



ALL PATHS LEAD TO RETENTION

How Gong “Forever Changed” Sendoso’s Customer Experience Team

THE CHALLENGE

Due to rapid growth and fast scaling, Sendoso’s Customer Success team was struggling to analyze its retention data. They wanted to determine what was causing churn, and on the flip side, what was creating positive retention numbers.

THE OUTCOME

Gong has allowed the Sendoso Customer Success team to “keep its finger on the pulse” of what is happening with its current customer base and has “forever changed” how the team operates.

“Everyone impacts retention.”

That’s Alli Tiscornia speaking. She’s the Chief Customer Officer at Sendoso, the world’s first Sending Platform (SP).

Sendoso helps companies stand out by giving them new ways to engage with customers throughout the buyer’s journey. By integrating digital and physical sending strategies, Sendoso customers increase the effectiveness of their existing go-to-market programs and improve their relationships with customers.


Alli leads a Customer Experience team of 50 and is a strong advocate for the “everyone impacts retention” mantra. She believes her team’s success is dependent on happy, satisfied customers.


However, no company in the history of companies has ever had 100% happy-all-the-time customers. All organizations experience churn. Learning why customers leave or choose not to renew inevitably becomes a guessing game — an educated guess at best.


Was there a gap in the sales-to-customer success transition?


Did the champion move to a new company?


Was it one big mishap or a series of small “paper cuts?”

 Headquarters
San Francisco

 Website
www.sendoso.com

 Founded
2016

 Industry
Sending Software

 Company Size
200+

Gong answered these unknowns by delivering much-needed customer insights. Gong also forever changed Sendoso's sales-to-customer success team handoff in the process.

Every customer lifecycle tells a story.

Here's how it all unfolded at Sendoso.

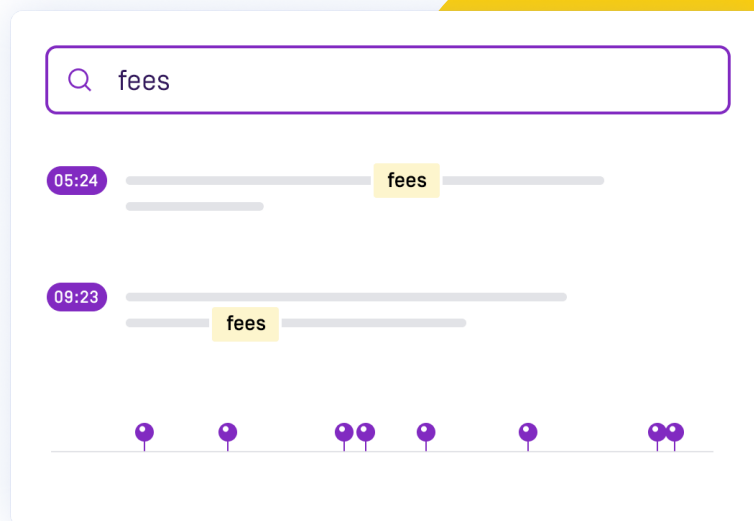
FROM OPINIONS TO REALITY (AND MORE RENEWALS)

One of the common themes we see here at Gong is that many — if not most — customers are introduced to the platform through a need on the Sales team.

This was also true for Sendoso.

“The Sales team at Sendoso was the first to purchase Gong,” says Alli. “Sales was a huge advocate and champion for the Gong platform. Shortly after the trial ended, our team immediately realized the value. The ability to search for key terms, especially post-sale conversations, was a game-changer.”

Gong quickly revealed if Customer Success Managers (CSMs) were covering certain topics: ROI, fees, inclusive conversations, and so on. Alli quickly found herself searching Gong for these keywords and then building reports on the fly to track progress.



“The ability to search conversations was really powerful,” says Alli.

But that was just the tip of the iceberg.

Many things go into retaining or losing a customer. The natural inclination for most people is to point to one issue that was the reason a customer leaves or stays — when in reality multiple factors are involved.

With Gong, Sendoso's CX team no longer relies on just the last thing that happened to a customer.

Gong empowers the team to actually dig in and find out what truly happened within the account.

“Simply put, Gong eliminates recency bias,” says Alli.

Her team now “has a responsibility” to listen to the sales calls before they begin the onboarding process. A CSM's role, first and foremost, is to protect the customer experience. “We want them to feel well listened to. When we invest the time to learn about a new customer before we get on our first call, it illustrates we aren't just as good as the salesperson's notes.”

Sendoso customers know the team has made that investment ... in them.

This Gong “pre-work” also helps the CSM get a feel for the personality and preferred communication style of its new account. They can begin to customize and personalize onboarding and success plans before the first call.

Again, “very very powerful.”

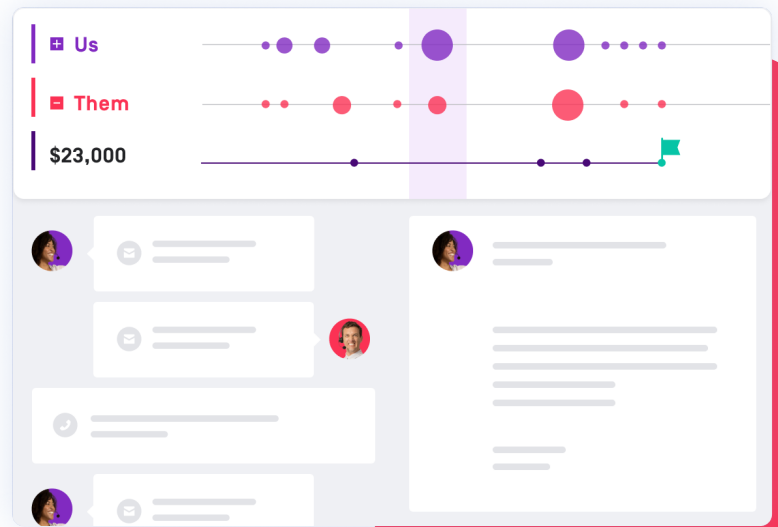
SEAMLESS SALES TO CUSTOMER SUCCESS HANDOFFS

Prior to Gong, the Account Executive [AE] to Customer Success [CS] handoff was inefficient and redundant and time-consuming and incomplete — not words and phrases that you want to hear when speaking about customers.

As we all know, salespeople and CSMs often are not listening for the same things ... not asking the same questions. Each team has a different goal, a unique agenda. In short, sales wants to close the deal, while customer success wants to, well, ensure the customer is successful.

Pre-Gong, “we were repeating a lot of work,” recalled Alli.

With Gong, **CSMs save hours of time per week** — searching Gong for relevant customer calls and listening directly to the words of the customer. Deal Intelligence helps the CX team quickly and efficiently identifying communication between the past rep and the account.



Gong forever changed the Sales-to-Customer Success handoff.

Gong has also helped Sendoso effortlessly and seamlessly onboard its own new CSMs.

ONBOARDING NEW CUSTOMER SUCCESS REPS

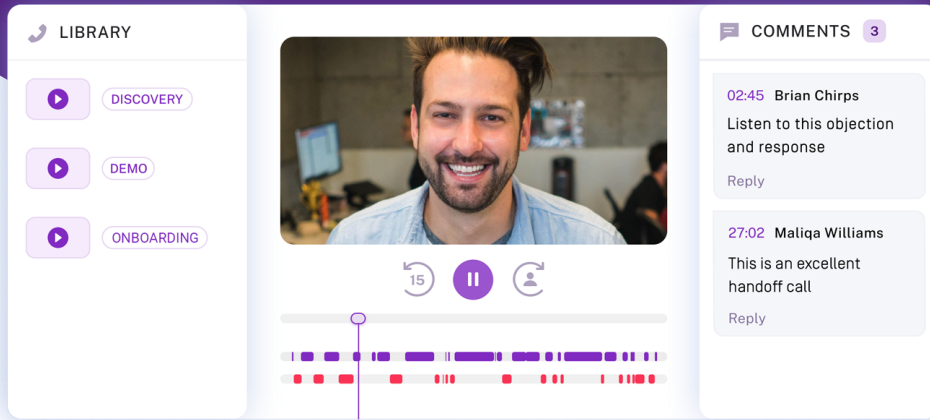
The Hero Complex tends to be a prerequisite for joining any Customer Success team. No matter the situation or the challenge it may present, CSMs want to help — they want to solve problems.

Helpful by nature. Outgoing by nature. That’s how Alli describes members of her Customer Experience team.

Shadowing team members can be a little awkward — especially when you're trying to get your footing as a CSM — to have someone looking over your shoulder, figuratively and literally.

Also, there are only so many hours in a day. So many open slots on a veteran CSM's calendar. Definitely not time to be every call. Leaving newbies crossing their fingers that the call they joined is “a good one,” that the conversation is one where they can learn valuable skills.

Gong enables Sendoso to “have access to every customer-facing conversation no matter where it is in the funnel.” Pre-sale. Post-sale. It doesn't matter. New (and experienced) CSMs can get an understanding of how those conversations take place and can choose the top performers they want to emulate.



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EVERYONE IMPACTS RETENTION

Let's revisit where we started: Retention.

As Alli said, "everyone impacts retention." Retention is the metric most often used to determine the success of a Customer Experience team.

"Everything we do is geared toward ensuring successful outcomes for our customers. . Successful outcomes drive usage. Usage equates to retention," says Alli. Her team needs to ensure all customers are happy, all customers are satisfied they are driving value. This, in turn, equates to solid retention numbers.

Win. Win. Win.

For any organization, it can be a challenge to determine what is causing churn, and on the flip side, what is creating positive retention numbers — especially for fast-growing organizations that are also changing rapidly.

"When Sendoso first started out, we were a coffee sender — just coffee e-gift cards." Things took off from there. Now a global warehouse with all kinds of physical sends and a feature-rich application, Sendoso — and its customers — has changed so quickly. The reasons for sales AND the reasons for churn have also changed over the years.

Rapid growth and fast scaling make it tricky to consistently track successes and failures.



Gong has allowed the Sendoso Customer Experience team to “keep its finger on the pulse” of what is happening with its current customer base.

Sendoso’s annual contracts mean that a customer lifecycle is long. There’s a long tail between the sale and the contract renewal. Pre-Gong, Sendoso struggled to understand what happened during that 12-month long span to either cause a renewal or for the customer to churn.

And more often than not, customer churn is not due to “one thing” — there is almost always a story of why the relationship soured. It’s a culmination of what happened over the lifetime of the customer.

When it comes to churn studies and churn analysis, it’s human nature to focus on the last thing that happened in the relationship that seemingly led to the non-renewal ... the recency bias.

But Alli’s not interested in that last thing. Instead, she cares more about the entire story and specifically what happened along the way — the bumps (and sometimes dips and spikes) that occurred.

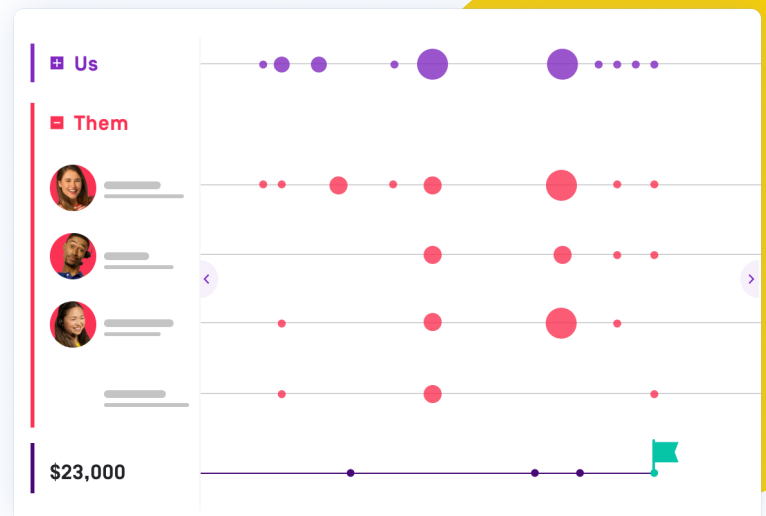
When a customer churns, Alli says there is a lot of customer experience debt built up throughout the life cycle.

This customer experience debt “determines sentiment” which is ultimately what leads to a renewal or non-renewal. And, unfortunately, even the best exit interviewer asking the best questions cannot always extract the true reason(s) why the relationship went south. And this is assuming you can even land an exit call.

“Gong enables me to do deep dives and analyze why a customer churned.”

Alli’s team reviews the conversations and emails along the way, looking for key signs — good or bad. They look at flagship customer accounts — engagements where everything is going really well — and use Gong to learn which exchanges were positive touchpoints to a strong relationship. They review the onboarding process as well as how the account was nurtured along the way. They dig into Gong to find the “successes that led to advocacy,” customer commitment and satisfaction.

On the flip side, when things do not go so well, Alli and her team are looking for the misses. What went wrong along the way that led to this customer choosing to not renew?



Gong provides a clear picture of what happened throughout the life of the customer and helps her eliminate those detriments and friction points.

Sendoso believes so strongly in this analysis, it has invested in a data scientist to look at the behaviors of successful, long-term customers vs. a customer that is likely to churn.

TRACKING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Like everybody else, Sendoso — the organization, its team members, its customers, and really all stakeholders — has been impacted by COVID-19, the global pandemic that is touching every aspect of life and business.

Sendoso is really trying to understand which of its customers have been impacted by COVID-19, so they can learn who needs the most help — and specifically how Sendoso can help.

“There are certain assumptions we make with customers in travel or restaurant-related industries. These folks have been heavily hit. Gong helps us understand to what extent COVID-19 has impacted them personally and professionally.”

Sendoso has been providing assistance for customers in need and Gong helps the team better understand what type of help they need to get through these times. “Gong helps us learn from our customers so we can immediately work to address those needs and ensures the team is having the most appropriate discussions.”

The “Gong COVID-19 Tracker” even led to a new Sendoso feature, address confirmation.

Address confirmation allows Sendoso to share with its customers the address they have on file and gives them the ability to quickly and easily change it to more accurately reflect their current “office” situation. “Certainly customers do not need to share their home address if they don’t feel comfortable; however, it also ensures we are not sending packages to locations where nobody is there to receive ... saving time, effort, and money,” says Alli.

Gong quickly shows if Sendoso reps are having conversations about address confirmation and empowers Alli to coach her team to ensure the messaging is on-point. Gong also helps identify customer feedback around the address confirmation feature. Is it helpful? Are customers using it?

Sendoso has also “massively expanded” its e-gift options due to COVID-19. It’s been a great way for them to nurture customers and prospects as the sales process has really changed during the pandemic. It’s not really the time for hard selling; instead, this is a time to show empathy and a much softer approach. Sendoso is sending e-gifts that can be used to support a local restaurant or used to donate it to charity.

“It gives our customers the option to either support that local restaurant or local businesses or to donate it,” shared Alli. “It’s been very successful.”



THE PRESENT IS AMAZING. THE FUTURE LOOKS AWESOME.

Alli really loves all the additional features Gong has released over the past year, specifically the email integration to Gong's Deal Intelligence capabilities. It saves her a lot of time, and even better, allows her to see all interactions across the entire life cycle.

"This visibility has definitely been a game-changer."

Also, the ability to see which contacts are involved in these conversations has been eye-opening. "Champion churn" can be an issue, really for anyone working with sales and marketing who tend to change jobs more often than in other domains. Gong helps us to find that Champion in the next job.

Alli is most proud that Gong helps her team feel empowered to improve their conversations and grow.

"Gong is amazing now. And the future looks even better."



GET STARTED TODAY

See how Sendoso uses Gong.io to achieve these results. Request your demo today.

See it live

