



Making your marketing interactive

New Opportunities to Engage Customers with Live Chat

ABSTRACT

Companies around the world are using live chat to boost online sales, reduce customer service costs and increase customer satisfaction. Now, new developments in chat technology make it possible to extend chat beyond your web site to online advertising, email marketing, press releases and even social media. Learn how you can use rich media chat to leverage social media, and transform traditional one-way marketing campaigns into interactive conversations.

► This paper examines how online retailers can use a new hosted solution to harness the power of rich media audio, video and live chat to truly engage prospective customers, reducing confusion and increasing sales and service levels.

INTRODUCTION

When the internet crossed the billion-user threshold a few years ago, most businesses recognized the need to have a presence on the web. But companies quickly discovered that the power of the web goes far beyond just allowing a customer to find your business or research products and services. The real difference between a brochure and a web site is, quite simply - interaction. Quality interaction with qualified customers who have already identified you as someone they want to know more about is one of the surprising gifts of the Internet.

If you could dream of the perfect way to acquire new customers, it might look something like this: We do what we are great at. Customers find us and become interested in our offerings. They already know the basics about what we do before using valuable and expensive staff time. We know where they are from and what they might be interested in before we even talk to them. While they are on our web site, we are able to reach out to them in a meaningful way, without any boundaries and without any technological barriers. We answer their questions immediately, creating a connection. We then know early in our relationship how we can serve their needs and we close sales with personal service, high satisfaction and low costs.

That dream is real - that dream is live chat

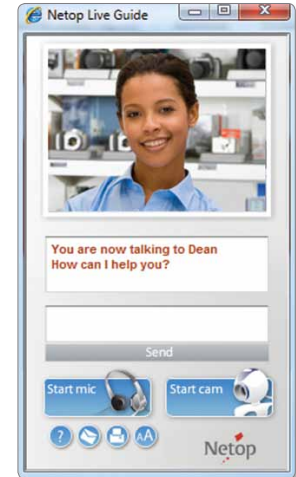
The next generation of customer engagement online has arrived. By allowing you to place "live chat" capability in your email, social media, online advertising, or any online communication, live web-based communication tools provide a unique opportunity to make marketing and communication efforts more interactive, more personal, and ultimately more profitable. As a result, you will increase response rates and more quickly and easily convert prospects into customers.

When customers see the "Chat with Me" link in an email, on Twitter or Facebook, or in an online advertisement or press release, they simply click on the "call" button and connect directly to a customer service representative. They can ask questions about products, find out how to get technical assistance and even make purchases without spending valuable time making phone calls, exchanging email or visiting another web site.

New live chat and web-based communication tools offer a wide range of personal communication features, including two-way text chat, two-way audio and two-way video, as well as redirects that allow you to control the Web browser and guide customers to the correct Web page. The solutions are quick and easy to integrate and can be customized to reflect your organization's corporate branding.

A BOLD STEP IN INTERACTIVE MARKETING

We live in an interactive world. Social media has changed the way that we interface with potential customers. Marketing to new customers has evolved into a two-way dialogue, not a static advertisement or a one-way transaction. The evolving trend in marketing has moved from a transaction-based effort to a conversation where both sides pay attention to the other and a dialogue exists. In a typical online environment, customers are isolated from the kind of person-to-person interaction that often makes the difference in closing the sale. Adding one-on-one service to web sites takes the bold step of adding personal, interactive customer service that makes brick and mortar stores so enduringly successful.



WHY "LIVE CHAT"?

With the live chat, you can increase the response rate on your next marketing campaign by making it interactive. Don't just drive traffic to your web site - engage prospects in a live chat with your sales team. With a simple click, your hottest prospects can be online and chatting with your sales team or technical support representatives directly. New tools now allow you to choose from audio, video or text chat with this innovative software that makes interactive marketing easy.

Adding live chat to your email campaigns will increase your response rates. You will transform the promise of social media into a marketing advantage by establishing a convenient and compelling way to personally interact with customers. Allowing an option for prospects to chat with your sales team directly can increase the benefit of your online advertising, and your press releases will be more engaging to analysts, potential customers and the media with direct click-to-chat capability.

The possibilities are endless:

- Perform live demonstrations of your product
- See a customer's reaction as you recommend alternative or complementary products
- Take control of a customer's web browser as you direct him to a specific place on your site
- Offer instant "sales" to convert browsers to buyers
- Cross-sell accessories and ancillary items
- Up-sell to more robust/expensive models with added capabilities
- Explain complex products or processes using visual aids
- Boost response times for increased customer satisfaction
- Anticipate customers' needs and offer solutions
- Provide customer support to resolve issues
- Train customers on how to use your products or help them complete forms
- Build customer loyalty by creating a positive experience each time, guaranteeing customer retention

USING INTERACTION IN EMAIL MARKETING

Take email from a one-way monologue to a two-way dialogue

Email has become the default method of communication in business today. Indeed, every day 247 billion email messages are sent and received in the U.S. alone. As a result, companies look to email marketing as a cost-effective and convenient marketing tool that can reach thousands of customers and potential customers worldwide. The trouble is that typical email marketing messages have a very low response rate, somewhere in the 1% - 3% range. This is because email does not provide the kind of immediate and personal two-way interaction that is a vital ingredient often needed to close a sale.

Adding live interaction tools and chat into email messages provides a unique opportunity to transform email marketing from a one-way monologue to a two-way dialogue. By embedding click-to-chat functionality in your email your marketing campaign takes on a new dimension; from transaction-based effort to a compelling customer conversation. Customers can connect "live" with your sales team instantly



without the need to stop and dial a phone or go to a separate web site.

Marketing email with this kind of instant interaction can bring about significant improvement in customer response and is an effective way to grab the attention of an audience faced with advertising overload. A company that communicates with its consumers via massive one-way media is having a monologue that is easy to ignore or overlook; click-to-chat capability removes the barriers to a more interactive customer dialogue and dramatically improves response.

By incorporating live chat in your email marketing you will address customers individually and promote a personal dialogue, not a one-time transaction. Instead of simply asking customers to call a phone number or click on a link, click-to-chat is a third option that will engage with a customer in a way that is convenient, immediate and unique, and does not require them to pick up the phone or send a separate email.

Benefits of live chat in email campaigns:

- Increase response rates by embedding live chat capability in your email campaigns.
- Customers simply click the link and they are instantly chatting to your sales team.
- Automated email (e.g., when they request information, download a white paper, start a free trial, etc) becomes personal and immediate.
- Drip marketing email campaigns nurture prospects through a long sales cycle.
- Live chat makes it more likely that customers will contact your sales team and take the next step towards a purchase.
- Including a "chat with me" link as a part of standard email signatures line improves response from prospects that may be reluctant to pick up the telephone and call.

USING LIVE CHAT IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Transform social media marketing into engaging customer conversations

It seems like everyone is on Facebook these days, Twitter is the social media of choice for millions of people worldwide, and LinkedIn connects professionals working with organizations ranging from budding start-ups to the Fortune 500. As a result, companies look to social media marketing as a cost effective way to expand their reach to new customers. But despite all the excitement surrounding social media, as a marketing tool it is fraught with uncertain return on investments and unclear benefits to real-world marketing campaigns. The question becomes: How can you truly leverage social media to bolster the profile of your company and increase revenue?

Live chat helps you transform social media into a marketing advantage by establishing a convenient and compelling way to personally interact with customers. While the social media environment is expansive and inclusive, it can be impersonal and distant as well. Live chat helps you cash in on the potential of social media marketing.

Social media is a great tool for reaching new customers that helps close the sale at the time they are most interested in your products and services. The most successful tactics in social media marketing are ones that move from a transaction-based effort into an interactive customer/seller conversation. If your social media marketing equates to only a massive one-way monologue even the most ardent effort may



not be actively embraced by your audience. Extending the power of social media to your marketing can effectively close the gap between you and potential customers.

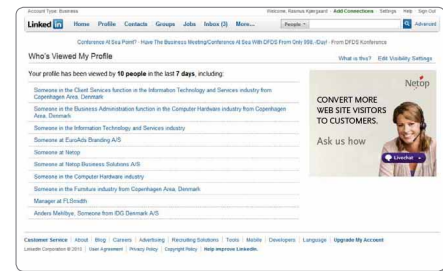
Extend the benefits of social media to your marketing:

- Social media “friends and fans” can click-to-chat with your sales team.
- Once you have established an interest in your product or service, live chat establishes a real-time and personal connection with your customer.
- Deliver the right message to our prospects at the right time to nurture them along the buying cycle.
- Move beyond traditional marketing tactics to more successfully convert prospects to customers.
- Establish a unique and eye-catching method of outreach and deliver person-to-person content that is relevant and of value to our audience.

USING LIVE CHAT IN ONLINE ADVERTISING

Convert Prospects into Customers

Online advertising has the capability of reaching thousands of potential customers around the world. Google and Yahoo command approximately 92% of Pay Per Click advertising and Craigslist receives around 4 billion page views per month. By placing interactive advertisements that can initiate a personal conversation in these environments you can reach out and give personal service to prospects, converting them to customers faster and with lower cost.



After all, the goal of your online advertising is lead generation; and what better way to generate and nurture that lead than to establish a personal, two-way dialogue right online. If your online ad is intended to attract hard-to-reach decision makers, using a versatile chat tool will ensure they get through to your sales team instantly. When your target audience is impulse buyers - then a live chat link in your advertisement puts them in contact with your sales team while that impulse to buy is strong.

Using an interactive solution that works seamlessly with paid search advertising, web sites and blogs is a vital tool for any company to be there when new customers are searching for products and solutions.

Maximize the benefits of online advertising:

- Google Adwords - Interactive chat instantly connect prospects searching for relevant keywords to your sales team directly from the Google search page.
- Add live chat to search and display advertisements with Bing, Yahoo, and all other portals as well.
- Enable live chat in your electronic publications so that your readers can contact you directly using text chat, audio and video.
- Improve response to your listings on Craig's List and other online classified advertising - an ideal way for leasing agents, car dealers and other classified advertisers to directly connect with potential customers.

USING LIVE CHAT IN A PRESS RELEASE

Change from a one-way monologue to a two-way dialogue

Press releases have been an indispensable tool for marketing professionals for years. Whether you want to attract favorable media attention, provide publicity for products or events, or simply raise the profile of your company a press release is often the first choice for your efforts. But despite its dependable

performance, the best you can hope for with a press release is a kind of massive one-way monologue that may not be heard actively by your intended audience. By embedding live chat capability you can turn one-way broadcasts of information into a two-way dialogue.

Creating an opportunity for dialog directly from a press release lowers the barriers for communication with your company and helps you better engage the press, analysts and potential customers using audio, video and text to get your message across. When you have an exciting new product to share with the market and want every opportunity you can get to pitch it to analysts and prospects, rich media gets that dialogue flowing with a click of a mouse button. In the end, you'll get a better response from any press release when you include an interactive chat function that makes it easy for readers to connect with you.



Press releases are also an important weapon to battle bad publicity. And if your news isn't good, it may take some personal effort to reassure customers and the public that you're on top of the situation. Enabling live chat directly within your press release can be a highly effective part of your proactive response.

Improve your outreach with interactive press releases:

- Leverage the power of live chat to start the dialogue flowing with analysts, editors and prospects.
- Use click-to-chat capability to attract new customers who are viewing your case study or testimonial.
- Make it easy for prospects to contact you directly from your press release by including an interactive chat function.
- Turn bad news into good results by using live chat to reassure analysts and customers that you're on top of the situation.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The bottom line is simple - the internet has changed the way that we find out about each other, products and services but social media has changed the rules forever for how we interact. No company can afford to ignore the importance of providing tools for engagement and service. And no business can afford to ignore the incredible cost savings of converting qualified customers online. Research shows that online interactions, even though they are personal, can be handled 3-4 times faster than email or phone calls - and with a high rate of satisfaction. When you choose your interactive solution for reaching your web site visitors, keep in mind that live chat is only the beginning. Rich media customer interaction can also include audio and video as well as text. Choose a solution that allows for the best customer experience, a flexible range of options for personal service and allows you to reach your prospects anywhere, rather they are searching for a solution with a search engine or on someone else's web site. Choose a solution that allows you to reach your customers no matter where they are.

ABOUT NETOP LIVE GUIDE

Convert prospects to customers and increase marketing response rates

Netop Live Guide is the next generation in online customer interaction. It offers audio, video, and live chat directly within your email, via social media, and in your online advertising and press releases. With a simple click, customers can easily engage in live, real-time dialogue with your customer service and technical sales representatives.

Designed specifically as an online sales, customer service, and support solution, Netop Live Guide is based on the pervasive Adobe Flash Player; so you can be assured that it will work on any computer - no download or extra hardware is needed. Users simply start a call by clicking on the "call" button. With Netop Live Guide you can communicate with customers, sell your products and services and resolve issues quickly, all in real-time and with and instant gratification.

Find out more today. Visit www.netop.com



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