

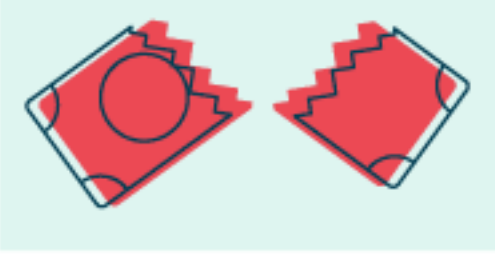
# A GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA CUSTOMER CARE

Social media has become a crucial platform to interact with customers, whether your company is large or small. But why is it important, and how do you ensure you're giving the best care you can?

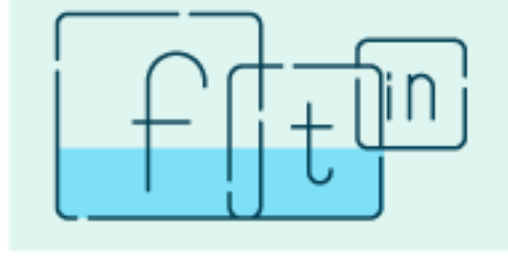
## Why social media customer care matters



**80% of companies believe they deliver superior customer service, but only 8% of customers think the same.**<sup>1</sup> The figures below demonstrate further why increasing that 8% is crucial:



**\$41bn** is lost each year by U.S. companies due to bad customer service.<sup>2</sup>



**33%** of social media users prefer to use social media rather than calling customer services.<sup>3</sup>



Customers who receive a service request response through social media spend **20-40% more.**<sup>4</sup>

**If the service is good, 48% of people will tell friends about the customer experience on social media.**<sup>5</sup> But what steps can you take to ensure your customer is always a happy customer?



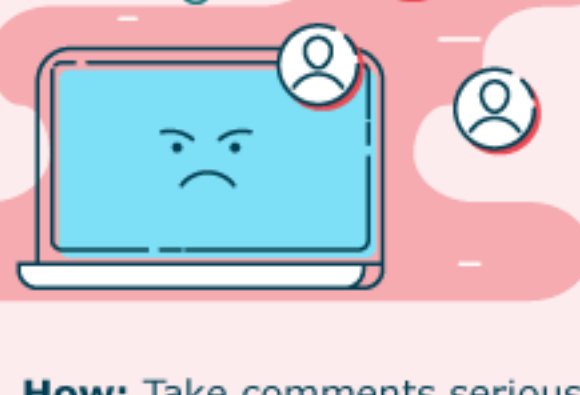
## A 10-step guide to giving excellent social media customer care

Some companies have entire teams dedicated to social media. Not everyone has these resources, but just a few simple steps can ensure you have the best strategy possible.<sup>6</sup>

1

### Always respond to customers.

70% of complaints on Twitter go unanswered, which is likely to rile customers further.<sup>5</sup>



**How:** Take comments seriously and reply in a polite tone, 43% expect a direct response.<sup>7</sup>

2

### Prioritize messages using the tag feature on Sprout Social.

It will save time, highlighting customers that need a response quickly.<sup>7,8</sup>



**How:** Work out a priority system, dealing with high-priority issues first.<sup>7</sup>

3

### Respond to messages within 1 hour.

42% of customers who complain via social media expect a response within 60 minutes.<sup>7</sup>



**How:** Acknowledge their message and let them know you're looking into it.<sup>9</sup>

4

### Use people's names and sign off your messages with your own.

This will create a personal and friendly tone.<sup>10</sup>



**How:** Just a simple "Hi [customers name]," at the beginning can make all the difference.

5

### Retweet or share positive responses or resolved actions.

This helps ensure a positive image and acknowledges your customers.



**How:** Scan for positive feedback and positive mentions of your brand, but don't go overboard.

6

### Take messages to a private setting when topics get sensitive.

A lot of social media is public, and people don't want everything broadcast to the world



**How:** Consider direct messages, but make sure the customer knows to use a different channel.<sup>7</sup>

7

### Monitor your brand name and respond when not directly mentioned.

Looking for and responding to indirect mentions shows you're paying attention.



**How:** You can save keyword searches with programs such as Hootsuite or Spout Social.<sup>11</sup>

8

### Look for opportunities to follow up with FAQs or articles.

This will alert people to other aspects of your business, giving you an opportunity to go beyond expected service.



**How:** Questions you receive often, include in your FAQs to save time.

9

### Do not engage with trolls.

It is easy to get into heated written arguments, and these never end well.<sup>12</sup>



**How:** Trolls will use confrontational language and rarely stick to the topic, simply ignore them.<sup>13</sup>

10

### Measure your success using social media analytics such as Sprout Social.

They can track your reach and engagement rate, as well as average response time.



**How:** You can test out free trials. Twitter and Facebook also feature their own free analytic sites.

Putting time and energy into your brand's social media presence can really pay off. Now, give our tips a try and get started!



#### Sources:

- Widrich, L. (2013). What Bad Customer Service Costs Your Business. [blog.bufferapp.com](http://blog.bufferapp.com)
- Schneider, M. (2015). 24 Statistics That Show Social Media Is The Future of Customer Service. [socialmediatoday.com](http://socialmediatoday.com)
- Trihey, P. (2015). Why is Social Media Important as a Customer Service Channel? [linkedin.com](http://linkedin.com)
- Barry, C., Markey, R., Almqvist, E., Brahm, C. (2011). Putting social media to work. [bain.com](http://bain.com)
- Wharton. (2014). The Ignored Side of Social Media: Customer Service. [knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu](http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu)
- DesMarais, C. (2014). 6 Dangerous Things to Do on Social Media. [inc.com](http://inc.com)
- Zendesk. (2016). Providing Great Customer Service Through Social Media. [zendesk.com](http://zendesk.com)
- Cuttica, P. (2015). Introducing Message Tagging in Sprout Social. [sproutsocial.com](http://sproutsocial.com)
- Shukle, F. (2015). How to Handle Customer Complaints Via Social Media. [socialmediaexaminer.com](http://socialmediaexaminer.com)
- Haines, B. (2015). 14 Amazing Social Media Customer Service Examples (And What You Can Learn From Them). [bufferapp.com](http://bufferapp.com)
- Biagi, A. (2015). Hootsuite Tip: Save Searches, Hashtags, and More in your Hootsuite Dashboard #Hoottip. [hootsuite.com](http://hootsuite.com)
- DesMarais, C. (2014). 6 Dangerous Things to Do on Social Media. [inc.com](http://inc.com)
- Basu, S. (2011). 5 Most Effective Ways To Deal With Arrogant Internet Trolls. [makeuseof.com](http://makeuseof.com)