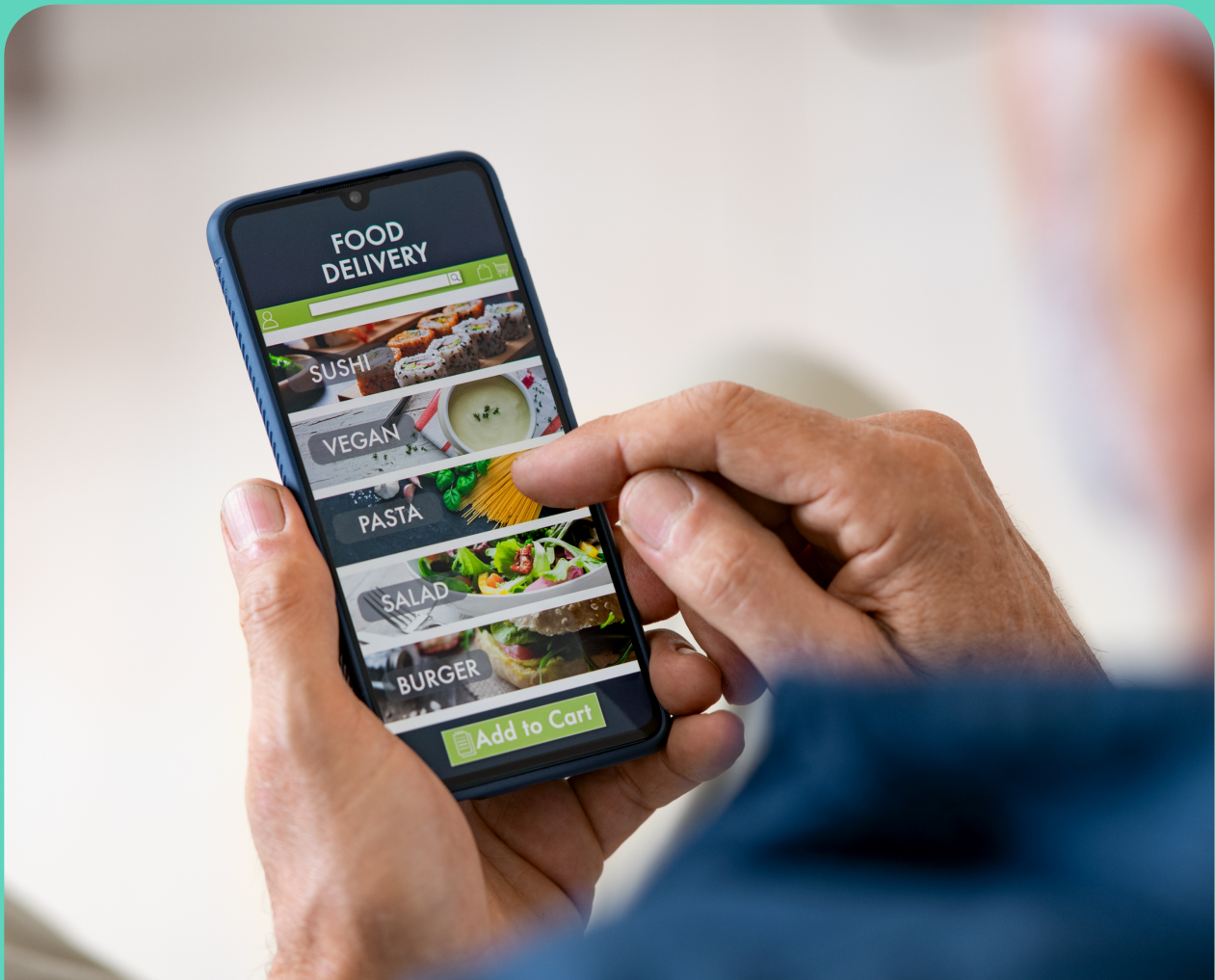




Coming In Hot: Innovative Retention Trends Led By Food & Beverage Brands - 2022



Dig into the top trends and strategies cooked up by Food & Beverage brands to become a major staple within the everyday lives of the consumer.

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Here's the Scoop

When it comes to selling online consumable goods, no other industry dominates like Food and Beverage. With online consumer shopping at an all-time high over the last two years, the food and beverage industry has become the fastest-growing e-commerce category worldwide.

STAT

Between 2019 and 2020, online food and beverage sales increased by **125%**

More impressively, food and beverage is one of the top few industries with a retention rate above the 30% average for e-commerce brands and accounts for 44% of all CPG sales -outperforming Health & Beauty by 6%.

How do they do it?

How does a diamond get formed without pressure? It doesn't! Since big names like Amazon have taken notice of the upward trajectory of the industry, the increased visibility has made it harder for brands to stand out.

However, it has also presented an opportunity for brands to think outside the box and discover innovative solutions to better engage with consumers and encourage brand loyalty.

Breakdown of Food & Beverage Retention Rate

F&B Retention Rate	31%
Highest Retention Rate Wine	48%
Lowest Retention Rate Meal Kit Services	21%

Breakdown By Industry

Meal Delivery	39%	Juice and Soda	28%
Coffee	38%	Groceries	26%
Meat Markets	35%	Chocolate	21%

What's Trending

Let's take a look at some of the top strategies used by big names in the food and beverage industry that are proven to keep customers engaged, spending, and loyal.

- Working to make an impact
- Reimagining customer loyalty
- Thinking outside the subscription box
- Recreating in-store experiences online
- Maximizing the value of SMS marketing

The Big Shift to Sustainability and the Demand for Social Responsibility

77% of consumers are more motivated to stay with companies whose values align with theirs.

STAT



85% of consumers express that they have shifted their purchase behavior towards being more sustainable within the last five years.

The driving force to establishing customer loyalty is not always shiny incentives and membership perks but building relationships with customers through shared values and action.

In recent years, the need for brands to make a positive impact in the world both socially and environmentally has become less of a bonus and more of an expectation for consumers.

With more than 80% of consumers citing sustainability as the most important factor when deciding which food brands to shop with, no other industry flexed its green thumbs and helping hands like online produce.

TIP



Online Grocery Delivery Services is the driving force behind how online F&B sales outperformed health & beauty

Brands Making a Difference



1. Reducing Food Waste

In its mission to cut food waste in half, **Imperfect Foods** stood out as one of the most resourceful online grocery delivery services in 2021. Growing by nearly 230% in the last year, many consumers resonated with its mission to reduce food waste by repurposing “undesirable” produce, often tossed out by grocery stores and restaurants.

2. Preserving the Environment

The B-corp-certified Meat Delivery brand **Butcher Box** is a fan favorite for more than its wide assortment of cruelty-free meats. Butcher Box breathes sustainability in its efforts to minimize its carbon footprint, improve soil health, and promote sustainable agricultural and fishing practices.

Having reported a 41% customer retention rate within a six-month period during 2020 - the highest in its category - Butcher Box cites that its high ethicality and environmental preservation initiatives are the foundations in which customers root their loyalties to the brand.

3. Changing Lives

Though technically not produce, it is hard to ignore the waves UK coffee brand **Costa Coffee** has made on a global scale. Not only does this coffee giant provide high-quality coffee beans sourced from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms, but they actively work to recycle and reduce waste by repurposing their coffee grounds into biofuel.

Additionally, consumers of the coffee brand can feel a sense of purpose knowing that their dollars have helped more than 90,000 people gain access to education in the ten countries where Costa Coffee’s coffee beans are sourced.

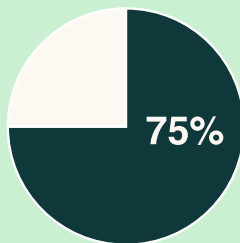


TIP

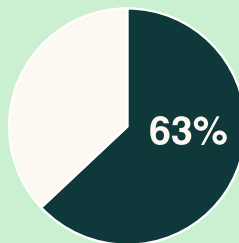
Though the price of sustainability is high, it is not entirely a dealbreaker! Research suggests that pricing is not a deterrent to customers if their dollars are going to a good cause. Be ready to include the “do-good feel-good” initiative in your branding.

STAT

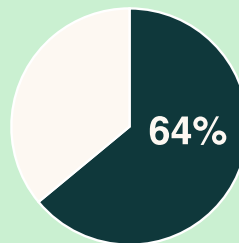
% Willing to pay more for an environmentally sustainable product



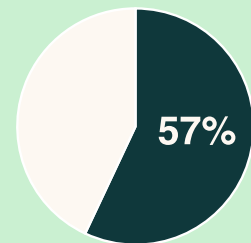
Millennials



Gen Z



Gen X



Boomers

TAKEAWAYS

- Building customer loyalty goes beyond discounts and shiny offers. Customer loyalty starts with building a community, whether through shared values, shared culture, or shared experiences.
- Be transparent about where your customer’s dollars are going -it could give your retention and engagement rates the boost you’ve been looking for!
- Customers value brands that serve a purpose.

Loyalty, Loyalty, Loyalty

Building on the topic of customer loyalty, nothing wins a customer over like surprise delights!

Customers love to feel valued, so it makes sense that offering rewards for their continued loyalty only motivates them to shop even more. However, we all know how to use traditional loyalty models such as points, tiers, and experiences. It's all everyone talks about!

Instead, let's take a look at some additional strategies to help you maximize the value of your program.

1. Rewards for Reviews

Your customers are your greatest critics and assets. Their opinion is worth more than its weight in gold, so of course, it deserves to be rewarded! Offering incentives such as free samples, add-ons items, discounts, or even access to exclusive recipes (if that's your niche) provides value to your customers and can motivate them to leave more positive feedback.

Additionally, make sure that when getting feedback, you do more than just value it; you use it.

STAT

If a brand has a loyalty program:

75% of consumers are more likely to do business

34% of consumers feel more inclined to become repeat buyers.

Known as the Netflix of Wine, **Winc** uses customer reviews and feedback to create more appealing wine selections that better fit the tastes and sensibilities of its customers. This ultimately streamlines their R&D process as they no longer have to guess what their customers want - they already know.

You Have Great Taste. May We Suggest...

★★★★★ 4.2	★★★★★ 3.7	★★★★★ 3.6	★★★★★ 3.7
"Jammy, Bold, Food Friendly"	"Fruit Forward, Round, Food Friendly"	"Red Fruit, Elegant, Herb"	"Complex, Punchy, Textured"

STAT

91% of customers value brands that offer personalized recommendations relevant to their interests.

2. Omnichannel Loyalty

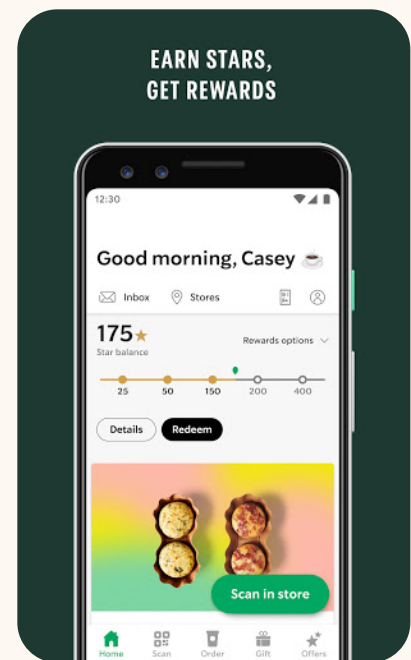
Holism is the name of the game! While points and rewards are great for building loyalty through gamification, make sure those rewards translate well through different mediums. The accessibility and redeemability of these perks will make all the difference in whether customers engage or go ghost. The trick to providing the best customer experience is to always meet your customers where they are at.

STAT

71% of brands that use omnichannel loyalty programs experienced more than a **50%** increase in transaction volume.

Starbucks is a brand well-known for making great coffee and having what is considered the #1 loyalty program in the food and beverage industry because of its holistic approach.

Through its mobile app, customers enjoy in-person benefits like online ordering to skip the lines and redeeming in-store rewards like free coffee, merchandise, or meal items. This holistic approach is not only impressive in the engagement it garners, but also in the amount of data that Starbucks can collect from it.



By using the customer profile data stored within the mobile app, Starbucks has the means to create more personalized experiences for its customers both online and in-store. With this data, they can accurately identify the times and days in which their most loyal customers are likely to make return visits, along with what specific items they favor, all of which are useful for building personalized segments and improving targeting for ads, emails, and texts.

Ultimately, Starbucks is not only ensuring a positive customer experience, but actively using the data collected as an opportunity to further boost their sales, customer satisfaction rating, and customer loyalty at the same time.

3. Referral Programs

Word of mouth is the most organic and effective method of retention marketing used within or alongside loyalty programs.

STAT

81% of customers are more likely to do business with brands recommended to them by someone they know and trust.



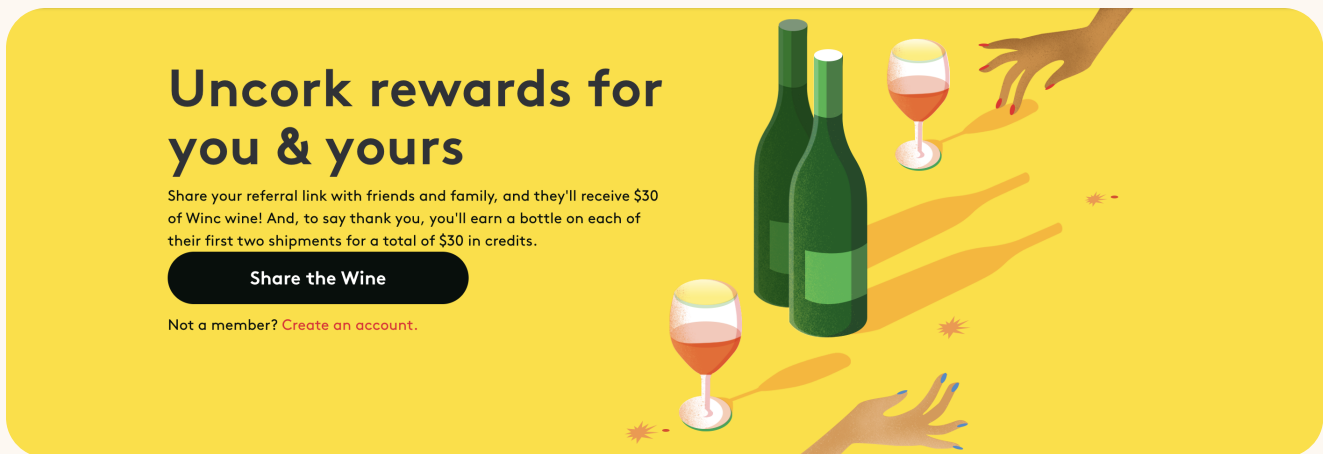
Most brands already have a referral program in place, but none use it quite as effectively for encouraging loyalty like the wine industry, specifically, the brand Winc.

STAT



The wine industry has the highest retention rate (48%) and customer LTV (\$737) within the food and beverage space.

Back again for an encore is **Winc's** referral program (we can't help it, it's just that good!) Winc's program stands out not for what they offer, but for how it is positioned to its existing customers. For newly referred customers, Winc offers a \$30 credit for their first order but offers two complimentary bottles of wine to customers that make the referral.

A promotional graphic for Winc's referral program. It features a yellow background with illustrations of two green wine bottles and two wine glasses filled with red wine. Two hands are shown, one reaching towards the bottles and another towards the glasses. The text reads: "Uncork rewards for you & yours". Below this, it says: "Share your referral link with friends and family, and they'll receive \$30 of Winc wine! And, to say thank you, you'll earn a bottle on each of their first two shipments for a total of \$30 in credits." There is a black button with white text that says "Share the Wine". At the bottom left, it says "Not a member? [Create an account.](#)"

Uncork rewards for you & yours

Share your referral link with friends and family, and they'll receive \$30 of Winc wine! And, to say thank you, you'll earn a bottle on each of their first two shipments for a total of \$30 in credits.

[Share the Wine](#)

Not a member? [Create an account.](#)

It's clever because two bottles of Winc branded wine is worth \$30. However, by presenting an offer that aligns with the customer's interests, Winc is able to motivate these customers to actively introduce more people to the service. After all, who doesn't love to get their favorite products at the price of free ninety-nine?

In the long term, not only does this offer promote brand advocacy, but it also helps identify their most devoted users, which Winc can leverage within other areas of their brand initiatives.

TIP

Relevancy boosts morale. Make sure your offers and incentives align with what your customers value for the best results.

4. Exclusive Access Perks

While on the topic of honing in on your most engaged and devoted customers, make sure to reward their loyalty with the gift of exclusivity! Again, customers love to feel valued and like they're getting the best experience. Exclusive access clubs fulfill this need in two ways.

Unique Experiences

Loyalty is becoming more of a two way street in recent years as customer expectations are at an all time high. Customers now require more connection, authenticity, and engagement from brands to show that these companies are just as invested in its customers as the customers are in them. One way to do this is to allow customers to meet the brains behind their favorite brands.

STAT

37% of millennials expect brands to engage with them from the very top.

JuneShine is a brand already ahead of the curve, taking the initiative of offering exclusive meet & greets to its most devoted customers via intimate outings and events with their founder and team.

“We have a field marketing team that plans unique events that are intimate and memorable enough to seem like a low-key hangout or a party among friends rather than a ‘branded event’. People nowadays are getting so used to getting marketing emails and texts with discounts and empty messaging that I think this approach is refreshing for folks.”



Annie Atwell, Marketing Director @ Juneshine

Behind the Scenes Access

Piggybacking on how to leverage customer feedback within product and marketing initiatives, customer advisory boards provide the ultimate experience of exclusivity.

For food and beverage brands, this could look like a program in which the highest valued customers can recommend, test, or gain access to new recipes, products, or services before they are released to the public.

Not only does this type of experience show that the brand trusts and values the judgement of its customers, but it also helps gain direct insight into consumer needs and interests. In turn, the brand can refine and deliver on these needs to improve overall customer satisfaction, fuel further engagement, and generate loyalty from the vast majority of its customers.

TAKEAWAYS

- Use customer feedback as a reference when making informed decisions of how to improve your product and service to ultimately create a better experience for your customers.
- Make relevancy a priority in your offers or rewards to boost customer morale.
- Word of mouth is just as effective, if not more than, targeted advertisements and campaigns.
- Utilize your existing customers to gain business from new customers by repurposing customer reviews within your marketing strategy.

How to Maximize the Value of Your Loyalty Program with **KONVO**

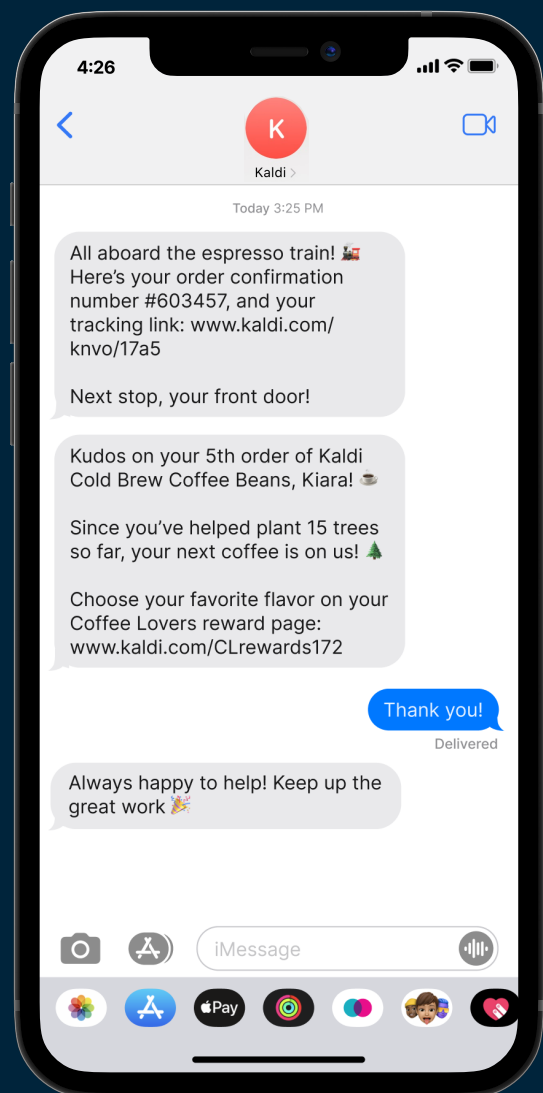
While gamification has been the traditional way of winning customer loyalty, today's customers have higher expectations, and basic incentives just don't cut it anymore. If you want to maximize the value of your loyalty program for your customers, consider offering rewards that reflect the impact of their purchases.

Example

With **Konvo**, each time a customer orders your products, they will receive a personalized message giving kudos and notifying them of the progress they're making to create a better tomorrow.

By highlighting and actively tracking the positive impact of their purchases, it gives the consumer a sense of purpose and value, knowing that they are making a change and their money is going to a good cause.

The result? Customers will feel more motivated to buy from your brand over time, thus encouraging loyalty and driving up repeat purchase rates.



Subscriptions are BOOMING

STAT

The average repurchase window (or time between orders) for DTC food and beverage brands is 105 days.

Already growing at a rate of 6x within the last decade, COVID-19 caused growth within the subscription economy to accelerate exponentially. With 37% of consumers expressing an interest in food and drink subscriptions, no time was wasted in these brands seizing the opportunity to shorten the time between orders, and ultimately drive repeat purchases.

Time Between Orders Vertical Breakdown

	Coffee	143 days		Meal Delivery	75 days
	Wine	132 days		Groceries	75 days
	Fresh Juice	129 days		Meat Markets	74 days
	Tea	96 days			

Meal Kits

For the consumer, the goal of online shopping is to make their lives easier through convenience and accessibility. Meal Kits check off both of these boxes by cutting out the hassle of grocery lists, shopping trips, and measuring meal portions. However, with so many options readily available to the consumer, if you don't want your brand on the chopping block, pay close attention to what these brands are doing to stand out!

Create Customized Experiences

When it comes to building up a unique experience for your customers that they will value, personalization and customization go hand in hand.

TIP

Success rates are often higher amongst subscription programs that offer flexible customizations as it provides greater value in the customer's experience.



Home Chef is an excellent example of how to break the traditional mold. Rated #1 in customer satisfaction and known for adopting a highly customized user experience, Home Chef introduces some zest and excitement to more than just its recipes!

Unlike traditional meal kit service models, Home Chef digs deeper into dietary needs and restrictions early on in the curation process. This not only sets them apart from the three-question standard that traditional meal kits follow, but also allows them to collect more user profile data early on to create a more personalized experience throughout the user journey.

Additionally, customers are allowed the flexibility to pick and create a custom meal plan that they can upgrade, swap, edit, or double up with more protein options.

This high level of customization has proven fruitful for its retention rates as 54.6% of its customers returned for a second delivery and 38.3% for a third!



Ensure Cost-Effectiveness

While meal kits rose in popularity during the lockdown phase of 2020, brands like HelloFresh were able to maintain their upward momentum in the following years because of its sustainable pricing model.

STAT

70% of customers often churn from meal kit subscriptions within the first year because of the long-term cost month over month.

Alongside its affordability, **HelloFresh** also offers a top-tier experience with high-quality ingredients, delicious recipes, sustainable packaging, and thorough quality assurance testing. All of which allowed the industry giant to beat out its low-cost competitors and experience a nearly 59% sales increase towards the end of 2021.

Be Data-Centric

Using machine learning to curate wine recommendations based on customer preferences, **First Leaf** is one of America's top wine club subscriptions because of its highly data-driven subscription model.

What's most impressive is their highly sophisticated quiz model that consists of over ****400,000**** possible paths users can take to receive the wine selections - or "wine fingerprint" - that is unique to them. As a result, the company saw 475% growth in annual revenue for over three years, which the company credits to its algorithm-reliant model.

Now that's how you do data.

TAKEAWAYS

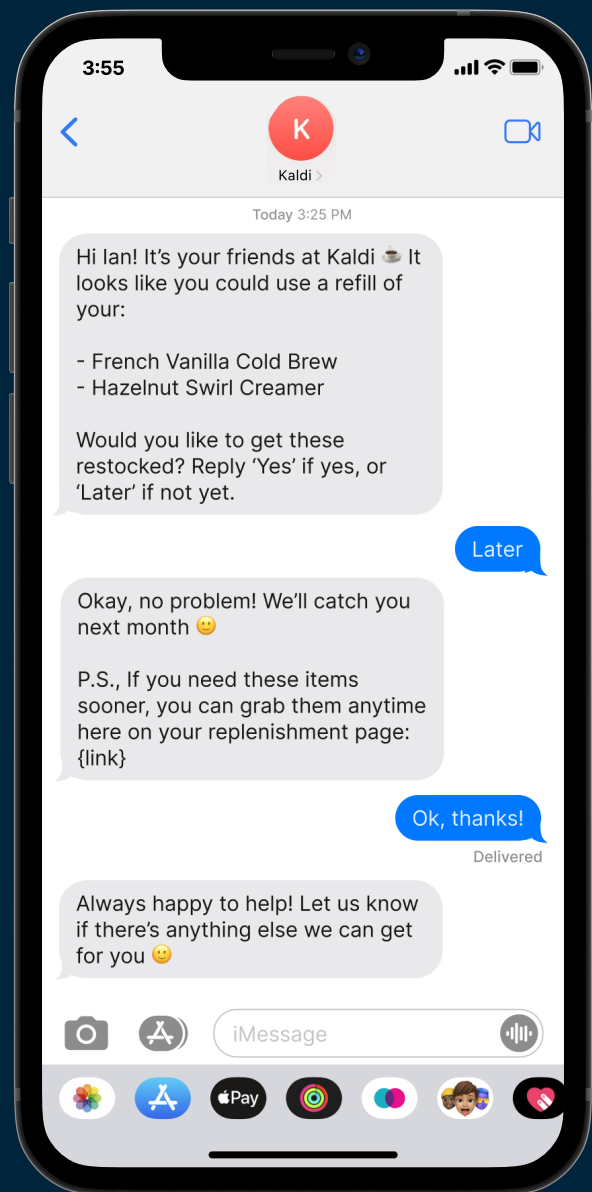
- Customers can find convenience anywhere online. Think long-term about how to make your service viable for your customers.
- Personalization is nothing without customization. Move away from gaining surface-level customer data and dig in to really make your products feel like they're their own
- Providing a positive customer experience throughout the entire customer journey is key to ensuring high retention rates.

Subscriptions Not Your Thing? Think Outside the Subscription Box

While subscriptions are great for driving up repeat purchase rates month over month, we understand that subscriptions just aren't for everyone. In our previous article, [The Evolution of Subscriptions for CPG Brands](#), we explored why on average, nearly 90% of customers do not sign up for subscriptions, why churn happens, and how to address these challenges.

Whether your brand has not had much luck with subscription programs in the past or simply does not care to hop on the trend, you can bet that though your customers may not care for the commitment, they love the convenience that comes with a subscription.

With **Konvo**, your brand can keep even your most subscription-shy customers engaged post-purchase by offering all of the convenience and personalization of a subscription without the commitment.



Not only is this approach effective for driving repeat purchases with subscription-shy customers, but it can also help re-engage churned subscribers as well by eliminating their pain points of:

- Surprise charges.
- Product overstock.
- Inflexible delivery schedules.

By instead offering them:

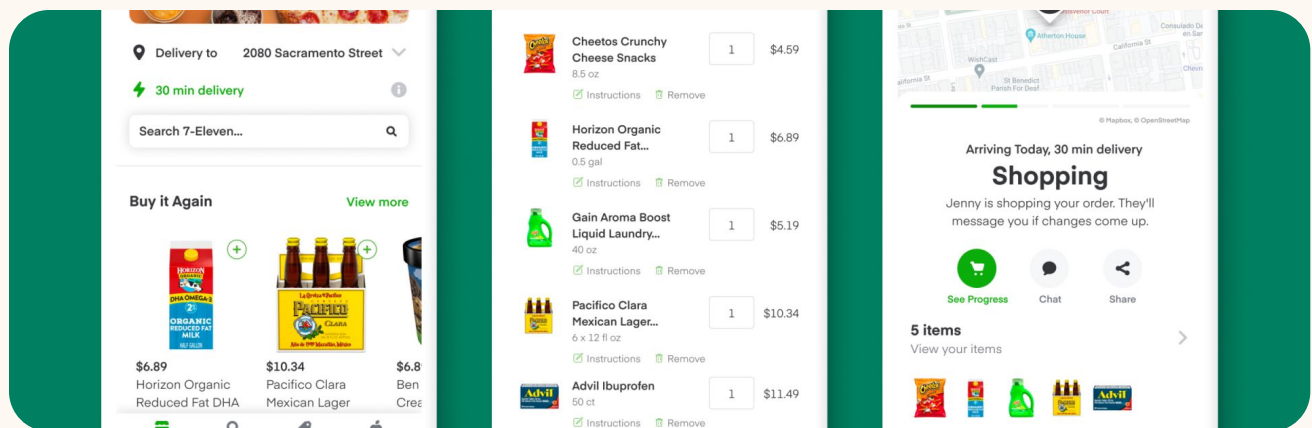
- A commitment and pressure-free experience.
- Highly customizable, friendly, and flexible replenishment reminders.
- Complete control of their orders via the channel that is most easily accessible to them; SMS.



Creating In-Store Experiences Online

Do you remember that part of 2020 when restaurants, coffee shops, and grocery stores, were forced to close down? Though many businesses were able to pivot and find success in the online DTC space, a new consumer need arose - connection.

Brands like **Instacart** understood that stores needed to meet customers where they are at. Offering all of the convenience of online delivery with a more personalized shopping experience led to a (nearly) 230% increase in sales for the business.

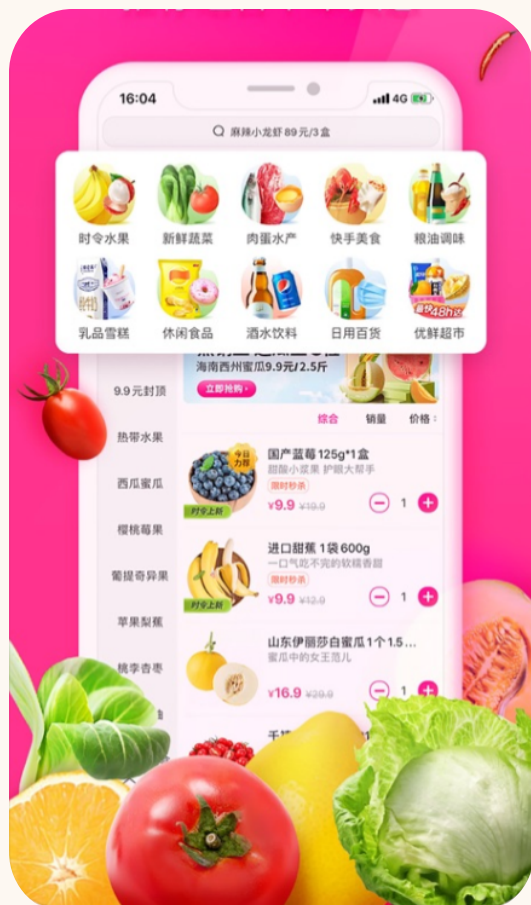


However, it was **MissFresh** that took it one step further to recreate and deliver all of the benefits of an in-person shopping experience directly to its customers.

STAT

93% of customers are more likely to practice brand loyalty when they feel taken care of by the brand.

During Q3 of 2021, the neighborhood retail market leader launched the first iteration of its personalized shopping concierge service to only their most high-valued customers. The program assigned dedicated advisors to provide one-on-one communication with customers from pre-sale to post-purchase, offering:



- Personalized recommendations based on dietary restrictions and requirements.
- A Q&A session on product usage, nutritional value, and proportions.
- Customer feedback requests and handling regarding the service.

The Result

Avg # of Orders per Customer	↑ 70%
Avg Monthly Revenue per Service User	↑ 100%
<i>compared to that of its non-concierge service customers.</i>	

TAKEAWAYS

- Always be flexible and prepared to meet your customers where they are at.
- Customers value 1:1 interactions in which they receive undivided attention and support from the brand; similar to what is offered by an in-store associate.
- Educating customers throughout their buying journey yields positive results in terms of sales, customer satisfaction, and in turn, retention rates.

How to Engage Your Customers at Scale with Konvo

Creating such a robust and personalized post-purchase experience at scale can be challenging for many brands, especially if done over SMS. Automations can overlap, over-communication can occur, and ticket volume can become a huge mess for the customer experience team.

Through the use of conversational AI, **Konvo** replicates aspects of the concierge servicing model and automates it at scale to allow businesses to create highly customized and personalized experiences for their customers.



This level of immediate and personalized support helps improve overall customer satisfaction by reducing the estimated wait time for a response.

By assuring customers that their issues have been acknowledged and support is on the way sooner rather than later, Konvo reduces the likelihood of disgruntled customers and customer complaints.

STAT

Nearly **97%** of customers who have an extremely positive customer experience will spread the word to their peers directly or via a review, drawing in more customers.

Additionally, **Konvo** also comes with a variety of built-in scripts that are constantly updated to handle conversations including:

- Replenishment reminders
- Purchase objections
- Customer feedback
- FAQs

SMS is Where Your Customers Are At

SMS is a channel rising in popularity because of how easily accessible it is to the consumer. Though email and SMS have similar capabilities, SMS is proven to outperform email in terms of the engagement it gets and is a favorite amongst consumers. An estimated 91% of people choose to opt-in for texts from their favorite brands while only 49% prefer emails.

This is not to argue that email should be tossed aside, but it should be noted that if you are looking to be amongst the top-performing food and beverage brands, it is best to adopt a cross-channel strategy that uses email for standard automations and SMS to create a more personalized experience.

Flexibility & Convenience

Olipop, the soda brand quickly becoming the new face of good-for-you soft beverages, simplifies the subscription experience for its customers via SMS. Understanding how frustrating it is for customers to jump through hoops to manage and edit their subscriptions, Olipop gives its customers the flexibility to skip, edit, or make updates to their subscriptions on the channel that is most easily accessible to them.

**Time to subscribe.
It's simple & easy!**

SUBSCRIBE TO ANY PRODUCT YOU'D LIKE
Select flavor and frequency.

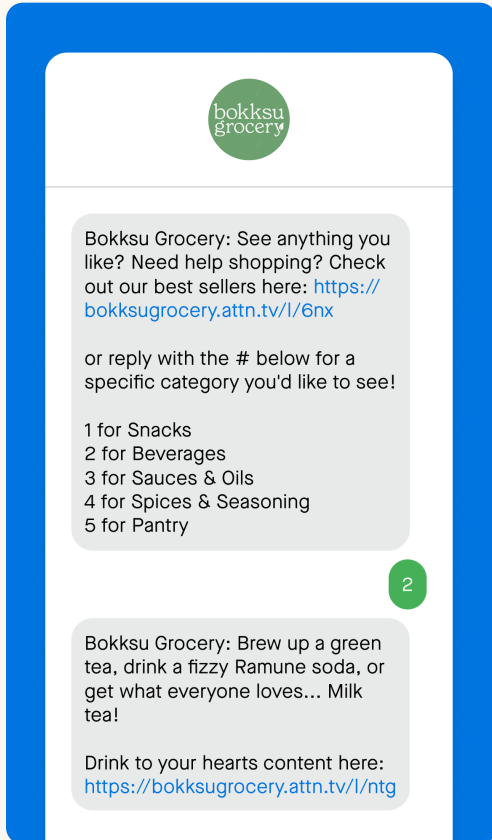
TEXT WITH US
Shoot us a text message to swap, pause, or cancel your next order!

CANCEL AT ANY TIME
No hard feelings.

Subscribe Today

As a result of delivering on this need, Olipop has the opportunity to drive up customer LTV, loyalty, and retention within its subscription program.

Accommodation



Grocery brand, **Bokksu Grocery** leverages the qualities of a concierge program within its SMS strategy to help get its customers the products they want faster. At the pre-purchase point of the user journey, Bokksu sends an automated text prompt with a variety of keywords to narrow down their preferences before directing them to the right product page.

This conversational approach not only saves time for the customer, but also allows the brand to collect data on user preferences, which can be used to deliver more targeted messaging in different stages of the customer journey.

Connection

SMS makes it easier to connect with your customers in a more direct and authentic manner that just can't be replicated through social media, ads, or emails. The seltzer brand, **Moment**, hones in on this aspect to establish a relationship with its SMS subscribers early on in the pre-purchase phase of their journey with a "secret" meditation club.

Within this community, subscribers are sent a daily link to a free wellness video and are prompted to ask product-related questions which are often answered almost immediately by a member of Moment's team. As a result of adding so much value early on in the customer journey, Moment is able to drive up customer loyalty.



During Q3 of 2021, neighborhood retail market leader **MissFresh** launched the first iteration of its personalized shopping concierge service to only their most high-valued customers. The program assigned dedicated advisors to provide one-on-one communication with customers from pre-sale to post-purchase, offering:

STAT

86% of online shoppers are more responsive to 1:1 support from a human.

TAKEAWAYS

- Make data-driven decisions using zero-party customer profile data to better engage with your customers.
- SMS is the most personal communication channel you can use to engage and build relationships with your customers; avoid limiting it to just promotional messaging.
- Do not think of SMS and email as one or the other; for the best results, cover all bases with a cross-channel strategy.

Conclusion

Though the food and beverage industry maintained an upward trajectory over the last two years because of unprecedented circumstances, the driving force behind its continued success is clear. Through constant innovation, data-driven strategies, and staying aligned with consumer needs and values, food and beverage brands display a deep understanding of how to maximize its value for consumers that exceeds the benefit of convenience.

So, when it comes to optimizing your customer retention strategy, refer to these tactics to help your brand think outside the box, and create unique experiences that will provide significant value to your customers.

Optimizing Your Post-Purchase Experience with KONVO

On average, returning customers spend 67% more than their newly acquired counterparts, making the post-purchase point of the customer journey the most valuable where brands should actively be engaging. Yet, this is also the point in which we see many marketers drop the ball.

With only 18% focusing their efforts on retention and nearly 50% focusing on acquisition, it goes without saying that the post-purchase experience is a severely overlooked area of opportunity.

So, if you're thinking of implementing these strategies into your SMS program, here's how **Konvo's** Conversational Repurchase Platform helps your brand step outside the box.

How does it work?

- **Konvo** combines your customer profile data with AI-powered predictive analytics to identify patterns within your customers' online shopping sessions. This allows us to create and send customized replenishment reminders at the time your customers are most likely to run out - delivering all of the benefits of a subscription without the commitment.
- **Konvo** takes aspects of the concierge servicing model and automates it at scale with pre-written scripts. This allows the AI to hold a variety of conversations with customers including replenishment reminders, purchase objections, feedback, and order-related inquiries.
- **Konvo** meets your customers on the channel that is most personal to them (SMS) to deliver direct and convenient support.

The Result

- A robust and highly personalized customer experience that scales with your business.
- Disengaged customers come back to life with engagement rates of up to 30%.
- A 24% increase in AOV conversion performance.

**Interested in stepping outside the box?
Get in touch with our team to book your first demo with us!**

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