



CLARABRIDGE

# SOCIAL CUSTOMER SERVICE *Etiquette*

Your guide  
for engaging as  
a person, *not*  
a logo





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It's an overstatement to say that everyone is online and using social media, but only a slight one. Social media not only connects millions upon millions of people across the world, it also opens a channel for a brand-new type of interaction between businesses and customers—and a new way to provide customer service.

But how new is it, really? While it may feel like social customer care is something different, it's really just an interaction between a brand and a customer. It's called "social" for a reason: it takes place among people.

With that in mind, the etiquette of social customer service isn't that different from any friendly conversation. According to the Emily Post Institute, "[T]hough times have changed, the principles of good manners remain constant. Above all, manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others."

**A social customer  
service program can increase  
customer satisfaction scores  
by nearly 20%.**

—ABERDEEN



So, here are some techniques for showing that kind of empathy to your customers while you provide them great service. It's only polite, after all.

## *Do: Move Social into Your Call Center*

Make a good impression—let your customer service experts provide social customer service.

Social media has traditionally been the purview of the Marketing department, because it is great for building brand awareness and advertising. However, your Call Center agents are the ones with the tools and the knowledge to provide rapid support.

Identify agents who consistently provide friendly, high-quality service. Teaching them to use social media to deliver high-quality online support is a simple next step.

And it helps the Call Center, too. Providing customer care through social channels reduces the volume of calls you have to deal with—and that saves you money. Research indicates that one social customer service interaction costs around \$1, whereas one Call Center interaction costs nearly \$6.

**Don't forget to share.** The social customer care team should share social data with the Marketing department to develop a joint strategy for engaging and satisfying customers.

Answering service requests on social media brings up to 40% more revenue per customer.

—BAIN & COMPANY



## *Don't: Delay Your Response*

It's rude to keep people waiting. (And your customers won't put up with it.)

Even if you're not able to give a correct answer right away, it's important to let the customer know you will respond as soon as possible. By simply replying, "Thank you for reaching out, we're looking into the issue," you acknowledge them and show that you care about their concerns. Of course, you also need to take the next step: fix the problem and provide a response as quickly as you can.

With the right tools and processes, you can handle huge numbers of social mentions without sacrificing speed. For example, Sky Betting & Gaming was able to reply to 33,395 social mentions in a single month, while consistently meeting its target response time of 15 minutes across social channels.

72% of customers  
who complain to you through  
social media expect a  
response in under an hour.

—ECONSULTANCY



**Speed matters.** A Clarabridge study of banking customers showed that they were more frustrated by slow responses than by inaccurate ones.

## *Do: Measure the Impact of Your Efforts*

What do manners have to do with metrics? More than you think.

Good social media etiquette means making a personal connection with customers, prospects, and even critics over social media. Those individual touchpoints certainly give you some idea of how you are doing—but you need to calculate real metrics to see the overall impact social media is having on your business.

When you know your numbers, you can take steps to improve them. Strong social media engagement and smart social customer service can result in higher sales value per customer, lower service delivery costs, and an overall increase in revenue.

Constellation Research<sup>1</sup> has identified a number of customer service metrics for social media ROI calculations:

### **Customer Service Metrics**

- Customer service satisfaction
- Deflection rates
- Escalation rates
- Case volumes by channel (calls, emails, text, social)
- First contact resolution rates
- Average handle time
- Total cases handled per hour
- Net Promoter Score®

### **Social Metrics**

- Sentiment (positive, negative, neutral)
- Conversation volumes across channels (comments, tweets, posts)
- Engagement analysis
- Community engagement
- Membership influence (measuring the extent of member network influence)
- Social Net Promoter Score

<sup>1</sup> *The Economic Imperative of ROI for Social Customer Care*. Dr. Natalie L. Petouhoff, Vice President and Principal Analyst, Constellation Research, 2016.

## *Don't: Push Customers to a Different Channel*

Unfortunately, many businesses regularly redirect social conversations to another channel, either for privacy reasons or convenience. For example, you may ask the customer to call the Call Center or to fill out a web form, rather than continuing to use Twitter or Facebook to resolve an issue.

Please don't do this. This type of channel hopping is very frustrating to customers. Keep in mind that **it's the customer—not your business—who owns the conversation**. By having public social channels, you've invited your customers to reach out to you—when they do so, they are your guests. It should be your company's mission to make them feel welcome, right where they are.

If you must change channels, here are a few golden rules:

- Don't insist. Instead, ask the customer how they'd prefer to proceed.
- Give good directions. For example, many customers don't know how to take a Twitter chat private, so make sure you tell them how.
- Inconvenience yourself, rather than your customer. For example, don't ask your customers to call a certain phone number. Ask for their phone number in a private message and call them up yourself.

70% of all customer interactions with millennials happen through social. Their preferences, such as staying on-channel, should influence your social strategy.

—TSIA



## *Do: Provide Authentic Interactions*

Be personal and genuine. Technology helps.

Your social channels are busy. Between ad campaigns, brand awareness, customer engagement, and social customer service, it can feel like there's no time for the personal touch. On the other hand, customers are looking for interactions that feel real and relevant. That's why you need good technology.

If you have a solution that alerts you to all new social mentions, you can respond to them right away. Smart filtering and routing help you get questions and complaints to the right people in your organization for efficient resolution. The ability to "lock" an open item ensures that only one agent is working on it, so nobody is wasting time.

Companies with a  
best-in-class social customer  
service approach show a 92%  
customer retention rate.

—ABERDEEN



Social engagement solutions make it easier to handle the “behind the scenes” stuff so that you can focus on building relationships with customers. Get to know them, understand their needs, and go the extra mile to help them.

**And always remember to say “please” and “thank you.” You must mind your manners.**





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Clarabridge offers the leading out-of-the-box SaaS solution to power customer experience management initiatives. Businesses gain insight to improve the customer journey, spanning all business processes and customer interactions. Social care teams use Clarabridge to provide a real-time response to customers. Our technology is the most comprehensive solution for omni-source listening, accurate customer and text analytics, and real-time, guided action. The result: a better customer experience. For more information, visit [www.clarabridge.com](http://www.clarabridge.com).