



Customer Loyalty, a guide for time-travelers

This new book by Lyn Etherington and Sionade Robinson provides a practical guide to increasing customer loyalty.

The book's findings offer a revolutionary contradiction of the common perception that consumers are increasingly fickle and are apparently never more than a mouse click away from buying from a competitor. As co-author Lyn Etherington explains, 'In today's confusing and fast-moving business world, consumers are frequently bewildered and stressed by too much choice. Our research shows very clearly that consumers - and business-to-business customers - are delighted when they find a supplier they like, trust and feel really comfortable about sticking with.'

Customer Loyalty, a guide for time-travelers also argues that an organisation needs to travel mentally back in time and look at changing social trends if it is to understand what influences customer demand today, and how customer demand and expectations will be different tomorrow. Grasping these factors, the book maintains, is an essential element in the battle for winning and keeping customer loyalty.

The authors share findings from research conducted by Cape Consulting.

One of the most important principles at the heart of the book is that merely satisfying customers is never enough to retain them. Instead, it is necessary for a business to win *enthusiastic* support from its customers. The authors quote research conducted by US customer loyalty guru Frederick Reichheld, who has convincingly shown that the only reliable determinant of loyalty is whether a customer would respond with an enthusiastic affirmative to the question: 'Would you recommend this organisation to a relative or friend?'

Lyn Etherington adds: 'We wrote the book because we believe the time has come for a revolutionary take to be applied to winning customer loyalty, and that almost all organisations could do better in this respect. We were adamant the book should cover both winning business-to-consumer loyalty and of business-to-business loyalty. The latter, is often neglected in management books, because it isn't as glamorous - or obvious - as winning loyalty from consumers.'

Customer Loyalty, a guide for time-travelers introduces the concept of 'loyalty-building experiences' (LBEs). These are emotionally positive experiences which will lead to customers becoming incrementally more loyal when the customers experience them. The authors identify a total of eight such loyalty-building experiences and describe each one in detail, along with suggestions for how an organisation can generate the particular experience in the customer's heart and mind.



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