

With an effective Social Networking Strategy, company emerges as thought leader and becomes #1 brand in market



Case Background (Current State):

Boxtone is the leading developer of software designed to help organizations manage mobile communication deployments such as Blackberry's. As mobile communication has become mission critical, Boxtone's products and services help manage some of the largest mobile device deployments in the world.

The Challenge:

The purchase of software in the enterprise mobile space requires a significant learning cycle, as buyers must understand their many options and decide on the most appropriate course of action for their companies. Although Boxtone provides a wealth of product information to assist with the purchasing decision, many buyers choose to reach out to their peers for advice and use this advice to supplement information from vendors such as Boxtone. In other words, peer to peer communication has taken on an even greater role in how purchasing decisions are being made. The reason for this change in behavior is the explosion of social media tools and communities on the web. In the age of social media, advice can be shared and stored much easier. The learning cycle which is so important to the buyer has shifted to more peer to peer communication. Boxtone was faced with the need to develop marketing communication tactics that worked within this new era of online social collaboration.

R2i Solution:

A social media marketing plan was developed with the primary goal of engaging target cus-

tomers as they communicated peer to peer online. Once able to engage, a true relationship building approach was deployed with the goal of joining these important conversations. Selling the Boxtone product was not the primary objective; the plan was not designed for short term results. Attempting to do so could create friction in these important communities and key players might see Boxtone as a solution provider trying to sell to the community – Boxtone wanted to become a part of the community so relationship building, not selling was our primary objective. The digital plan involved three primary steps:

1. Conducting online market research and monitoring to determine where communities were forming and who was participating. Research also focused on how the learning cycle was being affected by peer to peer communications and what opportunities there were for Boxtone to join these communities.
2. Engaging the existing communities by reaching out to key opinion leaders and talking about the important issues surrounding Mobile User Management. Part of the process involved having key opinion leaders evaluate the Boxtone product and make suggestions. These conversations were then viewed by other community members and engagement across the entire community started to increase. Over time, Boxtone turned into a true opinion leader in the community and Boxtone personnel got closer and closer to where the peer communications were taking place.
3. Once Boxtone became part of the existing communities, opportunities to create their own community were sought. For the purposes of social media marketing plans,

we refer to this transition as a social bridge. Community members active on other sites were invited to receive exclusive Boxtone content and social sharing tools were incorporated into our web properties. Soon, Boxtone's community assets became the center of many exciting conversations in the space.

Key Results:

Social media marketing is about building relationships and then trying to analyze how those relationships are helping move your organization forward. In order to understand our results we focused on three things. How much access did we have with the community? Did we have strong relationships with leaders in the community? Was the combination of these first two goals helping spread our value proposition making the sales process easier? We were able to answer yes to all of these questions.

Over the 18-month campaign, Boxtone emerged as the leader in Mobile User Management and has received the confidence of the most influential opinion leaders in the space. By taking our time with the campaign and not trying to sell, Boxtone also enjoys a high level of trust among potential customers and is seen as a true expert. Barriers to marketing and selling the product have been decreased significantly and Boxtone is able to work closely with peer to peer advice networks that play a major role in what products are purchased.

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