

6 tips to improve retail loyalty and decrease competition

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In the age of digital transformation, it is critical to guide your target audience through the customer journey from interest to purchase. Customers nowadays expect a pleasing and personalised shopping experience, but they also expect a shorter and more effective one than ever before.



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Customers are more likely to become frustrated as a result of slow and unnecessary complications and purchase barriers. Improved shopping experiences not only cater to the speed requirements of modern audiences, but also help you compete with other businesses in your industry.

When it comes to creating those experiences, there are a few simple steps you can take. Here are six of them:

1. Map realistic customer journeys

To shorten your customer's shopping journey, you must first create a detailed journey map that accurately depicts their true experience with your brand, from their initial contact to the close of the sale.

Keep in mind that the customer journey is rarely linear. While you may want to create an idealised version of your journey in order to focus on areas where your team excels, doing so will do little to improve your company's overall performance.

Use customer metrics pulled from interactions to gain valuable insights into the journey and determine where action should be taken.

Once these factors have been accurately identified, your insights will effectively improve customer experience in order to maximise your return on investment.

2. Digitise customer touchpoints where possible

Many issues that arise during the customer shopping experience may be addressable and improved through digitisation, resulting in a more enjoyable experience for your customer.

Consider the shopping experience on the leading e-commerce sites. Customers can view products related to their recent purchases or searches, ensuring that they're seeing only what they are interested in. This shortens the sales cycle and gives customers a reason to stay on the site, rather than visiting a competitor's website.

Digitise as many touchpoints as possible to make the customer journey faster, easier and more likely to result in a sale. Furthermore, it is critical that your customers can continue their journey smoothly and intuitively regardless of where their first point of contact is. While well-designed landing pages can help boost conversions, it is not guaranteed that every customer will interact with you through a designated landing page.

It is important that they can easily continue their journey through a different channel. If this is not optimised, valuable leads may be lost as their journey becomes more complicated and time-consuming than necessary.



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3. Digitally enhance retail operations

Making the customer journey as simple and straightforward as possible will help empower your target audience. However, you will also need to empower your own staff and adapt store operations in order to meet these empowered customers in effective, helpful ways. Digital enhancements for operations that may be right for your company include:

- **Speeding up communications:** Modern digital platforms can leverage sophisticated solutions, such as integrated ERPs, in-depth CRMs and multi-channel marketing automation, to improve communication and processes through a retail chain's corporate office and brick-and-mortar stores, keeping team members aligned with new strategies.
- **Improving inventory insights:** Vital information regarding customers can be supplied to stores and employees through portals, including shopping history and product interests. Doing so can help employees provide improved customer service in person, over the phone and via online chat.

By having your retail operation flow with as little friction as possible, your employees are enabled to respond to customer interests and individual needs as quickly and efficiently as possible.

4. Boost loyalty and profits with personalisation

Creating smooth journeys and ease of use can improve the shopping experience for everyone, but personalisation is a major component in proactively meeting the needs of your customers. When used correctly, personalisation can increase loyalty and lead to customers purchasing more frequently and in larger amounts.

To properly personalise your customer experience, you must build on a platform that collects data from online interactions and allows for accurate interpretations. This will enable you to gain a better understanding of their interests and history with your company.

As a result, brands can personalise messaging and target customers with communications that are tailored to them as individuals. Individualising your interactions with customers can help you keep their interest and encourage them to become brand ambassadors rather than a one-and-done customer.



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5. Create a loyalty loop

The previous tactics, as well as the shortening of the customer shopping experience, all contribute to the concept of customer loyalty -- which plays a significant role in shortening each return experience. Customer loyalty shortens the buying circle and works to eliminate the potential competition that comes from other companies.

Because of the previous interactions with your brand, potential customers will not need to learn about who you are and what you can offer. Furthermore, there will be less time spent considering and evaluating your product. Within the loyalty loop, customers are more likely to consider your products if they spend less time considering your competitors.

6. Predict the next steps

By correctly anticipating the next actions taken by your customers and understanding their future interests, you can provide solutions to their needs in as little time as possible. In doing so, customers will feel understood and be less likely to go to a competitor.

While it will take time and effort, it is crucial that you consider the steps of a customer and the many different approaches a customer can take. In doing so, a customer can be led through all aspects of a shopping journey, including the crucial post-purchase phase that is instrumental in improving loyalty and return purchases.

Today's customers are more knowledgeable and better equipped to find and purchase exactly what they want. Digitally transforming and enhancing your customer journey will provide the intuitive and pleasing experiences that your customer will want from any company they consider. The result is a higher return on investment, the ability to more effectively compete with other companies in your industry, and a faster sales cycle.

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