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Social Customer Service Finds Its Footing, But Expectation Gap Still Looms

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Key findings:

- Social media response time has continued to improve, though not as significantly as has been the case in prior years, signaling a potential plateau in response times that leaves a gap when compared to consumer expectations
- Brands are improving in social service response, and may be turning away from email/web forms as customer service channel
- Facebook response rates and response times dominated Twitter statistics, which is a shift from prior studies
- A significant opportunity for brands was uncovered in indirect contact response

Background

Customers have been driving social media as a customer service channel for many years, with high expectations as far as response rate and time, which left brands feeling the pressure to acclimate to this new normal. While this has been generally successful, will consumers continue to “drive the car” or will brands get to a point where they take control of the car again? This study uncovers some insight into the current state of affairs and gives some clues as to whether or not consumers will continue to “drive the car” so to speak with their customer service expectations.

Social media is a tool that companies have embraced successfully over the last several years. The evolution of social media by businesses has been intriguing; as social media became more commonplace, what was once used by customers to show loyalty or gain discounts/promotions from their favorite brands has evolved into another means of customer service communication. With this shift came a new, more demanding customer – one that wants to get their issues resolved quickly, using the communication channel they are most comfortable with. The new customer expects a much quicker response, no matter when or where they reach out to the brand.

This trend was starting to take shape in 2012. While the focus at that time primarily revolved around social media engagement and marketing, an increase in utilizing social media channels for customer service came into play, largely driven by the consumer. Prior to social media’s birth, email and telephone contact was the quickest route for assistance; the advent of live chat options was the first step in real time customer assistance and was a welcome, more immediate form of communication for customer service issues.

As social media evolved and consumers realized it was an effective means to quickly get assistance, expectations quickly rose. Similar to email communication, customers were initially expecting responses within 24 hours of posing a question or comment. This was a challenge for brands to accomplish in 2012 since they were still getting their feet wet with respect to social media engagement. Consumer expectations became more stringent, with consumers expecting a response within an hour at most. Some have started to expect a response in even less time.

Overall, brands have responded quite well. They realize that consumers are now in the driver's seat, and to be successful (and avoid viral backlash), they needed to align their strategy to seamlessly handle customer service in this new format while maintaining consistent service levels on their more traditional communication channels.

Ann Michaels & Associates first looked at social customer service in 2012. The study was again repeated in 2015 to establish the trajectory of evolution, at which time significant improvements were identified. This current study continues to monitor the progression of this customer service channel while identifying the next phase for brands to embrace as they continue to acclimate to ever-changing consumer expectations.

Objective

Ann Michaels & Associates initiated the study focused on customer service in social media in 2012 as the phenomenon started to emerge. At that time, social engagement from brands focused on information sharing and engagement with consumers, and little in the way of handling customer service issues, despite the fact that consumers started to view these channels as an efficient way to resolve issues and get assistance from the brands they do business with.

When the study was replicated in 2015, vast improvements were noted. It was clear that brands realized that the consumer was driving this need and it was only going to become more significant, and they responded in a positive manner. Response rates and times increased, and companies began to incorporate customer service into their social channels. The results were promising, but showed a continued need for establishing a solid customer service piece into social media engagement strategies.

Over the last two years, research shows that brands across all industries are continuing to focus on providing solid social customer service, and there have been great strides made in this area. But, how much progress has really been made?

The current study seeks to answer this question. In addition to evaluating response rates and response times across social channel and time of day, the study also looks to identify any potential gaps in social service and uncover any potential opportunities that may exist to further enhance the customer experience online.

Methodology

In order to fully evaluate progress and identify challenges brands may face, the methodology from the 2012 and 2015 studies was replicated. Ten companies within three verticals – specialty retail apparel, department stores, and drug/grocery stores - were selected to include in the study. The only minor change across studies occurred when a brand included in a prior study was no longer in business and could not be evaluated. When this occurred, the replacement brand mimicked the original brand with regard to its nationwide status, industry, and scope of service. The three industries were selected as they represent a nice subset of the retail industry as a whole, and obtaining data from different verticals within the same industry provides the best representation of current status.

Retailers were selected based on several criteria, including geography (nationwide or those with a well-known/significant presence) and those who maintained active Facebook and Twitter sites since the first study period in 2012. This designation would yield results from those companies who have utilized social media as a form of customer communication within recent years to generate comparative results.

The brands selected for this current study include:

Department Stores	Specialty Apparel Retailers	Drug/Grocery
Macy's	Forever 21	CVS
Belk	J Jill	Walgreens
Carson Pirie Scot	Chico's	Rite Aid
JC Penney	Gap	Jewel-Osco
Bealls	Hollister	Meijer
Nordstrom	The Loft	Publix
Dillard's	American Eagle	Albertson's
Von Maur	TJ Maxx	Kroger
Kohl's	Old Navy	Hy-Vee
Stein Mart	Victoria's Secret	Winn-Dixie

The study focused on two of the largest social media networks, Facebook and Twitter, as well as more traditional contact via email through a company's website. The email response time, while not social focused, can be used as a control group in some respects, as it was a significant customer service channel prior to the advent of social service. Incorporating email/web form contacts can also help illustrate any customer service response strategy shifts as consumers drive a desire for a more immediate and efficient customer service and ensure that consumers are met with the same response rate and time no matter which avenue they are more comfortable using.

Mystery shoppers were utilized to contact target companies with a simple inquiry related to their business. Days and times of contact varied to gain additional information regarding response time across a variety of days and time frames throughout the day.

Specifically, three time frames were designed for this study:

- Weekdays (Monday-Friday between 8am and 4pm)
- Weeknights (Monday-Friday between 6pm and 10pm)
- Weekends

Each retailer was contacted across each channel three times (once in each designated time period) for a total of 270 contacts. An additional three contacts per brand were made indirectly on Twitter - when a customer service inquiry was posted on Twitter, the mystery shopper did not post the inquiry directly on the retailer's Twitter page, send a direct message (DM), or use the @ symbol before the company's name to alert them to a new notification. Instead, the question was posted simply using the company's name or with the hashtag feature, as this does not directly notify a brand unless the hashtag is being actively monitored. This indirect piece was included as a secondary evaluation to determine if brands were actively monitoring conversations and reacting to issues when customers are not talking directly to them.

Survey design mirrored target data collection. Specifically, survey design collected data surrounding the following themes:

- Retailer contacted
- Date and time of initial inquiry
- Social Media outlet contact was made through
- Response time

Results were aggregated by retailer and industry, and the results of the study were analyzed across all retailers included in the study, with further analysis focusing on each industry selected and each individual retailer.

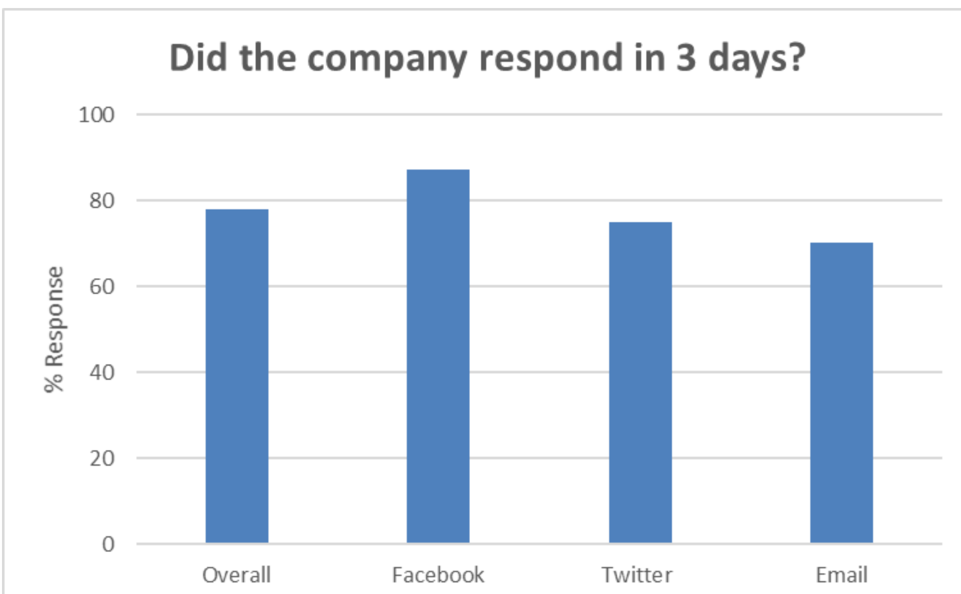
Results

The data collected for this study was analyzed to determine response rates within social media channels and also compared to that of more traditional customer communication channels, which included the website "contact us" forms on the company sites or email inquiry depending on the specific retailer's contact options.

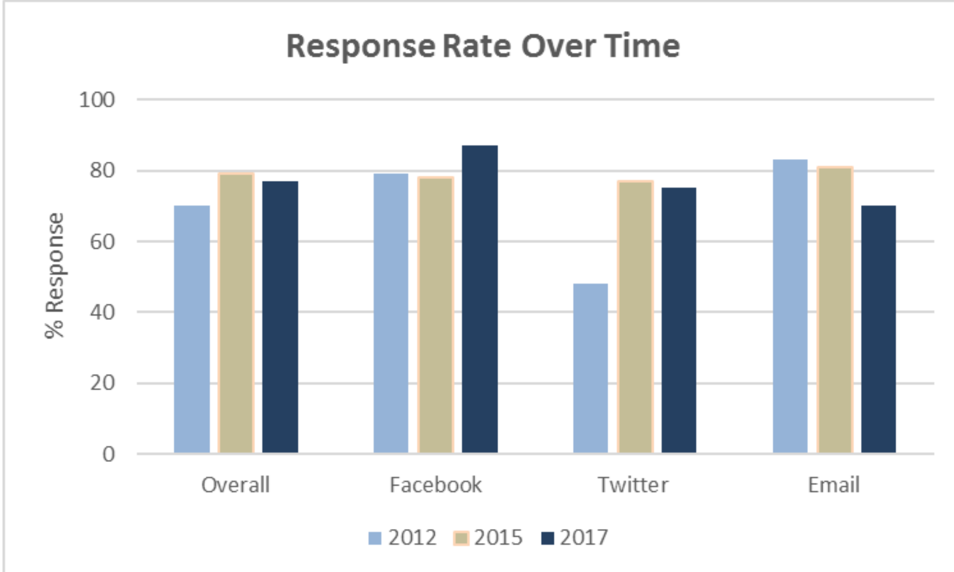
- Response rates were looked at as a whole of the study, and then cross analyzed on a variety of other factors, including:
- Response rates & times across social channels and traditional contact methods
- Response rates & times across times of day, both in general and specific to each social site
- Comparison to prior studies conducted in 2012 and 2015

Overall Response Rate

When looking at response rates across all companies in the study, regardless of industry, results show that a typical response rate was received 77% of the time, meaning that no matter which type of contact was made, companies responded to consumer inquiries 77 % of the time within a three day window. It appears that response rate was dragged down a bit by email communication; Facebook and Twitter yielded stronger response rates (87% and 75%, respectively), while email responses were only received 70% of the time.



Interestingly, overall response rate across all channels is down 2% since the 2015 study but still up from the initial response rate in 2012, which was 70%. The chart below illustrates the change over time across Facebook, Twitter, and email.



While Twitter showed the most growth between 2012 and 2015, signaling that businesses were getting a handle on the speed at which Twitter moves, it appears to plateau in this latest study. Conversely, Facebook shows a stronger performance with flat growth between the first two study periods but a nice increase in the most current study.

Email communication has shown a consistent and significant decline between 2012 and 2017. This may indicate that as businesses focus on social media as a form of customer service, they may not be putting the same effort into traditional communication. Additionally, based on respondent anecdotes, identifying a means of submitting an electronic inquiry proved to be difficult in some cases. Examples include:

- Being unable to identify a "contact us" form or email address to communicate with the brand (only telephone, social media, and chat options were available)
- Easily identifying a format to submit electronic inquiries only to be prevented from doing so by requiring an order number. By doing this, general assistance was not available for those who did not have a question about a recent order/purchase.
- Broken links and "we're sorry we cannot process your request at this time" messages upon submitting an inquiry via web form/email contact

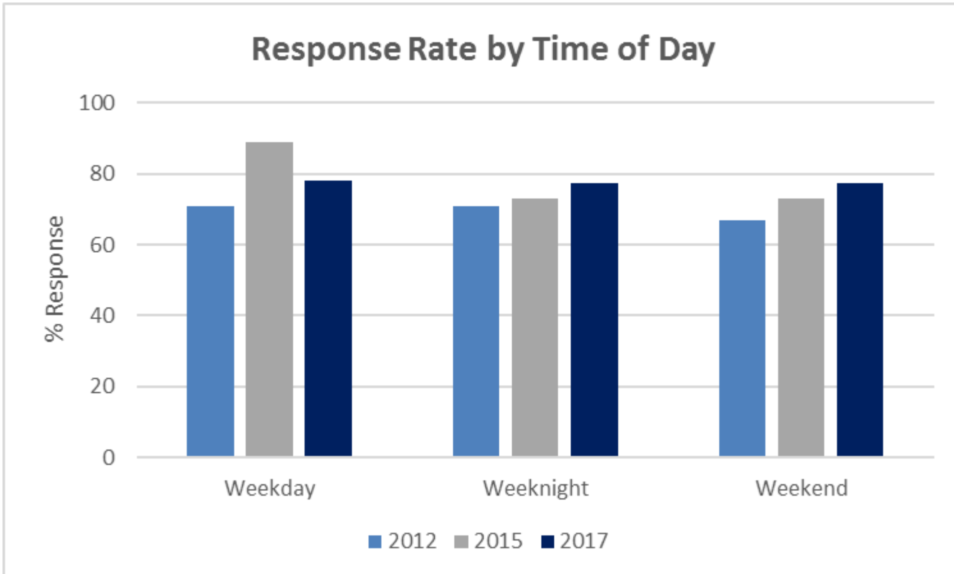
The initial thought is that some companies are choosing to focus their efforts and customer service budget on the more immediate forms of communication, such as chat and social media, while slowly migrating away from email/electronic communication.

Response rate by time of day

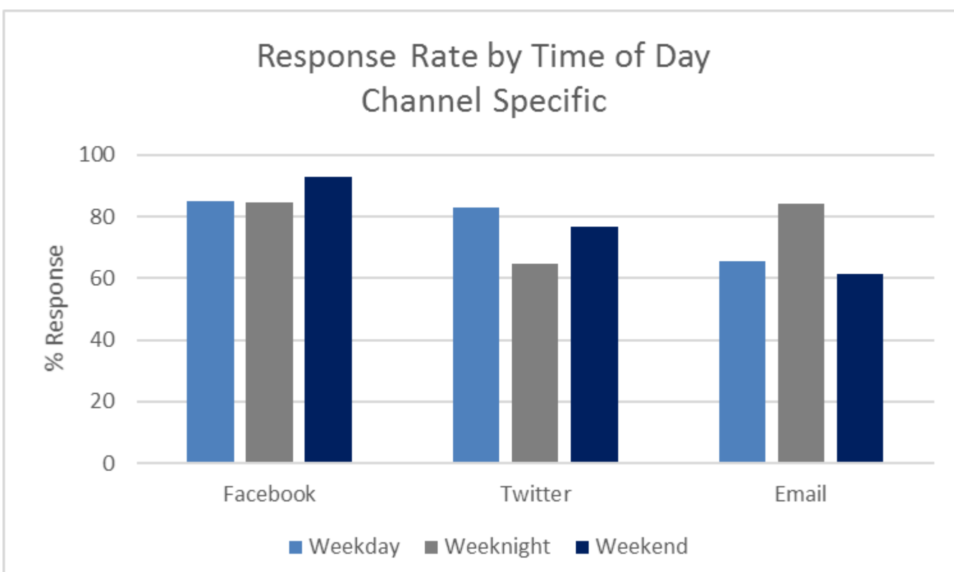
Time of day was incorporated into the study, with evaluations being conducted within three timeframes – weekdays between 8am and 4pm, weeknights between 6pm and 10pm, and weekends. Incorporating timeframe analysis can give deeper insight into response levels based on time of day and time of week and evaluate how brands view the importance of social customer service.

Initially, response rates were more likely to be higher during traditional business hours. This was when social service was in its infancy and brands were still adjusting to the shift. During the second wave of the study, improvements were noted in the less traditional times, including weeknights and weekends, indicating that brands were acclimating to the "new normal" and making strides to ensure strong service levels 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At that time, traditional weekday hours showed a nice response rate of 89% in 2015, whereas weeknights and weekends were showing a 73% response rate.

What's very interesting about the current findings is the consistency across all times of day; response rates were consistently at 77%-78%, with some improvement in weeknight and weekend response rate. Weekdays actually showed a decline this time around, which may signal a focus on non-traditional times and continual realignment of service staff to be able to be consistent in service levels no matter the social channel or time of day.



Further analysis looked at response rate by channel as a function of time of day the inquiry was made. The chart below shows the response rate for each communication channel for each of the three timeframes designated:



Looking specifically at each channel of communication, Facebook was the most consistent in response rate across all days/times evaluated. It should be noted that those retailers in the department store category and specialty apparel retailers responded to Facebook inquiries 100% of the time during the weekday hours, with drug/grocery retailers only responding 56% of the time in this timeframe.

Interesting to note in looking at the Twitter response rates is the fact that they show the weakest response rate performance during the weeknight hours, though remain fairly consistent during the weekday and weekend hours. One thought behind this finding revolves around the fact that Twitter, by nature, moves quickly. With higher volumes of traffic likely during the weeknight hours when compared to business hours, much of the conversation can get lost much easier on this platform, which may account for the lower response rate. Staffing and social strategy could also be a factor if brands place more value on Facebook compared to Twitter for customer service needs.

Email response rates are also interesting and do not appear to fall into “traditional” thought with regard to response rates. Because email communication is slower than social by design, the thinking would be that responses from inquiries made during business hours would be higher than those received during non-traditional times. However, that was not found in this study; in fact, the opposite was true, with the highest rate of response coming from contacts made during the weeknight hours.

The theory that Twitter would dominate as a prominent source for customer service communication during the 2015 study does not appear to hold true based on the current findings. While there was a drastic increase in response rate and response times on Twitter between 2012 and 2015, this appears to have flattened out in the current study, with Facebook communication being more consistent than Twitter and yielding a better response rate overall.

Future studies will continue to monitor the shift in social venue preference and performance and if any noted shifts will be driven by consumers or brands. What happens next can go in one of two directions:

- Consumers will continue to be in control, and any shifts will be the result of consumers opting to choose their social site of choice, essentially forcing companies to improve response rates in that venue regardless of the brand’s preference/strategy.
- Businesses may take the wheel and drive future shifts by focusing efforts and performance on their preferred social site, focusing consumers to engage on that platform if they need assistance in a timely manner.

As consumers currently drive expectations, it would be difficult to believe that the latter scenario of a brand driven shift would be likely at this stage in the game.

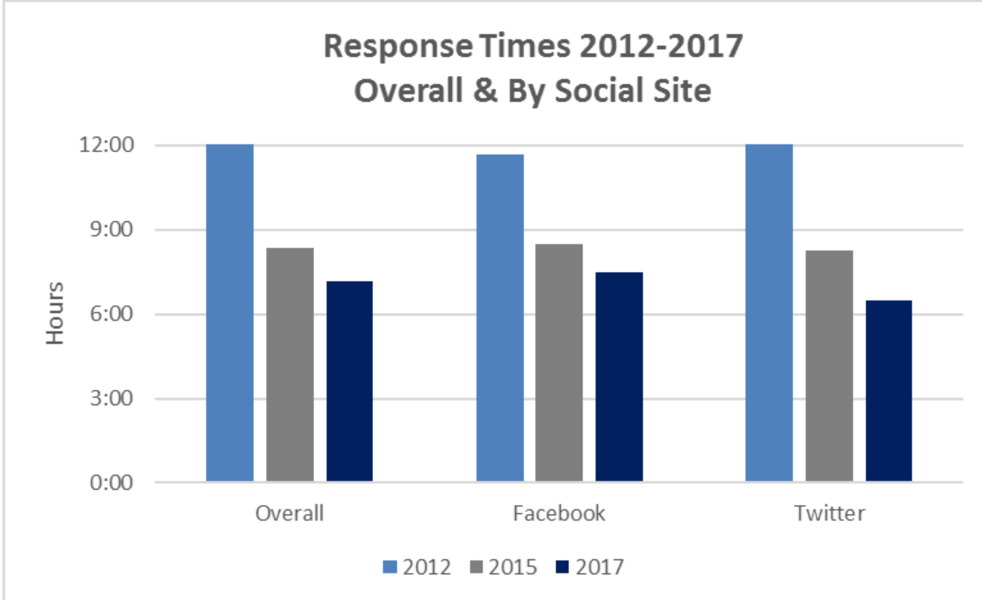
<u>Speed of Response</u>

Speed of response was evaluated. In the pre-social media arena, the main form of customer service communication online, aside from the advent of live chat, was email/web form inquiries. The gold standard for response time was 24 hours.

Once social media entered the stage, it was unclear how the response time would fare, but it was largely expected to be quicker than email simply because of the format and “always on” nature of social media. While not as immediate as live chat options, it was anticipated that response times would be drastically reduced, making social media the go to communication method.

Overall Response Time

This set of findings is extremely positive; response times have consistently decreased over time. In an effort to focus on only the social service aspect, response times for email/web form communication were eliminated in this analysis in to make a solely social comparison across time periods.

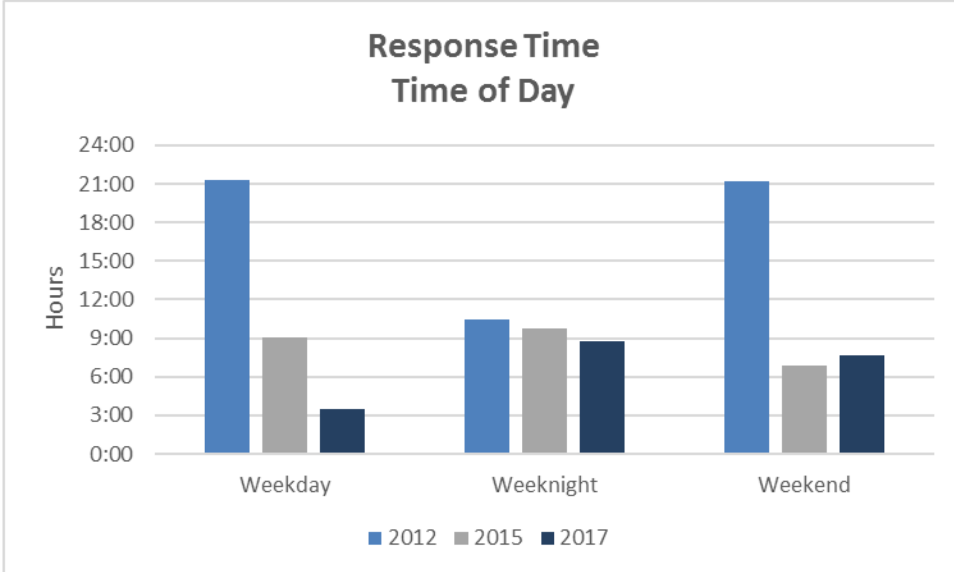


Response times dropped approximately 50% since the 2012 study, and quite a bit since the 2015 study. During the 2012 study, Facebook was more predominantly used by brands compared to Twitter, and it made sense that the response time at that time was slightly better. During the next study, in 2015, Twitter tended to dominate slightly, and the response time decline illustrated a response to this shift. Facebook responses were received in just under eight and a half hours on average in 2015, compared to the seven and a half hour average response time in this study. Response times decreased on Twitter between 2015 and 2017 (8 hours, 15 minutes hours vs 6 hours, 30 minutes) as well.

Since email was used loosely as a control group, these response times were also evaluated, though not in direct comparison to the social sites. In the current study, response time to emails/web form inquiries decreased by almost two hours. In the 2015 study, response times averaged just over 18 hours; currently, the average response rate was 16 hours. The theory that the speed at which social responses are expected by consumers has put pressure on more traditional communications channels, and, based on these results, brands have reacted by decreasing response times in this channel as well.

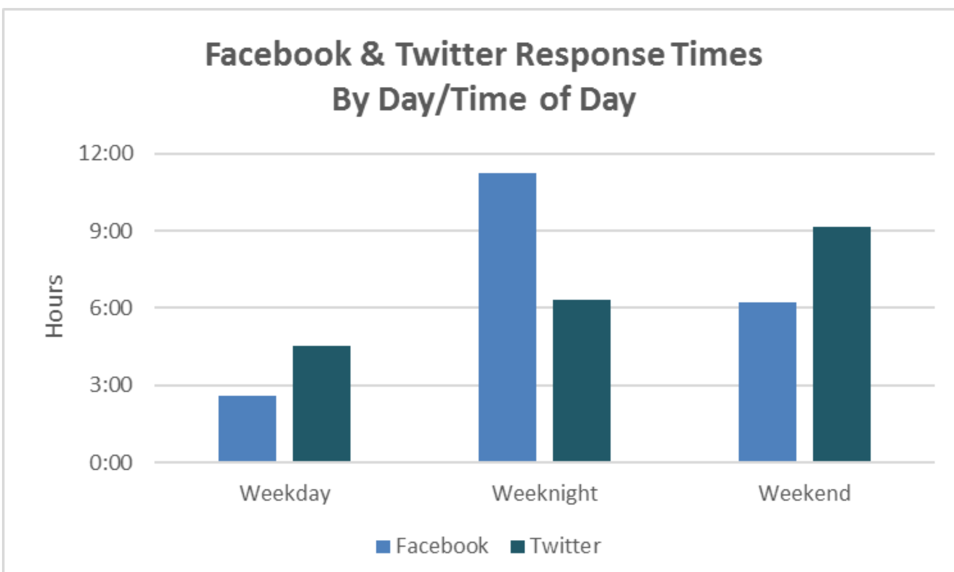
Response Time Based on Time of Day

Data was broken out into response times based on whether an inquiry was made during traditional business hours, weeknights, or weekends to evaluate company response to the consumer driven expectation of getting a response as quickly during business hours as on weekends or weeknights.



Response time continued to decrease nicely during weekday and weeknight time periods; weekend response time increased slightly, but still falls within relatively solid response times (approximately 7 hours from time of contact). Weekday response time decreased most dramatically, and interestingly, weeknight response times decreased slightly but have consistently been the best of the three time frames across all three studies.

Finally, the study looked specifically at response times across the three time frames for both Facebook and Twitter to try to identify patterns or strengths for each social site with regard to response times.



Facebook is generally the stronger of the two channels when it comes to response times; brands tend to respond within a two and a half hour period of time during weekday hours, which almost matches consumer expectations. The site performs better than Twitter during weekend hours, though response times increased from prior studies. Facebook shows a significant lag in response time during weeknight hours, while this is a much stronger area for Twitter. Weekday response times continue to dominate, following the traditional thought that business hours are the most opportune time for consumers to get assistance quickly. It still goes against the fact that consumers are likely to be most active during non-business hours, after their work day and on the weekends. This shows that brands may still be struggling with social media engagement during non-business hours.

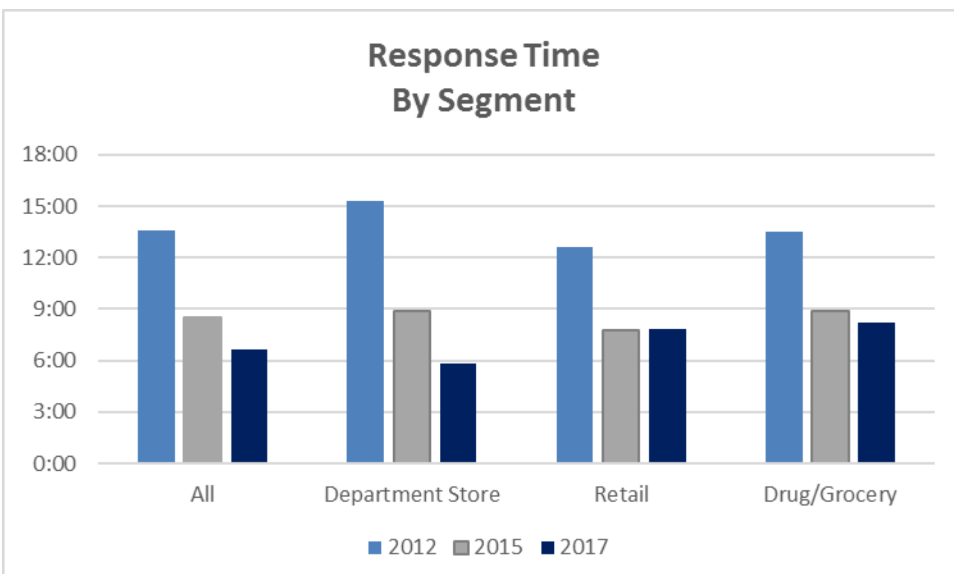
One interesting fact to note is that when responses were not provided within a 12-15 hour period, they went unanswered. It is unclear on why this happens, however. There is a possibility, especially in a fast moving environment such as Twitter, that comments and questions can get lost in the mix and missed from time to time. This would not explain the lack of responses on Facebook or through web inquiries. An expansion study evaluating this more closely may be something of interest in the future as this has been a consistent finding in each study since 2012.

Segment & Brand Analysis

While the three segments fall into the retail category, each has unique issues that may affect how they engage with their customers on social media or vice versa. The primary focus of the study was the response rates and times in the retail segment as a representation of the three verticals, but some segment and brand specific findings were interesting and worth mentioning as significant findings.

In looking at each of the three segments, department stores showed the strongest response time, coming on average at just under six hours. Retail stores averaged just an hour longer (seven hours, 51 minutes) while drug and grocery stores averaged a eight hour, 11 minute response time.

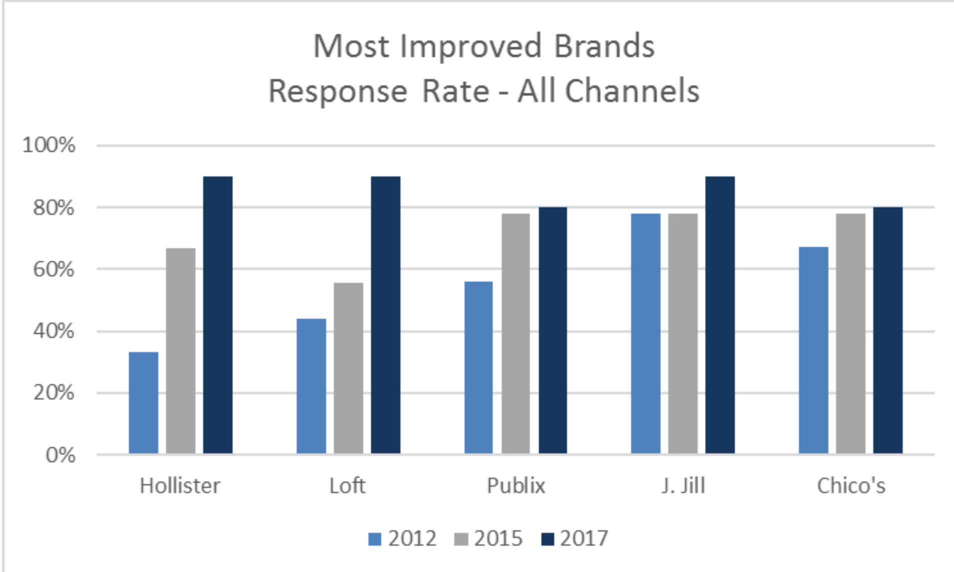
When compared to prior study results, a consistent decline in response times was found for department stores and, less significantly, drug/grocery retailers. Specialty apparel retailers did not show as significant of an improvement, but remained consistent and came in with faster response times compared to the drug/grocery sector.

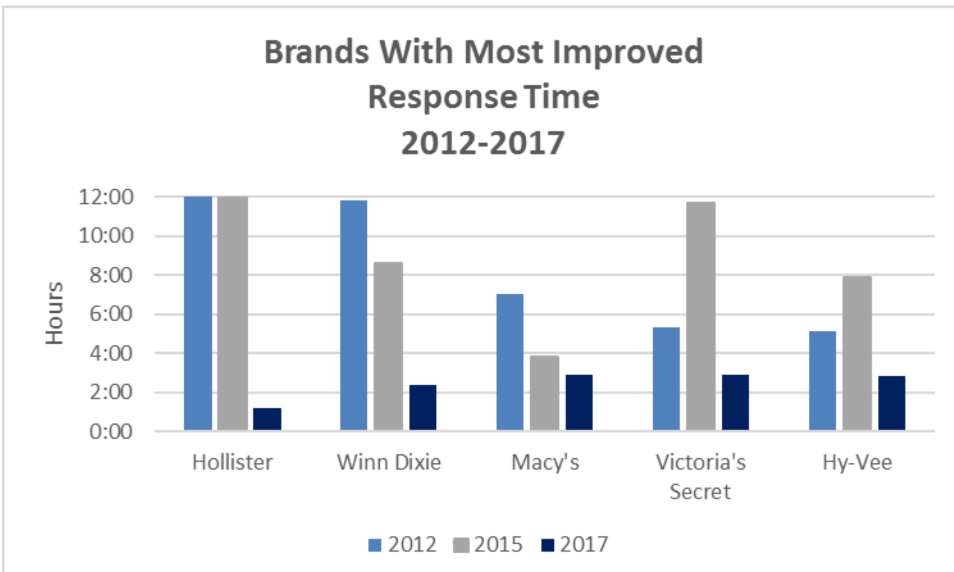


Looking at specific brand performance, some of the retailers stood out for their overall response rate and response times. When looking across all communication channels, the following brands showed the highest response rate (each coming in at 90%) and the fastest response times across the board.

- Nordstrom’s response time on average was 1 hour, 30 minutes
- Winn-Dixie’s response time on average was 2 hours and 24 minutes
- J. Jill’s response time on average was 4 hours and 21 minutes

Comparisons were made to the results from prior studies. Brands that showed the most improvement with regard to response rate and response time across the three studies are shown below.





Of all the brands included in this study, Hollister showed the best performance overall, yielding the most improvement in response rate and response times in social over the five-year study period. Other brands showed a significant improvement in response rate but struggled with response times and vice versa.

The remaining brands remained consistent over the three time periods, while some showed a slight decline over the years. When service interruption occurred, meaning that contact could not be made with the company, either due to a web form not submitting properly or not functional, or a Facebook page where public comments were not able to be posted, it showed an obvious decline in response capabilities during this current study period.

Study Uncovers New Opportunity for Growth

To stand out in business in an extremely competitive landscape, a company must quickly identify a potential "microshift" whenever a major shift occurs. This little shift can make a huge difference and set a brand apart from others very quickly. Social media as a customer service channel has been a macroshift that could not be ignored; this study uncovered a smaller change, a microshift that could be implemented within the bigger shift of customer service to make significant gains in consumer satisfaction.

A small segment of the study, which has not been included in data findings, revolves around an indirect customer service contact, specifically one made on Twitter. The initial thought in 2012 was that consumers were not quite yet used to tagging or using the @ response to communicate with brands directly, but were still talking about brands in this social space. One example would be if a consumer simply Tweets, “Does anyone know if XXX Retailer sells women’s clothing in petite sizes?” The consumer names the brand (and may or may not use a hashtag) and poses a question, but does not tweet directly to the company.

Contacts were made in this manner to identify if brands were monitoring social conversation outside of their own sites and, if so, were they responding or interacting with these indirect customers?

Expectations were extremely low in 2012, and results were as expected. In fact, the response rate was so poor that the results were not included in any way. As social media service evolved, it was anticipated there would be an uptick in this realm in the 2015. Unfortunately, results were slightly improved, but still quite poor (less than 5% response rate). At that time, it was realized that brands were still adjusting to direct customer service issues and it may be too early to measure or identify use of indirect contact service responses.

However, social media monitoring presented between 2015 and 2017, mainly as a means of monitoring brand reputation and consumer satisfaction. While there were inklings that the monitoring programs could be used to identify these indirect questions, complaints, and issues and allow brands to respond directly, it was unknown how widespread this practice was. Therefore, this segment was again included in 2017 to observe any shifts in this area.

The lack of response was quite significant – only 14% of those communicating indirectly with a brand received a response. This is somewhat higher than the findings from 2015, but still subpar. However, what was interesting in this round was the fact that the hashtag made a difference. Contacts were made with a hashtag just before the brand’s name while the other contacts were made without any social identifier before it.

Hashtags made a significant difference; 100% of those who received a response from indirect contact used a hashtag prior to the brand’s name.

What does this tell us? The brands that were able to identify a customer service issue and reply to these indirect contacts are, at the very least, monitoring “their” hashtag for opportunities to respond to and assist consumers. What’s even more promising is that, on average, the response time to these indirect inquiries were 38 minutes. This is very much in line with consumer expectations and far less time than averages found across other communication channels in this study.

Social media monitoring is still fairly young and its full range of use is still largely misunderstood. While initially used for brand reputation and even competitive intelligence, it is becoming very useful to identify those customers not directly engaging with a brand they do business with. Monitoring for such mentions can alert companies to consumer issues, questions, and concerns and engage directly despite the fact that the consumer had not reached out directly. This form of monitoring as a means of customer service may be the next step, though it may take some time for this to come to fruition. Given that fact that, according to recent research from Sprout Social, 47% of consumers have reported complaining on social to a brand, there is more than half of the consumers that may be talking online, but not directly to the company. Creating an avenue with which to capture that indirect 53% can make a retailer’s reputation for customer service to increase exponentially over time.

Conclusion

The results from this study support the research that has been done previously with regard to social media, though some assumptions made in 2015 did not fare as anticipated in the current study. Specifically, it was theorized that Twitter would continue to make strong strides in response times, but data shows that Facebook has closed the gap to customer expectations more so than Twitter in both response rates and response times. While this data departs from the earlier theory, it does fall in line with Sprout Social's Q1 2017 index which stated that, despite the fact that 47% of marketers believe Twitter is the preferred site for consumer engagement, Facebook is in fact the preferred site across Millennials, Baby Boomers, and GenXers.

Another interesting finding is that, while response times continued to decrease in 2017, the drop was not as significant as it was in prior years. In fact, it appears that response times may be flattening; as the gap is still quite wide between consumer expectations and actual response time, this may signal a potential issue in the future if brands do not continue to make progress in decreasing the response time.

However, this finding gives clues into the future of social customer service – while the consumer has been driving the car up until now, these findings may suggest that brands are starting to take back the wheel. There comes a point when response times will be as good as they're going to get – the plateau may indicate that the current response times may be the best brands can do, and consumers may have to realize that they can be satisfied with a four to six hour response time instead of the five to 60 minute response they would like.

Truth is, companies are overwhelmed. The lowered response rate across the board supports that fact. Adding social to the mix as a customer service has been challenging – the majority of companies have embraced social media, but ROI is still difficult to prove, which may mean there are not enough customer care staff allocated to this channel. There also lie additional challenges, which include, but are not limited to:

- Shifting the perception that there could exist social media staff and customer service staff, each in their own silo. At the onset of social media, for example, social media staff were responsible for broadcasting, promoting content, and engaging on a social level. As consumers turned to social for customer service, it was evident that customer service oriented staff needed to be brought into the loop, and cross training for both entities was needed. This shift may be slow to establish and have proper procedures/training in place across the board.

- Mapping the customer journey in this medium with regard to service issues, and tying social contacts to CRM platforms for seamless problem resolution should a customer require a second contact through a different channel continues to be a struggle.

- Ensuring that the right social monitoring platform is selected and utilized to its fullest extent. There are many social monitoring platforms available; choosing the one that best meets the brand's needs is important. Further, proper training and understanding of the programs is essential – there is a lot of social noise online, both on and off a brand's social sites. Setting up a monitoring program to easily cut through the noise, identifying problem resolution conversations, and establishing a workflow to monitor, track, and respond to these issues will help improve response rates and times.

These struggles should be realized, and the results of this study show that despite these challenges, companies have done quite well in acclimating to the new normal.

It will be interesting to replicate this study in another two years, not only to reexamine response rates and times on social sites, but to also look at how retailers are treating electronic communication (email and web forms). At the time of this study, there was an uptick in difficulty sending emails and completing web forms for some retailers, while others had inconsistent performance (one contact was easily made while another did not go through as though the site was experiencing difficulty). Contact prevention was also noted for some brands who only offered web form options for those who recently placed orders. In these instances, the form would not submit without an order number. Evaluators were instructed to provide a numeric chain in lieu of an order number to force the submission through, and this did work on occasion. However, there was not an option for general inquiries in these cases. This may signal a shift based on one or more of the factors below:

- Companies are not maintaining the same service expectations for traditional contact methods, whether intentional or not, and may not evaluate the ease of use/functionality as closely as they once did as their focus expands to social customer service.
- Brands may be allowing these functions to fall out of focus as the intent is to eventually phase out email/web form options as social and live chat features become more solid.
- Internal consumer analysis may be pointing to the fact that consumers are not utilizing the email and/or webform features to communicate as they once were or are only using these features for specific issues, such as order complaint resolution, and the limited options are a response to this shift in use.

Consumers still utilize traditional means of communication, and the results of this study show that performance is somewhat lagging. It is a data point that will be monitored in future studies, but current findings are potentially a warning signal that brands are focusing more on social vs traditional. If this trend continues, they may be faced with alienating a set of consumers who will not acclimate to social media to serve their needs, which could be costly.

Overall data suggests that great gains have been made in social media as a customer service channel; the next steps for companies to embrace include making continual improvements in social while also maintaining the traditional communication channels (email, web form, chat, and phone) and identifying indirect customer service issues and responding/engaging as needed.

Similarly, companies do not appear to be moving quickly to utilize social monitoring as a means of identifying customer service issues. It was believed that this indirect communication channel would have improved more significantly than it did in prior studies; however, that did not materialize. While improvements have been made, specifically around monitoring indirect communication that includes a hashtag, there is still a lot of room for brands to do better. Social media monitoring platforms are more than brand reputation tools; it allows for easy identification of consumers and any service issues that can be directly resolved in a simple format. The brands who take advantage of this and use it to their advantage will be the ones to be most successful. In the changing retail landscape, with retailers struggling in general, this could be a game changer for those who step up to the newest challenge in social customer service.

Customer expectations and satisfaction have become more difficult to adhere to over the last several years. The consumer is definitely in the driver's seat and it has been interesting to watch brands acclimate to the new demand. Social moves fast, and as it changes, consumer expectations continue to change as well. However, it appears that the majority of brands are realizing the need to be flexible and be able to change and adjust strategies as the consumer demands. What is important today may be long forgotten in six months or a year; however, it is clear that social media as a form of customer service communication will remain a stronghold for many years to come.

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