



mobile
case study



customer
success story
Lithium



About Virgin Mobile France

Founded in 2004 by Geoffroy Roux de Bézieux, the OMEA TELECOM group has quickly established itself as one of the leaders in the French mobile market. Its entrepreneurial and nonconformist culture promotes a different economic model, one that provides consumers with high-quality, competitive options.

The group sells the emblematic brand Virgin Mobile, one of the most dynamic and innovative in the French market. OMEA TELECOM focuses its investments on the development of its own services and technical infrastructure, outsourcing network radio antennas and signing roaming agreements with network operators to gain flexibility and reactivity. This unique and powerful model allows for perfect cost control, while guaranteeing the best technology and customer service. In 2012, OMEA TELECOM entered into the heart of the service infrastructure telecom network, becoming the first unbundled, full-MVNO mobile operator in Europe to use two operators simultaneously.

Community marketing is revolutionizing customer relationships. Agathe Robiaud, manager of Digital Customer Relations for Virgin Mobile France, offers a rich, passionate, and exciting testimony.

The Plan

From 2010 to 2013, Virgin Mobile France embarked on a new community strategy, integrating popular social networks like Facebook and Twitter and setting up the monitoring of public forums devoted to its mobile users, in the hopes of capturing the “voice of the client.”

In 2012, Virgin Mobile France created its online support community, and launched the first version of platform support for its customers. It was an opportunity for the company to gain experience in support communities, while noting the limitations of the first system used and the need to readjust the company’s strategy.

In 2013, Virgin Mobile France decided to invest further with the community, offering a completely new customer experience. In an online space devoted to customers and fans of the brand, customers can exchange ideas among themselves and help each other, but also have the ear of Virgin Mobile France.

Together they co-author the evolution of the brand, contributing to the improvement of its services and products.

Role and Mission

We monitor three different activities: the community, the customer space, and chat. The three complement each other, and our goal was to achieve a true “customer-centricity,” so that our customers can find everything online. This also reduces the consequent number of contacts at our call center which in turn increases customer satisfaction and contributes to NPS.

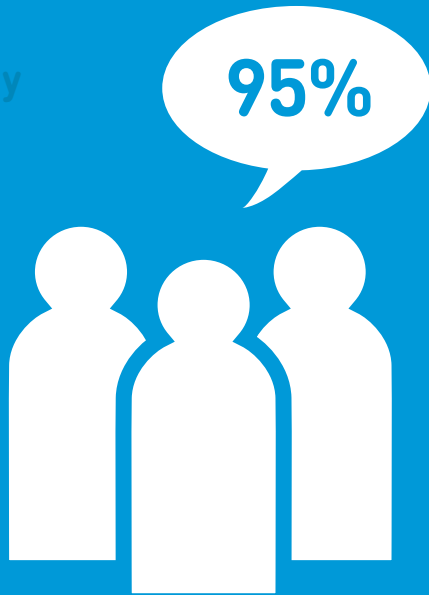
What was the initial challenge that led to the creation of the online community?

We wanted to reform our digital strategy along two major axes: the redesign of our online store, allowing us to sell more, and the redesign of our online customer service. One possibility was to retain our existing platform, optimizing it to fit our needs. But the limitations of this platform no longer corresponded to our ambitions for the redesign. So we decided to switch to a platform that allowed us to push boundaries and build a more energetic strategy.

We were super motivated by this new challenge, and put all our energy into working with the world’s leading branded community platforms. We decided to choose Lithium after just two weeks of testing, because it was so responsive to our needs. We feel that our decision to choose Lithium worked on all levels: the tool, the strategy, the subject of community, and the need to optimize the perception of our brand. Our previous tools had FAQs, forums, and the ability to ask questions, and a team of web advisers could respond directly to clients, but they weren’t dedicated to the community and its specific needs. Now we have a dedicated team of three focusing on digital relationships as well as the support of the Lithium team.

Which Lithium solutions are you planning to implement in the future, and why?

We started with a strong base: the forum, our blog, and the Tribal Knowledge Base. In 2014, we plan to broaden our reach into surveys, ideas, and contests. Our audience has strong ideas and offer up lots of user-generated content.



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In fact, we're planning to integrate all the Lithium tools we have yet to use: it's part of our product roadmap. Considering that our community was only launched in October 2013, that tells you how quickly and well things have been moving.

What type of solution were you previously using, and why did you decide to switch to Lithium?

The competing platform that we used previously didn't respond to a key criterion for us: being 100% independent. The back office had no latitude to iterate on the previous solution. We had to ask for specific changes each time, and more or less pay for each request.

For example, we couldn't redesign the FAQ section autonomously, so there was no room for imagination, design, or ergonomics. Any real change required a new budget. It became a never ending story. On top of that, the platform team offered us very little presence, coaching, or feedback.

With Lithium, it's been just the opposite. The Lithium team has worked with us in a fluid, easy, and continuous manner. Their team is very conscious of our success, and works in harmony with our team. Suddenly, we're allowing ourselves to dream and to imagine, and this excellent dynamic allows us to move beyond the product. It's a beautiful state of mind!

How much time did you need to make the Lithium platform operational?

From conception to integration, everything was fast—barely five months have elapsed! Perfect timing and enthusiasm for the project have gone a long way.

What were your initial uses of the platform?

Our first objective was to optimize peer-to-peer community support between users. Then we needed to improve our customer knowledge base, as well as the quality of our answers in the FAQ, in particular. The Voice of the Customer site came after the forum and FAQ were updated. We moved in a systematic manner, taking on a subject a week and mobilizing everyone to evolve the community around it. We also established a

weekly report that involves everyone. Even our General Director is often online in the community, demonstrating the quality of our management and their accessibility to community members.

We're also hoping to mobilize more subject experts within the company. Many employees have already expressed interest in the community as a means of expanding their regular area of expertise, but we want to get as many people onboard as possible. The goal is to create more exchanges between customers and Virgin Mobile France experts, and be more effective vis-à-vis client expectations.

How has the customer experience evolved since implementing the community?

In barely a month and ten days, the customer experience has radically changed, thanks to P2P support. We have over 70,000 visits per week, and that number continues to increase thanks to our SEO efforts and opportunities for customer feedback.

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Agathe Robiaud
Manager of Digital Customer Relations

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We were determined and confident in our approach, and things couldn’t be working better. Eventually, we hope to work with the community to jointly construct the offerings and services that will define it for years to come.

What statistical data have you seen from the use of the Lithium platform?

The community responds to 95% of questions in 24 hours or less, and 100% in 48 hours or less. In a little over a month, we were able to attain the same volume of page views and SEO that we had with our former platform, and after three months, we expect to exceed those numbers. P2P support posts average 5.7 responses per subject, evidence that the community is alive and well. Our Community Health Index (CHI) has already reached a score of 593, which is very good considering how young our community is. We’ll continue

monitoring these metrics to grow and increase our customers’ satisfaction through the community. In just a month and a half, we’ve achieved more than we dreamed possible, but that doesn’t keep us from wanting to improve even further to benefit our customers!

What have been the benefits in terms of ROI?

The use of online services for call deflection has ended up working very well in the event of technical difficulties or other alerts. We’ve made the choice to communicate through the branded community, and we’re satisfied with the results. Eventually, we’ll work more on tracking indicators of performance and ROI, but our community has only been in existence for two months. The first financial benefit appears to be that the customer voice has impacted the process of incident resolution. We’re in a constant process of improving our services to fit customers’ needs.

<http://www.virginmobile.fr>