# How Well Do Companies Respond To Customer Complaints?

Contributed by eMarketer
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Many marketers still ignoring dissatisfied customers on social media

Marketers are well aware that social media is a double-edged sword when it comes to word-of-mouth. Not only does it give rave reviews and glowing recommendations a chance to be seen by millions, but it also does the same for negative feedback.

How to best deal with negative buzz online is a perennial question.

Some companies are confident that their customers use sites like Facebook and Twitter to complain about them, according to a September 2011 survey by feedback management software provider MarketTools. But nearly half of companies surveyed think their customers don't comment or complain about their products and services online, and almost a quarter did not know whether their customers did so or not.

While it's possible that some business-to-business companies really donâ€™t have to worry much about customers turning to Twitter to vent their frustration, for consumer-facing firms, the probability seems high, raising the question as to whether executives are aware enough of online complaints.

MarketTools also found that while a sizeable number of marketers respond to customer complaints on Facebook or Twitter at least some of the time, many leave questions and negative feedback completely unanswered. On Twitter, 29% said they responded to such feedback seldom or never, while 17% said the same of Facebook.

Consumers may not be happy with this frequency of response. Research tends to show that social media users want businesses to answer them, and that an interaction with a company representative online can defuse negative feedback sometimes simply by offering attention.

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