5 KEYS TO WINNING WITH GAMIFICATION

How Businesses Are Growing User-Generated Content, Revenue and Customer Loyalty with Gamification
By 2015, M2 Research forecasts that game mechanics will generate $1.6 billion in revenues and will account for 23 percent of all social media marketing budgets (FastCompany).

With gamification, the main objective isn’t to turn your entire site into a game; rather, it’s about incentivizing the behaviors that are most closely aligned with your business goals.

**Why Gamification?**

Gamification works because it incentivizes users to perform certain actions by tapping into their competitive natures. When done right, it leverages the proven principles of rewards and incentives to help create customer action. By participating in loyalty programs and gaming dynamics, site visitors help promote your brand and content while having fun and staying engaged for longer stretches of time.

The reality is that most companies currently don’t have a strategy in place to succeed at socializing and gamifying their web properties. This presents a tremendous opportunity for organizations to move fast and push ahead of the competition.

To encourage a greater sense of community among your user base and incentivize desired site actions, we’ve outlined five ways businesses can leverage gamification to generate conversions while providing an immersive customer experience that builds brand equity.

**The Five Keys to Winning With Gamification:**

- Set the Stage with Social Login
- Encourage More User-Generated Content
- Implement Savvy Sharing
- Encourage Participation by Keeping Score
- Nurture Consumer Relationships with Rewards
1) Set the Stage with Social Login

Many businesses are built upon marketers simply dropping cookies on unassuming consumers as they make their way across the Internet, bombarding them with an onslaught of “relevant” ads and content. To today’s social consumers, who crave open communication and transparency with brands, this type of marketing is often viewed as a “sneak attack,” in some cases causing more damage to consumer perception of brands than increasing purchase intent.

Social Login, on the other hand, lets you identify customers by the actionable, relevant data points that they’ve already shared with their social networks. This ability to instantly capture user data and apply it towards your gamification strategy is invaluable to crafting a truly customized, personal user experience.

51% of consumers agree that if a layer of competition were added to everyday activities, they would pay more attention to their behaviors and actions (JWIelligence).
2) Encourage More User-Generated Content

User-generated content is incredibly valuable for businesses looking to connect closer with their consumers. It adds a dynamic layer to your web properties by providing an outlet for users to actively comment on, react to, and engage with your content. Not to mention, customer feedback like comments helps boost SEO for increased exposure among search engines.

Businesses seeking to increase their user-generated content can leverage gamification to incentivize customers to leave feedback through social plugins such as comments, ratings, and reviews. For instance, an e-commerce business can leverage reviews and reactions to offer exclusive product discounts to the authors of their most helpful product reviews by allowing customers to react to each review and mining these reactions to find the reviews with the most positive reactions.

New Belgium encourages members to contribute UGC with badges and points that lead to real-world rewards.

Incentivizing customers to produce content across your web properties encourages your most active evangelists to promote and provide constructive feedback on your business while fostering community and trust among your user base.
3) Implement Savvy Sharing

As you grow your customer base into loyal advocates, it’s important to offer outlets for them to share about your brand across their social networks. Sharing essentially acts as a virtual form of word of mouth advertising for your business, as it sets the stage for your biggest fans to promote your business to their friends.

To facilitate the sharing process, businesses can rank their top sharers on a leaderboard and offer rewards to these customers to keep them engaged in the long term.

Example: BYUtvSports

BYUtvSports, the official sports channel for Brigham Young University, incorporated gamification and sharing into their online experience by changing users’ virtual rankings and “titles” for performing valuable site actions like sharing articles, videos, and site actions. As a result, the media outlet reported “thousands and thousands” of new signups for the new gamification features just a week after their initial launch.

When it comes to the impact of gamification on sharing, the results clearly speak for themselves: we found that gamification increases social share rates by an average of 22 percent (Gigya).
4) Encourage Participation by Keeping Score

For gamification to be effective, brands must make participating a seamless part of the user experience, as well as give users a reason to keep coming back and engaging. Keeping score of user engagement through point systems is key in creating the level of active, purposeful participation that leads to repeat connectivity, conversion and, eventually, brand loyalty.

Award users points for taking simple, everyday actions like logging in or favoriting an item. Keeping users involved in a game without much effort on their part is a powerful strategy to convert them into active, continuous participants. Create challenges and competition by allowing users to earn and share special badges or displaying high scores via leaderboards. This fosters feelings of prestige and influence that make consumers feel more connected to and invested in your brand.

For example, leading video game developer Capcom created an interactive mobile app to generate excitement over the franchise relaunch of Devil May Cry. The mobile app presented users with daily challenges wherein they would scan real-world items to earn points that could then be redeemed in the game. Encouraging users to participate with intent resulted in thousands of daily app logins, with users logging in an average of 6 times each.

What Should You Keep Score Of?

As a general rule of thumb, you should be rewarding members for any action of value across your website or app. Here’s a list of ideas to help you get started:

**BRAND PROMOTION/LOYALTY**
- Inviting friends to participate
- Check-ins
- Purchases
- Sharing content
- Driving referral traffic

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**
- Posting comments
- Product reviews
- Poll participation
- Page views
- Joining live events
5) Nurture Relationships with Rewards

Gamification opens the door for brands to create incentives for customers to visit and spend time, and again through interactive reward systems and loyalty programs. Statistics show that companies that offer rewards card programs see 46% higher customer spending (LoyaltyLeaders), so providing consumers with a means to earn and redeem rewards is a proven and powerful marketing and sales tool.

Gamified rewards like giving a consumer free merchandise for reaching a certain level on your mobile app, or offering him or her a 25% discount for sharing favorite items with social networks not only increase engagement, but also make consumers feel valued. Stimulating such feelings of exclusivity and membership results in increased conversion rates and consumer loyalty. Brands should construct loyalty programs that incorporate multi-step processes and stretch across various real-world and virtual channels to create a more immersive customer experience.

CASE STUDY
Boyd Gaming Customers Hit the Jackpot with Gamification

Boyd Gaming’s B Connected Social is the first online social gaming platform connected to a casino loyalty program. Participants can earn points by booking hotel rooms, linking their social media accounts, sharing promotions with friends and checking in at any Boyd Casino. These virtual points can then be exchanged for real-world rewards like vacations, iPads, slot dollars and gift certificates. This gamified reward system led to exceptional results, including:

- Over 700,000 visits to B Connected Online a month after launch
- Over 115,000 game-based actions each month by members
- Over 35,000 social media shares, resulting in more than three social referrals per share
- A 30.4% increase in social check-ins to Boyd gaming outlets
Conclusion

As consumer attention becomes increasingly difficult to command, and engagement becomes the standard for conversion, gamification will emerge as a core element of every successful marketer’s strategy. Following these five keys to winning over users with gamification is sure to help you establish the connectivity and interaction necessary to develop long-term, lucrative customer relationships.

About Gigya

Gigya’s gamification solution is a social loyalty and rewards engine that makes it easy to reward users and stimulate activity on your site. Gigya helps you to reward users for performing actions that benefit your business through its plug-and-play and fully customizable integration options. And the solution is fully integrated with Gigya’s Customer Identity Management Platform, so you can tie gamification actions directly to consumer identity to build out customer profiles.

For more resources on gamification and customer loyalty, visit Gigya.com. To get started right away, you can speak with a product expert by calling: **888-920-1702**

Sources