

Avis: We try harder 2.0 case study

What was Avis's challenge?

In 2005 Avis UK recognised blogs and social media were having a big impact on how customers were renting cars. If Avis could get involved in social media, it believed it could serve its customers better and reinvigorate its 'We Try Harder' brand promise. The question was how to do it?

AVIS

We try harder.

What is the significance of social media in the travel sector?



40% of all travel bookings are made online. Customer reviews on sites like Trip Advisor are highly influential. ([http://asp.usatoday.com/travel/GCITravel/InsidePage.aspx?sUrl=/travel/news/2007-06-15-review-sites_N.xml&cld=argusleader.](http://asp.usatoday.com/travel/GCITravel/InsidePage.aspx?sUrl=/travel/news/2007-06-15-review-sites_N.xml&cld=argusleader))

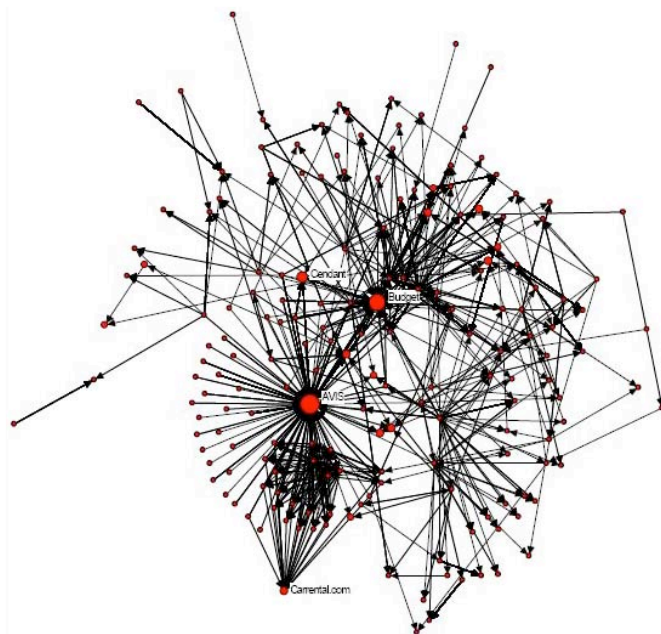
Positive reviews can drive word of mouth and market share, a bad customer review can lead to lost sales. Avis needed to ensure its customers were brand champions rather than critics online.

How did agency partner Web Liquid help Avis?



Web Liquid identified the opportunity, developed and now manages a comprehensive program for social media research and marketing that is applied throughout the Avis organisation to optimise brand health and marketing ROI.

What did Market Sentinel do to help?



Market Sentinel analysed online discussion about Avis to identify key authorities and topics of conversation. The research highlighted specific customer demands:

- A clearer contract
- Satnav/GPS
- Enhancements to the loyalty programme

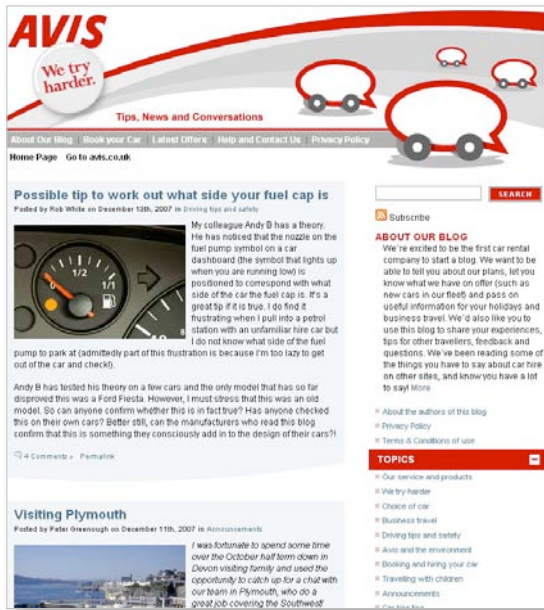
What did Avis do next?

Avis made a number of changes to the products and services it offers its customers. It introduced GPS, simplified the rental contract and offered the possibility for loyal customers to hire Aston Martins.

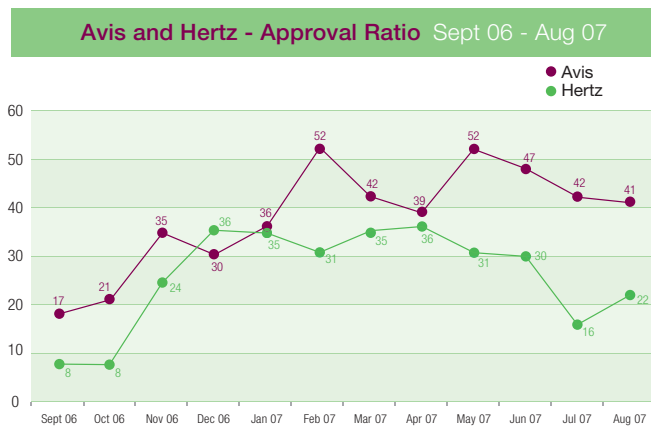


Wetryharder.co.uk – the blog

Avis made the bold decision to launch a blog wetryharder.co.uk. The blog was designed by Web Liquid and was a joint venture between Avis's Customer Service and Marketing departments.



Did it work?



To establish whether the initiative has driven customer recommendation Avis use the Net Approval Ratio. This is calculated by subtracting negative commentary from positive commentary and is based Frederick Reichheld's highly respected Net Promoter methodology, which Market Sentinel apply to the Internet.

Since launching its blog in January 2007, Avis's approval rating has increased by 200% eclipsing that of Hertz, one of its main competitors.

What do Avis's customers have to say?

Customer feedback is one of the best indicators of success. Since launch over 400 customer comments have been made. In addition, independent



third parties in the industry are also noticing. Here is what Anni Poulsen had to say: "So there you have it, Avis UK really does want your feedback. Not only that they seem to act on it too. One customer left a comment yesterday regarding an unsolved, two-year old complaint about excessive charges. A few hours later, he had not only received a response from Avis, he had also received a full refund, according to comments posted on Avis' We Try Harder blog." <http://www.thecooler.info/travel/457.html>

What about ROI?

In a sector growing at 1% p.a. Avis UK is achieving growth of more than 10%.

What does the industry have to say?

The industry has recognised Avis's work. In September 2007, Avis's social media work and the We Try Harder blog won the 2007 SOCAP award for Innovation in Customer Service.

