

How to Respond to Angry Customers in Social Media

WACRA Annual Conference

5 October 2015

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In social media, angry
customers make us nervous

In social media, angry customers make us nervous



Nkechi Nneji

@NkechiThinks



Follow

So angry with [@SouthwestAir](#). Turbulent flight with no food or drink and they say my bag didn't make it on the plane.

12:19 AM - 12 May 2015



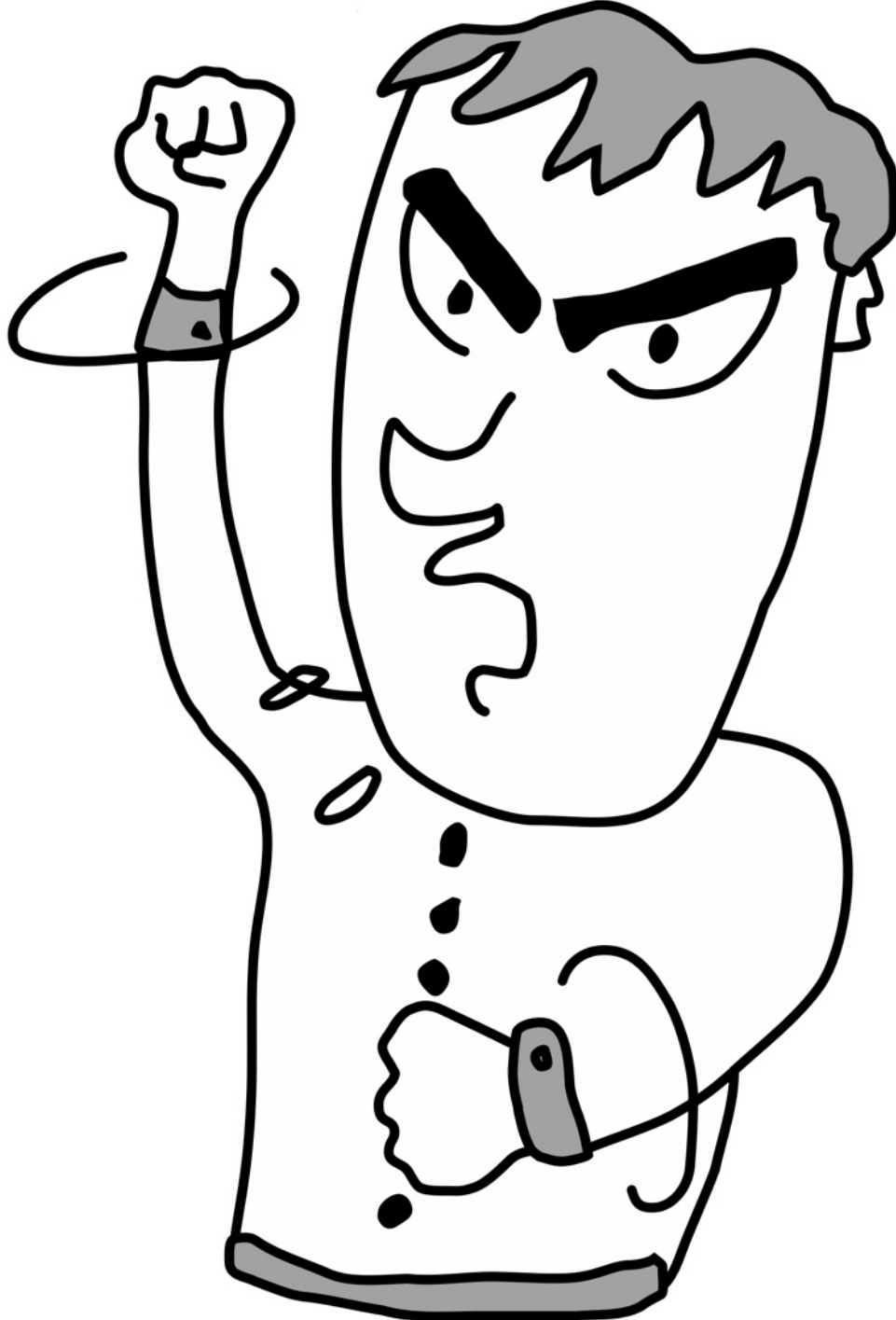


Nkechi Nneji
@NkechiThinks

Booking Producer for [@hardball](#) on [@msnbc](#). Alumna of [@abcnewsradio](#) [@ajam](#) [@HuffPostLive](#) & [@CNN](#). Love [@SmithCollege](#), football and politics. RTs≠endorsements.

Followed by [US Gift Giant](#) and 2 others

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Let's share our wisdom:

How does your airline handle angry customers on the phone, in email, or in person?

Today's theme:

We don't need new writing skills to respond to angry customers in social media

We need to use the customer service skills we already have

Topics for today's workshop

1. Why you must respond quickly
2. How to respond when the customer is just angry vs. angry about something specific
3. How to show empathy to angry customers
4. When to ask angry customers to move the discussion out of the public social channel
5. When to shut down an angry social media discussion

1. Responding quickly



1. Responding quickly

Question
or request?



We expect to reply within:

24 min.

Updated every 5 minutes



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145

LISTS
1



1. Responding to customers who are just angry



Meecheo

@JDMurder



Follow

@DeltaAssist honestly, really disappointed in how 3711 is being handled.

8:24 PM - 16 Jan 2015



Delta Assist @DeltaAssist · Jan 16

@JDMurder Hi there. I apologize for the service failure. Thanks so much for your patience. *SD



1. Responding to customers who are just angry



Hayley Mortimer

@HayleyMortimer



Follow

Very disappointed @British_Airways. Been waiting over an hour for baggage to arrive at Heathrow Terminal 5. Expected better from you.

6:16 PM - 7 Aug 2015



British Airways @British_Airways · Aug 8

@HayleyMortimer We agree this is very disappointing, Hayley. Please accept our apologies for the inconvenience this caused. ^Jane



Practice: Write a tweet to just-angry customer BOB @ajay1903



BOB @ajay1903 · Aug 19

@askairasia why do your staff in miri,malaysia airport not change the signs when checking in ! DOES BAG DROP NOT MEAN BAG DROP !

2. Responding to customers who are angry about something specific

- Confirm that you understand the problem
- Tell the customer what you will do and what he or she must do
- Enable the customer to take action
- Show empathy
- Apologize, if necessary

2. Responding to customers who are angry about something specific



Kevin Wong @kev_w22 · Sep 24

@FinnairHelps Our luggage was delayed in August - I lodged a claim and it has now been almost 2 months! What gives?



FinnairHelps @FinnairHelps · Sep 24

@kev_w22 So sorry to hear that. Please send your claim nbr as DM, as I was not able to find any claim with your name?/BR,Annukka

11:44 PM - 24 Sep 2015 · Details

2. Responding to customers who are angry about something specific



Dominik Lehmann @WDLehmann · Sep 21

@FlyAirNZ very disappointed that paying for extra legroom (18B) on NZ104 gets me less leg room than any other economy seat. What gives?




Air New Zealand @FlyAirNZ · Sep 21

@WDLehmann We're sorry to hear this Dominik. So we can look into this, can you please email socialmedia@airnz.co.nz your booking ref?
^NA




8:12 PM - 21 Sep 2015 · Details

2. Responding to customers who are angry about something specific


**Susy Torres** ► **Philippine Airlines**
September 9 at 11:17pm · 🌐

Worst customer service ever!
Went to the office in person, sent e-mails to different accounts, called 3 times. Apparently no one is qualified enough because no one was able to help me.
Never flying with you again, and not thinking about recommending your airline...

2 Likes 1 Comment

 Like  Comment  Share

2 people like this.

**Philippine Airlines** Hi, Susy. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience and disappointment you felt. Where did you send your email? Please let us know the specific email address so we may track your message and follow up with the concerned office. Thank you.
Like · Reply · September 10 at 1:15am

Empathy is the most
important response we
can give an angry
customer in social media.
Why?

3. Showing empathy

- We do understand how you feel
- We do understand why you feel that way
- We agree with you. Your feelings are legitimate.
- If we were in the same situation, we would feel the same way.
- What happened to you should not have happened.

3. Showing empathy



Ginny Marvin @GinnyMarvin · 27m

Awesome to have a @Delta representative just hang up on you before asking if you're all set or if you need assistance w/ anything else.



Delta Assist @DeltaAssist · 19m

@GinnyMarvin Hey Ginny, that's definitely not the Delta way, so I apologize that happened to you. Let me know if I can be of assistance. *VM

8:54 AM - 27 Sep 2015 · Details

3. Showing empathy

Visitor Posts



Julio Davila ▶ **KLM**

15 hrs · Bryne, Norway · 🌐

Hei! I have problems with my account login, I am a Flying blue member and I tried to get contact with the Flying blue member support and i was a bad experience! 15 min waiting and nothing! Please, do something there! I want to buy a ticket and use my membership.

1 Like 2 Comments

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Hotel Rate Discount likes this.

Most Recent ▾



KLM ✓ Good day Julio. We regret to hear that you encountered trouble while you tried to contact our Flying Blue department. Not to worry: we would be happy to assist you further with the award booking. Would you be so kind as to send us a private message with the following details?

- Flying Blue number
- Email address
- Date of birth
- Last registered flight in the Flying Blue program
- Preferred dates and route of travel

You can send us these details by clicking on the "message" button here: <http://klmf.ly/1gYkt3l>. We look forward to hear back from you!

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · 15 hrs

↩ View previous replies



KLM ✓ Thanks 😊 We will get back to you as soon as possible!

Like · Reply · 14 hrs

3. Showing empathy:

How to tell angry passengers their feedback has been shared



Jonty @SpiffingFrocks · 18h

2 blankets weren't even adequate last flight @Qantas
TurnTheFeckinHeatOnFFS it was about -4°C



Qantas @Qantas · 11h

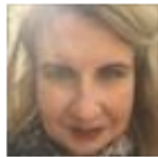
@SpiffingFrocks Hi Jonty, we'll be sure to address your concerns with the relevant department. Maritha

3. Showing empathy:

How to tell angry passengers their feedback has been shared

- Use the name of a specific department or team
- Use the title of the manager who will receive the feedback
- Mention what the person will do with the feedback

Practice: Revise this FB comment to show more empathy



Terra Gustafson-Davidson ▶

16 hrs · Mississauga, Canada · 🌐

Team - I flew with your team from Calgary to Toronto on Saturday, September 19th, 2015. Our service leader for the flight was named 'Kiki' - just wanted to let you know she was horrible to the rest of your flight team...berated them in front of guests. Totally not cool and left the other team members really frustrated. Just wanted to let you know.

1 Comment

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



✓ Hi Terra, your comment was forwarded to the appropriate department. Thank you for your feedback. /pd

Like · Reply · 15 hrs

Why do we ask angry customers in social media to move to private channels?

4. Asking angry customers to use a private channel



Kristin Deason ▶ **Emirates**

19 hrs · 🌐

First time flying Emirates and very disappointed. I am particularly shocked at the way your staff is treating customers in Nairobi.

3 Likes 3 Comments



Like



Comment



Share

3 people like this.

Most Recent ▾



Emirates ✓ Hi Kristin, sorry to hear that. Can you send us a private message with your booking reference, email address and more details about your experience? Thanks

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · 19 hrs



Kristin Deason Sure, will do.

Like · Reply · 19 hrs

4. Asking angry customers to use a private channel



I Like Turtles @Reggie_Freese · 16h

2nd time this month I had biz select A1 plane delay (mechanical) w tight connection n stuck w back middle n gate chk @SouthwestAir #WTF



Southwest Airlines ✓

@SouthwestAir



Following

@Reggie_Freese Thanks for your patience. Feel free to DM your travel conf # & I'll be happy to help w/ any questions left unanswered. ^JH

8:17 PM - 26 Sep 2015

5. Shutting down an angry social media discussion



Southwest's statement

July 24 2014 -

Reaction to Recent Social Media Concerns

 [Text Only](#)



[Download All](#)

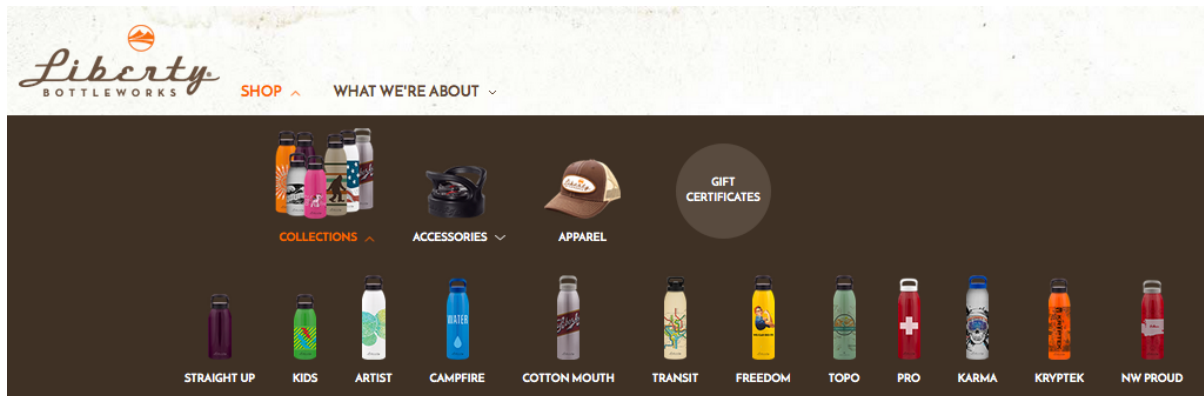
Updated: 7/24/14 at 10:37 AM

We've reached out to the Customer and had a very productive conversation. We've apologized and our Company and Employees are ready to move forward serving more than a hundred million Customers annually.

Southwest Airlines appreciates and is active in social media, and it is not our intent to stifle Customer feedback. Social media is a very valuable avenue for engaging with our Customers. On Sunday, July 20, a Southwest Airlines Employee and Customer were having a conversation that escalated about the airline's [family boarding procedures](#). The Customer was briefly removed from flight #2347 from Denver to Minneapolis/St. Paul to resolve the conversation outside of the aircraft and away from the other Passengers. Our decision was not based solely on a Customer's tweet. Following a successful resolution, the Customer and his family were able to continue on the flight to Minneapolis. We are thoroughly investigating the situation. We have reached out to the Customer and offered vouchers as a gesture of goodwill.

*Wow, rudest agent in Denver. Kimberly S,
gate C39, not happy @SouthwestAir*

5. Shutting down an angry social media discussion



DON'T DO BUSINESS WITH THIS COMPANY IF YOU WANT IT HANDLED RIGHT. THEY WAIT OVER A WEEK TO LET YOU KNOW - THEY LOST YOUR PAYMENT - THEY PROVIDE A PHONE NUMBER THAT NO ONE EVER ANSWERS. IF YOU HAVE A DEADLINE- LIKE CHRISTMAS - FORGET ABOUT IT. product is great - COMPANY is NOT



Ryan Clark Ryan Clark, Liberty's Co-founder and COO, here. I normally do not hop into Facebook rants but this one needed addressed. First of all, Ms. [redacted] thank you for your order and your desire to support American Companies, Job Creation, Green Manufacturing and the Hiring of Vets. We did receive your numerous voicemails and emails. The buck stops with me. This will I am sure will upset you but ... my customer service team will not be helping you on the weekends. Your voicemail stated "it is the holidays, you should be working" and your email stated, "instead of doing my Christmas cards and enjoying the holiday spirit, I was dealing with this". Perhaps, you need to spend a bit more time embracing the holiday spirit. You see, my employees were home with their families doing their cards, baking cookies, etc. Family first, product second. If you want immediate service on a Saturday, try supporting your local retail establishment such as, Bill and Pauls Sporthaus, People's Food Co-op, Barnes Ace Hardware. As to your original complaint, we emailed within 24 hours of your order concerning the Paypal issue. Second, we called you first thing this morning in response to your angry voicemails but you hung up on us when we introduced ourselves saying, "I never want to speak with anyone from your company." Ms. [redacted] we pride ourselves on doing things well, we pride ourselves on doing things right, we pride ourselves on doing things the American way. Not instant gratification, 24 hour shopping on Thanksgiving type of American way but, family and country type of American way. The way our grandparents did things type of American way. I am sorry you are upset and I will gladly give you your money back, but I am not sorry our employees were enjoying the holidays. That right is not exclusive to you. If you would like to discuss this is on the phone you may call my personal cell phone - [redacted] If I do not get back with you right away understand I may be eating dinner with my wife and kids. Please be advised we will not be shipping you your order, you will not be charged. I will not do business with anyone that threatens my employees the way you have. Merry Christmas!

5. Shutting down an angry social media discussion

Input from the experts



Advice from Tony Amrich, Virgin America Social Media Manager

- “We really take a personalized approach and interact with guests on a case-by-case basis...”
- “We use the same methods on social that we do across the board.”
- “If we've got a guest who is unhappy, we listen to them and try to make things better.”
- “We forward their feedback to the departments involved for follow-up when appropriate. “



Advice from Tony Amrich, Virgin America Social Media Manager

- “We typically respond to all guest issues on social, unless the guest is being publicly hostile toward our crew or teammates at the airport. We don't want to encourage that type of behavior and stand behind our frontline teammates 100%.”
- “The biggest lesson we've learned is a pretty simple one: Most people who reach out want to be heard. Make sure that you're listening to your guests and they'll reward you with understanding.”



TK HelpDesk ✓

@TK_HelpDesk

Welcome to Turkish Airlines Customer Support! We're here at your service 24/7 and would be more than delighted to help resolve all of your enquiries.

📍 Türkiye

🌐 turkishairlines.com

🕒 Joined November 2012

Advice from Ozlem Metin, Adba International (Social CRM for Turkish Airlines)

“We divide angry customers into two categories: (1) The ones whose problems can be handled immediately and fixed. These cases are easier to handle. We apologize in a hearty manner and act as quickly as possible to do the related correction to solve the problem. Responding in a short time usually calms down the customer even if you can not solve their problem. This response time is one of our major SLA's in our job.”

Advice from Ozlem Metin



(2) “Sometimes the customer will have to wait for the result for a cup of days or even weeks:

- If the situation happens because of general aviation rules, we try to explain the rules, regulations or wise reasons openly.
- If we need to take some personal information or make special explanation, we try to continue with them via direct message. Customers feel themselves private when we try to solve their problems in a special channel and usually accept waiting a bit more for the result. Offline communication avoids the negative buzz as well.”

Advice from Ozlem Metin

- “We have plenty of response templates but our agents try to personalize them according to the customers. Especially when they are communicating via direct messages, we try to reflect our human touch as much as possible.
- For each case, we prepared 5 - 6 alternative templates. This makes life a bit more easy for our team.
- As a principle, we don't respond to the customers who use inappropriate, very rude words or slang. We don't answer the posts of trolls.
- For THY case, we receive many comments about political issues. Most of these comments are not related to company's basic activities or operations. Some people may prefer to explain personal thoughts about political issues or try to connect some political arguments with THY by using our social media channels. We also never respond to them.”

Lessons learned from Ozlem Metin

1. “People love to get a response in any case. Silence of the company is the worst thing for the brand.”
2. “Satisfaction level of a customer may vary according to the personalities. Some of them can be happy with just a candid apology where some others continue to complain in any case. In both of them, our team should continue the communication and be calm.”
3. “Social CRM performance is directly related to the operational effectiveness of that company.”

Take-aways from today's workshop

How to answer angry customers in social media:

1. Respond quickly
2. Show genuine empathy when the customer is just angry
3. Solve the problem when the customer is angry about something specific
4. Move the customer to a private channel to provide excellent service
5. Stop responding to shut down an angry discussion on social media
6. _____

Request a Social Media Reading List

How to Respond to Angry Customers in Social Media

Reading List

Analyzing Customer Relations in the Airline Industry (Crimson Hexagon). This industry snapshot analyzes consumer relations and social media engagement of ten airline brands in North America and Europe

<http://bit.ly/1KTIDog>

How Much Does Customer Social Media Angst Really Matter? (Harvard Business Review). "The best brands don't just listen – they use online customer feedback to evolve and they ensure digesting and understanding social media feedback is part of their strategy."

<http://bit.ly/1laMCk9>

KLM's 150 social media customer service agents generate \$25M in annual revenue (VentureBeat). "Social business leader KLM, the airline that kickstarted the modern customer-support-via-social-media revolution, has 150 people dedicated to serving clients via social. And each of them represents almost \$170,000 in annual revenue."

<http://bit.ly/1Anxiym>

Social Media for Airlines: Now and Tomorrow (Simplifying). "The most important goal airline executives think social media should drive is customer service, rather than the current emphasis on brand awareness."

<http://bit.ly/1wdD2BL>

Southwest Airlines Adds Social To Its Customer Engagement Strategy (Forbes). "The hub of the company's social media presence is a social Listening Center, which has been in operation for a little more than a year...The Listening Center also lets Southwest provide "one-contact resolution" to whatever problem customers may be having, as opposed to having to e-mail or call."

<http://onforb.es/1Kuu4sm>

The Secret to a Successful Airline Customer Service Twitter Account (Skift). Does having a separate social media customer service account instead of handling all brand messaging and reservation-related inquiries on a universal account more effective for airlines?

<http://bit.ly/1Mz5nz0>

When "Oh No!" Is What You Want To Hear From Your Airline (Forbes). "Not only is [American Airlines] a company that transports its passengers safely and relatively on time to pretty much anywhere in the world, but it's a company that teaches me, a small business owner, a lot about how to run a professional Twitter account."

<http://onforb.es/1vPpWBO>

Questions? Comments?

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