

# The essence of social media for brands and consumers

By [Cecilia Mohlala](#)

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## What is social media?

Social media is evolving in very interesting times for individuals, and for brands, it is a way to market products, campaigns and acquire consumers

according to Webtrends.com, "Social media is a phrase being tossed around a lot these days, but it can be difficult to answer the question of what is social media."

In essence, individuals use social media to speak out loud to a mass of people, to market their skills, to advertise their personal projects and ideas, and to consume humour.

## Brands and relationships

Brands on social media are building relationships with existing consumers and acquiring new ones, and at the same time delivering products and engaging consumers.



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I suppose in observation, the essence of social media for brands is applauded when consumers compliment brands for doing great work, loving the marketed products and engaging the brands in playful manners, and on the other hand, lost when consumers see negativity in the brands, complain about the brands and service and overall enjoy talking bad about the brands.

Sometimes it could be because they expect goodies out of the brand, sometimes it could be because the brands are not complying with their own house rules, and sometimes, well, it could be because one disappointment to a long-standing consumer can result in a volume of hate speech from other potentials who are looking into building a relationship with a specific brand.

## Consumers and relationships

Consumers have taken to social media to complain about bad service, bad quality of products, and it becomes a sad case

when a brand is on social media to deliver great campaigns and work for their products, and the comments followed are negative, and only a few are left to bring a smile on a brand's face.

Social media for brands has become a platform to rectify mistakes, whether on a great campaign or other products pushed on the social media platforms. These communication platforms have moved from direct communication in brand houses, to bashing communication on electronic mediums.

## Where and when does quality prevail?

The Guardian explains it better when it says “gone are the days of one-way conversations dictated by brands. Customers now demand a high level of speed and convenience. Social sites such as Twitter and Facebook provide a very public platform and sort of easy access to organisations that modern consumers crave, so it's no surprise that social media is fast becoming an essential component of customer strategies.”

So the big question I suppose remains in observing what the real essence of social media for brands and a consumer is.

In observation, the essence of social media for brands lies in retaining consumers by maintaining a good consistency of handling conflicts, handling communication, and always being the 'player' in the relationship.

## ABOUT CECILIA MOHLALA

Cecilia Mohlala is a practicing Social Media Community Manager and writer who started out as a journalist and columnist for a community newspaper for two years. She studied Digital Marketing through DigifyZA from Livity Africa. I love writing, content, and thinking. Since giving birth to Digital, I have the curiosity to feed it!

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