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## 7 Tips for Building Brand Loyalty in a Discount Obsessed Market



from [onlineshoppingtrip.com](http://onlineshoppingtrip.com)

In today's marketplace, few customers stay loyal to a brand. And, why should they? Online is where most everyone does research, and where the vast majority of commerce takes place. Consumers are turning to the web primarily because of convenience — a days worth of holiday shopping can now be done in a fraction of the time in a cost efficient way.

The Internet enables people to be as leisurely or proactive about researching a purchase as they want before actually making the decision, countless websites offer hard-to-turn-down time sensitive discounts to drive sales, price comparisons are at consumer fingertips, and "flash sales" perpetuate an online shopping trend encouraging fickle consumer buying behavior in today's market.

According to a [study by Rice University](#) 40 percent of businesses would not offer another Groupon deal again and many companies have noticed that this new wave of online shopping does nothing encourage brand loyalty. For companies and brands looking to attract a large number of new customers, Groupon and similar flash sales may seem like a tremendous value, but how a company converts those deal-seeking customers into brand loyal customers is critical. The online shopping trend conditions consumers to only make a purchase if there is a deep discount. The result is a value obsessed economy where consumers have no incentive to be loyal to any particular brand.

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Consumers are expecting the same value from brick and mortar establishments that they can find online, even though that deal online was exactly as it was advertised — a short lived, first come first serve, and sometimes offered within a frustrating window of opportunity. Whether companies like it or not, these shopping experiences are setting the bar for how people perceive value. The mindset is becoming “If I found it once, sooner or later, I’ll find it again at or below the same price.”

As the CEO of Luxury Market Branding, I help brands navigate this issue everyday so they can build brand loyalty, while increasing revenue as well. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

1. **Keep quality high.** Depending on the price of your product there is an expectation of a certain level of quality from the marketplace. Stay consistent in the quality of your goods or services. People will go back to what they know they can count on, don’t let them down.
2. **Engage your customers.** Keep in touch with your target market on a frequent and consistent basis. Let them know about the new and exciting developments within the company and what to expect next, build momentum through communication and let your fans feel involved in the happenings of your company.
3. **Solicit feedback from consumers.** Stay in touch with your consumer, ask their opinion of your business, did they like their most recent experience with your company, were they satisfied with the customer service, did the product or service meet their expectations? Let them know that you care about their experience and that you are listening to their concerns. Make sure that your client’s know that you respond to the demands of your consumer. If you want your customer to come back, give them what they want!
4. **Give them a reason to come back.** Provide incentives for consumers to return to your company instead of the competition. Create programs that reward loyalty to your brand. Consider giving insider access, special status and other non-monetary driven incentives. Everyone wants something that can not simply be purchased, provide some privileges and create some cache!
5. **Stay relevant.** Keep a close eye on what your competition is doing and what the current trends are in your industry. If your marketing and communications strategy isn’t relevant to the current market then, your message provides little or no value and falls on deaf ears.
6. **Provide Value.** How much does the first repeat purchase mean to you, how much do you value the third transaction and is it worth losing the fourth potential deal to a competitor? The answer is that customer loyalty is invaluable and no, you don’t want to lose them to the competition. Create a plan to give a percentage of loyal customers’ cumulative spending back to the consumer in some way. Whether it is through phased in discounts, complimentary shipping, gifts with purchase, or if a bonus service, always find a way to create added value.
7. **Show your appreciation.** So often companies forget to say a simple Thank You for your business. Wish your clients Happy Birthday, Happy Holidays and a great New Year. It may sound unnecessary, but trust me from past experience, customers in every industry want to feel that you care about them outside of your business transactions with them.

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*Courtesy of YEC*

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