

Send the right message to the right customer at the right time

A comprehensive loyalty marketing program can help you turn customers into regulars with software that lets you tailor offers and messages for maximum appeal.

By David Hillar, Senior Marketing Manager, Vicinity

In the foodservice and hospitality business, trends come and go along with customers, who may or may not patronize your restaurant again after the first time.

In fact, research from the Vicinity network merchant data shows that on average, 50 to 60 percent of new customers don't come back. This is a business reality—whether you're a single location or a large chain. At least half of your revenue comes from repeat customers, which is why your marketing needs to focus on customer loyalty.

Savvy restaurant owners are discovering the value of cloud-based customer intelligence and loyalty marketing tools like Vicinity. These platforms give you the benefits of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) data storage, sophisticated analytics functionality and loyalty program management—without having to buy expensive hardware and software. You get cutting-edge marketing technology you can access online for an affordable price. No need to install complicated software or configure a database.

Here are four ways a loyalty marketing platform can help you create new opportunities:



BY BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CUSTOMERS

As a restaurant or bar regular, nothing feels better than having your loyalty recognized with a free drink, appetizer or dessert from the manager. An effective loyalty program rewards customers with offers they truly appreciate. It helps you to keep your top customers coming back and spending more per visit. Even better, it can help you transform those already-loyal customers into brand ambassadors who attract other customers to your business.

BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Loyalty program mechanics are set up to gather detailed customer information and store it in an accessible database. Knowing the demographics, lifestyle, and product preferences of your customers helps you engage them with appealing offers and rewards. So where a promotion aimed at millennial-generation customers might focus on fresh, fast organic food specials, another aimed at retired boomers might offer smaller-portion specials or emphasize healthy menu items. Statistics Canada has forecasted that by 2031, almost one-third of Canadians will be visible minorities and half that growth will be from South Asian and Chinese immigrants. Catering to this demographic with Asian-inspired menu specials will help you attract their business.

BY APPEALING DIRECTLY TO SPECIFIC CUSTOMER GROUPS

Vicinity's platform is customizable so you can create unique offers and rewards for different types of customers. Relevant, personalized marketing messages have more sway in today's overcrowded, buzzy marketplace. The more you can segment customers into groups based on their behaviour, the easier it is to send them appealing offers

that they want to redeem. This gets them inside your restaurant, where the potential is high for cross-selling and up-selling. Vicinity's AutoPilot tool lets you set up automatic text or email campaigns to reach out to different customer groups with highly personalized messages that are triggered automatically when certain dates (their birthday; 60 days after their last visit; one week after their first visit; etc.) or purchasing thresholds are reached.

BY ANALYZING YOUR CUSTOMER DATA

Vicinity helps you create your own CRM database full of customer emails, phone numbers, birthdays, and notes about product and service preferences so you can send specific messages to specific customer groups based on demographics and purchasing behaviour. With all this data at your fingertips, you also have access to analytics through the Vicinity Dashboard to view which offers resonate best with which customer groups.

GET MORE MARKETING TIPS FROM VICINITY

Download our free Loyalty Marketing Playbook today at www.vicinitywelcome.ca.

David Hillar is Head of Marketing at Vicinity, a complete, customizable loyalty program for small and medium-sized businesses. Vicinity provides an easy, cost-effective way to recognize, communicate with and reward customers to help drive repeat business. Launched in 2013, Vicinity is a division of Rogers Communications. More than 1,500 Canadian small businesses are part of the Vicinity loyalty program, which has more than 900,000 cardholders across Canada. To learn more, call 1-844-284-2464.

