



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIGITALLY FOR THE NEW NORMAL MARKET

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Abstract

The novel corona virus has taken in its turn even in marketing. The world and the business establishments are really into a crisis with the traditional mode of marketing. Firms started rethinking of how to change the definition of customer care and customer engagement in this pandemic season. Infuse the virtual experience with a human touch is giving a warmth of acceptance from the customers. The emotional content, what it was missing in the traditional mode of marketing has taken its new wings to fly. The real bond of people and brands are redefined with the word of customer engagement. In this article the word customer engagement is trying to give a new shape through various strategies which the firms, new entrepreneurs can adopt.

Keywords : Customer Engagement , Personalization, Drip Marketing, Social Media, Content Marketing.

Introduction

The pandemic changed our world dramatically. And the markets are really cautious and at the same time confused with a question of how to deal with the New Normal. Brands and consumers are anxious as they don't know how to pick up their lives and get adapt to the new era of new

normal. Brands as they want to survive in the new normal market they are looking forward to reach out to their customer not by walking along with them but to walk in front of the customer. For that in the new normal era brands need to plan, set targets and expectations beyond the customer perceptions. No one can't predict the way how customers change their priorities and it is for sure there will be an inevitable shift going to occur in consumer behavior. In this unpredictable scenario marketers need to figure out how to get grip with and delight their target audience on frugal budgets. For that marketers need to prepare with a handful of new leads with creativity to attract their customers. Marketers who are with the normal way of marketing their brands with the traditional modes are now feel the pinch and all set for going all out on digital.

Now it's time for going digital. The competition is digital. The customers and the potential customers are also in the digital platform. And the digital platform is now getting crowded than the previous time. So here comes the next question and the point of discussion in this article – How one can stand out in this digital space with a unique identity? Why a customer should get attract towards to your brand? What are the unique parameters of your brand which are getting attention? How to go with the right user engagement strategy through digitally to maintain your brand identity in a sensible budget?

Digital Bridge to a New Normal - Strategies

Marketers are forced to shift from the physical traditional mode of marketing to digital mode. This is helping the executives to analyze the impact of crisis and prepare for the new normal through digitally. In this tectonic shift marketers can make use of various digitally molded strategies to get a customer engagement for their brands .Some of the most important strategies which a brand can never ignore in the process of effective communication and engagement are as follows:

- 1) Less or no transactional communications: In the present scenario not to promote the transactional communications because it can be viewed as really insensitive in the present scenario. Instead of that, the brand can adopt is to humanize communication. This mode of communication would encourage the customer to start a dialogue with the brand. The end result of this mode is more of empathetic. Don't go for the concept of hard sell, but go for showing support. Bingo challenges, stay at home challenges went well in this context.

- 2) Deliver the best content: Marketers can give importance to deliver the best content of their products and services to get connect with their customers. In this tough time the best content can act as a costly tool to attract new customers and to retain the loyal customers. The brand can look forward for creating high impact creative content to reach the audience. A robust content delivery strategy through the brand website can give surprise to customers in their buying process or a particular issue which they are facing. Along with the delivery content, the brands can go ahead with webinars, active panel discussions to get engage with their clients, partners and customers.

- 3) Contact less digital gifts: Marketers who are coming under the category of gift retailers and flowers can try with contact less digital gifts to engage their customers in this tough time of Covid 19. Ferns and Petals a Delhi based company who are established in the business category of flowers and gift retail , tried this strategy and now they diversified their business into some other areas too. The digital gifting options made available by the company in the covid time contributed to 40% of April revenues and 700-800 orders per day the company is getting through this option. This innovative strategy of contact less digital gifts can operate as services like Guitarist on call, Celebrity video with a recorded personalized message , Personalized poetry on call, Violinist on call, Digital games , flute on call , e-greeting cards, etc. Customer engagement through celebrating their emotions of love and happiness digitally.

- 4) Get connect with your loyal customers: Loyal customers feel more valued when they get special attention through the loyalty programs. Loyalty points and extension of membership programs can make your customer to get engage with your brand. Getting a new customer in this global crisis time is very costly for any marketers and thereby get attach to your existing customers through customer engagement is always advisable. In the post covid zone, these customers will return to you undoubtedly and the brand can enjoy new opportunities in the future time. Use the brand apps and social media platforms to regularly conduct quizzes, contests and games. Through the brand apps communicate the customers about the operational updates regarding the delayed deliveries, caps in order etc.

- 5) Drip marketing and personalized communication: Brands which are operating in the FMCG area can mount the profit through this strategy. The customer engagement what this strategy can deliver is the cross channel communication will go up and thereby the effectiveness of the brand will get increase. Also the customers are getting a positive vibe that the brands are in touch with them even in the time of difficulty. Personalized communication through marketing automation helped many of the brands to get engage with their customers on the right time with right information's.
- 6) User friendly apps : The friendly apps place a major role in customer engagement. All are not tech savvy , but the brands can make a customer tech savvy by providing them a user friendly app. The ease of ordering through a user friendly app plays a major role in customer engagement. The information's what a customer is looking forward from a brand can easily convey to the potential customer through a user friendly app. A customer who is looking forward to buy essential commodities can make use of the friendly app and can order that by sitting at home itself. Also a good customer care call Centre which can take queries dropping in for the range , for knowing more information about a product availability and its features , taking feedbacks and reviews can act as a trigger for customer engagement.
- 7) Social media and e-mail campaigns : Some firms understood the use of this strategy in this lockdown season. The basic fact they realized is that , it's not the time for hard sell, but to give information's about the product and service to their customers through various medias. Push the brand image by providing information that can influence the customer in a positive way. The brands which are categorized under healthcare can opt for this strategy. Through social media and email campaigns the brands can give valuable information in regard to their brands. The health care brands can do e-consultation to their prospective customers, and there by reaching to a point of customer engagement. Keep the moment of personalization through the social media engagement. Along with that interactive sessions in the social media platforms with motivational speakers , fitness experts , nutritionists can make a health brand active for reaching a customer engagement phase. Make use of the

social media reach properly and in a controlled manner to engage the customer and deliver the moments of happiness, care, love and empathy.

- 8) Personalization: For educational services, the brands can adopt the style of personalization. Brands like WhiteHat Jr and others who are in the same line can adopt this strategy. Covid time demands more of personalization. A behavioral shift pattern is obvious in the consumer's behavior in the Covid season. Parents are looking forward to engage their ward in a fruitful and meaningful way through various activities. The moment a student getting registered for a session, and in the due process of studies, each time the brands can give a personalized attention to consumer is the need of the hour. This makes the consumer happy and a brand is getting engaged though the strategy of personalization.

Conclusion

Customer engagement has taken a new shape and new form in the overwhelming challenging time of Covid. For the long run, or for surviving in the market, the marketers now need to redefine their business policies and strategies. It's not only the marketers who suffered, but also the customers in this season of crisis. Both suffered together and both need the support of each other. Finding ways to make digital towards human is unavoidable and that is more demanding than any other time. The various strategies mentioned in this article are only few. Each firm depends on its nature of business can alter their strategies to go for customer engagement in a productive way. Adopt the agile innovation phase for getting the customer engagement in a more effective way and thereby explore the opportunities available in the respective business forms.

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