



Chapter 3

Consumer Complaints Management in the Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to provide theoretical insights into effectively managing complaints made by businesses and brands on digital platforms. In this context, the authors first explain the consumer complaint process in the digital environment. Following that, they provide guidance on how businesses should handle these complaints. Managing complaints is crucial for fostering satisfied and loyal consumers. To this end, the authors provide a detailed breakdown of each step in the complaint resolution process, including deciding on a complaint resolution strategy, collecting complaints, reviewing complaints, resolving complaints, acquiring customers, and conducting a comprehensive analysis of complaints. Briefly, they outline the procedures that businesses should establish for complaint resolution, how they should go about resolving complaints, and how to analyze complaints using cause-and-effect relationships. The research will also feature practical examples from digital platforms, and the authors examine the findings of relevant studies on this topic.

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INTRODUCTION

Consumer satisfaction with a company's products and services ranks among its top priorities. If consumer satisfaction is achieved, consumers will continue to purchase goods and services from those businesses and even recommend the products of those businesses to other consumers. Businesses should turn to relational marketing to establish long-term consumer relationships and not neglect the post-purchase period.

There is an increasing interest in relationship marketing and current marketing strategies to ensure long-term consumer satisfaction and promote consumer loyalty. One of the first studies on this subject was by Storbacka et al. (1994) shows a relationship between perceived service quality and relationship marketing. According to another study, Goodwin and Ross (1989) explain the formation of post-complaint satisfaction with justice theory. In this context, it was found that justice perceptions in the relationship between organizational reactions and post-complaint satisfaction. Furthermore, Reichheld (1993) underlined that even satisfied consumers may have a bad perception of the company or brand for several reasons. The situations as mentioned earlier make it necessary to consider consumers' complaints to satisfy them.

According to the British Museum (2023), complaints have been a part of socioeconomic life for centuries. The earliest complaint recorded in writing was written in Akkadian cuneiform in 1750. This clay tablet, known as the "complaint tablet to Ea-nir", contains the complaint made by a consumer named Nanni to a retailer named Ea-Nasir. Businesses that have existed from the past to the present have offered various alternatives to satisfy consumers. Today, digital platforms are among the mechanisms that offer important clues to businesses in terms of satisfying consumers. Digital platforms have facilitated not only commerce but also communication between businesses and consumers. Thanks to Web 2.0 and rapid digitalization, consumers can communicate more comfortably and effectively on digital platforms. Consumers may now communicate on digital platforms more easily and effectively thanks to Web 2.0 and the rising digitization of society. One of the concepts that emerged in this direction is social listening. Margaret et al. (2018) defined social listening as an "active process of attending to, observing, interpreting, and responding to a variety of stimuli through mediated, electronic, and social channels". Social listening occurs as a result of our interaction and communication with others on digital platforms. Social listening is a way to understand consumers much better. Businesses can better observe

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