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Gartner Identifies 10 Mistakes That Lead to Mobile Customer Service Failure

Analysts to Discuss Mobile CRM at Gartner Customer Strategies & Technologies Summit 2012, 11-12 June in London, UK

Egham, UK, 1 June 2012 —While organisations are judiciously deploying their mobile application strategy, there are 10 major mistakes that cause mobile customer service failure, according to Gartner, Inc.

"The desire of many organisations to extend their customer service to the mobile platform market has led to the misconception that any good application can also make a good mobile application," said Johan Jacobs, research director at Gartner. "IT leaders should not assume that, because all smartphones have browser and web access, their content is ready for mobile devices. They need to plan for content with products and services that are specifically suited to the mobile channel, or users will be left with an indifferent or poor experience."

Gartner said organisations should develop a mobile application strategy that enables them to capitalise on the unique opportunities presented by mobile technology. There are four areas that need to be addressed when developing this strategy:

- **Demand.** What do customers want, what does the business need, what devices and habits do customers have, and what will the competition do?
- **Supply.** Innovation is a major challenge, demanding that organisations go beyond "me too" mobile applications. What staff and skills will be needed to manage external partners, and how will they be obtained? What services and partners should be used?
- **Control.** Who owns and manages the strategy? How will the strategy be managed? What measurements will be used to track it?
- **Risks/issues.** What risks and issues are raised by mobility? What could derail the strategy, what other factors will impact it?

"If done well, mobile solutions can expand the channels of communication with customers, employees and business partners, and can result in better customer retention, increased sales, improved employee productivity, and more," said Mr Jacobs. "Done poorly, mobile solutions can very easily destroy your customer service reputation."

Gartner has identified 10 major mistakes that lead to the failure of an organisation's mobile customer service:

1. **Violation of the "three-click/tap/press" rule.** Applications must not use more than three key strokes to get to the required functionality. Each additional keystroke typically adds complexity and often stops the user from returning to the application.

2. **Difficulty with ergonomics, especially text input.** Just because your web content fits onto a laptop browser screen, this does not mean it is suitable for a mobile device. Mobile content needs to be simplified and repurposed for each user device.
3. **Not reusing learned behaviours — such as soft keys, navigation.** Mobile applications need to pick up the user's habits on the phone. For example, if "autocomplete" was switched off on the phone settings then don't use that option in your mobile application — because the user clearly dislikes that functionality.
4. **Violating "security 101."** As with laptop and desktop applications, mobile applications need to comply with security requirements. Authentication, encryption and secure login should all be part of any mobile application architecture.
5. **Difficulty with navigation.** Standard web pages displayed on a mobile device often have content disappearing to the right and off the bottom of the screen. To navigate, users have to scroll left-right and up-down to try and find basic functionality such as the "back" button. Ensure that navigation buttons can be easily accessible at all times.
6. **Burying most important functions.** Due to the limited screen real estate, mobile application designers must ensure that the most important functionality is right at the start of the navigation journey, as opposed to layering functionality deep down in the application.
7. **Incorrect or illegible display of text or graphics.** Many mobile devices are still not smartphones and have limited graphics processing capability. Pushing large graphical images and video text to the mobile device could result in a very poor quality experience for the user.
8. **Inability to revise mistakes.** Few things are as frustrating on a mobile device as trying to get the cursor to the middle of a word or web address to correct a typing error. Always have two "back" buttons — one that erases text and one that does not erase text but will allow the user the opportunity to correct typed mistakes.
9. **Content visibility.** Sunlight is one of the worst enemies of mobile applications, because it often makes the text on the screen illegible. Employ the best practice of "**bolding**" the most important pieces of information on the screen.
10. **Resource inefficiency — draining the battery, excessive network round trips.** Mobile applications must have a stop-start capability to allow the user to stop an activity or data entry and then return to the same point without having to re-enter all the content. This capability is needed when the device has to be switched off mid way through a transaction — for example, when flying or when the battery runs out.

"Capitalising on the mobile opportunity demands that the organisation looks beyond technology. It must also take a strategic view and ensure that its mobile investments align with, and advance, the organisation's business strategy and goals," said Mr Jacobs.

Gartner analysts will discuss how to exploit mobile for excellent customer service at the Gartner Customer Strategies & Technologies Summit 2012, to be held from 11 to 12 June in London. For more information about the Summit, please visit www.gartner.com/eu/crm. You can also register for the event by contacting Laurence Goasduff, Gartner, on + 44(0) 1784 267 195 or at laurence.goasduff@gartner.com. Information from the event will be shared on Twitter at http://twitter.com/Gartner_inc using #GartnerCRM.

About the Gartner Customer Strategies & Technologies Summit

CRM is entering a new era in which the focus is much more on the relationship and less on the management. As organisations balance growth and retention objectives, they need to get smarter, think socially and be mobile-oriented. The Summit will help organisations gain a fuller understanding of the technological, social and economic trends influencing the next generation of CRM.

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