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THE POWER TO KNOW®

How can we use social media data to detect customer issues sooner?

■ Business Impact

"One of the dangers for companies is assuming that they know their customers' needs and know what the customers think about the quality of their products and services."

–Timothy J. Clark, *Success Through Quality,* ASQ Quality Press, 1999

■ Challenges

- **Understanding context over time**. Manufacturers struggle to keep up with the latest reviews, opinions and posts, not to mention keeping track of what happened last month or last year; but this historical information provides deep insight into developing trends and can guide the decision of how to react to new information.

- **Analyzing down to the component level.** Manufacturers often have trouble breaking down huge data volumes to the component level, but without this level of detail, the quality department cannot act.

- **Measuring reactions to new product launches**. Traditional customer feedback mechanisms, such as warranty claims and survey forms, can take weeks or months to produce information regarding new product launches – a critical time for addressing customer perceptions.

- **Using competitive information.** Surveys and other methods for obtaining competitive information are generally time consuming and costly, but while social media has provided a "free" new data source, making sense of competitive information and making relevant comparisons is difficult.

YOUR GOAL: **Understanding customer perceptions of product quality and identifying emerging issues.**

Quality has many definitions, but when it is time to make a purchase decision, your customers' perceptions trump all of them. At a time when product recalls, government intervention and lawsuits are front-page news, customers are now questioning brands that seemed to have been above reproach. The ability to monitor, measure and manage those perceptions has significant impact on your ability to detect field issues, differentiate your products and increase profitability.

Although customer perception may seem less controllable than traditional definitions of quality, the good news is that your customers' perceptions are more accessible than ever. Consumer-protection websites, social media networks and other customer feedback channels are rich sources of feedback on your customers' perceptions of you and your competitors.

OUR APPROACH

Truly understanding and managing the perceived quality of your products requires a comprehensive approach to integrating and analyzing social media, governmental and internal data sources. Mining text data for issues, sentiment and influencers improves issue detection, problem resolution, competitive intelligence and future product design. Applications that are simply listening platforms are not enough. You need the ability to understand context in those conversations by better focusing on what you watch for with the lens through which you view your business. We approach the problem by providing software and services to help you:

- **Accumulate knowledge about relevant customer conversations** by integrating pertinent data across online channels, including government reporting systems, social media forums and internal sources, then storing that content in an analysis-ready format.

- **Analyze customer issues down to the component level** by modifying taxonomies so that they accurately represent your product component hierarchies.

- **Quantify the impact of new product launches** with the ability to compare sentiment before and after a product launch and set alerts for component-level comments.

- **Track social networks** to identify the most influential participants – those with the most friends and followers.

- **Base product design on customer sentiment and preferences** using a reporting and analysis platform that surfaces insights regarding the features that customers would most like to see added to future products.

Customers are sharing praises and complaints about your products whether you're listening or not. SAS can harness the power of this data, enabling you to identify issues earlier, resolve them faster, change perceptions about your products, reduce costs and increase sales.

THE SAS® DIFFERENCE: Closed-loop process to improve cross-sell revenue

For more than 30 years, SAS has been integrating data and applying analytics to improve product quality. Social media may be a relatively new data source, but the goals and the underlying processes are the same. SAS enables you to:

- **Integrate and analyze quality data from diverse sources** to gain insights that will help you create greater product value faster.

- **Quickly identify emerging issues and provide useful information** to your problem solvers by applying embedded, advanced analytics along with multilanguage support, hybrid sentiment analysis and component-level granularity.

- **Use the latest machine-learning algorithms** to discern sentiment and tone, while also allowing human experience to override rules.

Quickly providing useful information to your staff facilitates and accelerates the problem-solving process.

CASE STUDY: A Global Automotive Manufacturer

■ Situation

In a market where product recalls, government intervention and lawsuits were at an all-time high, a global automotive manufacturer needed to better understand what customers were saying about its vehicles, but making sense of the information available from hundreds of different sources was overwhelming.

■ Solution

SAS provided an integrated, analytics-based solution to understand the perceived quality of the vehicles. The solution:

- Integrated social media data from hundreds of different sites with consumer-protection websites and internal data sources.

- Tracked comments down to the component level to identify quality issues and monitor customer sentiment.

- Surfaced the information to problem solvers and other key users across the organization.

■ Result

- Quality issues are identified earlier than through warranty claims and other traditional data sources.

- Issues are tracked over time to understand historical patterns and solutions.

- Customer feedback is monitored in real time to understand reactions to new product introductions and other changes.

- Competitive data is available for benchmarking and other quality improvement purposes.

- Through the use of a phrase cloud, the manufacturer can identify which issues were creating the most conversations.

■ What if you could ...

Uncover small issues before they are big problems
What if you could detect customer issues before they show up in other data sources and before they become front-page news?

Monitor new product launches more effectively
What if you could understand customer reactions to new product launches before warranty claims and other traditional feedback are available?

Gather intelligence on your key competitors
What if you could identify your competitors' strengths and weaknesses, allowing you to react accordingly?

Use customers' sentiments and preferences to drive product design
What if you had the ability to discover ideas for new product features that would excite and provide value to prospective customers?

■ You can. SAS gives you THE POWER TO KNOW®

SAS FACTS

More than 2,000 manufacturing companies worldwide are SAS customers, including:

- 47 of Fortune's list of the top 50 global manufacturers.

- 24 of the Gartner/AMR Global Supply Chain Top 25.

- 48 of the top 50 US manufacturers on IndustryWeek's IW US 500 list.

Learn more about SAS software and services for manufacturing:
www.sas.com/industry/manufacturing

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