

## How to Deliver Great Customer Experience Through a Merger – 4 Keys to Effective Communications



### *How do you retain customers and strengthen brand loyalty through a complex merger?*

When your company takes on a merger or acquisition, you may see great opportunities, but you should also keep a sharp eye on how the transition affects your customer experience. With all the challenges of change —how do you retain customers and strengthen brand loyalty so you can capture the full value of the deal? In our experience, **effective communications** play a key role in a successful integration.

In a world where 2 out of 3 merger integrations fail ([Gartner report](#)), it's important to remember that the right messaging and communication strategy can help you positively influence customer perceptions and behaviors, and build alignment internally to ensure teams stay focused on delivering a great customer experience.

### 4 keys to effective merger communications

Sure, you need to retain customers, but it's even more important to strengthen those relationships, especially with acquired customers who may be new to your company. Consider these best practices for your merger communications:

- ① **Deliver consistent messaging** — During times of change, both your customers and employees will want to understand the big picture, and most importantly, how they'll be affected. That's why it's mission critical to define key messages that provide a clear, cohesive, and reassuring story about what's happening and what to expect, and communicate that story consistently across all channels. This helps you build alignment and momentum for a successful transition.
- ② **Identify and address stakeholder concerns** — It's not enough to simply issue statements about the merger. You need to understand stakeholder concerns so your communications convey what's most meaningful and generate positive perceptions about the changes. Do your homework early with [readiness assessments](#) that identify customer and employee concerns, and then craft merger communications that resonate well and build buy-in.



- ③ **Engage early and often** — You want to make sure your customers (and employees) feel like you're paying attention to their needs during times of change. In addition to servicing letters, engage directly through social media channels like Twitter and Facebook, which allow you to respond promptly to customer feedback about the merger and promote positive impressions that help strengthen brand loyalty.

Internally, provide regular updates through email broadcasts, newsletters, intranets, or other channels to keep teams well prepared to help customers with any questions or issues. And make sure you regularly communicate your appreciation to employees for all their efforts during a merger; when they feel valued and engaged, they're more likely to go the extra mile for customers.

- ④ **Equip internal teams with communication best practices** — To help drive that all-important consistency in merger communications, it's a good idea to provide tools that help customer-facing employees understand how to talk about the merger and best support customers through the changes. For example, a writing guide for merger communications can include recommended terminology, best practice examples for customer letters, links to helpful resources, and even legal tips for talking about the merger.

Ultimately, successful merger integration means you retain and grow your customer base, strengthen brand loyalty, and build stronger internal teams to lead the company forward. Well-planned, effective communications are a powerful tool to get you there, enabling you to overcome many common challenges and help ensure a profitable outcome for the merger.

### Let's Talk

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