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# Loyalty & The Lost Art of Giving

Contributors

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Expert opinion from



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# Why Modern Loyalty Programmes Need to Think Beyond “Transactions”



When was the last time you received a truly thoughtful gift?

I'll bet that when you remember it, you didn't just think of the item — you thought of the person who gave it to you.

That's because a carefully chosen gift creates the feeling of being seen and appreciated. It's a powerful emotional connection, a moment of generosity that sticks with you longer than the thing itself.

But that emotional connection gets eroded when the gift is hard cash — or points and miles that only help you fly more miles.

Somewhere along the way, loyalty programmes have forgotten the **root cause** of loyalty. We've seen how powerful loyalty is, and while trying to optimise its effectiveness, we've unintentionally made it transactional.

Points became predictable. Redemptions became routine.

For customers, the joy of rewards faded into the background noise of e-commerce marketplaces and irrelevant catalogues.

The relationship became an obligation. Like a friend who knows you intimately, yet gives you a generic gift card for your birthday.

## But there's a way to reignite that spark again — **by giving!**

Some brands are already doing it. They've arrived at a simple truth:

Customers don't just want to be rewarded. They want to be moved. They want a meaningful gift from someone who knows them.

This is the lost art of giving.

It's not a close friend giving them a thoughtful gift, but it's as close to that as possible.

It's the art of a brand giving a meaningful gift to the member — a curated, achievable, and emotionally resonant reward that reflects what the programme understands about their life, their values, or their aspirations.

## It's what **Loylogic** has been helping brands master for **20 years**.

The art of real connection and real feelings. That means replacing massive catalogues of random products with thoughtful, curated rewards that feel personal, timely, and truly valuable to the member.

### In this eBook, we'll explore:



Because when rewards feel good,  
redemptions go up.

And when redemptions go up,  
**so does everything else.**

# Traditional Loyalty Offers Points, Not Emotions

And It's Not Enough

Today's customers are overwhelmed with options, and what once felt exciting...

"You've earned enough points for a blender!"

...now feels like just another uninspired line item.

This is the unfortunate result of many programmes over-indexing on scale and cost-efficiency, while underestimating how powerful it is to actually connect with someone through rewards.

What we call the **emotional value of redemption**.

Customers don't remember the exact points value of a gift card.

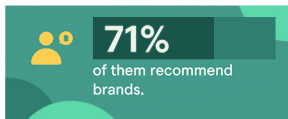
They think back with gratitude every time they have a peaceful flight, all thanks to the premium, noise-cancelling headphones your brand gifted them – the ones they'd never gotten around to buying.

Or feeling relieved when they could redeem points for essential groceries during an unexpectedly tight month.

They remember that the brand somehow knew exactly what they needed, exactly when they needed it.

Redemption is one of the most emotional moments in the entire customer journey. It's when the brand finally gives back. It should feel personal, even generous. And when done well, it'll be why your customer will always choose you.

## According to a report by *Motista*



At Loylogic, we're making a meaningful difference in achieving this degree of emotional connection. We've spent the last 20 years helping brands across sectors – retail, banking, airlines, even employee benefits – turn uninspired redemptions into moments that matter.

## CASE STUDY



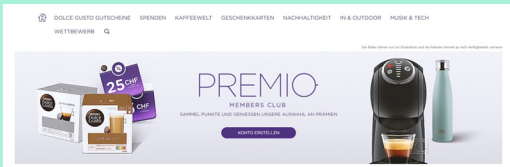
Nescafé Dolce Gusto faced a common challenge for consumer brands that sell through retail channels: establishing direct relationships with their consumers.

With their multi-beverage system available in 70 markets and annual turnover exceeding \$1 billion, they needed a loyalty solution that could create meaningful connections and differentiate themselves from compatible capsule competitors.

Working with them, Loylogic developed PREMIO, an omnichannel, easy-to-use loyalty programme.

Rather than overwhelming members with generic options, PREMIO carefully curates rewards that reinforce the brand connection and align with its premium positioning. This includes:

- Nescafé Dolce Gusto vouchers that bring members back to the webshop.
- Kitchen appliances that complement coffee consumption.
- Music technology that their specific customer base appreciates.
- Local gift cards that feel personally relevant.
- Ensuring nearly all products mirrored the brand's distinctive round, colorful aesthetic – attractive reminders of how the brand rewarded their loyalty.



The programme's balance of global consistency with local relevance ensures its success as the brand scales. While 80% of the catalogue follows global brand principles, 20% is customised to local market preferences.

“If you visit the reward shop in Korea and then the French one, you'll see the catalogue is adapted to the culture of the country.”



**Joël Muller**  
Digital marketing advisor  
Nescafé Dolce Gusto

## CASE STUDY



PREMIO has successfully built a coffee lovers' community with millions of members across Europe, Latin America, Asia, Oceania, and Africa. This community loves that Nescafé Dolce Gusto **understands them** and gives them rewards that **feel good and fit right**.

With this programme, we proved that smart programme design can turn transactional purchases into an ongoing relationship.

By focusing on thoughtful, brand-aligned rewards that customers can receive in a reasonable timeframe, our team helped Nescafé Dolce Gusto create lasting emotional connections.

It's the shift from points to emotions that makes the difference, giving gifts rather than dispensing products. When you do that, everyone – both your business and your customers – walks away feeling better.

## Giving Is Personal. Redemption Should Be Too.

We all know that a great gift doesn't have to be expensive. It just has to feel **right**.

In loyalty, the same applies. What makes a reward meaningful isn't the retail value. It's the fit – was it relevant to who that person is and what they value?

This is where so many redemption strategies fall short. They treat members like monoliths, constantly increasing their generic rewards catalogue and hoping people find something they like.

However, the best loyalty programmes know that **real loyalty is personal**. Redemption is one of the clearest opportunities to prove that.

By pairing smart data with a flexible, dynamic reward ecosystem, Loylogic helps brands do exactly that. Our premise is that customers expect to be empowered with more options, more often. But only as long as those choices are relevant and engaging.

We've created a redemption model that offers better-matched options, based on behaviour, segment value, and emotional context.

## CASE STUDY

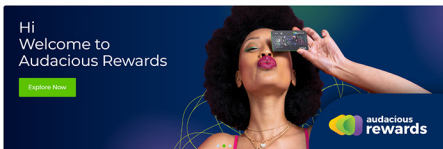


While many banks focus their loyalty efforts on high-net-worth individuals, African Bank took a fundamentally different approach:

What if a rewards programme served those typically overlooked by traditional rewards schemes?

Known as "The People's Bank", African Bank has been about inclusion since the very beginning. That's why they partnered with Loylogic — we understood the bank's values and cherished their vision.

Together, we created Audacious Rewards — a programme that meets its customer segments where they are. A programme for real people with real aspirations, financial pressure, and a strong desire to get ahead.



### Explore Our Amazing Range of Rewards



Launched in 2023, Audacious Rewards doesn't pile up luxury items out of reach for most. It offers "Rewards You Can Count On" — practical benefits that address their members' everyday needs:

- Mobile airtime and data bundles for staying connected.
- Electricity vouchers for essential utilities.
- Grocery vouchers for daily necessities.
- Cash conversion options for complete flexibility.

Beyond rewards, the programme incentivises positive financial behaviours like credit score monitoring, resulting in over 50,000 requested credit reports in a single month (March 2024).

## CASE STUDY



“Our customers are at the heart of everything we do.”



**Sbusiso Kumalo**

Chief Marketing Officer  
African Bank

This level of understanding is what makes Audacious Rewards stand out. It's a loyalty experience that feels like the bank **actually knows them**.

Knows that topping up data at the end of the month matters just as much as a luxury reward. Knows that progress isn't just about a purchase — it's about building credit, managing money, and making smart choices every day.

And it's working.

Membership exceeded business targets, and programme members show a remarkable 67% increase in revenue over 12 months compared to non-members. It even earned African Bank the Best Short Term Loyalty Campaign at the 2024 International Loyalty Awards.

We've helped African Bank build a loyalty programme that is as personal and empathetic as it gets. It reflects their customers' real lives and gives them rewards that are both achievable and impactful.

Because endless, aspirational luxuries mean nothing if members don't want or need them. Because one-size-fits-all loyalty can never be personal.

But by knowing their customers' lives — listening to them, understanding their habits, challenges, and dreams — Audacious Rewards creates loyalty that lasts.

It's the kind of personal connection that no amount of marketing can buy. It's sincere and thoughtful — **it's giving that cares**.

## This is the power of thinking beyond “**transactions**”.

Whether it's a small treat for yourself, a gift for your partner, or a reward you saved up for all year... a well-timed, well-matched redemption is **a reflection of what your brand sees in the customer**.

And when customers feel seen, they stick around.

# The Business Case Behind Emotional Redemption & Gifting

Here's a truth that might save you millions of dollars and retain thousands of customers:

**Not all redemptions are created equal.**

When a member redeems on a flight or internal inventory, it often eats into margins. When they redeem on curated gifting experiences, brand-name retail, or high-emotion surprises, then redemption is more delightful and **more profitable**.

This isn't theory. It's playing out in real programmes.

## CASE STUDY

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GUEST

Ethiad Guest set out to create a truly global reward experience — one that matched the airline's premium brand and international footprint.

At the same time, they were grappling with a core business challenge: how to give members more options and more relevant options to increase engagement.

They partnered with us to completely streamline their reward offerings into one smart, unified system instead of managing separate catalogs for each region.

In their new redemption platform, each reward would feel as premium as a global brand and as personal as a neighbour's gift — regardless of where members lived.

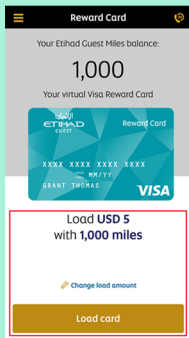
The Ethiad Guest programme practised the art of giving in two powerful ways:

### Giving Relevance

Seasonal campaigns and locally curated rewards came together to provide meaningful rewards to members in every cultural setting.

### Giving Flexibility

Working with Loylogic, they introduced the world's first globally accepted, multi-currency, and fully flexible rewards card. Members could redeem miles at any merchant accepting Visa worldwide. The programme also partnered with leading regional and global merchants to expand redemption options.



## CASE STUDY

الإتihad  
ETIHAD  
GUEST

This system substantially increased redemption frequency, basket values, and membership growth. And the best part?

Ethiad Guest now had a lower weighted cost-per-point – a lower average cost to the programme for each point's value to members.

Together, Loylogic and Etihad made one of the most versatile, redeemed, and renowned loyalty currencies in the world. It's a programme that understands what matters to its diverse global membership and delivers it.

It's proof that when a brand masters the art of giving, **profitability follows.**

Ethiad Guest isn't a one-off win.

It's evidence that thoughtful giving – mindful of what and how you give – makes customers feel great, produces better business results, and costs far less.

## But why is giving so effective?

Think about the psychology behind a well-designed rewards programme. It can fulfil multiple goals together:



### Recognition

When rewards feel personalised, members feel recognised as individuals, not just account numbers.



### Emotional Connection

Rewards that reflect what members actually value tell members that they are seen and understood.



### Achievability

Points thresholds that feel attainable keep members engaged in earning behaviour.



### Relevance

Rewards that match a member's lifestyle or aspirations feel more valuable than their monetary worth.



### Timing

Rewards that arrive at the right moment are joyful, memorable surprises – and more likely to be redeemed.

On top of all that, redemption on curated options is more profitable than redemptions on proprietary inventory (like airline seats or hotel rooms).

For banks, retailers, airlines, and others, this shift could mean millions in potential savings and revenue generation — all while delivering experiences that customers genuinely value.

## The Lost Art of Giving is Coming Back.

Great loyalty isn't just about earning. It's not even just about redeeming.

It's about giving — in a way that feels meaningful, personal, and memorable.

This philosophy doesn't just reshape loyalty programmes. It elevates channel incentives and employee benefits, too. Whether you're rewarding a customer, a partner, or a team member, the magic is the same: **make it personal, and the connection becomes lasting.**

For 20 years, Loylogic has helped brands rediscover the emotional power of giving.

We've brought back joy, surprise, and delight. We've helped brands move beyond transactions. And we've proven, time and time again, that when people feel valued, they stay loyal.

So maybe "the lost art" isn't lost after all. Maybe it just needed a better partner.

### Want to know more?



Get in touch with  
Loylogic today.

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# About Our Contributors



**Gabi Kool**  
*CEO, Loylogic*

Gabi has 20+ years experience running award winning loyalty businesses with deep experience in aviation. Loyalty Industry Personality of the Year 2014.

For over 20 years, Gabi has been lucky enough to run high-performing loyalty solutions and commercially grow client businesses by fully engaging and captivating their member communities. Today, as CEO of Loylogic, Gabi heads a team of dedicated, customer success focused loyalty specialists who connect global brands with engaged customer communities. Loylogic solve complex problems for global corporations, turning the BIG engagement visions of blue-chip companies into reality.



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