



# **20 BRANDS CUSTOMERS LOVE**

**FACTORS DRIVING  
CUSTOMER LOYALTY  
IN 2018**

**CROWDTWIST™**  
Loyalty. Engaged.

# INTRODUCTION

In 2018, brands should be investing more time and money into fostering customer loyalty. Winning new customers is important to grow a business, but keeping existing customers satisfied and loyal is crucial to a brand's success. What are the drivers of brand loyalty? What keeps customers coming back? Which brands are leading the pack?

In this e-book, we'll highlight 20 brands that are investing in the brand-customer relationship to deliver the high-quality products and services that create the exceptional customer experiences that drive loyalty.

## WHAT BRAND LOYALTY MEANS IN 2018



Brand loyalty is thriving according to [research](#) by Facebook. The company surveyed 14,700 adults in the United States, examining patterns of behavior across multiple different brand verticals. Across the board, 77% of consumers have the tendency to return to their favorite brands over and over again. However, those 77% seem to be split into two main categories:

**Repeat Purchasers** account for 40%, and represent people who purchase from the same brands frequently but only because they gave them a lower price or made it more convenient to and they would have no problem switching brands. Repeat Purchasers are therefore more driven by price and convenience.

**Brand Loyalists** account for 37% of the population. They make repeat purchases and are truly “loyal” to their favorite brands, meaning they would not switch given an opportunity like lower prices or more convenient access. Brand Loyalists within a vertical tend to prioritize more emotive and experiential qualities, like trust and service.

Facebook recommends that brands build trust, create cross-screen appeal, focus on the experience and connect through personalized communication to drive customer acquisition and convert repeat purchasers to brand loyalists.

Let's take a look at 20 brands that customers love and the factors driving customer loyalty today.

77%

A large pink circle containing the text '77%' in white, bold font.

of consumers have the  
tendency to return to their  
favorite brands over and  
over again





**zumiez**



# Zumiez

## Why they made the list

They were recently ranked #1 in the [“Total Retail’s Top 100 Omnichannel Retailers”](#) report.

## Why customers love them...

### Flexible purchases

Zumiez has implemented a point-of-sale platform that provides a flexible way for customers to purchase across all channels. Zumiez’s customers are able to reserve/buy online and pick up in-store same day, ship from any store to any location, and order online from the store.

### Multichannel support

Customer service is provided across three different channels: phone, mail and email, making it easy for customers to get in touch in whichever way is most convenient for them.

### Customer rewards

Its omnichannel loyalty program, [Zumiez Stash](#), powered by CrowdTwist and accessible via a mobile app and online, provides members with the opportunity to earn points and redeem them for exclusive rewards, digital Zumiez Stash Screens, and one-of-a-kind experiences with the best Zumiez brands. Reward programs make customers feel valued for their loyalty to a brand, and in turn help generate sales and deeper relationships.



**“The secret for having the happiest customers isn’t a secret at all... Listen to customers, fix their pain points, give them a great deal.”**

John Legere, President and CEO of T-Mobile

# T-Mobile

## Why they made the list

T-Mobile was ranked #1 in Overall Customer Satisfaction and Likelihood to Recommend in 2017 in a study by HarrisX.

## Why customers love them...

### Extended coverage and reach

T-Mobile recently announced the news that it had [surpassed](#) its [aggressive commitment](#) to broadening its coverage by reaching 321 million people with LTE in 2017. In fact, the carrier has nearly tripled its LTE coverage since 2015 and now covers 99% as many people as Verizon. This demonstrates a commitment to ensuring customers are getting the best brand experience.

### Unbeatable service

T-Mobile's LTE network consistently delivers the [fastest](#) customer download and upload [speeds](#) in the industry, with speeds only continuing to increase. T-Mobile's LTE network just ranked fastest for the 16th quarter in a row – four straight years – according to Speedtest by Ookla, ensuring customers get more value for their money.

### Free rewards and sweepstakes

T-Mobile's rewards app T-Mobile Tuesdays keeps members engaged with not only free treats every week but with chances to win gift cards, movie tickets and merchandise in the T-Mobile "Spin to Win" game. This adds fun and excitement to the experience of being a T-Mobile loyalty member and gives members something to look forward to each week.





# Amazon

## Why they made the list

Amazon ranked #3 in a Retailer Preference Index survey and #3 in the 2017 [Prophet Brand Relevance Index™](#) (BRI).

## Why customers love them...

### Value beyond competitive pricing

Amazon Prime paid subscription loyalty program boasts an impressive membership of over 66 million. The benefits of being an Amazon Prime member include two-day free shipping, unlimited streaming of movies and TV shows and access to Kindle books, all for a monthly fee of \$10.99 or \$99 for a year's membership.

### Seamless transaction technology

Purchasing a product on Amazon is simple. Customers using 1-Click ordering can complete the purchase in 2 or 3 clicks. Furthermore, if items are left in the shopping cart customers can log in and pick up where they left off. This provides a quick and easy shopping experience for customers.

### Personalized product recommendations

Consumers today are expecting, if not demanding, highly personalized experiences. [Research](#) finds it helps increase revenue, impulse purchases, fewer returns and boost loyalty. Amazon delivers a highly personalized shopping experience by recommending products based on what customers have bought in the past.





# Trader Joe's

## Why they made the list

Trader Joe's ranked #1 in the [grocery banner](#) in the Dunnhumby Retailer Preference Index survey. Trader Joe's is also the first grocery store listed in the 2017 [Prophet Brand Relevance Index™](#) (BRI).

## Why customers love them...

### High quality products at affordable prices

Consumers in the BRI ranked Trader Joe's highly for having better products. Products are highly curated, bought in bulk and direct from suppliers, which translates to savings for customers.

### Consistent and authentic customer experiences

Trader Joe's scores high marks for the consistency and dependability of its [customer experience](#). One of Trader Joe's strengths is the ability to maintain a uniform brand experience across all stores, yet authentically represent the community of each store location. For example, a [local artist](#) is hired at each location to create unique hand-drawn in-store designs.

### Individualized customer service

Trader Joe's employees provide a [level of service](#) beyond that of the average supermarket chain. They get to know customers, their preferences and shopping habits and actively work to find new ways to introduce customers to new products through product samples and recommendations. Buyers can purchase with confidence, with the ability to try anything in the store before purchasing, and return any item for any reason. This makes the customer feel valued and establishes a level of mutual trust between the brand and customer.

**“You just do what you do and you do it better.”**

Craig Jelinek, CEO of Costco



# Costco

## Why they made the list

Costco ranked #2 in the [grocery category](#) in the Retailer Preference Index survey. Costco scored an 83 out of 100 on the latest [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#), getting the top spot among department and discount stores and specialty retail stores.

## Why customers love them...

### Costco membership provides great return on fees

Costco memberships provide customers with the ability to save hundreds on everyday grocery items by offering lower costs for purchasing in bulk.

### Members have access to additional services

Costco members can get special deals on insurance, auto rentals, and travel packages. The store also offers banking services, eye care, and water delivery for homes and businesses. Costco has even teamed up with auto dealerships to give its customers discounts on many car makes and models.

### Great in-store shopping experience

Costco's extensive range of products makes it easy for customers to find everything they need in one store. The brand also offers free food samples so customers can try before they buy. Costco makes it easy for customers to return a purchase by offering a 100% money-back guarantee.







# Nordstrom

## Why they made the list

Last year, for the fifth time in a row, Nordstrom [ranked as the nation's favorite](#) fashion retailer in an annual retail industry study conducted by Market Force Information.

## Why customers love them...

### High level of customer service

Nordstrom employees have been known to great lengths to serve their customers including searching for hours to find a customer's lost diamond and [replacing an out-of-stock coat](#). This level of service encourages more foot traffic to the store and helps keep the brand top of mind.

### Seamless in-store shopping experience

They provide an amazing in-store experience making the shopping process seamless and simple. Last year they introduced a reserve online and try on in-store feature which enables app users to select items they like, then book to have them set in a fitting room for them in the store of their choice, ready to try on in person. Furthermore, sales staff ring up customer purchases [without making customers stand in line](#).

### Rewarding customers for their purchases

Nordstrom Rewards loyalty program awards 1 point for every dollar spent in stores or online at Nordstrom, Nordstrom Rack and HauteLook. Members can earn even more by shopping on bonus points days. For every 2,000 points, members will receive \$20 Nordstrom Note to spend on anything at Nordstrom. Members can also get even more rewards when they sign up for a Nordstrom credit card. As a card member, customers can enjoy more points per purchase and [exclusive benefits](#) including early access to sales and VIP events.

**TOMS**





# TOMS

## Why they made the list

In research conducted by [Brand World Value Index](#) TOMS ranks higher than Nike for the all-important millennial demographic.

## Why customers love them...

### Allowing customers to give back

TOMS give shoes to the millions of people around the world that do not have them by matching each sale to a donation, 'one for one.' TOMS' loyalty program TOMS Passport Rewards offers loyalty members the option to redeem points on a donation to a charitable cause or initiative, for example, currently members can redeem points for a \$25 donation to help TOMS support U.S. based after school groups and community development programs. This option creates goodwill and helps customers have a more emotional connection to the brand.

### Multichannel engagement

Members of the Passport Rewards program can earn loyalty points for signing up for email offers about exclusive products and new product lines, connecting their social accounts, attending events and making purchases online and in-store. This makes the program easy to participate in and creates more opportunities for members to earn points for redemption.

### Rewarding customers for their loyalty

In addition to offering members the ability to make a charitable donation, TOMS rewards members with birthday surprises and free products. This not only helps increase frequency of purchases but also gives incentive for customers to try new products.



**“ULTA’s more than 26 million loyalty  
program members are responsible  
for more than 90% of its sales.”**

USA Today





# ULTA

## Why they made the list

Last year, beauty was the fastest growing retail category according to GlobalData Retail. ULTA [opened 100 new stores](#) in 2017. ULTA's loyalty program, Ultimate Rewards has more than 26 million members, who are responsible for 90% of the company's sales.

## Why customers love them...

### Leveraging feedback for personalization

ULTA utilizes social media as a valuable resource for [customer feedback](#). Ulta leverages this feedback to personalize the shopping experience for each member in-store and online.

### Rewarding customers with exclusive experiences

Ultamate rewards program members have exclusive access to special in-store events and free beauty, hair and nail consultations. Every piece of information collected in the loyalty program helps personalize the experience for the member.

### Affordable mix of products and services

ULTA offers premium and lower tier cosmetic brands and salon services to meet every budget and drive traffic into the store.



# IKEA

## Why they made the list

IKEA is making shopping more **convenient** for their customers and last year started offering customers the option to buy products online and then pick them up at 31 of its 47 U.S. stores.

## Why customers love them...

### Unique Shopping experiences

IKEA is separated into four areas: showroom, marketplace, self-serve warehouse and checkout. This approach takes the customers on a journey of product discovery, easy locate and purchase. AR [Augmented Reality] integrations in the **IKEA** app mean that customers can see products in their space before purchasing, simply by pointing their phone at their bedroom and seeing how a new bed would look, for example.

### Affordable products

IKEA has created a pricing perception of being economical without being cheap. Their goods are much less expensive than those sold at West Elm and Bed Bath & Beyond, which makes them a great option for price-conscious consumers.

### Exclusive perks for loyalty members

The **IKEA Family** loyalty program provides members with product discounts, food offers, special in-store events and even surprise and delights select members each month with \$100 IKEA gift cards. This keeps members engaged, and feel valued for shopping with the brand.





# Steve Madden

## Why they made the list

Steve Madden's loyalty program [SM PASS](#) was just awarded silver for Customer Engagement Strategies in the [2018 Retail Touchpoints Customer Engagement Awards](#).

## Why customers love them...

### Seamless brand experience

Steve Madden's SM PASS program enables customers to seamlessly participate in the loyalty program wherever they engage with the Steve Madden brand; in-store, online or on the Steve Madden App.

### Rewards for engagement and spend

SM PASS points are the currency used to unlock exclusive member rewards, including \$ off discounts, access to Steve Madden events, and custom/hand-made rewards. The program awards 5 points for every dollar spent at Steve Madden stores, Steve Madden outlets, or at SteveMadden.com. Purchases made via the app earn a member extra points. Members can also earn points for completing engagement activities such as sharing their birthday and gender, connecting their social accounts, downloading the app, referring friends, writing product reviews and completing surveys around personal style.

### Personalized communications and promotions

Steve Madden executes storewide points promotions to drive members to the store, and surprises SM PASS members with targeted bonus point campaigns, powered by email personalization and geo-targeting.



# Pepsi

## Why they made the list

Earlier this year, Pepsi was named by [Brand Keys](#) as the leading soft drink based off a consumer study on how well brands meet customer expectations.

## Why customers love them...

### New loyalty program rooted in nostalgia

Pepsi's new loyalty program, [Pepsi Stuff](#), is a throwback to the popular program Pepsi ran in the mid 1990's. The program rewards customers with vintage Pepsi clothing and merchandise in exchange for points. Members can earn points by entering codes located under bottle caps and inside packaging and by scanning receipts on the [Pepsistuff.com](#) website.

### Sustained emotional loyalty across generations

The strategy and design behind the new "[Pepsi Generation](#)" campaign is deep rooted in building an emotional connection with consumers. The fandom of the original Pepsi Stuff program drives participation from older generations, while incentivizing a new generation of loyal Pepsi drinkers.

### Connecting through unique brand experiences

Pepsi uses new technologies like AR to create memorable brand experiences for consumers. Whether it's [surprising](#) commuters at a bus stop with realistic AR videos of UFOs hovering in the sky, or using a magic mirror AR paradigm and face tracking technology in bathrooms at movie theaters to turn guests' reflections into the faces of [monsters](#), Pepsi knows how to connect with customers in an immersive way.







# Spotify

## Why they made the list

Spotify ranked #4 on the MBLM's top 10 social apps & platforms based on Intimacy Quotient [rankings](#). Their subscriber base is [over twice](#) that of Apple Music at 70 million versus 36 million.

## Why customers love them...

### Sophisticated use of customer data

For premium subscribers, Spotify makes personalized playlist recommendations based on musical genre, time of day and social/cultural context. Spotify also curates personalized playlists like "[Discover Weekly](#)" or "[Your Summer Rewind](#)" giving each member a unique experience.

### Strategic partnerships that add value

Spotify partnered with Uber to enable members to listen to their own Spotify playlist during [Uber rides](#). By [partnering with Eventbrite](#), they gave their members access to upcoming live shows.

### Creates a community of users through music

Spotify allows users to create public playlists, follow and listen to the curated playlists of other users. [Spotify](#) recently introduced a social element into the creation of music playlists by integrating a new feature with [Facebook Messenger](#) that enables [friends to collaborate](#) on playlists.

**“A customer who is actively recommending a brand is beyond satisfied, and actually working, consciously or not, on behalf of the brand to bring it new customers.”**

Ted Marzilli, YouGov BrandIndex CEO



# Panera Bread

## Why they made the list

Panera Bread is among the brands that a majority of customers would recommend to friends and family, according to a 2017 [study](#) by marketing and research firm YouGov BrandIndex.

## Why customers love them...

### Fresh and organic food

Panera is the first national restaurant chain to pledge and make available food that is [100% clean of all artificial flavors](#), all artificial preservatives, all artificial sweeteners, and colors from artificial sources. Customers value the company's transparency and commitment to high standards.

### Omnichannel presence

In addition to the 2000 locations, customers can order online, and pick up in store, order via a kiosk in-store, or schedule a home delivery or even order catering. Interestingly, [26% of Panera's sales are digital](#), which demonstrates that customers want the flexibility to be able to order via mobile, online or at a digital kiosk in-store.

### Rewarding customers for spend with free items

The company's loyalty program, [MyPanera](#), has an industry-leading [25 million members](#), representing 51% of company transactions. The program allows members to earn money off and free food and drink items each time they make a purchase.





# Apple

## Why they made the list

Apple ranks #1 on [Forbe's Most Influential Brands](#) list and #1 on [Brand Relevance Index](#). There are currently 1.3 billion [active](#) Apple Device users.

## Why customers love them...

### Cutting edge technology

The brand's innovation is what resonates with customers and has them willing to spend their money on the latest technology. Morgan Stanley's [AlphaWise survey](#) found Apple leads its industry in terms of customer loyalty. The iPhone's reported 92% retention rate compares to Samsung's 77%, LG's 59%, Motorola's 56% and Nokia's 42%.

### A brand that reflects identity

Loyal Apple customers will most likely buy into the entire family of products. Apple's sleek aesthetic, its operating system and connected devices from mobile phones, to watches, to televisions to computers to iPads encourage customers to buy into the elite Apple lifestyle and ecosystem.

### Customer Experience

The brand is renowned for providing [exceptional customer service](#). The Genius Bar helps customers fix problems with their devices and provides a high level of personalization their customer service, allowing customers to schedule appointments ahead of time that outline exactly what the customer needs assistance with.

The background is a repeating pattern of triangles in three shades of blue: dark navy, medium blue, and light sky blue. The triangles are arranged in a grid-like fashion, creating a complex geometric pattern. The JetBlue logo is centered in the middle of the image.

jetBlue

# JetBlue

## Why they made the list

JetBlue is **ranked #1** for frequent flier satisfaction and **#1** for the best air miles program.

## Why customers love them...

### Creating memorable experiences

Jet Blue goes above and **beyond the services** one would expect for a low-cost airline, like free luggage, cheap cancellation and change fees, in-flight entertainment and complimentary snacks and beverages, a great selection of in-flight entertainment options to choose from, and free high speed Wi-Fi.

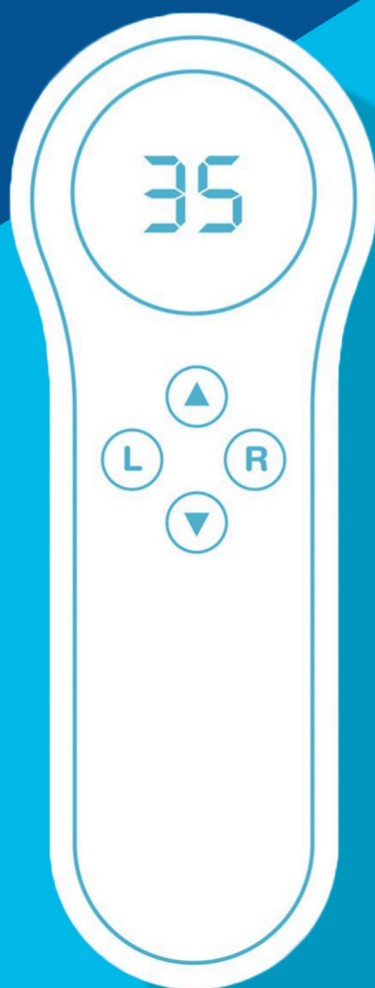
### A dedication to customer service

In terms of handling customer queries, JetBlue leads the pack with an average wait time for customers of **under five minutes**. Starting this year, JetBlue is **upgrading its customer service** operations to integrate modern communication channels like email, SMS text messages, and Twitter and Facebook by adopting a new software platform that consolidates all these channels into a single feed. This will mean a customer can tweet, then call then text the JetBlue customer service department and they will be able to respond and address each message.

### Rewarding members with unique perks

JetBlue offers a number of perks through their **TrueBlue** loyalty program. For example, they offer free flights for a year sweepstakes for loyalty members. Their partnerships also add value for loyalty members, for example they recently **partnered** with Laithwaites wine distributor to offer loyalty members exclusive rates for wine purchases. These perks add a n additional level of value beyond cash back and help customers form emotional ties to the brand.





# Sleep Number

## Why they made the list

JD Power ranked Sleep Number #1 for [Highest in Mattress Satisfaction](#) in 2015 and 2016.

## Why customers love them...

### Asking for customer feedback

Since incorporating product reviews as a point earning activity in their new online loyalty program, [InnerCircle](#), Sleep Number saw the number of submissions increase. Insiders can also earn points for submitting their testimonials. Sleep Number shares this insight with the entire sleep number community.

### Personalizing the customer experience

Launching their loyalty program allowed Sleep Number to extend the touchpoints at which customers can interact with a brand, the loyalty program was able to bring together additional customer insight for Sleep Number. Using this data, Sleep Number personalizes the customer experience and targets loyalty program members with relevant communications and promotions.

### Engage by educating

The online loyalty program encourages members to participate in surveys and polls where they can earn points for answering questions such as “Do you allow pets to sleep on your bed?” and “How often do you change your pillows?” Sleep Number then filters the results back to members via email with advice on how to improve their quality of sleep. Insiders can also engage with the brand and earn points for reading educational blog posts. Sleep Number also offers beds with [SleepIQ® technology](#) inside that tracks how well customers sleep each night, giving them personal insights into their sleep. It even connects to health and wellness apps, to give customers insight into how sleep is affecting their daily lives.

**“The Chase Sapphire Preferred is one of the best travel credit cards of 2018.”**

Forbes



# Chase Sapphire Reserve Card

## Why they made the list

Spending on all Chase credit cards [jumped 13%](#) in 2017 from 2016, and card revenue rose 3% to \$1.24 billion. Chase Sapphire Reserve constantly [tops](#) popularity lists for its travel perks.

## Why customers love them...

### Customers have flexibility

The Chase Sapphire Reserve card awards members with \$300 of annual travel credit. Members aren't locked into using specific airlines or hotel chains, in fact the credit can be used on a variety of travel-related services such as Airbnb, Uber and Lyft.

### It's easy to earn points for credit or travel

Members can earn 50K bonus points after spending \$4,000 on purchases in the first 3 months from account opening which equates to \$750 toward travel when redeemed through Chase Ultimate Rewards®. Members can also earn 2x points on dining and travel, including expenses like food and grocery delivery services, tolls, [Uber](#) and more.

### Great perks and benefits

In addition to rewards, The Chase Sapphire Reserve card also provides members with travel accident insurance, no foreign transaction fees, price protection, return protection, zero liability protection and travel and emergency assistant services.





# Dunkin' Donuts

## Why they made the list

For 12 years in a row Dunkin' Donuts was named by Brand Keys as a [coffee leader](#) in providing guests with a superior customer experience.

## Why customers love them...

### Rewards customers want

Members of the Dunkin' Donuts DD Perks Rewards Program earn five points for every dollar they spend at Dunkin' Donuts when they pay using the Dunkin' Donuts Card. After earning 200 points the customer can redeem the points for any-size beverage of their choice. DD Perks members also receive a coupon for a free, any-size beverage upon enrollment and on their birthday.

### Mobile order and pay

DD Perks members can order ahead of time and pick up in-store using On-the-Go Mobile Ordering. Members can place a mobile order up to 24 hours in advance, select their desired location, and then simply confirm via the Dunkin' Donuts Mobile App when they are ready to pick up their order.

### Strategic partnerships that add value

Dunkin' Donuts partners with brands and companies to drive additional value for their loyalty members. For example, Dunkin Donuts partnered with Rue La La to offer DD Perks Reward Program members 30 days of [complimentary](#) shipping when they shop with the brand.



**“Marriott International continues to raise the bar among luxury and lifestyle brands worldwide.”**

Tina Edmundson, Global Brand Officer of Marriott International



# Marriott Hotels

## Why they made the list

The Marriott International had the [highest number of award-winning hotels](#) in 2017. The Marriott Hotel's loyalty program, Marriott Rewards, was ranked the #1 hotel loyalty program in 2017.

## Why customers love them...

### Customer service

The website makes it easy to book rooms. Checking in is simple and staff are courteous and helpful. Room quality and in-room entertainment are of a high standard.

### Loyalty program perks

At the basic level members can earn points or airline miles per dollar spent. They can use points for a free hotel stay. They are eligible for bonus points and special deals year-round with [Member Exclusive Offers](#). At the [platinum](#) level, members can enjoy complimentary elevated Hertz Gold Plus Rewards Five Star® status, 50% bonus on Marriott rewards points, special gifts on arrival at hotels, guaranteed room reservations 48 hours ahead of time, and upgraded status and free bag check-in when they members fly with United Airlines.

### Accessibility

Due to its [merger with Starwood](#) last year, together the Marriott and Starwood operate 5,700 properties, giving travelers somewhere to stay in almost any business or leisure destination around the world.





# MoviePass

## Why they made the list

iOS app rankings now show MoviePass has overtaken Fandango as the leading Movie Theater ticket portal. MoviePass is expected to have 10 million subscribers by the end of the year.

## Why customers love them...

### Value for money

The MoviePass app enables subscribers to see unlimited movies, in theaters with no blackout dates; no contracts; just a low flat \$6.95 monthly fee. In some cities, the price of a monthly MoviePass is even less than the cost of a ticket. A standard adult ticket at the AMC theater in New York City, is more than **double** the cost at \$15.19.

### Accessibility

MoviePass is available in **over 91%** of all theaters in the U.S. This includes AMC, Regal and Cinemark theaters along with independent theaters.

### Perks and rewards

MoviePass has started to **incentivize** subscribers for going to see certain movies. Recently they provided subscribers who went to see I, Tonya in theaters by a certain date an entry to win 10 annual MoviePass subscriptions to share with their friends.

# CONCLUSION

Consumers today expect a higher level of sophistication from brands from the in-store experience, to customer service, to flexible shopping options, to how they are rewarded for their loyalty. Many of the brands featured in this e-book are investing in loyalty technology to operate their brand at an omnichannel level, reward customers for spend and engagement, and to collect insight into who their customers are and what they want from a brand. This enables brands to deliver personalized customer experiences and drive a higher level of customer service. These are the drivers that keep brand loyalists committed and convert repeat purchasers to lifelong fans.

