



The Customer-Powered Product Development Playbook



To gather customer insights, most companies rely on either time-consuming, 1:1 outreach—which only lets them connect with a handful of people—or email surveys—which don't often inspire customers to respond. The right customer community solution gives companies an engaging system for continually collecting meaningful feedback from a large group of customers, which can be used to improve their product offerings and inspire customers to adopt new features faster.

Continuously collect more customer insights

Stop relying on the same small pool of customers to influence your product direction. Leverage tools like Pendo to engage with a wider swath of customers directly in your product interface. Quickly collect a variety of insights from a broad group of actively engaged customers, and instantly recognize them for sharing their opinions, so they're motivated to do so again and again.

Send timely, gamified polls, surveys or open-ended requests for feedback to your entire community with advocates, or target users of certain product lines or industries to quickly get the best insights at multiple points in the product development lifecycle.

Accelerate product iteration

Quickly get products and features to market that have already been validated by your customers. Collect customer feedback so your product team can build the best products and get customers excited to adopt new solutions before they're formally released. If your product team needs a ready-made group of beta testers, look no further than your super users.

After all, they're the ones who work with your product every day, they're invested in your success, and they're more likely to help out than your average customer. Quickly source specific beta testers (based on usage, industry, etc.), track their progress, and quickly share real-time feedback internally so you can iterate on products with less effort.

Strengthen product launches

Launch your products more effectively by tapping into the market insights provided by your customers. For example, Influitive helps companies build stronger relationships with strategic accounts (such as Customer Advisory Board or Product Advisory Board members) by giving them exclusive sneak peeks of new products and greater influence on go-to-market plans.

Use engaging campaigns to collect customer feedback on pricing, naming, packaging, and messaging so they're excited to adopt and promote your newest products.

Success Story

Carbon Black.

How Carbon Black Collected Product Feedback from 100+ Advocates

Kate Cohen, Senior Manager of Product Marketing at Carbon Black—an endpoint security company—needed an easier, faster way to get product feedback to her R&D team, as well as to strengthen the company’s brand through online reviews and media.

With an online community consisting of over 15,000 members, she recruited the company’s most active members to join an exclusive community of hand-picked advocates to help her on both fronts, while rewarding customers for their participation.

Just one year after launching the Cb Defenders advocate community, Carbon Black recruited 100+ customer advocates to support their R&D work, and 500+ to boost their marketing team efforts. As a result, Carbon Black:

- **Ran six design studies over three months, quickly integrating feedback into the product’s UI**
- **Went from one week to two days to recruit 25+ advocates for a product design study**
- **Generated 50 new reviews on Gartner Peer Insights**
- **Recruited an additional 40+ advocates to participate in analyst and reference calls**

“When you think about all the different teams in the organization—from marketing to sales to product management and beyond—they all have something they can learn from our advocates that can help them achieve their goals. My biggest motivation is being able to support our company mission with the customer’s voice and to help cross-functional teams and leaders make informed decisions.”



KATE COHEN
Senior Manager of
Product Marketing at
Carbon Black

Success Story



How Cisco Cloudlock Drives Satisfaction with In-Product Conversations

The product team at Cisco Cloudlock—a pioneer in the cloud security space—turned the threat of a malware attack into an opportunity to gather feedback and provide an outstanding experience to their customers. When customers reported being affected by the Google OAuth attack, the security company decided to send out in-product messages asking customers if they wanted Cisco Cloudlock to implement an automated fix for them. By using Pendo Surveys to make it easy for customers to provide feedback, their response rate skyrocketed.

“The majority of our customers opted in to the automated fix. We saw a 68% response rate—nothing close to what we’d get through email,”

says Jennifer Sand, VP of Product Management, Cisco Cloudlock.

Not only did the company receive immediate feedback, but they increased their Net Promoter Score (NPS) by 20%.

“With Pendo surveys we could have an in-product conversation with our customers about the remediation process,” says Jennifer. “The positive impression that this gives our customers is really the most important thing here.”⁷

This positive customer experience is a foundational element for building an engaged customer community.

“We’ve found that our email contacts are not necessarily the people using the product. So really, in order to reach our customer base, we needed to do in-product notifications. Using Pendo for the notification provided us with immediate customer feedback.”



JENNIFER SAND
VP of Product Marketing at
Cisco Cloudlock

⁷Michael Peach, “Pendo Story: Cisco Cloudlock,” Pendo, May 22, 2017.

Worksheet

Build Your Own Customer-Powered Product Development

Answer the following questions to start bolstering your Product function with the power of your advocates.

What are some new products or features you're releasing that could be beta tested by advocates?

With easy, rapid access to customer feedback, what other aspects of your product cycle would benefit from customer input?

What are the goals of having advocates test, and how will you measure your success?

BONUS: Top 7 Questions to Ask Customers for the Best Product Feedback

1. What tasks do you most often leverage our platform to perform?
2. What tasks is our platform currently not helping you with?
3. What would you like to see added or removed from our platform?
4. What design features do you currently enjoy?
5. Are you currently using any "workaround" tactics to complete a task on our platform?
6. Is support available to you when you need it?
7. Would you ever consider becoming a beta tester?



READY TO BUILD A CUSTOMER-POWERED ENTERPRISE?

This guide is an excerpt from The Customer-Powered Enterprise Playbook

Download the full Playbook for:

- 7 strategic guides tailored to various departments of your business (including Marketing, Customer Success, Sales & more)
- 9 inspiring case studies that demonstrate how customers can fuel your business
- 7 tactical worksheets to help you start integrating customer power into each of your departments
- An overview of the different technology solutions that are available to leverage the power of your customers

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