

# WINNING CUSTOMERS' HEARTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Ways to Improve Customer Experience and  
Engagement via Social Media Channels

**WHITE PAPER**



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## INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part in the lives of millions of people around the world. A 2016 research by “We Are Social” states that there are around 2.307 billion users of social media around the world and the annual growth of these users is increasing daily, particularly mobile social users, which increased 17% last year.

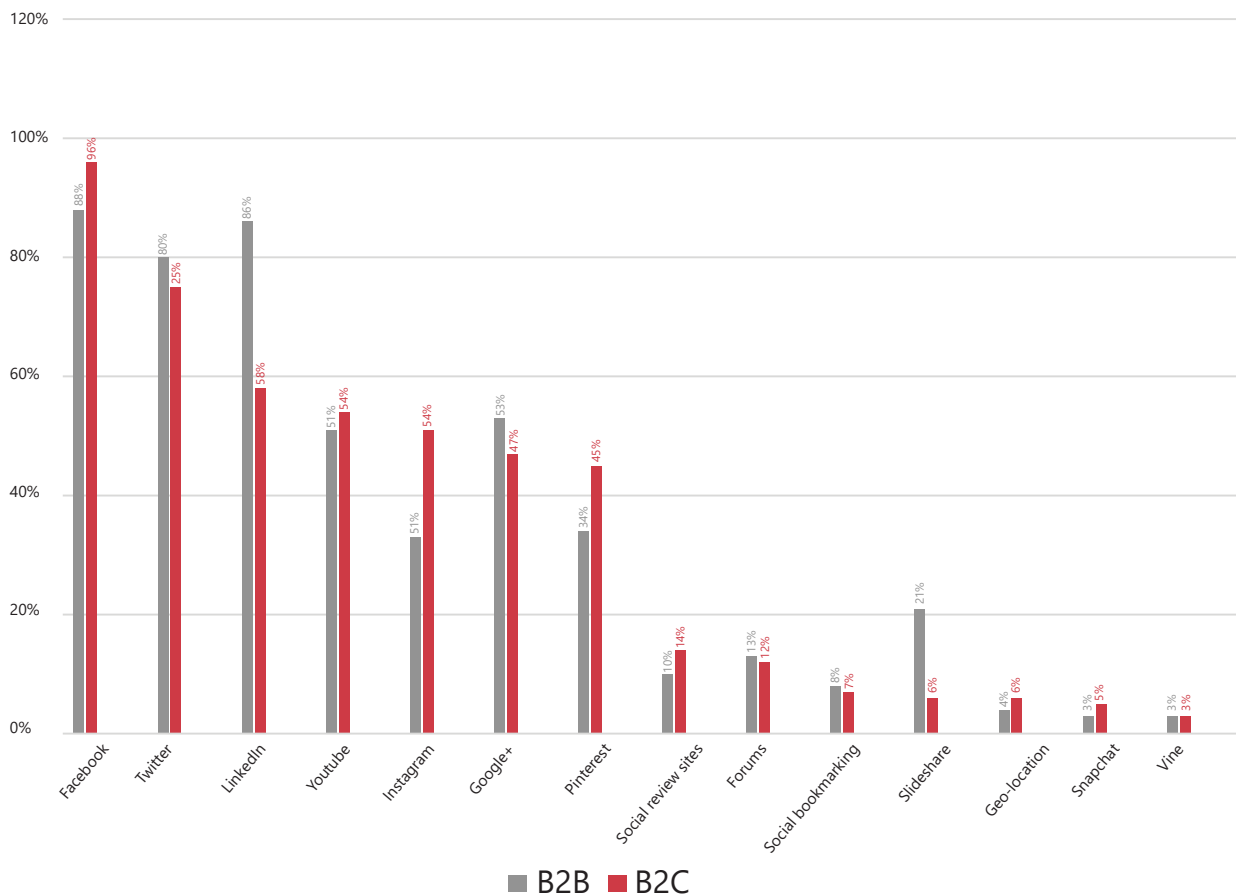
When it comes to social media, businesses have been relatively quick to adapt it for marketing, building and maintaining relationships and customer support. The digital era has had a significant impact on customer service. Customers expect instant responses and resolutions to their queries. Hence, these social channels are becoming more and more favored as a communication channel of choice by customers. Social networks such Facebook, Twitter and Instagram give customers the easiest, most direct approach for support, but it is one that many businesses are not very well prepared to handle. In fact, a recent study cites that around 25% to 55% of customer service inquiries on Facebook and Twitter go completely ignored.

Businesses need to take social media into consideration as it can effectively help in delivering great customer support and experience.

## B2B VERSUS B2C

The following chart shows how use of social platforms varies for B2B and B2C. B2C companies are more focused on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Pinterest whereas B2B companies have invested their efforts on LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, and SlideShare.

### PLATFORMS USED BY B2B VERSUS B2C



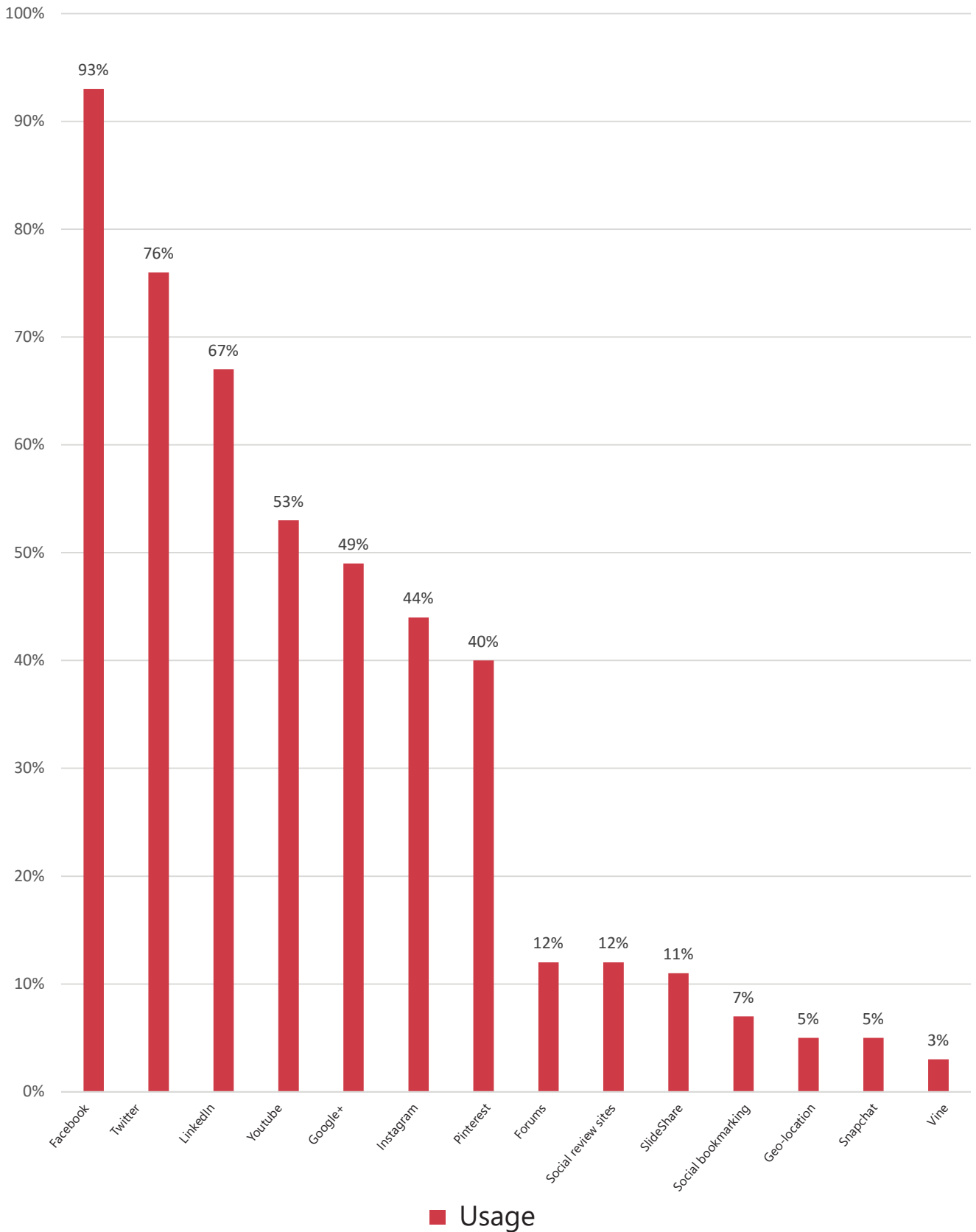
Source: 2016 Social Media Marketing Industry Report by Social Media Examiner

Here, we have chalked out some strategies that can help businesses improve their customer service through social media.

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLATFORM

The first and foremost thing before delivering customer service over social media is choosing the right channel. For most businesses, Facebook (93%) and Twitter (76%) are the primary choice. However, LinkedIn (67%), Google+ (49%), Instagram (44%) and Pinterest (40%) are also being used by many businesses.

## SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS USAGE



Source: 2016 Social Media Marketing Industry Report by Social Media Examiner

Customers will contact you on a platform of their preference, and it might be one that you're not very active on. So, the first step for choosing the right channel is doing your homework. Try to identify your customer base, their preferred platforms, how much time they spend on each platform and what activities they perform there. Make sure you monitor all of your social media platforms for queries and conversations about your brand. Moreover, to find more about your social traffic, try searching for mentions and hashtags of your brand within popular social sites.

## **DON'T IGNORE NEGATIVE FEEDBACK**

Online customers can make or break your brand reputation via Social Media.

Customers these days no longer like to call and talk to customer care representatives in order to get their issue resolved. They prefer interacting with companies directly on social media. According to a survey, 67% of consumers have used a company's social media site for servicing.

Many companies have not yet adapted to this change and currently focus their attention on traditional customer service channels (email/phone, etc.). Businesses need to realize the risks involved. Customers can easily make or break your brand's reputation in a matter of seconds by writing a poor review on Facebook or tweeting about how bad the customer experience was. Reputation Management over social media has become vital and businesses have to stay active on all social media channels to provide instant feedback.

Negative feedback and poor reviews over social channels provide you insights for improvement. Regularly monitoring these channels can help identify mistakes, which when worked upon, will benefit your social media support and help in customer retention.

## **DO SOMETHING EXTRA FOR CUSTOMERS**

Focusing on creating long-lasting relationships with your customers and going beyond their expectations is really important for any business to stand out amidst competition. People simply love it when something extraordinary is done for them.

The same applies to customers and businesses. According to a survey, 83% of people gave preference to a company that responded to them on social media. Businesses can use this medium to go the extra mile for their customers. Whether it's sending out a special birthday wish, retweeting their tweets, conducting lucky draws, competitions or even offering a free product occasionally over your social media channels – doing a little extra shows customers that you care.

## CONNECT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

Just like celebrities who become major influencers for many people, similarly there are social media influencers who are people with millions of followers. Forming a connection with these influencers enables you to increase your brand awareness and improve your online reputation. Connecting and maintaining a positive relationship with these influencers will help your business in gaining followers and improving your website ranking as well. In a recent research conducted, it was seen that 51% of marketers believe they get more customers from influencer marketing.

## TRAIN YOUR EMPLOYEES

Your employees should be well aware of the social mechanism and should be trained to efficiently handle queries on social media. Similar to traditional customer service, responses should be informative, friendly and instant. It is also important to resolve the issue in the same channel the customer has used to reach you. If more information is required, you can always privately message the customer and change the channel for better understanding of the customer's problem and then choose the right channel to provide the solution.

Each social media channel has its own purpose of use. Employees should be trained on how every platform works and how each response will vary. Staff should be dedicated to platforms with clear guidelines on when to respond, how to respond and track customer service interaction in a CRM or social customer service tool.

## CONCLUSION

Most businesses view social media as a marketing tool only, but social media has opened new doors of opportunity for them to benefit from. Using social media for offering round the clock customer support is essential to create loyalty and satisfaction.

Providing good customer support has become more important than ever before, because positive or negative word of mouth spreads instantly over social media. Hence, businesses need to actively use social media as a customer service tool and by choosing the right bundle of strategies, they can easily improve their social brand perception.

## ABOUT US

CustomerService.ae is the only magazine in the GCC region which publishes best practices, expert interviews, in-depth articles and industry reports to enhance customer experience for all types of businesses. It is also offering all-in-one social media management and DIY productivity games for customer service departments.

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