

Social media: The channel to build and maintain customer brand loyalty

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A strong social media presence provides companies with so many different ways to build and maintain brand loyalty with customers.



Source: © Camilo Jimene [Unsplash](#) A strong social media presence provides companies with so many different ways to build and maintain brand loyalty with customers

At the end of January this year, there were 28 million social media users in South Africa, plus the past 12 months have seen social media become an integral part of people's lives, which has impacted significantly on how consumers perceive and interact with brands.*

Create a personal connection with consumers

One way in which social media influences brand loyalty is through the ability to create a personal connection with consumers.

Social media allows brands to engage directly with their audience and provide a platform for two-way communication. This interaction helps to create a sense of community and belonging for consumers, leading to increased brand loyalty.

Highlight products and services

Social media also allows brands to highlight their products and services in increasingly dynamic and interactive ways.

Video content, live streams, and other multimedia are just some of the ways in which brands can display the benefits and features of their products. Social media platforms enable this content to be more engaging and compelling to consumers.

In turn, this can result in increased brand awareness and interest in the company's products and services, thereby enhancing customer loyalty.



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Influencer marketing

Another way in which social media influences brand loyalty is through the use of influencer marketing.

Influencer marketing involves partnering with popular social media users who have a large following and are seen as trusted sources of information and recommendations.

By collaborating with these influencers, brands can tap into their audience and reach a wider group of potential customers. This can be particularly effective in building brand loyalty as the endorsement of a trusted influencer can carry a lot of weight with consumers.

Of course, the risk is that brands can often be 'guilty by association' when influencers say or do controversial things. One of the most recent examples of this is when Adidas had to terminate its contract with Ye following the entertainer's comments on social media.



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Targeted advertising

Social media also provides the means to use targeted advertising. These platforms offer a wealth of data on their users, allowing brands to target their ads to specific demographics or interests.

This targeted approach can be more effective in generating interest and loyalty as it ensures that the ads are being shown to individuals who are most likely to be interested in the brand.

Furthermore, it shows a level of personalisation that customers have come to expect of brands to create differentiation in the value proposition.

There is no getting around the impact that social media has had on brand loyalty. Through the ability to create a personal connection with consumers, highlight products and services in an interactive way, collaborate with influencers, and use targeted advertising, brands can more effectively build and maintain loyalty. Those businesses who are not yet active on social media will find it increasingly difficult to stay competitive and relevant.

*Findings from independent customer relationship management company, LoyaltyPlus.

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