5 STEPS

TO A SUCCESSFUL MARKETING REWARDS CAMPAIGN

Incorporate Incentives to Drive Engagement, Fill Your Pipeline, and Encourage Brand Advocacy
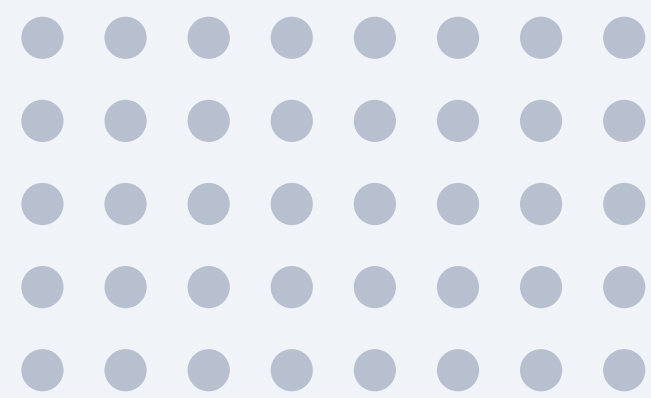
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Introduction

Almost any marketing strategy needs to have engagement to be successful, regardless of whether it targets prospects or existing customers. Email campaigns, webinars, customer surveys and communities, referral programs — none of them will help you reach your goals without high participation. By incorporating rewards into your campaigns, you can make sure you're getting the most out of your efforts.

Use the step-by-step guidance in this e-book to help you build a marketing rewards strategy that makes your brand stand out, delights your recipients, and creates the engagement opportunities your team needs.

Step 1: Identify Reward Opportunities

There are endless ways to add rewards to your new and existing marketing campaigns. That's why it's important to prioritize your goals and determine where rewards will be the most effective. Also, look for opportunities throughout the entire customer journey, some you may not even have considered. For example:

- **Top-of-funnel webinars and blog subscriptions.** Incentivizing participation in these awareness tactics will help you widen your reach and pull in leads that may not have otherwise engaged with your brand.

- **Account-based marketing programs.** When you ask for meetings with key accounts and prospects, offer to send over a reward for coffee or lunch. It can help you get your foot in the door and lay the groundwork for a strong customer relationship.

- **In-person events.** Conferences and trade shows are a big investment. Use rewards to help you attract traffic to your booth or your speaker's session.

- **Product demos.** Make sure that you're using your sales team's time to its full advantage. Rewards help reduce no-shows to meetings and demos, plus they build goodwill with prospects who are already actively evaluating your product.

- **Customer workshops and training.** Don't miss out on rewarding opportunities after your prospects have signed on the dotted line. Encourage product use and expertise by incentivizing them to attend workshops and training sessions. The more they use your product, the more likely they are to renew or even upgrade.

- **Feedback surveys.** You can get a wealth of insights from your customers about their sales journey, your support team, your product features, and even your competitors. Offering a reward to those who complete surveys is a great way to make sure you're getting a representative sample of customers across the entire satisfaction spectrum.

- **Advocacy programs.** Happy customers can be an important resource to support your lead-generation efforts. Nurture relationships with happy customers by rewarding them for actions such as submitting referrals, leaving online reviews, participating in case studies, and engaging with your loyalty program or community.

Tip: Rewards aren't just for happy prospects and customers. They can also be used to rebuild trust with those who had a bad experience.

Step 2: Choose Compelling Rewards

For marketing rewards campaigns to actually find success and create the outcomes you're hoping for, you have to choose the right kind of rewards. Branded swag and other physical gifts aren't as practical or effective in today's digital and contactless world. So what do customers and prospects want?

Using digital gift cards as incentives has a number of benefits for both your company and your recipients:

- **Everyone enjoys getting gift cards.** Fiserv found that 80% of consumers feel satisfied when they get a gift card, and the U.S. gift card market is expected to grow to over $221 billion by 2024.

- **Recipients can choose a reward they love**. Make sure your customers are even more likely to take the desired action by letting them pick out what they want. With a digital rewards management platform like BHN Rewards, you can offer a curated selection of options.

- **You'll save time and money.** Shipping rewards can be expensive and time-consuming, especially if you choose branded items that take weeks to produce. Digital gift cards require no lead time and can be delivered instantly (for free!) by email.

- **It's easy to include international recipients.** Even digital gift cards are typically country-specific, so it can be difficult to make sure every prospect or customer gets a reward they can use. Find a digital rewards management tool that helps you solve the problem by either offering virtual Visa and Mastercard options, which are almost universally accepted, or automatically curating a selection of rewards that can be used in each recipient's country.

Consider each campaign separately when determining reward value. You need to take into account what the requested action is and the time and effort required to complete it. A brand advocate who does a case study interview may warrant a $50 reward, but for a prospect who attends a webinar, $5 or $10 is more appropriate.

Tip: Include an option to donate the reward for those recipients who want to give back or who aren't allowed to accept a gift card.

Step 3: Create a Call to Action That Stands Out

No matter what kind of campaign you're promoting, you need to stand out among all the other marketing messages that people are bombarded with every day. First, decide on the most appropriate and effective channels for your promotion, based on your budget and target audience. While social media posts and paid ads are often part of the puzzle, the bread and butter for most marketing campaigns is email.

But email marketing has its own challenges. Campaign Monitor data shows that the average open rate for email campaigns is 18%, and the average click-through rate is only 2.6%. When crafting your message, pay particular attention to the subject line, which is what 47% of recipients use to decide whether to open an email, according to Invesp. Start by clearly defining the purpose of the email in the subject line. If recipients can't determine the call to action with just a glance, they are likely to ignore it, delete it, or, worse, mark it as spam. Also be careful of using buzzwords that may cause some email providers to flag your email. Even some terms and phrases that would seem like a good idea to include, like "free gift" or "limited time," can land you in the spam folder.

In any marketing communication — via email, social media, ads, digital channels, and others — make sure to feature the reward prominently. As long as you've selected compelling rewards with an appropriate value, promoting them will help you catch the audience's attention and encourage them to engage.

Tip: For CTAs that can be done anytime, such as online reviews and surveys, stress the immediacy of the digital rewards you're offering. Instant gratification is a strong motivator.

Step 4: Set Up an Efficient Delivery Process

Even if you've chosen digital rewards, manually compiling recipient lists and sending individual emails with gift card codes is time-consuming. Thankfully, digital rewards management platforms can help you automate the process.

If you use a marketing platform such as HubSpot or Marketo, find a rewards tool that will integrate seamlessly with that software. This has several advantages, including:

- It makes it easy to create segmented lists from your database.

- You can incorporate rewards directly into your emails.

- Rewards can be set up to deliver automatically based on a number of triggers.

- Data syncing allows the customer's activity log to be automatically updated to show when they claim their reward.

It also helps to use a tool that will deliver rewards from your own trusted domain. This ensures high deliverability and makes your reward more recognizable to recipients, so they don't delete it or flag it as spam.

Tip: If you want more control over your automatic reward deliveries, set up an approval workflow that lets you review recipients before their rewards are sent.

Step 5: Create Follow-Up Sales and Marketing Actions

Once your marketing rewards have successfully driven engagement for your specific campaign, don't let that goodwill toward your brand go to waste. You can capitalize on the delightful reward experience that your recipients just had to extend their engagement or move them further along in the sales journey. To start, make sure you're using the precious space in your reward emails and redemption pages to present another call to action. If they attended a webinar, maybe you can entice them to get on a sales demo next. If they wrote an online review, maybe they're also willing to do a case study.

When a recipient redeems their gift, you can also use that as a trigger for sales reps or account managers to follow up. Depending on the situation, you may want to try to engage them further or just send a simple message that says, "I wanted to check in and say that I hope you enjoyed your reward! Thank you for your participation!" This kind of personal and direct communication is key to nurturing relationships and keeping deals on track.

Tip: For customers and prospects who haven't claimed their reward yet, send reminders so you don't miss the chance to re-engage. A digital rewards management platform can even set up automatic reminders.

BHN REWARDS

BHN Rewards puts the power of rewards to work for marketers through its extensive catalog of digital incentives from top brands like Amazon, DoorDash, Starbucks, Apple, Target, and more. BHN Rewards also streamlines international rewards programs, with options such as Visa and Mastercard prepaid rewards, which work in over 150 countries, and its Smart Global Choice feature, which automatically curates available rewards based on the recipient's country and currency. BHN Rewards integrates with leading marketing and survey platforms, including HubSpot, Marketo, Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, and Medallia, to make rewarding easy and automatic.

Need more information? Contact us to request a demo.

Ready to get rewarding? Create a free account now.