# freshdesk

# WHAT MAKES CUSTOMERS HAPPY? THE STATE OF CUSTOMER SUPPORT

# Where is Support headed to?

Less than half a decade ago, customer support was still purely a reactive function. Customers would call in or email their frustrations to a business and then wait for hours, or even days to elicit a response. With the adoption of newer synchronous channels like chat and social media growing, companies are forced to proactively support customers the moment they tweet or share an angry Facebook post.
But how deep has this change in consumer mindset affected how customers and businesses perceive support experiences? And what should the business do to keep today's customers happy?

This study by Freshdesk analyzes the shift in adoption of new support channels against more traditional ones, and how businesses have been able to cope with them across a representative sample of 250,000 end customers.

Most importantly, this study benchmarks how fast businesses must respond to and resolve queries in order to keep their customers happy, and how their strategies must change as they move across channels.

## At a Glance

- ☑ Customers expect transparency
- ☑ Communities mean speed
- ☑ Email continues to dominate
- ☑ Hold times are killing the telephone
- ☑ Social is growing as a source

# What makes customers happy?

Nobody enjoys staying on hold. The time customers need to wait to elicit a response from the support team seems to play a major factor in how satisfied they are with the experience. Satisfaction ratings fall rapidly as response times increase after a critical threshold, indicating that customers understand the complexity involved in responding to a query till reasonable limits.
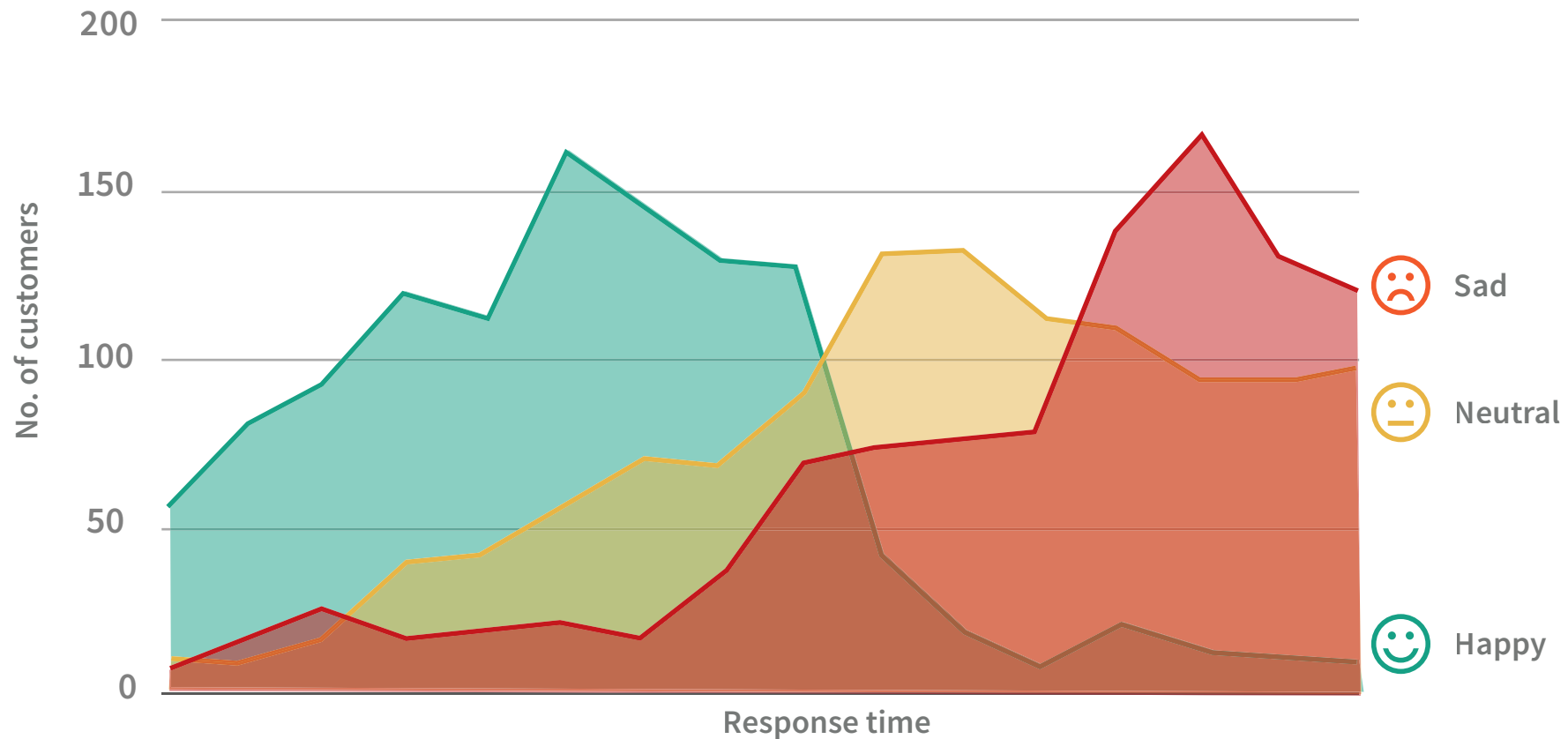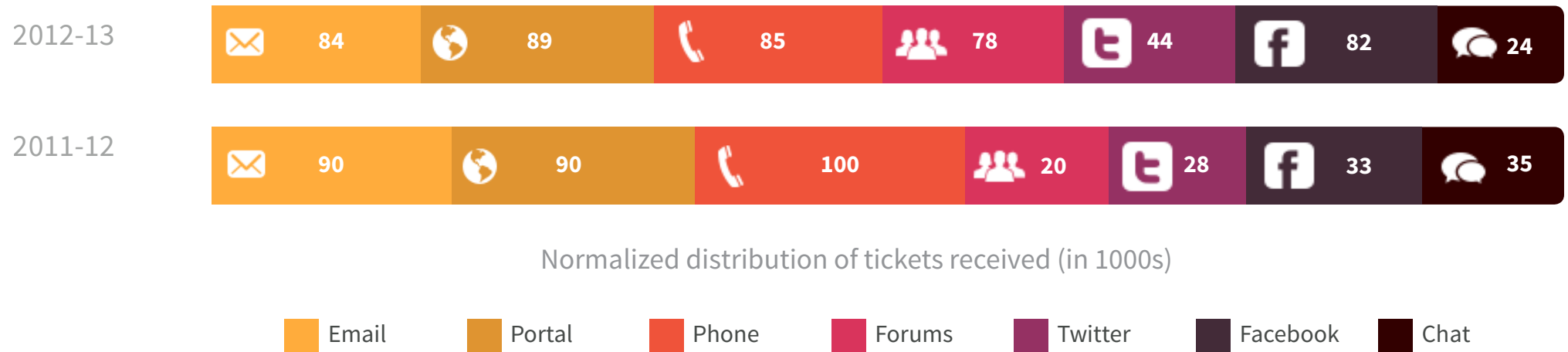
# How fast should you resolve?

Across all channels, customers expect their queries to be resolved within a maximum of one day, after which they start getting dissatisfied with the level of service. However, establishing clear Service Level Policies, and frequently sharing the progress on a ticket can help companies buy additional time to resolve.



Notable outliers clearly show how customers value transparency and effective communication to just quick resolutions.

Resolution time alone is a poor indicator of satisfaction.

# Where Customers Go: The Move to Modern Channels

| | Email | Portal | Phone | Forums | Twitter | Facebook | Chat |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2012-13 | 84 | 89 | 85 | 78 | 44 | 82 | 24 |
| 2011-12 | 90 | 90 | 100 | 20 | 28 | 33 | 35 |

Normalized distribution of tickets received (in 1000s)

- Email
- Portal
- Phone
- Forums
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Chat

While email continues to be the biggest source of support queries, its prominence has been steadily decreasing by over 7% compared to last year. Amongst social channels, businesses have opened up their support doors to Twitter more easily than Facebook.

Email is still miles ahead

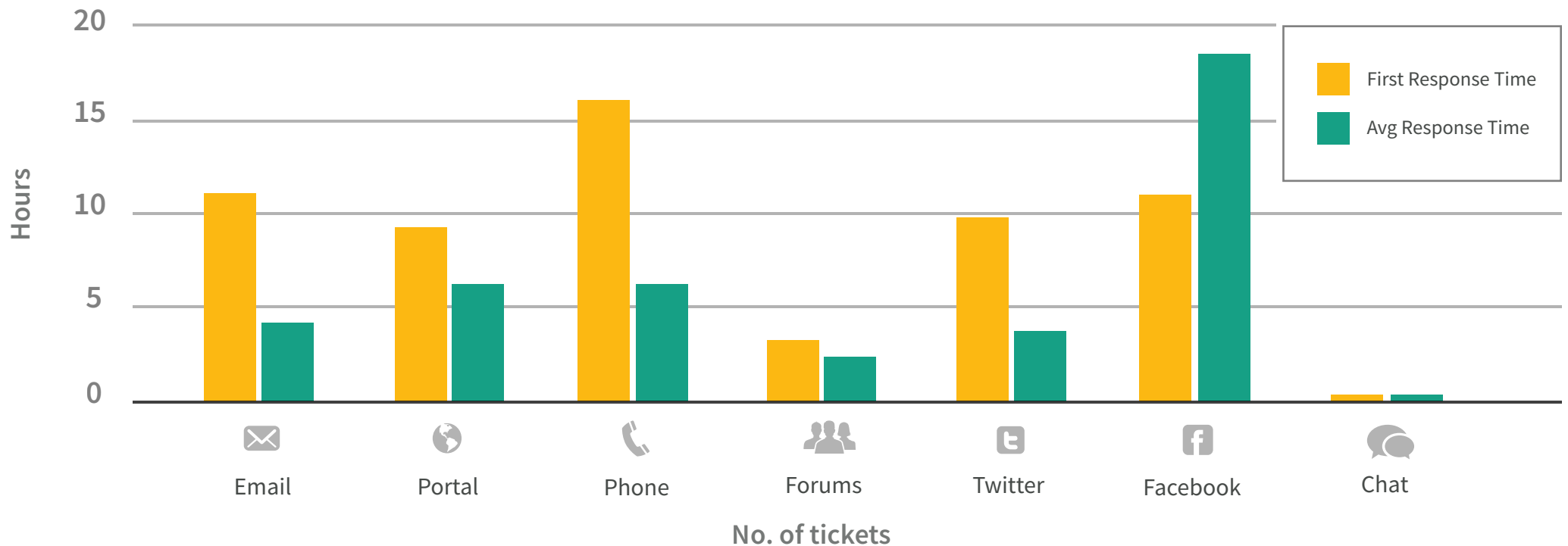Hashtags mean better support

Hold times are killing the telephone

# Fastest fingers are at the community

Comparing the first response time against the average time taken across all subsequent conversations, support teams seem to take a good amount of time to compose and send the first response, but pick up speed later in answering subsequent queries. Facebook is a notable exception here, where firms are quick to respond first but do not seriously follow through. Interestingly, the phone seems to be the worst medium to raise follow-up queries.
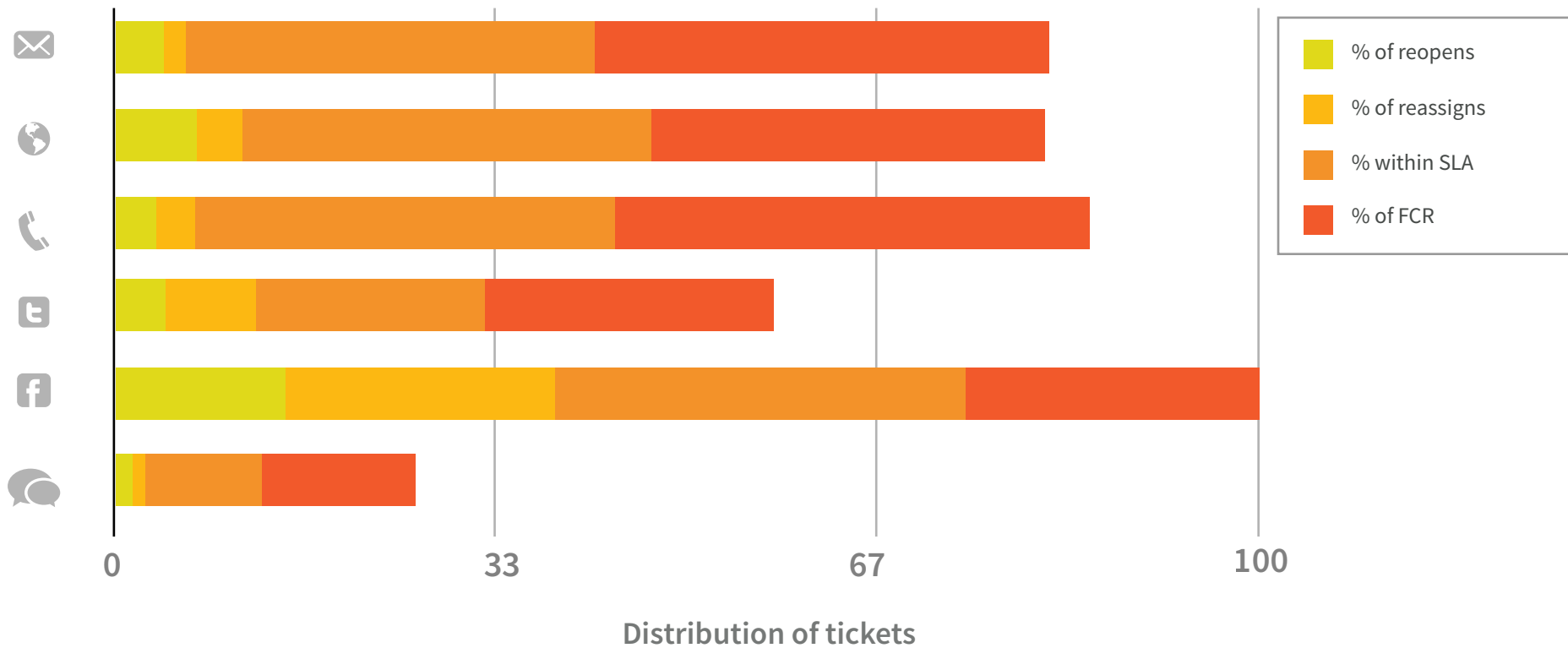
*An active user community is the fastest way to get solutions out to customers.*



Legend:
- First Response Time
- Avg Response Time

Y-axis: Hours (0, 5, 10, 15, 20)

X-axis categories: Email, Portal, Phone, Forums, Twitter, Facebook, Chat

No. of tickets

## A more stringent SLA Policy for social tickets can save customers & businesses lot of heart burn.

# Spray and Pray Support is fast dying out

Accountability and accuracy are core performance indicators of support efficiency across each channel. Email continues to dominate the space here, with most compliant as well as accurate responses, while Facebook seems to lag slightly behind. With response times and customer frustrations being more public in social channels, there is a clear need for higher SLA compliance and faster resolution here compared to email or web channels.



Legend:
- % of reopens
- % of reassigns
- % within SLA
- % of FCR

X-axis: Distribution of tickets (0, 33, 67, 100)

# What this means?

Speed and response time are essential metrics to win satisfied customers, but by themselves are often insufficient. Businesses need to understand their various support channels and the experience customers expect through each of them. While it is easy for businesses to neglect service level agreements and policies for new media, creating such structures can help businesses go a long way in winning the satisfaction of customers.

**About Freshdesk**

Freshdesk is a SaaS based social customer support solution  that allows companies to support customers across traditional media like Email, Phone, and their Website, and social channels like Facebook and Twitter, from one place.

To learn more about Freshdesk, please visit www.freshdesk.com, or contact us at love@freshdesk.com