The Ultimate Guide to Gamification for Customer Loyalty

How to Drive Repeat Engagement & Retention

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Contents

Foreword

Loyal customers don't just buy more; they are the ones who advocate for your brand and support your business growth. But with an increasingly competitive landscape, consumers being in the driving seat of choice and brand-switching, how do you build a genuine relationship with your best customers, and keep them coming back for more?

This guide aims to help you understand how marketing gamification can truly impact customer loyalty.

We'll start with the essentials: what makes a customer truly loyal, why loyalty is crucial, and the biggest challenges businesses face in fostering it. Next, we'll explore marketing gamification: the powerful practice that has proven to be a strategic driver in boosting repeat engagement, retention and ultimately impacting customer loyalty.

Then, we'll move into the practical side: how to build loyalty with the help of gamification.

Along the way, we'll showcase valuable insights from market reports and our platform data, as well as real-world examples and key takeaways from brands like Spar, Virgin Red, and many more.

In 2025, customers stay loyal for many reasons, whether it's rewards, appreciation, excellent service, or seamless experiences. Marketing gamification taps into all these motivations, keeping people engaged and coming back for more. And as every marketer knows, acquiring a new customer can cost <u>five to seven times more</u> than retaining an existing one. By the end of this guide, you'll be armed with the knowledge and inspiration to craft a gamification strategy that makes them love your brand! Let's get started. This is going to be fun!

Acquiring a new customer can cost five to seven times more than retaining an existing one

Who is it for?

This guide is designed for professionals in loyalty and marketing, including:

- **CMOs**
- **Marketing managers and specialists**
- **Customer loyalty managers**
- **Loyalty program/app managers**
- **Customer experience managers**
- **Commercial directors**
- **Brand managers**
- **Product managers**

While tailored to these roles, it also offers actionable insights and statistics valuable to anyone interested in exploring the powerful combination of gamification and loyalty. By examining trends in personalization, retention, and customer expectations, the guide empowers you to develop effective loyalty & gamification strategies for 2025 and beyond.

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1. The importance of customer loyalty

What is a loyal customer?

A loyal customer isn't just someone who buys from you once or twice - they are engaged, repeat customers who actively choose your brand over competitors. They:

- Engage with your brand's content consistently,
- Make repeat purchases, increasing their lifetime value,
- Show little to no interest in competitors,
- Recommend your brand to friends, family, or colleagues,
- Provide feedback and leave reviews, helping you improve,
- Interact with your brand regularly, whether through social media, email, or direct communication (for instance, through customer service).

Think of popular brands like Apple, Starbucks, or Nike. Customers buy their products; but also engage with the brand regularly, join communities, and even advocate for them.

But why do people become loyal to companies? Loyalty can be transactional (customers return for rewards, discounts, free delivery, or convenience) or emotional (customers feel a connection with your brand's values, mission, or experience).

The strongest brands build both.

Why does a loyal customer matter?

Nowadays, customer loyalty is more than just a nice to have; it is key to sustainable business growth.

Here's why customer loyalty is so important:

- Loyal customers spend more. 57% of consumers spend more on brands they are loyal to.
- Acquisition is more expensive than retention. Acquiring a new customer can cost 5-7x more than retaining an existing one.
- They become brand advocates. Loyal customers are 4x more likely to refer your brand to others, creating fantastic word-of-mouth marketing.
- They provide valuable feedback. Loyal customers will often share insights and opinions, helping you improve your offerings.
- You achieve higher profits. The more customers spend on your products and recommend your brand, the more profitable your business becomes.

57% of consumers spend more on brands they are loyal to.

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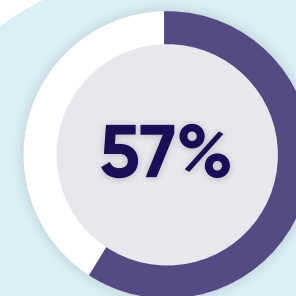
What data tells us about customer loyalty

43% — 43.17% of respondents are open to sharing data in exchange for rewards, highlighting a willingness to exchange personal data for benefits. *(Comarch)*

5% — Just a 5% increase in customer retention can boost profits by 25 to 95% *(Harvard Business Review)*

70% — While 70% of consumers engage more with loyalty programs, less than 25% of loyalty programs offer personalized experiences, and only 14% foster community-building. *(Deloitte)*
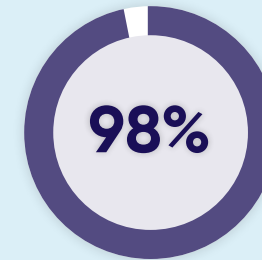
98% — Almost all (98%) consumers want brands to do more to guarantee the privacy of their data, as well as be more transparent about how their data is used. *(Forbes)*

50% — Studies show that existing customers are 50% more likely to try new products and spend 31% more than new customers. *(Forbes)*

38% — Brands risk losing 38% of customers because of poor marketing personalization efforts. *(Gartner)*
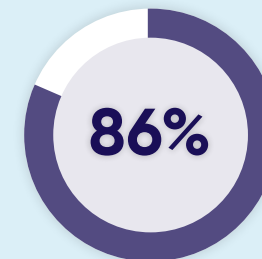
86% — 86% of consumers say that personalized experiences increase their loyalty to brands. *(Forbes)*

10+ — On average, each customer is a member of 10.72 loyalty programs. *(Comarch)*

39% — Consumers prefer instant digital rewards (39.48%) and personalized offers (37.62%), emphasizing the global trend toward customization in loyalty programs. *(Comarch)*
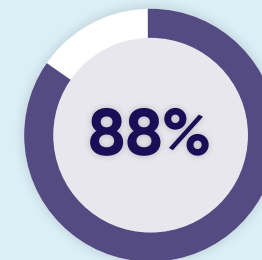
88% — When customers feel appreciated and listened to, 88% stay with the brand, 83% spend more, and 87% advocate. *(Forrester)*

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The loyalty challenge

Did you know that, on average, each customer is a member of 10.72 loyalty programs? (Comarch). This highlights the immense popularity of loyalty programs, but also reveals a key issue: standing out is harder than ever.

While some programs thrive, many struggle with low engagement, poor retention, and high costs. According to Harvard Business Review, for every successful loyalty program, a dozen others fail, generating low return on investment (ROI) and encouraging unprofitable customer behaviors. Net Promoter Scores (NPS), a key metric of advocacy, vary widely among programs, proving that not all loyalty strategies are equally effective. But why is that?

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Here are the key challenges many loyalty managers face:

☑ **A growing number of loyalty programs (competition)**
With so many programs available, customers have little incentive to engage beyond collecting discounts. Brands must find ways to differentiate their loyalty offerings.

☑ **Lack of personalization**
Many programs take a one-size-fits-all approach, failing to tailor rewards and experiences to different customer segments and preferences.

☑ **Price sensitivity**
If discounts are the only reason customers participate, they may easily switch to competitors offering better deals rather than staying for brand loyalty.

☑ **Poor understanding of customer behavior**
A lack of deep customer insights means brands struggle to understand buying behaviors, preferences, and motivations, limiting their ability to optimize loyalty efforts.

☑ **Low awareness and enrollment**
Without strong marketing and promotion, even the best-designed loyalty programs fail to attract enough members.

☑ **Inconsistent omnichannel experience**
Customers interact with brands through apps, websites, emails, and in-store visits. Without a seamless, consistent experience across these channels, including your loyalty program, engagement suffers.

☑ **Lack of performance visibility**
Many brands don't track their loyalty program's real impact, making it hard to optimize and improve.

Marketing gamification helps thousands of professionals like you overcome these obstacles and create highly engaging loyalty programs. More importantly, it shifts loyalty from being purely transactional to deeply emotional. When used strategically, gamification creates meaningful brand connections where customers stay not just for discounts, but because they truly enjoy the experience.

Building customer loyalty is no longer just about offering freebies and rewards; it's about creating engaging experiences and sustained interactions that keep customers coming back. In the next sections, we'll explore how gamification can help you create such experiences and boost engagement over time.

2. How marketing gamification can supercharge loyalty programs

Why gamification?

The psychology behind gamification. Play is one of the most natural human instincts. Across cultures and generations, play has been essential to how we connect, learn and grow. That's why gamification is so powerful in marketing: it taps into this innate drive, making interactions with brands more engaging and rewarding for customers.

Play triggers the release of the "feel-good" hormones that make people happy. The effects of these feel-good hormones are defined as:

- **Dopamine:** Striving to achieve
- **Oxytocin:** Helping us feel empathy and bonded to others
- **Serotonin:** Helping us feel that we are in a good mood
- **Endorphins:** Dictating our fight or flight response; in a game, endorphins help us persevere to win

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The release of these hormones creates a profound sense of happiness. They also leave a lasting impression, and make people more likely to remember the experiences they just had. Therefore, marketing gamification has the potential to turn transactional loyalty into emotional loyalty.

Game mechanics. The 5 game mechanics are the building blocks for how players interact with a game. Can you guess what they are?

Did you know?

More than 50% of people, according to Playable's YouGov research, say that winning a voucher meant more to them than a voucher given to everyone. That's why earning their own vouchers or discounts in a game keeps them more satisfied.

Rewards

Rewards can be monetary or not (discount codes, free shipping), be of high value, low value, intrinsic, or extrinsic. A prize can be a real item or within the game, and it can even be feedback or new knowledge.

Fun

Having fun makes the experience memorable and powerful, and it ties back to the release of the feel-good hormones we discussed above (in this case, the release of dopamine, which gives you feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, and motivation).

Compete

Competing with others or with ourselves, whether in sports, in board games, at work, is a part of our nature. The more challenging the experience, the more rewarding winning feels.

Challenge

A well-designed challenge makes the entire experience more engaging and interesting. For example, knowledge games challenge participants with their intellectual abilities or the trivia facts they know, while skill games challenge participants with their digital abilities, speed, and accuracy.

Mirroring

As a game mechanic, mirroring goes beyond simply showing players their scores. It allows them to see how they compare to others in a quiz, a poll, a leaderboard or a personality test, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

Marketing gamification's role in building loyalty. Now that you are familiar with the psychology behind gamification, it's time to dive deeper into its role in building loyalty. Marketing gamification takes loyalty beyond collecting points, getting badges, and progressing through tiers. It is a strategic tool for creating meaningful interactions that inspire long-term engagement. Gamification helps brands move customers through the entire **loyalty funnel**, from **awareness** to **repeat advocacy**.

Loyalty is the highest level of customer engagement. Customers can become regular and support your brand through repeat purchases or recommendations to others.

Here is how gamification boosts customer loyalty:

✅ **Increases engagement time**

Games keep customers actively engaged with your brand for longer periods. In fact, more than 33% of consumers are highly interested in gamification as a feature in loyalty programs, while 43% are somewhat interested. Incorporating gamified elements meets this demand and enhances customer interaction.

✅ **Drives transactional value**

Earning rewards, unlocking badges, or learning new things activates the brain's reward system, reinforcing continued engagement. Did you know that more than 50% of consumers are very likely to stay loyal to a brand if its loyalty program provides valuable, relevant rewards? Gamification helps you tap into this desire for value and prizes.

✅ **Rewards customers for their engagement.**

Rewarding customers with prizes like discount codes or free shipping encourages repeat engagement. However, keep in mind that more than 50% of people, according to Playable's YouGov research, say that winning a voucher meant more to them than a voucher given to everyone. That's why earning their own vouchers or discounts in a game keeps them more satisfied.

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Provides valuable customer insights

When used strategically, gamification helps you collect behavioral data, allowing you to personalize offers and rewards to match customer preferences, thus boosting customer satisfaction. In fact, 43.17% of respondents in the Comarch loyalty predictions research are open to sharing data in exchange for rewards, highlighting a willingness to exchange personal data for benefits. Therefore, a gamification marketing campaign with rewards is perfect for collecting customer data.

Helps create tailored offers

Personalization is key to long-term loyalty, with 65% of global consumers preferring individual offers, recommendations, and discounts from companies and loyalty programs. More than half of shoppers say they are likely to stay engaged longer when receiving personalized rewards. Gamification allows you to deliver these targeted experiences effectively.

Turns customers into brand advocates

Exclusive gamified campaigns for loyalty members drive deeper engagement and encourage satisfied customers to share their experiences.

In the long run, **gamification transforms passive customers into active participants**, strengthening their emotional bond with your brand and turning them into loyal, repeat buyers.

Creates emotional connections

Enjoyable, rewarding experiences trigger positive associations, making your brand more memorable. When customers feel a strong emotional connection to your brand, they become more loyal. Of course, their reasons to stick to your products might be related to your mission, ethics, quality, etc. For instance, those who strive for a more sustainable lifestyle would support eco-friendly products and manufacturers. However, gamification can help you expand on that by educating your customers or creating games that match their lifestyles, preferences, and interests.

Remember: Customers who emotionally connect with a brand are less likely to switch to competitors.

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Using marketing gamification in loyalty programs

Leading brands recognize that gamification shouldn't be a short-term reaction but a powerful strategic tool for fostering long-term customer loyalty. When embedded into a well-designed loyalty program, marketing gamification drives sustained engagement, strengthens emotional connections, and enhances retention. We asked our gamification experts at Playable; here are their suggestions on how to use marketing gamification to build a more effective and enduring loyalty strategy:

1. Design for engagement

Understand customer behaviours and motivations

Before implementing gamification, you need to analyze your customer base and understand customer behaviours and motivations:

- What motivates them to engage?
- How often do they interact with your brand?
- Are they highly engaged and looking for frequent interactions, or do they require more nudges to stay active?

For example:

- In consumer-driven industries (e.g., retail, e-commerce, hospitality), customers may respond best to daily engagement mechanics, such as daily challenges, spin-to-win games, or progress-based rewards that encourage repeat visits. For instance, you can offer daily games in your loyalty app to encourage people to return and engage with your brand more often.

- In low-engagement industries (e.g., insurance, financial services, B2B sectors), the focus should be on fewer but highly valuable interactions that educate about products or services, build trust, and create a long-term connection.
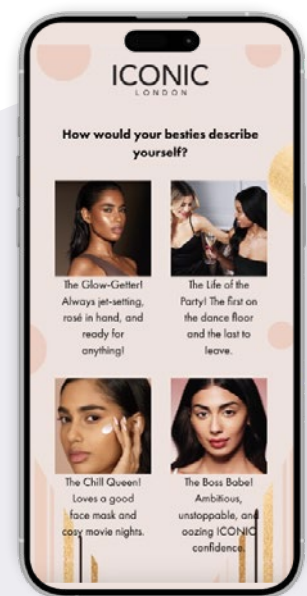
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Use your CRM data to analyse previous interactions and customers preferences. This will enable you to tailor the experience accordingly.

Define clear goals

Your gamification strategy should align with your business objectives. Each campaign must have a goal that ties into the overall strategy. In the context of loyalty, common goals include:

- ☑ **Drive repeat engagement**
- ☑ **Increase customer retention**
- ☑ **Boost brand advocacy and referrals**
- ☑ **Educate customers**
- ☑ **Encourage specific actions**
- ☑ **Collect valuable customer data**
- ☑ **Increase spend**
- ☑ **Increase purchase frequency**
- ☑ **Create personalized customer experiences**
- ☑ **Forster a sense of community and belonging**

Choose the right game mechanics

Once you have a clear understanding of your audience and goals, selecting the right game mechanics is crucial to driving long-term engagement and loyalty. Let's see how you can adapt the game mechanics (which we already explored above) into your loyalty programs:

Rewards

Instant gratification is a powerful motivator. Games like spin-the-wheel, scratch cards, and mystery boxes create excitement and encourage repeat participation by offering discounts, loyalty points, or exclusive perks.

Fun

Games should be enjoyable and immersive. Quizzes, personality tests and swipe games, for instance, make the experience entertaining while subtly reinforcing your brand values. When customers associate your brand with enjoyment, they're more likely to return.

Compete

Some customers are driven by status and social recognition. Leaderboards, score-based challenges, and time-limited competitions tap into their competitive spirit, encouraging them to engage repeatedly to climb the ranks and win rewards.

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Challenge

Encouraging customers to test their skills or knowledge builds deeper engagement. Skill games like memory games, spot-the-difference, and puzzles make customers work toward a goal, creating a sense of achievement when they succeed.

Mirroring

People are more likely to engage with experiences that make them feel a sense of community and belonging. Features like leaderboards and referral-based rewards tap into the desire to be part of something bigger, reinforcing emotional loyalty and long-term engagement.

Pro tip: Determine which game mechanics most align to your customer experience and keep members fully engaged.

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2. Implementation & integration

Planning and executing a gamification strategy requires careful integration into your loyalty program or app.

Plan your campaign strategy

- Always-on vs. campaign based: Some campaigns can be always-on (ongoing) to encourage continuous and long-term engagement, while others can be seasonal or event-driven (product launches, company anniversaries, or conferences and fair, etc).

- Multi-touchpoint integration: Gamification can be embedded into loyalty apps, websites, emails, and even in-store experiences to create a seamless customer journey.

> **Pro tip:** Consider the technical implementation so that the gamified campaigns are intuitive, mobile-friendly, and rewarding without unnecessary friction.

How to drive interest once launched?

Even the best gamified experiences won't succeed without strong promotion. You can raise awareness through different channels, such as:

- **Social media**
- **Email marketing**
- **Paid advertising**
- **Influencers**
- **Events**
- **QR codes** (in-store, product packaging, purchase receipts, flyers, etc)
- **In-app**
- **Website**
- **Pop-ups**

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3. Measurement & optimization

Since each gamification campaign is a part of your overall strategy, you need to measure the individual KPIs for each campaign. Were your goals to drive repeat engagement, boost participation rate, increase app usage, or increase lifetime value? Measuring the impact of every campaign will help you optimize your efforts.

When it comes to your strategy, you need to look at the bigger picture. To get a real understanding of your customer loyalty levels, it's not enough to only look at your loyal customer rate (LCR) or crude customer retention rate (CRR). Measuring brand loyalty involves both **quantitative** and **qualitative** methods to understand how strongly customers prefer and continue to engage with a brand over time.

Quantitative Metrics

✅ **Repeat Purchase Rate (RPR)**

Indicates how many customers are coming back to buy again, showing consistency in consumer preference. High RPR reflects strong brand stickiness.

✅ **Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)**

Helps businesses understand the total worth of a customer over time. Loyal customers tend to spend more, making them more profitable in the long run.

✅ **Net Promoter Score (NPS)**

Measures how likely customers are to recommend your brand. A high NPS indicates strong emotional loyalty and potential for organic growth through word-of-mouth.

✅ **Customer Retention Rate**

Shows how well a brand keeps its existing customers. Retaining customers is more cost-effective than acquiring new ones, and high retention often signals loyalty.

✅ **Loyalty/Rewards Program Engagement**

Tracks participation and activity in brand loyalty programs. High engagement signals that your loyalty program is working and has the wanted impact.

✅ **Purchase Frequency**

Reflects how often customers make purchases. Frequent purchases suggest ongoing relevance and strong brand connection.

Qualitative Methods

✅ **Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

Provide insights into how satisfied customers are with their experience, which correlates with their likelihood of staying loyal.

✅ **Brand Sentiment Analysis**

Helps gauge customer feelings toward your brand across online platforms. Positive sentiment can indicate trust and loyalty.

✅ **Customer Interviews or Focus Groups**

Offer in-depth feedback on why customers remain loyal or switch brands, helping you improve or reinforce key loyalty drivers.

✅ **Social Media Monitoring**

Observing mentions and user-generated content can reveal passionate advocates or detractors—both valuable for understanding loyalty dynamics.

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Customer loyalty best practices

☑ **Define your goals**

Brands that set clear objectives for their loyalty programs see better engagement and ROI.

☑ **Understand your customers**

Successful brands use gamification to learn about their audience.

☑ **Create an emotional connection**

Customers stay loyal to brands that make them feel valued beyond transactions.

☑ **Reward loyalty**

Companies that actively reward repeat customers see higher lifetime value and retention rates.

☑ **Offer a variety of rewards**

Not all customers are motivated by the same rewards. Providing a mix of discounts, experiences, and exclusive perks keeps engagement high.

☑ **Personalize customer experience**

Brands that personalize rewards see a higher success rate in their loyalty programs.

☑ **Promote your loyalty program**

Even the best-designed program won't drive results without proper promotion.

☑ **Ask customers for feedback**

Top-performing loyalty programs continuously evolve based on real customer insights. Brands that gather feedback through surveys, engagement tracking, and direct interactions refine their programs to keep customers interested.
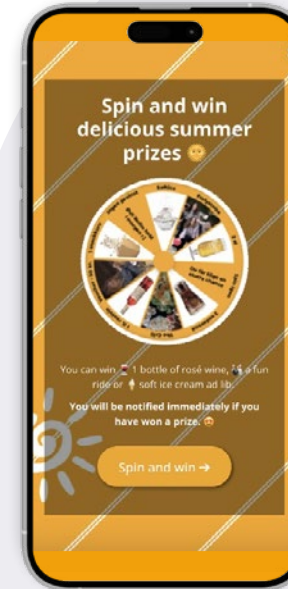
Successful brands take gamification beyond just about adding fun elements to their promotion.

They consider it a strategic long-term tool that enhances customer relationships and drives loyalty. By carefully designing for engagement, implementing effectively, and continuously optimizing based on data, you can build a gamified loyalty program that keeps customers coming back, spending more, and becoming true brand advocates.

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How to use integrated gamification campaigns to build loyalty?

Not all games are equally effective at driving repeat engagement and customer loyalty. Some game types, due to their highly rewarding and interactive nature, consistently encourage return visits, deeper brand interaction, and emotional connections. Let's explore them in more detail:

Luck games with rewards

These games, such as wheel of fortune, tapping games, drop games, memory games, and scratch cards, are highly engaging because they offer instant gratification. Customers have a high chance of winning, which encourages repeat participation, increases website or loyalty app visits and drives store visits to redeem rewards.

Pro tip: Some companies send birthday emails featuring a luck-based game. This strengthens the emotional connection to their brands.

More advanced skill or knowledge games

More advanced games that require effort, knowledge, or skill tend to have lower chances of winning but offer bigger rewards, creating a sense of achievement. These include word riddles, video quizzes, guess the image or guess the word (for knowledge games) and puzzles, memory games, and spot the difference (for skill games).

Pro tip: Create a brand-related knowledge game that asks questions about your industry, values, or mission. This educates customers, aligns them with your brand identity, and fosters deeper brand affinity.

Advent calendars

Calendars keep users engaged daily by encouraging them to return and participate over an extended period (most commonly, 12 or 24 days). This creates a habit of engagement, strengthening brand recall.

Personality tests, quizzes, and swipe it games

These game types help you gather customer data and, hus, personalize your marketing efforts and create more relevant experiences.

How integrated campaigns work together to help build loyalty

Gamification is most effective when used strategically, rather than as a one-off engagement tool. A single game alone won't build loyalty: but a well-planned gamification strategy can.

By combining multiple gamification touchpoints, you can collect valuable customer insights and strengthen relationships over time. Here's an example of how an integrated approach can work:

40%

Step 1:
Attract & engage

Start with a luck-based game offering an enticing prize (discount codes, giftcards, free products, etc). Require basic information (name, email, etc.) before participation, allowing you to build your customer database.

Step 2:
Learn more about customers

Next, introduce a personality test, quiz, or product selector that asks about preferences, shopping habits, or brand-related topics. This allows you to enrich customer profiles in your CRM system.

Step 3:
Personalize & reward

With customer insights in hand, you can send more tailored communications and personalized offers. Even the rewards customers win in new games can be customized to match their specific interests.

Why does this work?

Almost 40% of customers prefer personalized offers because when they feel understood, they are more likely to stay engaged and loyal.

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3. Overcoming common gamification challenges in loyalty

Here are some of the most common myths about gamification loyalty, or the most common pushbacks our customers have experienced.

Ensuring gamification isn't too much of a gimmick

One of the biggest pushbacks in gamification is making it too much of a gimmick or disconnected from the customer experience. If a game feels forced, irrelevant, or purely promotional, customers may lose trust and engagement rather than gain loyalty. To ensure gamification adds real value, it should be relevant to the customer journey and aligned with your brand's identity.

The most successful gamification campaigns we've seen are meaningful, rewarding, and most importantly, seamlessly integrated into the buyer journey. They were not just a flashy add-on, but rather a well-crafted game that was either solving customer pain points, creating engagement, or making brand associations more positive while being relevant. For example, a personality test can help customers find the right product for their needs and a calendar can increase repeated engagement.

Sustaining engagement over time

A common mistake in gamified loyalty programs is relying on a single campaign and expecting long-term impact. While an initial game might attract high participation, engagement will naturally decline if customers aren't given fresh reasons to return. The key to sustaining engagement isn't just personalization; it's variety, consistency, and continuous innovation.

Gamification works best when it becomes an integral element of your loyalty strategy. Instead of a one-time activation, consider running a mix of different game formats throughout the year, such as seasonal competitions, daily challenges, calendars, or quizzes that educate and entertain. This ensures customers always have something new to look forward to.

Another essential factor is progression and rewards. People love to see their efforts pay off, so incorporating mechanics like streaks, tiered rewards, and milestone achievements encourages them to stay engaged over time.

or example, giving customers bonus points for returning weekly or unlocking exclusive perks after repeated participation keeps them motivated to continue.

Finally, strategic communication plays a crucial role. If customers don't know about your gamification initiatives, they won't participate. Using email, SMS, app notifications, and social media to remind, re-engage, and celebrate milestones can keep excitement levels high and prevent drop-off.

By continuously evolving your gamification strategy, offering fresh incentives, and keeping interactions dynamic, you can transform one-time players into long-term loyal customers.

Measuring ROI

Gamification isn't a black box when it comes to data. In fact, it's one of the most measurable marketing strategies available. The key to proving ROI lies in tracking the right metrics, analyzing customer behaviors, and connecting gamification performance to your broader loyalty objectives.

Live reporting dashboards can track everything, including:

☑ **Game start rates**

See how many users engage with your campaigns.

☑ **Registration & conversion rates**

Measure how many participants sign up for your loyalty program, subscribe to your newsletter, or complete a desired action.

☑ **Repeat engagement**

Track whether customers return to play multiple times, an indicator of sustained interest and loyalty.

☑ **Time spent on campaign**

A longer engagement time often translates to a deeper brand connection.

To maximize impact, tie gamification performance to your overall loyalty objectives.
For example:

- If your goal is to increase loyalty program sign-ups, track registration rates and the percentage of game participants who enroll.

- If you want to drive repeat purchases, monitor redemption rates and whether users return after receiving a reward.

- If brand engagement is the priority, focus on game participation rates and time spent interacting with your content.

By consistently tracking, analyzing, and refining your approach, you ensure long-term success.

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Not understanding customer needs

One of the biggest challenges in loyalty marketing is the inability to collect meaningful customer data. Without it, understanding your audience and their preferences becomes nearly impossible. However, gamification provides a powerful solution. Since participation is voluntary and offers something valuable in return (whether rewards or an engaging experience) customers are more willing to share their information, such as names and email addresses.

Our platform data at Playable reveals a clear trend: adding multiple fields can reduce registrations. For example, when a game requires four fields, the registration rate drops to 72%. The takeaway? Only ask for the data that truly helps you understand and engage with your customers.

That said, customers are more likely to share personal details when they see direct value in doing so. If you're asking for a birthday to offer special birthday rewards, or if the incentive is particularly desirable, such as a free product, a high-value gift card, or an exclusive discount, customers are far more willing to opt in.

Gamification also enables the collection of valuable zero-party data in a non-intrusive way. Personality tests or quizzes allow customers to willingly share their likes, dislikes, and interests all without feeling like they're handing over personal information. This insight enables brands to personalize offers, enhance customer experiences, and, ultimately, build long-term loyalty.

How the number of field impacts the registration rate

On average, every field added leads to a loss of 6.5% in registration rate.

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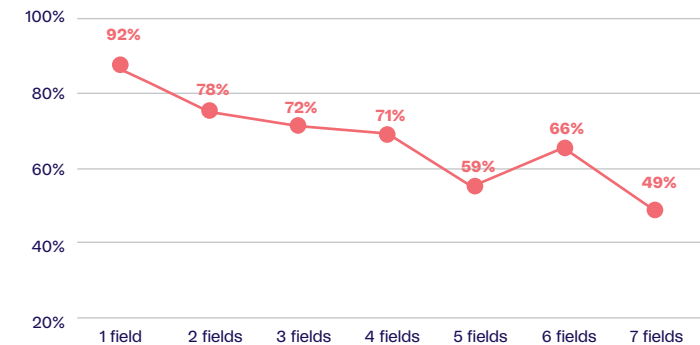
4. Real-world examples for inspiration

Let's dive into some examples of companies that included gamification into their marketing strategy and increased loyalty.

Disclaimer: The campaign examples presented here highlight the success of various brands using gamification. However, it's important to note that these companies did not treat gamification as a one-time tactic. Rather, these campaigns are part of ongoing, well-developed gamification strategies. These examples are intended to inspire, not to suggest a one-off approach.

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How did Spar Hungary get more than 7500 clicks to their MYSPAR app?

SPAR Hungary, a leading grocery retailer, has been using gamification for years to engage customers and build long-term loyalty. One of their key objectives with each campaign? Driving downloads of their MYSPAR app, a crucial tool for customer retention and personalized offers.

SPAR didn't just run one-off games; they created a gamification strategy that seamlessly integrated with their marketing efforts. Every new game was promoted through multiple channels, such as social media, in-store flyers, and more, maximizing visibility and engagement.

Here's the winning formula:

- Customers played engaging branded games (like scratchcards, drop games, or wheels of fortune) for a chance to win rewards.

- A clear CTA at the end of each game encouraged players to download the MYSPAR app to claim rewards, participate in more challenges, or access exclusive offers.

- SPAR also collected marketing permissions by adding an email opt-in field during registration, allowing them to build an audience for future promotions.

The results?

One of their campaigns, a winter-themed drop game, got more than 80,000 sessions with 25,000 registrations and more than 7500 clicks to the MYSPAR app.

Key Takeaways:

☑ Set clear loyalty goals for your gamification campaigns: whether it's app downloads, newsletter sign-ups, or repeat purchases.

☑ Add clear CTAs to guide players toward desired actions and deeper engagement with your brand.

☑ Think beyond a single game. Integrated gamification campaigns create ongoing excitement, keeping customers engaged over time.

Pattanj snowboardra az S-budget-vel!

Az S-budget pénztárca nem győzi kivárni a telet, és máris deszkára pattant!
Játssz velünk és nyerd meg a 10 db 10.000 Ft-os SPAR Nyereménykártya egyikét!

Gyűjtsd a forintokat és kapd el az S-budget termékeket, viszont a pályán szembejövő fenyőfákat kerüld el!

Játszom

Success at an unprecedented level with gamification for Virgin Red

Virgin Red, the Virgin Group's rewards club, turned to gamification to help customers do more of what they love while boosting daily engagement and growing their membership base.

Virgin Red introduced a different game every weekday, creating an ongoing reason for members to return and interact with the app. This approach successfully increased daily app engagement, a key KPI for the marketing team.

Let's take a closer look at one of their campaigns: a competition offering players the chance to win a spot on a Virgin Voyages cruise. To enter, users had to sign up as Virgin Red members and complete a registration form on the competition page.

The results?

- More than 130,000 competition entries;
- 3,500 new Virgin Red members
- Participation from eight companies within the Virgin family.

Key Takeaways:

☑ Create a habit-forming experience - daily games keep customers engaged continuously

☑ Combine your gamification campaign to membership growth, using signups as an entry requirement

☑ Brand partnerships help you amplify reach and engagement
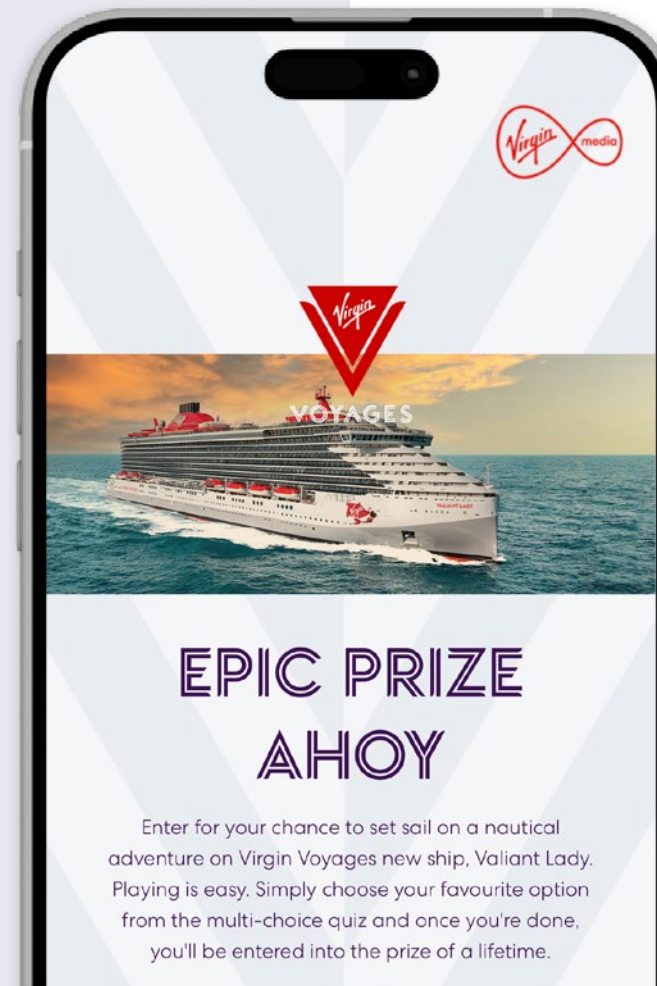
Read more about this case in a case story about Virgin Red.

EPIC PRIZE AHOY

Enter for your chance to set sail on a nautical adventure on Virgin Voyages new ship, Valiant Lady. Playing is easy. Simply choose your favourite option from the multi-choice quiz and once you're done, you'll be entered into the prize of a lifetime.

playable

How did XLL increase their loyalty program signups with gamification?

XLL, a Norwegian sporting goods retailer, has been successfully leveraging gamification to expand its XXL Reward loyalty program. Instead of just asking customers to sign up, they made the process fun, rewarding, and engaging, turning membership growth into an exciting experience.

How did it work? XXL designed gamification campaigns, including quizzes, calendars, and drop games, where participation was gated by XXL Reward membership. This ensured that every player engaging with the game also became part of their loyalty program.

One standout campaign was a drop game with a lead form and attractive prizes. Here is what XXL did:

- To play and win, customers first had to sign up for XXL Reward.

- The prizes were a powerful incentive: the main prize was a Mammut shell jacket and mid-layer jacket, while the top three players earned 5,000 bonus loyalty points each.

- The campaign provided players with a dual benefit: excitement from the game plus tagine rewards.

Key Takeaways:

- ☑ Make joining your loyalty program a prerequisite for gamification participation to guarantee membership growth.

- ☑ Use valuable prizes and loyalty points as incentives to drive signups and ongoing engagement.

- ☑ Think beyond one-time promotions and integrate gamification as a recurring strategy to sustain long-term customer loyalty.

playable
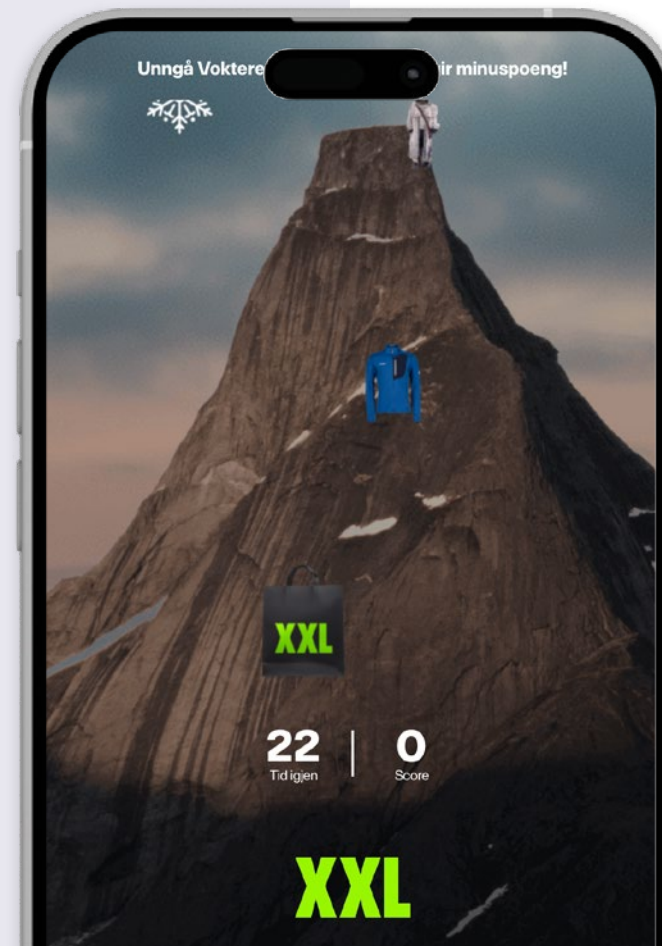
XXL

How did Comwell use gamification to grow loyalty club membership?

Comwell Hotels, a Danish-owned hotel chain, has successfully leveraged gamification in the hospitality sector to build long-term guest loyalty. Their creative approach keeps customers engaged and encourages repeat visits.

Comwell has been creating various gamification campaigns, including surveys, quizzes, skill-based games, and calendars. One of their most effective tactics? Using gamified calendars to grow their Comwell Club membership.

These calendars feature highly desirable prizes, such as exclusive stays at Comwell hotels across Denmark. To participate, customers must sign up for the Comwell Club and agree to receive marketing communications. This strategy not only expands Comwell's email list but also fosters long-term loyalty by keeping members engaged with valuable offers and experiences.

Key Takeaways:

☑ Make sign-ups part of the game - requiring registration helps grow your loyalty program.

☑ Calendars can help you increase engagement time and thus, emotional connection

Bag lågen gemmer sig denne uges hyggelige adventsspil.
Skrab lågen fri og vent et øjeblik...

3.
SØNDAG I ADVENT

playable

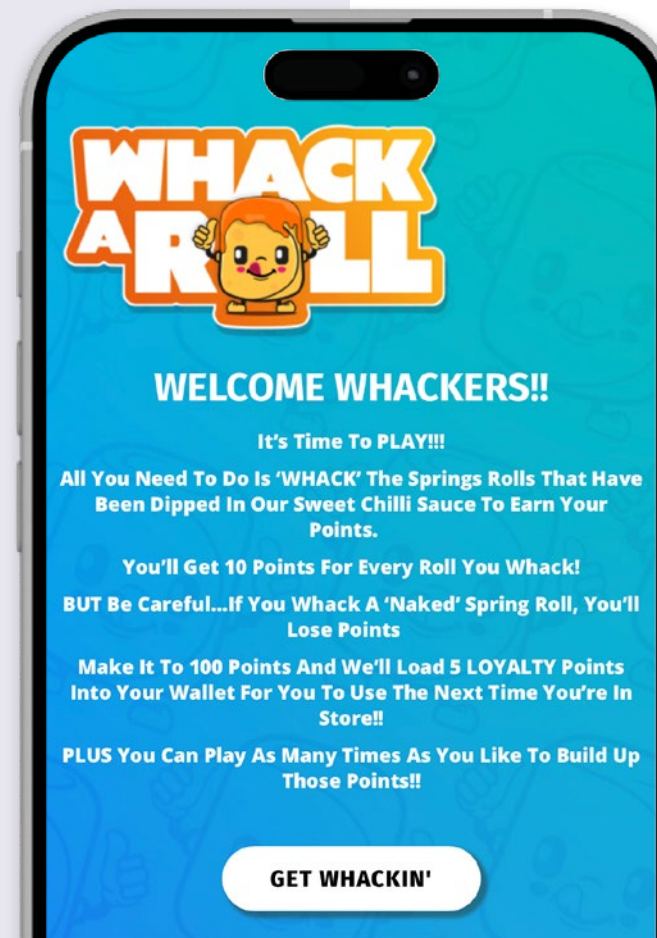# How Chopstix used gamification to drive repeat visits and loyalty

Chopstix, a Pan-Asian quick-service food chain, has mastered the art of blending storytelling with gamification to engage customers and drive loyalty. Their approach doesn't just entertain; it keeps customers coming back for more.

In one of their games, players had to collect 100 points to earn 5 loyalty points in their digital wallets. These loyalty points could then be redeemed in-store, encouraging repeat visits. PLUS, what is more, customers could play as many times as they like during the campaign period to build up those points! This created an ongoing loop of engagement.

Why did it work? This campaign kept customers entertained and gave them a reason to return - both to the game and their restaurants.

Key Takeaways:

☑ Provide tangible benefits that tie back into your business goals - in this case, building loyalty through repeat engagement.

☑ Allow repeated participation because the more customers engage, the stronger the habit.

☑ Make loyalty exciting - using gamification to directly reward customers for their success.

WHACK A ROLL

WELCOME WHACKERS!!

It's Time To PLAY!!!

All You Need To Do Is 'WHACK' The Springs Rolls That Have Been Dipped In Our Sweet Chilli Sauce To Earn Your Points.

You'll Get 10 Points For Every Roll You Whack!

BUT Be Careful...If You Whack A 'Naked' Spring Roll, You'll Lose Points

Make It To 100 Points And We'll Load 5 LOYALTY Points Into Your Wallet For You To Use The Next Time You're In Store!!

PLUS You Can Play As Many Times As You Like To Build Up Those Points!!

GET WHACKIN'

playable

How did Saxo boost newsletter subscriptions and premium memberships with gamification?

Saxo, a Danish book online store, showcased how gamification drives success in the eCommerce industry by using a quiz to engage customers and grow their loyalty program.

The campaign featured a quiz with an enticing grand prize - a Circus Christmas experience worth DKK 800. To participate, users had to complete the quiz and fill out a lead form, which also served as a newsletter signup. As an additional incentive, every participant received a special offer: a one-month Saxo Premium membership for just DKK 1. This strategy not only encouraged immediate signups but also introduced more customers to the benefits of Saxo's loyalty program, increasing long-term engagement.

Key Takeaways:

☑ Use gamification to incentivize newsletter signups

☑ Offer exclusive rewards to encourage trial memberships and long-term loyalty

Hvis du ser en dreng med kappe, en spids hat på hovedet og en tryllestav i hånden, så er det nok Buster – den gladeste tryllekunstner i Brønshøj! Hvad er Busters fulde navn?

Buster Texas Mortensen

Buster Hawaii Mortensen

Buster Oregon Mortensen

Find svaret her

Svar

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How did Ekstra Bladet build a strong gamification loyalty strategy?

Ekstra Bladet, the Danish news publisher, took a strategic approach to gamification by planning well in advance. Partnering with the airline DAT during the Christmas holidays, they launched a calendar on their homepage. Players could enter daily for a chance to win plane tickets home, boosting repeat engagement throughout the campaign period. To participate, users signed up for daily emails, allowing DAT to build a valuable database of potential customers while fostering brand awareness in an engaging way.

What made this campaign so effective? Ekstra Bladet didn't treat gamification as a short-term tactic but as a core part of their loyalty-building strategy. By capturing marketing permissions and increasing time spent with their brand, they created a strong foundation for future engagement. These interactions, combined with ongoing campaigns, help turn participants into long-term customers.

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5. The future of marketing gamification in loyalty

Now, let's have a quick look at the future of marketing gamification in customer loyalty. Traditional, transactional models where customers simply earn points and progress through tiers for purchases are no longer enough. People have hundreds of inactive apps on their phones, so yours really needs to stand out. Instead, the future of loyalty is shaped by gamification, emotional connection, and personalized engagement.

Trends shaping loyalty marketing

The days of simply building an app and calling it a loyalty program are over. With so many loyalty apps and programs available, brands need to rethink how they engage customers and create lasting connections.

We asked our gamification experts for their top tips on redefining loyalty engagement. Here's what they suggest:

☑ **Make loyalty fun**

Instead of just earning points, customers should enjoy interactive challenges, rewards, and competitions that make them excited to participate.

☑ **Create a habit loop**

Daily engagement mechanics, like advent calendars and streak-based rewards, encourage customers to return regularly.

☑ **Encourage exploration & interaction**

Reward customers for active engagement like learning about the brand, engaging on social media, and sharing their experiences, not just making purchases.

☑ **Use data for personalization**

Use gamification mechanics like personality tests, preference quizzes, and behavioral tracking to tailor offers and rewards.

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Why gamification is essential in loyalty

Gamification is no longer just a marketing gimmick - it's a strategic necessity. With increased competition and declining attention spans, brands need to create interactive, rewarding experiences that keep customers coming back. Gamified loyalty programs boost participation, create memorable interactions, and build emotional loyalty, leading to higher customer retention and lifetime value.

Brands like Virgin Red, Spar Hungary, and XXL have already proven that gamification isn't just a short-term tactic; it's a long-term strategic tool for boosting loyalty. Whether through daily games, interactive quizzes, or competitions, gamification keeps customers actively engaged with the brand.

Why brands should rethink engagement in loyalty

☑ **Emotional loyalty**

According to Comarch, emotional loyalty and gamification are two of the biggest trends in loyalty today. With 80% of customers wanting a stronger emotional connection with brands, companies must create experiences that foster trust, excitement, and belonging - not just discounts.

☑ **Gamification**

Snipp Interactive found that incorporating gamification can lead to a 22% increase in brand loyalty, showing its effectiveness in keeping customers engaged.

☑ **Personalization**

Customers expect more tailored experiences, with 71% expecting brands to deliver personalized interactions.

☑ **Engagement over transactions**

Many brands are shifting from purely transactional loyalty to engagement-based programs, where customers earn rewards for interacting with the brand - whether through playing games, taking quizzes, or providing feedback.

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6. Getting started with Playable

About Playable

The marketing gamification platform

At Playable, we believe loyalty isn't just about transactions - it's about creating meaningful, lasting relationships with your customers. Our gamification platform empowers brands to build deeper engagement, drive repeat interactions, and foster emotional loyalty through playable experiences.

With our flexible SaaS platform, marketers can design and launch gamified loyalty campaigns that captivate customers at every touchpoint. Whether it's driving app engagement, increasing loyalty program sign-ups, or personalizing rewards, Playable helps brands turn gamification into a strategic advantage.

Today, over 650 global brands trust Playable to power their loyalty marketing, with 15 games played every second on our platform. Founded in 2017 in Denmark, our expert teams in Aarhus, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Helsinki and London are dedicated to helping brands rethink engagement through gamification.

Want to see how gamification can transform your loyalty strategy? Book a live demo with our experts and discover the possibilities.

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Get in touch

hello@playable.com

playable.com

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