Building Sustainable Relationships Between CWAs and the Community

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28 March 2018

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Introduction

01 • Mega-trends: What affects how customers think?
   - Emotions: Current research around emotions and customers
   - Case studies: What are some best practices?

02 • What can we learn from leading CWAs?
   - What can we learn from experts outside the water industry?

03 • Survey results
   - Statistical analysis

04 • Report
   - Library of case studies
   - Assessment tool
   - Survey instrument
Research on megatrends

Sustainability
Research on mega trends

Digital revolution

- Social media and technology – changing the face of interactions, dialogue, relationships, communities
- Big data – knowing your customer
- Mobile devices
- Customer engagement and data analytics tools
Research on emotions
What drives decision-making and behavior?
Research on emotions

Emotional motivators that drive behavior

**HIGH IMPACT MOTIVATORS**
that drive consumer behavior

- A desire to stand out from the crowd
- A desire to have confidence in the future
- A desire to enjoy a sense of well-being
- A desire to feel a sense of freedom
- A desire to feel secure
- A desire to succeed in life

- A desire to feel a sense of belonging
- A desire to protect the environment
- A desire to be the person they want to be

**An Emotional Connection Matters More than Customer Satisfaction**
by Alan Zerfas and Daniel Leemon

**The New Science of Customer Emotions**
by Scott Magids, Alan Zerfas, and Daniel Leemon
Creating sustainable relationships

**Private sector**

**Consumer goods**

**Main goal:**
Drive **CHOICE**
Loyalty

**Why?**
Strong competition
Low change barriers

**Work on…**
Product (colors, styles, flavors)
Price levels
Distribution
Marketing and communication

**Private sector**

**Services**

**Main goal:**
Create **TRUST**
Loyalty

**Why?**
High stakes (life, money)
Some change barriers

**Work on…**
Reliability
Service quality
Competitive pricing

**Public sector**

**Utilities**

**Main goal:**
Create **TRUST**
Make people **CARE**

**Why?**
No choice,
Cushion of goodwill

**Work on…**
Education
Communication
Language, messaging
Expanded outreach activities
Interviews and workshop findings

- Strong support from senior management / Performance alignment
- Customer segmentation / Strategic outreach plan
- Identification of general & initiative specific community partners
- Learning through experience / Visualization

15 Interviews with CWAs / Workshop
Customer survey

Participating utilities and distribution channels

>1000 responses
Quantitative and qualitative

9 participating Utilities

Tailored survey to the needs of the research
NOT a customer satisfaction survey!
Customer survey
The value of water to customers

- Feel it is important to reflect on how water affects.....
  - 92%
- Their local environment and wildlife
- Community growth and prosperity
  - 90%
- Believe it is their duty to protect the environment
  - 93%

“A valuable resource that must be purified and reused.”
Customer survey

Connection to CWAs

How could your utility improve your understanding of the services that they provide?

“It would be great if you could partner more with communities within the city to help share the outreach of your programs”

Feel a personal connection to their utility: 27%

Only want to hear from their utility when it's absolutely necessary: 15%

Think their utility makes best use of the communication channels that are currently available: 33%
**Customer survey**

**Scenarios**

Thinking about bills…

- 86%
  - Feel that knowing about potential changes in advance would make them feel more positive about what's to come

The utility is responding to a new water problem…

- 86%
  - Feel that receiving a scientific or technical explanation of what occurred would make them feel reassured

**Despite people often trusting scientific data it is important to remember…**

“Scientific information should be explained better in layman’s terms. I find myself searching for information online because I can’t understand the brochures”
Your utility is starting a new community outreach campaign…

- 85% Feel they would remember a campaign that was informative
- 42% Feel they would remember a campaign that was funny

The utility is investing in new infrastructure

- 84% Feel more included if the community has been consulted, even if they are not directly consulted

Customer survey

Scenarios
What affects the likelihood of customers feeling personally connected to their local utility?

- Involvement in community life: 1.2 x
- Involvement in consultation process: 1.3 x
- Outreach connects with community values: 2 x
- Awareness of the utility’s work: 2.3 x

...more likely to feel a personal connection
Benefits from sustainable relationships with customers

- Increased level of trust
- Cushion of goodwill for times of crisis
- Increased customer advocacy / reduced number of complaints
- Potential positive behavioral change to realize operational efficiencies
- Public support for new strategies, programs, rates and investments
Developing tools for CWAs

Report

Assessment

Survey

"What our research shows is that people are going too fast. There are some benefits to it, but the natural area needs to be more for sustainability. In fact, there are several aspects of the achievements that we are missing. So, in other words, they have an enhanced economy. The economy is healthier, in fact."

- Clean Water Services
The process of building customer relationships

- **Awareness**
  - γνῶθι σεαυτόν

- **Connection**
  - Shared interests, values, purpose

- **Engagement**
  - With you for life...in good times and bad
ANY QUESTIONS?

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