



eBook

How to Effectively Manage Customer Complaints

Leverage Aptean Respond to Enhance the
Customer Experience



Introduction

When it comes to the success of your business, few things are more important than the happiness of your customers. They're the lifeblood of your business, and it should be your top priority to make sure that every experience your customer has with your company is a successful one.

A complaint management system (CMS) can help you with this. Not only does it help you manage your complaints as they're entered, processed and completed, but it lets your customers know that you take their complaints as seriously as they do.

In this eBook, you'll learn about the challenges that many institutions face and how an industry-specific CMS can help you overcome these hurdles to provide outstanding customer service.



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Seamless Workflow for Simple and Complex Complaints

Complaints are simple and straightforward, right? Managing those complaints, however, tends to be a bit more complex. Depending on the type of complaint, there may be a different workflow that needs to be employed. It can be a serious challenge to figure out which workflow is necessary when and who to involve in the process. There are different case types, and each one of those types, invariably, will need different treatments. From a macro-level, they may look similar, but likely there are small distinctions that also need to be considered.

Let's say a customer comes to you with a primary complaint, but on top of that they raise a secondary complaint, and they also have a tertiary matter to discuss. This is when it all gets a bit messy. You need to catalog each of these issues individually, not as separate complaints but as aspects of the same complaint. Each aspect may need different treatment, have different folks involved and have different resolutions and outcomes. Analytics are required for all aspects, as that's useful data you don't want to lose. You may have had only ten complaints in a day, but if each of those complaints had five 'aspects,' that's equivalent to nearly 50 broken customer journeys in a single day. Your CMS needs to be able to cater to all of these journeys and deliver insights from them.

You don't want your employees to have to worry about the workflow; instead, you want them focused on the complaint and the customer. So establishing set workflows and how to manage those respective nuances within your CMS are essential to your success. This will encourage and enable your employees to dedicate their attention and empathy towards your customers.



Single View of Complaints

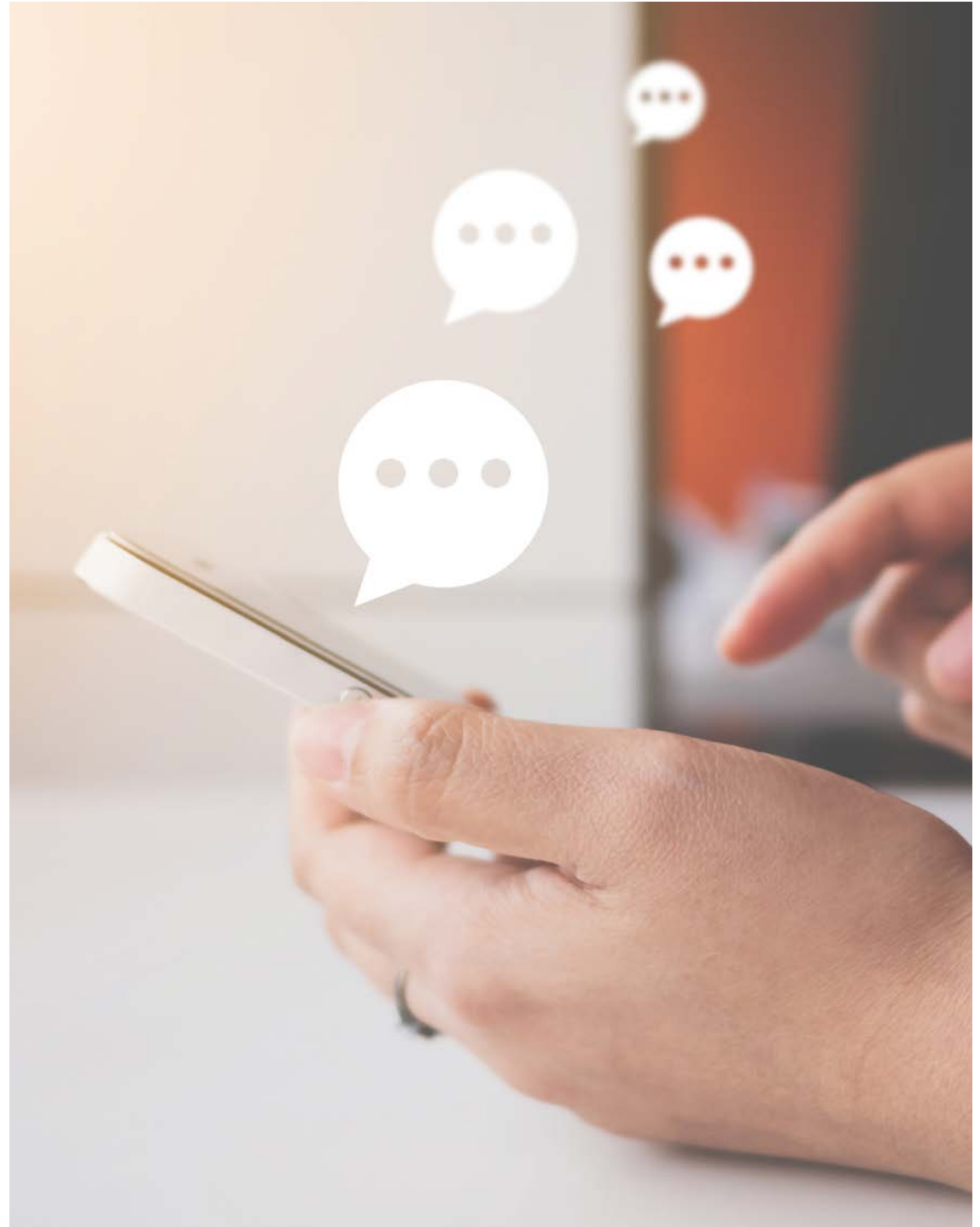
Effectively managing complaints is a complicated business, and it's only made more complicated by disparate systems. If there's not a single source of truth, a single repository for everything related to a case—documents and emails sent and received, case information, goodwill gestures and phone calls—where everything can be organized and tracked, then you're missing an opportunity to become more efficient and better utilize your data.

In fact, you may already have a CRM or IT ticketing system, and though you may be able to create tickets and view basic reports, it's not fit for purpose. You may see that system as fine, right? Maybe it's described as being 'good enough,' so why would you consider implementing a solution like Aptean Respond? Because responding to complaints and ensuring excellence in the customer experience is a complex business. Employing a CMS that's made specifically for you and your industry allows you to effectively track complaint data from within a single solution, which ensures your team has the most up-to-date information and can respond to your customer inquiries promptly.

Clear and Prompt Communication

Clear and prompt communication should be at the heart of customer service. In order to provide the best service to your customers, your employees must be able to access all the information they need to respond appropriately and promptly. The ability to make adjustments throughout the process to enhance and improve the overall customer experience is vital.

A CMS that has intelligent alerts and messages integrated within it ensures that everyone working on a complaint has access to the status, previous communications and to the complaint itself. As soon as negative feedback is received, team leaders are proactively notified to promptly take action. All of this centralized information makes it easier for your teams to figure out how to best respond to a customer, even if the customer service representative changes throughout the complaint process.





Ensuring Compliance with Government Regulations

When it comes to managing your complaints, ensuring you're compliant with government regulations is vital to your success.

In the US, the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) is a bill that was enacted to enhance privacy rights and consumer protection for residents of California, and there are several other states that are in the process of passing similar bills. Essentially, it puts the consumer in the driver's seat. With this act, it's now mandated that the customer has the right to know what personal data is being collected, whether their personal data is sold (and to whom), say no to the sale of their data, access their data and request that a business permanently delete their data. This means that businesses must be able to trace their customers' data, and if necessary, pull the data and send it to a regulator. A dedicated CMS can help with these types of compliances, as there's a configuration that includes all the things that need to be submitted to your specific regulator.

The same rules apply for those businesses in the UK; the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) mandates that twice a year each financial services business sends them data in a specific format for all the complaints they've worked on. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has its own set of regulations that outline the rights citizens in the EU have to their data. By leveraging a CMS, you don't have to worry about ensuring compliance as the system helps manage that for you – instead, you can focus on serving your customers.

Effectively Monitor Social Media Platforms

There are tens of different ways a customer can complain these days—over the phone, on social media, through email, face-to-face, via chatbot, etc. With all of these avenues, tracking the complaint to ensure that the customer's voice is not only heard but that their grievance is being appropriately managed can be really challenging. It's easier for things to fall through the cracks, simply because there are more cracks for it to fall through.

Social media platforms tend to have the largest gaps through which complaints can fall. Add the fact that comments and posts are visible to everyone, having the ability to clearly track all of that data is essential when it comes to effectively monitoring your social media accounts for customer complaints.

Imagine a CMS with a universal inbox. You're no longer restricted by a single account. So if you receive a DM on Twitter and then shortly thereafter receive a complaint on a Facebook thread, those alerts and messages will be sent to a singular inbox. And if there's enough information, then you can easily click through and create a case based on that post or DM, which seamlessly leads you into your normal case management workflow.

When it comes to monitoring social channels, a CMS can also perform sentiment analysis. It measures the heat of the interaction-based sentiment, levels of emotion, sincerity and demographics. This tool looks beyond the word itself to determine proper context and analysis. For example, the word bacteria on its own is generally perceived negatively. The word kill on it's on is also perceived as negative. Kill bacteria, however, has positive connotations.

Anything that's red within the system is flagged up instantly so that your team can prioritize and execute follow-up quickly – and even create a complaint if needed.

Figure 1

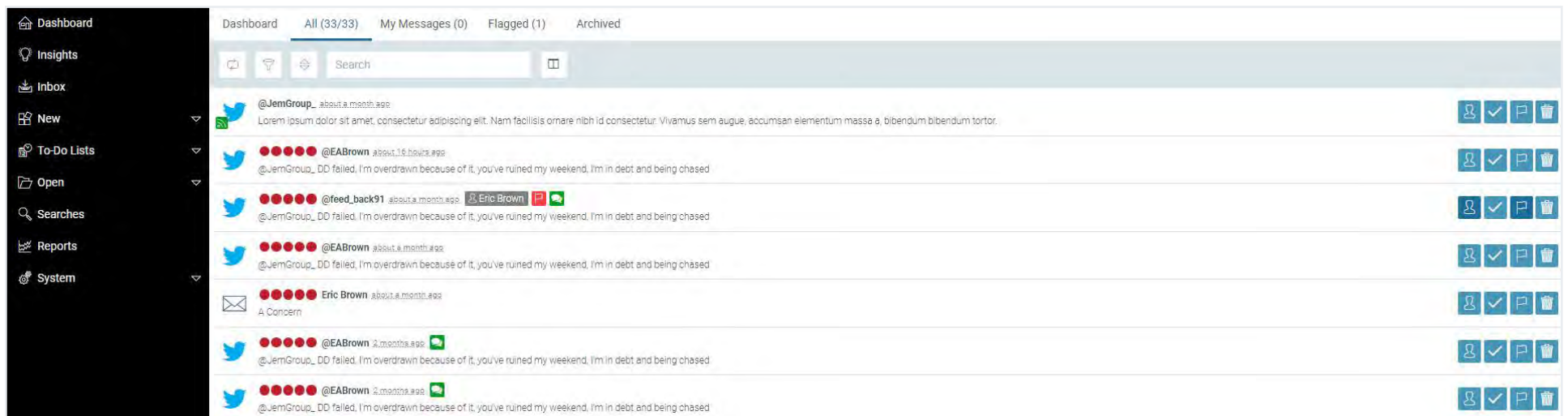


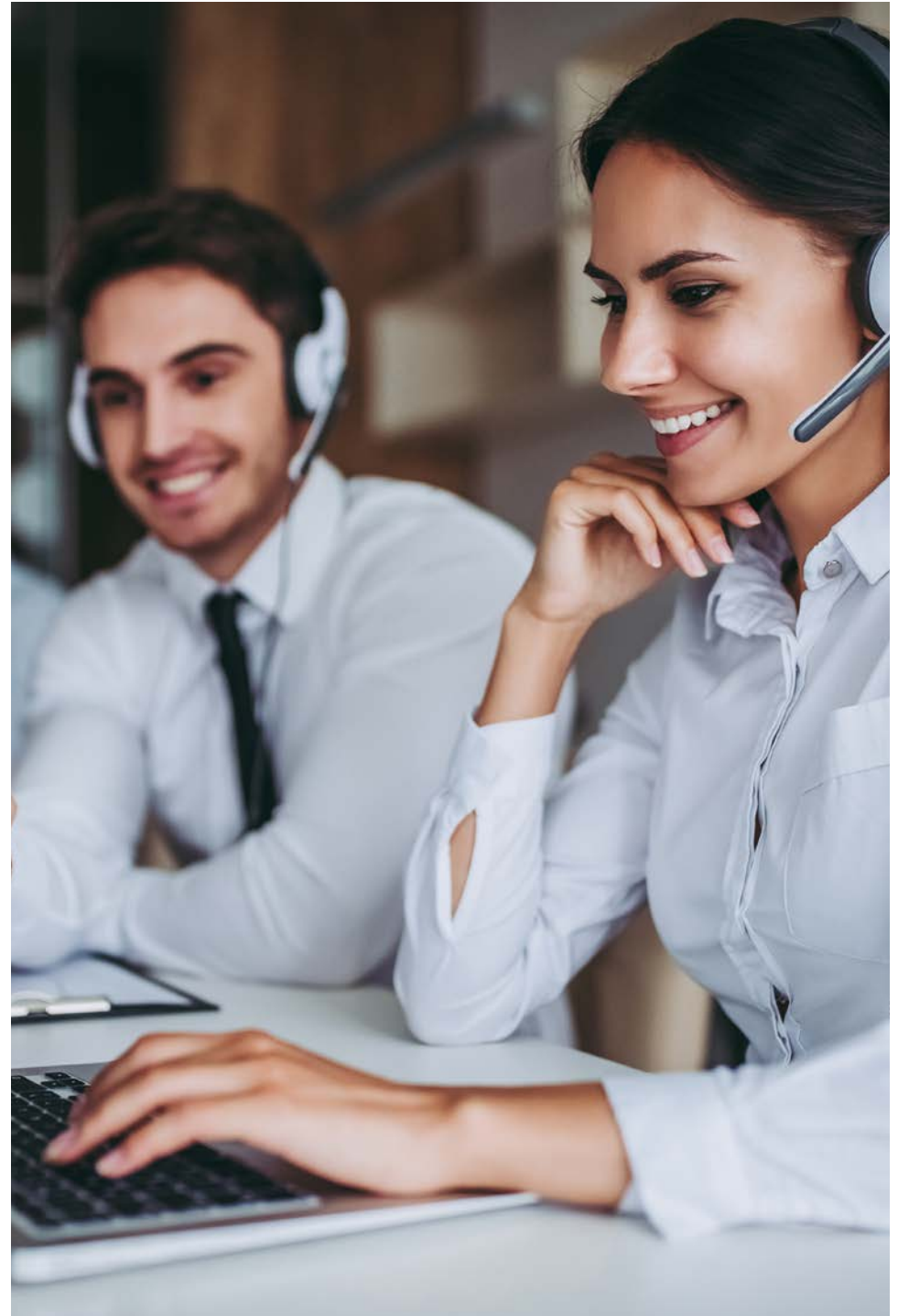
Figure 1 shows a unified inbox full of feedback from social media. Instead of digging around on all your different social media platforms for posts about either poor or positive customer experiences, the right complaint management solution will do all of that heavy lifting for you in a single interface.

Ensuring Good Customer Outcomes

If the goal of a CMS is to make complaint management easier, then it'd be valuable to ask why we want to make complaint management easier. The answer, likely, involves customer satisfaction. You want to keep your customers happy, certainly happy enough to come back again. To do that you must regularly evaluate how you're doing—as a company—when it comes to customer recovery.

If employees are able to manage their own quality performance and team leaders are able to manage their entire team's quality performance, everyone is likely to be more consistent and the quality of handling those complaints tends to be higher. Competitiveness can be a good thing, as it enables individuals to compare their quality performance against their peers, and team managers to compare the quality of their team against other teams. These comparisons harness the inherent competitive human spirit and drive standards upwards. A CMS that allows companies to provide surveys to their customers about the complaint process can help ensure consistency and improve the complaint process, while also creating some friendly competition within your team.

A good CMS should also be complemented by in-house expertise to guide the creation of an outcome-based quality framework. This will ensure complaint outcomes are aligned to the company's corporate vision, and it keeps the company's brand promise.



Closing the Loop

It's difficult to objectively assess the customer's perception of a company. However, if you're able to combine both internal quality results with customer survey results, you're able to objectively measure the difference in how you perceive your performance against how your customer perceives your performance. This side-by-side analysis exposes the customer expectation gap.

The end of customer complaint management doesn't simply end once the complaint has been resolved, it's important to survey your customers to see how they really feel about their experience throughout the entire process. A CMS that can create specific surveys to analyze the customer's experience during the complaint management journey is essential.

Slightly different from reporting and analytics, the results from these surveys could be extremely informative when it comes to your complaint management processes. When the case data and the feedback data is placed side-by-side, you're able to use it to drive improvements across the business. It's with this seamless comparison that feedback can become more actionable, informing the changes necessary to improve the entire customer experience. There's also a quality assurance aspect here, as it allows you to go through a process where you can provide actionable feedback to staff at certain touchpoints during the complaint process. By combining the survey insights with quality assurance data, you can provide exponential value. This not only assures your customer, but it empowers your case handlers to take ownership of their performance during the process.

It all comes down to you doing right by the customer. This is just another way for you to do that.

Figure 2

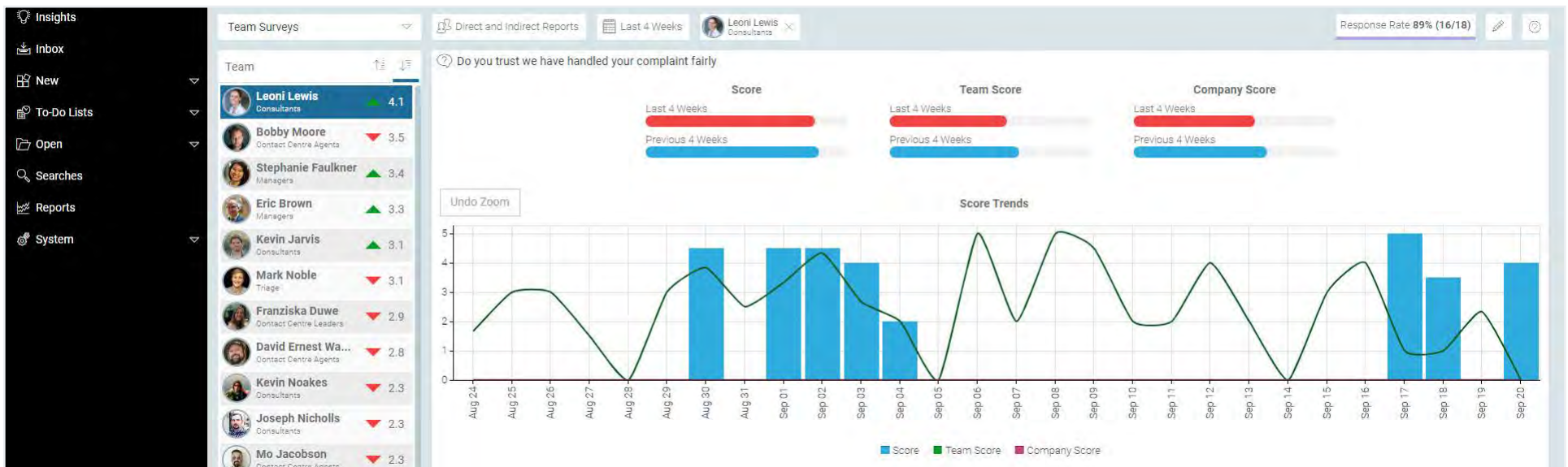


Figure 2 creates a bar chart of responses from the survey question "Do you feel that we listened and understood you?" Based on customer responses from this survey, companies and individual employees can make improvements and adjustments to better ensure a strong and positive customer experience.

Repairing Customer Journeys

The only way to ensure you don't have the same complaints day after day is to go through your business practices and understand the root causes of the complaints you've been receiving. This is why it's valuable for you to ask yourself if you're gaining all the necessary insights from your complaint management system to make the best, most informed decisions to improve the customer experience.

A fit-for-purpose CMS that supports all the different communication platforms on which your customers can complain will better help you manage complaints and then recover those initially dissatisfied customers. If you, as an enterprise, can understand what kinds of trends there are within your complaints, then you can proactively correct the issue so you don't keep letting your customers down for the same reasons time after time after time.

Figure 3

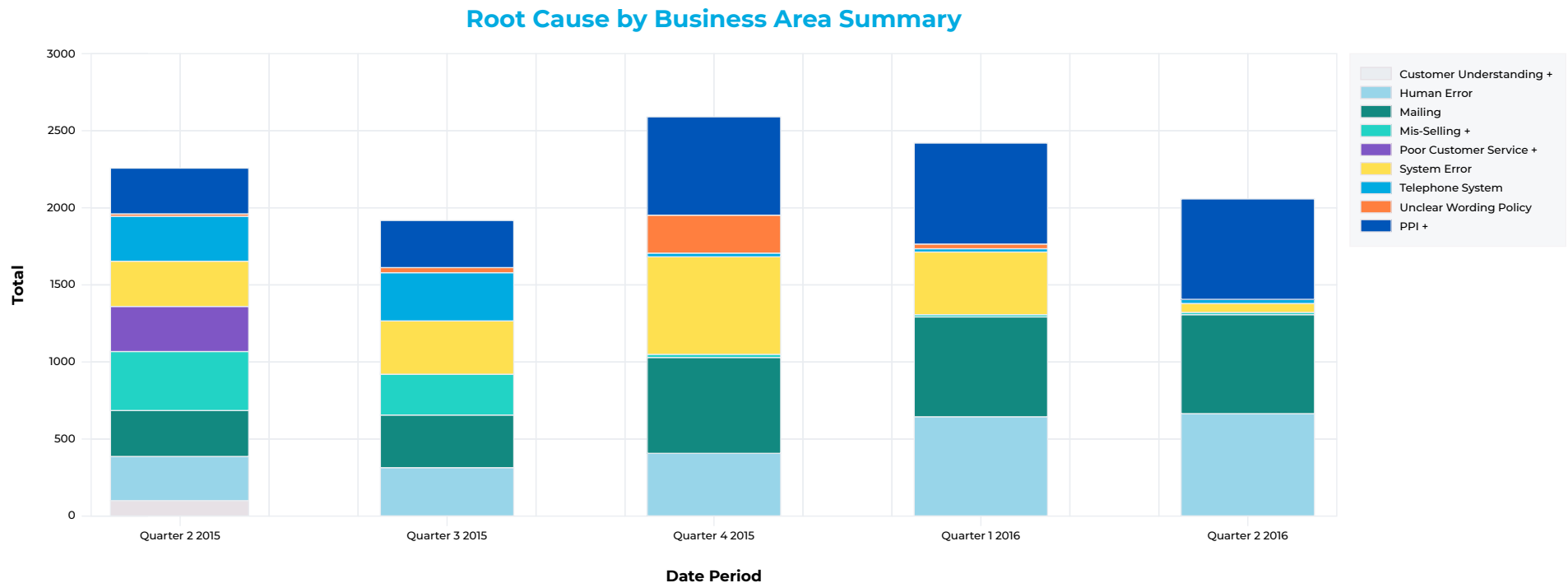


Figure 3 highlights the root causes of poor customer experiences. A CMS that allows you to dig through your data to successfully uncover root causes will set you up for success in both the long term and the short term.

Conclusion

With a robust complaint management system, you can improve your overall customer experience. Apteian Respond is an enterprise complaint management platform that supports every role in your customer experience team—from frontline staff and managers to team leaders and executives. Through configurable workflows and user-friendly dashboards, Respond empowers your team to improve customer interactions, accelerate complaint resolution and capture actionable insights to provide an outstanding customer experience.





See how Respond can work for you

Schedule a personal tour of Apteian Respond CMS and get a firsthand view of core complaint management functionality and advanced features.

[Schedule a demo today >>>](#)



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