

3 Reasons Your Customer Service Strategy Should Include Online Chat

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In brief

Adding online chat to your customer service strategy improves convenience, enhances the customer experience, and strengthens customer relationships.

Having the perfect company website is entirely subjective, but one of the easiest ways to stand out from your competitors is to offer a live online customer service chat. Whether available 24/7 or only during business hours, it's almost certain to please your customers.

So, why is an online chat preferable to a phone call? Here are just a few reasons.

Convenience

Live chats are convenient. Typically, people favor live online chats over phone calls because it's a free direct line for your customers. Plus, they experience no repercussions from data restrictions and overages for simply seeking information.

Not only is it free for the customer to take advantage of, but they will likely receive an answer to their questions sooner than if they were to make a phone call and be transferred from the operator to billing to customer service and back. Most importantly, there is no blaring hold music to be followed by awkwardly mumbled conversations. It's often helpful to work with third-party services.

One aspect to remember when designing your website is that even though a website design may be visually or aesthetically appealing, it's virtually useless if it's not user-friendly and easy to navigate. Before you even look into a live chat feature, consider what type of customers you'll generally be serving and the needs of your clientele. And when you do decide to add a line of communication, make it so that your live chat box is visible but not intrusive.

Customer experience

While your customers will already be saving valuable time and money by avoiding an endless game of departmental phone tag, they will spend significantly less time waiting for an initial response.

Receiving an answer through a live chat service is usually quick while waiting on hold or waiting for a callback usually takes a few minutes to several days.

Your customers are busy people, too. They don't have time to wait several days to receive a response. And they certainly don't want to spend time repeating the process if the connection is dropped or if they think of another question later. An online chat lets them save the conversation should they want or need to refer back later, keeping them from jotting down notes and trying to decipher their meaning after hanging up.

Not only is it crucial to find a method of communication that's generally accepted by the masses, but to satisfy your customers, you must also consider all your demographics. Not everyone is comfortable making phone calls, and it's possible that some of your customers may have underlying needs that make phone use too much of a bother.

Improved customer relationships

Customers prefer to work with representatives through a live chat. No one likes sitting through a sales pitch that lasts a minute just to ask a simple question, and they won't have to screen follow-up calls and offers in the coming months.

A positive customer service experience can be critical in creating repeat customers. They've already found a product or service they've been interested in once, and they know they'll be able to gain the information they're seeking in a timely manner. When you provide your customers with satisfactory customer service interactions and generate steady business for yourself, you should also expect an increase in your profit margins.

References

1. [continentalmessage.com](http://www.continentalmessage.com/) - <http://www.continentalmessage.com/>