

The challenge of a schizophrenic brand

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I'm sitting with a client who is sharing with me their latest social media challenge. Its not a new challenge but it is a big one, but let's start at the beginning.



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“ We want to build brands that people love. ”

It's the mantra of almost every marketer. Brand love is important, it affects the way we enjoy our job, the way we look at our brand and the way people interact with it. More importantly (possibly), is that brand love turns into sales and drives customer loyalty.

In today's digital age though, socially savvy customers are experiencing schizophrenic brands almost every day. Brands that have mixed messages, from fun and exciting campaigns to dull and legalised customer contact points. It's hard to trust a schizo brand, let alone love it.

So, while the digital age has been a blessing for brands, social media channels and communication is posing a very real problem for brands in presenting a single front to the customer that they can trust.

Social media is a mosh pit

Social media is not a marketing channel, rather it's a mosh pit of conversations that surround our marketing channels. If it were a channel we would be able to control its distribution and conversation better.

We need to understand that social media is the mesh (or mess) between our channels, it affects and feels the effect of everything the brand does. Needless to say, this presents a number of challenges for the brand. The biggest challenge I am hearing today is how this impacts our customer service teams.

Social in customer service

Smart brands have integrated their social media responses team into the customer call centre. It makes sense that you create a single point of contact for customers to contact.

Whether on a phone, SMS, Facebook, Twitter or other platforms, the customer chooses, brands are gearing their call centres to handle these requests. This is why *call centres* are now being called *customer contact centres*.

However, this presents a challenge for social media marketers who are sharing the platform with contact centre respondents. marketing teams and contact centres are built differently, on different operating principles.

Different standpoints

While marketing will prefer personalised responses, contact centres will look to streamline process and people with standard messaging and legally safe content. These different standpoints mean your customer is getting two (or more) pictures of your brand. They see cool, hip, creative content in campaigns, mixed with experiences of standardisation and legalism. The brand is divided and schizophrenic.

So, we find ourselves in a new conundrum with social media. How do we, at scale, manage the voice of the brand in social media that is aligned with itself and aligned with the experiences the customer will have through other channels of communication.

Let's not fool ourselves, no one enjoys that person who is happy and fun one minute and cold and bland the next. So we should be doing our level best to make sure our brand does not become that person.

ABOUT MIKE SAUNDERS

Mike Saunders, CEO of Digitlab, is a renowned Digital Business and CRM Consulting expert acclaimed for his unique ability to blend technological expertise with insightful business strategy. His leadership in digital consulting, combined with his roles as an international keynote speaker and author, has solidified his reputation as a visionary in the digital realm.

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