

Reading between the lines

 By [Beverley Klein](#)

22 Feb 2016

Loyalty wasn't only being tested during SONA, but also at the Inner City Ideas Cartel, as Brand Union and Eighty20 expanded on brand loyalty on 11 February 2016.

Matthew Weiss, MD of Brand Union spoke of the research being done to establish just how loyal customers are. He spoke of the criteria needed to gain consumer trust and loyalty.

The first is fame. This brings awareness, purpose and value for the customer. When it comes to fame the brand can be more broad in their campaign work and deliver better business results.



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But fame isn't something that all brands want, as with fame comes the possibility of infamy. With social media being such a massive part of digital marketing and brand awareness, a campaign can take a turn for the worst in a flash. However, fame can bring a sense of authority and remembrance, so marketing directors need to start pushing the boundaries more and start being braver.

Subliminal messages

Now when you think of the phrase "*just do it*," what comes to mind? Nike. This is part of Weiss' second criteria brands need for loyalty - Brand Assets. This refers to slogans, sounds and logos that these brands own and are synonymous with.

Many brands already have this: McDonald's, Audi, Coca-Cola - the list goes on, and it's one of the reasons these brands have become near monopolies in their sectors.

Consistency is king

The third criteria is consistency. When brands are consistent in delivery and promises made, they become trustworthy, which ultimately increases loyalty. Research shows a 15% increase in revenue for brands that deliver what they promise.

Unpacking loyalty programmes

Ilana Melzer, co-founder of Eighty20, then took to the stage to discuss loyalty programmes. We're all part of them, from Pick n Pay's Smart Shopper to the Clicks Card, but is it something brands should be doing? Does it expand their consumer loyalty?

Melzer says that with many users, they generally want programmes where they get something out of it, a reward for shopping in the brand's store. But brands aren't seeing an engagement from their "loyal" consumers. In fact, brands might be giving away too much to consumers who aren't changing their behaviour.

Loyalty programmes have a number of advantages, it can help suggest who your consumers are and it can gain loyalty over time. But it isn't the saving grace for brands in a weak position as consumers are likely to take advantage of reward programmes.

The bottom line is, unconditional loyalty doesn't exist so brands need to start thinking outside the box, push the boundaries and get noticed (for the right reasons, of course).

ABOUT BEVERLEY KLEIN

Beverley Klein is the editor of the Marketing Media South Africa section on Bizcommunity.com. With a background in journalism and historical studies, she's dived into the world of industry news, curating content, writing and interviewing thought leaders. She's often spotted in a forest on the weekend and rarely seen without a camera. Follow @BevCPT.

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