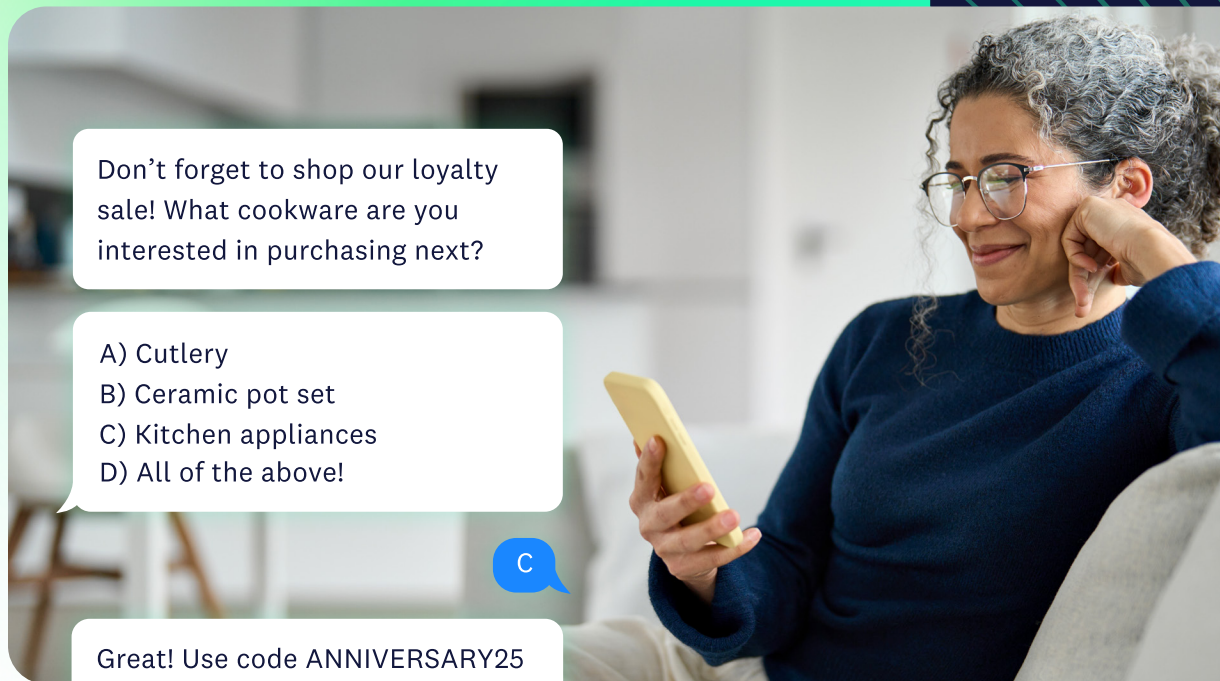




Building customer loyalty in retail and ecommerce

How to navigate the competition, meet evolving expectations, and drive lasting engagement



Don't forget to shop our loyalty sale! What cookware are you interested in purchasing next?

- A) Cutlery
- B) Ceramic pot set
- C) Kitchen appliances
- D) All of the above!

C

Great! Use code ANNIVERSARY25 to take 25% off your next purchase.

Thanks!



Customers today are bombarded with online messages from brands fighting for their attention.

For retailers, the competition is especially fierce – to succeed, retailers must cut through the noise with personalized experiences to not only earn business, but to build brand affinity and trust. Losing customers to competitors is at stake, and when brands fail to stand out in the moments that matter, customers will look elsewhere.

This book will explore how retail brands can build customer loyalty and outline key marketing strategies to improve engagement and compete more effectively.





Focusing on the customer journey

Data is your golden ticket to getting 1:1 with customers

Competing in today's digital, data-first market means retailers need to make their data the foundation of marketing, customer support, channel optimization, and loyalty programs. The right MarTech tools can help you leverage this data effectively to increase revenue growth and retention.

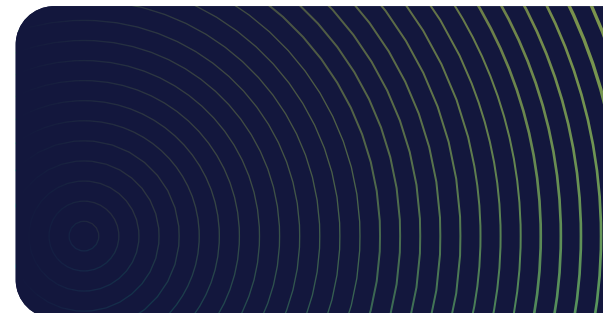
To get the full picture of your customers, your data shouldn't come from just external sources. Utilize first- and zero-party data that customers are willing to share with you so that you can create engaging campaigns.

Zero-party data

Capturing zero-party data along your customers' journey can help keep customers engaged, as this data enables marketers to provide personalized experiences that add value for the customer. Setting up a **preference center** is a customer-friendly way to collect valuable zero-party data, from the essentials like a customer's first name, location, or date of birth, all the way to specifics like what each customer is interested in, when they prefer to be contacted, how often, and on what channel. This eliminates guesswork for marketers, and the data can be easy to obtain, since you can collect zero-party data through interactive content, including surveys and polls.

First-party data

This data collected directly from a brand's own channels, like website, email, SMS, or mobile push, is critical for creating a reliable, compliant, and effective customer engagement strategy. With **first-party data**, marketers gain an understanding of the full customer journey with increased control and flexibility. This can enable them to act in real time and deepen personalization efforts.





First-party data can be used to bring your campaigns to the next level so you can:

- Target and personalize more effectively
- Develop dynamic content and message personalization
- Use behavioral data to target segments of your audience with relevant offers
- See which customers are at risk of dropping out of the journey

Here are five tested and proven **campaigns retailers can run** using first-party data:

- 01. Value-driven loyalty program:** Incentivize customers to share more data in exchange for rewards and use this data to personalize offers to drive engagement and loyalty.
- 02. VIP loyalty campaign:** Build a campaign focused on VIP customers and give them first access to your new releases or sale items.
- 03. Seasonal email campaign:** At the start of a new season, send emails based on each contact's behavior and style preferences.
- 04. Subscription sign-up:** Many customers will repeatedly make single purchases but not sign-up for the brand's subscription. Trigger emails or messages when it's time for a customer to reorder the product and include an offer, such as a free sample, if they set up a subscription.
- 05. Personalized product recommendations:** Get granular in your targeting by triggering emails and messages to customers based on the level of product interest and brand engagement a customer is showing.

With relevant, real-time data, you can make more informed decisions about your campaigns. And marketing in real time is far more engaging than scheduled blasts, as triggered marketing campaigns based on customer actions can lead to more conversions.



Consistency in the customer experience is critical

Connecting with customers across channels is only valuable if these experiences are consistent and seamless. If someone adds to their cart on a mobile device, this should be reflected in their cart if they switch to a desktop. Similarly, if a customer engages with an item on social media, brands should use email or SMS to send relevant deals for that item and remind the customer to complete their purchase.

To create the optimal customer experience, it's important to reduce levels of friction and frustration that can stop customers from converting and purchasing. Fully understanding how you engage with a customer should be part of developing that customer experience. For example, constantly giving customers the same pop-up window across your website is not an ideal experience and can lead to frustration, which ultimately may prevent sales. But technology solutions offering centralized data can help you provide a more consistent experience. With a 360-degree-view of your customers, you can seamlessly manage customer interactions throughout their journey.

Profitable touchpoints are everywhere

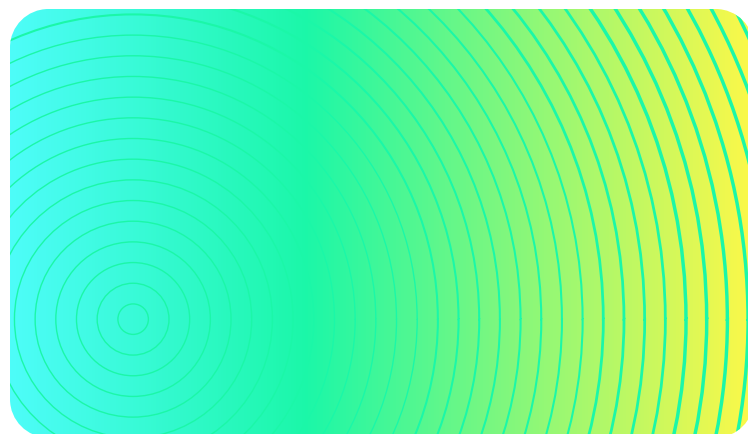
To win in retail, you have to be able to scale your marketing communications across multiple channels in a timely way. A powerful customer engagement platform provides you with the automation capabilities that can improve the productivity of your team, reduce the amount of effort it takes to launch and monitor campaigns, and reach your audience with real-time communications. A customer engagement platform can also help you understand which touchpoints and channels prove to be most

effective and profitable for each audience segment. Using automation and cross-channel journey creation can make it much easier for marketers to manage and realize ROI.

Establishing a multichannel and cross-channel experience

The customer journey is no longer linear, so leveraging all the channels and touchpoints available to you is critical for success. You need to reach your customers where they prefer to shop (marketplaces, social media, online, in-person) and using methods that match how they want to engage with you at different points in their journey.





Also consider how you can work with your partners to reach more shoppers. If you sell through retailers, work with paid influencers, or have any other partner relationship, you can market together to reach a broader audience and maximize your marketing investment.

But when reaching your customers, your messages won't convert if you aren't delivering the right message, on the right channel, at the right time. And to achieve that, your **tech stack needs to work together**. It's not enough for your AdTech to launch digital advertisements across the web nor is it enough for MarTech to launch campaigns on each channel. You need a connected tech stack that relays the product information, messaging, segmentation, and more across each campaign that goes live.

By optimizing journeys based on customer needs, preferences, intent, and behavior, marketers can create a brand-consistent customer experience across multiple channels. Tools that enable marketers to build these multichannel and cross-channel campaigns on one unified platform can accelerate this process, while AI can boost your productivity efforts and enhance creativity.

Build community among customers

One of the best marketing strategies for retailers today is to establish an active customer community. They can help to increase customer engagement and retention while improving the overall brand experience to make it more than just a transaction. These communities can help to personalize the experience – think of when local sales representatives in your brick-and-mortar store knew your name, favorite color, and preferred size.

Brands excel when they build forums, social media communities, or login portals where the customer community can engage, while inputting their favorite products, sharing photos, and gathering intel on products from other customers. For marketers and brands, this can offer valuable customer insights that enable more personalized interactions and stronger customer connections.

Don't fall short in the last mile: Every detail counts

When you invest so much in providing the best customer experiences, don't fall short just before



the finish line. Setting your brand up for success in the final stretch can begin at the checkout. It's important to avoid common pitfalls, such as making the customer go through the whole checkout process just to realize their desired item is out of stock.

Because there is so much competing for your customers' attention, every detail counts. The experience needs to be seamless and effortless so your customer actually makes the purchase – and comes back again in the future.

Once customers have made a purchase, make sure the tracking process is smooth, since tracking a package can often be a point of frustration for customers. Searching for an email from the carrier with outdated and clunky tracking platforms isn't

customer friendly. Take control of your own package tracking – better yet, use it as an opportunity for further brand engagement and upsells. Email isn't your only option for keeping customers updated on the status of their orders. SMS and mobile push notifications can be an engaging and convenient channel for package tracking updates.

Mobile marketing can also benefit your brand and the customers you serve beyond tracking updates – in fact, a mobile-driven strategy can transform how your brand engages with customers all along the customer journey.



The Style Lab

2h ago

Get ready for your package! Your order has been shipped. If you're...



Marketing to your customers with SMS

The first part of any successful SMS strategy is to have a mobile audience large enough to realize your goals. To build your mobile marketing list, take the following steps.

- **Market your SMS program everywhere**
Encourage your customers to join your SMS program by posting in-store signs with a QR code, having salespeople give reminders when customers check-out, and displaying a prompt to sign-up for text updates when a customer completes an online purchase. You can also market your program via email, mobile apps, and social media, reaching customers on each channel they engage with.
- **Give customers a good reason to sign up**
Let them know the benefits of signing up by offering promotions, discounts, personalized recommendations, or loyalty program bonuses. Clearly communicate these benefits with your sign-up message. You could even offer a bonus promotion just for signing up.
- **Ensure you gain consent**
Many customers view phone numbers as a much more personal piece of information than an email address. But even beyond perceptions, it's legally required to gain consent. Be aware of the local laws in the areas where you operate to ensure compliance.

Once you have a sizable list, you can begin seeing higher ROI on your SMS campaigns. There are a few basic best practices to be aware of as you begin implementing this strategy.



Keep it concise

One or two sentences to get your message across is plenty. The best texts are those that are simple and easy to scan, particularly when shoppers are busy.



Focus your audience by only using one link or CTA

Clickability is an asset in SMS messaging and accidentally tapping the wrong link can be a frustrating experience. Similarly, because SMS messages are typically short, you don't want to confuse your audience by asking them to take multiple actions. Do you want them to click on a promotion or mention the SMS message in-store to activate savings? Decide your primary goal and keep it simple.



Timing and frequency are everything

Since text messages are typically read within minutes, you'll want the message to coincide with the action you're hoping the recipient will take. For example, if time is running out on a Black Friday sale, you may send a promotion to customers with a reminder to shop before the sale runs out.



Leverage automation

Using SMS messages that are triggered based on a time sequence, account change, or behavioral event is critical to creating highly relevant, efficient mobile marketing campaigns. For example, you may automatically send a notification once an online order has been shipped that includes a link to tracking details. Customers will appreciate this convenience and the real-time update.



Don't overuse SMS

It's important not to bombard your customers with marketing text messages. A safe rule of thumb is between two and four texts per month. With text messaging, it's easy to opt out quickly – usually it only takes one “STOP” response from a customer. You don't want to over-text your customers, prompting them to opt out of your program.

While there are many ways to make SMS marketing a success, start with these strategies to connect with customers and start realizing ROI. If the communications you share are relevant, timely, and personalized, the customer experience will be positive, encouraging shoppers to become loyal customers.

You can use SMS for a number of use cases, including:

Supporting a “buy online, pick up in store” BOPIS strategy

Answering customer service questions such as what your store hours are or what your return policy is.

Sending real-time order confirmations and shipping updates.

Providing information on special services or sales.

Requesting online product reviews once customers receive their purchases.





Conquering cart and browse abandonment and customer churn

As a retailer, you've likely experienced a scenario where your customer finds the perfect item, clicks on "Add to cart," and then leaves your site. In many cases, brands are left to simply take a guess at what has (or has not) happened – but this doesn't help them resolve the issue or prevent it from happening again. But how can you find out why this has occurred?

Customers may churn for several reasons, but only with deep behavioral intelligence can you uncover the true reasons for cart and browse abandonment. From an unclear interface to buttons not working, attempted fraudsters (or click bots), or the customer simply not being ready to buy yet, it's critical to dive deep into the online behaviors so you can optimize the experience. Not all abandonment should be treated the same.

Access to **behavioral data** can help answer questions when brands see patterns from their customers. These insights provide an opportunity to deliver more impactful, targeted campaigns, leveraging a deeper understanding of customers. First-party behavioral data that includes experience signals can help brands identify which audiences need more time or need immediate attention so you can deliver timely and relevant messaging that matches the customer's current experience. The abandonment message will be different based on whether they've abandoned their cart because they are price buyers or if they couldn't complete the process because the page wasn't loading.

When brands understand intent, they can enable more successful cross-sell and up-sell opportunities based on their engagement and product interest at any point in the customer journey. This data-driven personalization gets marketers closer to 1-to-1 marketing, all in **real time**.





Build customer relationships that last

Acoustic Connect is a customer engagement platform that empowers brands with deeper customer insights as well as the ability to easily create and deliver highly personalized campaigns and experiences. As a result, marketers can infuse their customer journeys with deep personalization, engage with customers in the moment, and drive customer loyalty.

[Learn more today](#)

