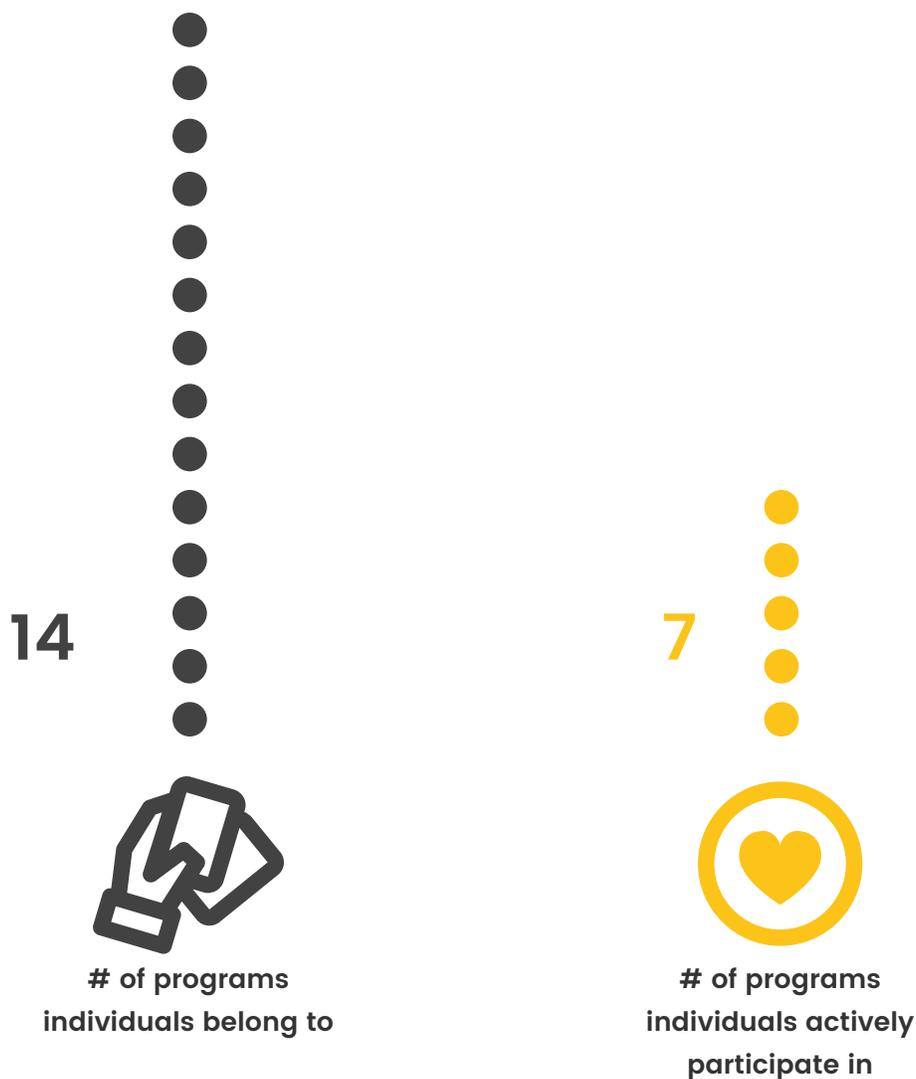


☺ smile.io

The expert's guide to **boosting program engagement.**



When it comes to building a brand community, it's easy to get stuck on the first step. After all, you need to keep adding new members if you want to continue growing, right?



The problem is that it takes more than getting new members in order to grow your brand community. According to Bond Loyalty, the average customer is enrolled in as many as 14 reward programs but only actively engaged in half of them. That means you need to be offering an unparalleled community experience to guarantee that your program is one of the 7 they choose to engage with.



The key to an impactful community experience lies in how they're connected. Since none of these stages exist in a vacuum, they need to work together in order to sustain your brand's long-term growth. As a result, simply having members isn't enough for a successful program. Instead, you need those members to be actively engaged in the experience your program offers.

In order to make sure your members are as engaged as possible, we're going to show you the 5 most common rewards program problems and how you can ensure you get as many customers engaged as possible.

Problem: customers don't know the benefits of participating



Reciprocity is at the heart of any successful rewards program. When you give your customers something valuable in exchange for their loyalty, you create a feedback loop that is both appealing to join and motivating to stay a part of.

However, in order for that feedback loop to start, your customers need to know what they're getting. Colloquy conducted a survey that asked loyalty program members to share the most important factor for participating in a rewards program, and the number one response was that a program is easy to understand.



81% of respondents said that a clear program outline is important to them.

Health check:

Can your customers quickly and easily answer the following 3 questions about your program?



- What's in it for me?
- How do I earn rewards?
- Where do I sign up?

If you answered no to any of these questions, your program engagement will suffer.

Solution: **build an explainer page**

Transparency is the key to getting your customers excited about your program. That means you can't hide behind fine print. Burying program restrictions in your terms of service or FAQ page are not appropriate ways to inform customers about your program. Instead, build a dedicated program page that visually breaks down the details of your program in quick, easy-to-understand chunks. This gives you the perfect place to address those 3 most important questions any customer will have about your program.

Example: Maggie Louise Confections

FREE SHIPPING ON ORDERS \$20+ TODAY

MAGGIE LOUISE CONFECTIONS

WELCOME TO CLUB COCOA MAGGIE LOUISE

- 1 Join the Club.
- 2 Start Earning Points.
- 3 Redeem Points for Sweet Rewards.

Join Club Cocoa now and start earning points with every purchase to use towards exclusive rewards.

[JOIN NOW](#) [SIGN IN](#)

	LEVEL 1 INSIDER (\$0-\$250)	LEVEL 2 ENTHUSIAST (\$250-\$499)	LEVEL 3 CONNOISSEUR (\$500+)
Welcome Gift			
\$5 Gift Card			
Birthday Gift			
Preview New Collections			
Priority Shipping			
Gifts From New Launches			
Exclusive Events			

Join Club Cocoa now and start earning points with every purchase to use towards exclusive rewards.

[JOIN NOW](#) [SIGN IN](#)

Why we love it:

Between the clear VIP tier breakdown, beautiful branding, and multiple invitations to join, Maggie Louise Confections has made participating in their program literally as easy as 1, 2, 3.



Take action:

Build your own fantastic explainer page.

[LEARN HOW](#)

Problem:

customers are having trouble earning points



Your customers get bored very easily. With so many brands to explore and discover, they're looking to join brand communities that are fun and fresh, and a rewards program has a lot to do with whether your brand can meet these needs.

If you are only rewarding customers with points for purchases, it won't be long before your customers start looking for the door. Not only is this not a very exciting rewards experience, but it also prevents them from earning rewards fast enough to keep them excited about being a member.

When customers feel they aren't earning rewards quick enough, they'll start considering your competitors when it's time to make their next purchase. Not only will this negatively impact your repeat purchase rate, but it will also continue to drag down your program engagement, stopping your community building cycle in its tracks.

Health check:

Are you motivating your customers to complete valuable actions besides making purchases at your store?



If you answered no, you are not giving your customers enough incentive to stay engaged.

Solution: offer more ways to earn points

There are a ton of ways to create value for both your brand and your community members besides rewarding for purchases:



Creating an account



Celebrating a birthday



Engaging on social media



Referring a friend



And more!



50% of rewards program members participate more actively in programs that offer a variety of ways to earn points.

(Colloquy)

Each of these actions are easy to understand and complete, making it more likely that customers will stay engaged over time.

Example: SweetLegs

WE WANT TO THANK YOU FOR BEING AMAZING!
EARN POINTS FOR SPENDING, REFERRING FRIENDS AND MORE
SIGN UP TODAY AND GET 250 POINTS ON US!

So Many Ways To Earn Points.

- 5+ POINTS**
Every \$1 you spend
- 250 POINTS**
Create an Account
- 500 POINTS**
On your birthday!
- 150 POINTS**
Write a review
- 250 POINTS**
Write a review w/photo
- 350 POINTS**
Write a review w/video
- 50 POINTS**
Share on Facebook
- 50 POINTS**
Share On Instagram
- 50 POINTS**
Retweet via Twitter

Why we love it:

SweetLegs makes sure their customers have a variety of ways to get and stay engaged, including birthday points and social engagement. They even make sure you know all of the ways you can earn as soon as you land on their explainer page with clear written descriptions.



Take action:

Make sure you have more than one earning rule set up.

[ASSESS YOUR EARNING RULES](#)

Problem: customers don't know your program exists



Your members can't get engaged with your rewards program if they don't know it exists.

While this might seem obvious, this is undoubtedly the most common reason for low program engagement rates. Too often brands will launch a program and not tell their customers about it — a fact that does not bode well for success.

Unlike offline retail experiences, your website does not have cashiers or sales associates reminding customers to present their rewards card or asking them if they'd like to redeem points. As a result, you need to find ways to constantly remind them of everything your program has to offer.

Health check:

Can customers tell that you offer a rewards program just by looking at your homepage?



If you answered no, your program is not visible enough to get new customers engaged.

Solution: make your program visible on your site

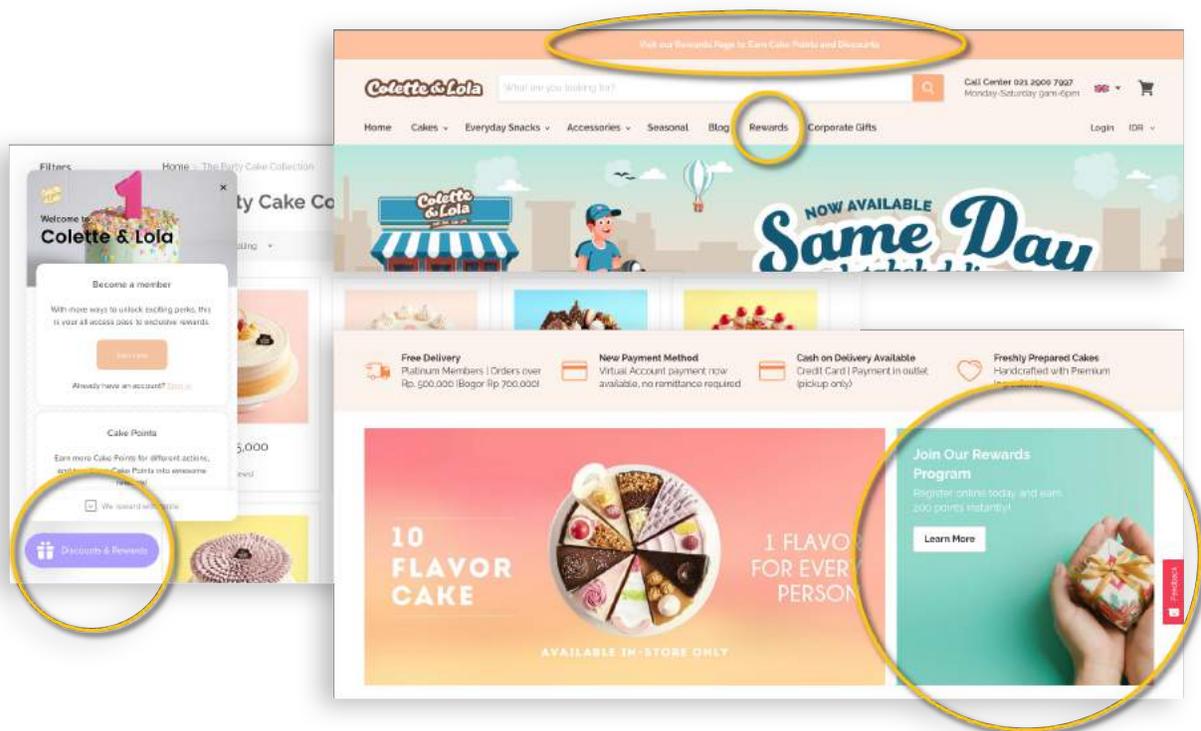
Your website has a number of highly valuable places you can promote your rewards program:

- Homepage
- Navigation bar
- Product pages
- Checkout page

Each of these locations are fantastic places to link to your program's explainer page or remind them what they can earn by joining. Use exciting colors, images, and clear CTAs to grab your customers' attention and get them excited about everything your rewards program has to offer.

Not only do these cues remind existing members to participate, but they also encourage new customers to join your community. Since many of your competitors won't offer this type of tailored customer experience, your program quickly becomes a point of differentiation that will push a potential customer to choose your brand first.

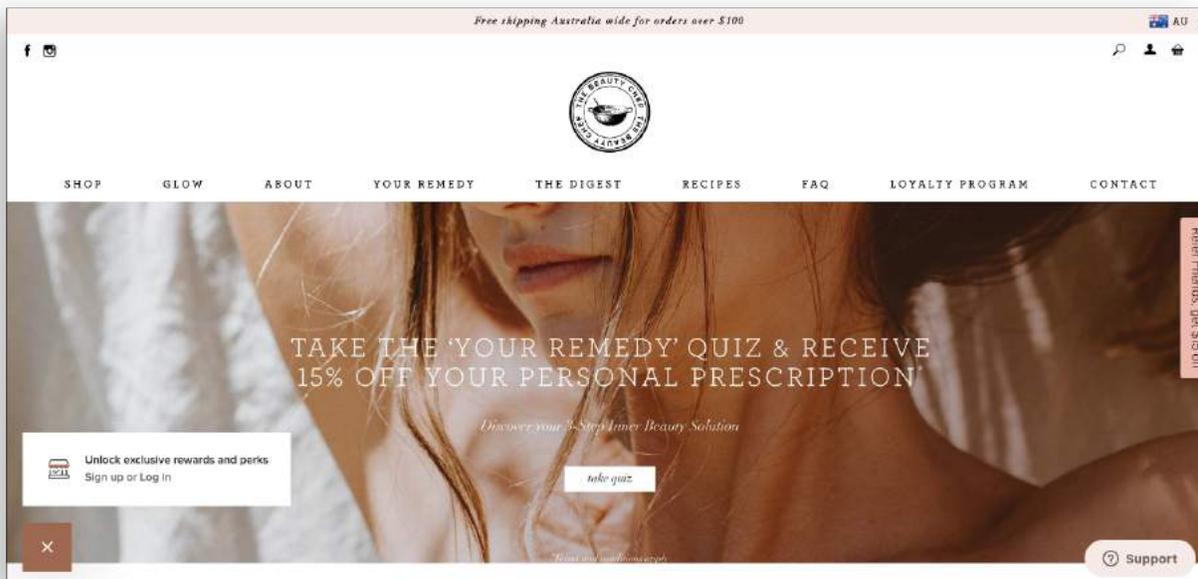
Example: Colette & Lola



Why we love it:

Colette & Lola has made it impossible to miss their rewards program by making their program Launcher visible on every page and including clear CTAs in their navigation bar and on their homepage.

Example: The Beauty Chef



Why we love it:

Colette & Lola has made it impossible to miss their rewards program by making their program Launcher visible on every page and including clear CTAs in their navigation bar and on their homepage.



Take action:

Find out more about where you should be promoting your rewards program on your site.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Problem: customers forget about your program



As discouraging as this might be, the reality is that your customers might forget about your rewards program. No matter how much they love being part of your brand community, other priorities will come up that preoccupy them in between purchases.

That means you need to proactively remind customers to come back and engage with your program. Simply waiting for them to return isn't enough. As competition continues to grow in every industry, your competitors are also fighting for your customers' attention. Unless you intentionally design a re-engagement strategy, your community is at risk.

Health check:

Is your repeat purchase rate and/or repeat customer rate increasing?



If you answered no, your community members have forgotten the benefits of being part of your rewards program.

Solution:

send regular program emails

A great way to boost participation in your rewards program is to combine rewards and email marketing through supercharged, value-focused campaigns. Email is among the most trusted and effective marketing tools, making it the perfect avenue for re-engaging your existing members.

You can easily remind customers of the value of your rewards program in a number of ways:



Launch campaign

Announces your program to existing customers and encourages them to participate.



Welcome message

Lets customers who join your program know how they can earn and spend points.



“What’s in it for me?” message

Show customers what rewards they can earn by engaging with your program.



Points earned or spent

Keep your program top of mind by reminding members how often they interact with your program.



Points balance emails

Remind customers how many points they have and encourage them to come back to spend them.



Points expiry emails

Let customers know their points are expiring soon and remind them what they can redeem them for.



Bonus point campaign

Motivate customers to come back by increasing the number of points they can earn for a limited period of time.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Example: One Love Organics



Why we love it:

With regular redemption campaigns, bonus point promotions, and points balance emails, it's impossible for Love Club members to forget about One Love Organic's incredible brand community!



Take action:

Learn how to run an effective launch email campaign with our expert guide.

[GET THE GUIDE](#)

Solution:

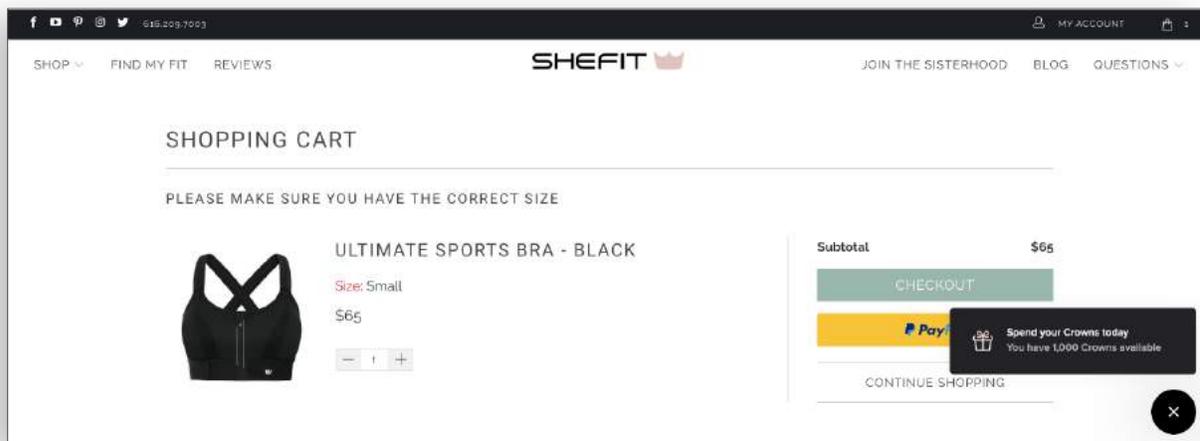
use program nudges

When customers get caught up in the excitement of exploring and purchasing your products, they might forget that they have points to spend or rewards to redeem. That's what makes Smile Nudges the perfect tool for keeping your program top-of-mind! These on-site reminders make it easy for your to boost engagement in the moments that matter, encouraging customers to use their points when they're most likely to.

The points spending and recent reward nudges are especially good at this. When customers experience the joy of turning points into a reward or are reminded that they have rewards they can redeem right away, you can strengthen the emotional connection they have with your brand and increase the odds of them engaging again in the future.

Best of all, nudges don't detract from your existing customer experience — instead, they add to it by making value easier to see and even easier to take advantage of! Combining these immediate reminders with an effective email strategy is the perfect way to make sure customers never forget how much they love and care about your rewards program.

Example: SheFit



Why we love it:

With a points spending nudge, SheFit is able to easily remind every customer to redeem their hard-earned rewards without interrupting their customer experience. This establishes a sense of trust between them and their program members, letting every SheFit member know that they always want them to get the best value from the Sisterhood Rewards program.



Take action:

Discover everything Smile Nudges can do to boost your program engagement.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Problem: customers don't find your rewards valuable



One of the most important things to remember when you're designing a rewards program is that every customer is different. Regardless of whether they're all interested in the product you sell or the values you stand for, each individual member of your brand community is going to have different priorities when it comes to why they chose your brand.

The same principle applies to your rewards program. Even though many of your customers might appreciate dollars off discounts, limiting your program to this type of reward closes the door to motivating other types of customers to get engaged.

It also makes your program significantly less exciting. Once a customer has earned a \$5 discount two or three times, the perceived value starts to decline. That's because it no longer feels rare or exclusive.

Similarly, the rate at which customers are earning points will also have a positive or negative impact on how often they engage. You want to offer rewards that are obtainable so shoppers are motivated to stay engaged. How is anyone supposed to get the 20,000 points needed for your reward if you are only giving 1 point per \$1 spent? With this earning model, your members would have to spend \$20,000 to get a reward.

Ask yourself if you would participate in that program, and you can quickly understand why your customers are no longer engaged.

Health check:

Do you have a low redemption rate?



If you answered yes, your customers do not find your rewards valuable and are looking for that value somewhere else.

Solution:

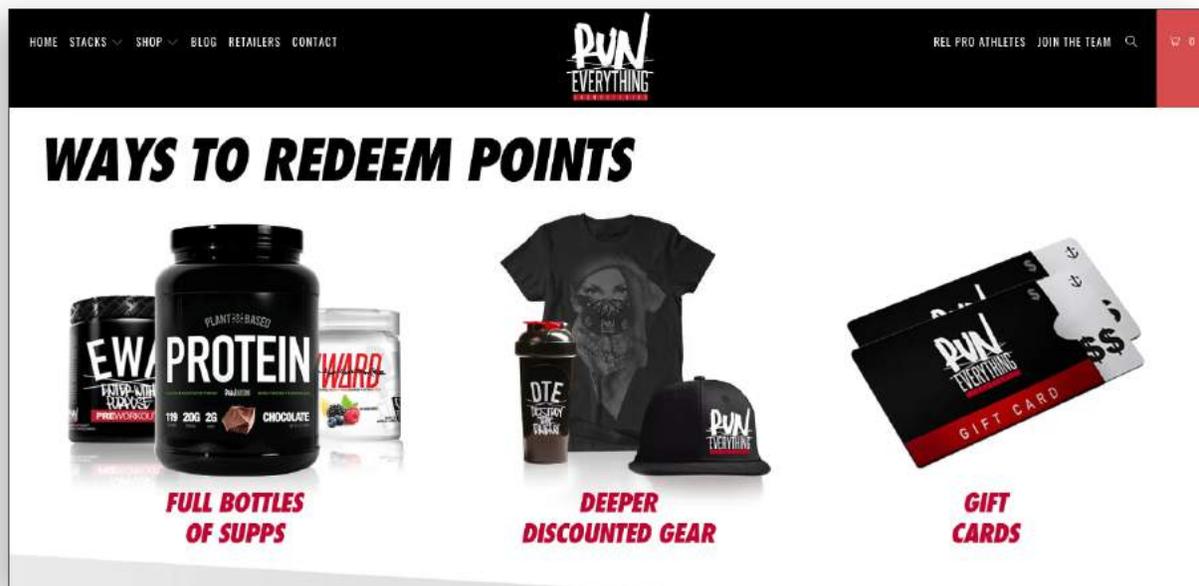
diversify your rewards menu

They say that variety is the spice of life, and when it comes to your rewards program that is absolutely true. Your rewards program members become hooked on your program when they first spend points on a reward, not while they are accumulating points, making the rewards you offer an incredibly powerful bargaining chip.

Offering a variety of transactional and experiential rewards is a surefire way to build a brand experience that allows every customer to find what they're looking for. With more rewards to work towards and new experiences to explore, customers will find more reasons to stay engaged with your program.

A great way to do this is by adding new rewards to your program over time to keep it fresh and exciting. Remember: your program is not a set-it-and-forget-it tool! Experimenting with rewards and ways to redeem will not only keep your customers interested, but also demonstrate your commitment to improving their customer experience.

Example: Run Everything Labs



Why we love it:

Whether their customers are looking for free products, straight discounts, or the freedom to do what they want, Run Everything Labs make sure that every customer can redeem rewards they find truly valuable.



Take action:

Expand your program's Spending Rules.

[SET UP REWARDS](#)

Want to learn more?

Our team has put together some more awesome resources to help you boost your program's engagement rates:

4 BEST TIMES TO
RE-ENGAGE MEMBERS



5 WAYS TO GET
MEMBERS ENGAGED



5 WAYS VIP TIERS
BOOST ENGAGEMENT



10 BEST REWARDS TO
BOOST ENGAGEMENT



BOOST ENGAGEMENT
WITH EMAIL

Contact Information.

sales@smile.io

1-855-699-9322

Visit us at smile.io

Author Information.

Kirsten Burkard

@kirstenburkard

