

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMAND CENTRE (SMCC)

Author: Mr. Khan
Lead - Social Media Practice
Atom Consulting Services

Social Media has permeated every facet of consumer and business interactions, be it peer to peer (P2P), brand to consumer (B2C) or consumer to brand (C2B). From being an additional channel, it has now become most preferred “The Touchpoint” for consumers and impacts overall Customer Experience. For businesses and organizations, especially with a B2C model, it touches almost all processes relevant to their business: Customer Care, Product Innovation, Advertising & Marketing, Public Relations, Sales and others.

For any business or organization, large or small, Social Media interaction and analysis capability is an essential component. Most businesses are however realizing that by doing things on social media in a distributed manner with no clear road-map, ROI tracking KPIs do not provide the desired results. The concept of Social Media Command Centre, or SMCC as it is commonly referred to, helps alleviate these challenges.



SOCIAL MEDIA COMMAND CENTRE & KEY COMPONENTS

A Social Media Command Centre is a dedicated practice comprising 3P's: Processes, People and Platform, where a company's social media team can monitor, engage and act as the nerve centre for the company's interaction across its various business functions. A Social Media Command Centre enables organizations to listen and respond to increasingly important Voice of Customer (VoC) that may not be achieved with distributed groups within companies as they cannot weave in the 360 degree view of the customer, vision of the overall brand, all lines of business (LoBs) and corporate strategy into their social media activities.

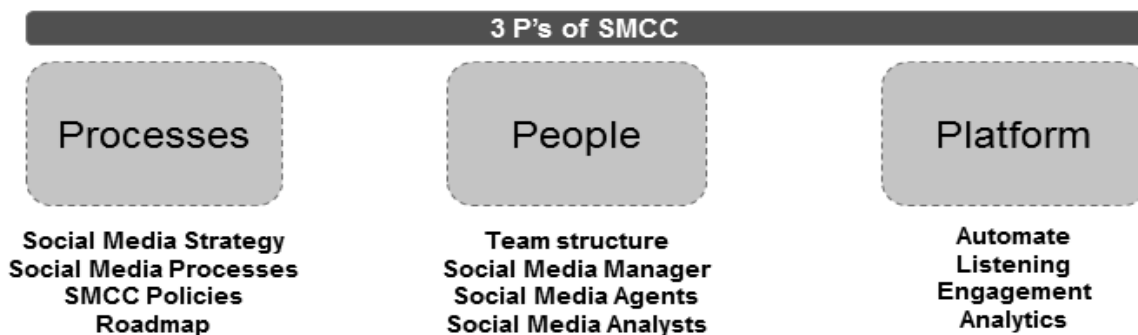


Figure 1: 3 P's of Social Media Command Centre

In many ways it is similar to an Emergency Operations Centre run by security agencies or a Network Operations Centre (NOC) run by telecom companies. The team in the SMCC works with the individual business lines and performs the following broad functions:

1. Provide actionable insights based on information from Social Media
2. Help track (or build) new products, services, technology innovations and peoples' adoption
3. Provide robust Customer Care support by engaging with customers to answer queries, receive accolades, address complaints, etc.
4. Run campaigns on social media in conjunction with marketing
5. Prospect profiling and lead generation
6. Monitor and manage potential crisis

Some well-known global brands have adopted and are building benefits from the Social Media Command Centres. This is because social media ROI, social media driven growth, enhanced customer experience, insights delivered business transformation and cost efficiencies are important to them.

SMCC HELPS MEET BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

The business objectives of Social Media Command Centre are to:

1. Align execution on social media with a keen eye on enhancing or meeting business objectives
2. Enhancing customer experience through social media
3. Cost reduction by deflecting calls and addressing a percentage of queries, feedback, complaints for Customer Service
4. Delivery of campaigns and high value leads to marketing and sales
5. Monetize Social Media insights w.r.t. the company's value chain

According to results of analyses of the impact of Social Media by various organizations, Social Media has generated multiple benefits w.r.t. customer retention, acquisition, cost, revenue and process efficiencies for organizations using them.

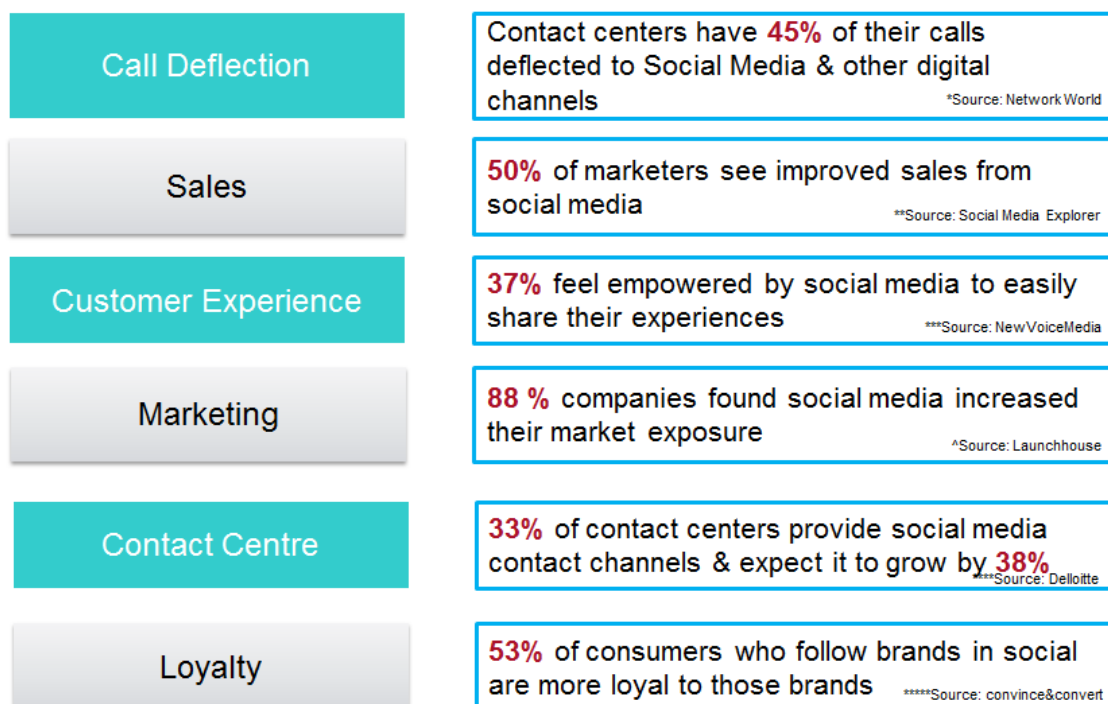


Figure 2: Benefits seen from Social Media

SOCIAL MEDIA MATURITY AND NEED

The reality is, companies - small or big - globally, have started seeing SMCC as a better way of leveraging Social Media to meet organizational and business needs due to its inherent capability to grow in an organized fashion along with business goals. A look at the maturity index provides an idea of how organisations typically mature into a fully co-ordinated SMCC that creates strategic business impact:

Social Media Maturity Index

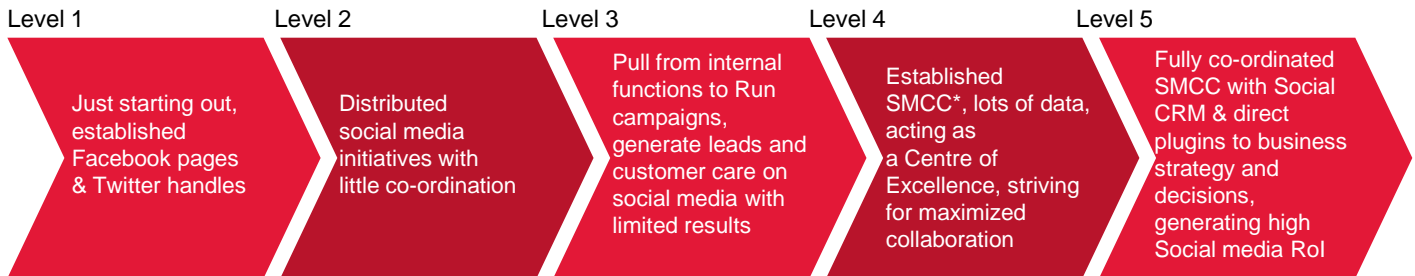


Figure 3: SMCC Maturity Index

The points below provide some guidelines on which organisations should move into the Social media Command Centre mode:

- Companies that have small disparate teams managing social media efforts
- Companies that are seeking to integrate insights from social media into mainstream business decision making
- Companies that want to enter the mature CRM space and include Social CRM as part of their perspective on customers, up-sell/cross-sell, lead generation, campaigns
- Companies that want to enhance or radically transform their customer support systems

SMCC vs. Non-SMCC SOCIAL MEDIA PRACTICE: A COMPARATIVE VIEW

SMCC provides an organization with the required bandwidth, capability and process to execute social media initiatives. While both structured SMCC approach and ad-hoc social monitoring and response approach may have similar objectives, it is SMCC that is able to foster more impactful communications and develop a social culture that helps meet business objectives.

Also for companies trying to aggregate social media activities from different business groups, creating SMCC creates a “pull effect”. By creating an SMCC and establishing it as a Centre of Excellence (COE), it provides the organization a vision of the impact social media can have on their business, thereby creating converts and believers in the organization and ensuring that social media initiatives take root deeply within the organization.



The following table outlines some of the benefits of a SMCC:

Impact	SMCC Practice	Regular Social Media practice	Details
PR Effect	✓	X	Create a huge PR effect that implies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take Voice of Customer seriously 2. Has become easier to reach 3. Is open to suggestions 4. Can positively impact market sentiments and potentially stock market prices 5. Ability to monitor and effectively respond to potential social media crisis
Integrated Customer Service	✓	X	Provide active customer support, and reduce the call volumes on traditional voice based Customer Care, thereby reducing costs
Digital Campaign	✓	X	Provide a single point of contact to launch digital marketing campaigns in tandem with larger Customer 360 degree and marketing strategy
Lead Generation & New Product Ideas	✓	X	It can deliver high value leads to Marketing and Sales for faster conversion to revenue. Automated and manual lead generation capabilities in Social Media help generate higher Marketing and Sales Rol from digital efforts
Specialists	✓	X	Trained, focused resources on analytics, analyses, reporting and engagement
Policies	✓	X	SMCC has well defined policies encompassing all eventualities that ensure easy management of opportunities, crises and govern employee and brand engagement on a highly unforgiving medium like Social Media
Creates Pull	✓	X	Rather than trying to provide insights via social media to business functions (sales, marketing, customer care), SMCC creates pull wherein the core functional departments themselves want to interact and benefit. This makes the process of imbibing a social media sensitive culture easy, thus, quickly translating to business gains
Economies of Scale	✓	X	Digital transformation within which social media enabled digital actions actually start costing lesser in the longer run as SMCC brings in economies of scale via cross-training, re-skilling resources while leveraging technology to the fullest. Since resources see a solid set-up, their belief in continuing with the practice remains
Drive Business	✓	X	Due to its large presence, SMCC can contribute at a strategic level. For example: "A leading multinational computer technology company uses their command centre to connect with IT leaders to uncover helpful information in order to better understand customers"
Domain Leadership	✓	X	An SMCC is led by a Social Media manager. This ensures that the latest in social along with the best practices are constantly factored in

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF SMCC

Social Media Strategy	The Social Media strategy identifies gaps and leverages the components to ensure the alignment of the overall business and digital marketing strategy with the social media strategy, thus ensuring high Rol of the organization's social media efforts
SMCC Structure	Defines how the actual SMCC should be with details like owner, driver, KPIs, reports, engagements, business processes, periodicity, coverage etc.
LoBs	Helps define the Line of Business' specific requirements and metrics, synergies, exclusive areas for each LoB etc.
Policies	Defines the SMCC policies and governance that make it a world class centre. Covers areas such as SLAs, content, access, management etc.
Analytics	Defines the SMCC analysis areas and types of reporting, frequency, analysis dimensions such as geography, products, trends, topics, competition etc.
Engagement	Defines how and when engagement should or should not take place and which posts or mentions should follow what allocation. Escalation or resolution paths
Technology	Defines the social media tool(s) that will be used for crawling, sentiment analytics, engagement, workflow etc. and the visualization, bandwidth requirement, cloud capability etc.
Infrastructure	Defines the requirements of the physical infrastructure such as whether it will be showcased in a fish bowl set-up, seating, location, centralized etc.

Summary

A Social Media Command Centre works as the nerve centre that links digital transformation across the company with key business objectives. SMCC enabled business growth and results can far outstrip isolated programs simply because of its capability to collate, correlate, synthesize and disseminate information with a 360 degree impact across business processes and needs.

Atom's Social Media practice brings in all components of a command centre and enables businesses at any stage of their digital and social media journey to achieve more. With the capability of Strategy, Platform and Social Media Specialists to provide services, business functions can be rest assured of significant benefits from a Social Media Command Centre.



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