Online Communication Channels in a Company. Case study: Bosch Service Solutions

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Abstract: *In the article "Online Communication Channels in a Company. Case study: Bosch Service Solutions", we highlight the communication platforms within the IT Service Desk project, the quality and transmission of information. In many companies, a lot of tools have been analyzed and made available for people to communicate with each other. At the moment, there is a need for efficiency and speed in our daily interactions. Effective communication enables one to send a clear message as soon as possible. Mastering effective business communication has a positive impact on the management of professional relationships and organizational behavior. More precisely, to meet the need for communication and to make human interaction more effective and simple, organizations provide various platforms where employees can share ideas, debate different topics, communicate with colleagues, including those from other departments in the organization. There are many ways of communicating and transmitting information online at Bosch and each has its own specificities. The way in which messages or information are sent is*

extremely important. Either in writing or orally, we must consider the type of channel available. Various platforms and programs are available within the IT Service Desk project, so that employees can communicate with their colleagues, solve the problems faced by users, provide feedback, etc.

1. Introduction

The purpose of our work is to identify the main communication channels in a company, the frequency of their usage and the level of communication effectiveness. Analysing the various types of channels, each with its own characteristics, we were able to find out how specific information is transferred and how a message is sent from one colleague to another.

Communication channels are tools used by companies to establish a relationship with their customers or with their employees, and to communicate with their public. They improve the experience between the customer and the brand, stimulating marketing, generating company recognition and sales impact.

Communication channels create a bridge between the firm and its public. Therefore, knowing what they are and how they work, the chosen communication channels are essential in attracting the right customer for the brand, because this will be the foundation for the digital marketing strategy. There is no specific channel that brings big results. Everything depends on the business and the customer profile that will take shape over time. But since there are multiple communication channels, one should offer customers multiple ways to reach the company.

The following are online communication channels suitable for a company: Social media, blogs, email marketing, support, videos, forums, a

channel for complaints. Depending on the company, these channels may be aimed at the customers or the employees of the company.

2. Research method

As the co-author of this paper has been working at the same company for almost 4 years, she is extremely familiar with its channels and she was able to make a comprehensive analysis of each channel.

As a research method, we have chosen the interview. Interviews can be defined as a qualitative research technique which involves "conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation" (Boyce, 2016).

The interview consists of 19 open questions and it was administered to 35 employees at Bosch Service Solutions.

Based on the respondents' answers, we received concrete examples and learned more about their opinion. We encouraged the interviewees to go into detail as far as possible, allowing them to be as free and honest as possible in their expression, so that we can get an image as close as possible to the truth.

As for the location of the interview, it was carried out online, on the well-known platform Skype for Business. We would have liked to take the interview face-to face at the company, but because of the 2020 pandemic, we had to rely on an online channel.

The interview lasted 25-30 minutes. Some sessions lasted even longer, because the respondents wanted to give us concrete examples, and even ideas for improving some communication channels we use daily but which are frequently avoided due to flaws. The interviews spread over 2 weeks. The respondents selected for the interview are colleagues with whom the co-author of the paper interacts every day, which led to a more informal

relationship between the two sides as well as to more honesty and lack of any constraints on the part of the interviewees.

3. Results

Based on the respondents' answers, we were able to analyze the following issues: general problems related to the effectiveness of communication when they send messages, how they manage to understand a message, differences in communication between the virtual and the real-life environment, the communication channels they frequently use, etc.

As for the preferred chat channel, 77,1% of respondents chose Skype, whereas only 22,9% chose Teams (Fig. 1). The frequency of use of the chosen channels was as follows: 25 out of 35 interviewees said "always", while the rest used 9 or less on a scale from 1 to 10.

What is your favorite internal communication channel?
35 responses

- Skype
- Teams
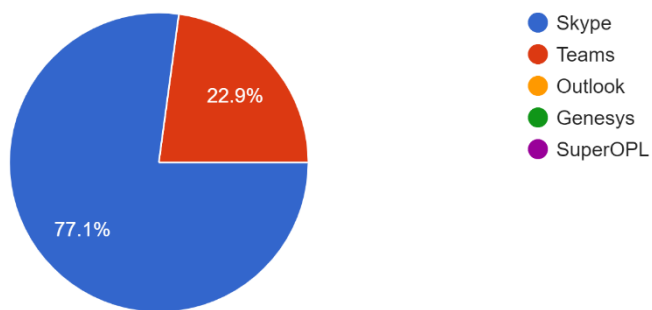- Outlook
- Genesys
- SuperOPL

22.9%

77.1%

Fig.1 – Favorite chat channel

When it comes to sharing important information to a large group (+50 users), most respondents said that they shared information through email, via *Outlook*. When someone is working from home, urgent information or

very important information should be sent verbally, in Skype meetings. Under normal working conditions (at the office), this type of information is best transmitted orally in a meeting.

In what concerns giving feedback, all the respondents considered it better to submit important information online (via Feedback tracker, e-mail or chat), in order to have either a sample of what is said or a timeline of facts. (fig. 2)

Tu cum procedezi pentru a transmite un feedback? Prin ce modalitate dai feedback unui coleg?
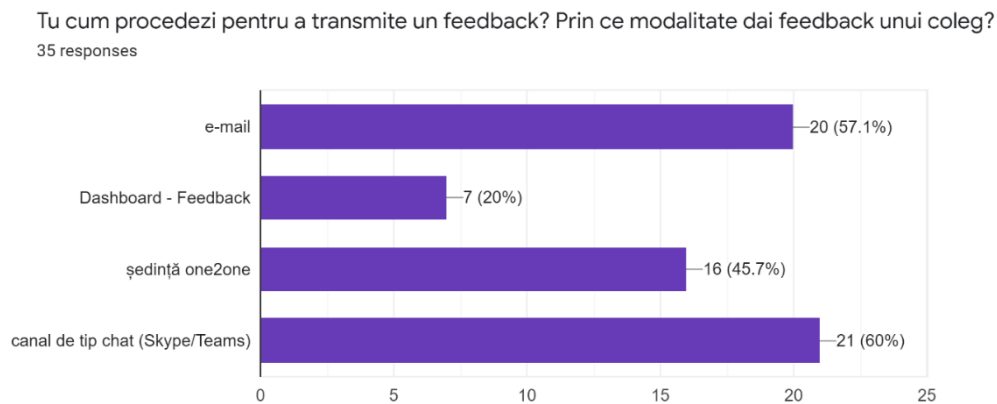35 responses

Fig. 2 – Preferred way to give feedback

When it comes to solving technical problems or explaining solutions, respondents chose several tools that are used every day. Whether it is from a customer or a colleague, the problem or the request must be solved in the most effective way. The graph below shows what colleagues use to solve various incidents. Agents who interact with customers benefit from the diversity of intranet platforms and numerous programs that can make their work easier, but everything depends on them when it comes to solving a request. Accordingly, they can choose from links, screenshots, graphs, etc. to solve the issue in the best and quickest way.

Conclusions

It was essential for us to make a difference between the two types of communication in an organization: online channels and face-to-face communication.

Each program we use is intended to make communication more effective and to provide various tools that can facilitate good and complex communication (image sharing, screen sharing, various documents such as MS Office documents, (video) calls, etc.). The question was: *How do you explain a solution to a colleague or a customer?* (fig.3)

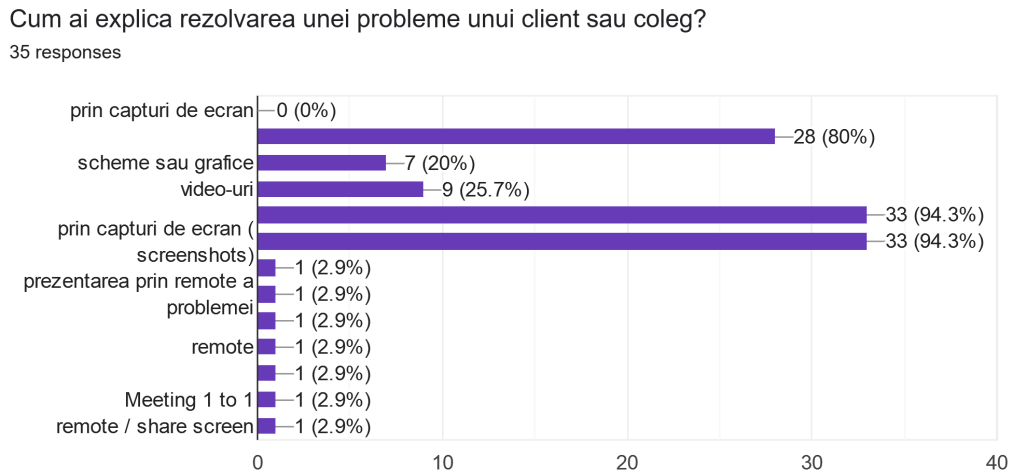Cum ai explica rezolvarea unei probleme unui client sau coleg?
35 responses

Fig. 3 – Tools to solve problems

As for the results of the interview, we have noticed that several respondents (or all, in some cases), share the same opinion about the same programs and each is motivated to be as productive and effective as possible. The message should be sent as simply as possible, whatever the problem, by avoiding technical vocabulary, so that the other person can

understand it easily. Open communication is also effective. If people can talk openly to each other and in a calm way, without differences, then communication is as effective. For the message to be understood there must be no haste in speech and the vocabulary used should be general.

A major result that we have found was the following. Although the respondents hold different project positions (some 1st-level agents, some 2nd-level and some team leaders), they have similar interests in communication. They have chosen the same tools in order to solve problems and they try to explain a certain problem in the same way: using as many tools as they can, so that the other person can fully and effectively solve their issue. In the end, we can say that they all want the same thing: to be understood.

Consequently, the internal online communication channels available in a company should be used to their maximum potential due to the significant impact they have on how people create privacy in conversations. Online communication is more and more popular nowadays, it is encouraged and makes it easier for everyone to move online, but people need to interact and will still tend to use face-to-face communication.

Webography:

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