

Reconfiguring a B2B Communications Function to Foster WOM

Few companies can match Texas Instruments' 75-year record of innovation. TI designs and manufactures semiconductors that help its customers develop products that matter. TI has long fostered a customer-centric culture and the company is aligned to help engineers develop breakthrough products using TI technology.

To better reach engineers and focus on customers TI recognized the need to contemporize its communications function. Engineers use online modes to share tips, issues and successes through blogs, forums, and WOM-driven communities. TI reconfigured its communications function to foster and participate in engineer-driven WOM about its products. And, the company undertook transformational steps to make WOM platforms successful.

Beginning with research TI and agency GolinHarris analyzed the WOM landscape. TI examined the dynamics of its customers' WOM. These insights helped TI tailor plans to add value to customer conversations.

TI changed the way its people approached communications to address the way engineers to received information. "Conversation Agent Training" was conducted and employees became subject matter experts in customer dialogue channels. Training topics: ethics; authenticity; style; and WOMMA's guidelines.

An ongoing "listening" function was created, providing monitoring of customer-focused communications channels. This process would quickly identify opportunities for the company to participate and add value. Listening serves as the nerve center for TI WOM activities.

Engineers sought and shared answers and discussed TI products quickly online and, to add value, the company streamlined its processes to participate faster than ever before. TI socialized processes so that employees were empowered to act quickly and join in conversations. TI created community.ti.com to foster engineer-to-engineer and direct-to-TI communication.

TI has developed closer relationships with its business partners. WOM works in concert with "traditional" media relations efforts to provide comprehensive communications. By surrounding its customers with multiple touch points, TI has succeeded in positioning itself as an innovator.

Case Study Library



Client: Texas Instruments

Agency: GolinHarris

Budget: (within overall PR retainer)

Date of Campaign: January 2008 - Present