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Customer Care in the Era of Social Media and Web 2.0

We are living in a world where social and cultural changes influence the requirements of customer services and customer communications. The generation of the so-called "Digital Native" demands a new approach to customer care.

Digital Natives

A digital native grew up when electronic technology was already prevalent and is comfortable with computers, the Internet, mobile phones and MP3 players. The use of the World Wide Web is more natural and convenient than picking up the phone.

At the age of 21, an average American has already surfed for 3,500 hours on a social-media platform and received 250,000 messages by e-mail, instant messaging or sms. These statistics indicate the transformation of online social media and Web 2.0 into a mass-media platform and suggest new rules for professional customer service.



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Business Development
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A New Type of Customer

Bad experiences have always been shared with others; that is just human nature. But the impact of platforms like Twitter and Facebook broadcasts this sharing on an entirely new level. Vehicles such as the Internet, laptop computers and cell phones can be utilized for nearly any circumstance.

Every third consumer is posting negative experiences on the Internet according to a survey of 2,000 Internet users in Great Britain. On average, one message reaches 45 recipients. Up to 62 percent of the public can form negative opinions of an affected company without personal experience. One unsatisfied customer on the Web can cause a company to lose 30 people. And once a company image is damaged, it can be very difficult to repair.

Consider the case of the musician Dave Carroll. He was travelling to a show, and an airline forced him to carry his guitar. He shot a video of the incident and posted it on the Internet. Within a very short time, the clip was distributed en masse, and the airline was forced to provide a refund for subsequent damage. Of course, the clip is still posted and continues to influence the company image!

Reacting to Customer Behavior

The majority of customers with a complaint avoid contacting the company directly and express their negative experience straight on the Internet instead. Half of these unsatisfied customers terminate their relationship with the company immediately. Even worse, without any customer feedback, the company is unable to compensate for customer discontent and improve its processes until it is too late.

How can we react to these new developments in customer behavior? Investing in CRM tools is not the answer. Most of the action happens on a personal level. If a company representative communicates effectively, we will gain a greater understanding of customer requirements.

On an enterprise-wide level, all information on each communications channel must be collected and evaluated. This process serves as the base of an effective quality management system to take care, retain and increase an organization's customers.

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About Katrin Hansel:
Katrin Hansel is Business Development Manager for Contact Centers at ASC telecom. She focuses on call recording and quality management solutions and holds a university degree in Business Administration and Sciences of Media and Information Technologies.

About ASC:
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