

Customers as Your Virtual Salesforce

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What is a Brand Advocate?

- A Brand advocate is a highly satisfied customer who goes out of their way to actively promote the products they love and care about.
- Brand advocates are a must have.
- Brand advocates are like walking billboards that engage and build relationships with your future customers.
- Brand advocates are 50% more influential than an average customer.

Why are Brand Advocates Important

- ▶ Increased Brand Awareness
 - ▶ When happy customers spread the word about a product or company, brand awareness increases
- ▶ Word of Mouth Fuels Growth
 - ▶ Brand advocates share their experiences with friends and family
- ▶ More social media likes, tweets, and followers
 - ▶ Social media allows companies to build relationships with customers
- ▶ Loyal, lifetime customers
 - ▶ Brand advocates are **LOYAL** customers and less likely to defect to competitors



Challenges in Managing Brand Advocates

- ▶ Maintaining relationships can be difficult
 - ▶ Time consuming
 - ▶ Means going the extra mile
 - *These are the most important relationships you will have, so do whatever it takes to nurture them*
- ▶ Hard to keep a consistent marketing message
 - ▶ It can be like a game of telephone
 - ▶ Keep your message consistent across all your platforms

Keys to successfully creating brand advocates



- ▶ Build trust through strong relationships
 - ▶ Deliver on promises and be reliable
 - ▶ Become a thought leader through social media
- ▶ Focus on delighting customers from the first point of contact
 - ▶ Exceed customer expectations
 - ▶ Create a positive emotional connection
- ▶ Offer a consistent customer experience
 - ▶ Customers interact with different parts of the organization across many touch points
- ▶ Strive for high customer satisfaction
 - ▶ A happy customer is a customer that will tell others about your company
 - ▶ Customers who score 8 out of 10 become an advocate

Keys to successfully creating brand advocates

- ✓ Empower employees to go above and beyond to exceed customer expectations
- ✓ Measure and track customer satisfaction
- ✓ Wow your customers with surprise experiences

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How to Identify a Brand Advocate

- ▶ They are your current customers
 - ▶ Have a system to capture customer information
- ▶ They score 8 out of 10 on a customer service survey
- ▶ They are already talking about you



Setting up a Brand Advocacy Program

- ▶ Identify them
- ▶ Ask them to follow you on social media
 - ▶ Interact with followers
- ▶ Ask them to write positive reviews and testimonials
 - ▶ Yelp, Amazon, Company Website
- ▶ Ask them for referrals
 - ▶ Offer referral discounts or incentives
- ▶ Ask them for feedback and suggestions
- ▶ Give them free stuff
- ▶ Keep it simple

Give Your Advocates a Voice



1. Facebook Reviews
 - On your company page
2. LinkedIn Recommendations
 - On your individual page
3. YouTube Video Reviews
 - On your customer's account
4. Local Search Directories
 - Yelp, CitySearch, Yahoo Local
5. Niche Review Sites
 - Hotels.com, Trip Advisor
6. Reward Customers Who Review
7. Google Alerts and Social Mentions
 - Make sure you respond to all negative reviews

Activity

Think

- ▶ Do you have a customer loyalty program?
- ▶ Do you have way to track customer satisfaction?
- ▶ What are your customer's motivations for using your products/services?
- ▶ Do you have a company Facebook page or other social media sites?
- ▶ Do I delight my customers across all touch points?

Do

- ▶ Reward you most loyal customers.
- ▶ Identify those customers with the highest company satisfaction.
- ▶ Interact with your customers on social media.
- ▶ Identify and fix potential weaknesses in customer service interactions.

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