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Providing superior customer service on social media

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BY LAUREN LABUNSKY

If your dealership has a presence on social media, you will be required to provide customer service through those social platforms. Past and potential customers will find your business on social media and use comments, messages, and other methods to ask questions, share praise and, unfortunately, complain. Although many businesses don't expect this when they join a social media platform, this is the reality, and it's best to be prepared.

Just let these statistics sink in:

- 45 percent of consumers share bad customer service experiences via social media. [via](#)
- 89 percent of consumers began doing business with a competitor following a poor customer service experience. [via](#)
- When companies engage and respond to customer service requests over social media, those customers end up spending 20 to 40 percent more with the company. [via](#)



[Smart Insights](#) calls this Social Media Customer Care, or SMCC. Customers expect your dealership to be active on social media, but with that presence there is also the expectation that you will respond to them through this channel just as you would through a call center, email, or form on your website.

How do you make sure that your team is ready to provide excellent customer service through social media?

- Check social media platforms on a daily basis at minimum – even better, check them a few times per day to make sure you don’t miss anything. Respond to comments, messages, and posts (both good and bad) in a timely manner. Maintaining an active presence shows followers that you care.
- Focus on building relationships. Social media is where people go to connect, so they don’t want to see only promotional content coming from your business. Share local community news, celebrate team members and customers, and show your dealership’s personality with fun content that isn’t related to your business. Remember that followers are real people who want to connect with your dealership on a personal level.
- Look at your interactions on social media as a branding opportunity. People are so active on social media that it is now expected for businesses to be present as well - use this to your advantage and embrace the personality and character behind your business. Social media is a unique marketing platform in that it allows you to celebrate your brand, promote your brand, and interact with your customers all in one place. Using humor, for example, can help alleviate a customer concern while also providing a glimpse into what your dealership team is like behind the scenes.
- Turn social media followers into advocates for your dealership. This can be done in a few different ways – there will likely be fans of your business following you on social media who will be happy to sing your praises. There will also be followers that didn’t have a strong opinion beforehand but are won over by their social interactions with your business. And, inevitably, there will be some unhappy followers who post negatively about your dealership on social media – but this creates an opportunity for you to correct the situation and turn things around. When handled correctly, you could turn an unhappy follower into a satisfied customer who feels like he or she is recognized and valued by your business.

The truth is that with digital technology becoming more advanced every day, there is no choice but to adapt. Customer service through social media isn’t a luxury, it’s a necessity – but it can greatly benefit your business when it’s done the right way.

Lauren Labunsky is the public relations manager for Dealer Spike, a company that provides innovative websites as well as a suite of powerful online advertising solutions that help marine dealers help increase sales and service profitability. For more information, visit www.DealerSpikeMarine.com or call 800-288-5917.



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