

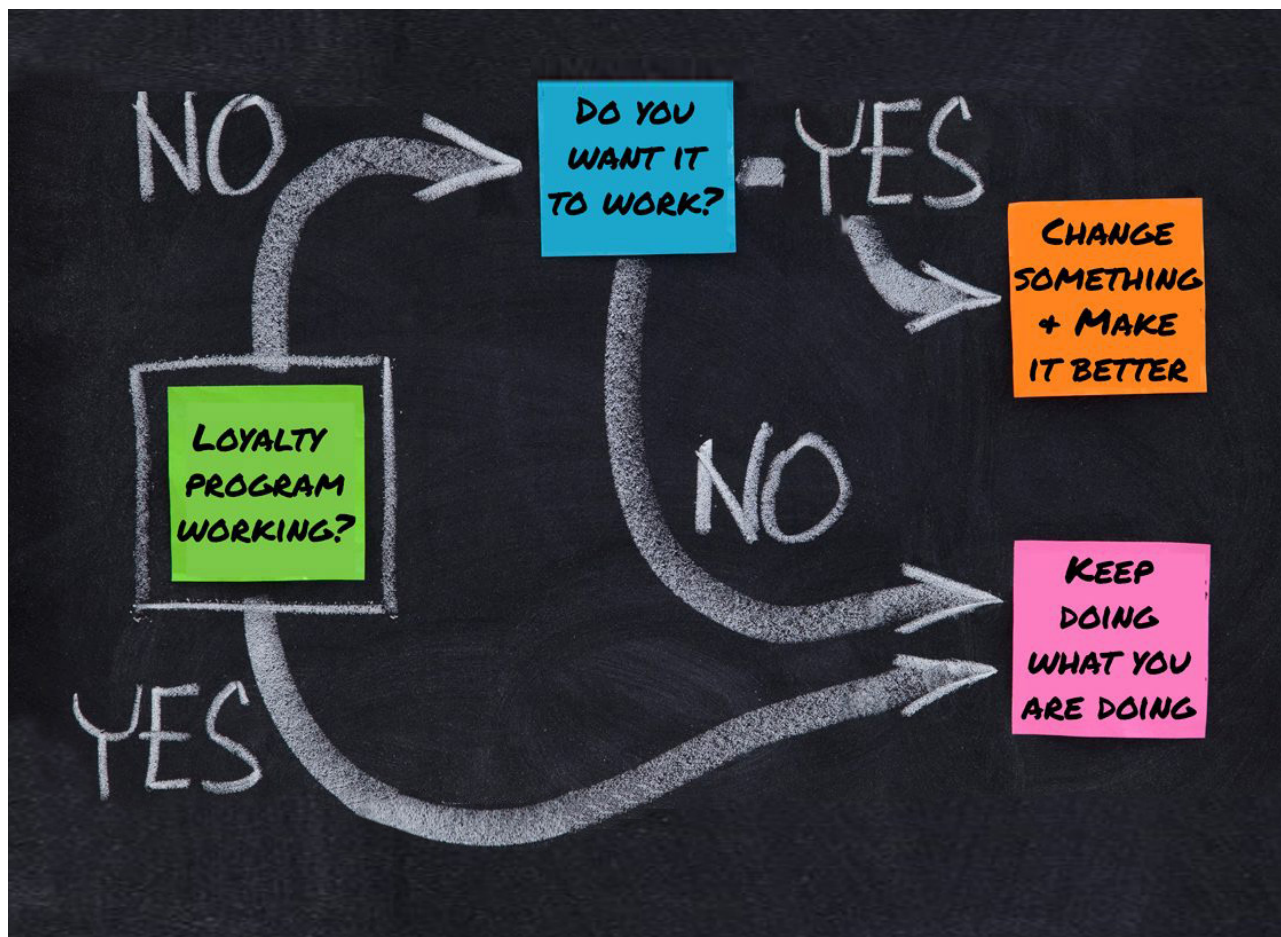
# HOW TO MAKE YOUR LOYALTY PROGRAM PROACTIVE — INSTEAD OF — REACTIVE



# IS YOUR LOYALTY PROGRAM WORKING AGAINST YOU?

A lot of traditional customer loyalty programs use discounts and promotions to spur repeat customer purchases. That doesn't sound like a bad thing at first, but consider this. When you rely on discounts and sales to bring back loyal customers, you can easily get stuck in a vicious cycle in which loyal customers only shop with you when they have a discount code or when you're running a promotion.

Worse, the more you use this kind of reactive loyalty program, the more you condition your customers to this kind of behavior. They'll want to buy your products or services, but they'll keep waiting until you offer your next discount. Only then will they make their next purchase. Obviously, this needs to change — but how? **It's time to implement a loyalty program that's proactive, not reactive.**



# PREDICT CUSTOMERS' NEEDS BY EXAMINING THE BUYER'S JOURNEY

**To start, take a look at the buying journey for your typical customer.** You may have dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of different touchpoints and points of interaction with this customer. Examine their journey, from start to finish, and find the interaction points with the most meaning. Then, focus on those points. With those touchpoints in mind, it's time to implement what we like to call "design think."

**What's design think?** Design thinking is a process for solving problems by prioritizing the consumer's needs. It relies on observing, with empathy, how people interact with you. It then employs an iterative, hands-on approach to creating innovative solutions.

So, what does design think look like? First, you dive into the customer's buying journey and pinpoint those meaningful interactions. Whether your customers are shopping online or in a brick-and-mortar store, **one of those important interactions will always be checkout.** Is the checkout experience personalized and streamlined? Are appropriate recommendations given for related items that the customer is likely to be interested in? Do checkout staff have the tools to recognize and greet loyal customers by name?

Of course, checkout isn't the only meaningful interaction point.

With design think, you'll **use data from customers' buying journeys** to examine real evidence for how consumers actually engage with your brand, rather than making assumptions based on someone or some group's opinion about customer engagement.

Taking this data-oriented, people-centered approach can create loyalty by focusing on customers' experiences and behavior. By doing this, you can anticipate and meet customers' needs — even before they express them.



# ATTRACT LOYALTY BY IMPROVING CUSTOMERS' BUYING JOURNEYS

All too often, customers' interactions with a company are dictated and defined by the company — with no true direction or thought for the customer experience. Companies take a "This is how we've always done it" approach to customer interactions – without taking into account how customers want to interact with them. This approach is a recipe for failure in today's market.

*People want to buy from companies that make the buying process as easy and friction-free as possible. Brands that don't deliver on that will suffer, but you can thrive by taking a data-oriented, design think approach to your customer loyalty strategy.*

## **As you create your strategy, weave in customer feedback with data insights.**

This will give you more perspective and a better view of the big picture for your customers' experiences with your brand. You will gain the tools you need to create highly personalized messaging targeted at the right customers at the right time to provide the most meaning for them.



With that in mind, your goal at these points should not be instant conversions. Those are almost impossible, and hard-selling tactics are counter-productive in building loyalty and relationships. Instead, **the goal should be to demonstrate how you're making customers' lives easier** — so you can earn their trust and continued business.

# TECHNOLOGY IS KEY TO A PROACTIVE LOYALTY PROGRAM

*So, how can you get the data you need to gain insight into customers' buying journeys?*

To be effective, you'll need the right tools. Your toolbox will need to include next-generation technologies, powered by AI and machine learning to capture and track data and analytics on every step of the buyer's journey. Based on a user's profile, previous purchases, web and mobile interactions, you can then personalize the user's interactions with your brand. From how calls are routed to what's displayed on your site when they log in — **you can tailor the whole experience to their needs and streamline the buying process for them.**



Leverage technology to enhance the customer's experience, and you'll likely see significant improvements in customer loyalty. In today's market, it's all about the customer experience. **When you deliver an outstanding experience, you build loyalty.** Those customers will keep coming back, and they'll tell others to shop with you too. Great customer experience means happier customers, and happier customers mean more repeat purchases and more recommendations and referrals.

Great customer experiences must be a mantra for your entire organization — from the C-suite to your front-line employees. And it must be implemented in a way that lets employees at all levels improve the customer experience. Replace outdated approaches to customer loyalty. Implement the right technology to track customers' buying journeys and personalize their experiences. And give all employees — especially front-line, customer-facing employees — the power to make decisions on the spot to improve customer interactions.



*Leverage technology to enhance the customer's experience, and you'll likely see significant improvements in customer loyalty.*





Want to start using design thinking, data and technology can enhance customer satisfaction and increase revenue for your brand?

**CONTACT US TODAY TODAY TO START YOUR LOYALTY JOURNEY!**



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