

# ***Next Generation Writing Skills:***

Do Your Customer Service Agents  
Have the Chops to Write to  
Customers Via Facebook and  
Twitter?

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[@LeslieO](#)

Government Contact Center Conference

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“As a contact center manager, can I let *these* people write to customers in *these* channels?”



twitter



“NO!”

“Dear God, No!”

Why should contact center staff be the ones to communicate with customers via social media?

# A cautionary tale



- Sept 1 – first e-mail to AT&T to report problem
- Sept 2 – second e-mail to report problem
- Sept 3 – first attempt to phone AT&T
- Sept 6 – second attempt to phone At&T
- Sept 9 –



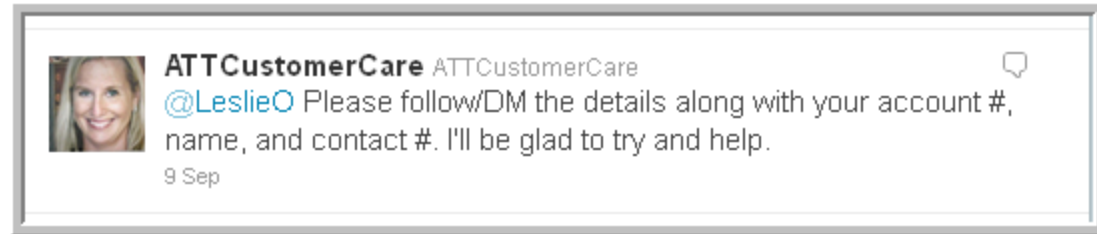
**LeslieO** LeslieO

[@ATTCustomerCare](#) From the last landline cust in the US (me) PLS answer my emails about noise on 9583. I'm about to go public with my beef.

9 Sep

# A cautionary tale, continued

- Sept 9 –



- Sept 10 -



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# A cautionary tale, continued

- Sept 10 – voice mail from “Brad” at AT&T
- Sept 11 – line quality miraculously improves
- Sept 12 – first Verizon repairman visits
- Sept 13 – second Verizon repairman visits
- Sept 14 – phone call with Brad in the Office of the President
  - Frontline agents don’t answer e-mails on the weekends
  - Social media complaints are answered by managers (marketing/PR)
  - The group that handles SM complaints is in the Office of the President
  - I have Brad’s cell phone and personal e-mail address

Why should contact center staff be the ones to communicate with customers via social media?



# Government uses social media to connect with customers in two different ways

- Broadcast – *push* – information
- Deliver service – *respond to questions*

# Using social media to broadcast information to government customers



**Federal Emergency Management Agency**  
(Sept 15) Our latest blog highlights ongoing recovery efforts in Connecticut following Hurricane Irene <http://go.usa.gov/OMG>

Disaster assistance is available for individuals and business owners in eight counties. To apply for assistance, visit <http://disasterassistance.gov/>, on your mobile phone at <http://m.fema.gov/>, or call 800-621-3362 /TTY 800-462-7585.

(15 sep) Nuestro blog más reciente resalta las labores continuas de recuperación en Connecticut después del Irene <http://go.usa.gov/0tr>



**FEMA Blog: Connecticut: Recovery Continues From Irene**  
[blog.fema.gov](http://blog.fema.gov)

While FEMA's operations have just moved into our Joint Field Office in Windsor, Ct., the team has already: - Opened nine disaster recovery centers, providing places for disaster survivors to...

Like · Comment · Share · 5 hours ago

19 people like this.



**CDCemergency** CDC Emergency

To ensure chainsaw safety, use the manual, wear protective gear, and never cut above your waist. [go.usa.gov/kuB](http://go.usa.gov/kuB) #chainsaw #irene

31 Aug

# Government uses Twitter to deliver service

13 Sep.



**SF311** SF311

@supertamsf Your request has been submitted to Animal Care and Control. Service Request # is 961503. ^ER

13 Sep



**SF311** SF311

@SSTNA To report an illegal business Please contact The Treasure Tax Collector @ 415-554-4400 Mon thru Fri 8am to 5pm^rr

13 Sep



**supertamsf** Tami Twarog

@sf311 Health hazard! Animal cruelty! LIVE frogs sitting in filth & feces. Sunset Super Irving btw 25th & 26th [twitpic.com/6kgw28](http://twitpic.com/6kgw28)

13 Sep



**SSTNA** South Silver Terrace

@SF311 Illegal car repair business operating out of a apartment block garage at Latona St & Thornton Ave

13 Sep

# Government uses Facebook to deliver service



## State of California Employment Development Department

The How to use the EDD Debit Card video on our YouTube page is now available in Spanish.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/CaliforniaEDD#p/u/1/H-88s-cbg2A>  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

 Like · Comment · Share · Monday at 4:17pm

 6 people like this.



**Samuel Stevenson** i submitted my claim form online three days ago and still nothing and when i call they can't tell me anything will somebody at edd please look into this i did it two weeks ago with no problems got my money the next day on my card please do your job Yesterday at 9:56am · Like



## State of California Employment Development Department

@Samual Stevenson: For questions about your individual claim, please contact EDD online at Ask EDD: <https://askedd.edd.ca.gov/asp/frmEDDCOMM.aspx>

### EDDCOMM (Ask EDD)

[askedd.edd.ca.gov](https://askedd.edd.ca.gov)

Important! Select the appropriate category from the list below. Otherwise it will delay the response.

Yesterday at 1:58pm · Like

Write a comment...

How do you know whether your customer service agents have the writing skills to communicate via social media?

Evaluate how well they do on  
their most common writing  
task: E-mail to customers

# Does this customer service agent have the writing skills to make the leap from e-mail to social media?

## **Customer's e-mail:**

My (permanent) Maryland disability placard expired in March. How do I go about renewing it? The number of my placard is 12345678. Thanks, Jane Doe

## **Customer service agent's response:**

JaneDoe,

In regards to your e-mail obtaining a current first-time update disable placard, one would need to complete a VR-123 ( can be down load from the web, under forms) and taken to any full service MVA office, Monday - Friday ,8:30 - 4:30 p.m. , ( If cannot get to the doctors, then the form will allow one 6 months to have the doctors to complete ( still will received a placard) If cannot come in , one may give nortize power of attorney.

Joe Farber, Customer Service

# Could this customer service agent make the leap?

## Customer's e-mail

Subject: Question about special garbage pick-up

Dear Solid Waste Services -

I recently completed the online request form for a special garbage pick-up. I have about 18 cans of old latex paint I want to get rid of. Do you pick up latex paint? Please confirm whether you will take this kind of garbage.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe



# Agent's e-mail response

**Subject: Confirmation of Special Collection no. 602556 pick up day Wednesday April 13th**

Ms. Doe -

Thank you for using our on line special request service. I have scheduled your special trash. Please have your materials at the curb prior to 7:00 a.m. on your day of collection. If you have both special trash and scrap metal to be picked up, you must separate it as two separate trucks collect the specials. The crew will only collect the items you indicated on your request for pick-up. Also, check our website for complete information on preparing items for collection. That information for a trash special can be found here: Sorry we do not collect paint, or wood you need to bring those items to the Transfer Station on RTE. 123 and Main Street.

[http://www.localgovt.govdpwt/solidwaste/trash/special\\_collections.asp](http://www.localgovt.govdpwt/solidwaste/trash/special_collections.asp)

Joan Meyer  
Division of Solid Waste Services  
joanmeyer@localgovt.gov

Which customer service writing skills cross over from e-mail to social media?

# To succeed in social media, customer service agents need these writing skills

## 1. Brevity

- Twitter = 140 characters
- Facebook = 420 characters

## 2. Quickness

- Facile writing skills
- Excellent keyboarding skills

## 3. Personality

- AVOID: “We appreciate your prompt response ...”
- WRITE: “Thanks for getting back to us ...”

## 4. Excellent critical reading skills

## 5. Ability to integrate information from other customer service channels and other sources

## 6. Comfortable online

# Which e-mail writing skills are less important in social media?

- Ability to use a well-crafted tone to manage a customer's reaction:
  - “We understand your disappointment and regret the inconvenience ...”
- Ability to give multi-step instructions
- Ability to write a well-constructed paragraph

# Questions? Comments?

# Contact info

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