

HOW TO CREATE A SUCCESSFUL SURPRISE & DELIGHT

One of the most effective marketing tactics a brand can deploy is the Surprise & Delight. Brands that are successful in creating even a single positive customer interaction can expect that customer to hold the experience dear to their heart for years to come. And while they're at it, they'll be sharing the experience across their personal and professional networks, influencing their friends, and amplifying your brand message.

We've put together some best practices on how to ensure you've got a successful Surprise & Delight strategy that will keep your customer relationships happy and strong, increasing the word-of-mouth that makes your brand great.

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SET EXPECTATIONS AND COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR TEAM

Create clear goals and communicate those goals. Think about what your success metrics will be and be sure you have a way to track that success. Are you looking for a few gracious responses or are you looking to be on the front page of Forbes? The key here is, be realistic, know what you can track and what you can't, report on what you can track, and be sure your whole team is aligned.



RECOGNIZE AND REWARD, DON'T BRIBE

The intent should not be to give someone a gift in exchange for some posts over social media about that gift. Instead, a Surprise & Delight should be a recognition or subtle "thank you" for the great things they're already doing. And don't think a new car will get you much more than a \$50 token gift. It will cost you 1000X more for only 3X the lift.



FIND THE RIGHT PEOPLE

A Surprise & Delight only works when it's actually a surprise. If you're handing them out to every person who happens to say something about your brand, then no one will feel special, you won't get the lift you're looking for, and your ROI will drop. Take the time to find the authentic people who have shown a history of positive brand mentions and advocacy.



MAKE IT PERSONAL

Know your people and offer what will delight them. If you're running a program for iPhone accessories, don't offer them to the Android loyalists in your community. It seems straightforward but too many times, brands get it wrong. Making it personal and showing individuals that you know them and their interests will create that lasting brand advocacy.



FOCUS ON CONVERSIONS

It's crucial that your Surprise & Delights easy to redeem. Optimize your offer to reduce friction in the conversion process, even using simple conversion options like Facebook Connect. Make sure you take advantage of the information you already have about an individual and keep any other "asks" at the minimum required to fulfill the offer. Creating a heap of extra form fields, or forcing them to undergo a convoluted redemption process will leave you with lackluster results.



THE BUCK DOESN'T STOP HERE

It's crucial to nurture the relationship. It doesn't have to be a lot of work, but you've just sparked some superfans, there are some lightweight ways to retain them as a strong asset for your brand. Every now and then, ask for their feedback, enlist their support when you need their help, or even seed a new launch with that core group. These are people who are deeply engaged with your brand and content, do you have a way to target content or ads to them directly? Make sure to capture them into an exclusive audience that you have owned access to for future initiatives.

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