

# Social Advocacy Programs

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Spring 2015

## What is Social Advocacy?

- ◊ Social advocacy defined: Advocates support and recommend a specific brand or company
- ◊ Act as free marketers on social media
  - ◊ This is done through liking, retweeting, reposting, word of mouth, positive online reviews, etc.



Source: Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas





# Social Media Advocacy Programs

- Social media enables consumers (advocates) to be a part of an online forum
- In the past word of mouth was the only tool supporters had to influence potential buyers
- In the digital era it is easy to utilize social media as a way to voice support



## Why should companies encourage social advocacy?

- Free marketing!
- Consumers are 70% more likely to trust an advocate's opinion about a brand
- 50% more likely to have an influence over potential customers than other current customers



## Examples

WHOLE  
FOODS  
MARKET

- Whole Foods 365 Everyday Value Products
  - Encouraging posting about products
- ASPCA - Posting for a good cause
- Microsoft's LinkedIn discussion threads
- Qdoba's Facebook Contest

Qdoba®  
MEXICAN GRILL

## Advantages

- Low costs
- Wide reach
- Instantaneous
- Gives brands more credibility

The most influential element driving purchase decisions today is

WORD OF MOUTH.

Credibility



Profitability

Offline

Online

Service

Experience

59%

49%

55%

27%

of Americans believe offline (face to face or voice-to-voice) word of mouth to be highly credible.

of Americans believe online word of mouth is highly credible.

of consumers recommend a company because of its customer service.

of consumers would pay 15% or more to receive a superior customer experience.



## Disadvantages

- Companies must maintain relationships with their advocates to keep them happy
- Companies have to invest time and effort
- Not everyone is reachable through social media channels



## Recommendations

- **Must have a strategy**
  - Locate your biggest supporters
  - Have clear communication
  - Reward your advocates to keep them engaged
- **Monitor social media comments and be quick to react**



# The Future of Social Advocacy Programs



Social media  
usage will  
increase

Social advocacy will be  
the most efficient form of  
online marketing

## Thank you!

○Questions?



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