

Viewpoint:

Building Customer Relationships with Integrated Communication

The dynamics of today's logistics industry are pushing companies to re-think the way they interact with customers. This includes new approaches to both Marketing and Customer Service. Innovative companies are discovering the advantages of bringing Marketing and Customer Service together at an early stage in the customer's journey. Collaboration is the key to leverage best practices across both processes and build customer relationships from the first contact.

Both Marketing and Customer Service require solid business intelligence to gain a clear picture of who the customer is. However, each looks at a different part of that picture. Marketing looks to understand customer requirements and motivators to develop strategies and collateral that will generate leads and build brands. Customer service requires an accurate profile of the customer in terms of their long term expectations and after-sales support requirements.





Collaboration is the Key to Building Customer Relationships

When Marketing and Customer Service collaborate to produce useful business intelligence and cohesive communication, they are able to ensure that customer's expectations and experiences are aligned for the best possible outcomes.

Todd De Rosa
General Manager Marketing and Communications

Marketing is traditionally focused on communication, brand and lead generation strategies, while Customer service is driven by the immediate needs of customers. What they have in common is the need for information – working together they can combine their respective skills and vital business intelligence to expand and enhance long term customer relationships.

The most effective Marketing communication strategies utilize all the contact points with potential and existing customers. Customer Service is the most prominent contact point with current customers. With Marketing driven integrated customer engagement, Customer Service becomes part of the outbound Marketing strategy. Customer Service is also an effective inbound channel with the ability to collect accurate real time information from existing and potential customers.

In a competitive business environment, logistics companies are compelled to respond quickly to market data while simultaneously developing coherent long term strategies for business communication. Integrated Marketing and Customer Service communication allows Customer Service to be less transaction and incident driven, while Marketing benefits from a stream of actionable real-time data about customers. The result of this focused, multi-outcome approach is increased brand equity, more effective engagement and higher customer satisfaction.

We've found that this approach enables us to set an even higher expectation and fulfil it at a critical point in the customer service process. First touch resolutions have risen, overall customer satisfaction has increased, and we have more BI [business intelligence] and cleaner data.

There are a number of tools and tactics for employing a cross-functional strategy, but no matter how you approach it technology plays a crucial role. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) applications are indispensable tools ensuring that all business areas have comprehensive information to deliver high value customer interactions. Customer Service collects more real time data so marketing, communication and customer notifications can be planned and executed in a more effective way. The net result is revenue from sales has increased – lead generation has expanded with our capabilities to respond with real time data, and deeper collateral resulting in higher program acceptance.

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