5 Things You Can Do to 'Humanize' Your Brand

Face it: Consumers don't automatically trust your brand or anyone else's. Whaddaya gonna do?

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Let's face it, consumers don't trust brands. Most people view companies like faceless enemies; they're just out to make money; they're just telling us what we want to hear. So, if your company wants to win over more customers, you've got to get them to trust you.

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In fact, according to PwC's *Global Consumer Insights Survey* 2018, more than one in three consumers surveyed ranked "trust in brand" among the top three factors, other than price, influencing their decision to shop at a particular retailer. How do you get consumers to trust your company? You do it by showing them the human side of your brand. That will inspire more trust from consumers and boost your conversions.

To form meaningful relationships with your audience, check out these five ways to humanize your brand.

Show off your funny bone.

One easy way is to show off your funny bone. According to researchers from the Turku PET Centre, Oxford and Aalto universities, social laughter leads to an endorphin release in the brain and may promote the establishment of social bonds. So, if laughter can make us feel good and encourage

connections between people, you should consider using it to get the same results for your business.

Not a comedian yourself? Don’t worry; you can share popular and funny content that already exists. It’s what Netflix does when the media giant shares funny images from its shows.

Image source: Search Engine Journal

Showing your more playful side will help consumers see that you’re not just a business focused on selling a product; you’re a human who can put aside your seriousness and have some fun.

Put your team members in the spotlight.

Letting consumers see the people behind the business is a powerful way to humanize your brand. If consumers are looking at just your logo all the time, they might not see your brand as human. So, put your team members in the spotlight.

Shoot some quality photos of your staff members and display them on your website and your social media platforms. You don’t need to hire a professional photographer; iPhones today can take some pretty stunning shots. You might even share your employee of the month and include a story about what makes that staffer so great. Seeing the amazing people “behind the curtain” will help consumers put a face to the brand name.

Share user-generated content.

Sharing user-generated content works to humanize your brand in two ways: First, it’s exciting and flattering to the user who

gets his or her photo featured on your website or social media feed. Second, it shows other consumers that you have great relationships with their peers and that those people already enjoy your products.

Instead of being asked to blindly trust a company's claims, consumers will see real-life people falling in love with your products, which will promote trust in your brand. Example? Airbnb does user-generated content well by sharing with its followers the amazing experiences its customers are having around the world.

Image source: Instagram

If you don't have any user-generated content, ask your customers for it. Do this in an email marketing campaign; add it to your branded packages for shipping;or create a post on social media encouraging users to take a photo of/with your product and share it in combination with a unique, branded hashtag.

Tell authentic stories.

Don't spend all your time online just talking about how great your company is; humanize your brand by telling authentic stories. Sharing real stories about your failures, hardships and lessons that you've learned will help customers better relate and sympathize with you. According to *Psychological Science*, research suggests that shared pain may have positive social consequences; shared pain acts as a "social glue" to promote solidarity and togetherness between groups.

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So, tell your target audience members stories that they can

relate to, instead of simply presenting your brand as perfect. You could even share stories of your customers who previously struggled but then achieved success with help from your company/product. This will not only humanize your brand, but boost sales too.

Show appreciation for your customers.

Letting your customers know that you care about and appreciate them is one of the best ways to humanize your brand. So, show appreciation for your best customers by sending them company swag or offering special discounts with a personalized message.

Buffer thanked one of its stand-out customers with not only company swag, but a personalized gift. I'm sure that those customers then became lifelong fans.

Image source: Buffer.com

Not every company can afford to send out swag to all of their best customers, but sending a gift to just a few of your rockstar fans can go a long way. For a less costly strategy, show appreciation to new customers by simply sending a welcome/thank you email. Not only will such appreciation for your customers humanize your brand, it'll turn those customers into brand ambassadors.

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Over to you.

Be prepared for your business to have a lot more die-hard customers. With these tips for humanizing your brand, consumers will be able to connect with your business, relate to you on a deeper level and want to have a relationship with your company for the long term.

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