



How To Grow Your Business With Client Communication



Why you should always pay attention to your client communications & how it can increase business growth

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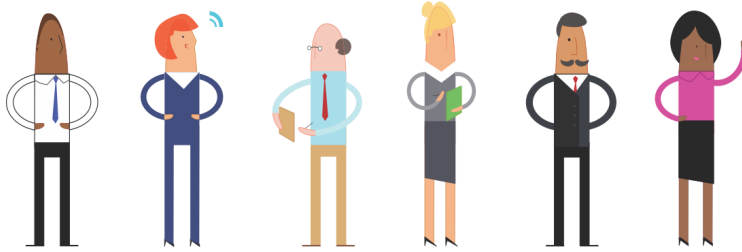
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How is 'communication' defined?

Definition: Communication (Noun) - the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium OR the means of sending or receiving information, such as telephone lines or computers. (Source: [Oxford Dictionaries](#))

Why is communication so important to business?

Communication is the foundation upon which professional relationships are built.

For your business to grow you should be able to relate well with your clients, partners and employees.

Communication, if not properly managed, can consume your time and effort, distracting you from your core deliverable service. Getting your communication under control will help you to focus on where you can add the most value and ultimately help to grow your business.

So, this e-book aims to provide you with the relevant information that you need in order to improve the customer experience, increase the loyalty of your clients and ultimately grow your business - all through effective communication.

INTRODUCTION

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Improve The Customer Experience

According to a [Walker study](#), by the year 2020, customer experience will overtake price and product as the key brand differentiator.

Effective communication is the link between customer experience and customer satisfaction.

A report from [Esteban Kolsky](#) shows that if the customers are not satisfied, 13% of them will tell to 15 or (even) more people that they are unhappy. And in contrast, 72% of customers will share a positive experience with just 6 or more people. This highlights the importance of providing a great customer experience.

Communicating your way to great customer experience

Of course, there are many different elements that go into creating a positive customer experience; from ensuring that support is easily accessible, to keeping your employees engaged. However, we're here to focus on one element in particular – practicing effective communication – and the ways in which it can be achieved.

> Creating a customer-centric culture

In short, a customer-centric culture focuses on creating a positive experience for customers before and after they are acquired by your business; in order to drive repeat business, increased customer loyalty and profits.

One way of doing this is to encourage open and transparent communication with your customers throughout the process of acquisition and retention. Be open to engaging with your customers and prospective customers (encourage conversations, keep them up-to-date and listen to their feedback) and you will build stronger business relationships as a result. This culture can be adopted across your departments and employees in order to ensure that all customers have a positive customer experience.

> Encouraging information sharing

The attitude of 'sharing' is one that is established early on in life and it is safe to say that the concept still applies to the working environment on a day-to-day basis. From a business perspective, there is a relationship between sharing information with customers and customer satisfaction that comes as a result; 55% of customers surveyed say that having easy access to information and support can make them [fall in love](#) with a brand, which assists in the development of better business relationships and increased loyalty. One way of allowing easy access to information for customers, without compromising on security and cost, is with a cloud-based solution; a subscription based, secure environment where businesses can share their information and documentation with customers and team members - from anywhere, at any time. There's also the added advantage that any employee will have updated access to all customer communications without the customer having to repeat themselves.

> Embracing the use of technology

The use of technology can be extremely effective alongside the above principles. One of the great things about the development of technology is that it can close the gap on communication issues that businesses were previously faced with pre-Internet. During most of the 20th century, businesses were limited to [three ways of communicating](#) with employees and customers: either in person, over a land-line telephone or by sending a letter through the mail. This meant that if something needed to be dealt with quickly at work, it would be difficult (and near-impossible if the problem arose out of the traditional work hours).

Looking forward, technology has been able to provide us everything from fax machines to email to cloud-based collaboration tools. And so now, in today's world, you can have the unlimited potential to share large quantities of information securely and instantly and deal with customers immediately, no matter the geographical location or time zone.

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The Value Of Having Loyal Customers

Understand that any business with customers is in the people business

While it is tempting to want to focus your efforts on generating loads of new sales or chasing bigger patrons (both of which are still important), customer loyalty is key to the financial prosperity of your business.

In fact, the [80/20 principle](#) applies here in that, often –

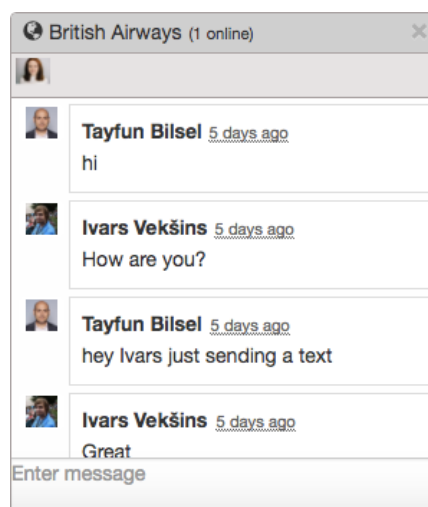
80% of purchases are made by 20% of customers.

And so, it is understandably very much in the interest of your business to identify its highest spending customers in order to effectively market to them and retain their custom in the long term.

It is communication that lays the foundation for building this all-important relationship - in particular, the interaction between your business and your customer post-purchase.

For example, much in the same way that a waiter or waitress might ask “is everything fine with your meal?”, you may ask the equivalent question for your product or service in the period of time after a purchase is made.

Establishing this sense of aftercare is crucial to customer retention. And so, from this point on, customers should be engaged through your use of newsletters, emails, phone calls and even communication tools such as [Clinked](#); so long as it conveys the excellency of the service you are providing them, in a personal manner.



What is the profitability of a retained customer vs. a new customer?

When compared with new customers, the value of those loyal retained customers can become clear. According to the [Harvard Business Review](#), an increase in customer retention of just 5% can result in an increase in profits of anywhere between 25% and 95%.

What's more, it costs a business far more to attract new customers than it does to retain existing ones. Approximately 6-7 times more according to a [Salesforce study](#).

But loyalty is not simply just limited to purchases: A study by [Customer Experience Matters](#) indicated that, as well as being 5x more likely to repurchase, customers who had an excellent customer experience are:

5 times as likely to forgive.
4 times as likely to refer.
7 times as likely to try a new offering.

In fact, this customer retention factor is so important that, when scaled, an increase of just 10% in customer retention can result in a 30% increase of the value of the company, according to [Bain & Co.](#)

Closing the deal

In summary; rewarding, engaging and communicating with existing customers is key to earning their trust and loyalty. In this way; your business can secure long term custom which, in turn, can prove to be far more valuable than one off punters.

And so, by increasing customer loyalty, you increase revenue whilst saving time and money. It's a win-win, right?

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Communication As Your Business Growth Driver

What is a business driver?

A business driver is a resource, process or condition that is vital for the continued success and growth of a business. A company must identify its business drivers and attempt to maximise any that are under their control. – [Techopedia](#). The term business driver has - for the most part - become a management buzzword to refer to any important area of a business. In this case, we're looking at how communication can be used as one of your main business growth drivers:

> By maintaining a consistent image for your customers

From branding and style, to messaging and customer service; a consistent image is key. We've already established that we can use communication more efficiently in order to improve the customer experience (link to Chapter One), but it's also important to highlight the importance of keeping a consistent image visually; throughout your branding, style and messaging. These are crucial in business growth as they contribute to building your reputation whilst increasing brand awareness.

We've got an e-book on the importance of business branding that you may find useful. You can download your free copy [here](#).

> By keeping frequent communication with customers

A misconception of regular communication with customers is that it can be seen as being too pushy and spammy, which in turn, drives the customers away. After all, if the customer has a problem with your product or service, then they would directly come to you - right? Wrong.

For every customer who bothers to complain, 26 other customers remain silent.

- White House Office of Consumers and Affairs

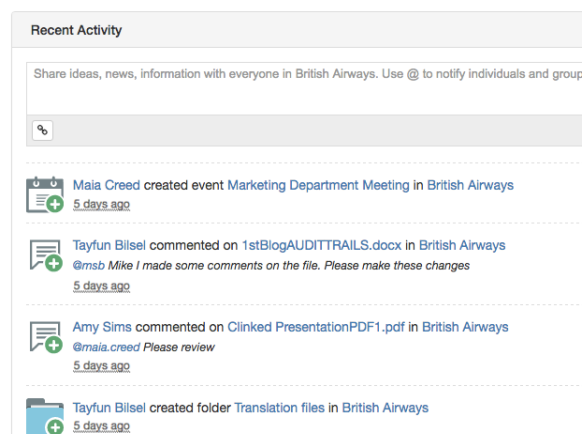
By communicating just the right amount to ensure that customers are [always up-to-date](#) and by being clear in your messages, you can effectively communicate whilst satisfying your customers and reducing churn. It's also worth noting that it's always important to take feedback on board from customers and to show appreciation; for instance, if a customer prefers to be contact by email, or phone - you should try to respect their wishes (when possible) to make sure your communication is efficient whilst keeping your customers happy (read Chapter 4 for more information on this).

> By ensuring that your content is always up-to-date

Happy customers equal a happy business. Keep your customers excited by continually offering new resources, content and information - whether that's in the form of white-papers, video tutorials or e-books. Out of date content should be removed, whilst existing content that has potential can simply be refreshed. You can regularly cover new topics, interview industry influencers and start conversations with your customers.

Keeping content up-to-date will show your customers that they are valued and that you want to support them further than just selling you your product or service. In the long run, you'll be improving brand loyalty whilst reducing customer churn; just like when you're keeping up with frequent communication (see the point above). In fact, you can go further than ensuring that your content is always up-to-date - you can choose to segment your content by interest and industry in order to maximise its effectiveness. It is notable that the one thing better than having up-to-date content is having relevant up-to-date content.

Customers will be much more likely to feel engaged and show loyalty to your company if you're providing them with valuable information and insights that they never realised they needed.



> By continually monitoring, measuring and modifying

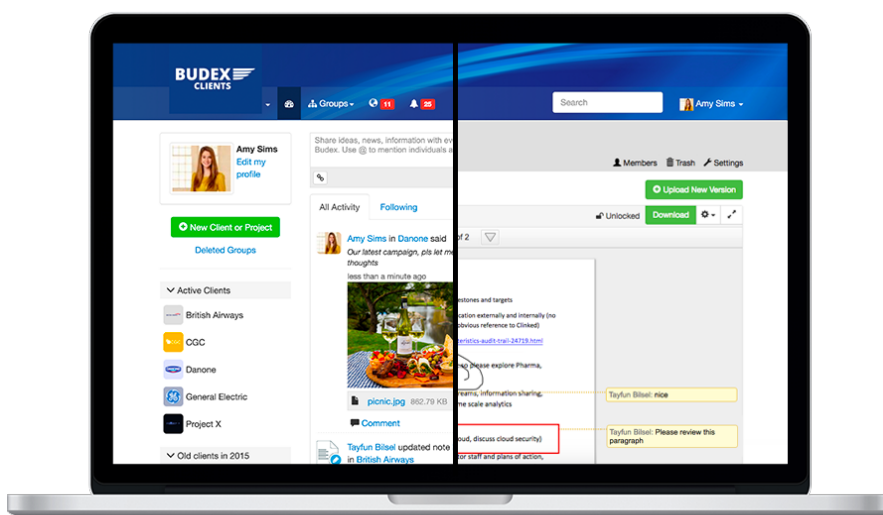
It is always important to know how communication is being used in your business and to make adaptations when necessary. Developing a concise communication strategy and policy can be one way of doing this, as they are designed to help yourself and your business to communicate more effectively, to meet [core organisational objectives](#) and to enable your business to communicate in a [more focused manner](#).

Upgrading to the cloud

With cloud-based solutions becoming a viable option for businesses in recent years (thanks to its easy implementation and subscription-based pricing), it's worth considering this route if you want to offer customers a more secure way of working in unison with your business (as opposed to using on-premises software or even the traditional filing cabinets).

While one of the foremost benefits of cloud-based solutions is the ability to improve communication and collaboration (think: real-time conversations and comments, file approvals and version control); such solutions can also work to overcome the barrier of business growth through increased transparency, flexibility and security.

If you're interested, you can read more about the facts vs. fiction of using cloud computing for business [here](#).



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The Key Communication Tips For Growing Your Business



From encouraging internal communication, to finding the right tool for the job - here are some top tips for growing your business through using more effective communication methods.

> Start with improving your internal communication

Naturally, effective internal communication enhances external communication. And so, for significant business growth to occur, communication has to start internally. Effective external communication can then help position your products and services in such a way that their demand increases and subsequently [leads to business growth](#).

Clinked is one example of a cloud-based solution for businesses who want to improve their internal communication with team members and customers.

Users can share information and documentation from within a secure cloud-based workspace; whilst adding comments, having real-time conversations, ensuring that the latest versions of files are signed off and planning and monitoring events and tasks - all within an instant, and at a fraction of the cost of on-premises solutions.

You can find out how Clinked could improve communication and collaboration for your business by heading over [here](#).

> Understand that “the customer knows best”

Customers, more often than not, know exactly how they wish to be communicated with. Ask them about their favoured mediums of communication and stick to them wherever possible.

Some may prefer to be contacted by telephone, others’ by email - or even a [real-time chat tool](#). It is important to understand that your business can risk alienating customers if you limit to only using a single method of contact, which can also negatively affect customer relationships in the long run.

> Remember that one size doesn’t fit all

Consider tools that can manage your communication in all formats, across all channels, effectively and securely. You need the right tool for the job, so don’t limit yourself to a single one; for example, you should not be relying on email for all of your communications (such as updates, enquiries, invoices etc.) with customers.

An alternative would be to use a couple of tools that work seamlessly with each other, in order to maximise efficiency. For instance, [Clinked](#) works well with Google Apps (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Contacts, Calendar etc.) as well as email and comes with the added bonus of an unlimited file uploading size.

In summary, focus on showing your customers that you care

It should be imperative that you build and maintain strong relationships with your customers, as without them you have no business (that much is obvious, especially if you read Chapter 2).

By combining the elements within this e-book, you can build meaningful communication skills to ensure that your customers continue to be *your customers* whilst continuing to grow your business.

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8 Tools For Supporting Your Business Growth

Growing your business can be a difficult and slow process. However, businesses of all sizes should take advantage of the numerous online tools available (both free and paid).

Embracing online tools can allow your company to improve its workflow, increase productivity and become a more resourceful business overall.

Listed below are 8 tools worth considering when it comes to growing your business (some are essential, some are definitely worth checking out).

Google Analytics



A must for any business with an online presence, Google Analytics allows you to track and analyse trends in your traffic. You'll have the ability to gain valuable insights and generate detailed reports about your website - these are essential when it comes to growing your business. For example, how many page-views are you getting each month? Which landing pages generate the most hits? Who is your main user demographic?

[Go to website](#)

Mailchimp



For managing your email campaigns, Mailchimp is extremely effective for businesses of all sizes. You'll have the ability to customise templates and campaigns, add widgets (e.g. video, social media buttons), be able to create custom lists, and have detailed reports about the success of your sent emails (click-through rate, bounce rate etc.).

[Go to website](#)

Hootsuite



If you're looking for an easy to use system to manage your social media accounts, Hootsuite could be the ideal tool. You can organise your messages to be sent out across your social media platforms at scheduled dates and times, target your messages based on geographical location and demographic, and more. Having an active presence on social media is now essential to increasing your reach and growing your business.

[Go to website](#)

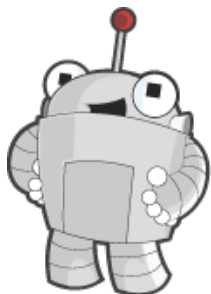
Clinked



Clinked is a collaboration tool and client portal. This online tool allows teams and clients to work together on projects – share documents, organise tasks, and have discussions from within the secure cloud workspace. You can white-label your portal (domain, logo, terminology etc.), and there's also a branded mobile app which allows you to collaborate on the go.

[Go to website](#)

Moz



Moz is a great tool for monitoring your inbound marketing and SEO efforts. With this subscription-based software, you can track everything from search visibility to keyword rankings, and inbound links. As well as being able to monitor your progress, you'll also be able to see where improvements can be made (e.g. site crawl).

[Go to website](#)

LinkedIn



As well as being an obvious social media channel to set up a company page for, LinkedIn is also one of the best social media sites for growing your business by connecting with prospective clients/businesses. What's more, LinkedIn also offers a number of business solutions that go further than just posting on your company page; for example hiring, marketing and selling.

[Go to website](#)

Canva



Great for content marketing. For design beautiful shareable content, Canva could be a great tool worth looking at. This tool gives you the ability to create a variety of graphics, e.g. infographics, posters, email invitations and social media banners. What's more, there's also a photo editor; collage, add stickers, text and more.

[Go to website](#)

Hubspot



Hubspot is an all-in-one inbound marketing and sales software. If you prefer to have one tool to replace your marketing tools such as Hootsuite, Moz etc. – try Hubspot. You can manage your web content, create landing pages, create email campaigns, manage your social media accounts; as well as monitor your sales, leads and other analytical data (bounce rate, views etc.).

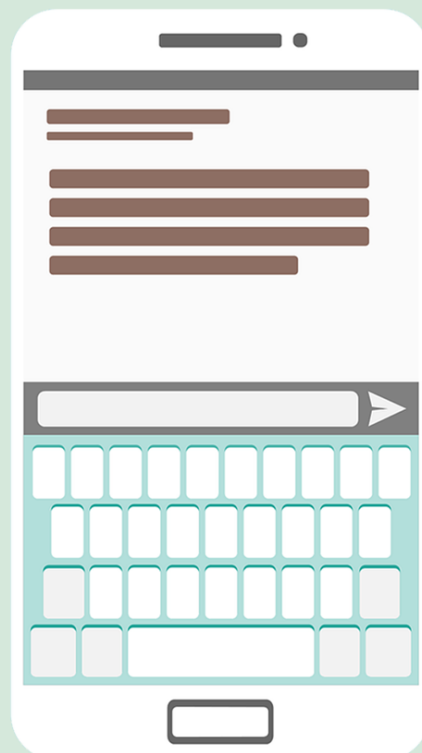
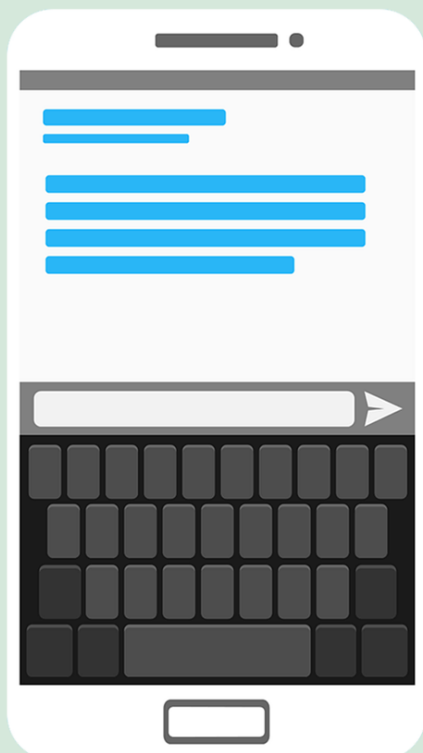
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Interested in finding out more?

Clinked is a white label file sharing, team collaboration and client portal for businesses. If you want to find out more about our solution, visit -

www.clinked.com



SOURCES

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