TELECOMS BRANDS

CAN CONNECT WITH TOMORROW'S CONSUMERS

CHEETAH DIGITAL

10 SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES FOR TELECOMS BRANDS IN 2018

INTRODUCTION

Fuelled by growth in the digital economy and ever-evolving consumer demands, the telecoms sector is undergoing profound changes.

While often at the forefront of digital innovation, what consumers used to enjoy as a perk just a few years ago, they now expect as a given. No longer satisfied with dial-up internet and patchy 3G, they demand super-fast broadband and blanket 4G coverage as a fundamental human right. It will be one or two years before 5G is the expected norm.

As consumers shop around for the best deal, competition increases and every provider offers add-ons such as complementary devices and unlimited data, calls and texts, it has become a veritable race to the bottom. Coupled with the abolishment of data roaming charges in many territories and an uptick in mergers and acquisitions, telecoms brands are beginning to feel the squeeze. That's why telecoms providers need to find a new differentiator to engage with consumers and connect with them on every digital touchpoint, keeping their brand front-and-centre when it's purchasing time.

Consumers are no longer content to call or email their provider for help or to air a grievance, they raise queries on social media and expect a near instant response. The challenge facing telecoms providers is to move complaints from the mob mentality of social media, to dedicated, moderated areas of their websites. Leaving social channels as a space for valuable brand engagement that can take place across owned and earned digital properties.

As digital advertising budgets continue to shrink, click-through rates drop to record low levels, and telecoms revenue per consumer continues to drop, marketers are feeling the pressure to build brand awareness and connect with savvy consumers.

13% — US CONSUMERS LOOKED AT THEIR DEVICES 13% MORE THAN LAST YEAR

$1.2tn — EXPECTED GLOBAL REVENUE FROM TELECOMS SERVICES IN 2019
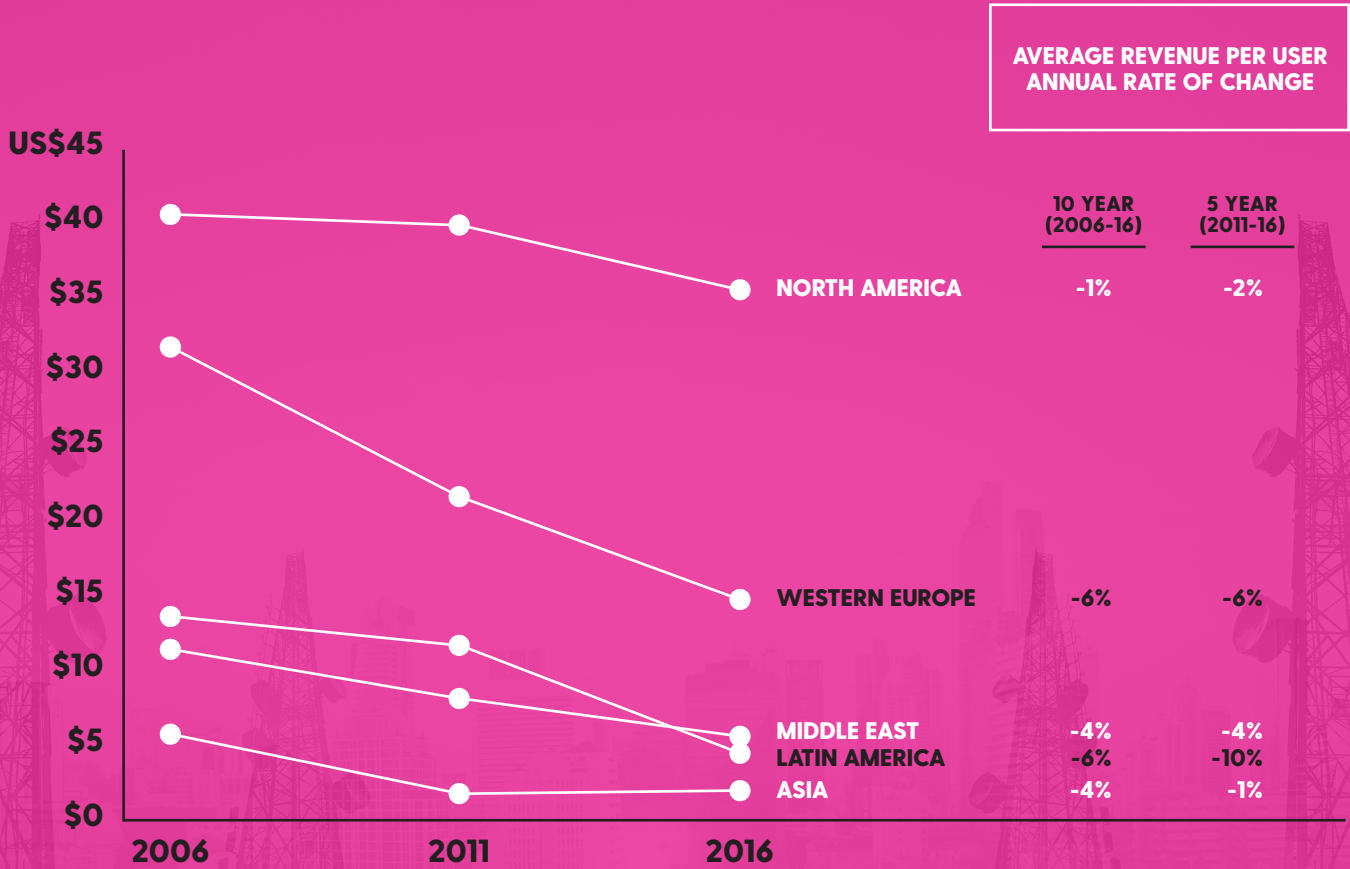
$2.9bn — FORRESTER PREDICT TOP CMOS WILL TAKE $2.9BN AWAY FROM DISPLAY ADS IN 2018

6.8bn — MOBILE PHONE CONTRACTS ISSUED WORLDWIDE

AVERAGE REVENUE PER USER IN THE TELECOMS INDUSTRY IS **FALLING** IN VIRTUALLY EVERY REGION.

AVERAGE REVENUE PER USER ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE

	10 YEAR (2006-16)	5 YEAR (2011-16)
NORTH AMERICA	-1%	-2%
WESTERN EUROPE	-6%	-6%
MIDDLE EAST	-4%	-4%
LATIN AMERICA	-6%	-10%
ASIA	-4%	-1%

US$45
$40
$35
$30
$25
$20
$15
$10
$5
$0

2006   2011   2016

Source: Strategy & research analysis

SO WHAT SHOULD TELECOMS BRANDS DO?

If telecoms brands focus their marketing efforts on tariffs, data, texts and coverage, they'll be caught in a never ending price war. And there's always a sim-free disruptor ready to undercut even the most generous of providers.

Instead, they need to develop a narrative around their brand that creates differentiation in the mind of the consumer, and apply engagement tactics that build a loyal band of advocates. Raising the conversation above and beyond price and how many free texts one receives in their bundle.

But rather than going down the cost rich and reward poor rabbit hole of digital ads, it's critical to make sure customers have an excellent brand experience at each and every digital touchpoint. It's this ongoing relationship and audience engagement that will differentiate operators and determine how effectively they grow their market share, minimize churn and increase usage.

Advertising has perpetuated the lack of real interaction telecoms brands have with their consumers, and through the proliferation of ad-blocking tech, rock bottom click-through rates and consumer indifference, digital advertising is no longer the answer.

With this in mind, here are 10 successful marketing strategies for telecoms brands in 2018 to be employed across all digital touchpoints.

1. **Tell A Compelling Brand Narrative**
2. **Socialize Your Digital Properties**
3. **Make Customers Your Best Marketers**
4. **Promote, Convert, Educate**
5. **Make Customers Loyal**

6. **Keep It All Legal**
7. **Show Your Partners Some Love**
8. **Connect Consumers With Big Events**
9. **Optimize Your Content Strategy**
10. **Base Your Decisions On Insight**

1 TELL A COMPELLING BRAND NARRATIVE

If all customer relationships were purely transactional, brands wouldn't exist. Consumers would make an unemotional decision based on price and little more.

It's only when telecoms brands connect on an emotional level that they can build trust, loyalty and advocacy. Making consumers part of your brand story, and making them more likely to re-sign when contracts are up for renewal.

Whether encouraging consumers to create UGC to ramp up the excitement for a sponsored event, or a quiz for audience insights on a new phone case design, making consumers part of your compelling brand narrative is essential. And today, behemoth telecoms brands like Vodafone, Verizon, 3 Mobile and many more are doing just that across all digital channels.

VODAFONE SUMMERTIME BALL UGC COUNTDOWN

Vodafone generated swathes of UGC to promote the Summertime Ball it sponsored and boosted brand engagement.

VERIZON SUPER BOWL SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

Verizon generated conversation and boosted brand affinity ahead of the Super Bowl.

2 SOCIALIZE YOUR DIGITAL PROPERTIES

Telecoms brands need to become as savvy as their customers, by transforming their websites and other digital channels into immersive social hubs that feature the perfect balance of branded and user-generated content.

These hubs are engineered to maximize engagement, drive interaction and boost traffic to campaign and product pages.

The benefits of proudly displaying your hard-earned UGC are clear: you maximize consumer trust, increase brand relevance and drive on-site engagement. Whether it's a collage of selfies with the latest handset, or tweets about your favourite feature, it makes your brand stand out from the competition.

To drive engagement that little bit further, using Wayin, telecoms brands can apply a custom call-to-action to a product or image within an Instagram photo or social story, and link directly to an optimized microsite or product page.

Yet, in 2018 all too many telecoms brands are failing to fully socialize their website and harness the power of UGC.

18%

ONLY 18% OF THE TOP 250 BRANDS CURATE UGC FROM INSTAGRAM ON THEIR WEBSITE

9%

A LOWLY 9% OF BRANDS PLACE UGC DIRECTLY ON THEIR PRODUCT PAGES

NOKIA LUMIA #MAKEITHAPPEN UGC CAMPAIGN

Nokia Lumia #MakeitHappen campaign generated huge amounts of New Year's wishes, goodwill and resolutions.
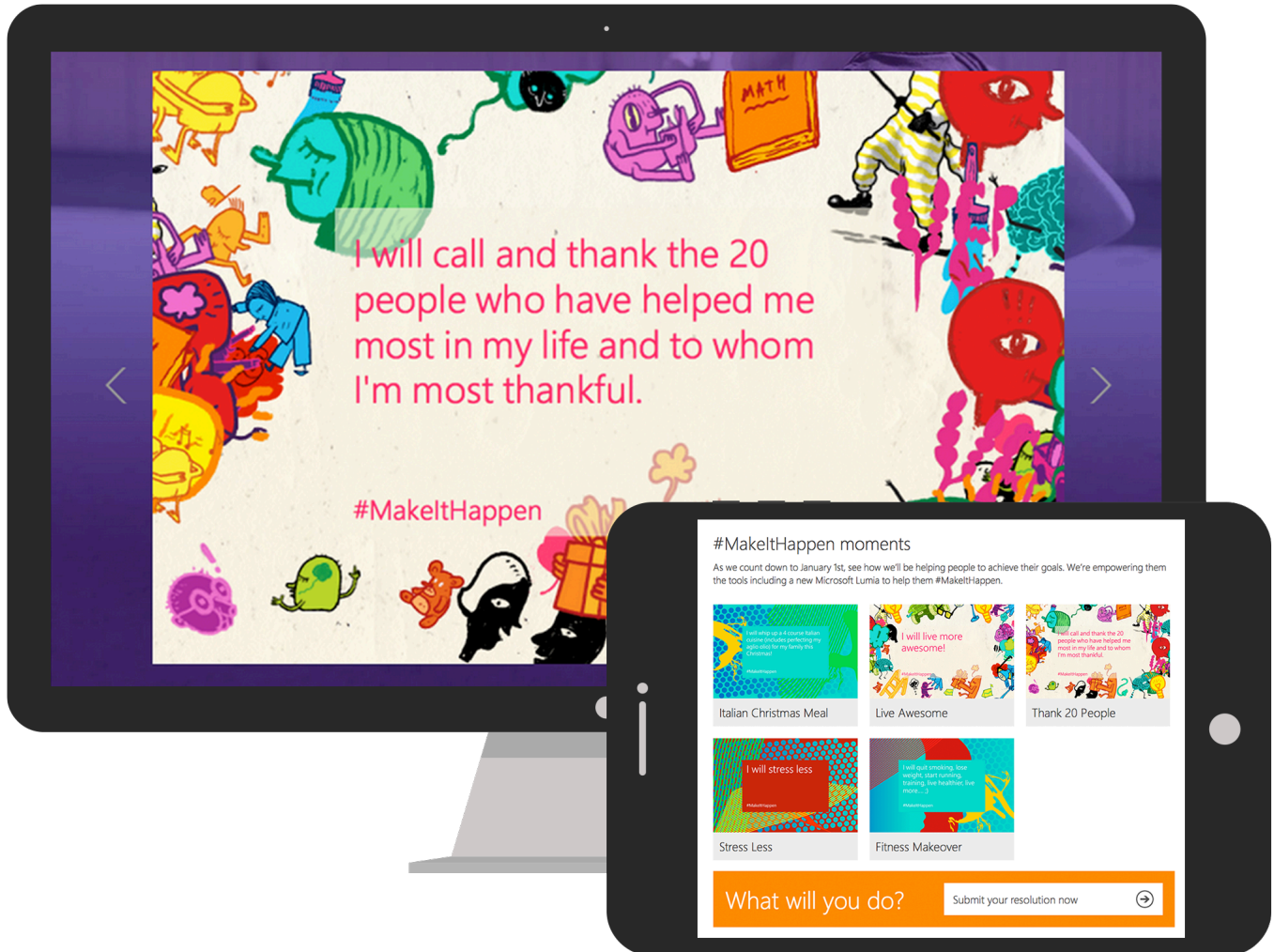
92%

OF CONSUMERS TRUST WORD OF MOUTH OVER ANY OTHER FORMS OF ADVERTISING

If telecoms brands can create the optimum mix of user-generated and branded content, they can turn social channels and websites into catalysts for conversions and ultimately sales. Consumers are far more influenced by content shared on social media and reviews from their peers over any form of advertising.

And by adding mechanics like quizzes, polls, meme generators and hashtag campaigns they'll encourage consumers to create and share more content, while capturing richly profiled audience data.

HOW IT WORKS

Social content ingested

Editor curates content

Editor favorites content

Editor publishes content

Content available to customers

UGC-POWERED WEBSITES ACHIEVE RESULTS

10%
DECREASE IN BOUNCE RATES ON WEB PAGES THAT FEATURE SOCIAL CONTENT AND INTERACTIVE APPS

22%
INCREASE IN CLICK-THROUGHS ON CTAS WHEN PAGES INGEST SOCIAL CONTENT

300%
INCREASE IN DWELL TIME ON PAGES WITH SOCIAL CONTENT AND INTERACTIVE APPS

11%
INCREASE IN WEB TRAFFIC WITH SITES THAT FEATURE SOCIAL CONTENT AND INTERACTIVE APPLICATIONS

3 MAKE CUSTOMERS YOUR BEST MARKETERS

UGC doesn't just look good, it has the added benefit of putting your customers to work to do your marketing and advertising for you.

By running marketing campaigns that encourage consumers to create and share their content, brands can inspire a huge volume of UGC that can be published to all digital channels. Cutting through the complaints, gripes and troubleshooting noise. Whether it be hashtag contests on Twitter, boomerangs on Instagram or sticker selfies on Snapchat, this content influences other potential customers.

HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DO TELECOM'S CEOS THINK THEIR CUSTOMERS HAVE ON THEIR ENTERPRISE TODAY?

63%
LARGE EXTENT

32%
SOME EXTENT

5%
LIMITED EXTENT
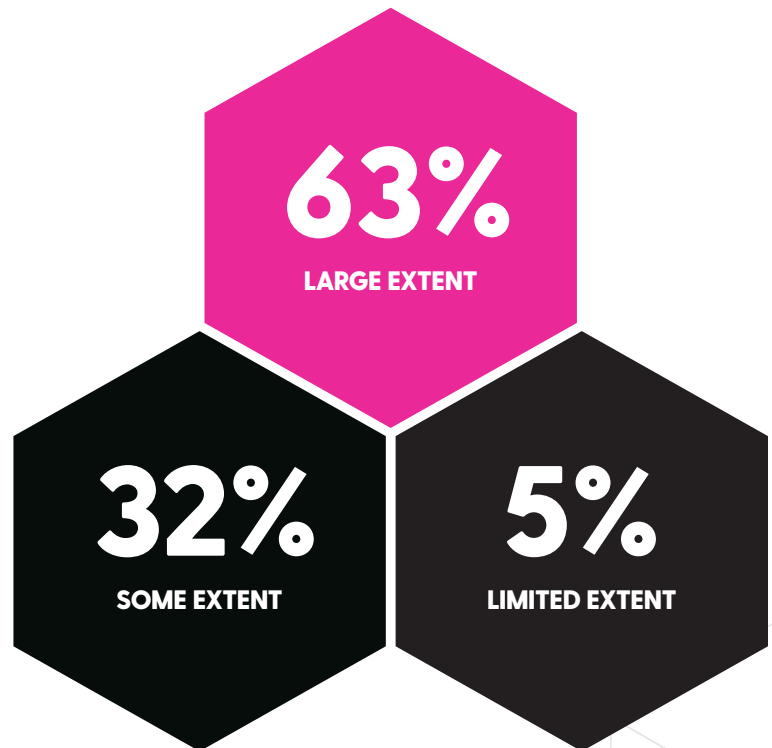
To truly maximize the benefit of all of this customer activity, marketers need to simply search social channels for the best content related to their latest campaign or product release through keywords or a specific hashtag.

Then choose the best photos, videos and updates, and publish them into socially curated pages or social hubs across social, mobile, big screens, website's or any digital touchpoint.

MOVISTAR #STREETCHALLENGE CAMPAIGN

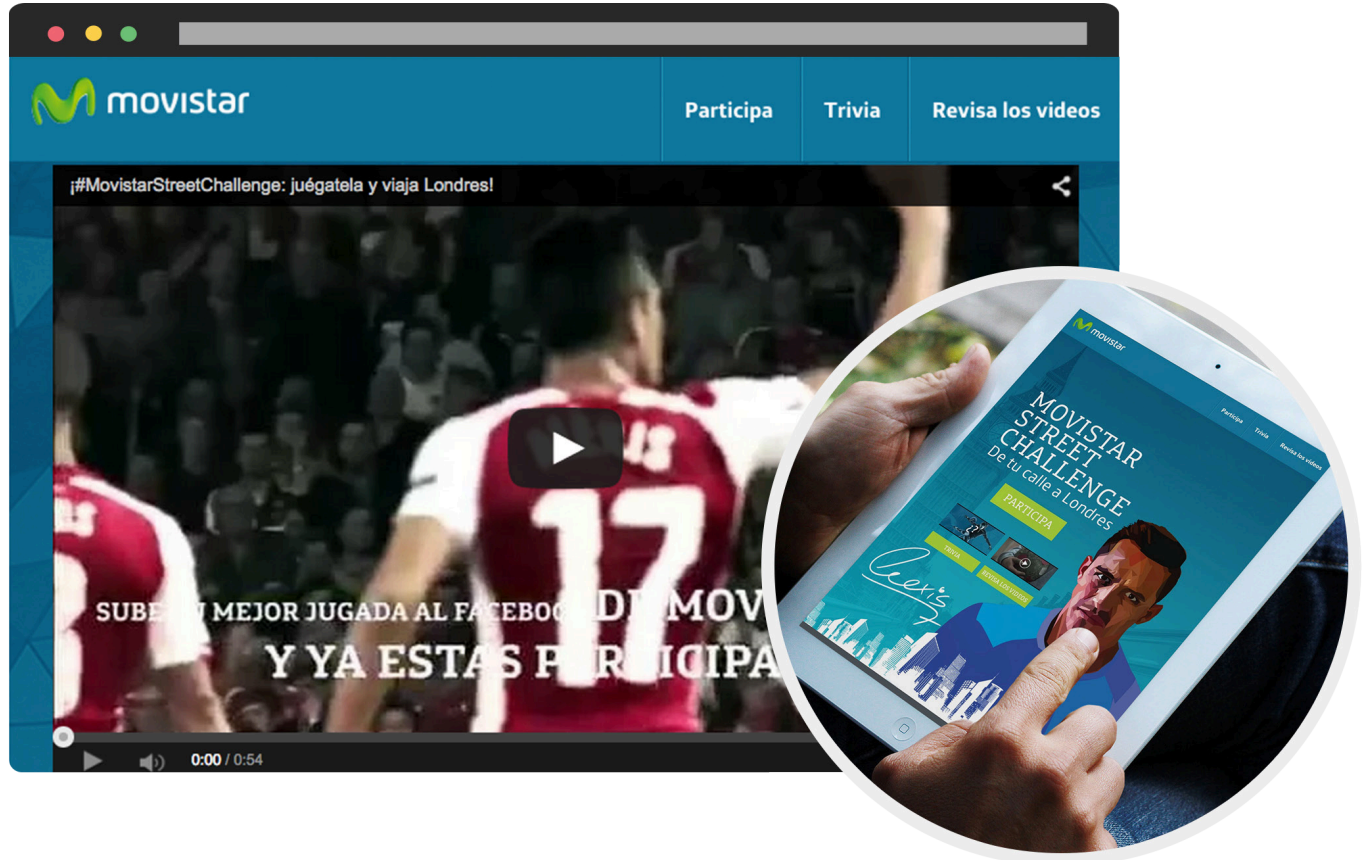Movistar Chile challenged their customers with the #MovistarStreetChallenge to test their knowledge of Alexis Sánchez and upload their own videos showcasing their football skills. Winners travelled to London to watch him play.

In addition to hard-earned UGC, telecoms brands should look to pull in other feeds, such as product reviews and ratings from third-party sites, as well as give their customers the opportunity to submit their own views via polls and voting, and give their content that extra bit of gravitas.

84% OF MILLENNIALS SAY USER-GENERATED CONTENT INFLUENCES WHAT THEY BUY. **(BAZAARVOICE)**

15% SAY THEY HAVE MADE A PURCHASE BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS. **(VANSON BOURNE)**

28% INCREASE IN BRAND ENGAGEMENT WHEN USERS ARE EXPOSED TO BOTH PROFESSIONAL CONTENT AND USER-GENERATED PRODUCT VIDEO. **(COMSCORE)**

25% INCREASE IN CONVERSION RATE WHEN ORGANIC IMAGES ARE USED RATHER THAN GLOSSY PRODUCT SHOTS FROM STUDIO OR ON-LOCATION SHOOTS. **(EVERCORE)**

4 PROMOTE, CONVERT, EDUCATE

Nothing quite draws a crowd like a crowd. You can have the perfect smartphone, a competitive price and a slick website but none of these will entirely remove that pang of consumer scepticism and buyer hesitancy.

A little bit of social advocacy however gives you that dash of credibility, as we all trust our peers a little bit more than a salesperson. But with internet users ever more wary of endorsing products or businesses, it can be tough to elicit the advocacy you require.

Social content both drives engagement and advocacy. As well as informing purchasing decisions and the propensity to buy. With a combination of earned and owned content, telecoms brands can provide the perfect mix of social proof, supported with detailed product information and their own branded promotions.

By displaying authentic and persuasive UGC within product pages or featuring shoppable links within social hubs (such as "Buy Now" calls-to-action), brands can monetize UGC, increase sales and prove measurable ROI.

68%

OF CONSUMERS SAY THAT A POSITIVE REFERRAL FROM A FRIEND MAKES THEM MORE LIKELY TO BUY A SPECIFIC PRODUCT OR VISIT A CERTAIN RETAILER

10%

BOOST IN CONVERSIONS WHEN YOU FEATURE USER-GENERATED PHOTOS AT THE POINT OF PURCHASE

The most effective place for a telecoms brand to present aggregated content is its own branded environments, so marketers must actively drive traffic from multiple sources to their owned web properties. Promotions on social media can capture data, encourage content creation and sharing, and then refer traffic directly to a website.

Then brands can use the social data to provide a richer, more personalized experience on websites and mobile apps. By running a mix of promotions across different digital channels and focusing on a combination of data capture and content creation, telecoms companies can promote service offerings, bundles and handsets. Whatever their consumer is after.

71%

OF CONSUMERS PREFER SEARCH AS THEIR PRIMARY SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON TELECOMS COMPANIES

56%

RELY ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS

65%

OF UNDER 25'S USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO EVALUATE TELECOMS BRANDS AND THEIR SERVICES

75%

STICK WITH A TELECOMS BRAND THAT PROVIDES EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE

CREATE THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR CONVERSATIONS

Historically, customer issues and complaints have bounced around the social media echo chamber. This has deterred many telecoms brands from embracing the potential of social channels and the compelling content it can deliver.

Fortunately, Wayin empowers global telecoms brands with the technology to filter and manage their community-powered forums.

5 MAKE CUSTOMERS LOYAL

Trying to offer the cheapest deal or most amount of data isn't going to keep your customers loyal forever. But by running a broad variety of engagement programs, telecoms brands can inspire their consumers to get involved with the brand, try new services and share their experiences.

Placing authentic and credible user-generated content at the heart of these programs has proved the most effective way to make valuable, long-lasting, brand connections. Promoting exclusive benefits and involving people in loyalty programs connects them to your brand, builds goodwill and reduces the chance of them moving to another service provider.

51%

OF CONSUMERS SAY THEY WOULD BECOME MORE LOYAL WHEN THEY HAVE GOOD EXPERIENCES

88%

OF INTERNET USERS TRUST SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS

33%

OF MILLENNIALS PREFER TO COMMUNICATE WITH BRANDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

So, whether it's offering VIP access to the hottest events, the chance to win money-can't-buy experiences or simply creating a bit of fun with enjoyable and engaging hashtag games, telecoms brands can continue to build a humanized view of their brand that recognizes and rewards loyal customers.

And, by capturing profiled data through contests, competitions and quizzes, brands can get deeper insights into product ownership, current tariffs and renewal dates.

6 KEEP IT LEGAL

There will always be times when telecoms brands want to roll with the punches, show a little initiative and use some compelling UGC for marketing collateral that wasn't considered as part of the original campaign. Or perhaps you will discover some killer content featuring the brand that has been created and shared outside a specific promotion or campaign covered by terms and conditions.

It's here you need to keep it all legal and eschew any improvising. It's these types of scenarios, as boring as it sounds, marketers need to ensure they stay within the law and obtain the appropriate permissions from the content creator first before popping content on their site or using it in a new campaign. After all, no brand wants to face a million dollar lawsuit for infringing copyright law...and they do happen.

Filter, curate and review UGC from many different sources

Request rights to re-use the most compelling content

Track rights and have an audited history of the permissions process

Optionally set content to automatically publish when rights have been granted

7 SHOW YOUR PARTNERS SOME LOVE

For several years now telecoms brands have found that sponsorship programs are an effective, albeit costly way of getting their brand message far and wide. Whether sponsoring concert arenas, major events or sports teams, partnerships have proved a key differentiator when appealing to consumers.

But other than emblazoning a logo on a shirt or venue, telecoms providers need to leverage social and digital engagement tactics to truly squeeze the most out of these relationships.

In this way telecoms brands can forge and showcase mutually beneficial relationships with their brand partners, while maximizing engagement and driving conversations with their consumers. To make this effective, network operators and handset manufacturers must adopt multi-channel experiences. Whether that be in-store activations to engage footfall, social campaigns, or large screens at events. Wherever your consumers spend their time you need to leverage your partnerships to truly resonate with them.

FIDO PARTNERS WITH PRIDE CANADA USING AUTHENTIC UGC
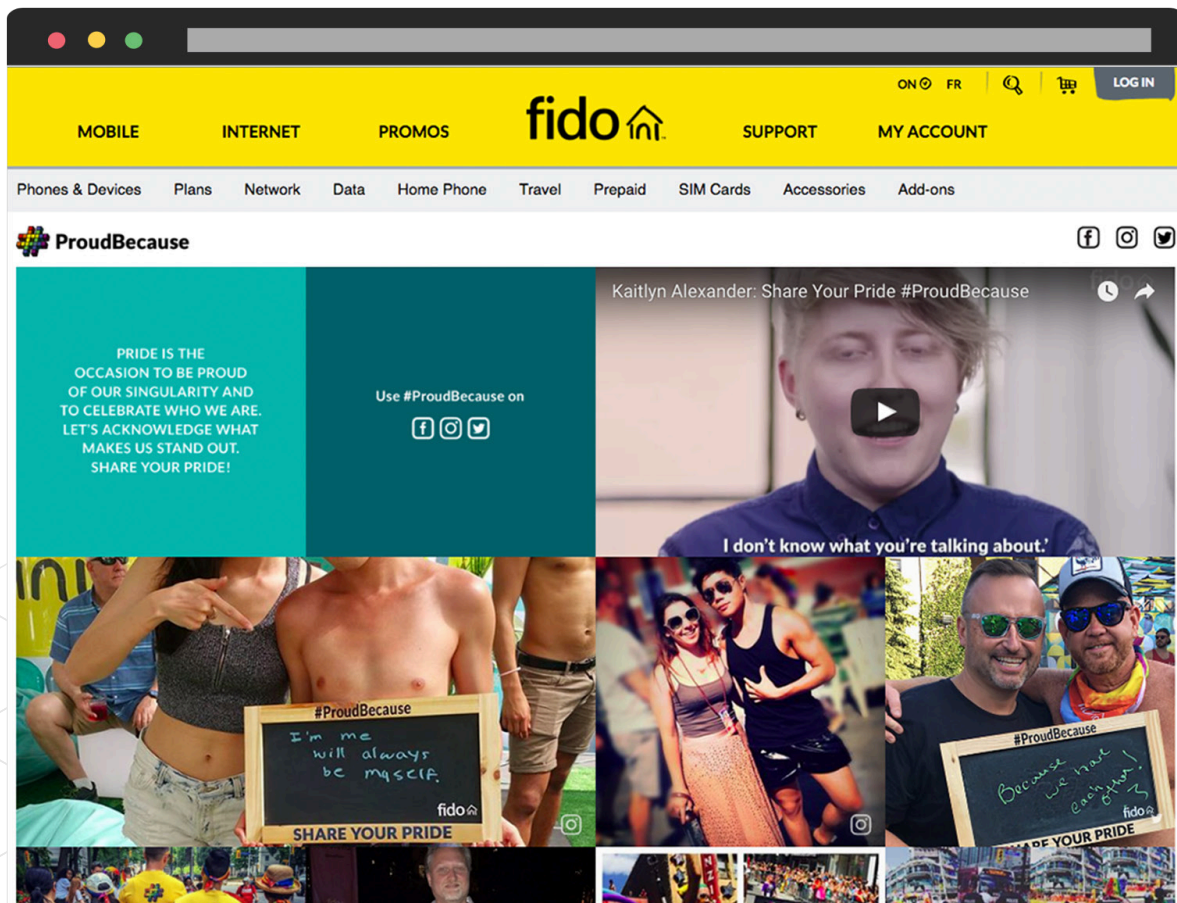
8 CONNECT CONSUMERS WITH BIG EVENTS

When ramping up to a large sponsored event, users online need to be kept up-to-date with everything that's happening, and user-generated content is the perfect way of engaging your audience and keeping them connected.

Simply discover, curate and re-mix UGC around a specific event hashtag on social media with your own content. And UGC doesn't have to merely live in the confines of social media sites, for killer impact it can easily be showcased on large screens at festivals, expos, awards shows or retail environments to promote in-store promotions.

What's more, brands have the ability to transform their in-venue and retail experiences with the use of UGC powered social hubs on mobile apps, digital displays and touch screen technologies, where visitors can seamlessly interact with Instagram photos, quizzes, polls and participate via promotional hashtags.

## DEUTSCHE TELEKOM DISPLAY HUGE SOCIAL WALL OF UGC AT LIVE EVENT

9 OPTIMIZE YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

Creating a brand narrative that puts your customers at the center of your brand isn't just about generating and publishing UGC shared by your consumers.

Using Wayin, telecoms brands can analyze the performance of their social hubs, marketing apps and published UGC with detailed reports showing live interactions, demographic insights and comparison charts over time.

Therefore, you can retrieve analytics on what content and campaigns are getting the most engagement, and effectively optimize content strategy and relevancy, shaping future marketing efforts.
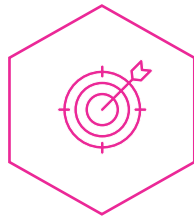
TELECOMS BRANDS CAN TRACK:
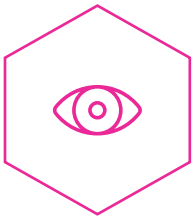
| VIEWS | CLICKS | SHARES | CONVERSIONS | ENGAGEMENT |

No more blindly launching campaigns and seeing what sticks. All your posts and campaigns can be highly targeted, engaging and resonate with your audience.

In addition to optimizing content performance, telecoms brands can now achieve unique insights into their audience and how individuals and segments of their audience database are connecting with campaigns, sharing content and participating in social hubs.

10 BASE YOUR DECISIONS ON INSIGHT

With a solid understanding of analytics, telecoms marketers should be able to effectively track and measure whether the results of their efforts are reaching important goals.

It's easy to fall into the trap of "let's just get things done." The often tedious task of planning, goal setting, form filling and evaluation can become a little choresome. But without setting proper KPI's it's impossible to call any campaign a success, or even deem it a failure. And it's impossible to improve upon previous efforts. It's especially critical to be able to translate huge amounts of data into usable, actionable insight.

Wayin empowers Telecoms brands to analyze the performance of their social hubs, campaigns and content with detailed reports showing live interactions, demographic insights, shares, reach, impressions, advocacy levels and comparison charts over time. Telecoms brands can achieve unique insights into their audience and how individuals and segments are connecting with campaigns, sharing content and interacting with social hubs.

SUMMARY

As budgets move from ads to experiences and consumers demand more than a just a decent deal on their call-plan, it's vital telecoms brands offer interactive campaigns to retain market share.

The Wayin App Store, allows you to view all your campaigns in one, easy to manage dashboard. True data visualization. No complicated axis graphs or vanity metrics.

With Wayin you can leverage your creativity across multiple markets, departments and seasons, by tapping into ours, and your own private Campaign App Library. All past campaigns are saved and searchable by any of the KPI's in the guide. Whether it's the Holidays, Thanksgiving or Mother's Day, just search for a relevant campaign, look at KPI's and metrics for previous years, then clone, translate, customize and go, your campaign is live. No coding, no developer work necessary. It's revolutionary.

Cheetah Digital

It's time to look beyond transactional data to build thriving customer relationships that deepen at every touchpoint. With Cheetah Digital's Customer Engagement Suite, you have an entire platform at your fingertips to help you drive revenue and deliver a unique value exchange throughout the customer lifecycle.

Cheetah Experiences

We help deliver interactive digital acquisition experiences that will delight customers, collect first- and zero-party data, and secure valuable permissions needed to execute compliant and successful cross-channel marketing campaigns.

Cheetah Messaging

We enable marketers to create and deliver relevant, personalized marketing campaigns across all channels and touchpoints.

Cheetah Loyalty

We provide marketers with the tools to create and deliver unique loyalty programs that generate an emotional connection between brands and their customers.

Cheetah Engagement Data Platform

Our foundational data layer and personalization engine enables marketers to drive data from intelligent insights to action at speed and scale.

Start building lasting customer relationships at **cheetahdigital.com**