

# CHAPTER 5

## Creating Your Social Customer Service Processes

The Definitive Guide  
to Social, Mobile Customer Service

VOLUME 4  
2016-2017 EDITION

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There are a number of unique requirements for a successful social customer service program that are not encountered within a traditional customer service setting.

## Prioritization

Filtering through social messages is a major challenge for any brand receiving even a moderate volume of customer interactions.

Unlike private service channels, social media consists of many messages and interactions that may not require a response.

A study of retailers using Conversocial found that 50% of social media messages merited an agent's attention, only 10% of which required a response. This demand to noise ratio does, however, vary across companies and industries, with service providers often seeing much higher volumes of actionable conversations (in the range of 50–80%).

It's important for managers to define a criteria for what their team should respond to first.

- What is high priority?
- What messages are actionable? What are noise?
- What should be always guaranteed to receive a response?

### FRAMEWORK FOR CLASSIFYING ISSUES OF VARYING URGENCY:

#### First-tier priority

- A customer asking the company a direct question
- A customer expressing dissatisfaction
- A customer that has an urgent product or service need
- Potential crisis issues

#### Second-tier priority

- General references of the company's products and services
- Positive experiences of the company's products and services
- Indirect references that are relevant to the company's industry

## Resolution

Social customer service is all about resolving customer issues regardless of where, when and how those customers choose to interact.

### Know who you're talking to

When customers reach out to you on social media they want to carry on their existing conversations with you, not start fresh or from scratch or anew. This is a major challenge in a multi-channel customer service environment, but if you get it right you can offer a much better customer experience.

Make sure that your team has full visibility of your customers' social history.

- Are you already in the middle of a conversation?
- Have you had similar conversations in the past?
- Has the customer previously had a positive or negative relationship with your company?
- Which agent dealt with that customer before?

As your team gets fully integrated into the customer service environment, they should have access to systems that hold customer records from other channels, such as their email, chat and phone systems, and core customer information in your CRM system. Getting the data to flow across these systems is the most important step towards a single view of the customer.

### Redirection is not good customer service

Customers know that social media offers a different customer experience to traditional channels.

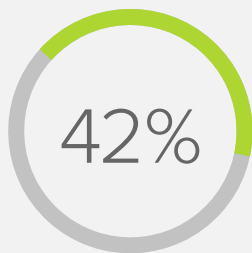
Customers have chosen to speak with your company there, as it is convenient and human. They might have even exhausted and lost confidence in other channels like the call center.

Redirecting customers away from their chosen support channel is one of the worst customer service experiences possible, forcing customers to interact in a form they have not chosen. According to the American Express Customer Service Barometer, 65% of customers report that in-channel resolution is the most important aspect of a good customer service experience (American Express 2012). Further, Conversocial research of a cross-section of social customer service interactions found that only 2% of customers who were given an email address or telephone number asked to be provided with one in the first place (Tweet, Email or Call 2013).

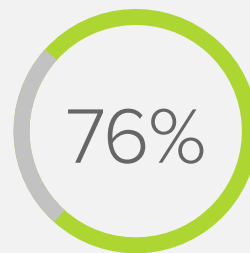
By offering in-channel resolution whenever possible, the consumer receives the interaction they were looking for, and the brand can publicly display any thanks the customer gives. Anxiousness about dealing with sensitive customer information publicly can usually be resolved by using private messaging. This protects both the brand and customer whilst avoiding redirection and a manipulated experience. If it becomes necessary to take the issue to another channel (e.g. for regulatory reasons), keep it on social for as long as possible. And even if an agent resolves an issue privately or on another channel, be sure to take it back to social media to show public resolution. Just a 'thank you' to the customer for their time and patience can suffice.



of customers had already tried the suggested channel or preferred social service



of customer tweets were ignored by brands when they objected to switching channels



of conversations didn't result in a further interaction after the brand suggested they switch channel



of customers who were given an email address or telephone number didn't ask for it

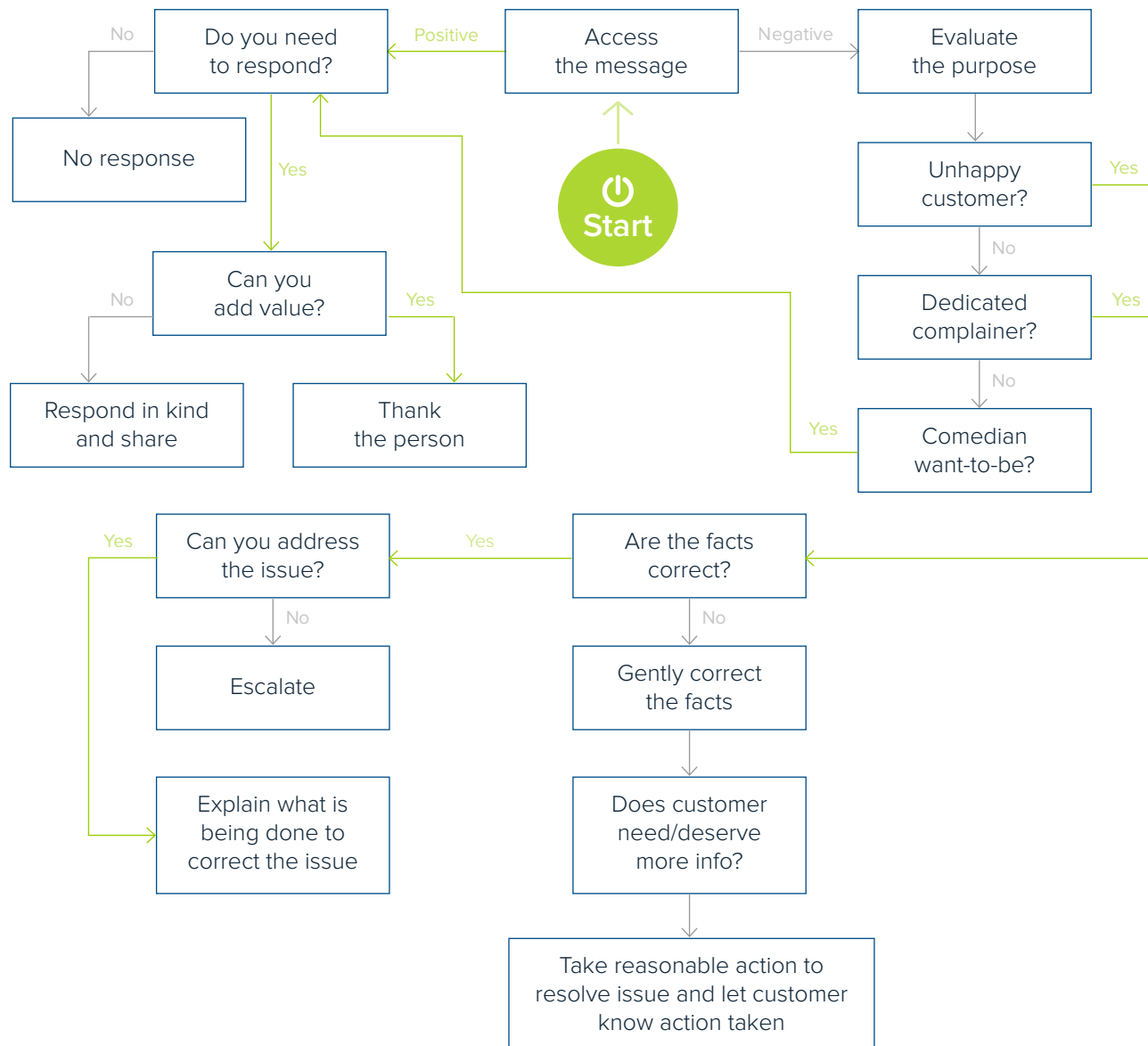
## Crisis Escalation Plan

### AN EFFECTIVE ESCALATION MAP SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Clear guidelines explaining which messages agents can respond to.
- A comprehensive breakdown of the types of messages frontline agents can't immediately respond to, and the team responsible for each type.
- A quick method of escalating messages, along with the full case history and context, to the relevant team.

Whether you are dealing with sensitive, detailed customer issues that require escalation to another team member or a mass notification of a service outage, it's important to have clear processes in place so that your agents can easily handle incoming messages without confusion or delay.

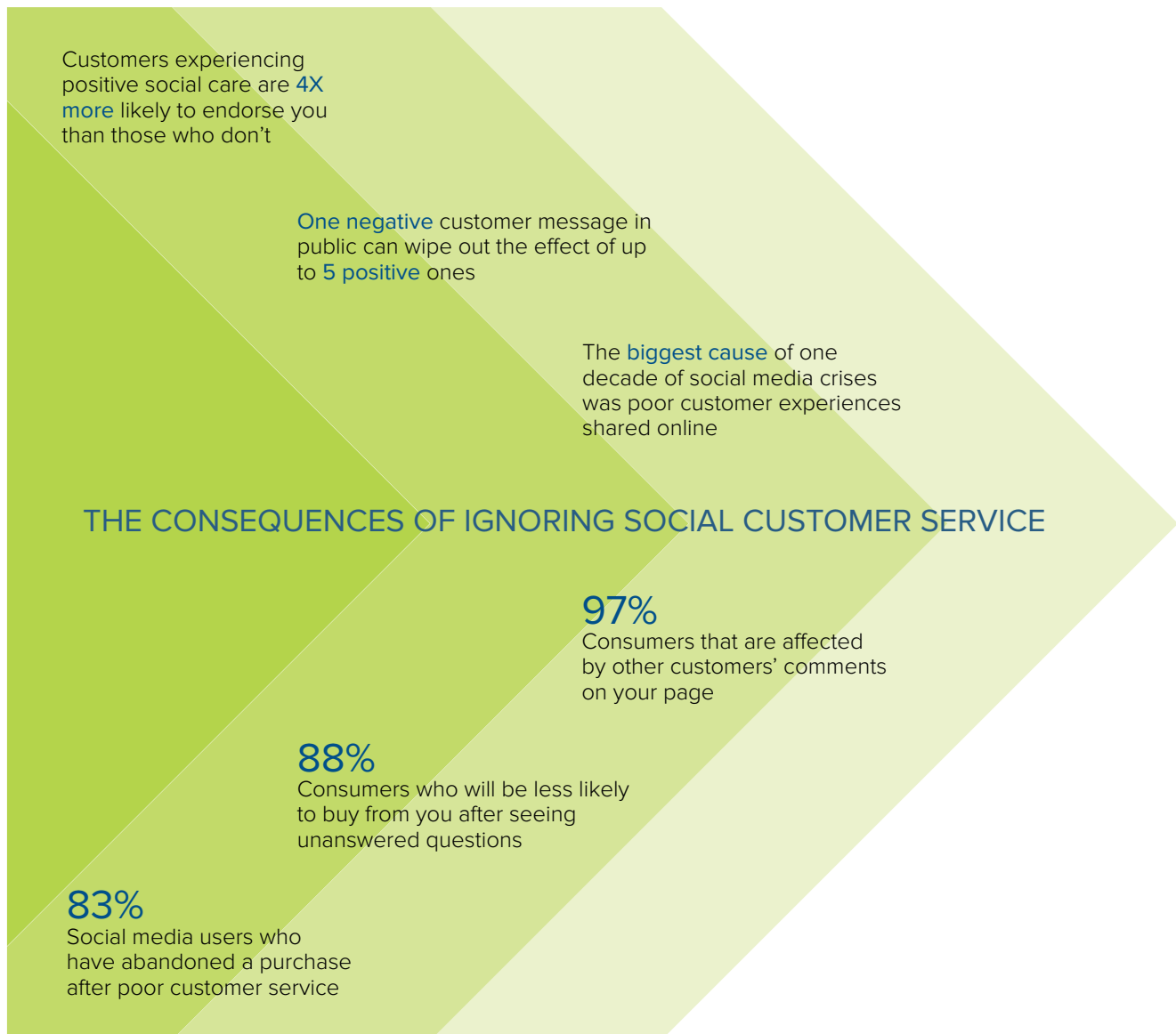
### Follow our Escalation Guide:



## Escalate the Smart Way

Brands that are smart about crisis management have an organized process in place and have practiced dealing with emergencies within their organization. Inter-department communication is on point and there is clear ownership. Be smarter in a crisis.

- Share with your team real-life examples of messages that do and don't need a response
- Make the first level of escalation the agent's team leader
- Track the ongoing performance of your agents
- Connect your team to PR, and experts in other areas of the business
- Transform your escalation map into a 'living document'
- For extremely sensitive issues, your front line agents should be equipped with a continually updated list of topics that will need PR approval when formulating a response



Read Chapter 6: **Creating a Social Customer Service Playbook** ➤

Read the Full Definitive Guide to Social, Mobile Customer Service ➤





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