CUSTOMER SERVICE:

LISTENING, PERSONALIZING, AND DELIVERING

THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE

bitly THE POWER *of* THE LINK.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: LISTENING, PERSONALIZING, AND DELIVERING THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE

It's a great time to be a consumer.

We can reach brands practically whenever and wherever we are.

We can ask for help with just a 140-character tweet. We can share our thoughts on our latest purchase by posting a photo to our Instagram account.

But that also means that it's harder than ever to be a brand.

Which platforms are customers on? What are customers talking about across these channels? How do you maintain quality and frequency of customer support as you scale?

IN THIS GUIDE, YOU WILL LEARN:

▶ Why customer service is so important

▶ Concrete ways to personalize the experience

▶ Common customer service mistakes and how to avoid them

▶ How to use Bitly to track and measure the success of your customer service efforts across all channels

▶ Top customer service trends to prepare for in 2018

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01
WHY CUSTOMER SERVICE IS SO IMPORTANT

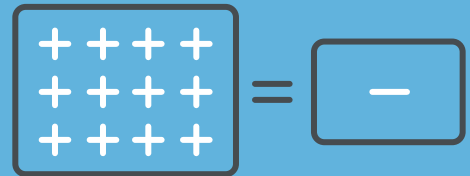**10**% increase in customer retention

leads to a

30% increase in company value.[6]

77% of people say that valuing their time is the most important thing a company can do to provide them with good service.[2]

It takes 12 positive customer experiences to make up for one negative experience.[3]

Loyal customers are worth up to ten times as much as their first purchase.[1]

It costs 6-7 times more to attract a new customer than it is to retain one.[2]

70% of all purchases are based on how a customer feels they are treated.[5]

Source   https://www.helpscout.net/75-customer-service-facts-quotes-statistics/ (1)
https://www.whitehouse.gov (2)
http://www.parature.com/infographic-financialcustserv/ (3)
http://www.conversocial.com/blog/the-7-most-important-customer-service-stats-for-2017 (4)
http://returnonbehavior.com/2010/10/50-facts-about-customer-experience-for-2011/ (5)
http://www.bain.com/publications/business-insights/loyalty.aspx (6)

02
3 WAYS TO PERSONALIZE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

HEY JEN!

$

If you're like most people, it probably means pretty much nothing. It's a fancy buzzword that can be checked off the list if you send an email with your customer's name in it.

And maybe that's why we as marketers are falling short with personalization— no one really knows what it means.

In a recent survey, 77% of brands say that real-time personalization is really important, but 60% struggle with doing this.

The key to compelling personalization isn't revolutionary. It's knowing what your audience wants. To spark real engagement, we have to see across all channels to manage, know, build and personalize the customer experience.

But 40% of us struggle to gain insight quickly enough, and 39% of us struggle with not having enough data. How do you organize, analyze, and turn this data into actionable content?

01 | Geotargeting: Get Mobile

If you look at Swarm and Pokemon Go, consumers are already in the habit of sharing their location data in exchange for special content.

The research backs this up. More than half (53%) of consumers are willing to share their current location to receive more relevant advertising.

At Bitly, we've seen brands use location data to both tailor real-time content and inform future marketing initiatives.

One media company uses Bitly OneView to organize and track engagement by city. They're able to see how each region responds to different artists by tracking the clicks to an album page, concert tickets, and VIP packages.

Many free users do this too. Country singer, Elizabeth Lyons, uses Bitly OneView to track which cities are most engaged with her content and schedules her tours around these top cities.
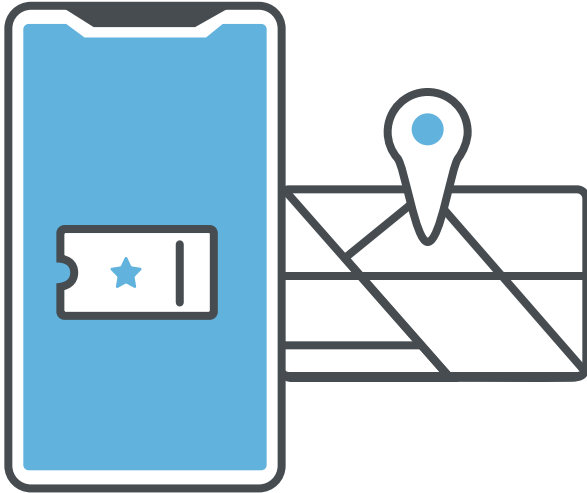
A major department store uses Bitly's API and an SMS service to bridge the in-store and online experience for their customers.

When a customer reaches a brick-and-mortar location, the app detects their location and sends a text message with a custom Bitlink driving back to a landing page with personalized content based on their purchase history, app search history, and saved items.

Getting Started:

Slice-and-dice location data in your Bitly dashboard and then base your customer service response off of this. For example, if a customer arrives at your store within 30 minutes of closing, you can have a notification pop up on their phone that gives them a heads up. Then provide additional ways the customer can get in touch. This kind of proactive messaging can reduce a lot of friction when a customer is looking for immediate help.

53% of consumers are willing to share their current location to receive more relevant advertising.
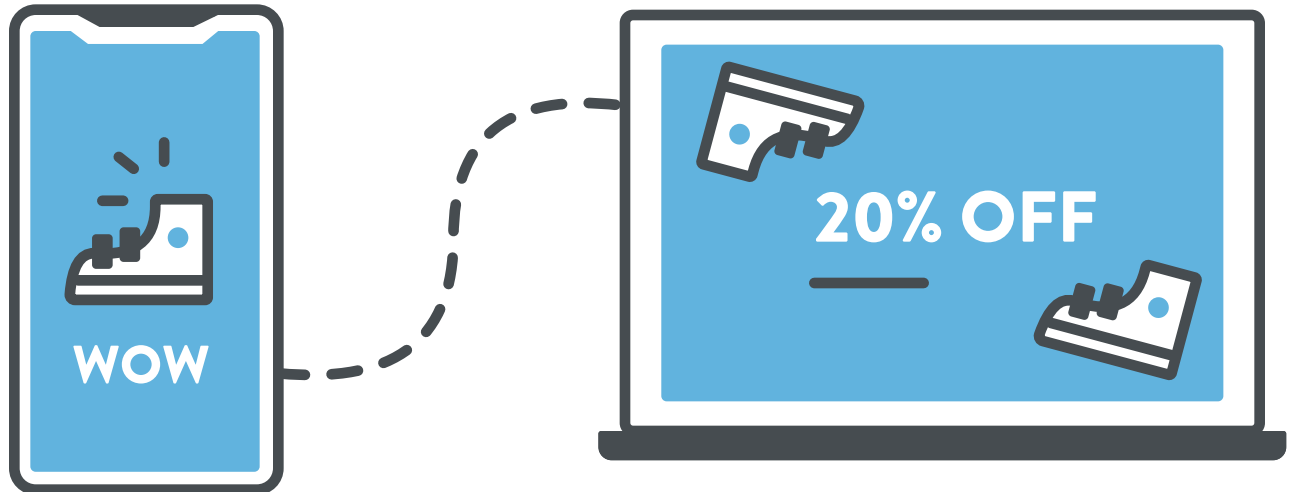
02 | Behavioral Retargeting: The Follow Up

For most websites, only 2% of web traffic converts on the first visit.

Retargeting, serving up related content to people who have visited your site or previously engaged, is a great way to keep your brand top of mind.

Our marketing team at Bitly uses Facebook Ads to retarget users who have previously engaged with our product or read our content.

To optimize our call-to-actions and be budget-savvy, we include Bitlinks in each ad to A/B test and tweak the content over the course of its run time. Bitlinks add a layer of insights on top of those pulled from Facebook Insights, giving us visibility into the effectiveness of our paid efforts across all channels and devices.

If one ad is taking off on one platform more than another, we can quickly reallocate our resources and budget where our customers are most engaged.
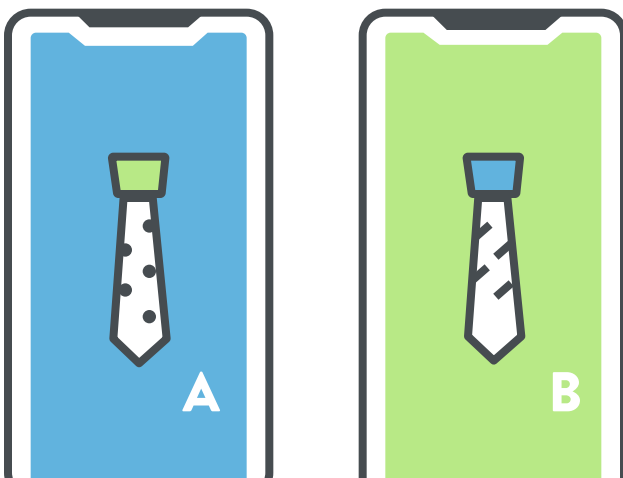
Rethink the link to build a more robust, seamless customer experience.
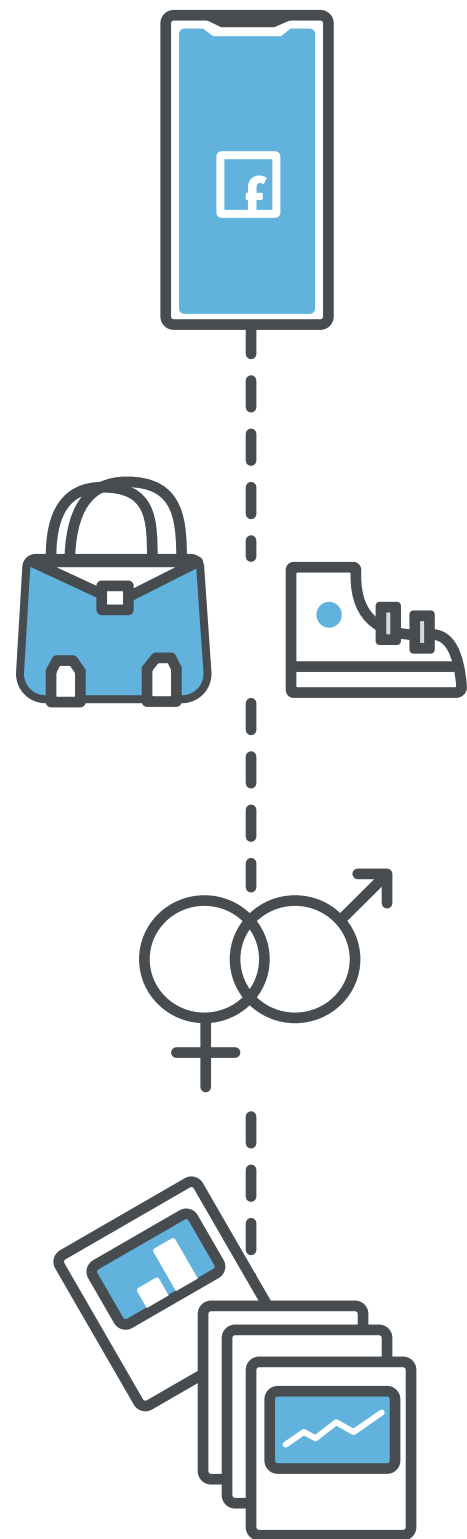
Learn how: bitly.is/rethinkthelink ▶

One luxury retailer uses Bitly OneView to track various products promoted through Facebook Ads.

Here, this retailer has broken it out by handbags, boots, and shoes, but these channels can be rearranged as you see fit. This retailer also goes one step further to track product by gender to see how each customer persona is engaging with specific products.

Each campaign has 100 links grouped across different channels, so you can really get an idea of how content is performing at both a micro and macro level.

Getting Started:

You can use retargeting in your customer service messaging. If you see that the customer you're interacting with hasn't engaged with the product in a while, maybe share content that recaps new features they may have missed.

Behavioral Retargeting: The Follow Up
Customer Serivce: Listening, Personalizing, Delivering the Ultimate Experience

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03 | Social Proof: What Is Your Audience Doing With Your Content?

The success of peer reviews and user-generated content (UGC) is rooted in science. Social proof is a psychological phenomenon where people conform to the actions or opinions of the majority under the assumption that it's the correct thing to do.

Many companies use Bitly OneView to track influencer marketing efforts. By sharing a custom Bitlink with each influencer you work with, you can collect a lot of data on niche audiences.

On a channel like Instagram, for example, popular sub-communities include "Passion Passport," an account featuring travel photos from around the globe, "Pursuit of Portraits," an account dedicated to featuring unique and artistic portrait shots, and "On The Table," a gallery of food and other items styled on tables.

Learn what these specific audience groups are interested in and serve up more of that type of content the next time they contact support.
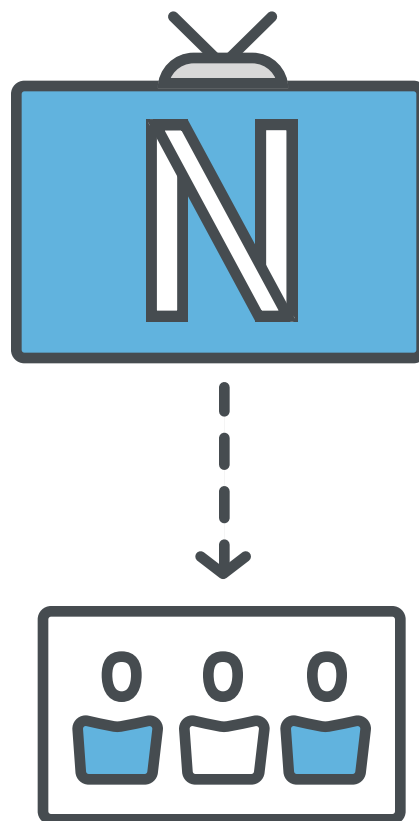
Getting Started:

Netflix does a great job of serving up recommended movies based on what viewers similar to you have been watching. Just by paying attention to what your audience and your extended network is engaging with, you can map your whole personalization strategy.
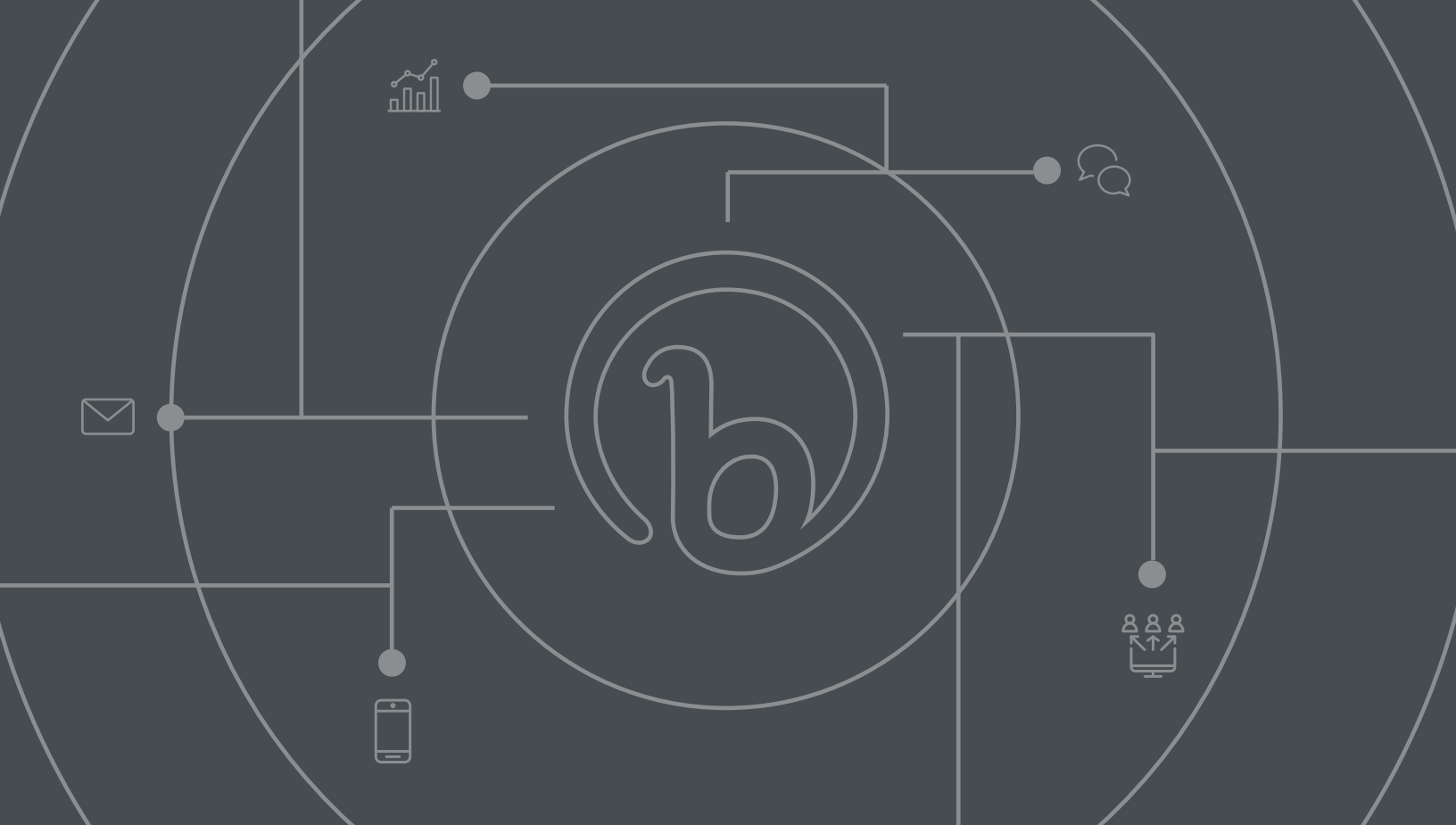
It's The Journey, Not The Destination

Realistically, customers won't be won over by just a few personalization tricks. If one landing page remembers their preferences and another doesn't, it will only make for a confusing and frustrating experience.

People are engaging across mobile, desktop, Facebook, Instagram, and email. Often, they're doing it all at once.

Personalization is very simple: use data to figure out what your audience wants. When you know what your audience wants, you can create experiences that you know they'll love.

Social Proof: What Is Your Audience Doing With Your Content?
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03
THE FOUR BIGGEST CUSTOMER SERVICE MISTAKES AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

They say the customer is always right.

But that doesn't mean you're always wrong.

The average business only hears from 4% of its dissatisfied customers. And for every complaint, 26 other customers remain silent. So how are you supposed to know how what's working well and what to improve on?

For all of the feedback we see on social media these days, getting a holistic picture of your customer service is surprisingly challenging. That's why we've rounded up some common customer service mistakes and how we've seen real life brands tackle them.

4%

26
**SILENT**

01 | Right Pitch, Wrong Tone

Even if you have the right message and the right intentions, it's all about how you deliver it.

And striking the right tone can be tricky with customers. While 65% of all customers usually prefer a casual tone over a formal one, this changes when the customer is being denied a request.

It's all about context. Personalize your tone based on audience, channel, and the situation.

Here's a really great example of how one UK supermarket chain turned a complaint into an opportunity to have fun.

David, Sainsbury's Social Media Manager, jumped to action when Marty wrote in about an issue he had with purchasing battered fish from the supermarket. He played on the seafood puns and also signed the tweets off with his name for a personal touch.
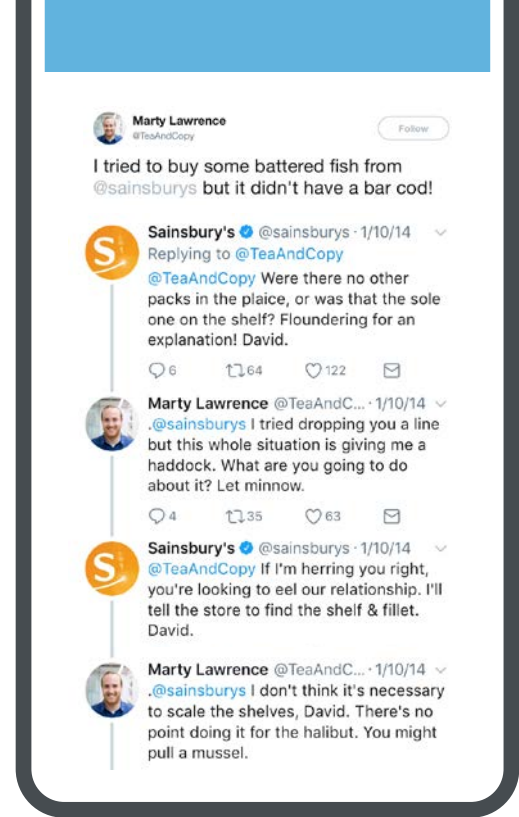
This kicked off a long exchange between David and shopper Marty Lawrence, ultimately ending with a great number of retweets and likes. Marty even called it the "finnacle of his tweeting career."

02 | Not Seeing The Bigger Picture

In the age of Face ID, Netflix recommendations, and Seamless Reorder on Alexa, customers expect you to know them.

A majority of customers, 72% of them, expect customer service reps to know their contact information and service history right from the start of the conversation without being asked for it.

But a recent study revealed that 79% of customer support centers have no bigger picture view of a customers' interactions across service channels.

That's because customer data is siloed across different channels, platforms, and devices. The average American owns four digital devices and spends 60 hours a week consuming content across these devices.

Look for a good CRM, customer relationship management software, to plug in across every aspect of the customer funnel. Make sure

all of the right teams have access to the data and can collaborate off of their insights.

At Bitly, we use Salesforce, Intercom, and Zendesk.

We also use Bitly, of course. We plug Bitlinks into each channel, the blog, social, email and more, to track and share content performance. Our team is able to identify which topics are of most interest to our community, which channels our audience is engaging from, and what devices they're on.

Through tracking with Bitlinks, we found out that most of our users were coming to the support page from Twitter and a majority of them were based in the United States. Back in our dashboard, we can also see clicks over time, so we can determine peak months for support.

MATT

03 | Not Treating Every Customer as an Advocate

Everyone is a micro-influencer these days. One tweet, snap, or Instagram post about your product has the potential to affect buying behavior. Friends, family, or even strangers who stumble on the post via a hashtag will take that post into consideration.

Unhappy customers might not complain to you, but they will tell 9–15 people about their negative experience. While happy customers only tell 4–6 people. Every interaction with a customer is an opportunity to build a relationship.

I recently purchased a pair of ski goggles from Backcountry and I was impressed when an account manager, the company calls them Gearheads, reached out to me over the phone and via email a few days later.

Despite the volume of customers he must be working with on a daily basis, my Gearhead sent me an email that felt personalized. He asked if I had any upcoming trips and he also took the time to introduce himself and his shared passion for skiing.

To top it off, he explained more about his role, how he could help and when he's available.

This is the kind of interaction that helps strike up a relationship because the customer knows exactly where to find help, knows that they will be heard, and most importantly trusts that the rep is knowledgeable in the space.

Backcountry's email certainly won me over since I'm now advocating for the brand in this ebook!

It can be tempting to simply give the customer what they need and close out that support ticket. Especially when you're dealing with a high volume of inbound messages. But thinking beyond that one purchase or interaction is what's going to get customers spreading positive feedback about your brand.

Not Treating Every Customer as an Advocate
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04 | Relying Too Much on Chatbots And A.I.

Chatbots have come a long way from the days of SmarterChild on AIM. They're trained to know the user and they've also become a lot more realistic.

Sometimes, it's hard to even tell that you're talking to a bot.

Amy, x.ai's bot, was asked out on a date nearly once a month in 2015!

Research shows that 57% of brands are either already using chatbots or plan to in the next year.

This makes sense because chatbots solve a lot of the pain points we've listed above. They can immediately pull up historical information on a shopper at the start of the conversation and personalize the experience. They can even learn what words or what tone to best use with customers by analyzing large sets of conversations.

But, most of the time, bots still need some sort of human intervention. We've probably all experienced ill-timed or irrelevant automated tweets before.

It's frustrating when you receive a canned "Thanks for your support!" tweet after writing in to a brand about an issue you're experiencing.

LogiNext, a workforce operations software company, says that the biggest issue is that chatbots can't understand things like sarcasm.

"There was a risk to customer service... currently chatbots aren't sophisticated enough to understand the context," says Dhruvil Sanghvi, Co-Founder and CEO, LogiNext.

The company tested customer service bots recently and ultimately stopped the project since they couldn't get accuracy levels high enough.

Relying too much on chatbots and A.I.
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04
HOW TO USE BITLY TO WIN AT CUSTOMER SERVICE

01 | Driving Reviews Through a Shorter, Branded Link

"We have a three-person customer service team and we rely on Bitly to drive and track customer reviews and testimonials.

Nobody wants to see a 200-character URL in a chat message or an email. But if it's a nice and neat Bitlink, they are more inclined to click on it and more inclined to leave a positive review on sites like Yelp and Google plus.

Since we started adding in Bitlinks, we have noticed a 14% increase in review acquisition!"

Bryan Clayton
CEO of GreenPal

Driving Reviews Through a Shorter, Branded Link
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BIT.LY →

BITLY.IS/SUPPORT

34%
ENGAGEMENT ↑

02 | Making Sure Users Know Exactly Where To Find Help

At Bitly, we've pinned a branded link to our support page (bitly.is/support) at the top of all of our social media channels.

Bitly.is is our Branded Short Domain, which replaces the generic bit.ly.

The Branded Short Domain and the customized second half of the link, "support" in place of the usual randomly generated letters behind the domain, make it easier for followers to remember the link and type it in whenever they need.

We've seen Branded Short Domains drive up to a 34% increase in engagement.

Making Sure Users Know Exactly Where To Find Help
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03 | Tracking The Effectiveness of Support Content

"Our clients are looking to automate or motorize their window blinds and shades. The Soma Smart Home team uses Bitly URL shortener for various tasks in our day-to-day operations to make it easier to navigate through the choices.

For example, we include Bitlinks in our email replies to customers. We use Bitlinks to share references to specific Google, Amazon or other e-store links when customers turn to us with questions on which blind or chain to choose to ensure that it works with our Smart Shades device. This helps us track how customers are engaging with content while still keeping the email looking neat."

Markus Tani,
Customer Relations Manager,
Soma Smart Home

Tracking The Effectiveness of Support Content
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04 | Tracking Across Channels: Bitly API + SMS

Challenge

As consumers have gone digital, food delivery has followed.

The days of trying to place an order to an overwhelmed cashier in a kitchen have been replaced by clicking and tapping. Yet those clicks and swipes happen across multiple channels: email, SMS, web, and social all come into the mix when restaurants and apps have to think about how to best service the audience.
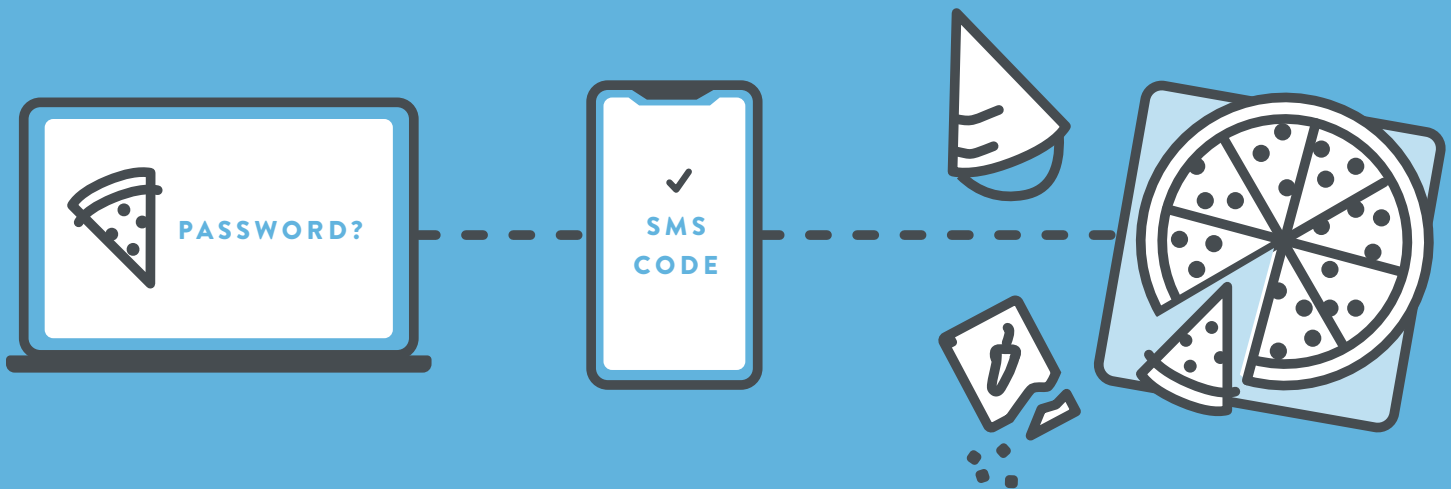
That's why one of the biggest food delivery services in the world turned to Bitly.

With Bitly's Branded Short Domains, the brand made sure that every link was consistently branded, no matter what channel. After starting to use branded links across multiple channels, the company built user seats out for different team members. Bitly Brand Manager allowed the team to build out dashboards for mobile, digital, social, and partnership

teams. That gave everyone access to the data they needed while making reporting easy and streamlined. Wherever customers ordered, the team could measure it.

By achieving cross-channel branding with Branded Short Domains and using Brand Manager to make sure every team member could own their piece of the analytics, the food delivery service turned to something that had been a challenge: SMS.
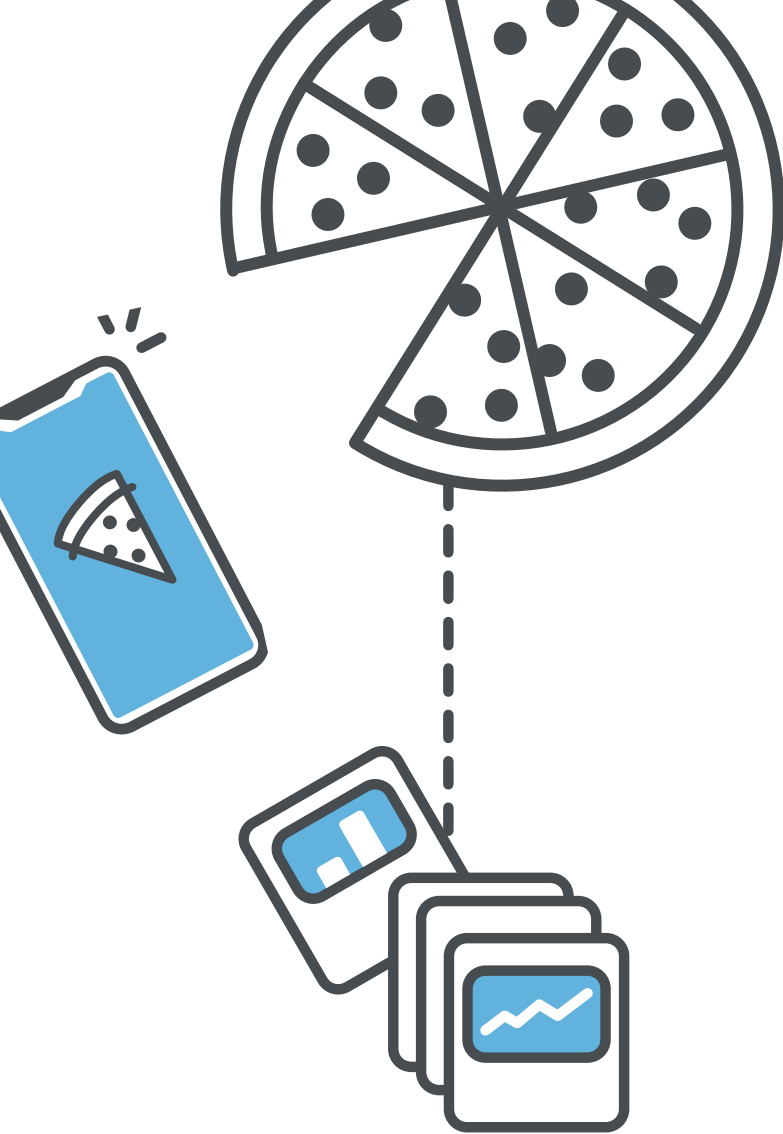
Tracking Across Channels: Bitly API + SMS
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Uncovering The True Value of SMS

SMS is one of the most immediate and personal forms ofcommunication between brands and consumers. The team knew that SMS can drive engagement and sales, but actual ROI was hard to prove.

With the Bitly API, the brand's dev team was able to integrate the SMS campaigns and customized, trackable Bitlinks in every text message. This made it easy to track the engagement rates on different promotions. Also, they could compress the ordinarily clunky UTM parameters that helped them track the customer journey into branded links.

The team also added Bitlinks to an automated password recovery process. This was enabled right on the account login page. If a customer forgot his or her password to the site, it was possible to request the reset link by a personalized SMS.

With the Bitly API, the team made sure that every link was branded and trackable. This made even the password resets a trackable and testable element of customer experience.

Tracking Across Channels: Bitly API + SMS
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Delivering a Great Customer Experience

The restaurant chain has a robust marketing engine and Bitly has helped fuel the digital experience for the brand's consumers. From text messages and social channels to the website, every link is branded and trackable.

That means that the entire digital team can ensure that they're constantly delivering the best possible experience — from preparation and delivery to consumption.
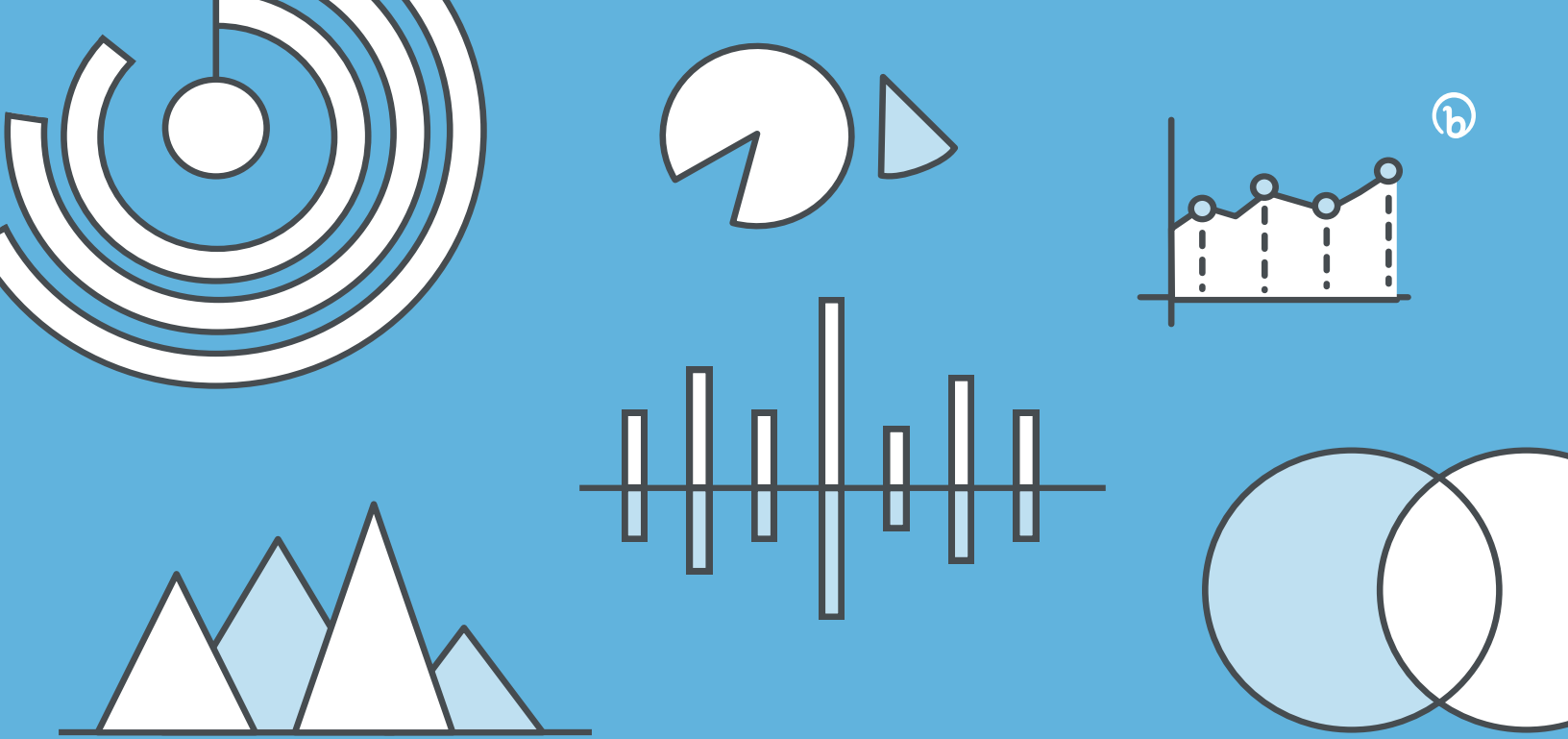
Results

Before implementing Bitly, the brand's support center would get 20–40,000 email requests for help with passwords each day. Since building an SMS password reset program with the Bitly API, the company has reduced email inquiries by 66%. That means less strain on internal resources and more self-service options for customers.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT HOW *you* CAN USE THE LINK TO OPTIMIZE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?

Email us at sdr@bitly.com to learn more. ▶

GET STARTED

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CHAPTER 5: TOP CUSTOMER SERVICE TRENDS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN 2018

2017 was a big year for customer service.

It was a year of lessons. From the Fyre Festival, we learned the importance of keeping your word. From the Equifax hack, we were reminded of how putting profits ahead of customers can seriously hurt your brand.

It was also a year of change. We've seen AI and chatbots make big strides. You can now order your morning cup of Starbucks coffee through Facebook

Messenger and get notified when it's ready for pickup.

The Messenger bot will also generate and play songs for you through Spotify depending on your mood.

So what's next for 2018? If stats are any indicator, there's much more change ahead. By 2020, customer experience will overtake price and product as a brand differentiator.

We've enlisted the help of some customer service experts to map out the biggest trends for the coming year.

01 | Data-Charged Personalization

**"In 2018, we'll see:**

Emotion-tracking technology:
Advances in machine learning have allowed computer software to analyze customer input and determine customer's emotions. These programs can listen in on phone calls, evaluate how a customer is feeling, and feed this information back to the customer service representative on the line in real-time so that the representative can respond accordingly based on that intelligence.

Customer data consolidation:
With how extensive technology is today, customer data now arrives from a wide variety of sources, such as social media, surveys, live chat systems, and phone calls. Centralized dashboards will increasingly be able to consolidate data from all of these customer touch points to provide a comprehensive view of the customer that helps businesses determine actionable steps to improve the customer's experience."

Peter Yang,
Co-Founder of ResumeGo
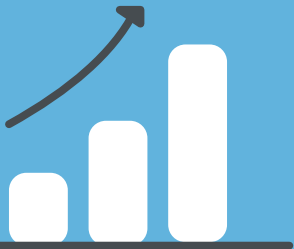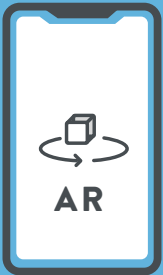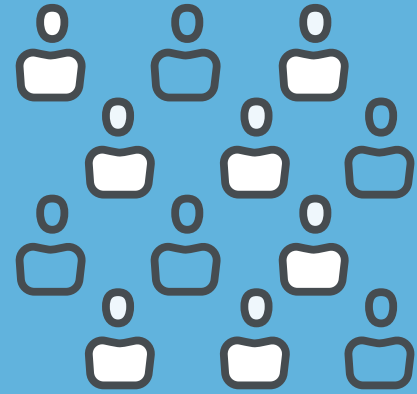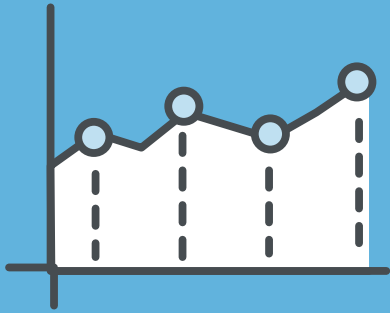
2018

02 | Cloud, Communication, And Talent

"As we look back on 2017 and into 2018 there are some new challenges as a result of new technology platforms, mainly cloud platforms, and customers demanding more ways to communicate with organizations. I see three major challenges that need to be addressed: learning to effectively leverage cloud technologies, managing the growing number of communication channels, and expanding the workforce.

Leveraging Cloud Technologies:

Cloud technologies allow organizations to achieve things they haven't been able to before due to financial or resource constraints. With the "pay-as-you-go" model and the elimination of of premise based systems, organizations now have access to a broader set of technologies. Some of these technologies are as basic as workforce management while some are more advanced, like speech analytics. Organizations need to determine which technologies to utilize to improve both the customer and employee experience.

Managing The Ever Growing Number of Communication Channels:

Customers continue to broaden the range of communication channels that they use to communicate with organizations. And organizations are challenged with providing the same level of service across all of these channels. Organizations must figure out how to address a number of items including: the types of skills agents need across various channels, key KPIs for each channel, and how to support customers pivoting across channels.

Expanding The Workforce:

In today's landscape, customer service agents are being called to take on more skills and responsibilities. Organizations must figure out how to expand their workforce to widen their set of talent. Remote teams are an effective way to accomplish this. To build a successful remote work program, organizations must address a number of items including: setting up the proper technical infrastructure and incentivizing employees to stay engaged."

Varun Shoor,
CEO, Founder of Kayako

03 | Still About The Humans

"My predictions for 2018: despite all the new industry buzzwords and CRM technology, in the end, customer relations in 2018 will depend, as it always does, on the customer service representative.

Customer service representatives need to be knowledgeable, courteous, and pleasant when dealing with the customer. Whether over the phone, on the Internet, or in-store, reps need to know the answers and deliver exactly what customers are looking for.

So, forget the technology, my 2018 prediction is your front line customer service people will make the difference."

Nancy Friedman,
President of Telephone Doctor
Customer Service Training Inc.

04 | Balancing A Human Touch With Automated Support

"There is no end to the number of technologies that make it easy to capture and record individual customer preferences and purchase history. This allows companies to create tailored solutions for their customers that (theoretically) enhance the customer's experience. However, there is a real desire amongst consumers to have real human interactions. Even though we have the technology to answer their questions, sometimes customers just want to talk to a person — and chat bots aren't cutting it. This is a real issue that I believe will grow in 2018 and beyond as more companies defer entirely to technology for customer support. We're mindful of this challenge at Chairish and strive to provide a balance between offering the human support that consumers crave and automated support for efficiency."

Anna Brockway,
Co-Founder and CMO of Chairish

Balancing a human touch with automated support
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Conclusion

Customer Service:
Listening, Personalizing, And Delivering The Ultimate Experience

Don't let the nature of today's digital landscape fool you. It might feel fast paced and on some channels the content might even disappear, but customer service is part of the long game.

Building loyal customers is the best way to improve your bottom line. Research shows that even a 5% increase in retention rate can lead to profit increases of 25% to 95%.

Customers have plenty to share about your product's biggest strengths and opportunities because they're interacting with it every day.

And in today's age of social media, it's all online. Whether you're hopping on to chat with customers directly or using software to tune in and filter out feedback, there are more ways than ever to communicate with your customers. All you have to do is look.

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GET STARTED