SO WHAT'S ALL THIS CUSTOMER-ADVOCACY MARKETING FUSS ABOUT?

10 Things That Make Up the Superhero

TIRO COMMUNICATIONS

Contents

So What's All the Fuss About? 3

Customer Marketing 1.0—and 2.0 4

Confluence Gives Rise to Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 5

10 Things That Make Up the Customer-Advocacy Marketing Superhero

1. Product Alignment 7

2. Sales Collaboration 8

3. Digital Marketing Rethink 9

4. Telling the Customer Story In Content Marketing 10

5. Online Communities 11

6. Demand Generation: From Top to Bottom 12

7. Customer (and Partner) Engagement 13

8. Social Media Amplification 14

9. Advocate Mobilization 15

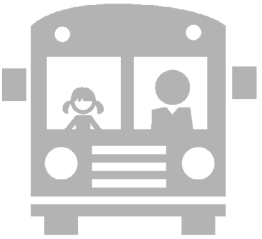
10. Analytics Go from Outputs to Outcomes 17

"It Takes a Village" to Make the Customer-Advocacy Marketing "Superhero" 18

Resources 19

So What's All Fuss About?

Once relegated to a seat on the back of the marketing bus, Customer-Advocacy Marketing is suddenly the talk of the town. Marketers have finally realized that their company and product stories lie not with slick branding and messaging campaigns but in the trenches where their customers toil every day. It resides with those who rely on their solutions to run their businesses, those on the frontlines, selling and servicing customer day in and day out.



But finding and uncovering those customer stories is not an easy undertaking. Indeed, Customer-Advocacy Marketing must consider a breadth of different issues when building out programs and initiatives. The days of Customer Marketing 1.0—and even 2.0—when the function primarily revolved around meeting tactical requirements from sales, PR, AR, and product marketing are gone.[1]

> **84% of B2B decision makers** start the buying process off with a peer reference.

> The days of tactical, output-based Customer-Advocacy Marketing Programs are over. Customer-Advocacy Marketing is often **a strategic business enabler** for companies, **reaching across nearly all functions**—marketing and non-marketing.

Customer Marketing 1.0—and 2.0—in the Rearview Mirror

Previously, Customer-Advocacy Marketing professionals were largely measured on whether they produced the right kind and sufficient number of case studies and video testimonials, found and secured the right types of customers for peer-to-peer requests from sales, and delivered the appropriate number and type of customers for analyst relations (AR) reports such as the Gartner Magic Quadrant and Forrester Wave. Further, in many instances, they were also evaluated on their ability to secure early adopters as PR and sales references for product launches or updates.

Since all of these were largely tactical functions, Customer-Advocacy Marketing was not seen as a desired career destination. Those seeking a springboard to acquire broader knowledge of the marketing function and/or to position themselves for vertical positions of greater scope and responsibility looked elsewhere in the marketing organization for employment possibilities. As a result, Customer-Advocacy Marketing was staffed with, at best, project managers rather than relationship managers and content strategists.

> “The Customer-Advocacy Marketing “Superhero” **is an adept relationship manager and expert content strategist** who knows how to stitch together technologies and to build organizational synergies as a result of her or his overarching business acumen.

Confluence Gives Rise to Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0

But this all changed over the past few years. A confluence of new cloud-based technology solutions, a growing focus on retention and consumption marketing, and recognition that the function must concentrate on relationship management development thrust Customer-Advocacy Marketing into a much more strategic position. Metrics are not relegated simply to the quantity—and perhaps quality—of outputs but to lead- and revenue-influenced analytics. In addition, Customer-Advocacy Marketing must align and integrate with a vast array of functions across both marketing as well as the business in general. This gives rise to shared business goals and metrics—within the marketing organization and various business functions.

Customer-Advocacy Marketing organizations that remain mired in the executional tactics of the past struggle with this transition. Unlike a few years ago when the volume of outputs and activities corroborated the value of a marketing function, this is no longer true today. Customer-Advocacy Marketing must deliver measureable business outcomes to justify the allocation of valuable resources—from headcount, to program dollars, to IT resources.

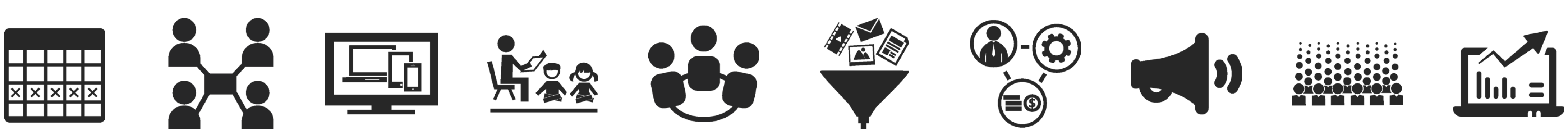
> Customer-Advocacy Marketing organizations that **remain mired in the executional tactics of the past struggle** with the transition to Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0.

> Customer-Advocacy Marketing **empowers advocates** by equipping them with the right tools and integrating them into demand-generation and content marketing strategies. This requires a cross-functional effort that touches most aspects of the business and **places a priority** on measuring the business outcomes they produce.

10 Business Areas to Consider

There are at least 10 different business areas that Customer-Advocacy Marketers must heed to achieve optimal results. The performance of Customer-Advocacy Marketing organizations in each of these areas should be scored and evaluated.

An excellent starting point is a SWOT Analysis that looks at each of the areas from the perspective of the four quandrants of the SWOT: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The ideal outcome from this exercise is a strategic plan and execution roadmap. Marketing organizations should formulate these based on competitive analysis and organizational requirements and focus areas. A one-size-fits-all approach will not suffice.



1 Product Alignment

Alignment with the product team is important for several different reasons. Specifically, the relationship between product management and product marketing in Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 evolves from one of order-taker to that of a collaborative peer. The relationship is a two-way street versus a one-way street under Customer Marketing 1.0 and to a lesser extent Customer Marketing 2.0. Product marketing and product management have "skin in the game" and collaborate to develop shared advocacy responsibilities and metrics. They play a role in building strategic relationships with advocates, with engagement within the online community and the social media airwaves as a requisite part of their charter.

In addition to building strategic relationships, product managers and marketers seek opportunities to showcase advocates—their best practices, measureable results, and thought leadership—within the online community, on the social media airwaves, and on various third-party community sites and content hubs.

Advocates naturally get first "right of refusal" when it comes to Customer and Product Advisory Boards, speaking opportunities at events, and the like. And when product launches occur, product managers and marketers don't simply seek out early adopters; rather, they should look for early advocates. Those that comprise for anything less are exposed and often at a competitive disadvantage before their product launches or new release happens.

> Product managers and marketers **must seek opportunities to showcase advocates**—their best practices, measureable results, and thought leadership—within their company's online community, on the social media airwaves, and on various third-party community sites and content hubs.

2 Sales Collaboration

The relationship with sales also changes dramatically with Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0. No longer is the sales team a passive customer expecting to be serviced by Customer-Advocacy Marketing. Rather, like product managers and marketers, sales assumes shared metrics and responsibilities; their relationship management activities are not merely focused on turning prospects into customers and selling additional product—or increasing utilization levels—to customers but also on turning customers into advocates.[3]

Further, once they become advocates, they help contribute to keeping them as advocates. Sales leaders and individual account managers who fail to make this recognition hamstring both themselves and their marketing counterparts, to the detriment of the larger organization.

Sales professionals wed to old habits of going outside of advocacy program boundaries propagate bad behaviors and should be retrained through the use of "carrots" and "sticks." And for those who are recalcitrant and unwilling to embrace this expanded, more strategic role for sales, organizations would be wise to remove and replace them with professionals who do get this new reality; retrenchment and a focus on short-term gains is the wrong decision in the face of long-term success.[4]

Alignment of marketing and sales is a non-negotiable and the foremost priority. Secondary objectives such as integration of advocacy management systems—whether those used for prospecting and cultivating advocates such as **Influitive**, **CustomerAdvocacy.com, Amplifinity**, **Zuberance**, **Podium**, **NextBee**, among others, or those used to track and manage sales and marketing activities such as **RO Innovation, Boulder Logic**, or **Point of Reference**—with CRM systems are critical cornerstones. Customer-Advocacy Marketing programs are unsustainable if these are not in place.[5]

> "Organizations are wise to remove and replace sales professionals who are recalcitrant and unwilling to take on the role of relationship development and management with professionals who do get this new reality; **retrenchment and a focus on short-term gains** is the wrong decision in the face of **long-term success**.

> "Without the right tools in place, sales professionals end up with poorly matched references-to-sales opportunity up to **40%** of the time.[6]

3 Digital Marketing Rethink

Organizations that relegate Customer-Advocacy Marketing to a small, dedicated space on the website and moreover only produce customer-specific content on advocates have a flawed online marketing and content marketing strategy. Historically, because Marketing Communications controlled websites and content, public assets featuring customer advocates were placed within the confines of a customer section on the website and tagged per asset type versus pain point (or challenge).

But this isn't how prospects or customers search for advocates; they seek out advocate stories because they want to solve a business problem or achieve a business outcome. And they likely don't go to the "Customers" on a company's website to look for those stories; they go to the solution, product, or about company pages, or even third-party peer communities and product review sites. Further, for many of these communities (owned, shared, and paid), the best content often isn't traditional advocate assets such as case studies and video testimonials, but rather it is product reviews, blog posts and social media mentions (corporate and personal), or trusted third-party thought leadership hubs.

In addition, digital marketers are quickly recognizing the value in personalizing the digital journey of customers.

Static content consumption becomes dynamic and a much more strategic endeavor with content targeting. Based on the behavior and identity of the visitor, digital marketers can leverage content targeting SaaS-based tools to proactively offer personalized content (which should include advocate-related assets) to each visitor and even extend the personalized experience after they leave the website using ad retargeting tools.

> "Despite growing numbers of companies embracing some form of an online community, their **full potential remains unrealized** in many instances. Advocate relationships remain nascent, lurking beneath the surface and largely un-mobilized.

> "One interesting advocacy approach is to **put digital engagement in the hands of advocates.** This is what Needle does in the B2C space, helping its customers to recruit, certify, and manage advocates who chat with their prospects using Needle's live web chat solution.

4 Telling the Customer Story In Content Marketing

The world of content marketing has dramatically changed over the past five years. Since customer advocates are an important part of the content story (or should be), Customer-Advocate Marketing leaders and content marketing leaders must align and determine new and more engaging ways to leverage advocates across the content marketing spectrum. It is a strategic discussion, not merely a tactical check list. Indeed, research shows that advocate stories need to be utilized within at least 25 percent of all content that a B2B marketing organization produces.[7] However, few marketing organizations can attest to this ratio.

When it comes to the publishing and promotion of content, the options—and opportunities—are vastly greater today than just a few years ago.[8] Customer-Advocate Marketing must align with content marketing to develop a content distribution and promotion strategy for each content asset, or grouping of assets.

Further, one marketing engagement with an advocate could result in a story that can be reformulated across a spate of marketing assets and activities. This makes the distribution and promotion strategies that much more important—it is a non-negotiable requisite. This means one advocate story could be published via different asset types to owned (corporate website and online community), shared (e.g., partner portals, non-branded thought leadership hubs or publications), and paid (e.g., Web banners, articles on third-party sites, etc.) destinations.

"

At least **25%** of all content a B2B organization produces needs to contain customer evidence and stories. It is also more effective—**30%** based on research.[9]

5 Online Communities

Customers want to talk to each other, prospects want to speak with customers, and customers want to connect with product engineers and managers—all via unfiltered forums. Indeed, B2B buyers cite online communities as the number one information resource they use when researching and evaluating solutions. B2B online community owners concurrently corroborate this finding: 73 percent of them report their communities support the buying process.[10]

And it isn't just mid-level managers who are going to online communities to support the buying decision. While senior executives value one-on-one interactions through strategic customer forums and executive sponsorship programs, they are increasingly turning to technology channels—online hubs or portals with specific charters—to connect with each other and thought leaders in their space.[11]

Digital forums are just as important once the purchase has taken place. Managers and individual contributors tasked with configuration, implementation, and management of B2B solutions look to engage with each other and their vendors through online communities. A decade-plus ago, companies organically built these platforms—either as an extension of their websites or as a skunkworks project in a silo. But as growing numbers of customers and partners began to embrace these communities as their source for information, answers, and networking with peers and product technology experts, they evolved into strategic programs for many organizations. The emergence of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) community platform solutions such as **Jive Software, Lithium, Get Satisfaction,** among others made the entry point for marketers much easier as well.

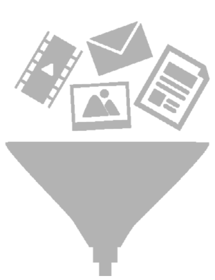
Yet despite growing numbers of companies embracing some form of an online community, their full potential remains unrealized in many instances. Advocate relationships remain nascent, lurking beneath the surface and largely un-mobilized. Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 recognizes the existence of these advocates, engaging and mobilizing them to action—from product reviews, blog posts, to social media promotion, to content strategies and marketing, to demand generation. In addition, Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 practitioners need to understand the gamification components that comprise their online community—assuming that is a capability of their online community program—must align and integrate with the gamification of their Customer-Advocacy Marketing initiatives.

> **60%** of buyers seek peer reviews before making a purchase—with primary sources being online communities and third-party sites and forums.[11]

6 Demand-Generation: From Top to Bottom

For most demand-generation campaigns, advocates serve a tactical role, providing content "filler" for different activities and assets. Unfortunately, though, few demand-generation campaigns use advocates strategically, neither employing their stories as the campaign hook or leveraging them to play an active role in driving demand-generation responses. Further, only a small percentage of B2B marketers have formal demand-gen campaigns targeting customers.[12]

In Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0, customer stories and evidence rise to the surface, helping to facilitate key moments of inspiration in the acquisition and consumption (or retention) funnels. In some instances, the entirety of a demand-gen campaign might be structured around a customer story or a series of customer stories. Regardless, for the majority of campaigns, customer stories sharpen the campaign hook and breathe life into the key journey markers.



Advocate harvesting isn't possible in every instance, though it is in most. Here, one engagement with a customer—interview and/or video—results can be reframed into multiple content assets used across the vast majority of the buyer and/or customer journey. For example, a 60-minute interview with a customer can be leveraged for a case study, podcast, press release, presentation slides, blog, infographic, or article used at different moments of inspiration during the buyer and/or customer journeys.

Just as much more granular metrics are possible with Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 than was the case a few years ago, analytics for content marketing are much more meaningful and actionable today. Using tools like **Kapost**, marketers can score each content asset and determine how well each asset is performing in different campaigns. Further, leveraging using advocate engagement platforms like **Influitive, NextBee, Amplifinity, CustomerAdvocacy,** among others, marketers can mobilize advocates to generate leads by encouraging them to reach out to their peers—specifically for new leads in the case of the acquisition funnel and upselling and retention for the consumption funnel.

> "Only **8%** of B2B organizations have formal demand-gen campaigns targeting customers.[13]

> **58%** of B2B customers today are more likely to tell others about their customer experiences than five years ago.[14]

7 Customer (And Partner) Engagement

Customers welcome the chance to connect with peers, supplier subject-matter experts, and thought leaders. This can happen digitally through vendor-sponsored and third-party online communities. These are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to customer engagement. Customers want to serve on product advisory boards and customer executive forums where they have a chance to engage with each other and with supplier technologists.

When organizations architecting their Customer Marketing-Advocacy Marketing programs, it is important to remember that different personas prefer different modes of engagement. Executives likely won't use online communities and aren't interested in product advisory boards. But they do embrace opportunities to network and exchange ideas with their peers. Hence, when targeting senior leadership personas, Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 focuses on executive forums and executive sponsorships. But for those who interactive daily or regularly with the supplier and are the front-line users of a solution, they seek the chance to provide feedback on the product development roadmap, participate in online communities, and network with each other—including local peers—on a regular basis.

In addition to being sensitive to persona types, Customer-Advocacy Marketing practitioners need to account for each stage in the buyer-customer journey (or lifecycle). Different personas are more receptive at certain stages depending on their role in that particular stage.

Often neglected when organizations plan their customer engagement programs, the role of partners must also be factored into consideration in Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0. Indeed, partners sometimes are the most vocal advocates of a company, depending on the solution and the depth of the relationship. Organizations that lack a formal Partner Advocacy Marketing capability need to get one, as they are losing significant opportunities—from generating greater partner loyalty and engagement to using partners to help mobilize their customers to serve as advocates of the joint solution.

> Engaged customers are **52%** more valuable (revenue, marketing, etc.) than highly satisfied customers. And though engaged customers represent just **22%** of total customers, they account for **37%** of revenue.[16]

> The **top three reasons** customers cite as advocacy "motivators" include:[15]
>
> - Affinity for Solution
> - Building Personal Brand
> - Access to "Inner Circle" of Peers

8 Social Media Amplification

Customer-Advocacy Marketing organizations that do not include social media as part of their broader advocacy and engagement programs make a strategic mistake. Many customers use their personal and/or corporate social media channels to showcase their successes and comment on their supplier relationships. This includes the good and the bad.

Obviously, to address support and experience issues when they arise, social media monitoring must be part of any Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 program (whether owned directly by the Customer-Advocacy Marketing team or by another group). But it is more than monitoring, it involves engagement as well.

So what does this look like? *First*, social channels can be quite broad. They include everything from Twitter tweets, to LinkedIn posts (including Pulse posts), to Facebook comments, to Google+ posts. However, the scope is broader than this; it also extends to company and personal blogs, third-party hubs dedicated to specific subjects, and product review websites.

Second, social media monitoring enables organizations to pinpoint customers who are detractors or are experiencing implementation or ongoing management challenges with a solution. Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 engages with these customers—working across functions (e.g., support, product, etc.)—to ensure their challenges are addressed and resolved. The potential impact a detractor can have on a brand's reputation makes this a crucial business requirement.

Finally, the use of social media in Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 involves more than mitigation of detractors. Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 not only monitors the social airwaves for advocates (viz., promoters), but involves a proactive outreach to potential advocates who simply need to be mobilized. Mobilization focuses on relationship building; Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 assumes the leadership charge, but the onus extends to nearly every function within an organization. This relationship-building exercise focuses on providing advocates with the tools and incentives (which, depending on the persona, might be gamification) to write blogs and posts on their corporate and personal social media channels.

“

Advocates are **3x more likely** to share brand information with someone they don't know.[17]

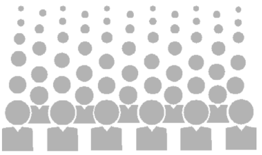
“

Advocates are **2x more likely** than other customers to share information about a product on social media.[18]

9 Advocate Mobilization

Relationship building is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Different customer personas have different inspirational points. One lever, which originated with online community marketing, is gamification, where reward points, badges, and leaderboards are afforded based on advocate activity.

But Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 practitioners must think more broadly than just gamification. In particular, those developing gamification advocacy models need to consider carefully what is granted to advocates. Front-line advocate personas value different engagement activities than executive advocate personas. Hence, while gamification might work extremely well for many front-line personas, it may not be very effective with senior-level personas.



Rather, the opportunity to form strategic relationships with supplier executives or attend executive-level forums with like-minded peers will prove much more effective than involvement in an online community or gamification program for executive advocates. Yet this doesn't discount the importance of providing high-level visibility to executives on the advocate activities of their front-line staff. Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 models require robust reporting tools, including visualizations, that can be packaged into meaningful reports for executive advocate stakeholders.

Getting advocates to events (either company hosted or third party) and granting special status to advocates often forms a crucial component of advocate recognition. Events serve as catalysts in helping to build deeper and broader advocate relationships. Specifically, if engagement activities at events are planned correctly, they offer advocates a chance for enhanced career development—and maybe even career advancement. Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 also uses the attendance and involvement of advocates to promote events to prospects and other customers. Demand-gen activities can be amplified dramatically—both virtually and at the event itself—when advocate attendees are given the right tools. Further, events are great opportunities for organizations to recruit and maturate new advocates.

> "Customers who attend events such as user groups are willing to serve as advocates **3x more often,** submit **2x fewer** support cases, and are twice as likely to upgrade to the latest product release(s) than customers who do not attend "engagement" events.[19]

9 Advocate Mobilization (continued)

Advocate mobilization is a comprehensive undertaking, encompassing a number of different activities that extend well beyond what traditional Customer Marketing 1.0 and 2.0 organizations have considered. It is much more than case study, video testimonial, and PR development.

While not exhaustive, the following are some of the engagement methods Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 practitioners should employ:

a. Product reviews (e.g., **LinkedIn, G2 Crowd, IT Central Station, TrustRadius, BestVendor,** et al.)
b. Peer reference calls or site visits
c. Event promotion and engagement
d. Demand-generation programs (campaigns) promotion
e. Social media engagement
f. Blogs (from their own personal and corporate blogs, to third-party blogs, to your own blog[s])
g. User Group presentations
h. Product Advisory Boards
i. Executive sponsorship programs
j. Executive forums or councils
k. eBooks (as corroborating examples)
l. Infographics (likely to become increasingly important given growing content preference for visualizations and "bite-size" content)
m. Online community participation
n. Peer mashups (virtual and in-person)
o. Presentations at company-hosted events or third-party events
p. Analyst reports (e.g., **Gartner's** Magic Quadrant or **Forrester's** Wave), white papers, and/or case studies
q. Magazine or online thought leadership articles, podcasts, and/or videos
r. Case studies
s. Video testimonials
t. Podcast interviews
u. Video Q&A talk shows
v. Fun activities and sharing

10 Analytics Go from Outputs to Outcomes

The days of measuring qualitative or the volume of activities and outputs are gone for marketing in general and most certainly for Customer-Advocacy Marketing. Under Customer Marketing 1.0, measurements were quite basic, typically focused on the volume of outputs and activities and the lack of frustrated internal business constituents (viz., sales, PR, et al.). Spreadsheets to rudimentary tracking databases allowed for minimal reporting on activities, and none of the measurements tracked to business outcomes.

Analytics progressed under Customer Marketing 2.0 to the point that marketing organizations began tracking advocate activities and assets to various marketing segments and tracking how peer-to-peer (P2P) activity tracked to opportunities influenced and won. It even became possible to measure and evaluate the use of case studies, video testimonials, and other advocate-focused marketing assets to the opportunity level. The performance of those same assets on websites also became a more frequent occurrence.

But the advocate recruitment and engagement paradigm stayed largely constant; it remained the responsibility of Customer-Advocacy Marketing with support from sales and services. Further, few Customer-Advocacy Marketing programs integrated customer advocates into a broader set of demand-generation and content marketing activities.

Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 seeks to fill these voids, empowering advocates by equipping them with the right tools and integrating them into demand-generation and content marketing strategies. This requires a cross-functional effort that touches most aspects of the business. It also means that Customer-Advocacy Marketing programs can be measured based on the business outcomes they drive.

While the volume—or quantity—of activity and assets may affect business outcomes, they are no longer the basis of measuring success. Rather, the metrics shift to leads generated, opportunities influenced and won, and customer loyalty and satisfaction. And because Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 is much more integrated with the different parts of the business, these measurements often become shared goals. Further, the integrated approach translates into completely new analytics such as a specified percentage of content containing customer advocates, the Net Promoter score of customer advocates as compared to other customers, customer advocate upsell opportunities won, or the level of social media engagement by advocates.

> **83% of satisfied customers** are willing to become advocates.[20]

"It Takes a Village" to Make the Customer-Advocacy Marketing "Superhero"

Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 is a highly integrated function that involves most aspects of the business. The saying that "it takes a village" is quite apropos. Virtually all 10 of the aforementioned areas of recommendation require the involvement of multiple marketing functions, in addition to cross-functional partnerships with sales, services, product, and other groups. Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 practitioners must have the acumen to identify, nurture, and propagate relationships within and outside (viz., customers and partners, though other external influencers would qualify as well) of their organizations.

But Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 necessitates more than just great relationship-building skills, it requires practitioners who understand finance, possess a keen interest in marketing technologies, and welcome the chance to aggregate and interpret the resulting analytics. These individuals become experts in not only Customer-Advocacy Marketing technologies but the ones that intersect with their programs such as content marketing, demand gen, social media, marketing automation, among others. Given the rapid growth in marketing technology (said to be in the thousands), this is not an easy undertaking.[21]

When everything is added up and the identity of the Customer-Advocacy Marketing 3.0 professional is revealed, the figure who walks out of the tunnel is none other than the Customer-Advocacy Marketing "Superhero." And with this sighting, all of the marketing fuss makes complete sense.

"Companies with Customer-Advocacy Marketing programs typically see a growth rate up to 2.5 times faster than their competitors.[22]

"Customer-Advocacy Marketing practitioners must **have the acumen** to identify, nurture, and propagate relationships within and outside of their organizations.

"Despite growing numbers of companies embracing some form of an online community, their full potential remains unrealized in many instances. Advocate relationships remain nascent, lurking beneath the surface and largely un-mobilized.

Resources

[1] Patrick E. Spencer, "Making the Journey to Customer Marketing 3.0," eBook, TIRO Communications, 2015.

[2] Jessica Hasson, "Infographic: How to Create Powerful B2B Advocacy," Business2Community, March 11, 2015.

[3] Organizations that fail to understand how all stages of the prospect and customer lifecyle contribute to advocacy—and concurrently benefit from customer and partner advocacy—place themselves at a competitive disadvantage. See, for example, "Customer Success and Marketing Alignment: The Key to Unlocking Customer Advocacy," Influitive and Gainsight, 2015.

[4] See Patrick E. Spencer, "The Intertwining of Customer Marketing and Sales: Relationships, Technology, and Accountability," TIRO Communications, The Scribe Blog, February 2, 2015.

[5] For example, Laura Ramos, "Advocate Markeing Creates B2B Customer Relationships That Last a Lifetime," Forrester, September 28, 2015.

[6] "How to Make the Most of Your Customer Reference Program," Boulder Logic White Paper, 2015.

[6] "The Next Wave of Advocacy: How Masters, Enthusiasts, and Loyalists Will Transform Customer Engagement," Needle, 2015.

[7] "Getting Customers to Produce More Content," Explorics, SlideShare, March 13, 2014.

[8] See Patrick E.. Spencer, "Capitalizing on the Content C onundrum: 5 Strategic Moves," LinkedIn Pulse Post, November 24, 2014.

[9] "B2B Content Preferences Survey: Mobile-Optimized Content with Visual Appeal Catches the Attention of B2B Buyers," Demand Gen Report, 2014.

[10] "Online Community Performance: Driving Revenue or Becoming Dead Zones?" Demand Metric, April 2015.

[11] A report from SiriusDecisions shows 75 percent of a CxO's research is done via persona interactions and viral communication networks and 80 percent of a CxO's final decision is based on his or her own experience with a company or that of her or his peers (Megan Heuer, "No One Cares What You Have to Say About Yourself: Why Marketing Plans Need Customer Advocacy More Than Ever," SiriusDecisions, December 23, 2014).

[12] Matt Senatore, "Eight is NOT Enough: Increasing Adoption of Marketing Automation Platforms," SiriusDecisions Blog, February 20, 2014.

[13] Ibid.

[14] "Customer Service and Business Results: A Survey of Customer Service from Mid-Size Companies," Dimensional Research, April 2013.

[15] "B2B Content Preferences Survey: Mobile-Optimized Content with Visual Appeal Catches the Attention of B2B Buyers," Demand Gen Report, 2014.

[16] Jessica Hasson, "How to Create Powerful B2B Advocates [Infographic]," Business2Community, March 11, 2015.

[17] Brian Cavoli, "Infographic: The Actions and Motivations and Influence of Advocates," Bzzagent, May 4, 2011.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Based on proprietary research conducted by TIRO Communications (involved a User Group Program consisting of 70-plus user groups comprising several thousand individual users).

[20] "How to Create Powerful B2B Advocacy."

[21] Michael Lowenstein, "The Strategic Marketing Case for Customer Advocacy Measurement," CustomerThink, June 2, 2010.

[22] Laura Ramos, "Establish Your B2B Advocate Marketing Goals Before Choosing Tech Suppliers: Specialized Offerings Help Scale and Unify Engagement Programs," Forrester, November 18, 2015.

About Us

Patrick E. Spencer, Ph.D., is the president and founder of TIRO Communications. An accomplished journalist and marketing executive with more than 30 different editorial and creative awards to his name, Patrick has published hundreds of magazine articles, bylines, eBooks, white papers, and blog posts as well as directed and produced hundreds of videos and podcasts. He architected and built marketing programs and departments from the ground up at Symantec, LivePerson, and PRO Unlimited that influenced millions of dollars in revenue and possesses a keen interest in technology and how it can be used to drive tangible marketing outcomes. He holds a doctorate of philosophy from the University of Durham, completed post-graduate studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, and holds two master and a bachelors degree from Abilene Christian University.

TIRO COMMUNICATIONS

TIRO Communications helps organizations create brand awareness and brand engagement through outstanding content and customer-advocacy marketing business outcomes. Founded by award-winning content and advocacy marketers, TIRO Communications has produced thousands of content assets—written, audio, visual, and video— and nurtured and developed tens of thousands of customer, partner, and employee advocates.

Visit us at **www.tirocommunications.com** or click **here** to contact us today.