



What Loyalty Really Means

Companies enter into the loyalty space for a variety of reasons, but always with the same end goal - to generate greater profits. It's important to remember what "loyalty" really means. Some retailers make the mistake of executing a "discount" program, but refer to it as loyalty. While discounts are an important tactic of a well-executed loyalty program, a successful loyalty program focuses on delivering meaningful and relevant offers and content to the consumer, while maximizing every touch point available, ultimately cultivating engagement and influencing desired shopping behaviors.

Engagement and the *Somewhat* Hidden Competitive Advantage

It is easy to overlook the *somewhat* hidden competitive advantage of investing in consumer engagement. With the advent of portable web enabled devices and smartphones, Near Field Communications (NFC), sophisticated consumer relationship (CRM) technologies, and the dawn of the social landscape (Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, etc.), the opportunities to engage the consumer are plentiful. However, today's consumers are harder to win and keep with traditional forms of marketing only.

Today's consumers expect merchants and brands to engage in a two-way conversation using more personalized and relevant channels which creates:

- Positive affinity towards your brand
- Higher levels of participation with your brand
- A long-term relationship that makes consumers more likely to return, repurchase, and upgrade

A successful engagement strategy is rooted in the effectiveness of data capture at the point-of-purchase. Today's point-of-sale (POS) systems process purchase transactions, capture consumer data, administer promotions, and even advertise and communicate directly to the consumer. Delivering a well-designed loyalty solution is dependent upon the right retail technology platform that underpins the brand.

The Goal of a Loyalty Program

The goal of loyalty and consumer engagement is to create brand advocates and loyalists who habitually shop with your brand. It is not a discount program or loyalty scheme in isolation. Offering promotional discounts is a great way to forge a relationship. But consumer engagement is about utilizing data to understand your consumers on a personal level so you'll know how and what to communicate to drive specific shopping behaviors.

According to Colloquy Loyalty Census 2015:

Loyalty programs are still going gangbusters across all retail sectors, which includes grocers as well as convenience store retailers. The census continues to cite extraordinary US loyalty membership growth rates of 3.32 billion new members in 2014, compared with 2.65 billion in 2015. It's evident that loyalty programs are pervasive across the retail sector and almost an expectation to compete. The question isn't whether your organization should have a loyalty program, but rather how will your loyalty program focus on continued activation of your membership base and how to evolve the consumer's experience to retain and engage your valuable consumers over the long run.



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About Eire

Eire is both a direct marketing agency and strategic consulting firm focused on delivering innovative customer loyalty and engagement programs that help clients overcome challenges, generate profitable growth, and build customer relationships. Our depth of experience allows us to deliver customized and actionable solutions designed to address our clients' most important business opportunities. We specialize in providing strategic marketing services for core industries including: retail & convenience, energy/oil, and financial services. Our clients are the cornerstone of our business and we value these long-term relationships.

The Eire Advantage

Combined experience in loyalty, customer engagement strategies, retail technology and traditional marketing. There are many factors that impact the performance of a retailer's loyalty initiative. Because of our ability to leverage data and analyze the effectiveness of a program and its supporting marketing communications, we can help measure and pinpoint the return on investment. We know the questions to ask and the relevant data to gather for analysis. And, we have proprietary technology that can model all facets of loyalty, communications, and engagement strategies. We'll offer data-driven insights and fact-based recommendations, ultimately optimizing the client's profitability and their consumer's loyalty.

Connect with Eire.

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The "C" Generation

Have you heard of the "C" Generation?

This "connected generation" of consumers lives in the social landscape and is comfortable broadcasting their location, what they are purchasing, and their experience while purchasing.

What's unique about this generation is that it spans age ranges and is equally balanced in gender. Men and women of a variety of ages are getting more and more comfortable interacting with their retail merchants through 1:1 digital and mobile methods.*

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