



## The Chaffey Column - Marketing: a two-way street?

### Is Your Marketing a One-Way or Two-Way Street?

I have recently been reviewing the results of the 4th Annual cScape-Econsultancy customer engagement survey is released today - this post is a preview featuring my contribution. You can download the full survey from the cScape site <http://customer-engagement.net/?p=1265> - this is worth downloading since as well as the research it has commentary from many well-known UK and US experts making recommendations in areas of engagement such as social media (of course), mobile, employee engagement and customer service.

What struck me on reviewing the survey was that encouraging participation – the two way street of the title was rated really effective by the marketers responding to the survey.

To help you think about your strategy for audience participation, here is my summary of the findings about participation – you can identify three main types to exploit:

**1. Recommendations participation** . 41.8% of respondents reported that recommendations of product, service or brand had been a benefit of engagement initiatives. It seems that many customers love to participate! This is shown by the success of UK retailer Argos who received over 2 million customer reviews in a post-Christmas Email campaign to prompt participation.

Action: Make it easy for through links for site visitors or email readers to recommend you, your products or your services.

**2. Community participation** . 34.4% reported benefits from audience participation in online communities or support. Only certain types of brand lend themselves well to communities on their own sites, but participation beyond your own site, for example through self-help support services like [www.getsatisfaction.com](http://www.getsatisfaction.com) should also be reviewed.

Action: Think about the quality of your online support and FAQ. Have you explored the option of Get Satisfaction?

**3. Feedback participation** . 30.3% said they received benefits from regular customer feedback, for example through satisfaction surveys, Net Promoter Score or product feedback (there is some overlap with the first category).

More intriguingly, 19.5% had seen benefits from customer participation in innovation and design. For me, this is one of the most exciting forms of online engagement - gaining direct feedback in a structured way through customer panels is tremendously powerful. I have compiled a list of some of the free and paid services that can be used for gaining direct feedback on website experiences at <http://bit.ly/feedback-tools>.

Benchmarking methods of achieving active participation within and beyond your sector can help you develop a participation strategy. Another aspect of participation strategy is to put in place measures which show the degree of participation.

Action: Explore the free feedback tools at the link above to get more user feedback from about your website AND your products and services.

All the best for increasing your participation rates!

#### **Next Article**

In the next article I will look at how you can plan a broader social media strategy.

#### **About the author**

Dr. Dave Chaffey, is the Director and lead consultant for [Marketing Insights Ltd](http://www.marketinginsights.com), an independent digital marketing consultancy.

Dave is also the CEO and co-founder of the "Smart Insights Digital Marketing Portal": <http://www.smartinsights.com> which advises companies on how to succeed online through smarter use of web analytics tools like Google Analytics.

He is the best selling author of several Internet Marketing books used by digital marketing professionals and on many University and College Courses globally. His latest book, Internet Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice, now in its 4th edition, was published in January 2009.

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