

Creating Stick(eez) customers

By [Clive Evans](#)

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The ambition of most marketers is surely to both attract and retain customers. We live in an ever-changing, increasingly complex world where consumers have more choice than ever before, while their attention spans have dipped to an all-time low...

As marketers, we now have to take a more customer-centric approach to keep them interested in and engaged with our brands. Not surprisingly then, retention marketing is now gaining more and more traction as brand custodians seek to get customers to stick with their offering and bring them back for more.



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Rewards Programs and Loyalty Clubs, although not new to South Africa, have shown significant growth in the last five years. According to the Value+Network Loyalty Survey there were 38 programmes in 2000. This increased to 57 in 2005, then to 75 in 2010 and by the end of 2014 we had 101 programmes; with the growth being led primarily by the retail sector. More phenomenal than the growth is the fact that the number of registered members has almost doubled since 2011 and there are now over 82 million registered program members in South Africa. According to the survey, this means that the average adult is a member of at least three programmes.

Reflecting on this data, it occurred to me that I must be above average, as I am member of at least four programmes. One retail reward programme that has kept me returning, week in and week out, is the Pick n Pay Smart Shopper. When their tellers ask me if I have a Smart Card, I smile happily and say: "I'm a smart guy." Pick n Pay gave me reason to stick with them a few years back, and I have stayed, loyally collecting my points. I really am an advocate of the programme, even though the math says I should think otherwise.

And then Pick n Pay thought they should do a little something extra to keep us coming back and clearly targeting kids they bought out their Stikeez promotion. Stikeez reminded me of the Simba Tazos from 10 or more years back in that what was offered was almost identical: instant, hassle-free gratification, the intrigue or excitement element as to what you would get, the collectability factor, the gaming element and most importantly, the child nag factor.

The biggest difference between the two promotions is perhaps only the 10-years plus span between them. In the past decade much has been written about neuro-science, shopper behaviour and how everything we believed or thought we knew was wrong. Clearly, not everything marketers did in the past was wrong. Some things did work, the format of Tazos worked exceptionally well, from a marketing perspective. But speak to parents and you will get conflicting viewpoints.

Some parents loved them - others hated them. Do yourself a favour and read [The Reluctant Mom's blog post on Stikeez](#). As a consumer and a parent it is a very amusing read - and from a marketing perspective, it is really insightful. I can only imagine that the reluctant mom must be ecstatic now that the Stikeez promotion has ended and it is 'safe' for her to go back to Pick n Pay - assuming she does go back...

Personally, I can't say I was sad to hear that the promo had run its course and I am still a Smart Shopper - or I will be, until I experience something that really changes my feelings about the brand.

I guess the question is this: what are you doing to create and keep truly sticky customers?

ABOUT CLIVE EVANS

Well versed in leveraging information into insights, opportunities and ideas to help build strong brands. As a master of the brand building discipline, I have both the the experience and people skills to help earn me the position of 'trusted advisor' among both clients and staff. Specialties: Brand and Communication Strategy

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