

## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PARTNERS

## Finding and “Arming” Advocates



**Conversation catalysts** (be they the Harley tattoo [discussed in Vol. XI-XVII], a Jim Beam cocktail glass, a Babies R Us car window shade, or countless others) are great tools for “breaking the ice” and thereby “permitting” others to engage into a discussion with the owner about the “promoted brand”. These interactions will hopefully accelerate *positive word of mouth* about the brand. But the costs of the catalyst, packaging and distributing it, typically adds up to more than a nominal expense. Pragmatically speaking, these tactics need to deliver a solid ROI—helping to increase profits by creating a significant volume of additional word of mouth. So, to guarantee effectiveness, the conversion starters can’t be “broadcast” distributed; they need to be given to a select group of customers - those in whose hands they will have the greatest impact. How does one determine which current customers should receive such catalysts? Customer Experience Partners recommends a three-step filter:

**1. Find your most behaviorally committed customers...** Sending an item to each and every customer, though a ‘democratic’ action, is unlikely to produce an acceptable ROI for the tactic. The majority of existing customers may not be dedicated to your brand. Sort your customers by spending and share-of-category allocation. Select only the top tier. Then you’ll have customers who are truly dedicated to your brand.

**2. Identify customers emotionally connected to your brand ...** There is also an emotional consideration. Customers may habitually buy a brand for many reasons other than a felt emotional connection (i.e. price; convenience; lack of involvement in the category; etc.) You need to find those of your customers who really care and would buy your brand even if it were harder to find or if it cost a bit more than your competitors.

**3. Select your customers who are vocal ...** Finally, all customers are not equal in their willingness or their ability to talk or write to others about a brand, product or service. Conversation catalysts should only be distributed to those who demonstrate experience in voicing their thoughts and feelings - and the more media channels they use, all the better.

**Now prepare these customers to “seed” positive conversations...**

Now you’ve identified your potential advocates: customers who are *behaviorally committed, emotionally connected*, and whose personality and communications skills qualify them as your best customer advocates. Placing a **conversation catalyst** into these folks’ hands will stimulate positive word of mouth! To learn more about creative ways to generate opportunities for your potential advocates to endorse your brand, call or visit our website:

[www.customerexperiencepartners.com](http://www.customerexperiencepartners.com)

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