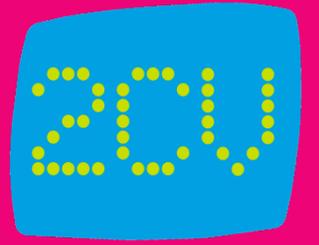


# TfL and social media

Debrief

October 2015



# Background, objectives and approach

# Background



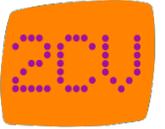
- TfL is currently trying to meet several customer and organisational needs through social media (customer service, journey planning, promotion) but this strategy has evolved organically, and TfL now want to better understand what people want from TfL via social media
- Research is required to inform TfL on:
  - How customers view TfL's social media presence
  - Where to focus efforts and adjust social media approach in certain areas
  - How TfL measures up versus other organisations
  - The impact of social media on reputation
  - What social media is doing well, and not so well, versus other channels



Business  
question

What is TfL's role in social media and how can TfL's social media strategy be adapted to better meet customers' needs and expectations?

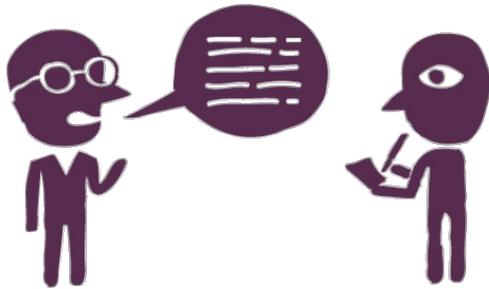
# Overview of our approach



Social media landscape

## EXPERT INTERVIEWS

- Interviews with experts in social media strategy:
  - To explore best practice and future strategy for social



## 2CV WIRE: COMPARATIVE REVIEW

- Discourse analysis of three organisations that deal with 'crisis' management
- Tracking the day-to-day practice of social feeds from other organisations - exploring the reality of the relationship between organisations and their customers



## CUSTOMER FOCUS GROUPS

- To deep dive into their social media behaviours, expectations and ideas for the future of TfL's social media



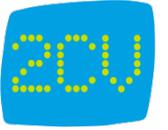
## 2CV HUB: PRE-TASK

- Online forum pre-task to understand customer use of / engagement with social media for travel information
- What they value / dislike
- Examples of other organisations that they think are doing well vs not so well



Customer use / behaviours, expectations and future desires  
**Speaking to TfL customers who use social media**

# Putting social media use into context



- Important to bear in mind that not everyone in London uses social media, and 9% of Londoners do not have internet access

	% of Londoners*
Use any Social Media	70
Regularly use Twitter	27
Regularly use Facebook	61

- Social Media users are most likely to be aged 16 to 34 and female (although Twitter users are slightly more likely to be male), while non users are more likely to be aged 55+



## Headlines from the research

# Key headlines



## **Brands on social media are on a path towards being popular and successful with customers on these channels**

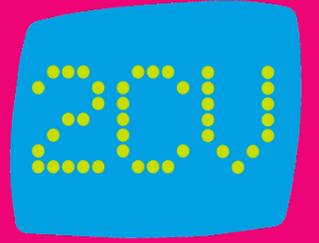
- **Entry-level:** Present on social media but are yet to develop a successful social strategy and are not meeting many customer expectations
- **Mid-level:** Visibly trying to develop their social strategy and are broadcasting information relevant to their customers
- **Best-in-class: Demonstrate true customer focus through** engaging and interacting with its customers in a truly authentic and relevant way

## **Customers feel TfL is currently at mid-level, as it is highly informative but is not yet fully engaging or interacting with customers on their level**

- Individual line and pan-London Twitter feeds provide useful information, but can lack the human touch or personality that customers want and expect
- The general feeds/pages provide some useful updates, but also lack personality and are not engaging. They don't appear to encourage interaction that customers want and expect, particularly from the Facebook page

## **TfL must decide whether to stay at mid-level or invest in being best-in-class**

- At mid-level TfL must continue to focus on delivering the information and customer care – but dial up the human side to the organisation
- To be best-in-class, TfL must deliver a more coherent social strategy that is authentic, responsive and engages customers. These brands invest in social media to ensure it complements other communication channels, brings to life the brand personality and demonstrates true customer care

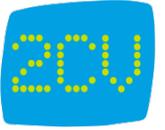


# Context of social media

# Several major trends are influencing what customers expect from companies on social media



# Four key needs from brands who use social media



**Relevant information for daily life**  
eg Power outages, travel times etc

“A lot of the brands I follow on Twitter are giving me useful information that helps me, like recipes for dinner, whether there are delays...”

**Customer care**  
eg Resolving complaints

“I go straight to Twitter now if I have a problem with something and want to contact the company”

**Entertainment and inspiration**  
eg Content, articles, images

“I like when brands have entertaining stuff to read, or videos, or sometimes I see stuff which makes me think I should really go out and do it”

**Promotions**  
eg competitions, challenges for prizes etc

“It’s fun when they’ve got competitions on their page, makes me want to get involved!”

Needs can differ depending on the context of the individual

# Brands are expected to play to the 'rules' of each social media platform – each platform has it's own primary needs that it fulfills



Primarily for seeing and engaging in **conversations**

Brands have permission on Twitter to engage with customers, particularly about products/services

Key platform to '**push information**' '**respond to events**' and demonstrate **customer care** in a public way

Relevant info for daily life

Customer Care



Primarily for establishing and building connections (friendships)

Difficult for brands to build **authentic** 'friendships' with customers, as this is a personal space

Important to **engage** with customers through **content and incentives**

Entertainment and inspiration

Promotions



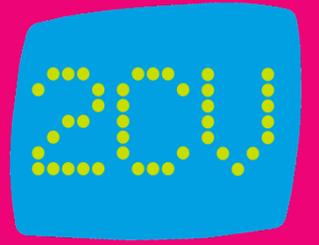
A platform to share images – to bring to life a **brand's story**

Not one that many customers engage with brands on at the moment (unless they have a clear 'visual voice')

Brands have permission to develop their Instagram presence to **bring to life** the **personality** of the organisation

Entertainment and inspiration

Responsiveness is expected across all platforms. Lack of response can be taken personally

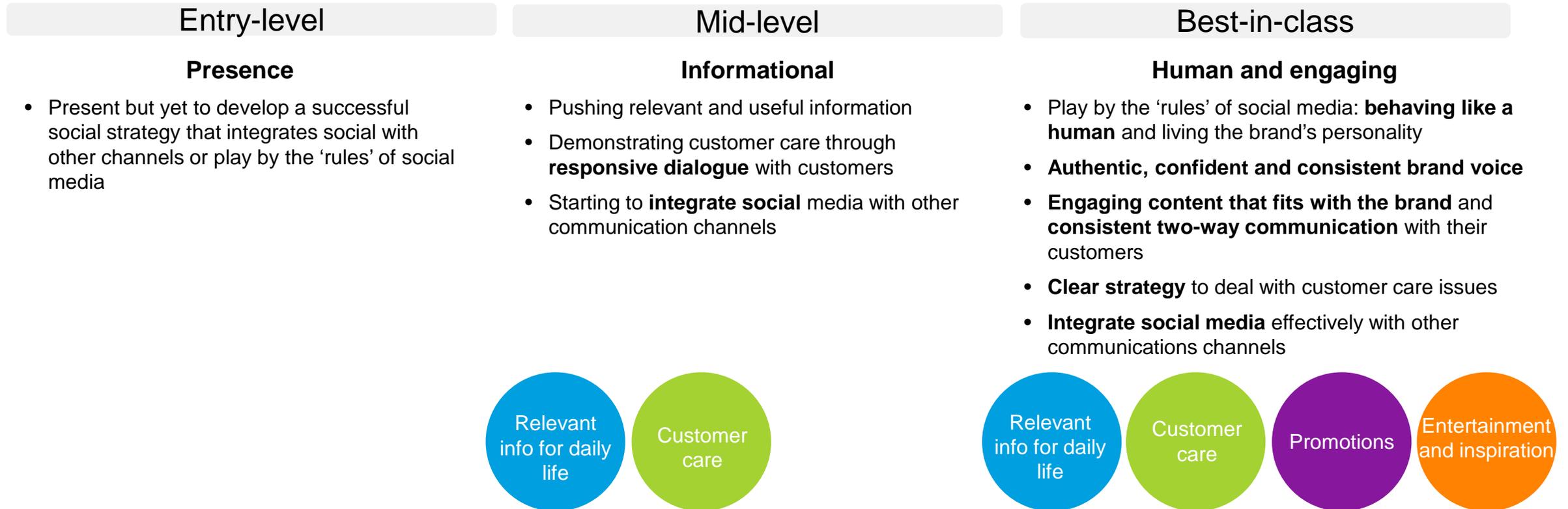


# Brands on social media



# Brands fall into three broad categories on social media

- Customers are aware and understand that once brands join social media, they are on a journey to learn what works and what doesn't work
- There are three broad stages in this journey



Best-in-class brands are truly customer focused

# A wide range of service and product brands are best-in-class on social media



## Mastering the human touch



**Customer (@gay\_platform):** "@O2 We're still waiting for that apology.. or maybe they texted me and I can't see the message because my phone DIDN'T WORK"

**O2 response:** "@gay\_platform Firstly, here are our deepest apologies. Network should be back up and running for you. How's your service?"

**Customer (@grahamcummings7):** "@O2 F\*\*K You! Suck d\*\*k in hell"

**O2 response:** " Maybe later, got tweets to send"

**Customer (@24vend\_Ltd):** "@O2 had to travel to Italy to get signal -- desperate times!!!"

**O2 response:** "You can come back now. We're back in business :)"

**Customer (@MrJeb):** "Oi! O2! Because of you I missed a call from my dear old mum. For that I think I owe you a pint. Ta! :)"

**O2 response:** "Um... you're welcome, we think. But if your mum asks, we'll totally deny this tweet"

"O2 on Twitter have mastered the art of being like a great friend who talks to you on your level, will always try to engage the customer, and injects humour, pathos, and a good dose of can do spirit into everything they do."

# Various customer service organisations are at mid-level



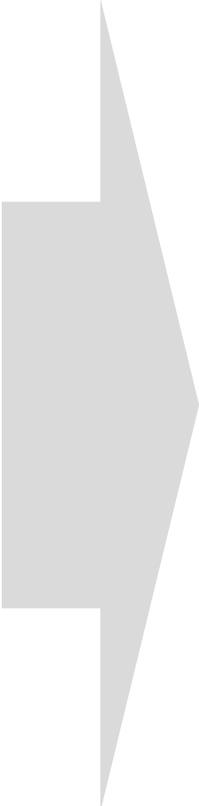
## Doing their best to offer the human touch



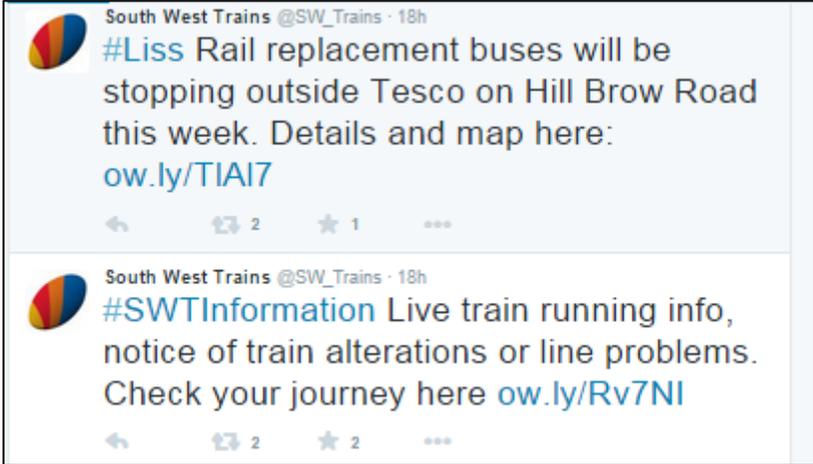
"British Airways.... Comments on their twitter page are responded to quickly and professionally. The response shows empathy to the customer, provides a solution and includes fact. There is no over performing or under delivering"

TfL is perceived to be mid level due to its strong focus on information provision

# Several transport brands are at entry-level on social media and are not meeting the needs of customers



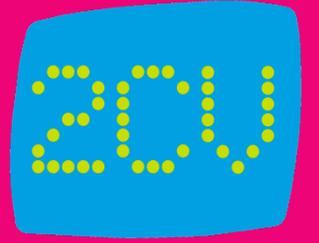
**SOUTH WEST TRAINS**



- Lack of personality or human touch
- Slow, untimely, and out-of-date provision of information
- Slow or non-existent customer response

“The information’s always so out-of-date on their feed”

“I get the impression SW trains has one man sitting at his desk, copying and pasting in announcements that are going out at stations, into the Twitter feed, but with TfL I get the impression they have a whole team, and it’s much more modern and up-to-date and human”



# TfL on social media

# Customers following TfL on social media tend to be aware of and interact with just a few feeds

- Customers tend to find TfL feeds organically, through word of mouth, links on the side of the webpage etc
- This means they are often not aware of TfL's social presence across a broader range of platforms and may not be following the feed most relevant to their needs
- Customers are largely unclear on the role of different TfL feeds, although they do follow different TfL feeds for different reasons

## Lines (Twitter)

@bakerlooline	Follow
@centraline	Follow
@circeline	Follow
@districtline	Follow
@hamandcityline	Follow
@jubileeline	Follow
@metline	Follow
@northernline	Follow
@piccadillyline	Follow
@victorialine	Follow
@wlooandcityline	Follow
@ldnoverground	Follow
@londondlr	Follow
@tramslondon	Follow
@tfrail	Follow

Followed primarily for information on delays/disruptions to their lines

## Pan London (Twitter)

**Traffic news**  
Traffic information for roads in London

Follow @TfLTrafficNews

**River**  
Service information for London River Services and piers

Follow @TfLRiver

**London Buses**  
Service information

Follow @TfLBusAlerts

**Emirates Air Line**  
Service information and news for London's cable car

Follow @EmiratesAirLDN

**Santander Cycles**  
Service information and cycle hire news

Follow @SantanderCycles

**Tube, DLR, Overground, trams and Emirates Air Line updates**  
Combined service information

Follow @TfLTravelAlerts

Followed primarily for information on delays/disruptions to their mode of transport

## General (Twitter and Facebook)

**TfL news on Twitter**  
News and latest information

Follow @TfL

**TfL on Facebook**  
News and latest information

Like

Followed primarily for TfL updates and to connect with TfL; engaging and entertaining info on TfL and London

# Overall, customers appreciate TfL's social feeds for being informative but they are not yet meeting other customer needs



Relevant information for daily life

eg Power outages, travel times etc



"I wouldn't class these feeds as interesting, however they are extremely useful for providing real-time updates on the roads, buses and trains around London."

Customer care

eg Resolving complaints



"They don't reply to things on their Facebook page"

Entertainment and inspiration

eg Content, articles, images



"I have never engaged with this feed mostly because I don't feel the Facebook page is intended to be interactive or to allow staff to engage with travellers, more just for announcements about TfL and London, it doesn't invite comments and there is no need to share the posts. "

Promotions

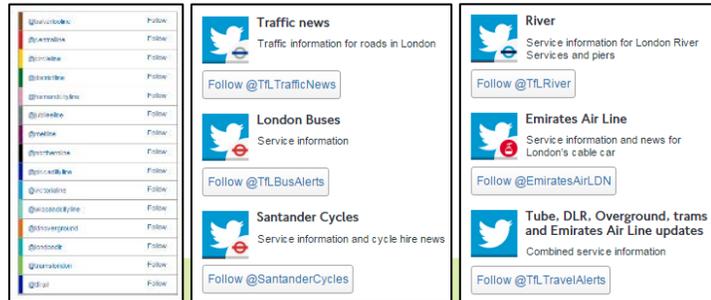
eg competitions, challenges for prizes etc



"I don't remember ever seeing any competitions or fun challenges or questions on the TfL feeds I follow before"

# Customers want TfL feeds to have more personality, more of a human touch and more engaging content

## Line & Pan London

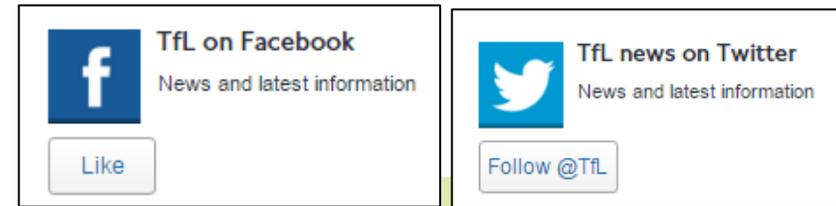


### Human touch and more relevant information

- Consistently warmer and more human tone of voice
- Different personalities for different feeds – through addition of content relevant to each feed or tone of voice
- Additional info on each line feed eg local station info and local area info (this must be timely eg not peak times)

“They should be a bit more human and put interesting information in that was related, like interesting bus info on the buses feed, road info for roads”

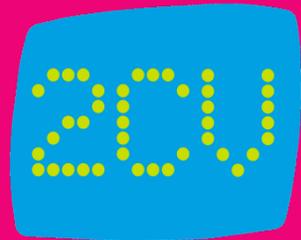
## General



### Personality and engaging content

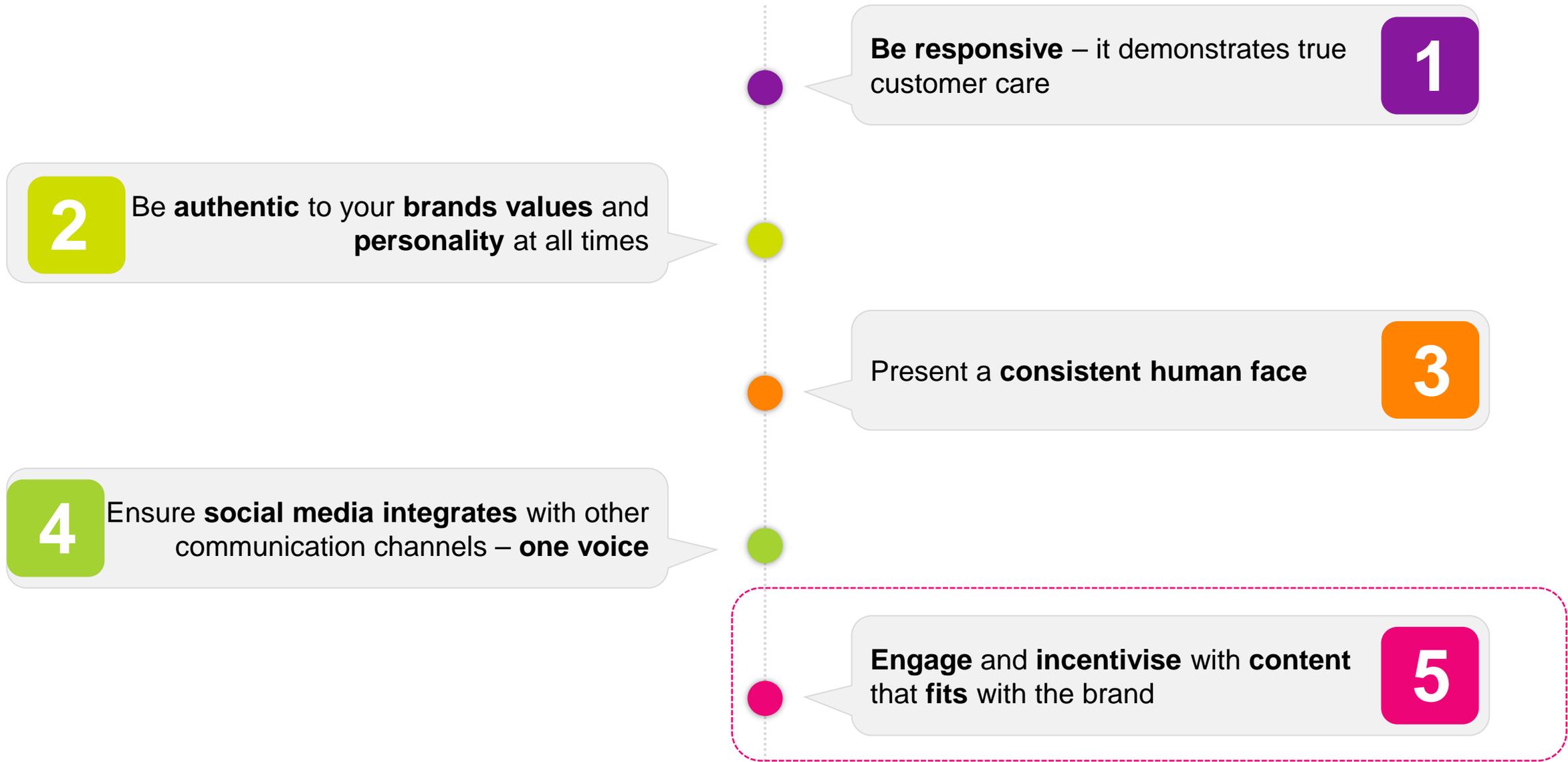
- Warm, personal tone of voice and expression of brand personality, particularly on Facebook
- Engaging, entertaining and interactive content that is non-service related and fit for the platform
  - eg showcase London’s ‘hidden gems’, behind the scenes at TfL, customer/staff travel stories and perspectives

They could have so much more personal and engaging stuff from people on the network – like ‘Thought of the day’ Whiteboard sharing! Or photo contribution from fellow travellers / TfL employees or interesting and quirky facts



# Moving forwards

# How to be customer focused on social media



# TfL must choose whether to stay at mid-level or aim for best-in-class



Best in class requires investment (strategically and financially)

# Mid-level recommendations



## What you say...

Relevant  
info for  
daily life

- Continue to provide real-time accurate information about service status

Customer  
care

- **Develop a strategy** to deal with all customer care issues
- Be **responsive** across all platforms
- Have consistent response times, appropriate for query
- Escalation of issue to other channels if customer desires
- Be **personalised, human** and **authentic**

## Where you say it



- Develop a clear strategy for the role of the different platforms
- Begin a dialogue with your customers



- Use Twitter and Facebook to demonstrate customer care and relevant information
- Have a consistent voice across the platforms
- Make the brand personality shine

Promotions

# How you will know when you are best-in-class



## What you say

Relevant  
info for  
daily life

- You are **confident** about what you say and who you are
- You provide information that is relevant to customers lives (not just the brand)

Customer  
care

- You execute a clear strategy to deal with all customer care issues

Entertainment  
& inspiration

- Your customer service strategy is **integrated** with other channels
- You have a clear content strategy that seeks to **engage, inspire** and keep customers coming back

Promotions

- Your content **fits seamlessly** with the brand and the platform
- Your brand personality is **visible**



## Where you say it

- You know the role for each platform and ensure they all bring something unique to the conversation
- Your brand personality is consistent across all platforms
- You use twitter to demonstrate customer care and bring relevant information to life
- You use Facebook, Instagram to engage and inspire with entertaining content that is liked and shared