

# Emotional Data

**M**arketing people like to be creative. Some will not openly admit that they loathe data because it's just not fun to look at spreadsheets, graphs, and charts compared to designing an animation for a website or shooting a commercial with a talking pig.

However, creatively using data about customers can contribute to the customer's experience in so many ways. For example, there's nothing easier than sending a birthday card to your best customers.

That doesn't mean a birthday card should be sent to *every* customer because data show that below-average customers know the sentiment is hollow; they know they don't shop enough to warrant a birthday card. In addition, below-average customers spend too little anyway and the result is a negative ROI.

But when you send a creative, relevant, personalized birthday card with a gift that has no catch to a good customer, it pays dividends in relationship building that goes beyond that day's transaction.

Data show that good customers, when they redeem their birthday gifts, will typically spend more than their average ticket. They'll purchase things they normally wouldn't as a treat for themselves and they'll buy more than usual in gratitude. They'll walk the store, discover new merchandise and extend their connection to the brand.

The brand experience can be enhanced by emphasizing how the brand relates to the consumer's wants and needs, as well. As consumers gravitate towards environmentally efficient and renewable products, there's an advantage in using loyalty data to define how the consumer sees "green," for example.

Which products define a green customer? Which product attributes link green products? Identifying those attributes leads to designing communications that resonate with "green" best customer segments and

reinforce that the brand is the right choice for them.

Employees also learn more about their customers through data and are more motivated when they see happier customers marching around the store with special offers.

Employee confidence grows as they are able to identify customers with rewards, knowing they will be easier to please.

A good employee can use those circumstances to drive higher baskets by making the shopping trip more convenient, quicker, and easier. In the world we live in, convenience and speed can trump everything, including price.

A database of best-customer shopping behavior also might show you something you can't see in real time: that customers do not shop the whole store.

In one retail chain, 32 percent of customers shop one or two departments, while 14

percent shop 11 or more departments. Yet, among the top 30 percent of customers, 40 percent shop 11 or more departments. In some locations, the number can grow as high as 60 percent shopping 11 or more departments.

Understandably, those stores where the best customers shop the whole store have higher average baskets and higher ROI. More customers receive rewards and visits are more frequent.

Using loyalty data goes way beyond crunching numbers. It might even be better than a talking pig. ■

## Using loyalty data goes way beyond crunching numbers.



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