

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

November 2018

Five Dependable Ways to Find New Customers

Are These 4 Things Killing Your Blog's Page Views?

Does Social
Media Improve
Customer
Service?

Infographic:
Social Media
Post Ideas

Can Marketing Make Customers Loyal?

Christmas Marketing for Small Businesses

The Do's and Don'ts of Customer Service



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LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

Greetings!

Here we are... the busy holiday season is upon us. Time to put your holiday marketing strategy into gear. It's so easy to get distracted during the hustle and bustle, but having a clear strategy will help keep you focused. We sincerely hope you have a tremendous holiday season, and that you capture more market share and grow your loyal customer base.

As we take some time this month to reflect on what we're thankful for, we would like for you to know that we're thankful for your loyal readership. We hear from so many of you that you enjoy the articles, and that you've used information from our magazine to help your business grow.

This month's articles and infographic cover many topics that we hope will be relevant to your business, including Customer Service, Social Media Postings and Blogging.

If you find the magazine helpful, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

Have a topic that you'd like to see us cover? We welcome any suggestions, comments or questions you might have.

To Your Success!

Raj Deshpande
CEO
CroydonGate

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A Little About Us

Local Business Marketing Magazine is proudly provided by CroydonGate.



CroydonGate was started with one goal in mind. We wanted to use the scientific approach to Online Marketing and use our expertise to help our clients achieve their goals – whether it was to increase sales & customers, branding, website design, Social Media Marketing or Mobile marketing. We wanted to give our clients the ability to leverage the same cutting edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at affordable rates.

We are a one-stop-shop for all Online Marketing needs. Our Google Certified AdWords and Analytics Experts, Social Media Marketing Gurus and expert Web designers provide the professional service to our clients which results in consistently higher ROI for our client's Online Marketing Investment.

Our goal is not just getting the customers to your site but to put a plan in place that will get them to take that next crucial step of calling you or placing that order online.

We use a scientific approach to the Online Marketing and we use Google Analytics, Multivariate A/B Testing, Sale/Search Funnel reports and other industry leading tools to understand the customer dynamics and we accurately optimize the Online Marketing parameters so that the marketing campaign works at a maximum efficiency level and increases our client's profit while reducing the conversion costs.

Give us a call to learn how we've helped businesses like yours grow revenue. If you have any questions, or would like to know how we can help you meet and exceed your marketing goals, please contact us.

Did you know that we are a full-service ad agency? Did you also know that we specialize in helping small and medium sized businesses? We customize a program that meets the needs and budgets of each of our clients, and we offer Free Initial Consultations. Give us a call to learn how we've helped businesses like yours grow revenue. Some of our services include:

- Mobile Marketing
- Web Services
- Reputation Management
- Promotional Items
- Online Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Branding
- Conversion Optimization



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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

November

Adopt A Senior Pet Month
Aviation History Month
Epilepsy Awareness Month
Historic Bridge Awareness Month
Lung Cancer Awareness Month
Military Family Appreciation Month
National Adoption Month
National Alzheimer's Disease Month
National COPD Month
National Diabetes Month
Family Literacy Month
Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month

November 11 - Veteran's Day
November 22 - Thanksgiving
November 23 - Black Friday
November 24 - Small Business Saturday
November 26 - Cyber Monday

1st - Men Make Dinner Day
4th - Candy Day
4th - Daylight Saving Time Ends
5th - Doughnut Day
6th - Nachos Day
10th - Marine Corps Birthday
10th - Sesame Street Day
11th - Sundae Day
14th - Pickle Day
15th - Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day
15th - National Smokeout Day
16th - Fast Food Day
17th - Take A Hike Day
17th - Adoption Day
18th - Mickey Mouse's Birthday
23rd - Random Acts of Kindness Day
26th - Cake Day
27th - Giving Tuesday
28th - French Toast Day
30th - Computer Security Day

December

Impaired Driving Prevention Month
Write A Business Plan Month
Tie Month
Tomato and Winter Squash Month
Universal Human Rights Month
Worldwide Food Service Safety Month
Awareness Month of Awareness Months

December 2nd-Dec 10th - Hanukkah
Dec 25 - Christmas
December 26th-January 1st - Kwanzaa

1st - World AIDS Day
1st - Bartender Appreciation Day
1st - Pie Day
2nd - Mutt Day
3rd - International Day of Persons With Disabilities
4th - Sock Day
5th - Volunteer Day
7th - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
10th - Human Rights Day

11th - App Day
12th - Gingerbread House Day
15th - Bill of Rights Day
20th - Free Shipping Day
16th - Chocolate Covered Anything Day
17th - Maple Syrup Day
18th - Answer The Telephone Like Buddy The Elf Day
21st - Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
21st - Crossword Puzzle Day
21st - Humbug Day
21st - Winter Solstice
22nd - National Re-gifting Day
23rd - Festivus
26th - Whiner's Day
27th - Fruitcake Day
28th - Chocolate Candy Day
30th - Bacon Day
31st - Make Up Your Mind Day
31st - New Year's Eve



Christmas Marketing for Small Businesses

5 Festive Ways to Get Your Yule On

If you're a small business owner wondering how to up your marketing game over the Christmas season, you've come to the right place. Marketing your small business during the holiday season doesn't need to be expensive and it doesn't need to consume all your energy. There are creative ways to marketing your business while showcasing your holiday spirit at the same time. If you want help with your small business'

Christmas marketing this year, try the following five festive options.

1) Celebrate your local community with a seasonal email newsletter. Send your email subscribers a weekly newsletter highlighting the holiday events from charities and nonprofits in your local area. Not only is this an awesome way to grow your email subscriber base, but it's also a fabulous way to introduce local community

members to charities and nonprofits they can support during the holiday season.

2) Christmas is a terrific time to clear out old stock your business hasn't been able to sell during the rest of the year. Consider hosting a Christmas end-of-year inventory sale to move stale inventory and make room for next year's incoming stock. Your customers will get a great deal on Christmas gifts for their

friends and family and you'll have plenty of room for brand new merchandise.

3) Social media and Christmas marketing are a match made in small business heaven. Promote a Christmas Instagram image contest featuring customers with their latest purchases from your small business. The best image can win a gift certificate from your business and the opportunity to have their image promoted heavily on your social media profiles. This tactic can earn you more followers on Instagram while promoting your small business at the same time.

4) Create a Christmas holiday preparation list your customers can print

for themselves or find at your local business. Staying organized over the holiday season can be tough. Helping your customers to make the most of their Christmas holidays will encourage a sense of gratitude towards your small business while keeping your company top-of-mind simultaneously. Make sure your business' name and contact information are prominently displayed on the top and bottom of your free checklist to encourage calls to your business for last-minute Christmas gifts.

5) Create 12 infographics to share with your small business' online audience to tie in with the 12 days leading up to December 25. You can prepare your

Christmas infographics in advance using a free infographic creation tool like Canva.com. Share your infographics on all your small business' social media profiles and pin them to your brand's Pinterest page for extra SEO (search engine optimization) juice. You'll be surprised how powerful infographics can be for attracting visitors to your business for years to come.

Use these five festive ways to get your yule on and you'll find small business Christmas marketing is a breeze. Promoting your small business at Christmas doesn't have to deplete your marketing budget and can drive substantial sales for your company.

Is Your Website Mobile Friendly?

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Five Dependable Ways to Find New Customers

While awareness might be a legitimate deliverable for marketing, acquiring new customers is the ultimate goal for every business, and there are dependable strategies that marketers can and should use to help meet this need.

There's really no two ways about it. Even if a company has a dedicated sales function, the marketing department has the responsibility of feeding the sales pipeline with qualified new customer candidates.

Marketers must also play a central role in managing the relationships with existing customers, whether through direct communication (i.e. customer service and support) or via the broader placement of marketing content. Marketers must also sell, irrespective of how creatively and deftly it might get done.

Finding new customers a far harder and more complex task than achieving awareness or even asserting brand

recognition; the latter can be measured by a variety of metrics of cognition and stated intentions, while the former can truly only be recognized through actual sales. Therefore, it's important that marketers approach new customer acquisition with a different mindset and strategy than a campaign targeting any other stakeholder group.

The most dependable ways to find new customers almost all relate to working with existing ones, either as targets, levers of access, or

sources of information. Here are the five best strategies to find new ones:

Network Through Existing Customers

By far the most direct and reliable way to find new customers is to network through existing ones. They should be the perfect candidates for identifying and then helping sell people (personal referrals and recommendations have always been the most powerful marketing tool, and it's no less true in our time of online conversations). This can take many forms, from the most overt, such as incentivizing them with rewards and/or discounts to refer customers, to more passive offers, such as giving them coupons they can use themselves or share with others. Broadly speaking, the happier they are, the more likely they'll be to recommend your brand to others.

Networking through existing customer is simply acknowledging the mechanism of referral that is happening with or without your involvement. But it has real significance in terms of your strategy, as you might want to consider campaigns to encourage and support existing customers, as well as your tactics, which could

show a significantly higher emphasis on customer service. It's a different way of looking at your outbound marketing, for sure, but when you consider how difficult it is to find new customers, the math often supports it.

Reactivate Lost or Dormant Customers

The very premise that any brand has ongoing customers depends heavily on terminology and metrics; arguably, the only time someone is "a customer" is when they buy something. Perhaps they're also customers if they're consuming other content from or about your brand. But otherwise, even if they've bought repeatedly, they're just people. A name on a list of purchasers who hasn't bought something in a few weeks or months is, in many ways, not all that different from a stranger. Different businesses define "active" customers differently, but a good operating rule is to assume that any purchase over a month old is distant history; unless you're selling cars or some other high-priced item, she or he is dormant, at best, and lost, more than likely.

So reactivating old customers is one of the

best ways to find new ones. Doing so can take a variety of forms, from the study of past purchaser and/or behavioral data to construct attractive new offers to them, to incorporating that knowledge into your overall marketing content and strategy.

You can also use research as an outbound marketing tool, and simply poll/ask past customers why they bought and why they stopped. The research would need to be legitimate, and you could consider offering an incentive for participation (see sampling below). This is also an important point to remember when assessing the value of your "current" customer list or sales volume numbers: What you rely on now may not be there tomorrow or a week or month from now. A day-old purchaser is one day along the road to becoming a stranger, and your marketing should address that possibility.

Sampling

Sampling is one of the oldest marketing tactics used to reach new customers, and it's still around because it works. In fact, sampling drives many brands' participation in group discount campaigns because

providing customers an actual product or service experience is often more compelling than even the most creative description or sales message. You see this happening in a variety of industries, from consumables (literally giving would-be customers a taste) to computer software (limited trials or free use of a bare-bones version of a product).

What can make sampling not just a good way to reach would-be customers but a dependable way of acquiring them is to unite the strategy with a software or other tracking mechanism, so you can follow-up and encourage real purchase. Often, this is accomplished by doling out the sample in response to a request that requires registration, though it could be as simple as asking for an email. Social media platforms are a great place to run outbound sampling campaigns, since would-be customers are already registered on a site. The goal isn't to track them with 100 percent certainty, however; it's to be able to get back to the majority of them with some sort of follow-up.

Find a Partner with Customers Like Yours

Many brands rely on sharing

their existing customer bases and finding synergy therein and upon. There are two basic categories of such cross-selling or partnership opportunities: The first is when brands provide products or services that can be used in a complementary way, such as food and drink, or perhaps clothing items. It's even better if user experience is enhanced by such pairings, though doing so could also simplify the purchase process (consumer electronics retailing does this quite effectively with offers of the required cables or other accessories along with sale of various devices).

The second way that partnerships work is when brands share similar target customer characteristics; while their products or services might not necessarily have a common use case or even relate to one another, they might both be attractive to the same demographic profiles. Consider purchasers of luxury automobiles, for instance, who might likely skew toward purchases of luxury vacations or fine dining. In either approach, the idea is to rely on another business to have done the work finding and attracting customers, which you've done also, and then finding benefits in sharing that information. It's far easier

and more dependable than replicating it on your own.

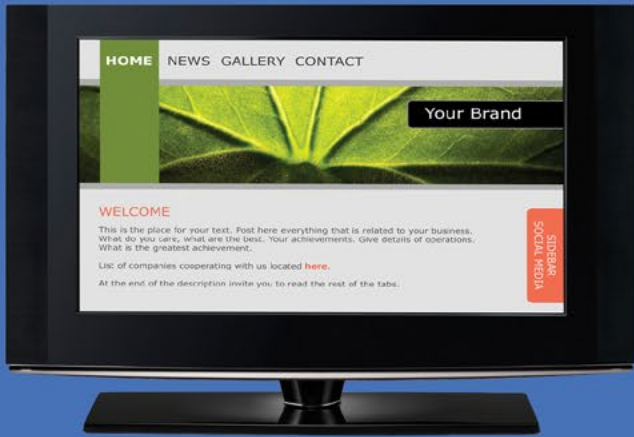
Sell More to Existing Customers

Perhaps the most dependable way to get new customers is to forgo them in lieu of serving and strengthening the profitability of existing ones. It's common for businesses to take existing customers for granted, often making them pay more for services that are deeply discounted in hopes of attracting new ones. Yet an existing customer represents both a sunk marketing cost and a tangible expression of interest in what you sell. So it makes sense to understand these dynamics and find ways to make them your customers more often, and for money money (and margin).

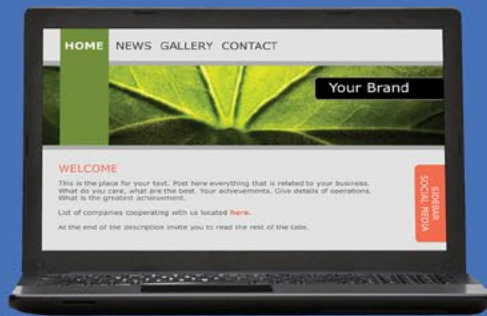
Creative marketing wins awards, and memorable branding achieves awareness and retention, but the ultimate measure of marketing is whether or not it helps deliver customers; doing so more dependably requires an understanding that existing customers or consumers are the basis for both insights into content as well as potential first-iteration targets for the next campaign.

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Are These 4 Things Killing Your Blog's Page Views?

Creating a blog that produces business awareness and sales can sometimes seem like a slow process. Not only does it take time to build a blog to the point where its viewership translates into closed sales, but determining the right way to go about blogging for your business can present its own set of challenges and setbacks. There are certain pitfalls new business bloggers can fall into that can hinder the success and growth of their blog and its ability to generate more traffic. Here's a look at four of them.

1. Your Blog's Layout Doesn't Match Your Main Website

The best way to list your blog is to include it in the top tab of your web page

next to the others (i.e., About Us, Products, Contact Us) so that visitors can access it quickly without having to scan your site for it. However, if your blog link opens up a new tab or contains a design that looks completely different from your main website, it can confuse visitors and result in high bounce rates.

Your site should have one consistent design and navigation structure that seamlessly directs visitors to various sections for information. Even if you're using a third-party blogging platform that integrates with your site, it's essential that it has the same overall feel of your site, as not to leave visitors with a confusing and disjointed online experience when they view your web pages.

2. Your Blog Is Your Homepage

Unless your business is the blog itself, it shouldn't be the homepage. When visitors come to your page, they're expecting to either see products or an overarching summary of what your business is all about. Placing your blog as the homepage not only distracts from your offerings but it also creates additional steps (even though it's just the click of a mouse) for visitors because now they have to perform another task to get to their destination, which is your offer.

3. Information Overload (aka "TMI")

Offering your visitors too much information on your blog pages can backfire. It may overwhelm visitors

and cause them to click out of your website. Lots of clutter such as sponsored ads, random pop-ups, various sidebar options, and animated images are a surefire way to turn off many online visitors. Why? Because they don't know where to go, so they leave the site entirely.

Site clutter distracts visitors and can even make them forget why they were visiting your site in the first place. Use effective website architecture on your blog pages and perform tests to see which design setup works best for engaging your audience and increasing your page views.

4. Over-Focusing on Your Blog

Spending countless hours trying to perfect each post and discover the best monetization strategies, SEO, and learn new blogging techniques can wreak havoc on your business productivity. Your blog doesn't have to be perfect. Your first posts don't have to be earth-shattering.

Sometimes business owners get so caught up in the fine details of their new blog that they neglect other aspects of their website or business. Gaining an online audience typically doesn't happen overnight, so be sure to set

the right expectations when starting your blog. Just focus on trying to consistently post a few articles every week until it becomes a habit. After that, you'll come to find better things to write about and how to get more engagement with your posts.

Having a clear understanding of the goals for your business blog can help manage your expectations regarding its success. Don't be discouraged if you don't get the page views and shares that you were expecting initially; just keep on blogging.

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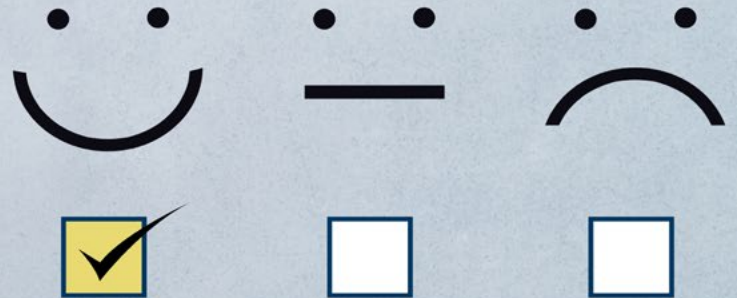


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Does Social Media Improve Customer Service?



Getting a product or service problem resolved has never been easier, thanks to the utility and ubiquity of social media technology. But has customer service improved? The reasoning behind most company social media strategies is pretty straightforward: Since people can post their experiences and opinions for all to see, it's important to encourage positive posts, in hopes they will influence future purchases (and fond feelings toward brands) and, conversely, it's even more important to address negative posts, because those revelations will discourage both the posters and their social media followers.

The last few years of social media usage has proven

much of this reasoning either false or misplaced. The presumed "influence" of social media content is far less than anybody hoped, especially the content that gets shared between people who don't know one another in the real world. This chatter has had the unexpected effect of making those true relationships - the close circles of family and friends that people have always relied upon - even more important as trusted sources of information (it's the basis of the concept of "word of mouth" influence).

Further, since companies have so aggressively inserted content, whether overtly commercial or indirectly intended to influence purchases, the

authenticity of social media conversations can often be questioned. This has tended to denigrate the utility of both the sponsored messaging as well as the posts by individuals.

The content that has the most credibility and relevance is that which is wholly unrelated to commercialism. It's not the result of dialogue "with" brands, but rather "about" the businesses and "between" individuals who know one another. So there's not much "social" behavior that drives conversations, at least any that matter to companies (or into which they can insert their commentary).

This evolution has intriguing relevance to the way

people and companies have approached customer service via the internet. Does social media usage improve customer service overall?

Almost everyone has posted an online complaint about a company, many people have received feedback from those businesses, and a good number have had their problems resolved. But, separated from the presumptions that this behavior has any effect on other customers, the dynamics underlying this behavior are easier to see and understand.

Most online complaints aren't surprises

A common refrain from social media service providers is to claim that monitoring social media chatter will keep companies apprised of emerging issues, so that marketing or operational departments aren't surprised when things go wrong. Yet most of the problems reported via social media are the result of purposeful management decisions to cut costs, reduce staffing, impose more onerous policies on staff, slash warranties, etc. To assume otherwise is to be ignorant of the experience of history, as it's simply impossible to deliver less operational quality or service and think consumers won't notice.

Looking to see which actions most anger them,

or inspire the most vocal minorities, isn't reflective of an improvement in customer service, but rather proof of a reduction in it.

Whether admitted or not, monitoring online chatter is a way for many companies to see which reductions in service they can get away with.

The problem is that not everybody complains

For every tweet that the cable guy was late, or post showing that a bag of fries was served cold, there are many more similar instances that don't get posted on social media. Not everybody complains even though they might be dissatisfied.

Marketers can hope to predict how many people in this silent customer base might be indicated by public complaints, there's really no good way to tell. Worse, without them literally holding up their hands online, there's no easy or regular way to address their concerns.

So it's possible for brands to maintain service procedures online that seem wildly successful, based on the metrics that exist to affirm those actions, while the overall quality of customer satisfaction could be flat or declining. Customer service provided in the limelight of social media is often only a sliver of the bigger picture, not its substitute.

Complaining is the new normal

Many consumers believe that the only way to get proper service is to complain, as what was once considered "standard" is now only provided upon request (or angry demand). It's an accurate assessment, quite often, since operational changes have reduced the reliability of manufacturing or delivery that were once all but givens.

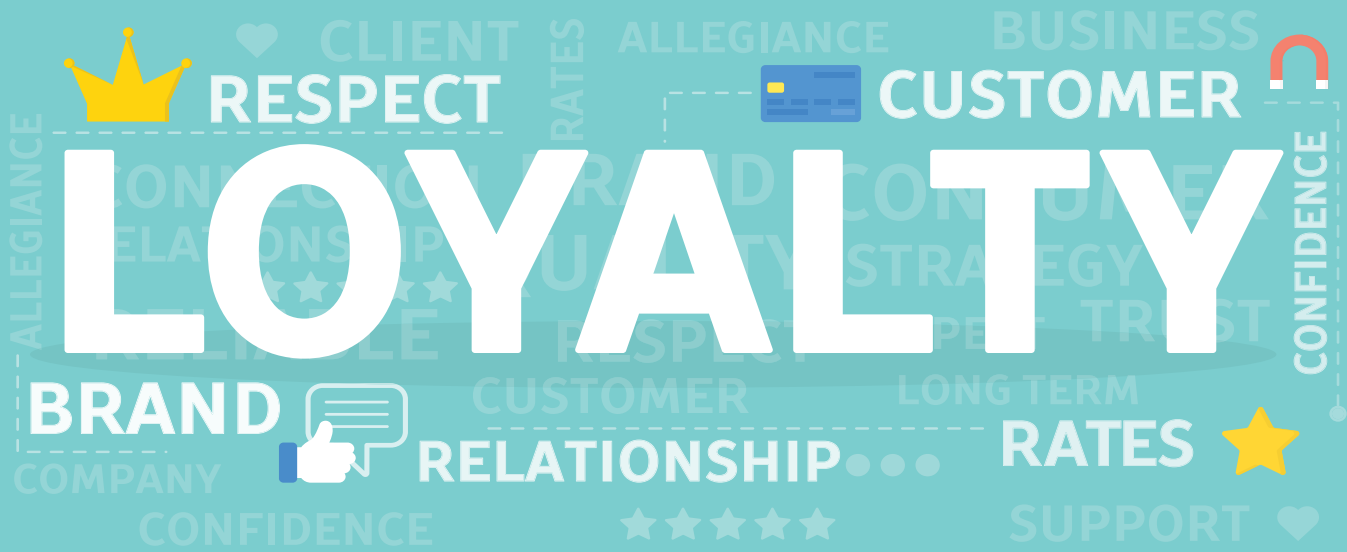
Marketing communications has shifted from informing consumers of what to expect, and instead engaging and entertaining them. So reality isn't as consistently great as it once was, yet people have greater or misplaced expectations of it. Waiting for customers to complain via social media is therefore an "outsourcing" of quality control that was once an internal function. Worse, the greater arrangement tend to ensure that there will always be service shortcomings in the future, irrespective of how they're solved in the short-term.

Social media are useful tools for registering complaints, and for businesses to get that feedback more immediately and directly. But it's not a substitute for providing high quality experiences and services in the first place.

Today's Marketing Platforms Have You Not Sure Which Way To Go?

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Can Marketing Make Customers Loyal?

Huge marketing budgets are spent in the hope that they can make customers loyal. They can't, at least not exclusively, but every marketer should understand the role they play in earning that loyalty. "Loyalty" is a word used so frequently in the marketing world, yet it has no consistent or dependable definition. For some, it is the quantity of patience or forgiveness consumers will give to a product or service that falls short in delivering some performance benefit. It can also mean the positive quality of enjoyment and appreciation a brand's best customers experience (added value), or the measure of extra efficacy that a marketing campaign will have when it preaches to the already converted (saved cost).

These definitions not only conflict with one another, but challenge the usage

of the term in peoples' personal lives. Nobody feels loyalty to a toothpaste brand the same way they are loyal to a friend or family member. In every instance, however, loyalty is usually a reciprocal quality; people are loyal to one another because they have a mutual understanding and trust in their relationships. It's the same thing when deciphering loyalty in a commercial setting.

Loyalty can't be bought

The most common approach to defining loyalty in the marketing world is to equate it with rewards for customer patronage, as well as merging it with promotional activity. Though it might work as a variant in a marketing strategy, it has little to do with actual loyalty, which fundamentally isn't a reward or selling scheme. Time after time, when consumers are

asked why they continue to buy a product or service, or continue as customers for long periods of time, the answer is pretty much consistent: "I get what I pay for, and I'm happy with it." That's not to say that there's a lot of detail and hard work behind that conclusion, but it speaks to the experiential basis for loyalty. People aren't loyal because they've received an incentive or payoff for their business. It isn't a rewards program and, quite often, the most loyal customers (again, those who are regular, consistent buyers for the longest periods of time) are those who demand or receive little "extra" in the way of marketing content.

It also can't be owned

Another mistaken approach of most loyalty programs is that they're intended to lock customers into relationships, such as those evidenced

by airline frequent flier programs. The premise is that customers will accrue tangible value over time that will serve as a barrier to leaving the relationship, and in some senses it works. Programs at retail, such as grocery stores, that provide regular discounts in exchange for allowing businesses to collect behavioral data that's used for marketing, are also often labeled loyalty programs. But these activities don't engender loyalty, at least not in the way that any human being would define it in their personal lives. Just like loyalty can't be bought, it also can't be owned or, better put, someone's loyalty can't be held captive. You can keep people on a list with a variety of marketing tactics, and even make money doing it. But to call them "loyal," or presume that they'd continue as customers without those incentives or barriers, is to replace insight with hope.

Loyalty is earned

Brands can't buy loyalty; businesses must earn it, and they do so through the operational reality of day-to-day sales and service. Marketers can highlight how a social media response team might respond to a customer complaint, but customer loyalty is a result of the boring, detailed, and ongoing behaviors

that drive a business and define a marketplace. So it's far more important that a company understand the real drivers of purchase and customer satisfaction - everything from sourcing and manufacturing or preparation, to delivery, pricing, use, and service - and devise models for how it can see and then adjust/improve how it earns its customers' loyalty. Marketers have an important role to play in these activities, but their content isn't a substitute for it. Loyalty programs don't originate in marketing departments; the company itself is a loyalty program.

And it's given freely

Marketers can also contribute to earning customer loyalty by helping them be better customers, and this can include helping them to be more informed, critical, and even demanding ones. One of the biggest hits loyalty takes is when customer experiences of products or services conflict with (or fall short of) brand promises. Yet marketers remain enamored with crafting rich, inspiring stories and messaging content, as if people buy those creative inventions. It can help prompt a sale, for sure, but rarely are people loyal to dreams. So instead of coming up with ways to turn loyalty into

a transaction, marketers can and should focus on providing content that helps customers align their expectations with the actual benefits they might receive. That's not to say that there isn't a role for creativity, but that the real challenge is to creatively help people fall in love with products and services that will live up to promises of benefits, not almost inherently fall short. Again, loyalty is given freely, by both a business and its customers.

Marketing can't make consumers more loyal, but it can either help them be loyal or, conversely, impede them from doing so. The key to accomplishing the former is for marketers to realize that loyalty isn't a reward to good customers or an incentive for additional purchases, but rather the outcome of businesses that constantly deliver on customer expectations and thereby satisfy them. Loyalty is the result of reciprocal relationships that are based on mutual understanding and alignment, and it can yield more efficient communications, more consistent business, and more enduring marketplaces in the event of bad news or delivery shortcomings. Loyalty doesn't belong to marketing, or even a brand or company. It resides in the eye of the beholder.

Do's



&

X

Don'ts

The Do's and Don'ts of Customer Service

Have you ever left a business smiling? It always comes as a surprise, but it's a surprise that lingers in your mind for much longer than most of the things that end up happening throughout your day. As a small business owner, you're in a unique position to customize the customer's experience and make it special. By rethinking how you treat the customer, they'll be rethinking your business and talking about it with their friends.

DO: Research your customer

Who actually buys your product? Is there a specific type of person who buys it? If so, you've already been successful at branding your

company and product. From there, it's your job to identify new potential markets that your product might be able to interact with if you marketed it appropriately. Distribute surveys in your online and brick 'n mortar storefronts to find out what the average customer thinks of his or her experience with your business.

DON'T: Forget your regulars

If things go south and business turns slow for a while, then you'll understand exactly why your regulars are the most important aspect of any company. Build a personal relationship with your regulars so that they feel both appreciated and like

they're receiving the best deal possible.

DO: Present a united front

Your sales and customer service staff should reflect the personality that your customer expects from your company. When hiring someone new, consider the basic values that attract customers to your business and add that to your decision-making process. By providing customers a consistent experience, you'll increase their chances of coming back for another go.

DON'T: Keep irregular hours

A business should be open when its customers need it. Try to avoid the college

town record store syndrome of small business ownership and keep your hours consistent and appealing to the customer. If you don't have a brick and mortar location, then always be forthcoming about you or your employees' contact information in case a customer needs information quickly.

DO: Allow yourself professional distance

Your customer is your customer, and life isn't always like Mad Men. Friends can be made outside of the workplace, but try not to let your business relationships become friendships while

in the midst of negotiations. That's not to say you shouldn't make friends with a client, but always be sure to recognize the importance of waiting before your business is concluded before hanging out.

DON'T: Pass the buck with a customer's concerns

If a customer complains about an employee, practice, or product that you sell: It's no one's fault but the business practices that allowed the complaint to occur. Talk to your customer about the problem, apologize, and then look into what went wrong from an organizational

perspective. After you've discovered and rectified the problem, inform the customer about your process to demonstrate how much you value their opinion.

Customer service is something you probably already know about, but it's important to constantly update your strategy. A customer's happiness is the memory that will keep them coming back to your store, and the ability to recreate the same kind of happiness they experienced the first time means that they won't be chasing the dragon with another business.



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FUN FACTS

The name 'November' is believed to derive from 'novem' which is the Latin for the number 'nine'. In the ancient Roman calendar November was the ninth month after March.

Unlike today's feast consisting of turkey, stuffing, cranberry, etc; the original Thanksgiving menu probably consisted of the following items:

Seethed [boiled] Lobster. Roasted Goose, Boiled Turkey, Fricase of Coney, Pudding of Indian Corn Meal with dried Whortleberries, Seethed Cod, Roasted Duck, Stewed Pumpkin, Roasted Venison with Mustard Sauce, Savory Pudding of Hominy

November Milestones:

- Nov. 7th, 1972 - Home Box Office (HBO) was launched, in Wilkes-Barre, PA.
- Nov. 18th, 1928 - Walt Disney's Mickey Mouse first appeared in NY in "Steamboat Willie."
- Nov. 23, 1963 - The first episode of the BBC's Doctor Who premiered
- Nov. 25, 1920 - The Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day Parade is the oldest in the US, starting on this date.
- Nov. 27, 1924 - Macy's department store held its first Thanksgiving Day parade.
- Nov. 28, 1895 - America's first auto race started: 6 cars, 55 miles, the winner averaged 7 MPH
- Nov. 30, 1979 - Pink Floyd released "The Wall" double album.

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Photos & Videos

- Short Video Clip
- Before & After Photos
- Demonstration Video
- Funny Meme
- Sneak Peeks
- Behind the Scenes



Be The Industry Expert

- Share an Industry Article / Video
- Answer a Frequent Question
- Provide Tips
- Post an Infographic



Events / Timely Topics

- Holidays
- National Days / Weeks / Month
- Trending News Topic
- Historic Milestones
- Tradeshow Photos

Interactive Posts

- Take a Poll
- Fill In The Blanks
- Would you rather...
- This or That
- If you could...



Cross Promote

- Promote a Chamber
- Promote a Customer
- Promote a Local Business

Show Gratitude

- Thank a Customer
- Thank your Followers
- Thank a Vendor



Show the Human Side

- Feature a Team Member
- Birthdays / Anniversaries
- Sports Team Loyalty
- Family Pets
- Fun Facts
- Holiday Celebrations
- Inspirational Quotes
- Team Building

Promoting Yourself

- Product or Service Feature
- Free Download
- New Blog Post
- A Testimonial
- Promote Your Newsletter
- Run a Special
- Run a Contest

Important: Only 20% of your posts should be self-promoting

