

# DoorDash, Taco Bell share 4 ways to build and retain brand loyalty

Article



Total brand loyalty is almost impossible to expect from today's consumers. But by earning consumer trust and delivering on promises, brands can get closer to being their first choice.

Here's some advice from executives at DoorDash and Taco Bell on how to build brand loyalty and what it takes to keep customers coming back.

## 1. Trust is the foundation

To build trust, brands need to make sure that they get the basics right, Kofi Amoo-Gottfried, CMO of DoorDash, said during a session at Advertising Week New York 2023.

“If you ordered something, did you get what you ordered? Did it show up in time? Was the food still hot? All of these things, if you don’t deliver on them, they erode trust,” Amoo-Gottfried said.

Once brands have consumer trust, they can start anticipating customers' needs or persuade them to make another purchase.

“To thrive, [brands need to] move beyond enabling trust to inspire customers,” said Dane Mathews, chief digital officer at Taco Bell. “Our vision is to get to a place where there’s going to be more delight than trust. And then we will finally be thinking about this from a relationship perspective [where] we can grow.”

## 2. Subscription programs can encourage frequency

“The two things that are super important in our business are retention and frequency,” said Amoo-Gottfried. “So if you’ve come on DoorDash, are you still here a month later? Are you still here three months later? Are you still here six months later, and so on? Are we retaining you and then increasing your frequency of purchase?”

Both **Taco Bell** and DoorDash use subscription programs to encourage more frequent purchases among customers. But these types of programs are best aimed at already-loyal customers that brands already have data on.

“[Subscriptions] need to be tied to discrete audiences that you’re trying to grow specific defined behaviors out of,” said Amoo-Gottfried. “And the metrics help give you clues into where and how to start to do that.”

## 3. Social media also plays a part

Purchases are where we begin thinking about loyalty, said Mathews, but social media can also offer fascinating insights.

Taco Bell's fans are so engaged on social media that some of them, dubbed "purple knights" by the brand, take to social media to help other consumers find out where they can get new Taco Bell products or give recommendations.

"We look at the sphere of loyalty beyond just purchases," said Mathews. "It's about how [to involve] other consumers that want to be engaged. We think that's part of being loyal too."

#### **4. Loyalty is a continuous journey**

Ultimately, brands will never earn a customer's loyalty 100% of the time, said Mathews. Instead, it's about continuing to earn consumer trust, which will unlock more frequent, and possibly larger, purchases.

"It's a game you're always trying to optimize," he said.

Amoo-Gottfried agreed, noting, "Loyalty is the end goal. You don't get there today. You have to earn it. So how do you keep building a better product? How do you keep building better value? How do you keep creating reasons for people to come back over [a prolonged period of] time?"

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