

# Transforming Retail with Social Clienteling



shaping tomorrow with you



While brick-and-mortar stores still drive the lion's share of shopping revenue, their influence on consumer behavior is diminishing. The digital revolution has reshaped how consumers access information, and today's shoppers now use mobile and online tools for product research and price comparisons, and increasingly consult with their peers before purchasing. Smart retailers are joining these fast-moving conversations and strengthening relationships with customers.

The static, uncoordinated customer data that has been collected by retailers in the past is no longer sufficient to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with customers. In order to succeed today, retailers need to have rich insight into customers including their likes, dislikes, and preferences—in order to know and serve their unique needs. The key to success is the adoption of Social Clienteling, which helps retailers analyze their customers' social media, online shopping, and in-store behaviors. By gaining a complete view of customer preferences, retailers can surprise and delight them across channels.

#### **Opening a window into the customer**

The best way to connect with today's tech-savvy consumers and deliver a consistent brand promise is to cultivate successful, learning relationships with each customer—in real-time—via Social Clienteling.

Consumers participate in multiple forms of social media (including Facebook, Twitter, and blogs) so retailers need to listen at multiple touch-points. By integrating information from social media, online shopping, and in-store transactions, it is possible to build a complete, dynamic profile of every shopper, with real-time insight into his or her behavior.

Social media tools that let consumers interact with brands anywhere, at any time, can also help retailers build personal relationships with their customers. Using Facebook, Twitter, and mobile apps, retailers can create connected, cross-channel experiences that are consistent in stores, at home, and beyond. By engaging in conversation with customers—wherever they are—retailers can forge closer relationships, and optimize offerings to increase wallet share.

When retailers listen to what people are saying about their brand and their competition, they can uncover key influencers, benchmark the competition, and initiate proactive responses from customer service teams. Participating in social media is a key component of the journey to becoming a Social Enterprise, connecting the internal efforts of employees, and extending outreach to customers, partners, and suppliers.

#### **The new reality – social clienteling in practice**

Madison Price is a marketing manager at Bangles, a specialty retailer of women's apparel. She is working on a summer trunk show, a component of her customer appreciation campaign, and is using Social Clienteling to identify and reach out to the best customers.

Lisa Miller is a social shopper who loves Bangles' clothes and follows the retailer on Facebook. Madison takes note of this and sends Lisa an invitation to the trunk show. Lisa excitedly RSVPs, then immediately comments about the event for her Facebook friends to see. Lisa also visits Bangles' Facebook page to browse the catalog. She looks at her personal wish list and again checks out a blue dress she really, really wants.

Meanwhile, Bangles' store employee Liz Richie is using Social Clienteling to monitor her high-value customers in real-time via their individual profiles, preferences, and purchase histories; she also tracks available inventory. When Liz meets customers on the floor, she can confidently make recommendations that she knows they will love and buy.

Liz receives an alert that that her VIP customer has responded to the trunk show invitation. By accessing Lisa's account, Liz can see what's on Lisa's wish list as well as recommendations that have been generated by a sophisticated engine – for example, concerning that blue dress. Liz sends Lisa a Facebook message: "That blue dress you like so much? It's on sale and waiting at the store for you, with some earrings to match."

At work, Lisa receives the message and tweets the great news for all her friends and coworkers to see. She feels appreciated and special, happy that Bangles is interested in earning her business. Meanwhile, Liz can see that her business managers care about the success of their employees, giving them the information they need to satisfy customers. And Madison has a complete picture of employee and campaign performance.

With Social Clienteling, retailers can bank on improved customer loyalty and grow promoters for the long term, which translates directly to increased sales.

Social Clienteling provides retailers with a range of benefits:

- Increased loyalty from better customer service
- Improved customer satisfaction from more relevant recommendations
- Improved employee satisfaction
- Higher average tickets from cross-sell opportunities
- Improved manager visibility into the performance of associates



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