

Marketing Thought Leaders

A playbook for leading your company to future success

A Social Snapshot: Kodak Captures Customer Engagement with Social Media

by Nancy Pekala

Keep it Social just might serve as an apt new tagline for Eastman Kodak. A snapshot at the company's recent social media efforts reveals an organization committed to engaging with its customers in multiple digital channels.

According to Eastman Kodak CMO [Jeffrey Hayzlett](#), the worse thing people can say about his company is absolutely nothing. Kodak has willingly moved into the world of social media and embraced what Hayzlett calls "The Kodak 4 E's": Engage, Educate, Excite and Evangelize.

•Engagement

Social media is a better way for brands to reach customers, one to one, Hayzlett said during a recent [Zuberance](#) webinar presentation. But brands also need to be prepared for what that means. The Kodak CMO relayed a situation in which a customer tweeted him about the quality of one of the company's products. "In his tweet, the customer suggested that 'You can shove this up your USB port,'" Hayzlett explained. "You will see customers do that in social media. But we were able to turn those kind of people around. Social media offers a better way to do that."



•Educate

"For us, social media is about educating the customer and the customer educating us," Hayzlett said. That process translated in Kodak developing products with features suggested by customers made directly through tweets. "Those features made it a #1 product," Hayzlett said. "It provides a more intuitive, one-on-one communication process without a lot of filters." Kodak recently hired a Chief Listening Officer to help manage conversations occurring online and route questions or concerns to the appropriate groups within the company.

Jeffrey Hayzlett

•Excitement

The third "e" of Kodak's social strategy is to get customers excited about their products and to talk about it.

•Evangelize

Hayzlett also stressed the importance of motivating customers to become brand ambassadors. "It's critical for any brand to develop these steps and build a strategy around what you can do and how to do it," he said. (Access Kodak's [social media](#) brochure for specific tips and lessons learned on developing a social media strategy.)

Haylett and his Kodak team do more than just talk the social talk. The CMO is an avid tweeter (you can follow him at [JeffreyHayzlett](#)) with more than 15,000 followers. He believes the channel allows him to remain engaged with Kodak's customers which allows for the sharing of information to managers and decision makers throughout the organization.

“You want to think about the reverb, about how many things you do get re-tweeted,” Hayzlett suggested. “You need to look at the pass along value of the message in different ways.”

Last year, Kodak launched a formal social media program with some impressive results. While 30% of traffic pre-social media program were centered on customer complaints, that number dropped to less than 10% today.

Kodak maintains three blogs, two Facebook pages, more than three Twitter accounts, podcasts, and YouTube posts. Kodak also sponsors online forums, called K-Zones, which encourage consumers to discuss their experiences with imaging, video, and photography.

It also was a lead sponsor of the [Streamy Awards](#) and broadcast the Web video awards show live on its web site. It further took advantage of the opportunity by sponsoring a Twitter trivia contest prior to the show which generated a large number of replies and retweets. In addition, Kodak produced short videos interviewing the award winners on their favorite Kodak moments.

Hayzlett said Kodak’s social media program incorporates multiple digital touchpoints to reach customers in this new social economy (he even had the Kodak Theater painted with the Kodak logo so that Google Maps would find it).

Kodak also utilized social media activities to launch the “It’s Time to Smile” campaign last year which focused on strengthening and deepening relationships through the sharing of images. The company commissioned the “Future of Reconnectivity” report to analyze how U.S. and European populations assess their relationships, and the role that digital imaging plays in facilitating deeper bonds.

To help “spread the smiles” during the campaign, Kodak launched three social media applications to make it easier and more entertaining to share smiles and photos including:

- *Kodak Konga Line*: The Facebook application allows users to create community photo albums surrounding an event or theme. Users can invite friends to share their images and watch the Konga line grow.

- *Kodak Smile Meter*: This Kodak Facebook application invites users to send custom smile messages to brighten a friends’ day. The application maintains a running message total—the Smile Meter.

- *Kodak Smile Maker*: A free iPhone application lets users paste unique smiles over their favorite photos, then share with family and friends.

Top Picks in Tools

How can your brand start to engage in social media?
Kodak’s CMO Jeffrey Hayzlett suggests these tools:

- [Sysomos](#)
- [Radian6](#)
- [Peoplebrowsr](#)
- [Tweetdeck](#)

Take Five: Article Takeaways

- 1. It’s about the 4 E’s.**
To generate results from your social media efforts, think about the 4 E’s: engage, educate, excite and evangelize.
- 2. Think about the reverb.**
In social media, it’s important for brands to think about the pass along value of the content they create via re-tweets.
- 3. Focus on the quality of the message.**
It’s about winning the hearts and minds of your followers through the quality of the content.
- 4. Engage with your customers.**
Use social media to get closer to your customers on a 1 to 1 basis.
- 5. Learn from your customers.**
Social media is not just about educating your customers but learning from them as well. Respond to them, listen to them and use what they say to make your business better.

Hayzlett also shared how Kodak used social media recently to solve a marketing challenge. He explained that Kodak had just developed a new high-definition pocket video camera called the Zi8. "I loved the product," Hayzlett said, "but hated the name. I hate calling products by letters or numbers. It should be a name that better reflects the value proposition."

So the imaging company turned to Twitter. "In a matter of hours, we put together a campaign about naming the product and tweeted about it," Hayzlett explained. "We asked our followers to submit ideas for a name. The winner would have their picture on the product box. We received 28,000 submissions and ended up choosing the name Kodak PlaySport."

Kodak and their use of social media or as Hayzlett refers to it, OPM "Other People's Money" is all about engagement with its customers. "It's about what we can learn from the experiences of others."

Hayzlett stressed that marketers need to get on board with social media. "You either get it or move on. I find that about one-third get it right away, another third eventually get it and the last third never get it."

The Kodak CMO also suggested that when it comes to tracking ROI on social media, it's no longer about just quantity. "It used to be all about the number of impressions you got," Hayzlett said. "I don't think that's the game anymore. My belief is that it helps to focus more on the quality of the message than quantity. What you're doing really in this new mode of communication is really winning hearts and minds, not hitting eyeballs and ears."



Kodak reached out to its Twitter followers to help name its new Kodak PlaySport

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