

The ultimate guide to social media customer service for automotive brands

Move your customer service into the fast lane

Automotive companies were early adopters of social media.

But where they have been in pole position for promoting their brands through social media, they have been slow off the mark for realizing its full potential as a channel for customer service.

In this guide we show you how to fine tune your social media customer service to improve the customer experience, maximize brand loyalty and grow market share.

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Why provide customer service via social media?

Social media customer service is a powerful engine for boosting brand loyalty and growing market share.

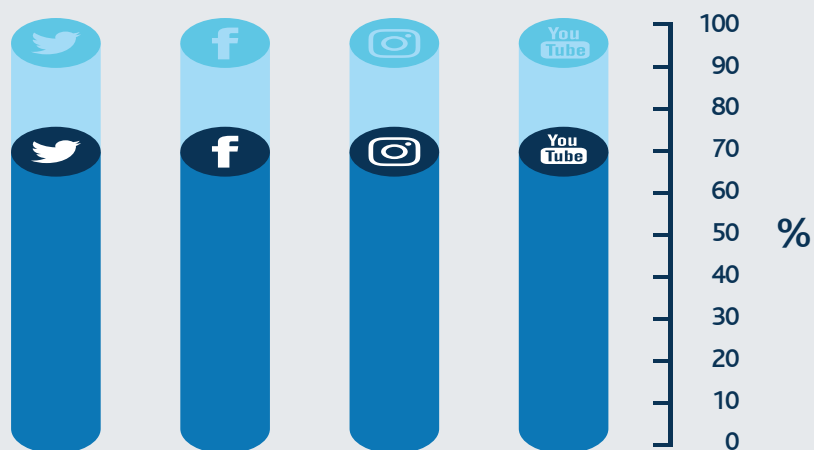


We predict that by 2021, customer service requests via social media will grow by 31%; and social media is already the preferred contact channel for Generation Y (people under 25).



71%

of consumers who have had a positive social media customer service experience are likely to recommend the brand to others.

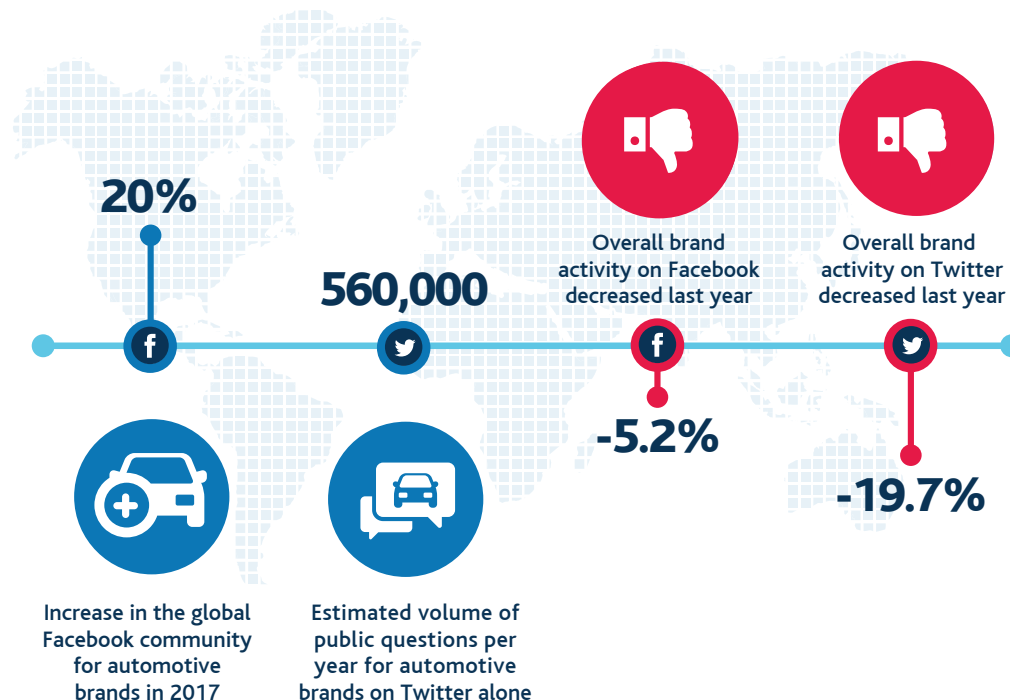


Companies that developed social media customer service capabilities have seen revenue per contact improve by 6.7% year-on-year through up-selling, cross-selling and reduction in customer churn.

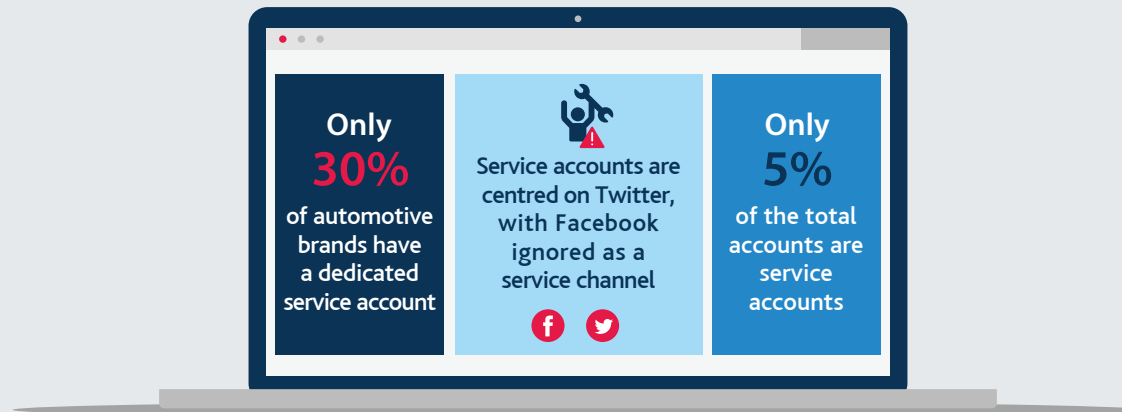


Are automotive brands on track with social media customer service?

Customers are stepping on the accelerator when it comes to social media engagement, but automotive brands are struggling to keep up.



Automotive brands mainly use social media for product promotion and marketing. Customers are hitting a dead end with their customer service requests on these channels:



Lack of joined-up infrastructure is putting the brakes on response times:



Five scenarios where social media support can make a difference during the customer journey

A proactive social media strategy can help you achieve your business objectives, whether that's to differentiate your brand through great customer service, to grow revenue and market share, or to achieve efficiencies and save costs. Here are some best-practice examples of how the right social media interaction can support your customers at every stage of their journey:



1. Awareness:

Hints & tips

At the beginning of the journey, customers are typically looking for information about your products or brand. A great way to use the power of social media is to engage with influencers, who are likely to share a positive experience with their followers.

Another great way to increase awareness for your brand is to proactively share useful hints and tips.

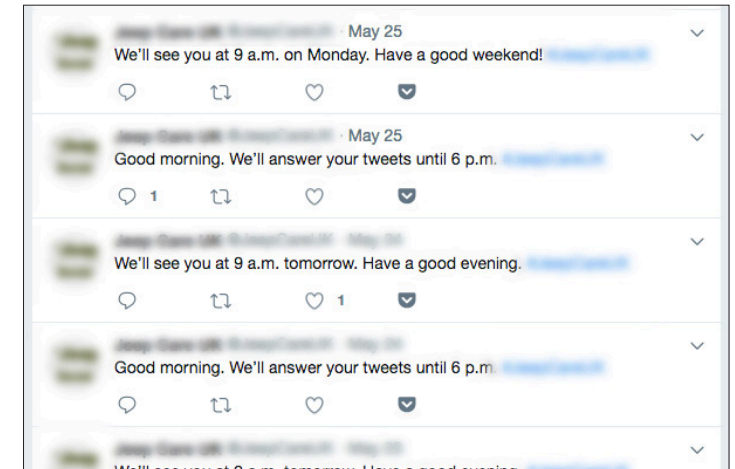
Brand A



Brand A: Offering customers proactive advice on technical features

- Service post on how to use Apple Carplay, including a link to short video on YouTube
- Stepping out to proactively consult the customer via the brand's dedicated support account
- Using proactive care to pre-empt customer requests and reduce instances of complaints.

Brand B



Brand B: Account showing that support is available, but missing opportunity to post hints and tips or solutions to current issues

2. Consideration:

Product launch

Customers regularly check out product reviews on social media, or ask brands about a product, to help them make a decision. By providing proactive and personalized responses, you can build a relationship with your customers and turn them into real fans.

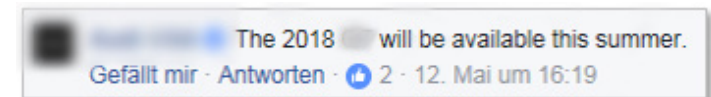
Brand A 



Brand A: Using the chance to create interest and increase consideration

- Personalized response
- Building up anticipation for the new model
- Tightening the bond with the customer

Brand B 



Brand B: Delivering information only

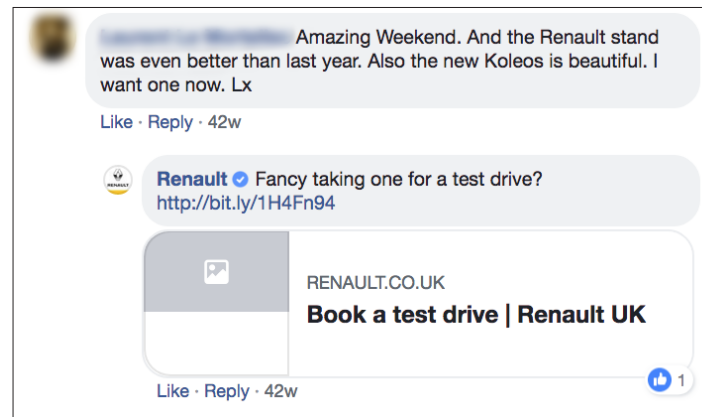
- Standardized, unemotional response
- Missed opportunity

3. Purchase:

Up-selling

Fans often express their love for a certain model on social media. Being able to identify and then act upon these sales opportunities can set your brand apart from the competition. Supporting your customer through the sales process, for example, by making an appointment with a local dealer, will increase the likelihood and speed of an actual purchase.

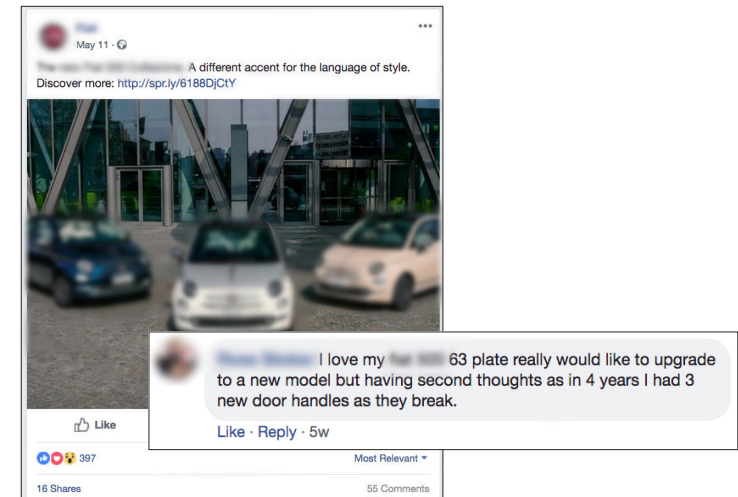
Brand A



Brand A: Taking the opportunity to offer a test drive to a customer

- Existing customer expresses his interest in a new model
- Brand proactively offers loyal customer an extended test drive
- Taking the chance to keep existing customers in the loyalty loop

Brand B



Brand B: Missing out on a chance to keep a loyal customer

- Customer owns the brand's product and seems interested in getting a new model, but expresses doubts due to product defaults
- No response, even though the customer clearly is a fan of the brand, but had experienced issues with her car
- Missed chance to show sympathy and interest in the customer's issues in order to prevent churn and win the customer back
- Consulting the customer on a new model or offering a test drive might actually have secured her intention to buy

4. Retention:

Complaint management

The key at this stage of the journey is to prevent churn and ensure your customers remain satisfied and loyal. Surprisingly, some brands seem to stop wooing a customer once they've purchased a car. By actively managing complaints or engaging proactively with negative comments, you can turn sentiment around and boost customer loyalty.

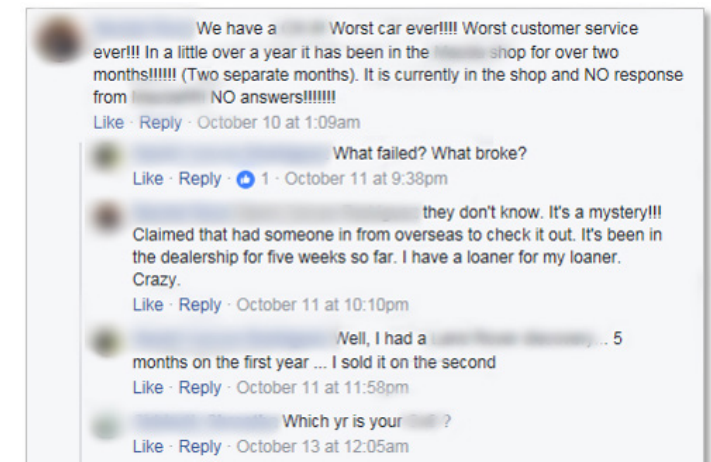
Brand A



Brand A: Responding in a sympathetic manner

- Customer complaining about bad service from the dealer and recommending other customers to stay away from the brand
- Apologetic response
- Support offered
- Willingness to take responsibility

Brand B



Brand B: No response

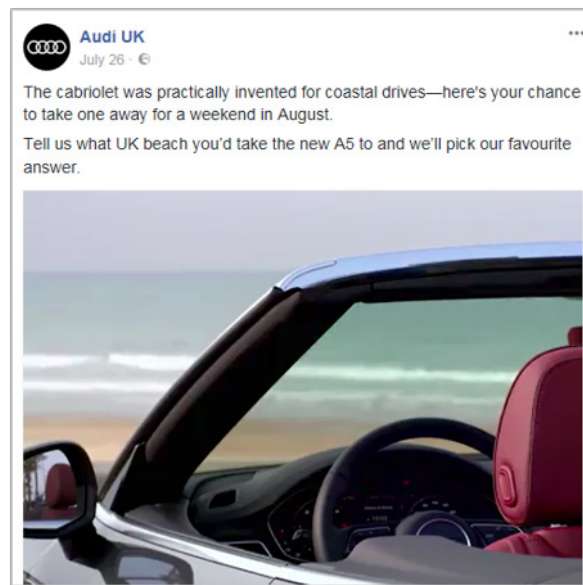
- Customer complaining about her bad experience with her car and the customer service department, which has not responded to her
- No response, even when other Facebook users join in
- Decreased customer satisfaction and lost customers

5. Advocacy:

Proactive engagement

Social media offers a great way to build a sense of community. Through sharing interesting stories and interacting with your fans, you can build a community of brand advocates that will inspire others and battle any negative sentiment for you. Social media is a two-way street: make sure you connect with your fans, not just broadcast your message.

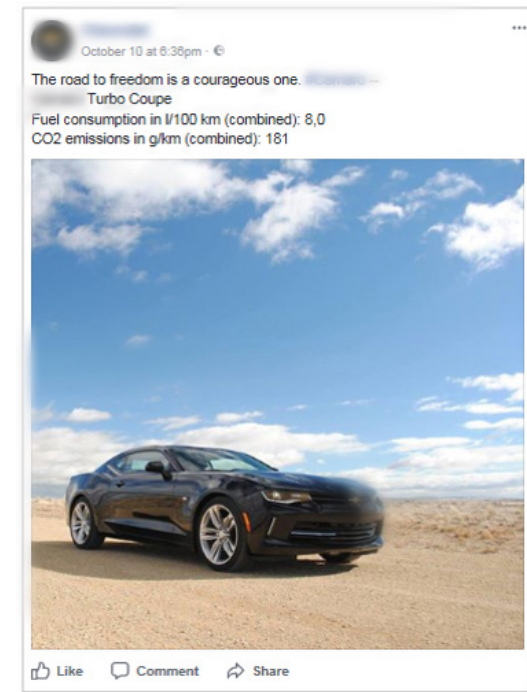
Brand A



Brand A: Fostering the brand community and creating brand lovers

- Emotional bond between customer and brand
- Community feeling
- Increased relevancy content
- Transforming customers into brand lovers and brand advocates

Brand B



Brand B: Single-way communication

- No interaction
- Missing emotional connection between customer and brand

10 Tips



for getting your social media customer service motoring



1. Consider your goals

Clearly identify what you want to achieve with social media, both as a way of creating brand awareness and also as a channel for customer service.



2. Centralize your processes

Implement a unified platform that manages all of your social media accounts in a central location, so responses can be processed efficiently and comprehensively wherever they come from.



3. Be clear on the ownership of social media activities

Make sure that social media enquiries are responded to by the team that's best placed to do so, avoiding hand-offs between teams and having to switch channels (e.g. consider placing this activity with your customer service team, not brand/marketing/PR).



4. Communicate your capabilities

Let your customers know they can ask service queries on social media channels.



5. Respond quickly

Quick answers are vital for effective customer service – this means minutes, not days. With the right infrastructure and processes in place, you can deliver rapid responses and delight your customers.

“For an effective presence in social media, marketing by itself is not enough – it has to be combined with excellent customer service”

Estelle Wienk,
Global Social Media Consultant,
Majorel



6. Manage expectations

Be clear on the hours your support team is available, and transparent on how quickly you're able to respond.



7. Don't forget the human element

Be proactive in your responses and give your teams the freedom to engage with your customers, for example, by using a more relaxed tone and style that's right for the channel but still aligned with your brand.



8. See every interaction as an opportunity

Always try and go the extra mile by offering additional information and support. If appropriate, look for opportunities to cross-sell new products and services to interested customers and gather customer feedback that will help you develop your products, service and business in the future!



9. Hire the right people

Effective customer service via social media requires a unique skill-set and the right attitude (see points 7 & 8) – this means recruiting the right people and providing on-going training.



10. Test, measure, improve

Track your social media performance over time and set key performance indicators (KPIs) to help refine and improve your service. Common KPIs include: customer satisfaction, customer sentiment, first response time and resolution time. Key measurements include: contact volume per channel, top issues and common feedback on products and service.

Case study:

Providing a high quality social media customer experience for a leading French multinational automobile manufacturer

Challenge

A leading French multinational automobile manufacturer realized that due to the increasing popularity of social media, it needed to establish an efficient customer care solution dedicated to these channels across the United Kingdom and Ireland.

For the UK, a typical month on social media could result in:

- > 5,000 customer contacts
- > 500 customer complaints

The social media posts would typically be:

- A response to a published ad that was sent to a wider audience through organic or paid posts
- A tag from a tweet
- A private message through the source channel

With this volume and type of activity, the company ran the risk of damaging its brand reputation and missing opportunities for customer engagement if it did not establish a robust process for social media.

Solution

The automotive brand partnered with Arvato to create a reliable, high quality customer service solution covering Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram. To achieve this, Arvato:

- Created a dedicated team for social media customer care, tasked with enhancing and furthering the customer experience.
- Introduced advanced training methods which, include three weeks of intensive on-boarding for new team members.
- Recommended and implemented a social media tool that aggregates all feeds from a brand's social media channels. This allows the customer service team to monitor and respond to customer contacts at scale, providing the correct information on the customer's preferred channel.
- Developed a sophisticated response methodology based on whether the customer contact was concerning a new car enquiry, an existing car enquiry, a complaint, or whether it was a passive or indirect comment.
- Integrated and tracked each interaction in Salesforce to have a single view of the customer, allowing customer relationships to be carefully managed over time independent of channel.
- Developed a bespoke Quality Model for Social Media, which tracks the social media performance of the brand and allows continual optimisation and improvement in line with the company's overall quality model for customer service.
- Set up incentivized individual and team targets to drive the performance of the customer care team, including quality and revenue generation attribution.

Success

Arvato's integrated approach to social media customer service has been a major success, helping the brand reduce response times, improve customer engagement and launch new products.

- In the first ten months since establishing the solution, the social customer care team processed over 40,000 social media posts.
- The brand is now widely regarded as the 'Best in Class' internationally for customer service within its international network.
- The social customer care team has consistently out-performed on the Quality Model in the following areas: appropriate brand awareness, professional and friendly interactions, up-to-date product knowledge, clear communication and timely response times.
- The average time to create a customer profile and respond is now 17 minutes
- Partly due to customer feedback from the social media channels, in February 2017, the brand launched an automatic version of one of its popular models in the UK market.
- As a result, Arvato and its client have been named a finalist for 'Digital Customer Services Team of the Year' at the UK Contact Centre Forum (UKCCF) Awards 2017 and for 'Innovation in BPO – A partnership approach' at the Customer Contact Association (CCA) Excellence Awards 2017.

About Arvato CRM Solutions UK

Arvato CRM Solutions UK is a trusted partner to the private and public sectors, with expertise in delivering award-winning customer relationship management, business process outsourcing (BPO) and public sector and citizen services.

With more than 50 years of experience, we design and deliver innovative, individual solutions for some of the world's most respected consumer brands and UK public sector organisations. Driven by technology, differentiated by experience and powered by our people, we help our clients achieve their strategic objectives and delight their customers.

A division of Bertelsmann, Arvato CRM Solutions UK employs approximately 1500 people across eight UK locations.

For more information, visit: www.arvato.co.uk

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About Majorel

Majorel creates amazing customer experiences that consumers love and we are proud of. By smartly combining people and technology we deliver true value for our partners.

We are driven to go further

We serve customers across the world through our 48,000 employees based in 28 countries in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Americas and Asia in 36 languages. We support your customers at any time, through every device and in the manner they expect of their brands. We speak their language wherever they are and whatever their culture.

We serve your customers by combining the best of people, technology and innovation. We truly believe that the greater the use of technology, the more human we can be. Because service is a human thing, even when it's delivered by a robot.


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