject matter experts.

Even with the most robust training program in place, chances are every agent will get stumped with a question at one point or another. Forging relationships with key contacts ahead of time prevents your team from getting stuck during a blooming PR crisis.

Reduce the amount of time it takes to retrieve the right information with an internal social network that enables agents to share customer information, advice, and ideas in real time no matter where they are.

Your in-house knowledge base can store brand information, expert contacts, and training materials. Appoint someone to oversee and own the internal community to keep it updated and valuable.
Activision levels up on customer service.

Activision has made some of the most played games in the world for over 30 years — all while delivering incredible customer service.

Activision uses Salesforce to manage service cases from every possible touchpoint — email, phone, mobile app, Facebook, and other social channels. Through social media monitoring, Activision flags social posts containing keywords, then automatically creates and routes them to the correct department.

Before Marketing Cloud, half of customer service at Activision was self-service. Customers now solve 85% of all problems on their own with self-service content. The remaining 15% of issues lead to live conversations with agents; over half of those are solved on social media. That’s how Activision lowered service-related operating expenses by 25% annually.

Amazingly, the deployment only took three months. Put in gaming terms: Achievement unlocked.

“I’TS AN INCREDIBLE CHANGE. WE’RE REDUCING COSTS AND INCREASING SATISFACTION AT THE SAME TIME.”

Tim Rondeau, Senior Director of Customer Care, Activision

378% return on investment

$807,011 average annual benefit
Create an engagement playbook.

You need an engagement plan to adequately care for your community and customers. Create a playbook to guide personnel through the following:

- **STEP 4**
  - Listening to the right conversations
  - Flagging and prioritizing conversations
  - Classifying conversations ("product review," "sales lead," "industry discussion")
  - Tagging the source ("tier 1 customer," "influencer," "employee," "competitor")
  - Escalating the conversation if necessary
  - Assigning the post to the appropriate team

**The playbook should outline how to join conversations:** Which conversations should you respond to privately, publicly, or not at all? Establish rules for routing to self-service, emailing, or calling the customer directly. The playbook should include recommended dialogue for common situations.
When you’re ready to take engagement to the next level, try adding other plays to your manual.

**Reward advocacy**
You have die-hard fans who show loyalty on their blog, Facebook, or Instagram. Why not give these advocates a virtual pat on the back by featuring them on the company blog or Facebook page?

**Say thank you**
A small “thanks” can go a long way. Try a public gesture to let your customers and social media followers know you value them.

**Participate in industry discussion**
Getting involved in conversations surrounding the verticals you serve is essential to establish your business as a thought leader (and one that truly cares about its community).
Train teams on assigned roles and responsibilities.

Depending on the size of your team and your type of organization, you may monitor social media in a number of ways. Maybe the marketing team answers queries and directs questions to customer support. Or perhaps you want support to handle social media listening and route the right conversations to the corresponding department.

Whatever your method, it’s important that your team understands the procedure, and that everyone involved has the proper skills and understands the processes in your engagement playbook. That way, you’ll avoid more than one employee answering a customer query – or even worse, queries falling through the cracks.
6 Steps to Transformative Customer Service

- 89% of top marketers say marketing and service share common goals and metrics.
- 87% of top marketers alert service to special promotions and offers.
- 81% of top marketers suppress marketing efforts when a customer has an open service case.

Measure what matters.

Your business metrics should work toward giving the very best customer service – the kind people want to share, tweet, and blog about.

**WHEN MEASURING YOUR SOCIAL CUSTOMER SERVICE EFFORTS, REMEMBER:**

- Tie what you measure to hard business metrics.
- Don’t ignore the soft benefits.
- Focus on quality over quantity.
- Measure what will truly make your business remarkable.
Below are the most critical metrics and KPIs to track:

**Response Time**
How long does it take to respond to customers posting in social media?

**Inbound Volume**
The best way to improve response time is to make sure you are staffed during the times your customers are active on social networks. Track inbound volume by day to understand how you can boost your program.

**Open Cases on Social**
Track the workload of your social customer service team. This can help determine staffing and other logistics.

**Case Close Time**
Make note of the total time it takes to close a socially generated case. With this data, you can come up with solutions to improve the process or establish better training programs.

**Customer Satisfaction or Net Promoter Score**
Engage customers after a service interaction to determine their satisfaction. Customers often have great ideas for practical ways to grow as a social brand. Plus, a high score can be a feather in your organization’s cap.
Of Facebook’s 2.07 billion monthly active users, 1.66 billion are active on mobile. In fact, 1 of every 5 minutes people in the U.S. spend on mobile is on Facebook or Instagram. This means consumers have an immediate public voice to talk about products they love – as well as express their concerns. That’s just one reason social customer service is a must.

get started with social.
Consumers have more touchpoints than ever with brands they love. Companies are no longer just an email address and a telephone number. Social media provides consumers with more outlets for brand interactions.

Social users expect speed in communications. Eighty-four percent of consumers expect companies to respond within 24 hours of posting a concern on social. In fact, 47% expect a response within one hour.

Consumer data is front and center on social. Social networks often display basic consumer information. Support agents can see the consumer’s name, location, and age before they even have to ask.

The channels for user-generated content have grown. Consumers can share opinions about everything on social networks and blogs, including how a customer service department has treated them along the consumer journey.

Self-service is becoming the new norm. Product reviews, forums, and message boards have made it easy to find product information quickly. Social users find answers without directly reaching out to a company.

Social media is a candid camera. Unlike a market research survey or focus groups, social commentary is ongoing and unprompted. It offers a clearer picture of consumer preferences and industry trends.

**WHEN YOUR CUSTOMERS FEEL HEARD, IT MEANS TANGIBLE BENEFITS TO YOUR BOTTOM LINE.**

Need help getting started with social customer service? Learn how brands integrate social marketing and service solutions – and see Salesforce’s integration of Marketing Cloud and Service Cloud in action. Visit [salesforce.com/marketingcloud](http://salesforce.com/marketingcloud) to learn more.