



Who Cares Whether the CCO Tweets?

by Curtis N. Bingham

**CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER
COUNCIL**



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Curtis N. Bingham
Founder and Executive Director
Chief Customer Officer Council

Curtis Bingham is the recognized authority on chief customer officers and the first to promote this role as a catalyst for competitive advantage. He is the creator of the CCO Roadmap, a groundbreaking work containing 100+ critical strategies essential for customer centricity. As an international speaker, author, and consultant, Curtis is passionate about creating customer strategy to sustainably grow revenue, profit, and loyalty.

Now that “tweet” has become a verb, it seems that everyone has a Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and any other alphabet soup social media account. And rabid social media “experts” are calling for every C-level executive to embrace social media as part of their “new commitment to transparency.”

Who cares whether or not the CCO tweets? Is the CMO going to magically create brand evangelists in 140 characters? If the CFO posts a family vacation snapshot on the company blog is Wall Street going to raise earnings expectations?

I think not. While there are benefits, whether you choose to blog or personally participate in social media is irrelevant. However, there are four things CCOs need to be thinking about now with regards to this powerful phenomenon.

Customer monitoring

More and more of our customers *are* on social media and, with the proliferation of social media monitoring tools, we have at our fingertips a very rich and real-time view of customer (or end-user, as it may be for your business) needs, desires, and issues. Do we need yet another source of information about our customers? We might think not, but in truth, this source is far more immediate than sales reports, quarterly rolling surveys, or even post-interaction surveys. And because they are unsolicited, they are probably more accurate although sometimes far more inflammatory due to the inherent anonymity of the medium. Leverage the opportunity presenting itself and use it to mine information about customers, users, and even competitors and detractors. What might words said in pseudo-public tell you about private business strategy and direction that salespeople can leverage?

A white lighthouse icon on a blue background, with a yellow beam of light shining from the top. The lighthouse is positioned on the left side of the page, and the beam of light extends across the top of the page towards the right.

Triage and escalation avoidance

As we've seen over and over again, mistakes and mishaps can go viral in a heartbeat. FedEx did a wonderful job of responding within 48 hours to a security camera video of one of its drivers caught throwing a monitor over a customer's gate. In two days the video received more than 4 million views and 17,000 comments. The SVP of U.S. Operations issued a video and print response that was fantastic: apologizing, reiterating the true values of the company, detailing actions being taken, and reaching out to the offended customer. Every news article includes reference to his response, nearly nullifying the impact of the original misdeed. We have all spent significant time and energy creating in our companies elaborate, closed-loop triage and issue resolution processes for our customers in the call centers, sales channels, and at the executive level. We need to extend those processes to social media to discover problems and nip escalations before they become full-blown PR nightmares that damage our brand, loyalty, and profits.

Opportunity discovery

During the Super Bowl a couple of years ago, a number of customers were highly offended by Go Daddy's continuing borderline risqué advertisements and expressed their frustration with the obvious disconnect from their personal values along with their interest in changing domain hosts. An individual in Comcast's then-nascent social media monitoring group happened to be watching and offered them a special incentive to switch. There was a fair amount of business generated by this lucky catch. What opportunities can we find and shuttle to our sales teams?

Employee monitoring

In addition to all the benefits, social media can be a legal nightmare, a PR disaster, or simply a venue in which customer trust can be damaged or destroyed. Not all employees are malicious; many are simply misinformed and need guidance. Assuming that someone in the company has produced clear guidelines for social media behavior, there is a rising a need to monitor employee behavior on social media. In response, new businesses are emerging that help companies monitor and control how employees interact with customers using social media. While you're monitoring customers you need to be monitoring employees—not necessarily to catch them doing something wrong, but to guide their creation of a consistent customer experience across all channels.

What are your thoughts? Who cares whether or not the CCO tweets?



About CURTIS N. BINGHAM

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About THE CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER COUNCIL

The Chief Customer Officer Council is the first of its kind; a member-led peer-advisory network offering unparalleled insight into the critical issues facing CCOs. It was created to provide a safe environment where CCOs can share ideas, concerns, and build best practices that will help them, their companies, and especially their customers succeed. The Council includes CCOs from diverse industries, purposefully cross-pollinated with the most forward-thinking companies, large and small. For more information, visit www.ccocouncil.org, email info@ccocouncil.org or call 978-226-8675.



Are You Experimenting at Your Customer's Expense? – In this article by Curtis N. Bingham, you'll learn seven ways to drive more profitable customer behavior, while minimizing the risk of negative consequences for your customers and their loyalty to your brand.

Download your free copy today at www.ccocouncil.org/site/exclusive-resources.aspx

For more resources from Curtis Bingham and the CCO Council, including articles, videos, and *The Bingham Advisory*, visit www.ccocouncil.org.

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