COVID-19 Customer Engagement Tips
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COVID-19 has created an unprecedented challenge for brands. Under normal circumstances, it can be difficult enough to ensure every customer interaction is excellent. But in these trying times, brands face the added challenges of reduced contact center staff, increased noise on social media, and inability to connect with customers in person.

We compiled these tips from our Crisis Management Expert Event in Atlas. Read below to learn how to adapt your strategy and deliver excellent customer engagement across social marketing, digital care, and online communities.
Social Marketing Tips

REVIEW YOUR CURRENT CONTENT CALENDAR
As a rule of thumb, avoid unnecessary paid and organic content about canceled gatherings or events, in-store promotions, imagery that conflicts with social distancing guidelines, and copy that could come across as insensitive during a global health crisis like “taking a sick day” or “laughter is contagious.” If you’re unsure of what to post or how to respond, consider asking your audience what content they would like to see.

PLAN CONTENT FOR THE COMING MONTHS
There’s no telling how long this crisis will last, but it’s important to consider what long term effect it will have on your business and customers. Try to anticipate what customer needs will be both during and after this crisis and work on content that showcases how you can help solve those future problems. Until it ends, try to strike a balance between COVID-19 content and normal content — so long as it is not insensitive.

FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO SURPRISE AND DELIGHT
Even though consumers are practicing social distancing, they are still seeking a sense of belonging and connection — perhaps even more now than before. Brands can respond in kind by making their audience feel valued and cared for. Does your brand have offerings that can support those in need? Or is there something you can do to simply spread joy? Surprising and delighting customers will strengthen your connection with them and create new fans of your brand as well.

Want to learn more strategies to surprise and delight audiences? Read The Social Media Pocket Guide for Enterprises
Digital Care Tips

SUPPORT YOUR AGENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR CUSTOMERS
While your customer care agents may already be accustomed to assisting people with urgent needs, customers are now likely more anxious than usual. By providing your agents with additional training on working with emotionally stressed customers, you can equip your team with the tools to maintain or improve customer satisfaction.

SET AND COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS
Your contact center may now be partially or entirely remote, your volumes may be spiking, or you may be handling a new range of customer needs. All of these changes can have a profound effect on your team’s ability to meet customers’ expectations. Reevaluate your SLAs and reprioritize cases. Clearly communicate your new strategy and tell customers what to expect when contacting you. Even frustrated customers will appreciate your transparency, and this, in turn, helps build trust in the brand.

EVALUATE AND ADJUST YOUR TOOLKIT
Now is the time to reassess your channel mix — especially if you do not currently have the resources to sufficiently staff traditional channels. Customers want quick resolution and companies need cost-effective solutions. Capitalizing on efficiencies in digital channels is a win-win. Messaging channels allow your agents to handle multiple conversations concurrently. Bots and AI can be implemented for basic welcome messages, FAQ deflection, and triage. Start small and throttle new channels as your volumes and staffing levels change.

Want a step-by-step guide to make your care operations more efficient? Read: Modernizing Your Contact Center
Online Community Tips

SHOW AND TELL WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY
Everyone is being inundated with information right now. At the same time, we’re all looking for help managing this crisis, both personally and professionally. Rather than leaning on traditional forms of content to reach customers, seek more interactive vehicles, like video, that can be deployed within your community. This gives your customers (and also prospects) the opportunity to connect with your brand remotely.

CREATE A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS TO COMMUNICATE
Your customers are going through a lot right now and they’re looking for support in many ways. Listen to their concerns and be aware of their needs so that you can respond meaningfully. Build a forum or Group Hub in your community that addresses these topics in real time, providing them with a safe space to connect with their peers, seek help from experts, and share how they’re managing through these tough times.

ARM YOUR SUPER USERS WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED
Super users within your community are key for responding to customers about the crisis. Make sure they’re set up for success by looping them in early and setting expectations. They will need to know where to direct users within your knowledge base and how to escalate conversations to the right people. Ask them to tag discussions and nominate solutions to help surface the right answers quickly. Above all, show your appreciation for their time and expertise.

Want to learn more about how leading brands are using Khoros Group Hubs? Check out our:

On-Demand Webinar with USAA
About Khoros

Khoros — built from Spredfast+Lithium — is the leading customer engagement platform built to connect with customers throughout their journey and create customers for life.