

Turning social media data into meaningful interaction is an extremely powerful tool

MARK OFFERS HIS GUIDE TO GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CRM SYSTEM:

Get sponsorship from the top guys. If management doesn't believe in the new approach, why should the employees? Implementing CRM requires working across organisational boundaries and breaking down long-term siloed behaviours and attitudes. It can't be done alone.

What are your business objectives? It's essential that your CRM strategy must be designed with your business objectives and customer requirements in mind.

Identify who your customer is. Can you identify your customers across multiple touch points? Make sure you get agreement on who they are and where they interact with your business.

Differentiate. Understand what each customer wants. How should you segment them? By region? Or by what drives them as outlined in one of our other articles (see article entitled, 'Building the customer connection').

To find out more, contact your dedicated Telstra Business Account Manager.



Mark outlines one example of a business in Australia, Rushfaster, (an online store that sells laptops bags) that uses the outputs of its CRM system extremely well.

'In what is a fiercely competitive market with little to distinguish between the players, Rushfaster have really excelled in their marketing efforts and post sales support.

'Rather than list its complete range of laptops bags, (putting the onus on the customer to find the bag that fits their laptop), it does a very clever thing. It asks you what laptop you have and returns with a list of the bags that will only fit your laptop.

'Their post-sales support is extremely well constructed. Throughout the customer experience, the company asks for feedback on its performance and products. Importantly, it incentivises customers for offering comments with options of discounts on future products. Customers are then directly feeding back into Rushfaster's system, allowing them to see in real-time

what, if any, changes they need to make to their selling processes. They are building a truly relevant relationship with customers.'

USING CRM OUTPUTS TO MAKE DECISIONS IN REAL-TIME

Social media is having a huge impact on the ways in which companies contact and engage with their customers. With more channels to feedback and give opinions (Twitter and Facebook to name just two), there is now more data being produced about customers than ever before. The good thing is that it allows you to understand and act on these insights in real-time – and this is where the smart companies are now headed. But how do you go about finding the relevant information and turning that into meaningful customer interactions?

Mark explains further, 'Turning social media data into meaningful interaction is a powerful tool. You can now devise a campaign, launch it and then continually tweak that campaign based on what people are doing with the information you put out there.'

'One of my clients in Sydney is a business leadership group called The Executive Connection. We help them look at the information they publish to their customers. Where we see information isn't being clicked on, we modify it so that the content can become relevant. They are constantly adapting their marketing messages in this way so that the message is always relevant.'

Nowadays the customer experience is vital. Customers have more choices and are more frugal. This affords them the luxury of demanding more. Businesses need to be able to offer a consistent experience across all company touch points, because the smart companies will identify and capitalise on unmet expectations from others. 📱

GRAND WASH AUTO

A clean beginning for Australian car washing

PROFILE

ALI SADIKU
running a family owned business with a commitment to top quality service.



A visit to a car wash during a European business trip two years ago was where Melbourne brothers, Ali and Lee Sadiku, first came up with the idea for Grand Wash Auto. Now six months in, business is booming.

Building one of the most technologically advanced car washes in Australia, Ali and Lee partnered with Telstra to deliver some of the crucial elements that make the car wash a local sensation in their home town of Thornbury, Victoria.

'Having seen the idea firsthand in Europe, we were keen to see whether there was a market for this in Australia. Most car washes are self-service or hand wash which are both expensive and time-consuming, so we spoke to people in our local area. What we heard confirmed our thoughts – there simply weren't many options available for the local community.

'With technology at the heart of our business, the Grand Wash Auto experience makes it easy for people. It simply involves driving into a tunnel (nearly 50 metres long), and takes just three minutes from start to finish – it's completely unique in Australia.'

TAKING TECHNOLOGY TO THE WASHERS

Finding business partners to help Ali and his brother deliver this rather unique car-washing experience was an important part of the jigsaw. As well as requiring a supplier for the actual car-wash tunnel, Grand Wash Auto needed a supplier that could be relied upon to run the other solutions that make it distinctive.

State-of-the-art payment booths, hi-tech surveillance systems and solutions to communicate with customers via the internet and SMS, all form a vital part of their strategy to deliver high quality service to customers.

FAST, EASY PAYMENT

'Without technology, we wouldn't be able to offer some of our very distinctive services,' says Ali. 'One of our attractions is the automatic pay stations we have installed that take credit cards. This offers speed and convenience if customers don't happen to have the correct change.'

The pay stations work over the internet, processing credit card transactions quickly and efficiently. There's no signature or pin required and, once paid, the computer acknowledges which wash the customer has chosen and the car moves through the tunnel to be washed. 'We use Telstra's Business Broadband facilities for the credit card clearing function. Without that we wouldn't be able to deliver our crucial benefits to customers, that of speed and convenience. Plus we'd never get paid,' says Ali.

INTERACTING WITH CUSTOMERS

The broadband solutions provided by Telstra also play a role in Grand Wash

Auto's ability to stay in regular contact with customers.

'It's pretty unusual for a car wash to have a website, but for us it's a great channel to reach out to customers and offer them all kinds of benefits. It helps us get closer to them and understand what they want from a car wash. I like to think it's why we get so much repeat business. We really value our customers and what they think of the services we provide,' says Ali. Using the website, customers can make a purchase for a car wash or fill out an application online to join one of the car wash clubs. The information is received by Grand Wash Auto via an SMS, and a confirmation is then sent back to the customer within minutes, to confirm their booking or application – day or night.

'If a wash is purchased online the customer will receive a card preloaded with the wash value purchased which can be swiped at the pay station. Additional value can be added to the card at any time. We get a lot of bookings in this way from repeat customers, so if the internet ever goes down, then so does our ability to communicate with them and offer a speedy and reliable service. It has to run efficiently and it has to run reliably,' adds Ali.

Grand Wash Auto offers several car washing clubs which enable them to collect information about customer preferences. As a result, this information allows them to refine their services even more, based on customer wants and needs. 'The website, while being a booking system, also allows us to gain a better understanding of our customers, their habits and what they like. We then tailor our offers and promotions in an even more targeted way – not just a mass approach to all.'

KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON THINGS

To protect the buildings and valuable technology located on the car wash site, Grand Wash Auto uses a comprehensive surveillance system to monitor the premises. The 32 surveillance cameras link to the internet using Telstra Business Broadband, allowing the surveillance team to monitor the site remotely. In addition, should the pay stations be tampered with, alarms within the pay stations trigger an alert over the internet, prompting the security team to take action.

'This is a fantastic innovation for us, and the ability to run this via the internet means we get so much use from Telstra Business Broadband. If we see someone trying to break into a pay station, we have the ability to not only watch and record this via the internet, but relay messages to anyone who would be criminal via a speaker system and warn them away from the buildings,' says Ali.

GRAND WASH AUTO USES THE FOLLOWING TELSTRA SOLUTIONS TO OFFER A UNIQUE SERVICE TO ITS CUSTOMERS:

Telstra Business Broadband

Telstra Mobile Broadband

Telstra Business Phone Systems (fixed line phone)

Telstra Next G™ mobiles

To find out more, contact your dedicated Telstra Business Account Manager.



Helping to protect the environment by not washing dirty water down drains and rivers

MAKING IT EASY FOR CUSTOMERS AND EMPLOYEES

To stay connected within the business as well as with customers, Ali and his team use a network of five Telstra mobiles, and an LG-Nortel phone system. The wireless handsets used with the phone system allow staff to walk throughout the premises and take phone calls from customers and other staff. 'Due to the nature of our business, employees are moving around a lot of the time throughout the day. We need to be contactable and remain efficient in our ability to respond to inbound customer calls at all times. While we have a website, people still like to speak to a human being, so I think it's really important we can respond in this way too.'

WHY DOES IT WORK?

'The core ingredient is our ability to interact with customers,' reiterates Ali. 'There are a lot of car washes that don't have any service, and where you don't interact with any staff. Even though we've got full automation here, it's important for us to create relationships, welcome customers to the premises, and be able to explain and educate customers about how we are different. We have the perfect blend of technological advances combined with an ability to interact in a human way. We listen in person, and deliver real customer benefits using technology. Our customers trust the product; they trust it's good for their car, they trust that what we're doing is honourable and that we provide a valuable service.'

SAVE UP TO \$1,000* ON STANDARD INSTALLATION

If you connect to an eligible Telstra Business Phone System Plan for a minimum of 36 months, you could enjoy a discount on standard installation of up to \$1,000* for your new phone system. Ask your account representative today.



FOR THOSE WHO LIKE THE DETAILS WE'VE GOT THEM HERE: *Offer ends 31/05/10 with a nominated connection date before 30/06/10. The installation discount will be deducted from the final installation price under your eligible contract. Credit management approvals apply and some customers may be required to pay for part or all of the system up-front. If you cease to be eligible or your plan is terminated before your agreed fixed term, Telstra may require repayment of the amount discounted or waived under this special offer on a pro rata basis.