

The best rewards to build a brand community.






Your brand community is made up of customers who are invested in more than just what you're selling. They want to become a part of your brand itself and are looking for other ways to get engaged besides simply making a purchase.

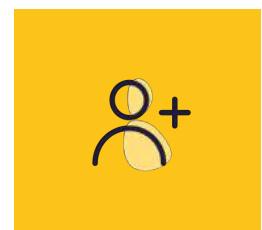


Whether you have an existing community or are looking to build a new one, rewards are the best and easiest way to motivate your customers to join, engage with, and share your brand — the 3 steps to building a thriving community.

To help you visualize how this all works together, we're going to show you the best rewards you can offer to get your customers to:

-  **Join your community**
-  **Engage with your community**
-  **Share your community with others**

How rewards motivate joining



Show value up front

When customers land on your website, most of them plan to simply make a purchase and leave. A rewards program creates a powerful motivator to not only create an account in order to make future checkouts easier, but also because of what they can earn just for signing up.

By clearly outlining what they can earn by joining your community, you show every customer the value your brand has to offer. This makes creating an account and coming back a much more appealing option than the single purchase they had originally intended.



Take action

Discover 15 ways to get your first customers to join your rewards program!

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Valuable rewards motivate a desire to achieve

Clearly showing your shoppers all of the great perks and rewards they can earn as a member of your community is one of the best ways to entice them to join. This is a result of Expectancy Theory, which states that customers will be motivated to put in more effort with your brand if they know they will receive an equal number of rewards in return.

By letting customers know exactly what they can earn, you eliminate the mystery behind the expectation and make it easier for them to decide that the value you're offering is worth the effort. With a visible Panel or dedicated explainer page showing them what's up for grabs, your customers can be confident that the rewards you're offering are truly valuable and, more importantly, desirable.



Community building block:

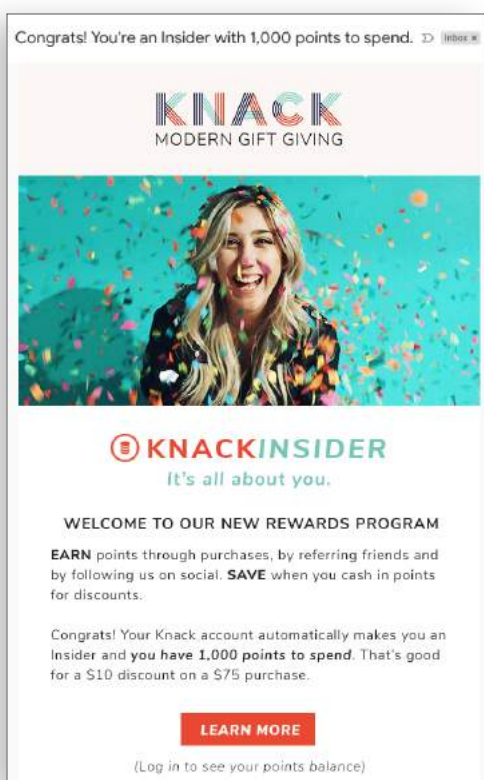
show customers the value of belonging to your community up front to get them excited.

The best rewards to motivate joining



Welcome points

Welcome points are the best way to show customers the value of joining right off the bat. Without even having to make a purchase they are receiving value from your brand, validating their decision to join your community.

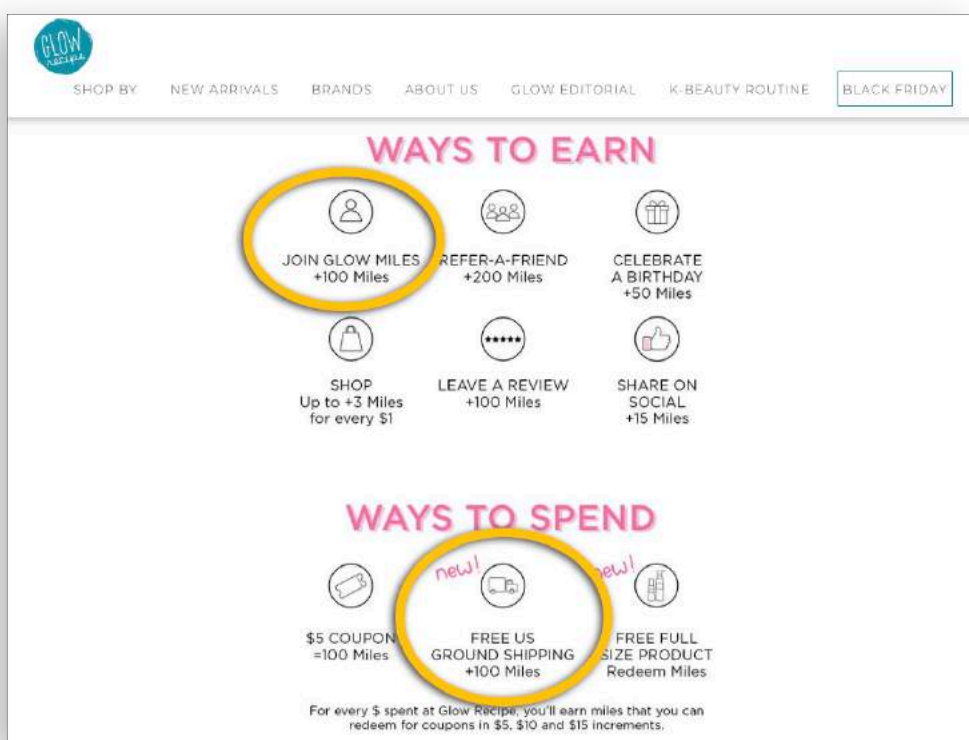


For Knack, giving gifts is both their business and how they run their rewards program. After signing up for their KnackInsider rewards program, members are given a whopping 1,000 points, redeemable for \$10 off their next \$75 order.

With these points in hand, making a purchase is a whole lot more appealing — even if they hadn't originally planned on it!

Free shipping

Nobody likes paying for shipping. In fact, 9 out of 10 shoppers indicate that free shipping is the number one offer that could get them to shop online more often. As a result, free shipping is one of the most enticing rewards you can offer and one of the best ways to encourage customers to join your community.



Glow Recipe knows how much their customers value free shipping, which is why they give new program members exactly enough welcome points to cash in for free shipping right away. With this super valuable reward available just for signing up, more shoppers will be motivated to join their community and keep shopping, picking up this highly valuable reward along the way.

Birthday points

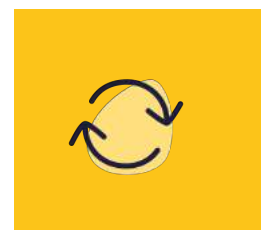
Birthday points are one of the best ways to encourage customers to join your program because everyone has one. Similar to welcome points, birthday rewards don't require your customers to do anything in order to be rewarded and guarantees that they'll see additional value from your program at least once a year.

They also give you the perfect opportunity to show each individual how much you appreciate them every single year, adding a small but impactful level of personalization to your community experience.



Ivory Ella wants each of their customers to feel special, and know that birthdays are one of the best times to make that emotional connection. For customers that haven't shared their birthday yet, they make sure they know that there's a delightful treat waiting for them if they do with gorgeous email messages. By showing customers this type of personalized attention, Ivory Ella makes it an easy decision to join their brand community and experience all the other goodness in store.

How rewards motivate engaging



Gamification makes earning exciting

The secret sauce behind a VIP program is that it encourages members to perform micro-actions, earn points, feel great about it, and do it all over again. The feeling of even these small successes can be addicting, making it hard to stop once we've started.

By rewarding your customers for small actions like sharing a post on Twitter or following you on Instagram, your community members will want to stay engaged with your program in order to see their points balances jump up. Even if only a little bit at a time, gamification makes earning exciting.



Take action

Learn everything you need to know about how to get members more engaged in your rewards program!

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Exclusivity breeds social comparison

When it comes to motivating engagement, nothing beats a tiered rewards program. That's because the social status members earn by reaching the top is one of the most valuable rewards there is. Your customers want to be told they're the best, and enjoy being put on a pedestal to highlight their elite status within your brand community.

When customers experience this elevated status in comparison to their peers, it creates a strong switching barrier. We all want to be special, and we're not about to let that feeling get away once we've earned it! This means your best members will do whatever it takes to maintain their status, staying engaged over time to keep their place at the top of the social ladder.



Community building block:

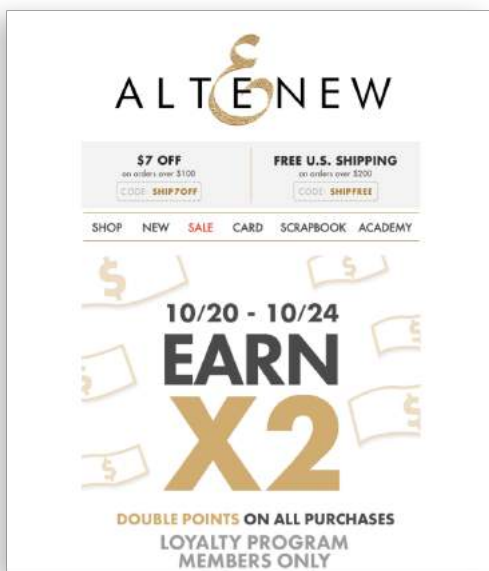
use social status and gamification to encourage customers to stay engaged with your community

The best rewards to motivate engaging



Bonus point events

Few things are as motivating as knowing you can get more bang for your buck. That's what makes bonus point events such powerful engagement tools. When customers know they can earn more points for every dollar spent, it's easier for them to imagine redeeming their next reward. This promise of imminent value will get them back to your store faster than you can say "earning multiplier!"

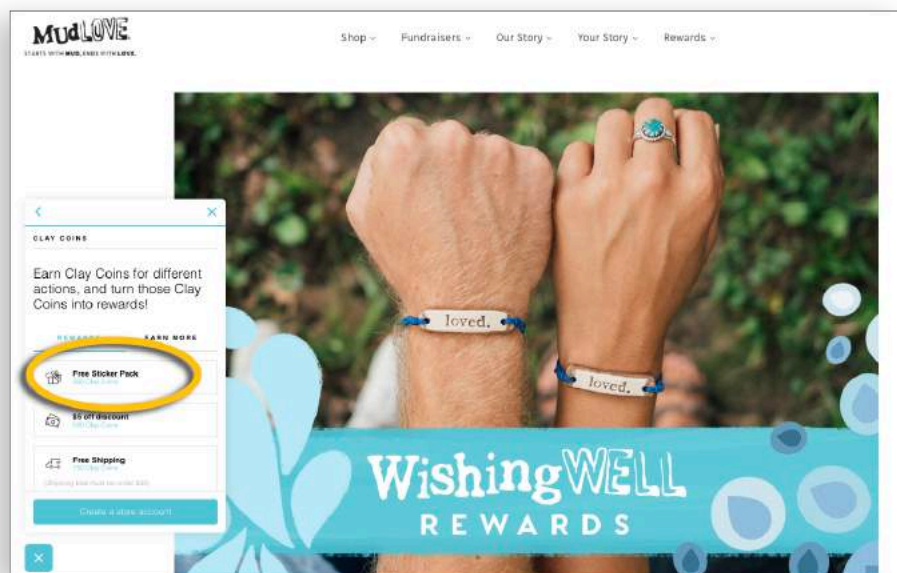


Members only events like this double points one run by Altenew drive huge community engagement. Not only are members coming back to make purchases and earn all those extra points, but they will also be much more likely to re-engage in the weeks after the event. With a bigger points balance to spend, they'll be eager to visit again and make the most of it.

Free products

One of the best ways to diversify your rewards menu is to offer members the ability to cash in their points for free products. Since you know what your community members value, you can tailor these rewards to suit their tastes.

You could even offer exclusive products as rewards. Giving your customers access to items they can't get off your regular store can be even more motivating, pushing them to engage with your program more often in pursuit of that exclusive reward.



MudLOVE wanted their ethically-minded program members to be physically rewarded as soon as possible. As a result, it makes sense that the first rewards their member can redeem points for is a free pack of stickers. By making this their first reward, customers can see (and feel!) more value in reaching that first redemption threshold and will do what it takes to keep experiencing that exciting feeling.

Early access

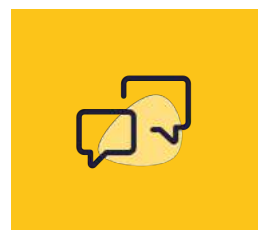
Nothing says “exclusive” like getting access to products and sales before anybody else. Giving your most loyal community members a sneak peek of what you’ve been working on is the perfect way to reaffirm their position in your program and increase its sense of luxury.

BEAUTY SQUAD <i>benefits</i>	GLOW GETTER	RISING STAR	A-LISTER
	0+ POINTS	101+ POINTS	401+ POINTS
ENROLLMENT OFFER	●	●	●
BIRTHDAY GIFT	●	●	●
FULL SIZE PRODUCTS <small>redeemable with points</small>	●	●	●
\$5 OFF \$20+ PURCHASE <small>Rising Star Bonus Offer</small>		●	●
FREE BEAUTY SET <small>redeemable with points</small>		●	●
EARLY ACCESS TO SALES		●	●
CHOOSE YOUR OWN SALE DAY A-LISTER BONUS OFFER			●
FREE DELUXE BEAUTY SET <small>redeemable with points</small>			●
EARLY ACCESS TO NEW PRODUCTS			●
	\$1 spent = 2 pts	\$1 spent = 4 pts	\$1 spent = 6 pts

For cosmetics brands like e.l.f., this sense of luxury is the strongest motivator in their Beauty Squad Program. On top of their other great rewards like free products and choose-your-own-sale days, they offer their Rising Star and A-lister VIP tiers early access to sales. A-lister’s also get early access to new products, separating them even further from members of the Glow Getter tier.

With these incredible status-based rewards on the horizon, the motivation is strong for Glow Getters to earn their way into the ranks of the most glamorous, committed community members.

How rewards motivate sharing



Reciprocity makes giving and receiving valuable

Most people like giving gifts almost as much as they enjoy receiving them. This is how reciprocity works: you do something for me, and I'll do something for you.

This is essentially what powers your rewards program. When your customers do something valuable for you (like making a purchase or leaving a product review), you give them points in return as a way of saying thank you. This establishes a two way exchange of value that not only keeps your customers coming back but also inspires them to share your community with others. Getting gifts is nice, but it's even nicer to be able to get a gift with a friend.



Take action

Find out the best ways to create the most effective referral program strategy!

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Users are already sharing content

Your customers are posting on social media every single day, making platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook the perfect tools to add to your community building toolkit. With over 2 billion social media users across the globe that could potentially discover your brand, you can use your members' user-generated content (UGC) to benefit your community.

By rewarding program members for their UGC, it's easy to show them that there is great value for them to not only love your community, but also to tell all their friends about it. It doesn't take much to turn your content community into your own motivated marketers — all you need are a couple of points!



Community building block:

**delight your customers every step of the way
so can't help but share your brand when
given the chance.**

The best rewards to motivate sharing



Referral rewards

Referrals are one of the pillars of a well rounded rewards program. They take advantage of reciprocity by rewarding your community members for sharing your brand with their friends. For every new customer they refer, they receive a referral reward and are able to give a reward to their friend. This turns the sharing process into something everyone can benefit from.



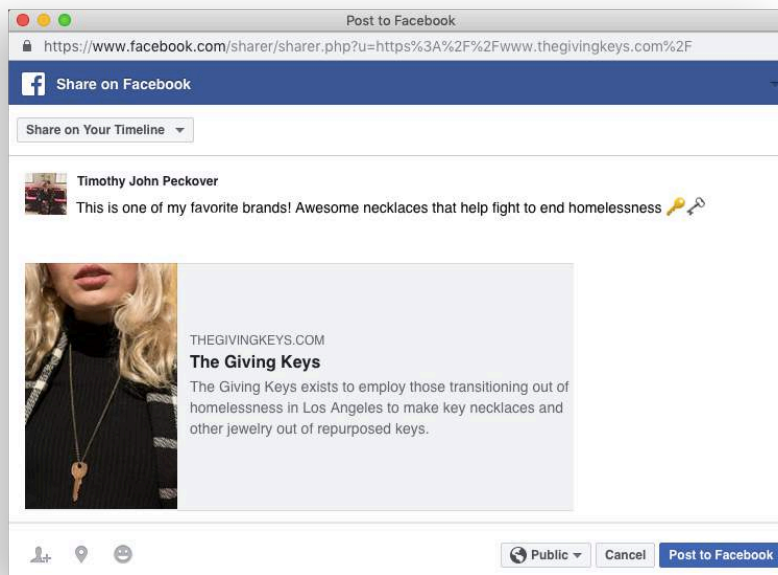
As a photo printing powerhouse, Mpix understands the power of sharing. Since photos are made for sharing, a referral program was an obvious choice as part of their community building strategy. They mobilize their members with eye catching referral emails like this one to encourage them to refer their friends.

By making sure their members know that each referral is going to be valuable for them, too, Mpix makes sharing a win-win!

Social media rewards

Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are where customers go to find out about new brands. As a result, it's also the place they want to tell others about the brands they love!

Making it easy for your customers to engage with you on social media (and giving them some points for doing so) is the perfect way to make social sharing a natural extension of your community experience.



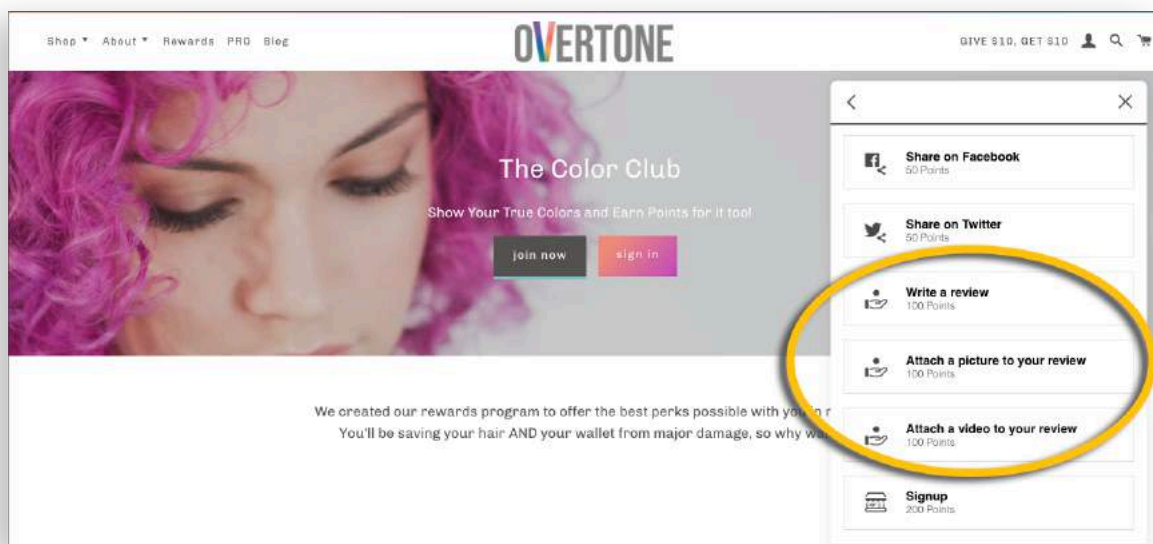
This is easy to see at work in The Giving Keys' community. Driven by their vision for ending homelessness, community members are primed to want to share that message far and wide.

To capitalize on this tendency, the Giving Keys gives rewards for sharing on Facebook, and with their rewards program members can share in just a couple of clicks. This makes it easy for their happy customers to get the word out, closing the Giving Keys' community building loop.

Product review rewards

Today's consumers do a lot of research before making a purchase, making product reviews a valuable form of social proof. The challenge is getting those reviews. Customers might be willing to share their experience, but without motivation it's easy for them to forget about it.

You can use points and the promise of a future reward to prompt customers to leave a review. When your customers know there are other shoppers who have had good experiences with your products, it's easier for potential shoppers to commit to your brand community.



oVertone knows the power of product reviews, which is why they've made them the focus of their program Panel. Not only do they reward for written reviews, but they also give an equal number of points for including photos and videos in them! With this reminder so prevalent in each program interaction, their members are prompted to create social proof that can speak volumes for prospective shoppers.



Make sure your Smile rewards are building community

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Start building a brand community with Smile

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