

Is It Time To Add Gamification To Your Loyalty Strategy?



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More than 80% of millennials and nearly two-thirds of baby boomers [have reported](#) an interest in getting rewards not just for purchases but also for engagement with brands. Companies can use gamification marketing to drive engagement, which is key to loyalty.

In the same [report](#), nearly one-third of all participants and 40% of millennials say there should be games with loyalty programs. One advantage of using games to drive loyalty is that gamers are also more likely to be [active on social media](#). This means they can spread the word of their engagement with others.

How Brands Are 'Winning' Gamification

Here's how a few well-known brands are using gamification as part of their loyalty efforts:

NBC: A new app from NBCUniversal has participants enter information about their viewing preferences and allows them to watch shows for the chance of getting points. According to [reports](#), "each featured episode gives 10 viewers \$100 worth of points they can redeem at outlets like Amazon, Best Buy, Macy's and Target."

Nike: Consumers in China have the opportunity to try on Nike shoes at stores in select cities. Virtual reality [allows them to participate](#) in a fun virtual environment called Reactland. They can share several seconds of the experience on social media.

Victoria's Secret: Victoria's Secret has [created an app](#) in association with its customer loyalty program, PINK Nation. Users provide data to the company, and in return, they get points for signing up for a contest called "Fashion Show Sweeps." This gives them the opportunity to win a trip to the company's fashion show. They can get additional points by playing daily trivia games and sharing the promotion on Facebook. In addition to gathering a great deal of customer information, the promotion increased visits to and participation on the website.

Any product -- from makeup to food and clothes to gas -- can use gamification to increase engagement. [Under Armor](#), [Domino's](#), [Shell](#) and [Sephora](#) are also among the companies that have successfully used gamification rewards programs to build loyalty.

How To Apply Gamification Techniques To Your Loyalty Program

There are 11 essential tips for adding gamification to your loyalty program strategy:

Set Goals: Begin with the end in mind. First, consider the goals of your loyalty program. Next, consider the outcomes you want to see from gamification. It is also important to establish how success will be measured and determine what analytical tools can provide the metrics for success.

Know Your Audience: What kinds of games will your customers engage with? If your customer base is a mix of demographics, you'll need to create a game that has a broad-based appeal and has the flexibility to create challenges to target subsets of customers. You can also look at competitors or other brands with similar audiences to see how they engage your customers.

Become A Storyteller: Just like any good movie, book or TV show, the game should include a story plot. Without a plot, there is nothing that needs to get done. Plus, players are more likely to become engaged in a game that includes a good plot. The story should involve the company's brand and be a part of the marketing both online and offline.

Go Mobile: Consumer screentime on mobile has [surpassed desktop](#). Consumers check their phones frequently for news, Facebook updates, email and more. It makes sense for brands to be able to engage with the game whenever they want. The game should be available in app form, whether it is integrated into one that already exists or a new one is created.

Make It Social: Some ways to make a game go viral include the use of hashtags and rewards for social sharing. The creation of an online community and participation in it can also be a reward in itself.

Maintain Recognition: Program levels can be structured in a way that allows customers to see progress and create goals that are challenging without being overly difficult to reach.

Reward Participation: It can be a challenge to get new members to take that initial plunge, but one way to encourage participation is by giving them points for doing that very thing.

Gauge Difficulty Level: While encouraging participation, it is also important that the challenges offered are difficult enough to make participants feel they have achieved something. They should also be shown that they are getting closer to a reward or a new level.

Make It Competitive: Achievement badges and leaderboards can be a great way to nudge participants into a sense of competition by seeing how others are doing.

Make Winning Easy To Understand: None of the above will be effective if participants are unclear about what they have to do to get rewards, so instructions and

gameplay should not be too complicated.

Include Surprise And Delight Moments: Random rewards can be very motivating, and participants will enjoy getting unexpected freebies. People also enjoy the sense of having won something above and beyond the value of the item itself.

Increasingly, the most effective and best loyalty programs will integrate gamification and focus on engaging customers instead of just getting transactions from them. A one-time transaction is valuable, but multiple transactions are even more valuable. Loyalty and engagement can encourage customers to repeatedly choose one company and its products over the competition.

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