

Improving Customer Engagement In Social Media With Predictive Analytics



To capture more value from social media, companies are moving from listening to engaging. Predictive analytics can help businesses plan strategic responses across a wide spectrum of customers to maximize the value of their social media interactions.

Using techniques from data mining and text mining, predictive analytics lets you look at historical patterns and make predictions about future behavior for specific individuals. By taking customer data that you hold internally and adding what people have said and done, you can map out what people are likely to do and engage them accordingly.

Augmenting your social media efforts with predictive analytics

If you've got a social media game plan for monitoring feedback and engaging customers, consider adding predictive analytics to help you respond to customers in more proactive, targeted ways. As an example, by classifying sentiment in social media data and tying that to customer data, you can predict people who are likely to be favorable to your company and those who aren't. You can then target specific customers and prospects with special messages or offers.

Here's one way you can get started:

- 1 Capture 1,000 comments in the social media sites you monitor. You'll need to determine who to respond to, and how.
- 2 As it's not feasible to respond to all comments, you can use text mining to classify sentiment, and based on the results, follow a 3-pronged response strategy:
 - Offer thanks to positive comments - reinforce the relationship.
 - Ignore comments with negative sentiment below a certain threshold – in some cases, it's more effective to focus on more receptive customers.
 - For those in between, send an invitation to engage further via one-on-one social interaction with a support or sales representative. You can engage customers "in social" through networks such as Twitter, or direct them to your online email portal or phone bank.





- 3 Next, you'll want to measure the effectiveness of your response strategy. After planning your responses, test different messages (A/B testing) for each response type to gauge effectiveness, analyze and understand response rates, and refine your messaging. This testing will inform the engagement strategy you deploy going forward.

Deeper understanding, better engagement

Adding predictive analytics to your social media efforts lets you capture more value from what you're already doing – giving you the tools to play the social media game strategically. Ultimately, it can help you gain a deeper understanding of your customers to more effectively engage them, increasing retention and loyalty.

Predictive analytics also offers other exciting opportunities – for example, to target your most influential customers and stakeholders in social media with the help of the emerging field of social network analysis. We'll talk about more ways to apply predictive analytics in future articles and blog posts.

Let's talk...

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