

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL CRM ON CUSTOMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS BRANDS

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.58257/IJPREMS35858>

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the key factors shaping customer attitudes towards brands and evaluate the effectiveness of Social Customer Relationship Management (Social CRM) strategies. A quantitative research design was employed, complemented by qualitative insights gathered through open-ended survey questions. The data was collected via an online questionnaire targeting online shoppers, with statistical analysis conducted using SPSS for Multiple Regression and Factor Analysis.

The findings indicate that young adults (aged 18–25) are the most active social media users, significantly influencing their brand perceptions. The majority of respondents were male, highlighting the need for gender-specific Social CRM strategies. YouTube and Instagram emerged as the most widely used platforms, necessitating a focus on visual and video content. Although customer satisfaction is generally high, there is room for improvement in the quality and speed of brand responses. Additionally, concerns around community involvement and privacy underscore the need for enhanced community-building initiatives and greater transparency. The study also revealed that customer attitudes are strongly influenced by brands' ability to fulfill promises and provide attentive service. Furthermore, increased purchase likelihood is closely tied to customer satisfaction, suggesting the need for further research into effective complaint resolution strategies.

The study concludes that while current Social CRM practices positively impact customer attitudes, there is potential for improvement in engagement, responsiveness, and transparency to further enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction. Brands are advised to focus on content creation for dominant platforms like YouTube and Instagram, fulfill their resolution promises, prioritize timely and personalized responses, and invest in community-building initiatives.

Keywords: Social CRM, Customer Attitudes, Brand Loyalty, Social media, Customer satisfaction, Community Engagement, Digital Marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

By incorporating social media platforms, social customer relationship management, or social CRM, is an advancement over standard CRM systems that allows for more dynamic and individualized client engagement. Businesses are using Social CRM to engage with their audiences on social media sites where customers are most engaged, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others, as social media takes on a greater and greater role in consumers' lives. This strategy goes beyond providing basic customer service; it entails actively listening to and taking part in discussions that influence consumers' impressions of brands.

Businesses may better monitor consumer interactions, get real-time feedback, and handle inquiries by integrating social media into CRM. Social CRM provides useful data that firms may utilize to analyse client sentiments, preferences, and behaviour by studying social media activities, offering insightful information that can be applied to develop stronger connections, enhance customer service, and customize marketing campaigns. By predicting requirements and resolving issues before they worsen, firms can transition from reactive to proactive client engagement with the help of this data-driven approach.

When a consumer complains on Twitter, for example, a business can respond quickly to the issue, showcasing attentiveness and transforming a potentially bad experience into a favourable one. Furthermore, Social CRM enables organizations to provide more relevant and tailored content that connects with their target audience and increases engagement. Through the incorporation of these social insights into more comprehensive customer relationship management strategies, companies can guarantee that each connection has purpose and fosters enduring client loyalty.

In general, Social CRM provides a more comprehensive and customer-focused approach to relationship management by acknowledging the influence of social media on the opinions of consumers. Social CRM is an essential tool for

fostering customer pleasure, trust, and brand advocacy as businesses continue to negotiate the intricacies of digital interactions. This, in turn, leads to stronger customer connections and long-term economic success.

2. IMPORTANCE OF RESPONSE

In an era dominated by instant communication and digital interactions, customers expect brands to be highly responsive. Whether through social media, email, or customer service platforms, the speed and relevance of a brand's response are pivotal in shaping customer perceptions and overall satisfaction.

When customers reach out to a brand, they are often in need of immediate assistance or seeking reassurance. A swift and well-crafted response not only addresses the immediate concern but also sends a powerful message that the brand values its customers and is committed to providing excellent service. This responsiveness is fundamental to maintaining a positive relationship with customers, as it builds trust and reinforces their confidence in the brand's reliability and customer-centric approach.

Conversely, slow or inadequate responses can lead to frustration, dissatisfaction, and even resentment. In today's competitive market, where customers have numerous alternatives at their fingertips, a lack of responsiveness can quickly result in lost business and damage to the brand's reputation. Customers are more likely to abandon a brand that fails to meet their expectations for timely and relevant communication.

Moreover, the importance of response extends beyond just resolving issues. It also influences how customers perceive the brand's overall commitment to quality and care. Brands that consistently prioritize quick, accurate, and thoughtful responses are more likely to foster positive attitudes and long-term loyalty. This underscores the need for brands to invest in efficient response mechanisms that not only meet but exceed customer expectations, ensuring that every interaction enhances the customer's experience and strengthens their relationship with the brand.

3. SATISFACTION WITH RESPONSE

"Satisfaction with Response" is a crucial determinant of customer loyalty and brand perception in the realm of Social CRM. This, refers to how content customers are with the responses they receive from a brand when they seek help or express concerns. It goes beyond just receiving a reply; it encompasses the quality, relevance, and personalization of the communication. When customers are satisfied with the responses they receive, it significantly enhances their overall experience and strengthens their relationship with the brand.

A key aspect of satisfaction with response is the degree to which the response addresses the customer's specific needs and concerns. Customers appreciate responses that are not only timely but also empathetic and tailored to their individual situations. This means that the brand has taken the time to understand the customer's issue and has provided a solution that is clear, actionable, and effective. Such responses leave customers feeling valued and respected, which is essential for building trust and long-term loyalty.

The impact of satisfaction with response is profound. When customers consistently receive high-quality responses, they are more likely to develop positive feelings toward the brand, leading to increased loyalty, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth referrals. This, in turn, enhances the brand's reputation as a customer-focused organization that prioritizes the needs of its customers.

On the other hand, if the responses are unsatisfactory—whether they are delayed, generic, or fail to address the issue adequately—customers may feel neglected or undervalued. This can lead to dissatisfaction, erode trust, and potentially result in the loss of customers. Therefore, it is imperative for brands to continuously evaluate and improve their response strategies, ensuring that they consistently deliver responses that not only meet but exceed customer expectations. By doing so, they can maintain strong, positive customer relationships and secure a competitive edge in the market.

4. PROMISE OF RESOLUTION

The "Promise of Resolution" is a vital aspect of customer service within Social CRM, representing the brand's commitment to resolving customer issues or addressing concerns that may arise during interactions. This factor plays a significant role in shaping customer attitudes toward the brand, as it directly influences how customers perceive the brand's dedication to their satisfaction and well-being.

When a brand makes a promise of resolution, it sets an expectation that the customer's issue will be handled in a timely and satisfactory manner. This promise is crucial because it provides reassurance to the customer that their concerns are being taken seriously and that the brand is actively working towards a solution. The mere act of making a promise of resolution can have a positive impact on customer attitudes, as it demonstrates the brand's accountability and commitment to customer care.

However, the effectiveness of a promise of resolution is contingent upon the brand's ability to follow through. Customers value transparency and honesty, and they expect brands to uphold their commitments. If a brand makes a promise but fails to deliver on it, the result can be significant disappointment and a loss of trust. This can damage the brand's reputation and lead to a decline in customer loyalty.

On the other hand, when a brand consistently fulfills its promises of resolution, it reinforces the customer's confidence in the brand's reliability and integrity. This not only helps to resolve the immediate issue but also strengthens the overall customer relationship, making it more likely that the customer will continue to do business with the brand in the future. For brands, the promise of resolution should be more than just a verbal commitment—it should be a core principle of their customer service strategy. By ensuring that promises are kept and that customers are informed and satisfied throughout the resolution process, brands can build stronger, more trusting relationships with their customers. This, in turn, can lead to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy.

5. CONCLUSION

This study identifies crucial factors shaping customer attitudes and assesses the effectiveness of Social CRM practices. The findings reveal that the speed and quality of responses are vital in influencing customer perceptions. Brands that provide timely, relevant, and empathetic responses enhance customer satisfaction and foster stronger loyalty. Additionally, fulfilling promises of resolution significantly strengthens trust, demonstrating the brand's commitment to resolving issues and maintaining customer confidence. These factors collectively highlight the effectiveness of Social CRM strategies in shaping positive customer attitudes. While current practices show success in building strong relationships, there is room for improvement. Brands should focus on refining their response strategies and ensuring consistent resolution promises to further enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. Overall, effective Social CRM practices are integral to cultivating positive customer experiences and sustaining long-term brand success.

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