

Compliments of Avaya,
the leaders in contact center

AVAYA

Social Media and the Contact Center

FOR
DUMMIES[®]

Avaya Custom Edition

**A Reference
for the
Rest of Us!**[®]

FREE eTips at dummies.com[®]

Increase the size
of your audience by
adding social media
to your contact center



Paul Dunay
with Colleen Totz Diamond

Social Media and the Contact Center

FOR
DUMMIES®

AVAYA CUSTOM EDITION

**by Paul Dunay, with
Colleen Totz Diamond**



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

These materials are the copyright of Wiley Publishing, Inc. and any dissemination, distribution, or unauthorized use is strictly prohibited.

Social Media and the Contact Center For Dummies®, Avaya Custom Edition

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
111 River Street
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

Copyright © 2010 by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

www.wiley.com

Published by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the Publisher. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at www.wiley.com/go/permissions.

Trademarks: Wiley, the Wiley Publishing logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Making Everything Easier, Dummies.com, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. Avaya and the Avaya logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Avaya, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHOR MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION WARRANTIES OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE ADVICE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR EVERY SITUATION. THIS WORK IS SOLD WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLISHER IS NOT ENGAGED IN RENDERING LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. IF PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED, THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL PERSON SHOULD BE SOUGHT. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. THE FACT THAT AN ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE IS REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK AS A CITATION AND/OR A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE AUTHOR OR THE PUBLISHER ENDORSES THE INFORMATION THE ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE MAY PROVIDE OR RECOMMENDATIONS IT MAY MAKE. FURTHER, READERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT INTERNET WEBSITES LISTED IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE CHANGED OR DISAPPEARED BETWEEN WHEN THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN AND WHEN IT IS READ.

ISBN: 978-0-470-65174-2

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



These materials are the copyright of Wiley Publishing, Inc. and any dissemination, distribution, or unauthorized use is strictly prohibited.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Understanding the Social Media Landscape	5
Getting to Know Social Media	6
Working with Microblogs.....	9
Working with Social Networks	11
Working with Blogs.....	13
Providing Customer Support with Forums.....	14
Creating a Community.....	15
Chapter 2: Monitoring and Spotting Customer Issues	17
Understanding Listening Platforms.....	17
Choosing a Listening Platform That's Right for You	23
Understanding the Types of Conversations	24
Chapter 3: Creating a Work Distribution System.	27
The Secret Sauce: The Work Distribution System.....	28
The Avaya Solution.....	29
Testing the System	33
Engaging in Conversations	34
Measuring Results.....	35
Analyzing Where Conversations Are Happening	37
Optimizing Contact Center Performance.....	38
Chapter 4: Ten Reasons to Turn to Avaya for Help . . .	39
Avaya Offers a Complete Solution	39
Strategic Communications Consulting.....	40
Developing World-Class Products	40
Trusted and Tested Benchmarks.....	41
Fast Integration with Popular Listening Platforms	42
Partnerships	42
Thought Leaders Who Know Social Media.....	43
We Know Contact Centers	44
Trusted Brand Name	44
J.D. Power and Associates Recognized	44

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our online registration form located at www.dummies.com/register/. For details on how to create a custom *For Dummies* book for your business or organization, contact bizdev@wiley.com. For information about licensing the *For Dummies* brand for products or services, contact BrandedRights&Licenses@Wiley.com.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

Acquisitions, Editorial, and Media Development

Senior Project Editor: Zoë Wykes

Editorial Manager: Rev Mengle

Business Development Representative:
Susan Blessing

Custom Publishing Project Specialist:
Michael Sullivan

Production

Senior Project Coordinator: Kristie Rees

Layout and Graphics: Wiley Indianapolis
Composition Services

Proofreaders: Wiley Indianapolis
Composition Services

Special Help from Avaya: Laura Bassett,
Jorge Blanco, Ajay Kapoor,
Marshall Reed, David Skiba

Publishing and Editorial for Technology Dummies

Richard Swadley, Vice President and Executive Group Publisher

Andy Cummings, Vice President and Publisher

Mary Bednarek, Executive Director, Acquisitions

Mary C. Corder, Editorial Director

Publishing for Consumer Dummies

Diane Graves Steele, Vice President and Publisher

Kristin A. Ferguson-Wagstaffe, Product Development Director

Composition Services

Debbie Stailey, Director of Composition Services

Introduction



Avaya is the industry leader in global business communication systems and market share leader in contact centers. Its solutions help organizations of all sizes, from small and medium enterprise to Fortune 500, grow their businesses to accommodate changing market demands in efficient, effective ways.

One of the biggest challenges for organizations today is managing the flow of information about their brands, products, and services that occurs in social media channels, including microblogs (such as Twitter), social networking sites (such as Facebook), blogs, and online forums.

More than ever, consumers use social media to spread the word about the brands they like and perhaps more importantly, don't like. With the introduction of each new media channel, the landscape changes, often dramatically, and organizations need to adjust quickly to stay ahead of the curve. To help achieve that goal, organizations now adopt formal processes that structure how their contact centers organize, distribute, and analyze the information they collect from many channels.

Avaya provides the tools you need to structure your contact center's process and effectively collect, organize, and distribute social media information within your organization. The result is faster turnaround on customer complaints, and increased responsiveness to customer needs.

About This Book

Social Media and the Contact Center For Dummies, Avaya Custom Edition, helps you to grasp the opportunities and challenges of working within the new social media market landscape. This book describes the commercial tools, as well as some free ones, that organizations use to manage the massive stream of information they collect from the various social media channels.

Avaya offers many tips, ideas, tools, and services to get you up and running in the new social media market landscape. This book describes those tools and offers some general direction on how to put them to use.

With the landscape changing so rapidly on an ongoing basis, you need to be able to adjust on the fly pretty regularly to meet new demands. This book outlines Avaya's process that helps you to achieve the flexibility you need to make these adjustments and survive — and thrive — in this exciting new market.

Foolish Assumptions

Organizations that operate contact centers stand to benefit the most by using social media tools. Using the right social media tools in the right way helps contact centers improve communication and interaction with customers, expanding their reach and performance. It's also the single best place to realize ROI on social media since providing superior service to your customers is always less costly than acquiring new customers.

This book assumes that your organization has a contact center and is interested in understanding how it can manage information being routed to it from social media channels.

How This Book Is Organized

This book contains four chapters. Each chapter describes a different aspect of managing your organization's response to consumer demands in a social-media-driven market.

Chapter 1: Understanding the Social Media Landscape

In this chapter, you get to know social media and how it helps define the new market landscape. The chapter covers how to highlight and monitor information with Twitter, market your business through Facebook, and communicate with your customers through blogs and forums. Most important, perhaps, you see how to establish a productive online community that supports your organization's reputation.

Chapter 2: Monitoring and Spotting Customer Issues

This chapter provides an overview of the products available to help you get a sense of the online “buzz” around your brand’s products or services. It discusses how to select the right listening platform for your needs, and talks about some ways to monitor the tone of consumers as they congregate online to pass along the word about your organization’s offerings.

Chapter 3: Creating a Work Distribution System

This chapter explains how a work distribution system, or method of distributing information to your contact center representatives, works. The chapter outlines the steps required to test the system and integrate it into your contact center. You get examples of how to measure the results of your efforts, and a full explanation of how to use Avaya’s tools to identify where the buzz is happening. The information in this chapter helps you to improve your contact center’s performance and maximize the benefits of working with social media.

Chapter 4: Ten Reasons to Turn to Avaya for Help

This chapter details ten important reasons why Avaya provides the right solution to help you integrate social media into your contact center’s mission and purpose.

Icons Used in This Book

This book includes the following icons to help you find your way more easily through the text.



Don’t forget the information marked with the Remember icon! If you do, however, you can always flip through the book and find the information again by looking for the icons.



The Tip icon marks hints to help you more seamlessly integrate social media with your contact center's daily operations.



The Warning icon indicates pitfalls that you may encounter when navigating the social media landscape. Pay attention to the information marked with this icon, and you will save yourself headaches down the road.

Chapter 1

Understanding the Social Media Landscape

.....

In This Chapter

- ▶ Getting to know social media
 - ▶ Highlighting and monitoring information with Twitter
 - ▶ Meeting all your social media needs with Facebook
 - ▶ Communicating with your customers through blogs and comments
 - ▶ Providing assistance and tracking customer feedback with forums
 - ▶ Establishing a productive community
-

Hardly a day goes by that we don't hear about a marketer who is trying to understand and reap the full benefit of social media. Every company wants — and *should want* — to use these technologies to connect with their customers and prospects.

Companies that operate contact centers stand to benefit the most by using social media tools. Using the right social media tools in the right way helps contact centers to improve communication and interaction with customers, expanding their reach and performance. Best of all, the contact center is also the single best place to realize ROI on social media — providing superior service to your customers is always less costly than acquiring new customers.

This chapter gives the rundown on the various social media tools available and the benefits of using them with your contact center.

Getting to Know Social Media

Social media refers to content created, shared, and consumed by regular people with each other. Social media, part of the famed Web 2.0, represents in large part the landscape where you and your customers will interact in the future, if you're not doing so already.

Social media comes in a few flavors, and you can use each type in different ways. Here are four major types of social media along with strategies for how to get the most from using them with your contact center:

- ✓ **Blogs** spread your voice and create discussions with an audience.
- ✓ **Forums** provide help for customers and allow customers to help others.
- ✓ **Microblogs** highlight conversations and share quick bits of information — can also be used to monitor for important discussions.
- ✓ **Social Networks** serve as the social media hub of everything a member of the network wants to share from news, events, videos, surveys, polls, and creating community around discussions.

Businesses and their customers are hopping onto the social media bandwagon and realizing great rewards for doing so. Cone Inc.'s Social Media in Business study found that 60 percent of consumers believe they are already interacting with companies on the social Web. Nearly all participants — 93 percent — believe all companies should have a presence in social media. And 85 percent believe companies should not just present information via social media, but use it to interact and become more engaged with them.

The payoff for such engagement is evident in the 53 percent who already say they have developed a stronger connection to a brand through social media encounters. Further proof of social media's growing pervasiveness and influence is found in a recent Nielsen Study of Social Networks, which reveals that social network usage now exceeds that of e-mail.



Parts of the market don't use e-mail as their primary communication tool — they just use their social network to communicate!

Putting social media to work for you

Customer support is an obvious place for many companies to begin building a social media business case. Natural communities form around virtually any product or service, from shoes and clothing, to airlines and automobiles, to computers and communications systems.

When customers have something to say about a brand, they expect the company to listen and respond, especially when it comes to customer service issues. Increasingly, those customers are airing their comments and, more importantly, their complaints through social media.

Companies can realize both “soft” and “hard” benefits by engaging with customers through social media.

On the soft side, responding and reaching out to customers in a virtual location gives them a sense of empowerment. They feel the company is listening, understands them, and cares enough about their preferences to interact with them in the way they want, making them less likely to switch brands because they know someone is personally engaged with them.

Social media engagement also delivers bottom-line benefits. Enabling customers to communicate with the company, and each other, can actually lower support costs. Computer maker Dell, Inc., was able to reduce the number of moderators in its support forums from 30 to 5 because community members began moderating and helping one another.



People use social media for just about any online activity, from searching for something, to connecting with people of like interests, to watching and interacting with your favorite TV show. We're not far from the day when you'll use Facebook instead of a text message to vote someone off a TV show.

Growth rates

If you want to know where you'll get the most bang for your efforts, you need to monitor the growth rates of the various social media sites. Here are the growth rates for the two biggies, Facebook and Twitter:

- ✓ **Facebook.** As of February 2010, social media giant Facebook had 400 million users, up from 175 million in February 2009, half of which are engaged on Facebook every day spending a total of 5 billion minutes per day on the platform. People 35 years old and older represent the fastest-growing demographic for the Facebook market. Any way you slice it, 400 million users is not a market you want to pass up. This is where you'll find your customers.
- ✓ **Twitter.** Nielson reports that Twitter, the popular microblogging site, has grown 1,382 percent or more (depending on whether you factor in mobile phone usage) between February 2009 and February 2010 to a grand total of 75 million users thus far and growing.

Knowing the demographics

Social media provides a great opportunity for both business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) marketers to get the word out about their product or organization.

Benefits for business-to-consumer marketers

Business-to-consumer (B2C) marketers were quick to realize the value of social media as a branding opportunity. Entertainment companies — such as movie studios, book publishers, and music labels — were among the initial advertisers on Facebook, for example, and remain among those that continue to have a major presence.



The best campaigns give people a reason to participate. Whether it's sharing hilarious pictures of Peeps in compromising situations or debating the benefits of salt and bacon as an essential part of a diet, consumer-facing businesses are interacting with their customers in entirely new ways because of social media.

Benefits for business-to-business marketers

Consumer marketers aren't the only ones to benefit by having a social media presence. Many B2B (business-to-business) marketers are tapping into the business appeal of social networks such as Facebook by reaching out to their customer base where they live and play. From accounting firms like Ernst & Young, who launched a targeted recruitment advertising campaign to attract recent CPA graduates, to technology management consultancy BearingPoint, who sponsored a contest for the best "Green Enterprise" idea, B2B marketers are leveraging community-oriented tools in exciting ways.



Many of the same benefits that B2C marketers enjoy on the social media circuit apply to the B2B world. From community-building to providing a customer feedback loop to search-engine positioning, social media helps build relationships regardless of whether an organization is selling to businesses or individuals.

Working with Microblogs

There are many microblog platforms out there like Plurk, Identi.ca, and Twitter, but the grandfather of microblogging is Twitter (www.twitter.com). *Microblogging* is a social media tool for exchanging ideas and information, and for staying in touch with people, businesses, and organizations. You can access microblogs from your computer or your mobile phone, which has really helped accelerate their adoption.

Microblogs have one central feature: They let users instantly post entries of 140 characters or less. In Twitter, microblog posts are called *tweets*. Figure 1-1 shows an example of a tweet.

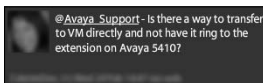


Figure 1-1: Example of a tweet.

Case studies: Who's using Twitter?

Sixty-seven percent of the Fortune 100 uses Twitter for direct-response customer service. Here are just two success stories:

✓ **Comcast.** Sees between 5,000 and 8,000 mentions of their name per week. Comcast successfully resolves hundreds of customer support issues by using Twitter. Because of their great customer service, their Twitter presence has grown to more than 25,000 followers.

✓ **Dell, Inc.** Sees between 28,000 and 30,000 mentions of their name per week. Dell resolves thousands of issues daily by

using Twitter. In addition, Dell Outlet is reporting \$6 million in sales of their refurbished items on Twitter.

The challenge, as you can imagine, is keeping up with all the conversations happening about your brand. Thank goodness names like Comcast or Dell are unique, unlike a name such as Windows or Apple, which have more volume and are harder to find the exact brand-related conversations. This is where Avaya comes in. We provide the tools to help keep you abreast of mentions of your business and allow you to manage and respond to the important ones with your contact center.



Your customers can use a microblog like Twitter to write *to* you — and talk *about* you. Managing all this information, processing and responding to it, has its challenges, since you can't control your customers and the things they say about you and your services or products. You must respond quickly and effectively to each customer communication. Chapter 2 covers the landscape of tools that can help you stay on top of tweets about your company and any conversations that result from them.



With microblogging, you can respond to your customers in near “real time,” and your responses are public to everyone who uses the microblogging software. Do a good job, and word will spread quickly.

Working with Social Networks

There are tons of social networks out there such as Ning, LinkedIn, Orkut, MySpace, and Facebook. But as far as social networking goes, Facebook is at the top of the heap.

A company can use Facebook to communicate company news, announce events, offer tutorials, highlight videos, conduct polls, and create community around discussions.

It all begins with the Facebook Page: an online location for businesses, organizations, and individuals looking to market themselves to the Facebook community. Every Facebook Page contains a *Wall*, a place where a business can have two-way conversations with its customers. In this way, Facebook provides a great feedback mechanism to learn about your customers' needs. Figure 1-2 shows the Avaya Facebook Wall.

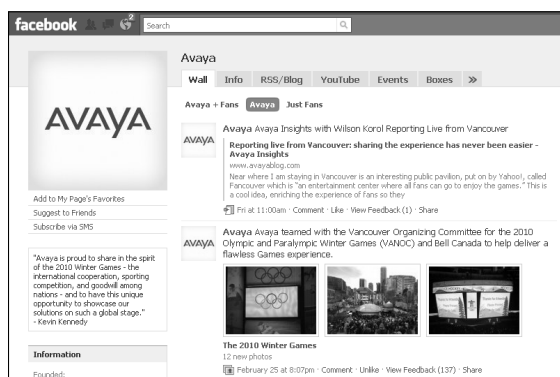


Figure 1-2: The Avaya Facebook Wall.

When you set up your Page, you need to have a strategy that involves starting a conversation. A good way to start a conversation, for example, is to solicit customers' input to decide on the best packaging label to use for a limited edition item available the next holiday season. A question like that gets customers talking not just with you, but with each other. Offering giveaways by asking questions — what's your favorite color of Skittles, for example — starts a conversation about the best colors of Skittles.

What's unique about Facebook (or any social network) is that it operates on real data, your customers' names, real e-mail addresses, real shared thoughts, tastes, and news. So expect to get feedback from your customers on your events, products, the accuracy of your information, and, most importantly, your customer service!

And — get this — you're not the only one who can initiate a conversation about your product! Within Facebook, surveys, groups, and status updates can circulate with the scoop on your performance as a company. Word travels fast out there, so you've got to be on your toes. (Don't worry — we've got you covered. Just keep reading.)



Search engines, such as Google, can find and index Facebook Pages, often improving a company's positioning in search results. This also means that all that great, or not so great, feedback on your hard work is available for anyone using the Internet.



Taking a closer look at Facebook

Facebook is the grandfather of social networking sites. Just in case you need some information to back up that assertion, check out these statistics:

- ✓ If Facebook were a country, it would be the third largest country, surpassing the United States (behind China and India).
- ✓ Facebook's user base is up to 400 million users (that's one-fourth of all Internet users on the planet).
- ✓ Facebook is growing at a pace that is *three times* as fast as the Internet.
- ✓ People 35 years old and older represent the fastest-growing demographic.
- ✓ 70 percent of Facebook users are outside the United States — a very impressive number!
- ✓ Facebook users upload 2 billion photos each month (making Facebook the largest photo-sharing site). That's 750 photos per second.
- ✓ 14 million videos are added to the site each month, making it the second largest video-sharing site behind YouTube.
- ✓ Facebook users upload 8 billion pieces of information every month (such as Web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, and photos).
- ✓ 45 million status updates are added to the site every day.

- ✓ Facebook users create 2.5 million events each month.
- ✓ 45 million active user groups exist on Facebook.
- ✓ Facebook is home to 350 thousand applications and 1 million developers.
- ✓ The average Facebook user views 662 Facebook Pages per month.
- ✓ 175 million people log in to Facebook and spend 5 to 8 billion minutes per day (25 to 45 minutes average) on the site.
- ✓ According to Alexa.com, Facebook is the second largest site on the Web behind Google and surpassing Yahoo.

Working with Blogs

Blogs are online journals where you can post articles, however brief or lengthy, to showcase your perspective, culture, and personality. Most blogs have a single unified theme, such as to educate readers about a particular topic relevant to your business. As an example, Figure 1-3 shows the Avaya blog.

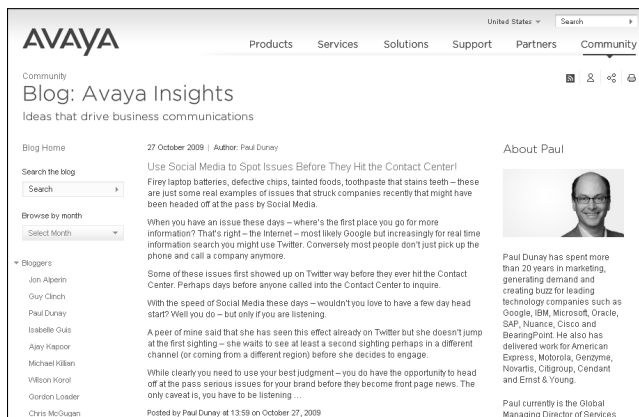


Figure 1-3: Avaya's blog.



Blogs can be written by multiple writers. Each writer can have a different area of focus, creating different “channels” of interest. For example, on the Avaya blog, we have many writers who cover many areas of interest, from tools that help small businesses, to the latest in global communications trends.

Once articles, or *blog posts*, are created (or posted), the stage is set for readers to weigh in with comments and questions about your articles. One best practice here is to respond to every reader comment in a helpful and timely way.



As a general rule we recommend that no comment should sit in the queue for longer than one business day.

Providing Customer Support with Forums

Forums serve as a help desk function, providing product support for customers, as well as a place for customers to help one another. Forums typically list a variety of topics based on the product or service. Forum administrators hop into reader discussions and address forum users’ questions and concerns in a timely and comprehensive manner. Figure 1-4 shows an Avaya forum.

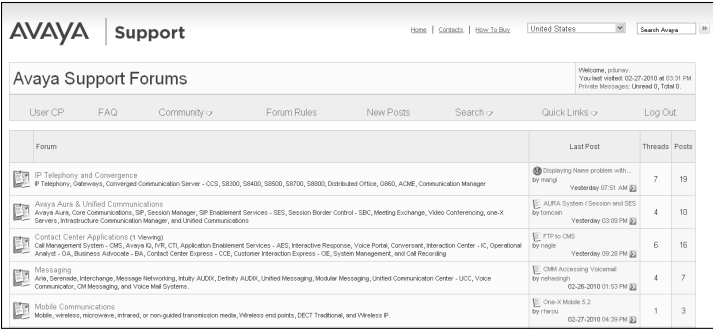


Figure 1-4: An Avaya forum.



Forums are an excellent way to track customer feedback. When you show that you are responsive to your customers, and when customers help other customers, a community forms around your product or service. The next section covers online communities.

Creating a Community

When you use multiple social media channels effectively, you quickly form a community around your product, service, or corporate brand. But creating a positive community takes work. You must show that you are responsive to your customers and effective at meeting their needs across many of the channels we outline earlier.

For example, you don't want to let comments sit on your Facebook Page unattended for more than a couple of hours, and Twitter requires near-immediate feedback. Trust us — if you are responsive, word will spread fast, and you'll grow your “virtual” community fast.

Forums are one of the easiest places to create a positive community, because you can exercise the greatest control on the information posted in that format. But what about the communities you don't create? Conversations may spring up on Twitter that you have no control over; you need to be on your toes, ready to find these conversations and manage them as best you can.

The real magic of an online community kicks in when you can help customers across a variety of channels with your contact center.

Chapter 2

Monitoring and Spotting Customer Issues

.....

In This Chapter

- ▶ Knowing the available listening platforms
 - ▶ Selecting the right listening platform
 - ▶ Using a listening platform to listen to online “buzz”
 - ▶ Monitoring customer sentiment
-

Consumers are now engaged in more forms of social media than ever before: They discuss, recommend, and disparage brands to their broader peer networks. This groundswell of social activity is both a blessing and a curse; it gives you invaluable feedback to become more effective and closer to your customer, but it also takes time to be sure you participate in the right conversations.

If you are to survive and thrive in this connected world, you must mine — not just monitor — these conversations to respond and glean insights that will inform your future strategy.

This chapter provides an overview of the products available, as well as some general guidelines for how to use them, to help you make sense of the online “buzz” around your brand, products, and services.

Understanding Listening Platforms

Working with social media is more than just connecting, networking, and broadcasting. You also have to *listen*, or collect and analyze data circulating in social media outlets

about your brand, product, or services, so that you know where and how you can improve your reputation.



Conversations will inevitably happen with or without your involvement, so even if you're not active in social media, it doesn't mean that you aren't being talked about. You must monitor and *mine*, or actively collect, the information that is being spread about your brand, products, or services.

Many products are available to help you gather and analyze data being shared online about your organization's offerings. This section gives the rundown on some of the best.

Networked Insights

The Networked Insights listening platform enables you to collect data, analyze it in meaningful ways, and then organize it to help you interpret what's being said online about your organization. Here are the details:

- ✓ **Data collection.** Each day, Network Insights collects text and comments (as well as the metadata about the site) from tens of thousands of forums and millions of blogs.
- ✓ **Analytical processing.**
 - **Intelligent analysis to discover meaning.** Networked Insights uses its own algorithm to understand the meaning and sentiment of text found in social media.
 - **Statistical analysis to produce information.** After the meaning behind the text has been established, Networked Insights performs Statistical Analysis to summarize it and provide the relevant context.
- ✓ **Information organization.** The information gathered by the analytical processing can be arranged by groups of posts around themes and keywords. For example, you can look at trending graphs, influence, engagement, keyword insight, verbatims (customer quotes/testimonials), sentiments (tone and mood), and thereby discover insights you would not be able to get from more traditional sources, such as a Focus Group.

Nielsen BuzzMetrics

Nielsen BuzzMetrics offers a good balance between technology, insight delivery, and strategy. It offers a strong analytical and insight capability, and has text-mining capabilities and strong strategy. Nielsen BuzzMetrics services and solutions uncover and integrate data-driven insights culled from nearly 100 million blogs, social networks, groups, boards, and other forms of social media.

BuzzMetrics services give you the tools to:

- ✓ **Understanding Your Customers.** “Listen” to unaided consumer conversations online to gain insights into your customers and understand how they perceive your products, brand, and services.
- ✓ **Brand Management.** Monitor and analyze how consumers discussing your brand online feel in their own words, and build solid brand advocacy programs based on these insights.
- ✓ **New Product Development.** Gain an unobstructed view into what consumers really think as you develop your product concepts and enhancements, and monitor product launches.
- ✓ **Campaign Tracking & Measurement.** Discover how your online and offline marketing campaigns resonate with consumers.

Radian6

The Radian6 listening platform allows you to view your data in an easily configurable dashboard. Radian6 provides a self-serve and near real-time platform for monitoring, measuring, and engaging in conversations online.

The Radian6 workflow model allows you to engage directly with the people creating the buzz online (the *influencers*), manage internal workflow, and tag conversations. Here are the three phases of their end-to-end solutions:

- ✓ **Listening.** Monitor mentions of your company, products, issues, and competitors in real-time.

- ✓ **Measuring.** Analyze buzz about your company, products, issues, competitors, and outcomes of specific marketing campaigns and social media investments. Analyze the sentiment on individual phrases surrounding your key-words on topics. Completed in real time.
- ✓ **Engaging.** Have an active dialogue with customers and tracking/ tagging comments for further use and then route assignments internally.

Salesforce.com

Salesforce.com is a new entrant to the field but offers some exciting promise. Since enterprise collaboration around social media is just emerging, Salesforce.com's Service Cloud was designed to leverage social media when it pertains to the customers and prospects of a given organization.

Salesforce.com can help you stay on top of everything that's happening in your company with real-time updates on your customers and prospects. You'll know more about what matters most to help you fuel better and faster business decisions.

The Salesforce.com platform is also a way to collaborate with people in your company around specific customers and prospects. It is both a collaboration application and a platform for connecting and sharing information securely and in real time.

TNS Media Cymfony

The Cymfony Maestro listening platform collects all forms of content, organizes and categorizes it, and provides an easy-to-use interface with data visualization and discovery features that allow you to gain insights from selected discussion most relevant to your brand.

Cymfony combines both social and traditional media, when understanding your brand presence in social media isn't enough. The Cymfony platform can help you to:

- ✓ Probe your market for unmet needs and objectives
- ✓ Interpret conversations happening across media
- ✓ Analyze the findings to answer questions that you specify
- ✓ Deliver recommendations through an interactive dialogue

Cymfony is a powerful tool that can be tailored to meet your exact market needs, making it an extremely versatile listening platform.

Trackur

Trackur's dashboard is sophisticated in its options, yet extremely easy to set up and use. You enter the keywords you want to track and refine the results with some simple filters. From there, Trackur searches the Web and comes back with the results you requested. Here are just a few things you can accomplish with Trackur:

- ✓ See at a glance the date published, source, title, and summary of each item.
- ✓ Quickly see what conversations are trending on the Web.
- ✓ Understand the influence and audience reach of those discussing your brand.
- ✓ View new items in your Trackur dashboard or have them sent to you by e-mail or RSS feed.
- ✓ Tag discovered items with a positive, negative, or neutral sentiment. Keep track of who's saying positive things about you and who's attacking your reputation.
- ✓ Group searches by client profile, export to CSV (comma separated values), bookmark items, and keep notes on conversations.

Visible Technologies

Visible Technologies offers the TruCAST SUITE, a suite of products that function as a complete listening platform solution. With TruCAST, you can listen, analyze, and engage customers — all important ways to manage your brand online. The TruCAST SUITE includes

- ✓ **TruPULSE.** Using TruPULSE, you can quickly and easily begin listening and assessing questions about your brand, products, or services. TruPULSE helps you to identify the following:
 - Whether anyone online is actually having conversations about your brand, products, or service

- Whether what's being said is good, bad, or indifferent
 - Whether the people talking are influential, and where they tend to congregate
- ✓ **TruVOICE.** Using TruVOICE, you can understand what is being said about your organization's brand, products, and services online. With TruVOICE, you can actively participate in discussions about your organization and target the information you disseminate, ensuring that it appears in front of the right people at the right time.
- ✓ **TruSEARCH.** TruSEARCH is an advanced search tool that puts you in contact with the most relevant information about your organization being passed around the Internet.
- ✓ **TruINSIGHT.** TruINSIGHT helps you to make sense of the large volume of information about your organization that you cull from the Internet.
- ✓ **TruREPUTATION.** Using TruREPUTATION, you can ensure that your organization is represented accurately to people searching the Web for information about you.

Other free tools on the market

You can find a number of tools on the Web to help with your social media monitoring. Check out some of these free tools to help you with your listening objectives:

- ✓ **Backtype** (www.backtype.com) is an ideal tool for monitoring comments on blogs, although it also searches other social media sites.
- ✓ **Boardtracker** (<http://boardtracker.com>) helps monitor conversations happening on forums.
- ✓ **Google Alerts** (www.google.com/alerts) allows you to set an alert for a particular company or topic. Convert the alert into an RSS feed and monitor with any free feedreader such as Google Reader.
- ✓ **Google Blog Search** (<http://blogsearch.google.com>) helps you find blog authors who discuss your brand.
- ✓ **Social Mention** (www.socialmention.com) searches blogs, microblogs, forums, comments, video, and more.
- ✓ **TweetDeck** (www.tweetdeck.com) is a leading Web-based application for real-time responses to Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and MySpace.

- ✓ **Techorati** (<http://technorati.com>) provides blog search on a given topic and can be converted into an RSS feed, which can be monitored with any free feedreader.
- ✓ **Twitter search** (www.search.twitter.com) allows you to search by keyword and monitor recent tweets.



You can find social search tools available on almost every popular social site. Explore a bit, and you'll find them.



Password-protected social networks such as Ning, or private communities like Comunispace communities, are not indexable by search engines and therefore won't be part of any results from any listening platform.

Choosing a Listening Platform That's Right for You

The growing number of listening platform vendors and the accompanying hype make it difficult to figure out the best solution to meet your needs. Following are five questions and answers to consider when choosing a listening platform:

✓ **What are the goals of the listening platform?**

Because listening platforms have so many uses, you must match their objectives to a vendor's strengths. For example, if your focus is on matching your segmentation using social media, you should seek out vendors that specialize in analysis or have strong clustering approaches. On the other hand, if you seek alternatives to traditional market research, then you need a vendor that specializes in sentiment capture and community analysis.

✓ **Which media sources are relevant to your goals?**

All listening platforms collect data from numerous online sources — news sites, blogs, and other Web sites. But some specialize in social media sources like Twitter, review sites, and even communities; others have the ability to cover offline media such as print, television, and radio. If you are focused on market research, or messaging effectiveness then you should work with a vendor that tracks social media and user-generated sources. For true 360-degree brand tracking, you may

require a vendor that also integrates offline sources such as print or television.

✓ **What technology will you need to support your listening goals?**

If you are focused on crisis management or consumer engagement, you need data collection solutions built on continuous data capture, but if you are seeking more episodic or campaign analysis, you can settle for a platform that collects data at regularly scheduled times. For multi national brands you may also want to evaluate each technology based on support for multiple languages.

✓ **How much time and money can the team commit to the listening platform?**

The amount of time you need to commit to listening depends largely on the output — dashboards, reports, and digests — from the listening platforms. For example, dashboards require a good deal of time to set up but provide customized data on command; reports save time but still necessitate that you (or your department) spend time interpreting the reports and defining a follow-up strategy.

Cheaper solutions might require more human support than expensive ones.

✓ **How prepared are you to use a listening platform?**

You must realize that choosing a listening platform is only a first step — listening without implementing any of the results is wasted time, effort, and money.



Understanding the Types of Conversations

Word spreads quickly online — sometimes more quickly than you can keep up with it. You must keep a constant eye on mentions of your brand, products, or services in order to survive this market landscape. Following is a list of some things you may recognize as you monitor the social media buzz around your organization's brand, products, or services:

- ✓ **The Compliment.** Compliments come in many forms. They can be congratulatory messages about a recent award, or a customer raving about the experience she's just had

with your product or with customer service. Social media compliments are the online equivalent of references or testimonials, and they deserve your attention. You can also begin to think about how to harness these sources long term by creating an advocate program around them.

- ✔ **The Complaint.** Watch for posts complaining about your products or services, company, and staff. Catching something early means getting a chance to respond and demonstrate your problem-solving abilities. A posted complaint may also draw out other similar customer experiences, which provides an opportunity to reach out to them as well. And who knows, impressing customers with great customer service may also generate some positive posts about how you resolved their problems.
- ✔ **The Expressed Need.** The best way to watch for expressed needs is to look for keywords often used to describe those needs. People make known what they are doing and often ask the general public for advice when they are about to make a purchase. Both of these situations provide an opportunity to reach out with an offer of assistance, information, or even a free demo or sample. People appreciate when a company listens, and they don't mind offers of assistance, especially when done in a helpful, friendly way.
- ✔ **The Competitor.** Knowing when a competitor's name is mentioned can highlight opportunities to reach out to a potential customer who is dissatisfied with that competitor's product or service. You may also discover which industry players are advocates for competitive brands, giving you the opportunity to reach out and gauge their interest in your offerings. Competitors often talk about subjects they are strategically interested in. Being able to stay on top of those discussions allows you to anticipate future moves by your competitors.
- ✔ **The Crowd.** Topics often pop up online that draw huge crowds. You can learn a lot from these discussions, especially when they have the potential to affect your brand. Following the crowd can give you a better understanding of current sentiment about a certain topic or product feature that you may need to keep tabs on. Tracking how quickly word spreads about the topic (its "viral" nature) and how long it generates buzz can give you an idea of its relative importance, and opportunities to join the conversation at its peak.

- ✓ **The Influencer.** Influencers gain their power from how frequently they post on a topic, the number of people who link to their posts, the number of people gathering to comment, and how engaged visitors to their posts become. An influencer's audience helps to spread opinions on a brand faster, and those opinions can have greater impact. Often an influencer's post appears prominently in a topic's Google (or other search engine) results where even more potential customers will see it. Knowing who these influencers are and understanding their opinions of your brands can help you to connect with them, or to understand why they currently hold a negative view.
- ✓ **The Campaign.** To measure engagement and ROI of a campaign, track all mentions of it in user-generated content before, during, and after the campaign. Isolate positive words associated with a particular brand and gauge the number of times they were used over a period of time. Alternatively, you could sort all posts mentioning a particular campaign or topic by number of comments or views to uncover the top 50 discussions where engagement was the highest.
- ✓ **The Crisis.** Discussions happening in social media can serve as an early warning system. By using advanced tools, you can observe new words — especially negative ones — appearing more frequently around your brands, and guide you to the posts where they appear. Tracking the instance of “crisis” words over time can help you spot issues before they hit your contact center.
- ✓ **The Thread.** With so many social media channels, conversations often become splintered. A discussion can start on one site and quickly leap into another making it difficult to follow. Following discussions by using important keywords to your company can help bridge the thread across all types of social media, connecting the conversation for easy analysis.



Your customers, prospects, and peers are discussing your brand, your industry, and your competitors right now in social media: with or without you. Listen, pinpoint the buzz, and participate in the conversation.

Armed with this information, you can create a strategy to respond and reinforce your organization's reputation — a topic that's covered in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Creating a Work Distribution System

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding how a work distribution system works
- ▶ Recognizing the importance of testing the system
- ▶ Integrating social media into your contact center
- ▶ Measuring the results of your efforts
- ▶ Knowing where the buzz is happening
- ▶ Improving your contact center's performance
- ▶ Maximizing the benefits of working with social media

Integrating social media into your contact center's mission and operations requires that you give your immediate attention to tweets, blog posts, fan page comments, and other channels. News spreads fast through these channels, and that news can be good, bad, or indifferent. The contact center naturally operates as "command central" to monitor, evaluate, respond to, and begin building relationships with both fans and detractors who are using social channels to voice their concerns and opinions.

If you acknowledge the need to integrate social media into your contact center operations but struggle to make it happen, you're not alone. Ninety-six percent of the organizations polled in an Avaya survey conducted by *Call Center Magazine* reported that they have not yet fully integrated social media into the contact center. Instead, they have had to establish separate, dedicated teams to handle social media. Creating a separate team duplicates efforts; it is inefficient and, most importantly, cost-intensive.

In this chapter, we outline the Avaya solution for creating and integrating social media into your contact center. You also get some hints for how to get the most from the system once you have it in place.

The Secret Sauce: The Work Distribution System

Combustible laptop batteries. Defective computer chips. Car brake failures. Tainted foods. Teeth-staining toothpaste. These real-world product problems, all of which have occurred recently, might have been handled better by the companies involved had they listened carefully to social media, sifting through it for the most important items and feeding those items to a contact center for attention.

Using any of the popular listening tools outlined in Chapter 2 will deliver you a feed of social media information about your company. Social media is like a river of information with conversations constantly flowing from tributaries, including Twitter, blogs, Facebook, YouTube, and Web sites. The goal is for social media to become another stream into the contact center, being routed seamlessly to the right agent based on content, customer segmentation, and technical considerations.

The following sections outline how to put a work distribution system in place. The rest of this chapter describes how to use the system to its full benefit.

Components of a work distribution system

Distributing social media work into the contact center in an intelligent way dramatically simplifies your contact center environment by removing key activities from your marketing and communications teams. It also expands your options for dealing intelligently with callers on your contact center platform. This streamlined environment makes more efficient use of your high-dollar contact center systems, while putting greater emphasis on systems that cost less — lowering your overall total cost of ownership!

A six-stage process

Designing a system to distribute work into the contact center is a six-stage process:

- ✓ *Gathering* information from the different social media streams, such as Tweets, blog posts, and other communications.
- ✓ *Sifting* through the various social media feeds to identify important items that merit further attention. For example, “my WizBang product isn’t working, and I can’t figure out what’s wrong with it — can you help?”
- ✓ *Integrating* social media into the activity stream that is going into the contact center to enable responding to tweets, blogs, posts on forums, comments, and so on. Your goal is to turn social media into a standard form of media that contains the “verbatim” information and the exact location of the item so that any contact center agent can work with it and respond instantly.
- ✓ *Matching* the item to the right contact center agent who can provide resolution action in the most appropriate, efficient manner possible.
- ✓ *Measuring* the effectiveness of social media activity, both in terms of customer responses and satisfaction.
- ✓ *Improving* your agents’ social media knowledge and the flow of operations continuously.



Each company has their own processes for responding with the contact center. The trick is to leverage the existing process with this new flow of information to get the best results. Avaya has patented predictive algorithms that can help you match agents and keep workflows level.

The Avaya Solution

Avaya provides solutions that help you quickly collect social media information from all the various social media channels at once. The work distribution system then processes and delivers that information to the right contact center representative in a timely way. When this whole process is complete, you can revisit the information you have on file and analyze it to

see how you can improve and optimize your work distribution system and contact center's performance, as described later on in the sections "Analyzing Where the Conversations Are Happening" and "Optimizing Contact Center Performance."



You want to be sure that your contact center is able to offer a fast turnaround on customer requests and quickly field any other issues that crop up in any of the various social media channels. By getting the information to the person best suited to address the issue raised in the communication, you serve your customers more effectively, bolstering your brand reputation. It's a win-win.

Collecting information

With the number of social media channels you need to monitor, you may find collecting the information to be a daunting task. To help make things easy, Avaya uses a 3-tier monitoring system that includes the following:

- ✓ **TweetDeck.** Monitors Twitter feeds for mentions of organization names. We typically see 40 to 50 percent of social media mentions happening in microblogs.
- ✓ **Radian6.** Acts as a safety net to capture mentions of your organization beyond Twitter (on blogs, forums, and social networks such as Facebook). See Chapter 2.
- ✓ **Networked Insights.** Tracks mentions of specific product names and other competitive instances when the organization's name itself may not be included. Also discussed in Chapter 2.

These tools are terrific for collecting potentially important data. In addition to collecting data, however, you need to know which items are important, how they should be handled, and by whom. This is where a work distribution system, like Avaya's Customer Connections Social Media Manager, comes in.

Distributing the communication

Avaya Social Media Manager enables contact centers to analyze, process, track, and respond to relevant, actionable social media interactions. The Avaya Social Media Manager

gateway is the first component in the process. The gateway scans social media sites and third-party social media connections for social media interactions of interest, scanning a large number of relevant and non-relevant interactions. This large group of potential interactions is passed into the contact center by the gateway.

Customer-developed social media dialog applications receive the input stream from the gateway. These applications are written with Avaya contact center development tools, such as Dialog Designer, and make use of the Social Media Manager text-processing toolkit.

The toolkit provides Web service methods for performing social media processing and analysis. For example, a typical application:

- ✔ Uses the toolkit to process and analyze each social media interaction.
- ✔ Checks for spam at high levels, enabling quick processing of meaningless items.
- ✔ Performs a relevance analysis to determine whether the social media interaction is in the desired domain (airline, financial, travel, and so on).

Next, an application utilizes the toolkit to perform classification.

- ✔ The classification engine utilizes several statistical techniques and rules-based processing to classify the social media interaction (sales, service, competition, and so on).
- ✔ Additionally, the dialog application may perform any number of custom processing steps to implement customer business logic and fetch desired CRM data used in further processing. The resulting interactions are determined actionable.

Once a social media interaction is determined to be actionable, the dialog application processing begins.

- ✔ If the application determines that the interaction can be handled with an automated response, another dialog may be invoked to handle the auto response.

- ✓ If agent processing is required, the dialog application composes a social media work item. The work item is then queued for distributing to the next available agent with the skills required for the specific work item. Skills are typically determined based on language and agent classification.

Agents logged in to the contact center receive e-mail work items containing social media interactions.

- ✓ The agent desktop supports the display of HTML e-mail items.
- ✓ The social media work item contains the social media interaction, user information, analysis information, and the social media context of the posting user.
- ✓ The work item also has hyperlinks to assist the agent with reaching out to the user and with helping to reclassify or redirect the work item if the analysis proves incorrect.

Figure 3-1 gives you a look at our dashboard.

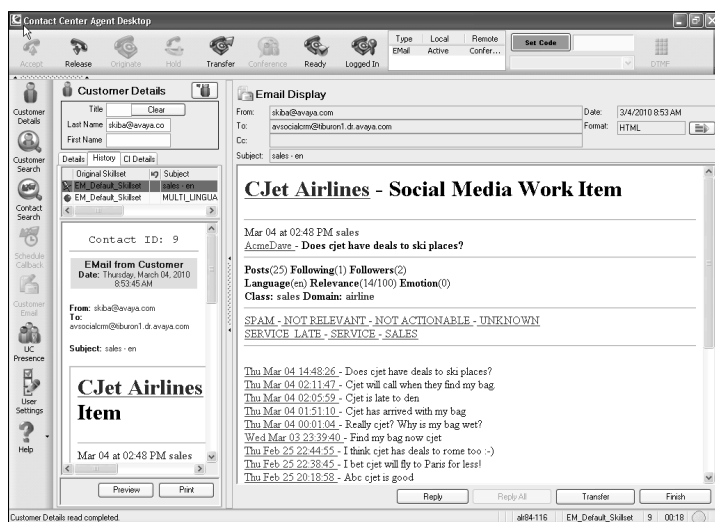


Figure 3-1: The Avaya dashboard.



Whatever the situation, avoid trying to automate responses to social media. Instead, each issue or query should be put in the hands of someone with the knowledge and authority to handle it.

Testing the System

Testing is essential to integrating social media into the contact center. Testing is conducted with a group of individuals drawn from the different skillsets in the contact center that have interest in or already have some social media skills.



You will need to provide training on social media and even create a policy or set of guidelines for responding with social media when you want to scale your approach beyond the test group.

Test sample issues to be sure they are distributed properly. Try an example of an issue that can be easily identified but possibly misrouted — like when a complaint arises with a laptop computer and is distributed to the laptop support group, when in reality the issue actually relates to Wi-Fi. Through the testing process, you can determine whether the proper group is receiving the proper issue and has enough data to resolve it or whether it needs to be distributed to another, more experienced group.

Here's how organizations typically run the testing process:

1. Test adequacy of responses.

This part of the testing process has two components:

- Determining whether the issue is basic enough so that you can actually close the issue quickly, or whether you need to move the issue to a more experienced agent immediately.
- Creating a standard-response vocabulary to support social media engagement. Since every interaction is different, you may want a standard library of responses, both good and bad, to show to the agent.

2. Review the workflow process.

An agent who gets a social media request goes through a workflow process, using the standard-response vocabulary and other tools. This is essentially a practice run, to make sure that the agent knows the workflow and the social media request is processed properly.

3. Determine what test group data you need to collect to conduct the analytics.

Do you just want the classic data that comes out of the agent workspace, or is there something new you want to collect from social media as a means of tracking the interactions differently?

After you complete the testing process, you can begin to integrate social media into the contact center. During this process, you must measure activity in real-time rather than on a weekly or monthly basis. Supervisor shadowing of social media interactions, combined with continual coaching, can smooth out various issues in the first weeks of implementation.



There is a fine line between being helpful and being intrusive when engaging social media. Also, it is considered poor form to use social media data that's brought to the contact center, such as Twitter and Facebook handles, for marketing purposes.

Engaging in Conversations

When you work with social media, you must think differently from the standard marketing approach of segmenting people by the usual audiences — customers, prospects, and employees. Any social media discussion of interest to your organization is likely to draw participants from these and other groups.

Because social media draws participants from several groups, you need to focus on conversations rather than audiences. The conversation topic can be a product or service, an industry or customer trend, or a technology innovation. Whatever the subject, multiple groups would likely weigh in, perhaps even your competitors. Listening to the market and engaging in the right conversations helps you to spot issues and opportunities as they arise, even before anyone contacts you otherwise.

An organization receiving social media mentions can assume that there's a core group of people talking about it. These commentators fall into two categories: advocates and influencers.

✓ **Advocates.** This group of commentators tweets, posts, and blogs about your organization and retweets your news. These commentators may deal directly with your

organization and rarely talk about other firms in your competitive space.

- ✓ **Influencers.** This group writes about both your organization and others. Influencers function as journalists rather than publicists, and warrant similar treatment to that given traditional reporters.

You can begin your outreach to influencers by following them on Twitter or becoming a Facebook Friend or Fan. Of particular interest are people who speak negatively about your organization. Engaging with them can have the positive effect of turning down the volume and intensity of their tirades because they know you're listening as well as changing the overall sentiment of the market.



The effect of becoming involved with social media is like that of turning on an old water faucet. When the flow begins, it's murky with the negative noise from detractors. But if you engage them, take the criticism, and make the effort to respond, the bad vibes begin to decrease dramatically.



Social media is a two-way street. Along with addressing what's being said about you, you can create greater trust and sense of community by being interested in what others are doing. For example, you can also circulate news generated by outsiders through retweeting, liking, or commenting on other people's content as a corporate user.

Measuring Results

Debate has swirled on Twitter and elsewhere over what metrics are meaningful and doable for social media. In the contact center world, metrics employed include *first-contact resolution* (a measure of agent performance) and *net promoter score* (an aggregate, or combined measure).

The question with social media is: are you striving for first-contact resolution or for something different? Possible metrics being tracked today include

- ✓ **Activity-Based Metrics.**

- **Number of mentions:** The number of times your company is mentioned on forms of social media

- **Number of comments:** The number of comments a given post receives, which is also known as the Conversational Index
- **Number of Followers or Fans:** The number of people following or fanning you on specific social media sites
- **Frequency of interactions:** The number of times you get involved versus the number of mentions

✓ **Contact Metrics.**

- **Number of contacts to resolution:** The number of interactions required to resolve a given inquiry
- **Quality of issue resolution:** The tone and sentiment of the interaction
- **Net Promoter Score:** How likely this interaction was to create an advocate for your organization

✓ **Customer Support.**

- **Customer satisfaction:** How satisfied customers are with their support
- **Time to Respond:** The time from a post until the Contact Center or designated owner responds
- **Number of support tickets:** The number of support tickets initiated because of social media inquiries
- **Support cost per customer using social media:** Time spent in aggregate across the agent base using social media for support

✓ **Marketing/Sales.**

- **Number of social prospects:** The number of prospects identified using social media
- **Number of leads/period:** How many of those prospects graduate to leads
- **Number of qualified leads/period:** How many of those prospects become qualified leads
- **Ratio of qualified to non-qualified leads:** The resulting ratio of leads to qualified leads
- **Cost of lead:** The cost per lead based on the time spent using social media and the number of leads

- **Time to qualified lead:** The average time a lead takes to become qualified from social media
- **Lead conversion:** The conversion rate of those leads to sales

All of these could be applied in a tiered framework to determine a rating — for example, average, better, best, and best in class performance using social media and the contact center. Avaya is working toward an industry standard benchmark for social media in the contact center.

Analyzing Where Conversations Are Happening

Using technologies like TweetDeck, Radian6, Networked Insights, or other listening platforms helps to find the conversations underway about your organization. You have to determine whether what's being said is important and requires your involvement.

There may be so many conversations happening about your organization that you need to prioritize. For example, some users may only have a limited number of followers and are likely less important to your organization than, say, an influencer with hundreds of followers. Knowing the metadata about a user is important to prioritizing your responses.

Typically, a mix of conversations is happening about any organization in microblogs, blogs, forums, and social networks. And the exact mix of those conversations depends on your individual organization and how often you respond.

Many companies tend to focus on Twitter because it usually has a high conversation volume for any organization. Also, because of the speed of communications on Twitter, many companies want the ability to immediately respond. However, it is important to maintain a monitoring safety net to capture conversations no matter where they're happening, especially on blogs and social networks and to a lesser extent in forums. This also gives you the ability to analyze where conversations about your organization are happening frequently, which can be useful for finding online advertising opportunities. If you identify several

sites with a large conversation volume about your organization, why not consider advertising in those spaces.



Twitter or any social media does not have an out-of-office or hours-of-operation feature. So be prepared to respond 24/7/365.

Optimizing Contact Center Performance

The growth of social media is a driving force in what Avaya is describing as the Next Generation Contact Center (NGCC). NGCC is a suite of capabilities that includes a multimedia, multichannel, and open core for work distribution, designed to incorporate all forms of content in a real-time, collaboration framework. NGCC and its work assignment engine are able to bring social media to the core of the contact center by leveraging the Avaya Social Media Manager.

It's important to recognize that the classic walls between who is a customer, versus who is a partner, versus who is a co-collaborator continue to erode. For example, in the next-generation world, a customer can be a collaborator in defining where a technology is heading. The NGCC also holds promise for synchronizing channels and responses. If someone unleashes a tirade on Twitter, the contact center representative fielding it likely won't understand the situation. In the NGCC, a special algorithm flags the item and directs it to a representative who previously dealt with and communicated with the individual. This algorithm provides context to the dialog and turns the Next Gen Contact Center into the Next Gen *Context* Center!

Among steps you can take to optimize your contact center is developing a best-in-class database of sample, customizable response content that an agent can tap for various situations. Avaya is working on a maturity model that can guide contact center organizations in their development of social media capabilities.



In running a social-media-enabled contact center, it is crucial to remember that a positive or negative experience can spread like wildfire, much faster than in a voice contact center. This makes continual coaching and feedback processes more critical than ever.

Chapter 4

Ten Reasons to Turn to Avaya for Help

In This Chapter

- Getting a handle on what Avaya has to offer

This chapter breaks down the Avaya solution into bite-sized chunks so that you can see what Avaya has to offer you.

Avaya Offers a Complete Solution

Avaya delivers open and flexible communication systems that transform the way you serve your customers. Using Avaya's contact center solutions, you can enhance the customer experience and increase the performance of your contact center.

Moreover, as the communications environment becomes more complex, our services help to ensure that customers get the most value out of their investment. These services:

- ✓ Provide knowledgeable advice to evolve technology
- ✓ Drive a communications strategy that creates competitive differentiation
- ✓ Smoothly integrate solutions into existing infrastructure
- ✓ Enable full realization of full product benefits to meet customer needs

Avaya solutions work equally well for organizations of all sizes, from small and medium enterprise to Fortune 500.

Strategic Communications Consulting

Avaya has more than a thousand experienced consultants who specialize in communications technologies. Avaya helps to solve business problems via discovery assessments, strategy development, planning, integration, and optimization either directly or with our business partner community.

We also provide roadmaps that are self-funding, helping you to pay for development with the money we save for you in rationalizing your architecture. In the end, what you receive is a detailed prescription for needed business improvements and something that is in alignment with the direction of your overarching business strategy.

Developing World-Class Products

Avaya is also innovating and introducing new products to connect users and groups with organizations.

Social networks typically require “friendship” to make a connection. Therefore, the user is forced to go outside the social network and fall back on old-fashioned communication paradigms for support.

Because of this shortcoming, Avaya has developed a widget for social networks, like Facebook, to deliver support from directly within a social network.

You can find the Avaya Customer Connections Social Media widget on a company’s Facebook Page, for example. Not only can the widget display availability and hours of operation, but it can also include the expected wait time for the next contact center agent.

The Avaya Customer Connections Social Media widget offers rich experience for user-to-contact center communications with intuitive menu-based interactions and an interface that allows users to make free-form requests.

It also offers automatic upload of user profile data from social networks like Facebook, as well as customer feedback to contact centers through star ratings and a comment box right inside the widget.

Trusted and Tested Benchmarks

Benchmarking compares a company's method, process, procedure, product, and service performance against the best practices of those companies that consistently distinguish themselves in the same measurement area. *Best practices* refer to standard, published operating methods found to produce the best performance and results in a given industry or organization.

In many companies the contact center is a critical and strategic component of the business operation. The performance of a contact center can influence a company's brand image, revenues, profitability, and competitiveness. Contact centers are also a significant expense for a company. Hence any improvement in efficiency, effectiveness, and performance of a contact center will have far-reaching impact on a business. Avaya's benchmarking compares your contact center practices against industry best practices and establishes a baseline for identifying and implementing the improvements.

Avaya's benchmarking helps you to:

- ✓ Expose improvement opportunities within the contact center
- ✓ Identify cost reduction areas
- ✓ Assess performance using objective and intelligent methods
- ✓ Establish methods for ongoing measuring of improvement initiatives and successes

Fast Integration with Popular Listening Platforms

Avaya is taking a very open approach to helping contact centers with their listening activity and integrating that activity within the contact center. We believe that most firms have or are in the process of installing some sort of listening platform.

In our experience, this activity is mostly driven by the marketing and communications group. Our research with *Call Center Magazine* has shown that 96 percent of contact centers are not integrating social media fully, but 69 percent of companies monitor some form of social media. So our goal is not to displace the existing monitoring system but to integrate with it.

Avaya has its own listening platforms in place that monitor for mentions of Avaya, and we have integrated our contact center with them as well. Let us show you how we can do this for your company. Contact your Avaya sales representative or Avaya business partner for a demonstration of our system and what it can do for you.

Partnerships

Avaya works in a way that enables the end customer to have a multi-vendor, best-of-breed approach to communications that integrates communications into specific environments depending on the end-customer's needs.

Avaya has a rich ecosystem of more than 10,000 business partners and numerous development partners that can leverage Avaya directly or co-deliver the best solution for every customer.

Because of this, Avaya maintains a *Competency Model*, which is a simple 4-tier structure that is comprehensive and scales to the abilities of different partners when it comes to co-delivery.

Avaya also maintains strict standards for ourselves and our partners to ensure the highest level of customer delivery and ongoing support, which enables your growth and protects your investment in the Avaya brand.

Thought Leaders Who Know Social Media

Contact centers have a long history of adapting to new channels like 800 numbers, faxes, e-mails, Web, Web self service, and chat, but social media adds as many if not more channels to the list such as forums, blogs, comments, microblogs, and social networks.

Avaya Professional Services for contact centers has a 4-step approach (based on our SCC methodology) to gaining traction with social media in the contact center.

1. Social assessment:

- What Social technologies do you have?
- What applications should we be considering?
- What are the likely departments for deployment?
- How is this technology likely to evolve?

2. Social strategy:

- Identify conversations.
- Define objectives.
- Define strategy for each technology.
- Build technical foundation.

3. Listening and distributing services:

- Build segmentation defined by conversations.
- Identify points of contacts for listening and engaging.
- Define work distribution strategy.
- Build and test.
- Refine.

4. Knowledge share and collaboration:

- Knowledge helps you determine which calls are good and which are bad — this saves ramp-up time for new agents.
- Collaboration allows comments and observations to be shared with discrete communities of interest.

We Know Contact Centers

Avaya is the market share leader in contact centers, with more than 57 percent of the market. A recent Gartner Research assessment described Avaya's Interaction Solutions, Performance Solutions, and Mid-Market Solutions as "forming a broad portfolio of fully-featured contact center infrastructure and applications, including call and multimedia distribution, an IVR/voice portal and outbound dialing."

Gartner recommends Avaya's contact center suite, which includes several best-of-breed applications, particularly when using, or considering using, Avaya telephony environments.

Trusted Brand Name

To get an idea of Avaya's market penetration, consider that 10 million business users leverage Avaya solutions every day. Avaya now has roughly 33 percent of the worldwide market share in the IP telephony market (IDC). More than 90 percent of Fortune 500 use Avaya communications. In fact, Avaya was the official supplier for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, the first all-IP converged network at the Olympic Games.

J.D. Power and Associates Recognized

Avaya has been recognized by J.D. Power and Associates for providing "An Outstanding Customer Service Experience." Avaya has been certified for two consecutive years and is among the top 20 percent of companies nationwide offering technology support. Avaya has reached the benchmark for satisfaction, verified through survey results and audit.

Certification includes core service and support, assisted support, non-assisted support (Web), and field support.



**Realize the full
communications potential
of social media!**

Integrate social media with existing systems and simplify your communications strategy

Social media is transforming the landscape of communications at a never-before-seen pace. Individuals are embracing this new channel and expecting to have a consistent experience with every company. This book shows you how to easily integrate social media into any large or small enterprise to improve the customer experience, increase productivity, and simplify communications.

Discover how to:

Leverage social media to streamline communications into your contact center

Use listening technologies to quickly find and respond to social media inquiries

Become a leader in your industry by embracing this new channel

Integrate social media with your contact center

**THE
DUMMIES
WAY**

*Explanations in plain English
"Get in, get out" information
Icons and other navigational aids
Top ten lists
A dash of humor and fun*

Get smart!
@ www.dummies.com

- ✓ Find listings of all our books
- ✓ Choose from many different subject categories
- ✓ Sign up for eTips at etips.dummies.com