



Three Steps to Manage Customer Crises

by Curtis N. Bingham

**CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER
COUNCIL**



Three Steps in Managing Customer Crisis

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Curtis Bingham is the recognized authority on chief customer officers and the first to promote this role as a catalyst for competitive advantage. He is the creator of the CCO Roadmap, a groundbreaking work containing 100+ critical strategies essential for customer centricity. As an international speaker, author, and consultant, Curtis is passionate about creating customer strategy to sustainably grow revenue, profit, and loyalty.

Customer crises strike without warning, and the chief customer officer must act swiftly and decisively to address root causes and begin rebuilding damaged customer relationships. Over my years of experience working with scores of chief customer officers, I've found three steps that are crucial in successfully managing any crisis:

Build Strong Customer Insight *Before* Crisis Strikes

As owner of the customer you know the value of thorough customer research, but having detailed data is particularly vital when crisis strikes: your unique customer insight must form the basis of a successful response strategy. Relying on that insight you will be able to specifically target touch points that will resonate with your customers, identify areas of the organization's plan that may exacerbate negative opinion, and determine the best strategies for mitigating that negativity. Have a comprehensive customer research program in place *before* you're faced with crisis to ensure that the information is there when you need it most.

Focus the Organization on Customer Impact

It's all too common for the wider organization to focus on damage control—acting in self-defense, laying blame, or stonewalling. But this will only worsen already injured customer relationships. Instead, it's imperative for you to lead the organization to focus on customer impact at every step along the road to recovery. This is not to say that every action must have a positive impression; we know there are times the organization must act despite negative impact. Your job is to ensure that at every step someone is asking the question: *how will this affect customers?* If it's positive, highlight it in a way that strengthens customer relationships, and if it's negative, use your customer insight to mitigate the damage.

A white silhouette of a lighthouse with a lantern room on top, emitting a beam of light. The lighthouse is positioned on the left side of the page, with a yellow and blue curved graphic element behind it.

Rebuild Damaged Trust

Incorporating high customer touch into routine operations allows you to rebuild trust while creating sustainable customer centric change. Seek opportunities for reassuring customers not only within the recovery, but throughout the organization. Look for functions that can be updated or repackaged to highlight positive customer impacts. Share information with customers by updating call center scripts, or devise high touch outreach programs to provide understanding about particular actions or operations of the organization. Customer trust will return only when customers feel they are receiving honest and forthcoming communication about the problems affecting them and the steps you are taking toward resolution..*

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About CURTIS N. BINGHAM



The first to promote the role of chief customer officer (CCO) as catalyst for competitive advantage, Curtis is recognized as the world's foremost authority on CCOs. He is founder and Executive Director of the Chief Customer Officer Council™ and creator of the CCO Roadmap and the Customer Centricity Maturity Model: groundbreaking, proprietary works that assist companies achieve customer centric culture and revenue growth. Curtis is a champion of customer engagement as a critical growth engine and first to identify engagement as the next evolutionary step beyond loyalty. An international speaker, author, and consultant, Curtis is passionate about creating powerful customer strategies and trusted for his business acumen, actionable insights, and commitment to measurable business results.

About THE CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER COUNCIL

The CCO Council is a powerful and intimate gathering of the world's leading customer executives from widely diverse industries. The Council helps executives achieve objectives faster and more easily by leveraging best practices. It helps validate and refine strategies and initiatives to avoid experimenting at customer expense. Membership is by invitation only, and purposefully cross-pollinated with the most forward-thinking companies, large and small, so as to help customer executives deliver solid, customer-centric business results. For more information, email info@ccocouncil.org or call 978-226-8675.



LEARN MORE ABOUT CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

The Customer Engagement Trajectory - In this ***Bingham Advisory*** Curtis provides a framework for understanding where engagement emerges in the business-customer relationship to provide its greatest value.

In addition, you'll also learn how real world companies such as MetLife, Oracle, and Riot Games are engaging their customers and enjoying bottom line improvements to revenue and shareholder value as a result.

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