

The New Loyalty Is Not Just About Transactions; It's About Interactions

Aimia report: Loyalty programs that reward customers for behaviours and attitude build deep customer advocacy--and a sustainable competitive advantage

MONTREAL, March 6, 2014 /CNW/ - Aimia, a global leader in loyalty management, today released *Rewarding Interactions: Are You Ready for Customer Intimacy* – a global report highlighting the importance of connecting with customers beyond the transactional level—planning for interactions both before and after the purchase activity.

For marketers there are opportunities to build real relationships with customers at every touch point or interaction. When effectively executed the intimacy and trust built through interactions are catalysts for customers to become brand ambassadors, promoting the brand to their networks including social media. Companies who truly value interactions develop additional ways to reward and recognize loyal customers beyond points, cash and discounts. For example, social currency—online recognition and status—is a way for customers to gain social standing among peers and social groups.

"Real loyalty isn't created at the close of the sale," said **Rick Ferguson, Vice President, Knowledge Development for Aimia**. "It's created when the brand and the customer become intimate through multiple interactions before, during and after the purchase. Companies that strategically use those interactions to learn more about their customers will build greater loyalty, create new revenue streams and develop lifelong customers."

According to Aimia's research, there are four reasons marketers should collect interaction data in addition to transaction data:

1. **To create new revenue streams.** Interaction data is an untapped resource. There is revenue to be had from refining the information.
2. **To drive incremental revenue from the loyalty base.** Tying interactions to transactions creates a three dimensional, customer-centric view generating sustainable incremental lift beyond a campaign ROI.
3. **To leverage and validate investments in new communication channels.** Marketers need to reach consumers where, when and how they want to be reached. Different media, such as social media and mobile, are needed to connect with consumers throughout their interactions with the brand.
4. **To lower the cost to serve, while increasing value.** Seeing the consumer on her entire lifestyle journey enables a wider array of partnerships to be formed, lowering the cost to run the loyalty program while increasing value to the consumer.

The entire paper is available at <http://www.aimia.com/content/aimiawebsite/global/en/new-thinking/library.html>

About Aimia

Aimia Inc. ("Aimia") is a global leader in loyalty management. Employing more than 4,300 people in 20 countries worldwide, Aimia offers clients, partners and members proven expertise in launching and managing coalition loyalty programs, delivering proprietary loyalty services, creating value through loyalty analytics and driving innovation in the emerging digital, mobile and social communications spaces.

Aimia owns and operates Aeroplan, Canada's premier coalition loyalty program, Nectar, the United Kingdom's largest coalition loyalty program, Nectar Italia, and Smart Button, a leading provider of SaaS loyalty solutions. In addition, Aimia owns stakes in Air Miles Middle East, Mexico's leading coalition loyalty program Club Premier, Brazil's Prismah Fidelidade, China Rewards—the first coalition loyalty program in China that enables members to earn and redeem a common currency, and i2c, a joint venture with Sainsbury's offering insight and data analytics services in the UK to retailers and suppliers. Aimia also holds minority positions in Cardlytics, a US-based private company operating in card-linked marketing for electronic banking and Think Big, the owner and operator of BIG - AirAsia and Tune Group's loyalty program. Aimia is listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: AIM). For more information, visit us at www.aimia.com.

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