

In Honor of People.

A manifesto on Social CRM

Social CRM is not technology, a tool or even infrastructure. I think that is more less generally agreed by now. Social CRM can happen without Facebook & Twitter because we were social long before these tools showed up. We are now able to leverage these tools to provide better experiences for our customers, wherever they are.

Social CRM is not just about marketing either. It makes marketing very easy and more effective but not when we set out to do it that way. It's about the R in CRM. Relationships. To build great relationships there needs to be meaningful conversation. Ask anyone whose been married for a little while and they'll tell you the same thing. What does 'meaningful' translate to for your customers? That's what the tools around social network and media allow you to find out, if you'll **listen**.

Social CRM is not about managing the customer. At some point I suppose we assumed that CRM was about managing the customer and their relationship with the business. And that may have worked for a while. On this side of 2009, 'M' in CRM is about managing 'engagement'. For instance, it allows the brand to know where conversations are happening, who's talking, whether to get involved and how to go about it. It also provides a structured process for the staff to help them go about the whole process effectively.

Social CRM is about the Customer. It's about knowing the customer, 'de-silorizing' information about them within

the business and using what you know to provide extraordinary experiences. This can be very easy to do. I think it would be great if my bank knew what my interests are and sent me information that would help me further these interests. It would be even better if they would develop simple tools that put some power in my hands so I can be more effective as a customer. It would be **extraordinary** if the manager would e-mail asking me how my product launch went and if there's anything he can do. Not very complex is it? But it takes the right technology and a social organizational culture to scale it to 200 managers across 55 cities in Africa.

Creating a social culture within the enterprise involves putting the customer first. Literally. It means altering your business process to accommodate this reality. Putting the customer first doesn't require advanced technology. It means understanding what processes you have that are unfriendly to them and fixing them so they aren't. It also means enforcing guidelines for how quickly customer issues are resolved, how often customers are updated and the quality of the information they are provided.

The 'Social' space is about people. So if you step out to be active 'socially' as a brand, keep these thoughts in mind.

1. **Your customers talk** to others about you. Will your activities in 'social' spaces make for good conversations?
2. **People don't like arrogance.** If you jump into conversations with the sole intention of making a sale, you are

at risk of being insensitive. If you fail to respond to concerns or questions related to your brand, you are at risk of coming across as arrogant. Do you know which conversations you need to join? Do you know why? Do you know what you will say?

3. **Customers that shout the loudest get heard the most.** If you have a strict policy on queues and people don't know about it, enforcing it when a customer brings a problem onto a public social space won't help you look objective. You'll just seem vindictive. Policies that aren't adequately publicized should be liberally circumvented.

4. **Internal inefficiencies are not the customers business.** If the customer fills out a form giving (for instance) personal biodata, they shouldn't have to fill out the form every time they need to access a service. Gather information once and provide it to every area. The accounts department should now my twitter handle because customer care asked me for it once. Making customers fill out the same data all over again makes for poor experiences.

5. **If you don't have a strategy, don't do it.** No active presence in the social ecosystem is better than a bungled one.

Social CRM is an approach to business. It doesn't just seek the advancement of the business but **actively seeks out ways to provide remarkable experiences to your customers.**

It's all in **honor of people.**