THE NON-STOP REAL-TIME RELATIONSHIP

CHRISTIAN BEHRENDT

6 RULES ON HOW TO STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR CUSTOMER IN THE SOCIAL MOBILE AGE

Many companies that think they have a great relationship to the customer only have a part-time relationship when looking at it in detail. Some might not even call it a real relationship, but only a flirt or if you want to be really mean, an irregular, repeated "one-night stand". Why? Because they only meet their customer once or twice a week when he visits their store or surfs over their website. Many companies even call their customer "loyal" after they have only visited the store twice and decided to buy something.

But was he really a loyal customer, or maybe only accidentally in the area and didn't really know where else to go? Many companies will never find out! And this is such a shame, as there was never a better time to update your relationship with your customer and get closer than ever before. This next level of customer relationship and intimacy will help you get a higher quality of customer insight that not only will help you sell more products but maybe even make you change your service or product. You may even be inspired to invent new ones you had not thought of before. What can happen is that you suddenly get very close to your customer and learn so many new things about him.

Social Media platforms going mainstream and the rise of smartphones have completely transformed the way we get information.
Both are getting better, smarter and more and more personal with every new user signing up on Facebook and every new innovation which start-ups introduce to the tech community. Every day social media and mobile becomes more sophisticated and deeply integrated into the enterprises that take advantage of them, as its applications continue to evolve beyond media and marketing, helping you to have deeper impact throughout the business organization. In terms of customer relationships, this impact means a huge jump from only watching the consumer from a certain distance and learning about his needs and wants mostly via occasional, expensive market research, to actually getting pretty close to the actual consumer. But to get this close and to earn the customers' permission to stay there, brands need to offer more than just coupons and freebies. Brands and companies need to find ways to not only talk to the consumer, but to give him a real benefit. This can be a service, a tool, relevant content or a solution to a problem nobody was able to offer before. And as Facebook Walls and Twitter feeds have emerged as key points of interactions between companies and consumers, we can learn from the brands that have made a science of directing community discussion and channeling customer support.

I have provided some key take-aways and lessons learned from my past social and mobile projects I worked on, and the observations and experiences I had during this time in terms of customer relationships.
The goal of the next 6 rules is to help you get a better understanding about the changes that happened over the last years and the new opportunities that appeared for how to make better and deeper connections with your customers.

LESSON #1: LISTEN AND HELP

Many brands and companies see Social Media and Mobile only as additional communication channels they need to fill and add to their media mix, but miss the big opportunity to also see them as service channels. If you understand that and see the potential it has for your brand or company, then you are far ahead of most of your competitors. Because seeing social and mobile as potential areas where you can offer your customer a service, will help you reach a whole new level in customer relationships and intimacy. And what better way to keep up a relationship and gain some insights on the way, than offering your customer a service he values as helpful and relevant to his everyday life? This is an untapped opportunity to make improvements in the area of customer service. Compared to retraining employees or communicating changes with customers over the phone, leveraging social tools allow brands to scale much better and faster. The real opportunity is making social media actionable and real in people's lives.
Their recent overhaul of their Facebook page allows consumers to access information on a local level – and directly leads to transactions. There has been a strong push to get customer support issues resolved via social channels, and off main pages. This does two things: A: Publicly displaying a single successful resolution can save a lot of redundancy, instead of repeatedly solving the same issues.
And B: It also creates an environment where consumers feel that they are being listened to, a public forum where consumers can get information, give their two cents, and not have to spend an hour on the phone. I gained my own experience with using social media and mobile in the field of customer service needs while working with my creative partner Leif Abraham at the advertising agency Crispin, Porter + Bogusky in Boulder, Colorado. The agency was one of the most awarded agencies at that time and famous for experimenting with digital and social media in order to create a better customer experience and generate a higher level of awareness for client campaigns they developed. One good example for using social and mobile to create a more relevant and helpful experience and to improve customer loyalty and service wasa project called "Twelpforce" that I worked on during my time at the agency.

Case example: Twelpforce

"Twelpforce" was a Social Media innovation and service invented in 2009 for one of the agency's clients.

The client was a leading consumer electronics retailer in the USA and comparable to retailers like Media Markt and Saturn in Germany. The idea of the "Twelpforce" service is simple: enlist a legion of customer service representatives from the retailer's store employees to respond (using Twitter) to questions and concerns about products and services sold in their stores The amusing name "Twelpforce" comes from the following definition:

Tweet + Help = Twelp + "Force" = Twelpforce Twitter *, the online social networking and microblogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters, known as „tweets", had been online only about 2 years at that time (in 2009) when the "Twelpforce" launched, but it had already started to enjoy high popularity among the tech-freaks and early-adopters.

Most of were frequent customers of the consumer electronics retailer that we were consulting. At about this time, the CMO of the retailer was emerging as a major voice on Twitter. The CMO started to get very visible with customers, and that set the tone for the rest of the department. He was the catalyst, giving his marketing team and advertising agency the green light to experiment, so we had the luxury of management buy-in. As the CMO couldn't answer all customer questions himself, it quickly became clear that the company needed to find a way to tap into the tech expertise across the organization. As a result, the idea of "Twelpforce" was born.

HERE IS HOW IT WORKS:

Employees sign up to participate in the program and are empowered to respond and engage with online consumers, primarily through Twitter (and to a lesser extent Facebook), who have service questions or problems or seek knowledgeable recommendations about potential purchases.

Think of it as a social media concierge service designed to ensure that you really do make the best decisions about what to buy at the store. Unlike traditional customer support services, employee access to Twelpforce was not restricted to a select group of highly-trained agents. Any employee is eligible, but there are protocols, guiderails and principles in place to balance employee passion and „authenticity" with branding objectives. In fact, the genius of Twelpforce is that it tapped into an existing talent pool that welcomed the chance to share their knowledge in their spare time. This talent was ready, willing and able to help out. Because the system was designed to tie each response to an individual employee, each Twelpforce representative could feel a personal sense of pride in their participation."

THE LEARNING:

The best way to nurture loyalty and advocacy is to show evidence of addressing a concern, solving a problem or fixing an issue. The company recognized that in the consumer electronics space, there is no shortage of opportunities to get „pain points" to connect with consumers. In many respects, they pushed the boundaries of what we might typically call the „call center" to a much more expansive, and inclusive, frontier of consumer need and participation. Along the way the Twelpforce dramatically raised the bar for expectations. The service raises an important and strategic question: are passionate employees one of the most effective advertising channels? It's worth noting that employees carry a relatively high „trust" factor with consumers. This is a big deal, as we may start thinking more about HR as a marketing input.

With over 3000 employees actively participating in the program at the time this was written (December 2012), one can only wonder whether brands have a largely untapped competitive advantage in „subject matter expert" employees. The key here is making sure policies are in place that frame the right balance between authenticity and sincerity and brand objectives. Maybe the future of advertising is less about buying impressions, than it is about making impressions through service. While on the surface, Twelpforce could be perceived as a short-term marketing ploy, it is in truth more like a vein of gold that has just barely been tapped. Twelpforce offers "real time pulse measure-ment" to use the Twitter feed to adjust banner ad copy, to reflect trending topics like smartphone accessories, new game releases or localized out-of-stock conditions. Social data is invaluable, not only to consumer electronics retailers, but to all marketers because it can help them learn how their campaigns, programs or services perform in the real world, as well as drive decision making for new content and communication. An emerging best practice is to integrate measurement strategy into the initial planning of a campaign to facilitate learning, accountability, and continuous improvement. So, the question you should ask yourself is:
How can I use the existing social and mobile channels and platforms in a new and innovative way to become more relevant and helpful to my customers?

* Now, about three years later, the microblogging service Twitter has hit the 500 Million mark of registered users worldwide (as of Q1 2012). Popular German online news platforms like Bild-Online, or Spiegel-Online are now using Twitter as a real-time news stream to follow and broadcast events of high interest, which is a sign that Twitter's popularity has now expanded outside of the US and is starting to take over the mainstream in places like Germany.

LESSON #2:
GIVE SOMETHING
PERSONAL

Another way to deepen the relationship to your customer is by giving him something customized and personal, which he cannot get anywhere else and that he will always connect you, your company or brand with. For me, having worked for many years in the music business before moving over into digital, the customer at that time was the fan of the band I was marketing. And as I am still passionate about music and entertainment, I try to keep in touch with the business and use my experience in Digital and Social Media to help young music artists to promote themselves and find new and better ways to connect them with their fans. One example I want to share shows how to give your customer something more personal, which he may also be willing to share with his friends on Facebook. It is a project I worked on together with a team of befriended creatives here in New York.

Case example: The "Track Me" Project
The project was called "Track me" and it was a Social Media experiment for the band "Riot in Paris", an Alternative Rap band from Brooklyn, New York. The goal was to find new and innovative ways to connect them to their existing fans and create long-lasting relationships. The project also needed to create awareness to extend the existing customer base.
To achieve the goals, we launched a campaign that gave their fans not just a one-off music marketing experience like many other entertainment marketing campaigns do. We offered them something better and more personal.
Something they could share not just once with their friends and followers on Twitter and Facebook, but long after the campaign was over.
And we imagined, what could be better to give to a band's fans and music lovers than a song? Moreover, that song should not only be dedicated to the fan – but ABOUT the fan. And that's what the band did! We offered selected fans a personal song, written, produced and performed from a real band from Brooklyn with lyrical content about their Social Media lives.

AND HERE IS HOW THE CAMPAIGN WORKED:

For four weeks the band turned their fans Social Media Profiles into Perso-nalized Songs. Based on the insight, that in today's transparent age of social media, there is enough information available to write songs about complete strangers. To quote the band: "With all the juicy stuff you guys are posting to Facebook and Twitter, the places you check-in via Foursquare or the photos you upload to Instagram and Flickr - there's likely enough information out there for someone to know a whole lot about your personality... Or maybe even write a song about it."

This what the band did when we launched the Track Me project in beginning 2012. Every day, for four weeks, starting in February 2012, the band locked themselves into the studio writing, recording, and releasing new studio-quality songs about people's Social Media identities. Everybody who wanted a song written about them just needed to visit the website www.riottrackme.com and hit the 'Track Me' button that was located prominently in the center of the site. This "Hitting the Button" activated a Tweet from the person who clicked on the button, giving the band permission to check out their tweets, not to mention Facebook posts, comments, likes and Instagram photos, not to mention everything else you find out about the person via a Google search. The band found some very interesting stuff while they tracked all those people! One Russian guy, for example was so much into guns and weapons that they dedicated a song called "FPS Russia". Not politically correct, but still in the green zone for an Alternative Rap band :-)

Another girl that clicked the "Track Me" button sent out a tweet that said she wished that people would express their feelings in Pantone colors. That was enough to spark the idea for a song. Or a girl that tweeted and posted about the hard everyday life of an undergrad; the band turned all of her Tweet content into a unique song. Besides the hundreds of people tweeting and clicking the "Track Me" button every day, right after the launch the blogs, press and magazines were already jumping on the campaign.

After only one day we already had features on industry news sites, several Social Media blogs and sites, leading to mentions in the music press.

This activity constantly fueled the campaign, pushing more and more people to the campaign site which requested the people to send a tweet, and this kept the viralmarketing machine running. In within only four weeks the campaign made it on the most relevant Social Media and Music sites and Blogs, reaching hundreds of thousands of potential new fans and finally putting the band into the spotlight of MTV, which found out about the campaign based on the buzz and luckily nominated them for their MTV OMusic Awards in the category "Most Extreme Fan Outreach" next to famous artists like Bon Jovi, Snoop Dog, Taylor Swift and Deadmau5. The band was not only nominated, they even WON. They were the first band that had no signed recording contract with a major music label that won this award. But next to winning their first MTV OMusic Award, the media buzz and show-gig bookings they gained out of the campaign, what was even more amazing was seeing what impact their personalized songs had on their fans, meaning their customers.

Their emotional reactions the moment they found out that they had a song about them was so intense and rewarding, and the amount of friends that liked and commented their songs on their Facebook wall within minutes was proof enough for us that giving them something personal and exclusive which they couldn't get somewhere else was the right strategy. It created brand ambassadors for life and free PR and media for the band, and their future record label. This amount of attention could never have been paid for.

But what does this mean for your company, in case you are not a band from Brooklyn?
Next to creating something personal, it means that you should think long term and develop a content strategy to keep your customers, Facebook friends and Twitter followers engaged. If you fail to generate a steady stream of content that people interact with and want to share, algorithms will take over and the content will stop showing up on their wall – becoming irrelevant.

* Track Me is a social media experiment masterminded by the creative collective of Innovative Thunder, aka Leif Abraham & Christian Behrendt, Ina Ernesti, Feinkost, Brian Caruso, Lance Morales and David Nguyen

LESSON #3: DON'T BE BORING

Another way to deepen the relationship to your customer is by giving him the user experience a service he wasn't able to get before, customers are becoming more and more demanding. Very often just offering a relevant service on the smartphone via an app isn't enough, as you are not only competing with your competitors in your brand or product category, but with the Angry Birds* and all the other game and entertainment apps living next to your app in the app store. This becomes a real challenge when you are one of the leading American seasoning and marinade brands and want to have your customers, mostly Moms, more connected to your brands and recipes on their phones. That was our situation in mid-2011 while I was a Creative Director for this client and had to consider more entertaining and fun ways to engage our client's customers on their smartphones.

With mobile apps becoming more mainstream, intelligent and capable of letting Other competitors were providing informative, but rather boring recipe and cooking apps. There had to be a better way, and there was. As for the seasonings brand, giving recipe recommendations to their customers on their smart phones was the main priority for them, because the more recipes from their brand they use, the higher the chance they will also integrate the company's products into their cooking. However, the problem was that there were already hundreds of other recipe and cooking apps in the app store. So we came up with a mobile app that still offered cooking and recipe recommendations, but also offered a fresh, entertaining and innovative experience that helped stand out from the crowd of competitors' mobile apps. This idea was born around a universal insight, that nowadays technology is pulling the family away from the dinner table, as things like texting, e-mailing, watching TV, computer gaming or Facebooking are making it harder and harder for Mom to motivate her family to come to the dinner table. That' why we invented...

Case example: The Digital Dinner Bell
A mobile app for smartphones which is the ,21st century way for Moms and Dads to call their kids in for dinner'. To use it, people just need to go to the Android app store and download the app. After opening the app, they can choose from a range of different dinner bells, all representing the different flavors like Mexican, Asian and BBQ for example, that the company's Seasonings and Marinades are offering. Then they just choose the bell that shows the flavor that they will be cooking, add the family members they expect to see at the dinner table to their guest list and enter their Social Media information on where to reach them. Now they just have to shake the phone, using the phones accelerometer, to invite the family to the dinner table. That's it. The app automatically now sends a message that "Dinner is ready" via text, e-mail, Facebook or Phone call to their family. Also, once the family's Social Media data is entered, the app saves that information, so next time they just need to select the dinner bell matching the recipe and flavor they are planning to cook and then start shaking the phone to have them there where they want to – at the dinner table.

THE RESULT:

The Dinner Bell helped modernize the brand while engaging and helping Moms explore new flavors. In the first months we had more than 144.000 total installs, +92% over goal, and generated154,902 Recipe Views through the mobile app, which is the bread and butter of the Seasoning and Marinades brand, a result the client was very happy with. We generated very positive buzz and feedback with getting 342 Ratings, with a 4/5 star average rating. But similar to any other web campaign or service you want your customer to interact with, you need to add paid media to your marketing mix, because if you don't tell the people that it's out there, nobody will come. Yes, viral momentum and potential PR based on a certain level of innovation can give your tool, app or campaign a great kick start in the beginning, but with hundreds of thousands of new apps coming to the app stores every day, it becomes harder and harder for people to find out about your cool app. In the end, with more than 1000 downloads a day, and the Digital Dinner Bell being ranked in the Top 10 of the Lifestyle category of the Android Marketplace (the app store for Android phones), we were happy to manage on one side to give the customer something relevant and useful (useful = finding recipes) and on the other side something fun and playful (fun = inviting your family to the table via shaking the phone) and with this staying true to our own rule = **DON'T BE BORING.** The question you should ask yourself: How can I spice up the service I am offering or app I am planning to make with a new and interesting insight or a fun experience to help it stand out from the competition?

*Angry Birds is a computer game. In December 2009, the Finnish development studio Rovio Entertainment Ltd. published what became the most popular smartphone game.

LESSON #4:
GAMIFY TO CONNECT

The term Gamification is defined as the use of game mechanics and game design techniques in nongame contexts. Typically gamification applies to non-game applications and processes, in order to encourage people to adopt them, or to influence how they are used. Gamification is also a great way to make technology more engaging which is sometimes very important if your customer is a little older and didn't grow up with all of the new Social and Mobile tools that popped up in recent years. In the summer of 2011, the tricky target group for us was the male griller. Yes, I am talking about the men, usually ranging in age from their mid-30's to late 50's, standing behind their home BBQ grill. These men are extremely passionate about their love for delicious home grilled beef. This male target group might be a "little" more interested in technology than their female companions, but to have them engage more frequently with the Grill Spice Brand on the Social Web and maybe even have them tell all their friends on Facebook about it, was quite a challenge for Leif Abraham and me. We were the Creative Directors for that client and we approached this challenge

with the help of "Gamification". It helped us to turn a rather unmotivated so-cial-media user group into a highly motivated one. How? By "gamifying" what brands the customers loved most – grilling and bringing the game to the loca-tion we needed – the Social and Mobile web. To be exact - to Foursquare. The location-based service Foursquare has ramped up relatively quickly over the last few years, but brands have been relatively slow to invest, despite the potential attractive returns in data about consumer behavior and opportunity to influence consumers directly at the point of sale. We were able to convince our grill brand client to take advantage of this untap-ped opportunity and invented a Social Mobile contest, living on Foursquare.

AND HERE IS HOW WE DID IT:

Since the invention of Foursquare - the location-based social networking website for mobile devices, where a user can „check in" at venues using a smartphone, earn virtual "Badges" every time he checks-in somewhere and can even become a virtual "Mayor", if he checked-in somewhere the most. There have been Mayors for all kinds of brands, like Starbucks Mayors, and all kinds of physical locations, like dog park mayors and even park bench may-ors. But we took the grilling spice brand seriously, and when we launched our "Summer Grilling" campaign on Foursquare we didn't want to make mere Foursquare mayors, we wanted to make a mayor for real. And this inspired us to come up with the following idea:

Case example: The Grill Mayor

The "Grill Mayor" campaign offered every griller the chance to become the real Mayor of Hunt Valley, Maryland for a day, the home of Grillmates in the USA. Once a griller had added his home grill as a Foursquare venue through the campaign site, his check-ins, meaning when he was at his grill and taking out his phone, checking in at his grill on Foursquare and telling all his friends that he is grilling at his BBQ grill, this counted towards the big prize. The person with the most check-ins at their grill was awarded Grill Mayor. At the end of the grilling season, on September 19, 2011, there was a new mayor in town! A Queens, NY man was named the honorary Mayor of a little town in Baltimore, the home of the spice company. This marks the first time a foursquare mayor has ever been granted an official mayoral title. He won the honorary title after generating nearly 850 foursquare "check-ins" at his grill, in just 8 weeks. He and his grill-fanatic friends inundated the site with check-ins during al fresco feasts he hosted on every grill-worthy day from June through August. To make it official, he was also awarded a formal decree from the Baltimore County Office. In addition to his mayoral title, he managed to unlock all 28 grilling badges on foursquare - including the Rare Badge (for che-cking in at exactly 5:32pm), the Superhero badge (for going to see a Superhero movie before checking in at your grill) and the Werewolf badge (for checking in when there's a full moon). The Grill Mayor Foursquare program allowed the Grilling Spice Brand to celebrate with their fans, and help them create memorable food experiences at the grill. Bringing the contest to Foursquare and giving the brand's customers not only an opportunity to win an amazing prize, but actually a great reason to brag about their passion for grilling and step up on the social status ladder within their community of befriended

grillers, was a great way for the brand to connect with avid grilling fans and online/mobile customers. Now more than one year after the campaign ended, marketers still have much deeper engagement opportunities with their customers and also much richer data from which to understand and target their customers. They will also be able to engage consumers in physical and virtual events, co-viewing content and activities and even running contests in even newer ways than we did on Foursquare with our Grill Mayor campaign. So, the question you should ask yourself is: **How can I turn one of the new popular Social and Mobile channels via the help of Gamification into an opportunity to make better and longer connections with my customer?**

LESSON #5:
BE SIMPLE

With technology in the mix and all the many great new features that the Social and Mobile web is offering, it is very tempting to put too many features, text, content or information in your service, retail experience or campaign. This can harm the desired customer relationship in many ways, as he might be willing to try, open or download your digital tool or app, but the moment he has to read too much or is overwhelmed by too many features and alternatives, he opts out and chooses a simpler alternative from your competitor. I also was tempted many times during my career to put nearly every amazing feature the web has to offer into one experience, but learned quickly. Now I always try to apply this rule to everything I approach. One good example for Being Simple is a project we launched while working at R/GA for a big TV channel here in the USA. For the season start of their new reality TV show about a Redneck family from the South that is very much into Duck Hunting, we got briefed to find a way **to make the show the most talked and tweeted about on Twitter the night of the new season premiere**.
To succeed we knew we needed a Social Media campaign that wasn't too focused on a niche target group,but would be fun and awesome for all ages and genders. And with this comes the tricky part: also understandable for all ages and genders! That's when we knew we needed something really simple for our Twitter campaign! Our solution:

Case example: The Duck Hunt on Twitter

It is exactly like a real duck hunt, except that It takes place on Twitter. This unprecedented social activation campaign asked fans of the show from all across the country to follow the various Twitter handles of the show. Fans were then instructed to look out for a #QUACK tweet on Twitter. That, of course, is the sound of a duck call that hunters use when they are trying to lure the ducks into the sky so they can shoot them. The first person to respond #DUCK on Twitter won one of various great prizes.

For everybody that is not on Twitter every day and unfamiliar with the usage of "#", the # symbol, called a hashtag, is used to mark keywords or topics in a Tweet. Twitter users created it organically as a way to categorize messages. Here is a simple step-by-step summary for how we used the "#" hashtag for our campaign:

STEP 1: First we have to send out a Tweet via the TV shows Twitter account saying: #QUACK

STEP 2: Then the people responded to our Tweet with the following Tweet: #DUCK

STEP 3: The person that tweeted #DUCK the fastest, won.

The Winner was then notified via a Re-Tweet from the TV shows Twitter account. So simple.

To bring the concept from out of the Twitterverse and into the Realverse, we were also "duck calling" on television during the TV shows airtime via on-screen touts. Additionally, we had set up an active social media response lab, built by Social Media experts, Designers and Copywriters, during the season premiere night to interact with the fans on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. The lab responded to tweeted messages and sent out "duckified" versions of users' Twitter profiles (mostly involving the addition of bushy beards or turning their Social profiles into "Duck" versions of themselves). This also was the first time a social response lab was conducted for a non-sports TV show. But most important, we kept our promise and the show finally made it to "most trending" on Twitter the night of the season premiere. And not only that, we also made it happen that the #DUCK was a trending topic on Twitter for the first time since Twitter was launched. This wouldn't have happened if we had added more features, more rules and more functionality. Simplicity was "king" in this campaign, especially when working with still relatively new, for some age groups, Social platforms like Twitter. So, the question you should ask yourself is: How can I make my service or experience even simpler and with this keep and reach more customers?

LESSON #6:

NEVER STOP INNOVATING

Don't be dazzled too much by the existing social media platforms, nor should you be satisfied with using what many other companies already have used or are starting to use in the same way. Because the more mainstream social media and mobile gets, the higher the expectations of the customer will be and, as in many businesses, the fight around the customer will very often not only be won by service, quality or price - but by innovation.

What I mean is, do not observe only how other companies are using social and mobile to generate a higher level of customer intimacy and copy what they are doing, but step up your game and start innovating on top of these new platforms yourself! One example to demonstrate how to build on the existing social networking platforms and adding your own innovative touch to give the user a new and better customer experience is 'Pay with a Tweet' – an online service my creative partner Leif Abraham and I founded in 2010. This became the first social payment system.

Case example: Pay with a Tweet

Pay with a Tweet is the first social payment system that lets people sell products for the price of a Tweetor Facebook post. It provides an inexpensive and innovative way for brands and companies to offer their customers access to special deals, promotions or digital products. Because in today's world the value of people talking about your product is sometimes higher than the money you would get for it. 'Pay with a Tweet' is the first social payment system, where people pay with the value of their social network. It's simple, every time somebody pays with a tweet, he or she tells all his or her friends about the product. The users/customers can decide if they want to pay with a tweet on Twitter or with a post on their Facebook wall to tell all their friends about you, your product and your brand. What is nice about Pay with a Tweet is that, in general, all content creators and marketers that want to create buzz for themselves, their brand, product or service can use it in order to offer their customers online a new and innovative way to purchase a product from them.

Here some use-case examples:

DJs and Music artists in general are selling their latest mixes, new singles and music videos for a Tweet in order to promote their new albums and tours.

Journalists and Publishers are selling their leading articles for a Tweet to promote their cover stories, magazines, newspapers and premium online services.

Authors are selling teaser versions of their books with a Tweet to boost their sales.

Consumer Brands are selling their latest commercials for a Tweet in order to help them go viral.

Business Professionals and Scientists are selling their master studies, white papers and presentations for a Tweet to increase their popularity in their special field.

Service Providers are selling a version of their "free" basic service for a Tweet and with this bring more people to their website where the potential customer can learn about the benefits of their "charged" premium service.

Film Directors and Entertainment Companies are selling trailer and teaser versions of their upcoming movies for a Tweet in order to maximize the viral momentum of as they launch their campaigns.

And so on...

But when we invented Pay with a Tweet we actually didn't plan to set up a whole new service right from the start. We only had one thing in our minds and that was creating an inexpensive way to promote the book we had just finished. And here is the story: The system was launched in June 2010 with the release of the book we had just finished. At that time we needed an inexpensive but fast and effective way to promote the book. To promote it, we started with a single Tweet to our Twitter Followers that said: "This book helps you to move into the Digital era of awesomeness. Download it for free, plus a Short link to the Pay with a Tweet website. Using just the Pay with a Tweet system, we had more than 13.000 downloads of the book, 16.000 Tweets about the book and 32.000 visitors on our site.

All of this happened only 72 hours after the launch! It even became the top 3 most trending topic on Twitter. Twice. After only 3 days, our server crashed twice due to the 13,000-plus downloads and Tweets of the book. It even became the third most trending topic on Twitter worldwide, and that was during the soccer world cup. To date, people have downloaded over 300.000 copies of our book with more than 1.5 million visitors to the site. And that was without any press release, paid blogger, big advertising campaign or big influencer program. All of this accomplished with only the system and…one Tweet. After one week, based on the success with the release of our book, we opened the system for everyone else to use and the URL: **www.PaywithaTweet.com** was born.

Since then, everyone can embed a 'Pay with a Tweet' button into their website to sell their digital goods for a Tweet and the service has become a huge hit world-wide. Music artists, book authors, movie directors and big brands like Greenpeace, Microsoft and Brazilian Super-Star Luan Santana have created nearly 100.000 Pay With A Tweet buttons so far that led to more than 2 million people paying for something with a tweet or Facebook post. Our innovation even inspired one of the world's largest breakfast cereal brands to open a 'Pay-with-a-Tweet Pop-up Shop' in Soho/London in the UK in summer 2012, where the company sold their latest product line of breakfast crisps for the price of a Tweet in a real physical location. It was a smart and fun way to get products into people's hands and give them something to talk about. So, the question you should ask yourself is:

How can I innovate on top of the existing social and mobile channels and plat-forms and give my customer a cool solution to one of the many things that need to be fixed, simplified or even just invented in the Social Web. Because Social and Mobile is still like the Wild West out there with enough fields, opportunities, and domain names, to be claimed.