

# Driving loyalty program success: the importance of timely communications

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The average person consumes about **34 gigabytes of information a day**<sup>1</sup>, making it a struggle to keep even our highest priorities top of mind. In today's world, attention goes where it's demanded. If you're not nurturing, reminding, promoting and communicating, you can be certain someone else will.

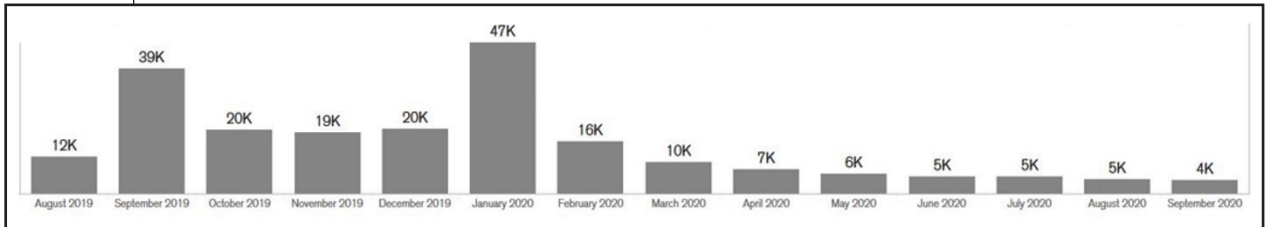
Loyalty and incentive programs are no different than any other product in that they're competing for attention. Without the fuel of thoughtful and well-timed communications, participation is bound to lag. So what happens when you don't plan ongoing communications within your program? Here are three scenarios that show the power of communication to drive participation.



A lack of **communication** leads to **poor engagement results**.

drop despite ongoing, exciting updates to program content and reward offerings.

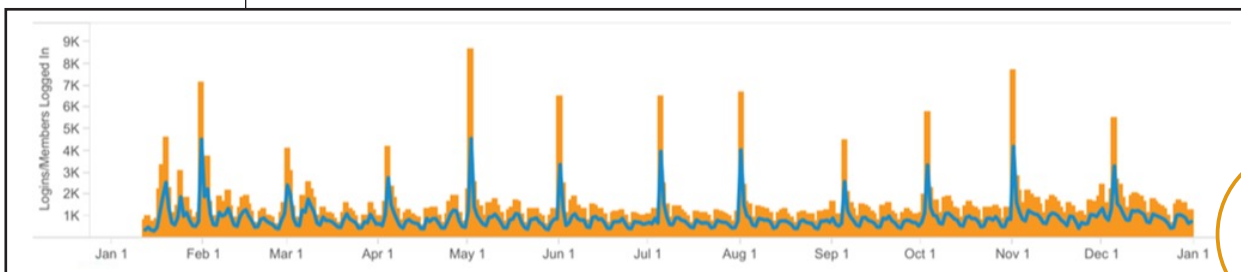
The first six months of the program started with a strong enrollment campaign and initial communications. But once communications stopped, program logins dramatically decreased and continued to



Ongoing **communication** is linked to **greater participation**.

Over the course of a year, participation data showed a strong correlation between the newsletter schedule, increased member logins and higher customer satisfaction with the program.

A loyalty program used a monthly newsletter to drive participation and create behavior change. The newsletters shared information about new content that was available and other helpful information for members.



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A **channel sales program** dramatically **increased engagement** by adding communications.

In a channel partner program, the number of unique sellers active in the program averaged between 200-300 daily. By adding a communication plan built on personalized scorecards, the sellers were reminded of their prior sales goals and achievements. As a result, daily user numbers rose as much as **500%**.

Adding communications to your program is more than just adding emails and hoping for the best. You'll need a successful strategy.

**1** **Create a plan.**

A great communication plan takes many things into account like new content deployment, consistent cadence, the timing of other marketing initiatives outside the program and the best days to deploy for the highest open rates.

**2** **Get your members' attention.**

Stand out from the onslaught of communications your members receive by using vivid imagery and colors.

**3** **Personalize the message.**

Personalize the message as much as possible with the new content that's available for them to engage with, how close to a goal they are or how many points they have. These encourage your members to engage with your program.

**4** **Get to the point.**

Your members are exposed to an incredible amount of information each day. Research shows that people hear around 100,000 words each day. Earn member attention by delivering relevant information in a clear and concise manner.

**5** **Deliver a clear call to action.**

Once you have your members' attention, make sure you are clear about what you want them to do. Include a brief but clear call to action at the end of the communication.

**6** **Do an SMS communication right.**

Text message and SMS communications can be a great tool if used properly. Deliver important information and thoughtfully define the cadence. Be sure each message is brief and provides critical information only. It's important to be careful not to drive that member to type "STOP" and lose that opportunity to reach them.

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Consider **offline communications.**

In a world filled with digital communication, direct mail stands out. Direct mail can deliver vivid, engaging and personalized communication with a strong call to action and can drive engagement with digital content via QR codes. Dimensional direct mail that is interactive or in interesting packaging has a **5x higher** engagement rate than email.

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**Observe** and **adjust** as needed.

A good communication plan should be fluid and responsive. Look at the open rates and click through rates along with program engagement rates. If those numbers aren't where they should be, make changes to the plan. Look at deployment timing, test the subject lines and make sure you are delivering on all the key elements listed above.

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Communication can be a vital tool to engage your members and build loyalty. If you do it right, your members will understand that you know them, appreciate them and respect their time. Those members will engage and continue to engage with your program over time, helping you reach your program goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Consuming Information Research, Ask Wonder, 2022