

1to1[®]
customer
champions

* Presenting the
2010
1to1 Customer
Champions

1to1 Customer Champions know that a superior customer experience delivers superior business results; their unyielding focus on the customer helps their organizations achieve both.

1to1[®]
media
a division of Peppers & Rogers Group

* Business success begins
and ends at the same place:
with the customer.

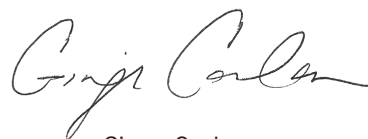
As Sam Walton once said, "There is only one boss: the customer. And he can fire everybody in the company, from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else."

Executives who embrace this philosophy understand that focusing on the customer is simply good business. Whether it's gathering and acting on customer feedback, rethinking marketing based on customer value segments, or using service as a revenue generator, approaching business with a customer-centric strategy is certain to produce positive results.

1to1 Customer Champions are executives who exemplify this. They believe that understanding customer needs, behavior, and value is essential to making informed decisions that lead to profitable outcomes. They also know that acting on customer insight provides a competitive advantage. Their success underscores this.

Selecting the 1to1 Customer Champions each year is a challenge and a privilege. All of the nominees are championing the customer cause in their organizations and making an impact on the bottom line. This year the 1to1 editorial team was delighted to have two additional judges to help choose this year's customer-centric leaders: Forrester Research's Harley Manning, vice president and research director, and analyst Andrew McInnes—both experts on customer experience management.

The 2010 1to1 Customer Champions demonstrate through their customer-centric strategies and actions—and their performance—that an uncompromising focus on the customer is a guaranteed business driver. Here are their stories.



Ginger Conlon
Editorial Director

Making Unconventional Service Channels Traditional

Gina Debogovich has executed on a vision to provide assistance and advice to customers in as many ways as possible, sometimes blazing a new trail to make it happen.

Best Buy has positioned itself as a leader in the technology retail space in part because the company isn't afraid to take risks with new customer support platforms. That means making social media a priority as a customer experience tool, instead of considering it an afterthought for someone to do in their spare time. Leading the company's social media service strategy is Gina Debogovich.

"Customers were contacting us outside traditional [contact] channels," says Debogovich, senior manager of communities and social media strategist. "We couldn't leave those questions unanswered." Her intense drive to provide a direct line of communication and advice for customers online and off is representative of Best Buy's culture. The retailer's online community has grown from a sole moderator (her) to a vibrant community staffed by 14 dedicated community responders. And the company became one of the first to develop a Twitter customer service strategy with its Twelpforce program.

Best Buy's online community, powered by Lithium, averages 600,000 visitors and 20,000 messages each quarter across more than 22 million pages of content. And its Twelpforce service has more than 29,000 followers. With Twelpforce, community responders (and any other user with permission) answer questions directly from Twitter. In addition, integration tools from Lithium allow responders to take relevant tweets and automatically create a new thread directly in the online community board, which adds to the community's base of knowledge.

The company's original goal for its online activities was to decrease customer support calls into the call center and reduce expenses. But new benefits soon emerged. More than 60 percent of forum posts are product discussions, something Debogovich saw as an opportunity to increase and influence customer spending. In addition, social media platforms help build retention and loyalty, and the user comments help Best Buy gain new insight into the



Gina Debogovich
Senior Manager of Communities
and Social Media Strategist
Best Buy

"Every contact is an idea."

customer experience. "Every contact is an idea," she says.

In one example, a customer posted about his frustration when he was unable to buy an iPhone at his local Florida store because a few wholesalers bought the entire inventory. "As a business we were disappointing our customers," Debogovich says. She sent a link to the post to the executive team to start a dialogue about how to solve the problem. As a result Best

Buy changed its policy within two weeks to limit the amount of items purchased.

Debogovich says the biggest challenge is staying on top of the vibrant community. "It was just me at first," she says. "I didn't sleep much, which is typical of community managers at the start." Formalized processes have helped rein in what might otherwise be a Wild West of social media outreach, she says. "Before I ever tweeted or posted a blog, I met with stakeholders to create policies and rules of engagement." That way the public relations, legal, human resources, customer service, marketing, and other departments all have a say in how the brand is represented online.

As a result of her team's innovative customer support initiatives, in 2009 Debogovich and her team received Best Buy's highest honor: the Chairman's Innovation Award. She says next steps will include integrating more video into the customer support function. "The new culture of customer service 2.0 is just going to continue to grow," she says. —Elizabeth Glagowski

KUDOS

Congratulations!

Gina Debogovich

senior manager of communities and
social media strategist, Best Buy

Lithium is honored to partner with Gina and Best Buy
in delivering an exceptional customer experience.

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