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Are You Missing a Valuable Way to Gain More Customer Loyalty?



“Consumers value the post-purchase experience twice as much as the pre-purchase experience when forming an impression of a brand”*

And in today's digitally connected world customer experience can make or break a brand. It is little wonder then that companies of all sizes and structures are investing in CRM programs to capture and act on their customers' real life experiences with the products and services that they buy.

Deeper customer engagement and increased customer loyalty are the name of the game, but many businesses are overlooking an ongoing opportunity to interact with consumers long after the initial purchase fades from memory.

How can this be?

Mention the words “user error”, “technical fault” or “breakdown” at the launch of the latest consumer electronics product and many marketers will visibly break out into a cold sweat.

Ask the question about how customers' experience of the product in use will be understood and positively influenced and you might hear about focus groups and customer surveys. Or you may be referred to back office teams such as the technical department or the service function.



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More enlightened companies not only bring product support “front of house”, they also make it the central pillar of their drive to help customers to get the most out of their products over the entire product life cycle and to systematically collect information from them to feed into product and service enhancements as well as next generation products.

Actively promoting after sales support as a value added part of the product itself is a smart strategy that reaps long term rewards such as:

1. Making service a known strength of the brand, reinforcing its reputation for quality and reliability
2. Creating a positive and lasting impression on the customer by providing instant access and assistance in the event of any product issue
3. Influencing brand advocacy by responding to customer complaints urgently and effectively, especially those posted on social media

All of the above enhances lifetime customer value and drives repeat customer purchases.

Let's not forget that customers are looking for more from the brands that they buy and share their experiences online and by word of mouth.

Some consumers love product support packages as a way of buying into a closer, ongoing relationship with the manufacturer behind the brands that they choose.

Which is precisely why companies such as [Apple](#) and [Dell](#) are packaging and promoting their service offerings alongside their outstanding products and boosting their bottom line as they grow their customer loyalty.

* Source: [Smarter Commerce Consumer Advocacy Study by IBM](#)