EVALUATION OF USE AND IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN OFFERING CUSTOMER CARE SERVICES IN NETWORK SERVICE PROVIDER COMPANIES: A CASE OF SAFARICOM LIMITED.

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K50/63320/2010

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (COMMUNICATION STUDIES), SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

OCTOBER, 2013
ABSTRACT

Use of social media in offering customer service in mobile network service provider companies is of value to customers and business owners. It helps to improve the service offered to customers. Improved service leads to improved revenues because customers are willing to spend more. In Kenya, Safaricom Limited uses social media to contact some section of its customers. This study sought to evaluate the use of social media in mobile network service provider companies using Safaricom Limited as a case study. The study had three objectives. It sought to find the benefits of using social media in customer care; the problems that use of social media in customer care encountered and various ways in which customer care was used in the call center. The research employed a case study method. Stratified random sampling was used to obtain the study subjects. A questionnaire was used to obtain data from the study subjects. Document analysis was used to obtain relevant data about customer care service. The data analyzed was from April 2012, when social media services were launched, to April 2013. Document analysis established that use of social media in Safaricom call center had helped in improvement of customer delight index, average handling time and number of customers served every month. From the questionnaires, it was established that there was no significant effect of use of social media to the reduction of number of repeat calls. Use of social media improved accessibility of customers to the call center. The major problem that the use of social media encounters is that few people have access to internet. It was similarly verified that language barrier was a problem with using social media. The languages were limited to Kiswahili and English yet some customers are not well acquainted with the written form of the two languages. Results from the questionnaires verified that social media was used to educate customers, inform them about new products and help them in troubleshooting problems related to use of Safaricom products and services. The study concluded that use of social media has had a major impact on customer service in Safaricom. It recommended that more studies needed to be done to understand the discrepancy between increased customer delight index and the non reducing repeat calls. The research also recommended inclusion of interviews as data collection tools in future. This would help to get more insights about other contributing factors that may have led to improvement of customer delight index.