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JOIN THE CITIZEN CONVERSATION

Listen, respond, and engage with
Salesforce Citizen Communication

The relationship that citizens have with government needs some attention. Trust levels are not where they should be - the OECD states that only 40% of citizens trust their government representatives[1]. Social media offers public sector organisations opportunities to engage citizens in new ways, to build those relationships anew, and is already recognised as important by the majority of local authorities and central Government Departments. However, they may not yet be using it to best advantage.

Social growth cannot be denied: today 64% of UK internet users use social media each week[2] making it not only impossible to ignore, but a major opportunity. Many public sector organisations use it as an outbound communication tool. Yet social platforms also offer the ability to listen and learn in real-time. That may be gauging local community sentiment around a policy, monitoring for social unrest signals, tapping into public service need – or simply getting to know citizens better. Both sides of this became apparent during the 2011 London riots, in which Twitter played a significant recruitment role – but also kept the public informed, and helped BT to manage down escalating 999 call-waiting times.

Citizens are demanding more from government. They see digital media as part of that: they are used to being 'always on' – not just always connected, but constantly informed. We are reminded of this each time a transport strike or major weather event causes delays; complaints about lack of real-time updates via social media can dominate media coverage. Citizens are also highly mobile, with social media closely linked with mobility: in August 2014 the use of mobile devices to access gov.uk exceeded PCs for the first time[3]. 24 million of the 27 million UK users of Facebook are doing so via a mobile device, and on Twitter, 80% of usage is via mobile.

Cost reduction is obviously essential too: cost per transaction online is far lower than by phone or face-to face. It is also an important service efficiency measure, and a factor behind the drive for digital-by-default. Perhaps one of the most persuasive drivers of all is that social conversations happen with or without you. To make it a useful you must participate, but listening is the foundation for that – if you don't know what is being said, you cannot gain insight and be responsive.

Wherever you are on the path towards creating social conversations with citizens, it is clear that the need for such communication is rising rapidly.

80%
of customers tweeting brands expect a response on the same day 50% expect a response within two hours

Brandwatch, March 2015

Make better connections

To ensure that your social processes play a real role in engaging citizens, communicating better and building more trusted relationships, the citizen's needs must be built into the core. That means:

• Making it easy to engage with you, on the channels and devices that citizens choose

• Making messages consistent across all channels – it needs a broad strategy

• Talking their language, not that of bureaucracy – that means real conversations

• Responding in real-time, meeting expectations for service and accountability

• Switching seamlessly between channels, just as citizens do

• Engaging in dialogue, as opposed to simply broadcasting sanitised, universal information

Meeting these needs is challenging when social media is typically monitored and managed by the communications department, rather than those who deal directly with delivering services and interacting with the public. At best there is a disconnect between social media and other channels, such as face-to-face, call-centres and websites. At worst, messages across the channels – and the knowledge of service personnel – can be entirely out of sync. Citizens have become used to the speed of response delivered by commercial brands; research suggests that 80% of those tweeting to a brand expect a response – and around 50% expect that response within two hours. Research by Klout suggests that 53% want a response within just ONE hour[4]. Government must aspire to meet those expectations too.

The social world changes fast – and you need to keep up; social use continues to rise in the UK, new platforms emerge, and there is a visible increase in privacy awareness – 70% of UK users have tightened their privacy settings above default levels[5]. This means that the systems that public sector organisations put in place for better citizen communication must span social channels, be agile enough to evolve to meet new ones, be visibly secure, and be able to monitor changing usage patterns.

You need to empower your people to communicate effectively with citizens. Employees may often be juggling multiple conversations at once when on digital platforms, and they need to be informed properly. Providing insight at their fingertips is key, whether that is about an individual's social influence or the interactions they have had with the organisation in the past.

Social media can be managed in ways that lessen the load on staff, and increases accessibility for citizens, through the smart use of automation. Certain responses can be made automatic, so your staff can spend time on answering the question. At the same time you can learn from these conversations, and put measures and tracking in place, to feed into performance measurement and planning so that the communications process improves in an agile fashion.

Using social platforms effectively can not only improve citizen relationships, but also be very supportive of the transformation agenda to improve and digitise services, increase self-service, boost efficiency and cut costs. Social platforms are also extremely visible by nature - you can change the perception of the organisation overnight by carefully-managed interactions online.

48%
of UK citizens would like more council services to be available online

PwC, 'Local State We're In' 2014

With 33 Facebook accounts and 39 Twitter accounts, there was a strong need to track what citizens were saying.

Salesforce is used to track sentiment and used to proactively respond accordingly.

"Our services were online, but they were static – like paying a parking ticket – and didn't engage citizens"

"Salesforce helps us engage with citizens better"

Ron Vinson, CMO City & County of San Francisco

Put social to work with Salesforce

Salesforce can help you create a platform for citizen communications that is fundamentally social but connected and supportive of the business of government. We developed the world's #1 platform for managing relationships, and today have a powerful portfolio of integrated tools designed to support social media success:

- By using a social media platform you can become truly omni-channel: listening and responding to citizens across their channel of choice and adapting as these evolve.

- By building a connected citizen journey across all digital channels you can channel-shift citizens effectively, providing support, guidance and communication throughout as you expand self-services to new digital platforms.

- By using tools to analyse social comments, complaints and conversations, you can manage the volume of content you publish effectively, to create meaningful and measurable social interactions.

- By utilising smart tracking and analysis tools you can build insight that informs more valuable citizen conversations and supports future service decisions. You can learn more about individuals, communities, interest groups and more easily identify individual influencers who can amplify your communications campaigns and pass on messages – or those who may challenge you.

With Salesforce you can keep citizens in the lowest-cost channels by making those channels highly usable, informative, and engaging – while at the same time improving citizen customer service in ways that are more human than ever before, and have a direct impact on their perception and trust in government.

Salesforce solutions for social media

Salesforce's social platforms can help you build conversations and create more valuable, satisfying 1:1 citizen journeys that span channels. They will help you to open up communication between yourself and your citizens, manage and maintain your social media assets, and analyse and identify citizen influencers. They include:

Salesforce Marketing Cloud

As the world's most powerful 1-to-1 digital marketing platform it helps you make the most of every citizen interaction – creating personalised, cross-channel citizen journeys that deliver exceptional brand experiences.

Social Studio

Helps you listen, analyse, engage, and publish across platforms. You can organise teams around a campaign, listen to and analyse the social community, plan your content calendar and monitor performance.

Social.com

Tap into premium placements and ensure citizens see important messages, Social.com can help you create, optimise and automate social ad campaigns through an easy to use, self-service solution.

Join in the citizen conversation with the help of Salesforce and drive better relationships, greater insight, and easier transformation

29%
of the public agree that their council is embracing technology opportunities

PwC, 'Local State We're In' 2014

"What should we be monitoring? What should we read up on? How can we make sure we're well-informed about what users want?"

Government Digital Service Jan 2015

1 OECD, Trust in Government
2 Ofcom, Adult Media Use 2015
3 Government Digital Service
4 Lithium Technologies Research
5 Kantar UK Insights, June 2015

Learn more about how Salesforce can help you succeed.

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