



Customer Retention Marketing: Creative Approaches



Customer Retention + Marketing

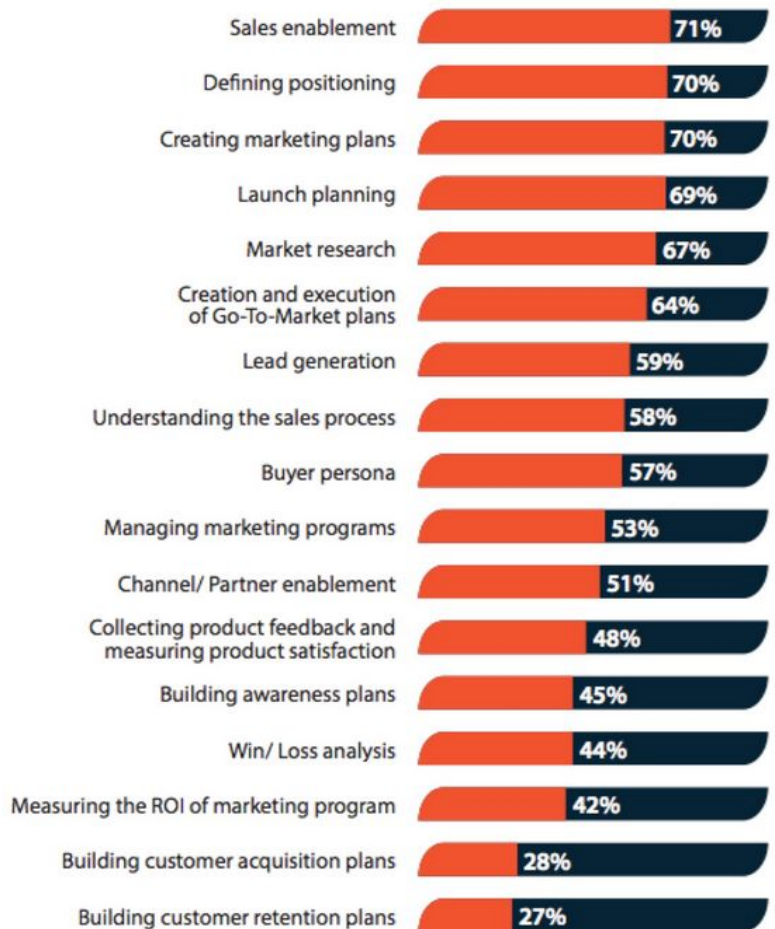
Isn't that an oxymoron?

Customer Retention Marketing may sound like an oxymoron, but I promise you, it's real.

Too often, marketing isn't involved with customers after the initial sale. They pass off that responsibility to groups like Customer Success.

As we'll see, that's a missed opportunity.

Look what's in last place



This data is from the Regalix Research report on the State of B2B Product Marketing.

Here's the survey question: "Which of the following activities do you carry out to achieve product marketing goals."

In very last place on the list is "Building customer retention plans." Only about one in four B2B marketers plan for customer retention.

If you get serious about customer retention marketing, you've got a real opportunity to differentiate your business from its competitors.

Definition:

Marketing campaigns and activities that support customer success and loyalty at scale.

Let's start by defining customer retention marketing as those marketing campaigns and activities designed to support customer success and loyalty at scale.

Customer retention marketing practices and strategies may originate in Marketing or in Customer Success. Ideally, they involve the collaboration of both teams.

Customer Retention marketing is how you do Customer Success at scale

Customer Success teams help customers find success and become loyal on a case-by-case basis.

Marketing campaigns are key to doing this at scale, without high-touch personal interactions you might otherwise reserve for the most valuable customers.

Best Practices

Yes, there are some....

Let's look at how customer retention marketing plays out today for those companies that are doing it.

Most of the current best practices belong in the category of helping new customers find success quickly.

Welcome campaigns

Customer onboarding/launch plans



Depending on the business, these common customer retention practices might be called Customer Welcome campaigns or Customer Onboarding plans.

They might include *drip email campaigns, training content, videos, and webinars.*



Hello there!

Congratulations on being one of the first to try the new "Create Presentation" feature on SlideShare! SlideShare teamed up with us here at Haiku Deck to bring you the ability to create beautiful presentations -- and instantly share them with SlideShare's 60 million users -- all in one place.

At Haiku Deck, our goal is to make it as simple as possible for you to create stunning slides you'll be proud to share. We streamlined the process by automatically setting up your new Haiku Deck account using your SlideShare credentials. This means you can create a new presentation or access your presentation drafts any time you're signed in to SlideShare.

If you'd like to copy, modify, or edit a Haiku Deck you've created on SlideShare, you can [sign in to Haiku Deck](#) using the email address we sent this to. Click "Forgot your password?" to receive a link

Comprehensive, friendly, useful welcome letter

I signed up for Haiku Deck a couple months ago, then did nothing about it because I wasn't creating any slides at the time. When I was putting together this slide deck, I found this welcome email that offered all the resources I needed to get started.

This email an example of a best practice customer welcome campaign. It's marketing, it's customer success, and it's training, all in one place. It's comprehensive, has a consistent tone and style, and helped me get started and successful quickly, on my own terms.

Customer Values

1. Promised value
2. Expected value
3. What do they value?

Every Customer retention marketing campaign must start with an understanding of what your customer values. You must take the customer's perspective.

What value have you promised (the brand promise)?

What do they expect? (It's not always the same as the promise)

What do they value? What is important to them?



Nurture the value

Once you understand what your customers value, find ways to nurture that value – make it grow.

Let's look at four ways that marketing and customer success teams can work together to nurture loyalty and value.

Nurture Customer Value

1. Achieved value

Help customers achieve the value that you have promised or they expect to get from being a customer. This is where today's best practices operate.

If you already have customer onboarding strategies, can you find ways to enlist marketing to streamline them at scale? And if you don't have a customer welcome plan, can you come up with something creative that helps new customers find success quickly?

Customer Success teams know what problems and questions new customers have. Is there a way to proactively reach new customers with the information they need?



Video is a wonderful way to help customers at scale while keeping a sense of personal connection.

As an example, I like Zipcar “How to Zip” videos that tell you how to reserve a car, return a car, and extend a reservation

The brand promise of Zipcar is that it’s easy, convenient to use. The videos help new users by taking the mystery out of using the service- and the personable Zipcar co-pilot embodies the brand personality.

Nurture Customer Value

1. Achieved value

2. Perceived value

The second value nurturing strategy is to nurture the *perceived* value – remind customers about the value they’re achieving.

The easiest, fastest customer retention campaign you can run right now is to share customer stories with existing customers.

Every marketing organization sends customer stories to prospects or put them on website. But are you getting them in front of customers? The stories might remind customers of the results they are seeing. Or they might spur customers to find new ways to realize value from your solution.

Highlight and celebrate customer successes. Because you want to do this at scale, find ways to automate or semi-automate the small celebrations. It might be as simple as an email triggered by a milestone, such as “congratulations on completing your first module.”



High Fives!

Your campaign is in the
send queue and will go out shortly.

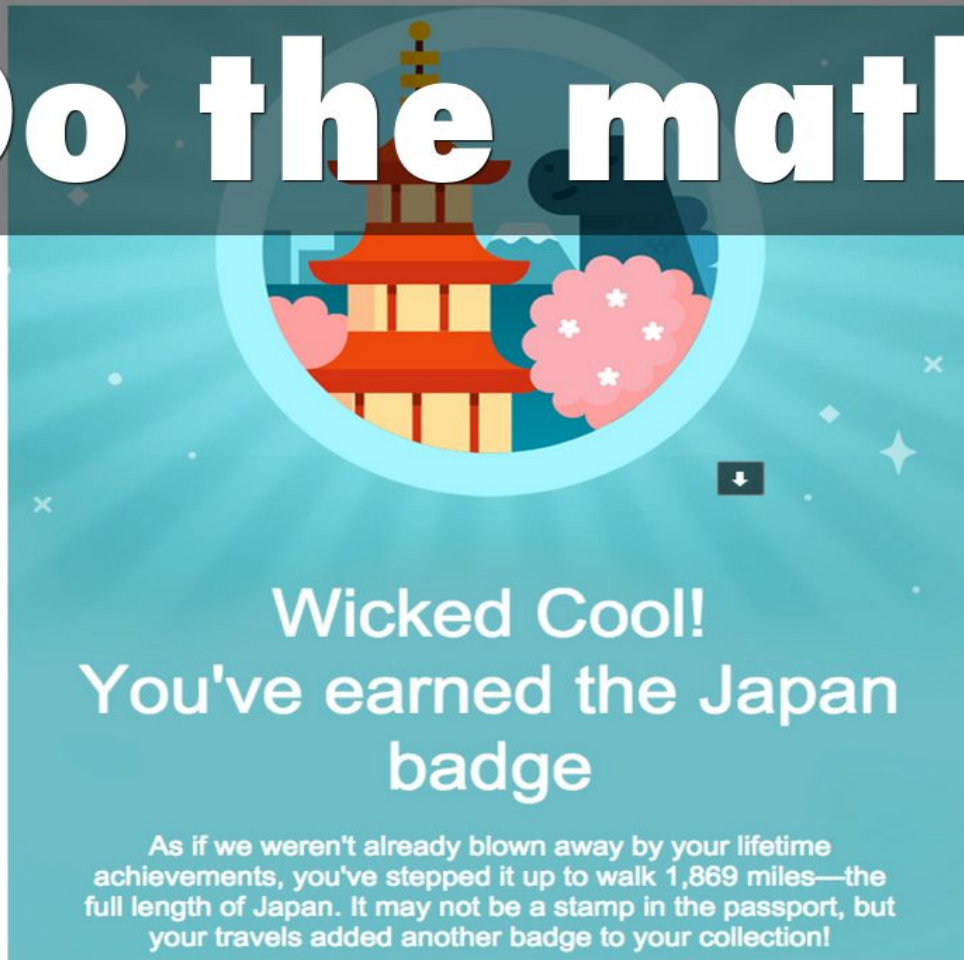
Celebrate success

Mailchimp does this quite effectively. Mailchimp is an email marketing service that makes it easy to create and send email campaigns.

There's something nerve-wracking about hitting the 'send' button on an email campaign – especially if you're new to email marketing. Before I send an email campaign, Mailchimp shows me an animation of the chimp finger hovering over a big button. And once I send it, the software gives me an animated high-five image.

This message reinforces the fact that I've just done something worth celebrating. Mailchimp has built the celebration of success into the solution itself.

Do the math!



Sometimes, to make people realize success you need to do the math for them.

Every business collects data about its customers. If it makes sense, and isn't creepy, can you put it together to quantify some of the success?

I wear a Fitbit because I hope it will motivate me to become more active. Every now and then, Fitbit does the math about how far I've traveled and sends me that data, putting the number into a meaningful context, like the length of Japan or the breadth of India. This data makes me reflect on my success towards my objective of exercising.

Nurture Customer Value

1. Achieved value

2. Perceived value

3. Added value

A third strategy is to add value outside the solution itself. This is where you have a chance to be creative

Effective Customer Success teams already adds value to the customer relationship by offering support, guidance, and training.

Customer retention marketing is about finding ways to doing the same thing at scale, without high-touch, personal interactions.

Value of Community



Create Community

Invite customers to participate in broader communities.

When you can connect people with others who have similar interests and concerns, you've done something valuable, and potentially earned customer loyalty.

There are many ways to create and support customer communities, including live phone calls, email lists, and social media communities.

Customer Success Summit 2015

March 23-24



Don't forget the power of in-person events. People who share the same concerns gather to learn from speakers and each other.

Bonus: In-person events give you a chance to listen to and interact with customers, guiding marketing and product strategies going forward.

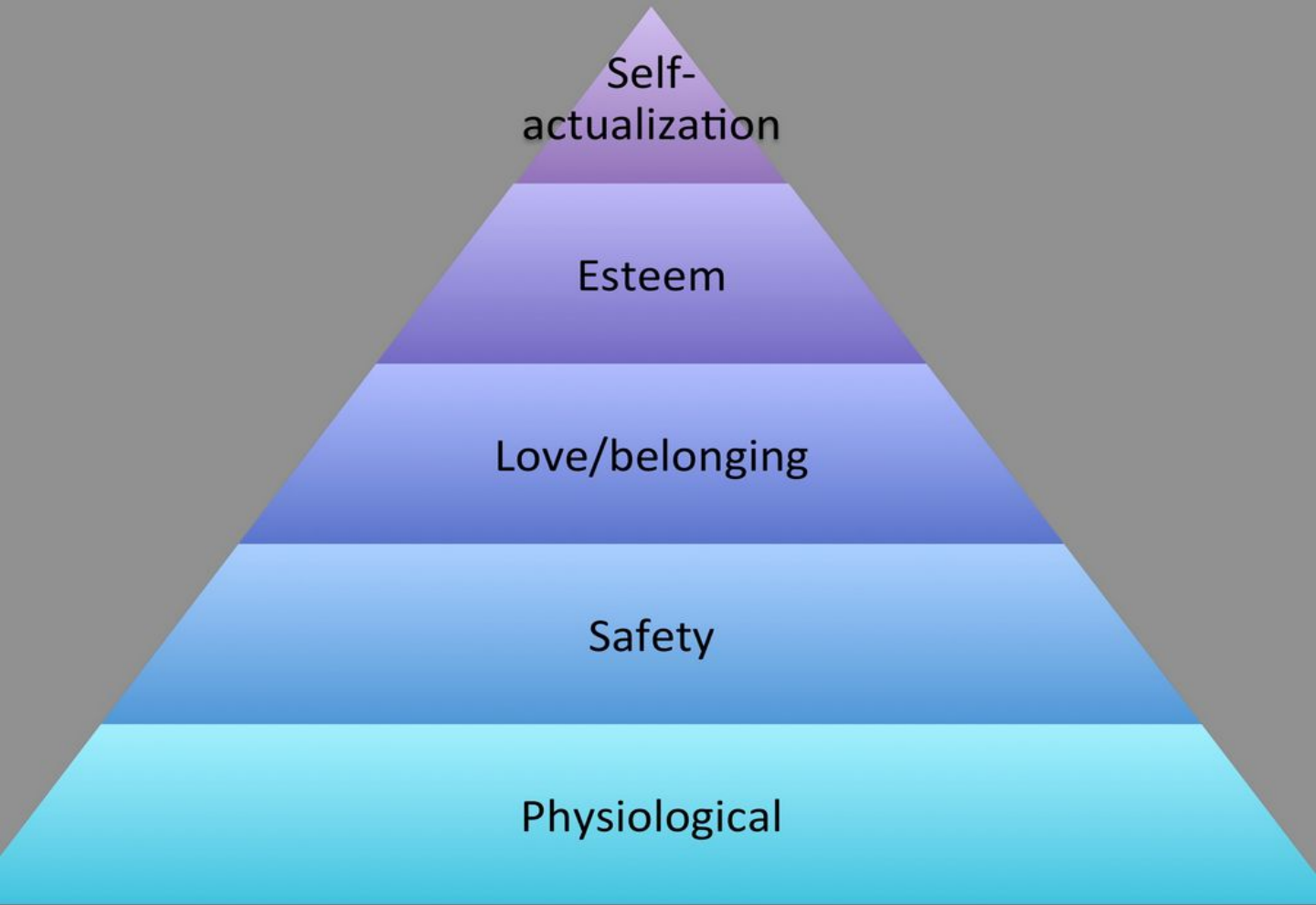
Creating and sharing great content is another way to add value to the relationship with customer, beyond the solution itself.

Content marketing is widely used for lead generation and lead nurturing. It should extend beyond the sale.

Nurture Customer Value

1. Achieved value
2. Perceived value
3. Added value
4. Higher-order value

The fourth strategy is to appeal to your customers' higher-order values. This is where you have an opportunity to get creative.



If you took a psychology class in college, you may remember Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The highest-level needs on this pyramid are self-actualization needs, which have to do with personal growth: being creative, learning, solving problems, and helping others.

If you can help customers fill these needs, you'll earn a place in their lives that is difficult to displace.

Proceed with Caution

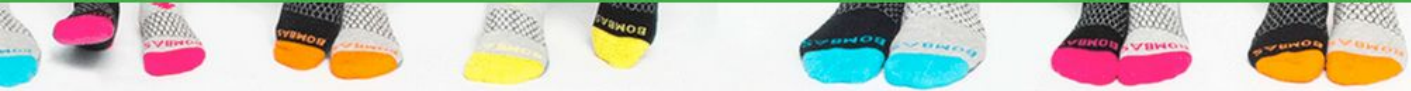


Before we go further, a word of caution: Be real, not manipulative, using these strategies.

In Maslow's own words, people who are interested in self-actualization have *"an unusual ability to detect the spurious, the fake, and the dishonest in personality, and in general to judge people correctly and efficiently."*

If you're openly manipulative in your marketing strategies, these campaigns will backfire on you. We live in an era of radical transparency – you cannot fake your values.

Share Your Story, Values



Giving Back

“Socks are the number one most requested clothing item at homeless shelters.”



This quote inspired us to create Bombas, an athletic-leisure sock company with a mission to help those in need

If your company has a unique story, share it. Those stories are why people buy shoes from Toms' or socks from Bombas.

Bombas shares its story up front on its website. Its founders discovered that socks were the most requested item at homeless shelters. So they built Bombas using the buy-one, give-one model, and designed a special sock that met the needs of people living in homeless shelters for the “giving” sock.

By buying a pair of socks, Bombas customers automatically donate another sock to someone else. That's a higher order value.

Ask for Advice

ADRIENNE (*Undergraduate Student, Sweden*)

Entrepreneurship is all about 'new' activities undertaken by an individual or a group of individuals, displaying some commercial elements in order to make a change in the market, society or community.

★ FAVORITE { 5 } | TWEET | SHARE

LUKAS (*Undergraduate Student, Switzerland*)

Looking at the world with an opportunity-oriented mindset.

★ FAVORITE { 4 } | TWEET | SHARE

HOW DO YOU DEFINE ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Entrepreneurship is...

PHOTO | YOUTUBE |

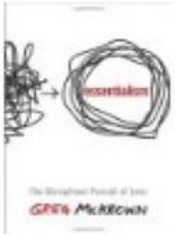
NEXT

Ask customers for their advice or help. Invite them to contribute product ideas, share their thoughts, offer ratings. Being helpful to others is a higher order needs.

I love Babson College's Define Entrepreneurship campaign. Babson is a Boston-based college that defines itself as the school for entrepreneurship of all kinds

Boston asks people to contribute personal definitions of entrepreneurship, then shares them on a website and across social media.

Anne Janzer, a customer just told us your review was helpful to them while shopping on **Amazon**.



Essentialism: The Disciplined...



The busier you are, the more you need to read this...

April 24, 2015

Share your review



You have published **14** reviews. Customers have found your reviews helpful **5** times.

Help customers help others

Help customers help your other customers.

Amazon is a master at this. Amazon reviews are enormously valuable. After you purchase something, Amazon asks if you'd like to review it.

If you submit a review and someone rates it as being helpful, Amazon notifies you. This reinforces the fact that you've provided value for someone else.

The Salesforce logo, which consists of a blue cloud-like shape with the word "salesforce" in white lowercase letters inside it.

salesforce

MVP

Find Your Super-Users

Ask your best users (your super-users) to officially assist and support other customers.

The Salesforce MVP program is a great example of a super-user program. To be an MVP, you need to be a brand advocate, be expert and responsive in answering questions, and help Salesforce by representing the customer viewpoint.

Salesforce MVPs are recognized for helping other Salesforce customers.

Your definition of an MVP may vary. It's important to identify your most loyal and active customers, know how to recognize them, and then create programs to help them help others.

Align marketing with customer values

Up to this point, we've been looking at ways that marketing can help with customer success after the sale. Now let's look at how Customer Success can help with Marketing before the sale.

With what you've learned about loyal customers, figure out how to align your marketing campaigns with what those customers value. Profile the super loyal customers, and use this information to create personas for marketing programs.



Find your raving fans

And make them customers

Redesign the marketing messages that deliver customers to reach those personas that are more likely to become loyal customers.

Meg Murphy at BigCommerce shared her story of doing this at the Totango Customer Success Summit. Taking what they had learned in Customer Success, they completely redesigned their marketing personas, and changed their pay-per-click ad spending and lead generation strategies. The raw number of leads coming in dropped, but the quality of those leads increased, and that ended up creating better conversions and retention. In addition, they freed up marketing budget they'd been spending attracting suboptimal prospects.

The Process

- Understand customer value
- Nurture those values at scale
- Align marketing with customer values

To summarize the retention marketing process:

Start with the customer's perception of value.

Use the four “value nurturing” strategies to nurture that value :

1. Help customers achieve value from the solution
2. Demonstrate that value
3. Add value through content or community
4. Appeal to higher order values

Finally, take what you’ve learned and use it to align before-the-sale marketing with customer values.

Collaborate



Customer Success + Marketing

Most of these strategies require customer success and marketing teams to work together

What can you do if that's not happening today?

Making it Happen

1. Top-down
2. Sideways
3. Bottom-up

Collaboration happens because it's supported in one of three ways.

Build collaboration into the organizational structure, by embedding a marketer on the Customer Support team or having both teams report to the same executive.

Set up processes to reinforce collaboration between groups. Create task forces for customer-centric initiatives, or get everyone in a room regularly to address customer retention.

If that's not happening yet in your business, just reach out on a personal basis and make it happen. If you're in marketing, take a customer success colleague to lunch. If you're in customer success, ask to sit in on a marketing meeting

“....I took it upon myself to be that person.”
Unnamed Customer Success Hero

Here's a quote from one of the attendees at the Totango Customer Success Summit:

“Sometimes it’s easiest to reach across [departments] and not wait for top-down direction. I took it upon myself to be that person.”

Sometimes you just have to reach out to your counterparts in marketing or customer success.

More Resources

Read the book

[Subscription Marketing](#)

Available on Amazon

