Three Ireland x Khoros

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Best in Class: Care

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Company background

Three is one of Ireland's leading mobile operators, with 41.6% market share and 3.4 million customers (as of June 2022). Their network is built for data, with 99% 4G coverage, and they carry over half of all mobile data on their network, which is more than all other operators combined. Three has recently launched its 5G network, which is available to customers in every county. Three has invested over €2 billion to build up their business in Ireland. This includes a €820 million investment in upgrading and expanding their network and in Three's digital transformation, which will deliver a cutting-edge experience for their customers and their employees. Annually, Three continues to invest over €100 million into their business to ensure they deliver the best network, experience, and service for their customers. Customers can reach Three by phone, messaging, email and through their multiple social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and newly integrated Instagram.

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Digital customer service initiatives

Three strives to provide customers with a better-connected life through meaningful products, best in class service, and a connected network experience. Social media has become integral in people's everyday lives, and their social media platforms provide a place for customers to discuss all things Three. No query is too big or small. Regardless of why a customer needs support, Three want to ensure that the experience with them is positive, worthwhile, and memorable. Their main aim is to provide best-in-class service that wows customers. Over the last two years, Three has been making changes in how they work within social media to ensure this is provided to customers when they contact them.

In March 2020 when the world hit a pandemic, this tested a lot of companies and challenged them in providing support to customers. It was no different for Three Ireland. Although COVID-19 was a challenge, Three saw the opportunities for improvement. It opened their eyes to better ways of working within their area, and with the help of Khoros, they were able to introduce a lot of different features that helped them deliver on their strategy and ensure customers were heard and supported during this time of need.

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Approach to solving digital technology issues

Three wanted to gain more insight into customer feedback on their experience so they could showcase the best-in-class service they aim for. For customers that chose to contact them through social media, they wanted to keep the survey in that native space. They built new customer feedback surveys — aligning to the same structure as other care channels. They began this journey in January 2019 by surveying customers they supported through private and direct messaging. They first started out surveying as a team, but they have since evolved this space, and now all CCEs on the team have their own survey links with individual customer experience (CX) scores. Secondly, when COVID-19 hit in March 2020, this had a major impact on Three's queues. With a team of nine CCE's at the time, they had to do something to ensure all customers were answered and they could continue offering that best-in-class service. They were faced with a lot of challenges during this time, however, each presented a huge opportunity for improvement. These were:

CUSTOMER EXPECTATION
- Longer customer response times due to the increase in volumes they experienced. Their daily volumes increased by 286%, going from an average 89 conversations per day to 344 conversations. The highest their available queue stood at was 2,500 conversations during this period.
- Customers growing impatient with response times which led to multiple PMs/DMs before they were able to respond.
- No expectations were set when customers came through with their initial query

The Welcome Response Bot was a big help here. They introduced an auto-response that set expectations with the customers on high volumes and longer response times. They asked customers for validation details up front so all the information was available to the CCEs when they picked up the conversation. Some customer queries may have been urgent and needed a live response, so for that they included a direct link to their chat team — keeping the customer in the digital space.

This bot supported Three greatly and still does to this day. They have enhanced the bot to alert customers to any network or other customer issues that may drive contacts into the channel. They also use this as a promotion tool for any new services they introduce. For example, they recently introduced a device support guide on their website, where the

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welcome response advises customers of this and provides a link for them to check it out and potentially resolve any device issues through this tool. Since including this, 246 customers used the support guide — clicking on the link provided.

VOLUMES OF QUEUES

- They had too many queues (16 queues in total).
- The rules behind the queues were not fit for purpose and a lot of conversations were going into their 'unknown queue,' which made it hard to filter through.
- Customers were going public after coming through PM/DM and these tweets/posts were getting lost in the unknown queue.

Three met with Khoros to help configure their queues more efficiently.

- They reduced from 16 queues to 3 main queues — Public Only, Private Only and Public and Private.
- The Public and Private queue housed the conversations where a customer may have first come in PM/DM and then went public
- Rules were set up to ensure conversations went into corresponding queues

As a result of this, Three was able to structure their working day more efficiently, as the CCE's could focus on one queue each, and therefore, the issue around missing public queries within private queries was not a challenge anymore.

TAGGING

The tagging they were using within social media was not aligned to other channel tags. Additionally, due to the way their tagging was set up, Three couldn't report on top trending tags easily. It made it difficult for them to report against other channels on what their top queries were. During COVID, it was important to report on top trending tags daily, so this was a major issue they had to tackle.

Three met with one of Khoros' support teams through a product coaching session to upskill on Khoros' tagging and find out how they could make tagging more efficient and easier to report. What came out of that session was very insightful and helpful to reporting within their channel.

- They were able to set up different categories, parent, and child tags to align their tags with all other care channels in the business.
- They set up the "Tags" widget to be able to report on top trending tags in real time.

Now, Three can report more efficiently on their top trending tags and their weekly customer sentiment packs now provide rich, meaningful data. Anytime they have a network issue, or a customer impacting issue, sentiment packs are created and volumes reported back as this greatly helps the business understand the impact this issue may have had.

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Results and metrics

Customer feedback results: Since surveys started in January 2019, they have had significant uptake from customers and great results both in 2019 and 2020. In 2019, they received an NPS score of **54.8** and **88%** RFT — the highest results among all their care channels within the business. For 2020, they received an impressive NPS score of **39.8** and **84.4%** for RFT, even with the pandemic going on and volumes at their highest. This was the highest RFT result among all their care channels within the business. They also ask the customers if they would use social media again for queries and in 2019, **98%** said they would along with **95%** saying yes in 2020.

Customer expectation: Prior to introducing the welcome response bot, Three was averaging three responses per conversation. After introducing the welcome response bot, they reduced it to two responses per conversation. This reduction freed up a lot of time for CCEs to handle more conversations. They handled and closed **32,902** conversations at the height of COVID-19. In total, they handled and closed **55,104** conversations in 2020.

Volume of queues: During the height of COVID, they were hitting a Public Service Level of **39%** weekly on average. Post the change to the queue configuration, they increased this to an average of **77%** versus their target of **70%**. This was an increase of **38%** and brought them from not meeting to exceeding their target.

Three Ireland's story demonstrates how not even COVID-19 could stop them. It spurred them on to make improvements to ensure their customers receive a better connected life through their best-in class-service at Three. *Note: Content repurposed from Three Ireland's 2021 Khoros Kudos submission.*

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