



Inspired Incentives

How to Keep Customers Motivated – Entrepreneur Reblog

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A while ago, Entrepreneur had a guest writer, Andrew Reid, write a piece on keeping customers motivated to come back to your business.

Reid, the Founder and President of Corporate Innovation at Vision Critical, highlighted some interesting points in his article, entitled 4 Strategies to Keep Customers Coming Back. Besides offering sound advice, we thought this blog article was particularly fitting during our month of Motivating through the Summer.

Here are a few of our personal takeaways from that article and how they specifically apply to the incentive industry and keeping your customers motivated.

1. It's All About the Relationship

We've spoken on this before as it relates to loyalty, but it's always worth touching upon because it's the most important aspect of motivating sales and retention.

The customer has always been king, but as Reid points out in his article, that fact has become especially true in recent years. Now, with so much availability for customer engagement via the internet and social media, it's easy to lose a customer to negative reviews, slander, and word-of-mouth. But that also means it's now easier to captivate your customers—and thus distinguish your brand—using these tools as well.

Many of HMI's programs support professional marketing and communication plans for their participants, who happen to be your customers. Announcements, reminders, and even videos that can be sent to your customers can make the difference in the motivation of sales and overall retention.

2. Personalization Is Key

When we think of a more personalized customer experience, we tend to think of messaging and communication, and the highly beneficial information we gather from this. However, being able to gain information is not the only thing you can do with personalized messaging. For instance, a study conducted by Dennis P. Carmody and Michael Lewis found that "hearing one's own name has unique brain functioning activation" (2006).

This finding means that using the first name of a customer or participant of a program within the communications sent to them will certainly lead to higher engagement and better motivation to continue to work with you.

But personalization is relevant not only in the communications you deliver, but also in the services you provide, too. Reid points out that personalizing both your services and communications can have some seriously positive impacts on your business—citing a 2013 Bain & Co. survey, he points out that "25 percent to 30 percent of consumers want to customize their purchases," which in the footwear industry alone (to use an example) would be equivalent to roughly \$2 billion a year in sales. So, whether it's engaging your customers on a more personal level via social media, or enabling them to personalize their own unique consumer experience themselves, it's become clear that customers are seeking increasingly interactive brand relationships.

3. You Must Entertain

Finally, one of the most vital tactics for companies looking to delight their customers is to create experiences that not only enlighten and educate but also entertain. It is one thing to learn, but doesn't it feel good to get some excitement out of that lesson?

Reid mentions gamification and gratification in his article. This strategy has been one that HMI has pursued thoroughly in recent years. For example, many of our programs now sport Spin to Win Modules. These modules depict a wheel, which

participants use special codes to set spinning and land on tiered reward prizes. This experience has been deemed extremely rewarding for our participants, and extremely lucrative for our clients.

For many companies, the summer months can be a time fraught with challenges when it comes to motivating and retaining customers. But it doesn't have to be. By keeping in mind certain key principles—and featuring strategies that often are incentivized—you can help keep your customers excited and engaged through the summer... and beyond.

To learn more about how incentive programs can make the difference for you against Amazon, contact TIMBR - HMI to learn more about how you can add value to your business.