Beyond the Click:

Incentivizing Customer Responses in a Digital Space

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Företagsekonomi C | HT 2023
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**Preface**

I extend my thanks to the respondents who participated in this study both paid and not. Without them this wouldn’t have been possible.

A special acknowledgment goes to my supervisor, Erik Borg, who has supported this essay from the start and whose guidance has been a great help in structuring this work.

Furthermore, I express my gratitude to my classmates for the invaluable feedback they provided. Their insights and reflections have played a pivotal role in refining and enhancing the quality of my work. And last but very much not least a big thank you to Red Bull GmbH, who provides the gift of wakefulness. They've seen more of my late-night musings than my own bed has. Without their unwavering support, this paper might still be lingering in the realm of caffeine-deprived drafts.

Stockholm. 2024-01-04

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Angelina Petros
Abstract

This research delves into the intricate dynamics of customer incentivization in company outreach, exploring the impact of incentives on consumer behavior. The study reveals a compelling connection between consumer opinions on monetary incentives and their actual responsiveness, emphasizing the need for strategic incentive-based programs.

Theoretical frameworks, including regression analysis and Spearman's rank coefficient, are introduced for statistical analysis. Hypotheses posit a correlation between incentives and customer response, and the superior influence of altruistic motivations. The study employs a cross-sectional design utilizing Amazon MTurk workers.

Results indicate positive responses to company outreach, supporting the positive impact of incentives. Altruistic motivations significantly correlate with consistent engagement, but so does extrinsic motivations.

Keywords:

Marketing, Incentive, Altruistic motivation, Reward types
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Introduction

In an age of relentless digital communication and information overload, businesses face a formidable challenge: how to effectively engage their customers and elicit responses to their outreach efforts. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, and consumers become increasingly selective about the messages they engage with (Amankwah-Amoah et al. 2021), understanding the art of successful customer incentivization is paramount for companies seeking to build lasting connections and foster brand loyalty (Coll-Rubio & Carbonell 2024).

Through a comprehensive analysis of various methods and tactics, this essay aims to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with incentivizing customer responses. It will explore the application of incentives in the context of customer outreach, considering diverse industries and consumer segments. The primary purpose is to offer practical and informed recommendations for businesses looking to optimize their outreach strategies.

Furthermore, this essay strives to contribute to the broader discourse on customer engagement by examining the multifaceted dimensions of incentivization, including its impact on brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, and long-term relationships. It seeks to explain the complex interplay of factors that influence customer responses to outreach efforts and to offer a nuanced perspective on the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior in a digitalized and competitive marketplace.

Ultimately, the purpose of this essay is to equip businesses and practitioners with actionable insights and strategies that can enhance their ability to engage customers effectively, thereby fostering brand growth and sustainability in an increasingly complex and interconnected business environment.

Background

The ongoing process of digitalization stands as one of the most profound and continuous societal transformations in the modern era, permeating multiple facets of both business operations and daily life. This transformation holds particular significance for the retail sector, as it both shapes and is shaped by these sweeping changes. Retailers are pivotal in delivering an array of digital products and services tailored to the evolving landscape of digital technologies. Simultaneously, they grapple with the consequences of altered consumer behaviors driven by these digital advancements (Hagberg, Sundstrom, Egels-Zandén, 2016).
Although digitalization has a long history within the realm of retailing (Watson, 2011), its current magnitude and significance have become increasingly evident. The advent of the internet, in particular, has piqued the interest of scholars, causing comprehensive investigations into its effects on retail practices. These explorations involve a wide spectrum of implications, including shifts in business opportunities, the remolding of business models, the diversification of commercial forms, alterations in purchasing processes, and the transformation of local businesses into global players (Alba et al., 1997).

It is important to note that the discourse on digitalization has predominantly centered on the realm of e-commerce. While e-commerce undoubtedly represents a substantial component of digitalization, its impact transcends these confines. The digitalization wave extends its influence far and wide, ushering in the metamorphosis of tangible products into digital services, the proliferation of consumer recommendations through social media platforms, and the integration of digital devices into the very fabric of the purchasing journey (Hagberg, Sundstrom, Egels-Zandén, 2016). Reviews alleviate uncertainty during the shopping process (Guo et al., 2022; Rasool and Pathanai, 2021). For instance, it has become commonplace for consumers to embark on online information quests, which seamlessly guide them toward offline purchases, thereby exemplifying the interconnectedness of the digital and physical retail realms (Pauwels et al., 2011).

Aim

The purpose of this essay is to critically examine and explore strategies and approaches aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of customer incentivization in company outreach efforts.

Research question

By addressing the research question: “How to more efficiently incentivize customers to respond to company outreach?” This essay seeks to shed light on the pivotal role that customer engagement plays in modern business strategies.
Theoretical background and hypothesis development

The theoretic basis for this essay will be based on a variety of past topics, due to the scarcity of published papers related to incentivizing customer responses. The lack of relevant research papers can present a significant obstacle to writing this essay, due to this the essay will be constructing a comprehensive literature review and constructing well-supported arguments. Additionally, relying on related but not directly aligned research might necessitate a careful balancing act when extrapolating insights from these studies to support the thesis.

Previous research has focused on topics such as building brand loyalty (Meyer-Waarden, Benavent, 2006), incentivizing repeat purchase behavior and the effect incentives have on customers' publically accessible reviews of products or companies (Zhang et al. 2023). The duration of a customer's association with a business also plays a role in influencing the connection between the type of reward and the sentiment expressed in reviews. As customers spend more time engaging with online retailers and build relationships with them, their overall attitudes toward the brand and online retailers tend to become more positive (tran, Taylor, and Wen 2022). While the topics all are relevant to this essay there is a lack of research on how to expand customer engagement for internal data gathering.

What there is literature about the use of incentives to motivate people to complete an action or otherwise influence people towards an action. The existing literature provides a comprehensive categorization of rewards, distinguishing between extrinsic, intrinsic, and altruistic motivation.

Motivational types

Broadly classifying motivation into two types based on distinct initiation sources, the self-determination theory formally introduced by Ryan and Deci distinguishes between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Vallerand, 2000). Extrinsic motivation involves engaging in activities with a goal-oriented focus, driven by the pursuit of a separable outcome. Conversely, intrinsically motivated individuals undertake activities for their inherent enjoyment and hedonic satisfaction, emphasizing the inherent pleasure derived from the engagement itself (Deci, 1971).

In addition to extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, several qualitative inquiries have emphasized the significance of altruistic motivation as a notable behavioral catalyst. In consumer communication, altruistic motivation takes a prominent role, guiding individuals in decision-making processes,
particularly in purchases. Engel et al.'s (1993) identification of altruistic motivation extends its significance beyond mere assistance, positioning it as a driving force in the intricate landscape of interpersonal communication and decision-making. Consumers driven by altruistic motivation desire to assist others in making informed purchase decisions (Hussain, Islam, and Rehman, 2022).

**Monetary rewards**

Chief among extrinsic motivation are financial incentives constitute a motivational approach grounded in economic theory, assuming that individuals, being utility-driven, respond to monetary rewards in their decision-making processes Huang et al. (2019). This theoretical foundation finds validation in numerous studies. Volpp et al. (2009), for instance, demonstrated the effectiveness of paying individuals to quit smoking, resulting in an increased likelihood of cessation. According to Yu, Khern-am-nuai, and Pinsonneault (2022) monetary rewards increase both the quality and quantity of reviews, similarly Fryer (2011) identified that students could be motivated to attend school more regularly through the promise of financial compensation.

The effectiveness of financial incentives extends to online platforms, as evidenced by various studies. Specifically, in instances where the financial gains derived from reviews surpass associated costs, individuals lacking inherent motivation to engage in review writing may be prompted to do so, increasing the frequency of reviews. Certain business-to-customer (B2C) online platforms employ a strategy whereby users are motivated to contribute reviews through benefits and rewards stated by Hu and Krishen (2019).

Experimental research has shown that even relatively small financial incentives can motivate individuals to contribute in different online contexts. For example, Fradkin et al. (2015) offered $25 in Airbnb credit to encourage users to write reviews on Airbnb.com. Similarly, Cabral and Li (2015) provided rebates of just $1 or $2 to elicit feedback on eBay, and Khern-am-nuai, Kannan, and Ghasemkhani (2018) considered Best Buy's offer of 25 reward points (equivalent to $0.50) for each review.

Building on this context, Burtch et al. (2018) delved into the impact of monetary incentives on reviews. They found that while monetary incentives increased the quantity of reviews, there was no guarantee of a corresponding improvement in quality.
Reimer and Benkenstein (2016) hypothesized that providing monetary compensation for composing a review would increase individuals' inclination to write compared to those without incentives. This expectation was based on the premise that individuals would be motivated by the allure of monetary rewards, constituting extrinsic motivation. The findings supported this hypothesis, revealing an increase in extrinsic motivation due to the monetary incentive, subsequently heightening the likelihood of individuals expressing a desire to compose a review. However, the monetary incentive had no significant impact on alternative forms of motivation, and the direct influence of monetary compensation on the intention to write a review, without considering motivational factors, was not statistically significant. Thus, it appears that extrinsic motivation, played a substantial role in increasing individuals' inclination to write reviews when offered financial incentives (Wang, 2021; Wang, 2023).

In exploring the impact of financial incentives on user behavior, the context of Amazon Mechanical Turk (AMT) has been a focal point of investigation. Studies by Horton and Chilton (2010) and Mason and Watts (2009) within the AMT framework revealed that offering higher payments increased the volume of completed tasks, emphasizing the influential role of financial incentives in shaping behavior. Even relatively modest financial incentives, such as those below $0.10 per task, demonstrated the ability to motivate individuals to engage in desired behaviors, illustrating the broad applicability of financial incentives across various settings.

**Non-monetary rewards**

Within the domain of incentivizing user contributions and engagement, the discourse on non-monetary rewards has also gained prominence. Sun, Dong, and McIntyre (2017) proclaim that non-monetary rewards center around voluntary contributions individuals make, resulting in social and reputational benefits. This involves activities such as offering assistance based on positive experiences, fostering social goodwill, and enhancing one's reputation within a community (Hussain, Islam, and Rehman, 2022). Non-monetary rewards have also demonstrated effectiveness in inspiring consumer actions and enhancing the quantity and quality of reviews (Labsomboonsiri et al. 2022; Woolley, and Sharif 2021). Notably, the impact of these rewards is further accentuated when tied to performance, as observed in studies such as Huang et al. (2019).

Another type of non-monetary reward are loyalty schemes which is brought up by Meyer-Waarden and Benavent (2006) who propose that loyalty schemes can generally cause an increase in purchase frequency in the short term, but when considering a longer-term perspective the market is categorized by
a certain degree of stationarity which precludes a more permanent effect on recruiting new customers. Loyalty programs do however affect existing customers where up to 90% of customers taking part in promotional purchases were already clientele of a business before the prospect of loyalty cards were offered.

Another method of incentivizing customer engagement and repeat purchasing is personalization, a method aimed at tailoring a pertinent, personalized interaction to improve the customer experience. To achieve this, personalization utilizes knowledge derived from an individual customer's personal and behavioral data to provide a better experience (Ho & Bodoff, 2014). Frequently, personalization involves customer participation to craft a tailored experience, which can involve customer reviews, purchase data, and social media interactions, among other factors (Chandra et al. 2022). The increasing opportunity for customer personalization builds upon data analytics. Organizations now have access to an overwhelming volume of data, encompassing customer behaviors, preferences, and interactions. Through advanced analytics techniques, companies can decipher this data, extracting invaluable insights that result in more effective customer outreach. By identifying patterns, trends, and anomalies, businesses can better understand their customers' needs and aspirations (Akter & Wamba 2016).

Recently there has also been a rise in the use of gameified incentives as a new interpretation on non-monetary rewards. Gamified incentives refer to applying elements drawn from game designs into non-game context to improve individuals’ motivation and engagement in a task. The studies conducted by Hamari (2017), and Goes et al. (2016), collectively suggest that gamified incentives yield a positive influence on user contribution, indicating an increased likelihood of users participating in desired activities when exposed to these game-like elements.

However, the efficacy of gamified incentives is intricately linked to the specific context in which the elements of game design are integrated. For example, in the context of an online peer-to-peer trading platform investigated by Hamari et al. (2017), the introduction of badges was observed to have a favorable impact on user activity. This manifested as heightened engagement, evidenced by increased posting of trade proposals, transactions, comments, and overall platform usage. Similarly, within an online question and answering community examined by Goes et al. (2016), the implementation of hierarchical badge systems initially heightened users' contribution frequency. Nevertheless, this effect waned after users achieved the badges.

Transitioning to non-purchase interactions on online platforms, the effectiveness of non-monetary rewards remains relevant. Gallus (2017) demonstrates that awards, a form of non-monetary reward,
significantly increase the willingness of new contributors to engage in collaborative activities on Wikipedia, marking a 50% increase in the month following the intervention. The impact extends to organizational aspects, with a 33% rise in the participation of editors in guideline development and administrative tasks during the initial post-intervention month.

With prolonged engagement on a platform, customers shift their focus from simply gathering personal information to demonstrating an increased sense of responsibility toward the online retailers (Raës et al. 2015; Tran, Taylor, and Wen, 2022).

*Crowding out effect*

The interactions between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is multifaceted and sometimes contradictory. While Burtch et al. (2018) underscore the positive outcomes of financial incentives in motivating users, this positive impact is counterbalanced by the phenomenon known as the "crowding-out" effect which challenges the common belief that monetary incentives consistently enhance overall motivation. This phenomenon explores the interplay between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, as evidenced by studies like those by Amabile (1993) and Frey and Jegen (2001) and happens when an external economic incentive is introduced, activating extrinsic motivation but simultaneously hindering intrinsic motivation (Gagné and Deci, 2005).

Building on this are the findings of Reimer and Benkenstein's (2016) and Qiao et al. (2020). Qiao et al.’s (2020) field experiment on Amazon, revealed that financial incentives can diminish users' intrinsic motivations, leading to reduced effort in review writing, while Reimer and Benkenstein's (2016) research highlighted that providing monetary incentives to reviewers heightened the desire to write reviews, but at the expense of intrinsically motivated reviews resulting in monetarily rewarded reviews overshadowing those generated without any incentive.

Reimer and Benkenstein (2016) continued to point out that businesses that provide monetary rewards for reviews impair customers' attitude to that business on the presumption that the result will be biased in their favor. This effect doesn’t appear when the reviews are intrinsically motivated or encouraged without the promise of a reward.

Something also echoed by Cabral and Li (2015) who caution against the potential biases introduced by compensating users for reviews, including a tendency for users to write positive reviews following the
implementation of monetary incentives. The authenticity of such reviews is also questioned by consumers when they discover that a review was financially motivated (Stephen et al, 2012).

The surge of online reviews and marked increase of paid monetary rewards has made consumers vary of their credibility (Ananthakrishnan, Li, and Smith (2020) which may lead to consumers choosing to avoid products or companies which offer financial incentives as they may seem less trustworthy (Bi and Zhang 2022; Wang et al. 2022). The increase in negative responses to paid comments might lead to a decrease in the practice as social pressure could cause abatement of monetary incentives( López, Sicilia, and Verlegh 2021).

Altruistic marketing actions, on the other hand, are not expected to cause this crowding-out effect, as extrinsic motivation remains independent of these marketing initiatives. Altruistic incentives are not expected to activate extrinsic motivation, thus avoiding the crowding-out of intrinsic motivation. This effect is predicted to occur only among consumers incentivized by a monetary reward, as this intensifies extrinsic motivation, encroaching upon and diminishing intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971). This complex interplay underscores the need for a nuanced approach in implementing financial incentives, considering both their potential benefits and drawbacks in influencing user behavior.

Theoretical framework

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical tool used to understand the relationship between two or more variables. It aims to figure out how these variables are connected and the strength of their relationship (Lohr, 2010, p.447). Regression could help predict consumer behavior, assess marketing strategy effectiveness, and identify key factors influencing outcomes (Lohr, 2010, p.448).

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

ANOVA is a statistical method for examining differences in means between groups and within groups. It involves breaking down the total variability in a dataset into parts linked to different sources. The main concept is to compare means of three or more groups to see if there are statistically significant differences (Lantz, 2013, p.297).
**Two-Tailed Student t-Distribution**

The Two-Tailed Student t-Distribution is a probability distribution commonly used in hypothesis testing, especially with small sample sizes. It allows researchers to draw conclusions about population parameters based on sample data. The theory behind it lies in understanding how sample means are distributed and calculating t-scores to determine if observed differences are statistically significant. The two-tailed t-distribution is applied when comparing sample means, testing hypotheses, and making generalizations about population parameters (Lantz, 2013, p.177).

**Spearman's rank coefficient**

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, often denoted as rho, is a non-parametric measure of statistical dependence between two variables. This correlation coefficient assesses the strength and direction of the monotonic relationship between the ranks of the paired data points. In other words, it evaluates how well the relationship between two variables can be described using a monotonic function (Wahlin, 2021, p.301).

Unlike the Pearson correlation coefficient, Spearman's rank correlation does not assume that the variables are normally distributed or linearly related. Instead, it focuses on the relative order of values, making it suitable for analyzing relationships in data that may not meet the assumptions of parametric tests (ibid.).

The formula for Spearman's rank correlation coefficient involves ranking the data, calculating the differences in ranks for each pair of observations, and then applying the standard formula for the correlation coefficient. The coefficient ranges from -1 to 1, where: rho = 1 indicates a perfect positive monotonic relationship, rho = -1 indicates a perfect negative monotonic relationship, and rho = 0 indicates no monotonic relationship (ibid.).

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is widely used in various fields, particularly when dealing with ordinal or non-normally distributed data, providing researchers with a robust tool for assessing associations between variables (ibid.).
Hypothesis development

The research question posits the inquiry into the factors affecting customer engagement in company outreach initiatives. To systematically investigate this, three distinct hypotheses emerge from the provided options:

Null Hypothesis (H0): Incentives do not have a significant correlation to customer engagement

The null hypothesis posits that incentives have no noteworthy impact on customer engagement. This assumption is grounded in the idea that providing incentives, whether monetary or non-monetary, does not lead to a discernible change in customer behavior or interaction. This hypothesis forms the baseline against which Hypotheses 1 and 2 will be tested.

(H1): Incentives have a positive correlation on customer response to company outreach.

Hypothesis 1, influenced by the principles of motivational psychology (Deci and Ryan, 1987), proposes that incentives play a pivotal role in influencing the likelihood of customers engaging with company outreach initiatives. The works of Fradkin et al. (2015) and Cabral and Li (2015) underscore the motivational impact of incentives, supporting the expectation that the presence of incentives positively correlates with increased customer interaction.

It delves into the nature of the association between customer interaction with company outreach and the presence of incentives. It seeks to establish a statistically significant relationship, affirming that customers who engage with company outreach are more likely to have encountered incentives.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Incentives of the altruistic motivation type yield superior results in influencing customer engagement.

Hypothesis 2, influenced by self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2000), posits that internal motivation-driven incentives are more effective in influencing customer engagement compared to external motivation-driven incentives. The theoretical foundation finds validation in studies by Sun, Dong, and McIntyre (2017), emphasizing the potency of intrinsic motivation in stimulating customer actions.

Based on Reimer and Benkestein (2016) altruistic motivation will be more impactful due to not having a crowding out effect on other types of incentives.
Methodology

Research method and design

This study employs a cross-sectional research design, and incorporates two groups, group 1 consisted of 103 paid Amazon MTURK workers, and group 2 of 110 unpaid Amazon MTURK workers. The survey was responded to via Amazon MTURK, participants in group 1 were rewarded with 87 cents per completed survey, while participants in group 2 completed the survey for free.

The survey included a short explanation of company outreach which led into questions of participants demographics (age, gender, occupation, country of origin), their history of outreach experience, how effective they feel incentives have been, their motivation for interacting with company outreach, how they respond to outreach, and the barriers and challenges they perceive.

In conducting the survey, I utilized the embedded survey function within Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to host the primary survey on the Qualtrics platform. This choice aimed at optimizing the survey administration process. To elevate the overall quality of the responses obtained, I strategically utilized Qualtrics' built-in platform capabilities. These capabilities specifically focused on refining data accuracy by eliminating duplicated responses from the same individual and excluding incomplete questionnaires from contributing to the final results. By harnessing these features, I sought to ensure a more robust and reliable dataset.

Moreover, to streamline the integration between MTurk and Qualtrics, I implemented a systematic approach (Cowhitt et al. 2020). This involved having Qualtrics autonomously generate a unique and random identification (ID) for each respondent. Subsequently, the respondents input their individualized generated IDs into the MTurk platform. This procedural step not only served to enhance the security and accuracy of the survey data but also played a role in guaranteeing the comprehensive completion of the survey by each participant. Overall, these measures were implemented to fortify the methodological integrity of the survey process and to yield more trustworthy responses (Blomkvist, Hallin & Lindell, 2018, p.54).
Population and sample

The target audience was anyone over 18 who has encountered company outreach. This study utilizes probability sampling (Bryman & Bell) from MTurk participants, where each individual in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.170).

The use of MTURK introduces a potential bias towards respondents under 30 from the US, which may impact the results. To mitigate this, the survey incorporates questions about respondents' age and country of residence, enabling a stratified analysis (Körner & Wahlgren, 2015, p.23). Although calculating a weighted average age might compromise the study's integrity, grouping participants into age ranges allows for generalizations within each subgroup (Lohr, 2010, p.85). Each subgroup's choices can be assigned a percentage score, facilitating a comparative analysis of opinions across different age groups. This approach enhances the study's ability to discern patterns and variations in responses based on age demographics (Golder et al. 2023).

Attrition

In the paid survey three results had to be discarded due to non-completion and another 12 due to anomalous or incongruous answers, while in the unpaid survey ten results had to be discarded due to non-completion and another 12 due to anomalous or incongruous answers. Another 2 of the answers, one paid and one unpaid, were discarded due to not receiving company outreach. Totaling 174 answers, 87 paid and 87 unpaid. The attrition rate being 18% could lead to less reliable results (Körner & Wahlgren, 2015, p. 14), however the control questions were introduced to enable this reduction of measurement error and increase the quality of the overall response (Blomkvist, Hallin & Lindell, 2018, p.96).
Survey Development and pilot study

The survey questionnaire consists of closed-ended questions with predefined response options. Before the survey for the study was conducted and sent out to the respondents, a pilot study was conducted with five participants. The primary objectives of this pilot study were to mitigate inaccuracies, incorrect variables, and address ambiguities. All participants could complete the survey within 20 minutes and confirmed that the survey was functional. Additionally, the pilot study aimed to evaluate the feedback garnered from the experimental questions, as outlined by Bryman and Bell (2011, p.262).

Based on the constructive criticism from the respondents and their feedback on how the survey was structured, parts of the survey were improved for participants comfort. Explanations of the topics of customer incentivization and company outreach were implemented to ease understanding of the topic, 6 questions were reformulated with better word choices, an additional question was added regarding which channels participants would prefer to receive company outreach through, and additional options were added to the question of ‘What motivates you to interact with company outreach?’.

Wanting to be helpful, opinion of the company, the amount of time one has been a customer of a company, and employee helpfulness are all altruistically motivated. Joining them within the intrinsic, but not altruistic motivations is personalized outreach. The extrinsic motivations are divided into non-

Image 1. Of the control questions having incongruous answers leading to dismissal of the answers.
monetary rewards including the quality of a product or service and rewards of badges or status symbols. The monetary motivations consist of discount offerings and the like. Additionally there was an option for not responding to company outreach at all.

**Survey Content**

The survey encompasses the following key components:

a. Demographics: Gathering demographic information, including age, gender, location, and occupation.

b. Outreach Experience: Evaluating participants’ past interactions with company outreach, including frequency, channels used, and overall satisfaction.

c. Incentive Effectiveness: Assessing participants' perceptions of different incentive types (e.g., discounts, loyalty points, exclusive offers) and their impact on response rates.

d. Motivation Factors: Identifying the factors that motivate customers to respond to company outreach, such as personalization, relevance, and perceived value.

e. Response Behavior: Measuring participants' actual response behavior, including the frequency and nature of their responses to company outreach.

f. Barriers and Challenges: Exploring any obstacles or challenges that hinder participants from responding to company outreach.

**Data collection**

*Amazon MTURK*

Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) is an online crowdsourcing platform operated by Amazon. It enables businesses, researchers, and individuals to outsource small, scalable tasks, known as Human Intelligence Tasks (HITs), to a large distributed workforce of independent contractors, often referred to as "Turkers" or "workers" (Amazon Mechanical Turk n.d.)
The tasks assigned on MTurk can vary widely and may include data annotation, image and video processing, content moderation, surveys, and other tasks that require human intelligence. Businesses and researchers use MTurk to access a diverse pool of workers to complete tasks that are challenging for computer algorithms but relatively straightforward for humans (ibid.)

MTurk provides a flexible and cost-effective way for individuals and organizations to leverage human labor on a per-task basis. Workers, on the other hand, can choose from a variety of available tasks and earn money based on the tasks they complete. The platform plays a crucial role in facilitating the outsourcing of work that requires human cognitive abilities on a large scale (Amazon Mechanical Turk Worker n.d.).

**Dependent and independent variables**

The independent variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.42) encompass various aspects. Demographic information, such as age, gender, occupation, and country of origin, serves as independent variables. These factors are essential for understanding how different demographic groups respond to company outreach, contributing to a comprehensive analysis of outreach effectiveness.

The control variable for this study was whether the respondent received company outreach and out of 176 answers, 174 responded yes.

Due to this study having multiple hypotheses the dependent variables change depending on which are to be tested, a dependent variable for H1: if incentive have an effect, does not have to be a dependent variable for H2.

**Coding**

The survey can give 19 different measurements of data. 18 questions and weather the Turker was paid or unpaid for participation in the survey. 5 measurements were binary, gender was a question with multiple answers but only male and female was chosen rendering the answers binary as well. Country of origin was a list question, however 148 of 151 participants comes from the US, rendering the question itself irrelevant for population comparisons.
The binary questions are interpreted through a 0, 1 analysis. For Yes/No questions Yes equals 1 and No equals 0. For non-value based questions like gender the 1 and 0 will be arbitrarily assigned. There is one question with three answer alternatives, Yes/Sometimes/No which are interpreted Yes=1, Sometimes=0.5, and No=0. The 5 qualitative questions with multiple options were coded with sequential numbers (Wahlin, 2022, p.311). Another 2 questions were multi item scale quantitative questions and were assigned +1 for the most positive answer and -1 for the most negative with the values in-between assigned based on the sentiment and amount of questions (Körner and Wahlgren, 2014, p.31). The 4 check all that apply (CATA) questions were coded as multivariate binary choices where every checked box will correspond to a binary yes=1/no=0 (Landaluce-Calvo et al. 2022).

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<td>My opinion of the company</td>
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<td>The length of time I have been a customer of the company</td>
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<td>The outreach effort being personalized to you (e.g., mentioning your by name)</td>
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<td>Non-monetary awards like badges or status symbols</td>
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<td>If the employee has been pleasant or accommodating</td>
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<td>I like being helpful</td>
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<td>Monetary rewards as in discount offerings or the like</td>
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*Image 2. Example of multiple choice question.*

*Monetary and non-monetary motivation for interacting with company outreach was measured with a select all that apply question with 9 possible answers.*

*Measurement and operationalization*

The central constructs of the study ‘How to more successfully incentivize customers to respond to company outreach?’ was measured with the help of multiple choice questions and multi item scales in the survey.

The control variables of having received company outreach and incentive to interact with company outreach was also measured through multiple choice questions. Control questions play a crucial role in maintaining the study's internal validity (Boosey et al. 2020). For instance, the study employs control questions at two points in the survey, ensuring that respondents' answers remain consistent. This
strategic use of control questions helps to identify and eliminate potential measurement errors, contributing to the overall quality of the responses.

Participants opinions towards 5 different types of monetary incentives Discounts, Loyalty points, Exclusive offers, Free products or samples, and Cash-back was also measured twice. Once regarding opinion towards the type of incentive through a 4 point semantic differential items (e.g. I like it 1/I dislike it 4) and a second time scaled as five-point semantic differential items (Increase 1/Decrease 5) regarding whether the type of incentive would increase or decrease interaction with company outreach.

When investigating whether the opinion on different types of monetary incentive had any correlation to the effect of incentives the multi item scale was converted into numbers where the highest opinion rated a 1 and the lowest opinion rated -1, with the intervening opinions rated in steps of 0.5. With this done I made a table off difference between opinion and effect for the five options (Discounts, Loyalty points, Exclusive offers, Free products or samples, and Cash-back). From this the average, variance, and standard deviation was calculated to arrive at the t-value.

Validity and reliability

The study's internal validity is underscored by strategic choices in survey administration. The integration of the embedded survey function within Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and the Qualtrics platform was purposive, serving to optimize the survey administration process. This methodology was implemented to bolster consistency (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.42). To fortify the internal validity, meticulous measures were adopted to eliminate the occurrence of duplicated responses, incomplete questionnaires, and incongruent answers. Such procedural endeavors aimed at refining data accuracy, thus advancing the methodological integrity of the study (Körner & Wahlgren, 2015, p.15).

Attrition rates, including the reasons for discarding responses due to non-completion or anomalous answers, are transparently reported. While this contributes to internal validity, it necessitates careful consideration of potential biases introduced by the removal of these responses (Lohr, 2010, p.539).

The pilot study, conducted with a subset of participants, serves as a methodological safeguard for internal validity. It functions to identify and rectify potential issues with survey questions, ensuring a consistent interpretation of questions among respondents. Incorporating participant feedback and iteratively refining the survey based on constructive criticism is instrumental in fortifying the internal validity of the survey instrument (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.303).
The external validity of the study is contingent upon the acknowledgment of potential biases introduced by the utilization of MTurk and the distinctive demographic characteristics of respondents, notably in terms of age and geographical distribution. A commitment to transparency concerning these potential biases is imperative for assessing the generalizability of study findings (Blomkvist, Hallin & Lindell, 2018, p.54).

Reliability in the study is underscored by the purposeful employment of closed-ended questions with predefined response options. This methodological choice contributes to the consistency and stability of measurement, a cornerstone of reliability. The conducted pilot study, aimed at identifying and rectifying inaccuracies, incorrect variables, and ambiguities, is a prudential step that aligns with reliability considerations. The description of data collection procedures, notably the utilization of MTurk as the platform, contributes to the reliability of the study by ensuring methodological consistency (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.157).

Clear explication of how key constructs are measured, including the operationalization of variables through multiple-choice questions and scales, is instrumental in fostering the reliability of the study's results (Blomkvist, Hallin & Lindell, 2018, p.54).

**Criticism to methodology**

When utilizing Amazon MTurk (Mechanical Turk) to gather responses for academic surveys, researchers need to be mindful of potential faults related to population and sample. One key concern is sampling bias, where the demographics of MTurk workers may not accurately represent the broader population, given that these workers are often younger, more tech-savvy, and may have different socioeconomic backgrounds. Additionally, there might be a geographic bias, as MTurk workers are predominantly from certain regions.

The generalizability of findings may be limited, especially when aiming to make broader claims about society. The population on MTurk may not be reflective of diverse perspectives, and responses may not be as thoughtful or accurate due to potential inattentiveness or the presence of professional survey takers.

Ethical considerations also come into play, such as the possibility of duplicate responses and the need to ensure informed consent. Some MTurk workers may participate in multiple surveys, leading to potential duplicate responses if not properly controlled. Ensuring that workers fully understand the study and
providing informed consent is crucial, as some may rush through without fully engaging with the consent process.

Another concern is the homogeneity of the MTurk worker pool, which may limit the diversity of perspectives depending on the nature of the study. Researchers must implement stringent quality assurance measures, such as attention checks and verification questions, to filter out low-quality responses.

To address these challenges, researchers should be transparent about the limitations of their samples and take steps to enhance the robustness of their research, such as combining MTurk data with other sampling methods or conducting additional validation studies.

The integration of digital surveys, although convenient for data collection, introduces notable considerations. The inherent nature of digital surveys fosters one-way communication, limiting the researcher's ability to actively engage with respondents, address potential misunderstandings, or delve into nuanced discussions that could provide deeper insights. As a consequence, the data collected through digital surveys may be perceived as superficial, lacking the richness and depth that could be derived from more interactive modes of data collection.

In the realm of quantitative research, despite the advantage of amassing extensive data from a large pool of respondents, there exists a potential trade-off. The sheer volume of data collected might inadvertently obscure the attainment of nuanced insights into the intricate motivations and underlying reasons guiding respondents' answers. This limitation arises from the challenge of effectively integrating and interpreting such detailed understanding within the final results. Therefore, while quantitative research offers breadth in data collection, it may sometimes sacrifice depth in the interpretative process.
Results

Hypothesis testing

The opinion towards company outreach was perceived as moderate with 48% interacting regularly with it, 20% interacting only when they were happy with the product or company, 29% interacting on a case by case basis, and 3% interacting with company outreach when they had complaints. None of 174 respondents who received company outreach reported avoiding interacting with it entirely. Opinion towards receiving company outreach was overwhelmingly positive with 78% of respondents reporting that they were happy to interact with it.

There was a slight demographic difference in the paid and unpaid group, with 63% men in the paid group and 49% in the unpaid. The age distribution also differed with 53% of the paid group being 30-44 and 45% being 18-29 with the remaining 2% being 45-59, compared to the unpaid group where the largest demographic was 64% being 18-29 30% being 30-44 and 6% being 45-59. Despite this there was no overall difference in their responses.

(H1): Incentives have a positive correlation on customer response to company outreach.

Would you be more likely to interact with company outreach if offered incentives?

Image 3 Participants opinions towards incentives
To examine the potential impact of incentives on respondents' increased engagement with company outreach, a straightforward binary inquiry was employed. This question also functioned as a control measure to assess the consistency of respondents. Specifically, the query "Would you be more likely to respond to company outreach if offered incentives?" was initially presented in the section addressing motivational factors. A similar question, "Would you be more likely to interact with company outreach if offered incentives?" was posed two questions later in the chapter dedicated to exploring response behavior. Respondents were required to provide a consistent response (either "yes" or "no") to both iterations of the question to be included in the valid response pool. A substantial 98% of respondents expressed a heightened likelihood of engaging with company outreach in the presence of incentives.

Upon scrutinizing potential covariates, responses exhibited the closest associations with whether the respondent had recently received incentives to respond to company outreach, motivational factors such as the desire to be helpful and a desire for monetary rewards, an ambiguity regarding the frequency of their interaction with company outreach, and a preference for receiving outreach via social media.

Image 4 Participants outreach experience

Supporting the supposition that incentives have a positive effect on response to company outreach are the results to the question 'Have you interacted with company outreach primarily because of the
incentives offered. The 84% affirmative response underscores the significant impact of incentives in influencing consumer engagement. However, the nuanced responses, with 12% indicating occasional interactions and 5% responding negatively, suggest variability in consumer responsiveness.

A multiple regression analysis explores factors associated with engagement, revealing covariates such as receiving company outreach, recently receiving incentives, and a preference for email communication. These findings offer valuable insights into potential drivers of engagement. For instance, a significant correlation between receiving incentives and increased engagement highlights the efficacy of incentive-based programs. The preference for email communication as a covariate suggests the impact of communication channels on consumer responsiveness.

To further disprove (H0) ‘Incentives do not have a significant correlation on customer engagement’ a relation had to be proven between the frequency of interaction with company outreach and increased interaction due to incentives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often do you interact with company outreach?</th>
<th>Have you interacted with company outreach primarily because of the incentives offered?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost always</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only answer when I’m particularly happy with the product or company</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes I respond sometimes I don’t</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only answer when the company or product has been particularly bad</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Image 5* A matrix showing the correlation between the frequency of interaction with company outreach and increased interaction due to incentives.

To determine the correlation between these sets of data Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used due to the data being abnormally distributed. This results in a rank correlation of 0.44 to test the hypothesis a t-test with n-2 degrees of freedom was performed and resulted in a t-value of 6.4. Since the critical value with a 95% confidence interval is 1.6538 and the t-value exceeds it we can discard H0.
(H2): Incentives of the altruistic motivation type yield superior results in influencing customer engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Contributing factor</th>
<th>Item description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic motivation</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>I like being helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My opinion of the company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The length of time I have been a customer of the company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If the employees have been pleasant or accommodating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>The outreach effort feeling personalized to you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>The quality of the product or service the company offers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-monetary awards like badges or status symbols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monetary rewards as in discount offerings or the like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotive</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>I won’t respond to company outreach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image 6 Percentage of people who reported a specific motivational factor contributing to their desire to interact with company outreach

Building upon the first hypothesis the second hypothesis looks first upon self-reported motivational factors. The results of the survey reveal intriguing insights into the motivations driving customer engagement with company outreach. The dominant theme that emerges is the substantial influence of altruistic motivations, with more than half of the respondents (52%) expressing a willingness to engage based on their desire to be helpful, their general opinion of the company, the duration of their customer relationship, and their positive perception of company employees.

This prevalence of altruistic motivations suggests that a significant portion of customers is inclined to engage with company outreach not solely for personal gain but out of a genuine desire to contribute positively. This finding aligns with the idea that customers, to a considerable extent, are motivated by a sense of community or a desire to support a brand that they view favorably.

Moreover, the acknowledgment of intrinsic motivations by 40% of respondents underscores the importance of personalized and tailored approaches in company outreach efforts. This group values interactions that feel specifically crafted for them, indicating a preference for a more individualized and customer-centric communication strategy.

The recognition of extrinsic motivations among 38% of respondents emphasizes the role that tangible factors, such as product quality and rewards (both non-monetary like badges and monetary like
discounts), play in influencing customer engagement. This group is likely to respond positively to outreach efforts that highlight the quality of products or present enticing rewards.

Interestingly, a small percentage of respondents (3%) indicated a reluctance to respond to company outreach altogether. While this group is a minority, understanding the reasons behind their hesitancy could provide valuable insights into potential pain points or areas for improvement in the outreach strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often do you interact with company outreach?</th>
<th>Altruistic motivation</th>
<th>Intrinsic motivation</th>
<th>Extrinsic motivation</th>
<th>Amotivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost always</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only answer when I’m particularly happy with the product or company</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes I respond sometimes I don’t</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only answer when the company or product has been particularly bad</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Image 7 Correlation between self-reported motivation and frequency of interaction with company outreach*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Spearmans rho</th>
<th>t-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic motivation</td>
<td>0,49</td>
<td>7,42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>0,06</td>
<td>0,74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
<td>0,49</td>
<td>7,33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotive</td>
<td>0,55</td>
<td>8,80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Image 8 Spearman's rank correlation coefficient and t-value for establishing the significance of self-reported motivation and the frequency of outreach interaction*

Another instance of Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used due to the data examining the intersection between a check-all-that-apply question and a sequentially coded qualitative question. The student t-test with n-2 degrees of freedom has a critical value of 1,6538 with the confidence interval of 95%.

Altruistic, extrinsic, and amotive motivations all significantly exceed a t-test at any confidence interval proving the correlation between the motivational factor and frequency of interaction; however the
intrinsic motivation lacks correlation to the frequency at a 95% significance level and doesn’t exceed the critical value until 76%.

This also reflected in image 7 where altruistic, extrinsic, and amotive motivation has preference for frequently interacting with company outreach, where intrinsic motivation is a lot more evenly distributed. The correlation analysis between motivational factors and customer engagement offers valuable insights into the nuanced dynamics of customer behavior. Specifically, examining the implications for (H2): Incentives of the altruistic motivation type yield superior results in influencing customer engagement.

A substantial proportion of respondents (52%) indicated altruistic motivations as the driving force behind their interaction with company outreach. Among this group, individuals motivated by a genuine desire to be helpful demonstrated a strong correlation with consistent engagement, engaging almost always with the company. Comparatively, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations also emerged as significant contributors to customer engagement, each exhibiting distinct patterns. Intrinsic motivation was associated with a preference for personalized interactions, while extrinsic motivation, linked to factors such as product quality or rewards, showed a comparable impact, particularly when customers were content with the company.

While the findings underscore the positive correlation between altruistic motivation and consistent engagement, they do not unequivocally establish its superiority over other motivations. Notably, extrinsic motivation, particularly tied to tangible rewards, demonstrated a significant influence on consistent engagement, with 50% of respondents engaging almost always.

In light of these insights, it becomes evident that the hypothesis (H2) is only partially true. While proven that altruistic motivation has a stronger correlation to the frequency of company outreach than intrinsic motivation, it was also proved that extrinsic motivation has an almost equal correlation to how often respondents interacted with company outreach.
In the exploration of individuals’ opinions regarding various types of rewards for engaging with company outreach, distinct patterns emerge for each reward category. Analyzing the results reveals nuanced insights into respondents' perceptions of discounts, loyalty points, exclusive offers, free products, and cash-back.

All t-values fall in-between the critical value of ±1.9738 in a two tailed student t-test with a significance level of 95% which confirms significance of the findings. This proves that a respondent’s opinion on a type of monetary incentive corresponds to the self-reported effect that same incentives would have on interaction with company outreach.
The results indicate relatively small differences between respondents' opinions on different types of monetary incentives and their perceived effectiveness in influencing behavior. The average differences, ranging from 0.02 to 0.06, suggest that, on average, respondents' opinions align closely with their perceptions of the impact of these incentives on behavior.

Given that the hypothetically largest difference is ±2, the observed differences are comparatively modest. This implies that the variations in respondents' opinions and perceptions are within a relatively narrow range, resulting in respondents' opinions on monetary incentives closely mirroring their expectations of the incentives' effects on behavior.

Considering these results, discounts, loyalty points, and exclusive offers emerge as strong contenders for increasing customer outreach interaction. Free products or samples present a slightly lower but still favorable option, with a substantial positive sentiment. Cash-back, while positive, may be a slightly less compelling choice compared to the others.

| people receiving company outreach via emails preferred | 89% | 90% | 64% | 85% | 78% |
| people receiving company outreach via texts preferred | 67% | 93% | 59% | 83% | 70% |
| people receiving company outreach via social media preferred | 52% | 58% | 92% | 87% | 56% |
| people receiving company outreach via phone calls preferred | 28% | 34% | 38% | 83% | 31% |
| people receiving company outreach via physical mail preferred | 49% | 56% | 42% | 64% | 81% |

Image 11 Correlation between the channels a customer receives outreach on and the channel they prefer to receive outreach on

The preferences for receiving company outreach across various communication channels provide valuable insights into the nuanced dynamics between customer expectations and outreach strategies. Analyzing these preferences unveils implications for companies seeking to optimize their outreach methods.

Among those receiving company outreach via email, a notable 89% express a preference for email communication. This preference aligns with their chosen channel, indicating a correlation between the channel of receipt and preference. The same correlation is evident in the context of text messages, social media, physical mail, and phone calls. Notably, respondents exhibit a strong preference for the channel through which they receive outreach, suggesting a harmonious alignment between selected communication methods and expectations.
**Analysis and Discussion**

In this analysis, I delve into the findings derived from our quantitative survey-based research, which aimed to uncover strategies for more successfully incentivizing customers to respond to company outreach efforts. The study collected responses from a diverse sample of over 200 participants, providing valuable insights into the factors influencing customer response rates and the effectiveness of various incentivization techniques.

As highlighted by Burtch et al. (2018), using money to motivate customers to respond to outreach efforts may get more responses, but it doesn't necessarily lead to better quality reviews. Nonetheless, in cases where getting responses is a challenge, this approach represents a commendable step towards increased customer engagement.

The respondents have shown interest in monetary rewards, with all examined types having a strong positive correlation to self-reported increases in outreach interaction. However, when examining motivational types, it becomes clear that altruistic motivation is a clear contender for incentivizing outreach interaction, corroborating the empirical findings of Reimer and Benkenstein (2016).

When examining participants' opinion towards incentives, the strong positive opinions correlation with recent incentives suggests that ongoing incentive-based programs can be effective in sustaining and even amplifying consumer engagement. Understanding motivational factors, including the desire to be helpful and the allure of monetary rewards, provides avenues for tailoring incentive structures to align with diverse consumer motivations. The ambiguity regarding the frequency of interaction underscores the need for clarity in survey questions, but it also hints at the potential for increased engagement when incentives are introduced.

Furthermore, the preference for receiving outreach via social media as a covariate suggests the importance of channel selection in outreach strategies. Aligning incentive-driven initiatives with preferred communication channels enhances the likelihood of positive responses. These implications collectively guide marketers in optimizing their outreach strategies by leveraging incentives strategically, aligning with consumer motivations, addressing the ambiguity in survey design, and selecting communication channels tailored to audience preferences. This corroborates the studies later findings that people will overall prefer to receive company outreach among self-selected channels and comes with the implication that attempting outreach through channels not actively chosen by consumers might lead to a negative response towards the outreach and influence opinions negatively towards the company.
When digging further into the responses the discrepancy between the high percentage of individuals who have previously engaged with company outreach due to incentives (84%) and those expressing an increased likelihood of interaction with incentives (98%) suggests that incentives play a significant role in encouraging consumer participation. Notably, recent receipt of company outreach correlated significantly with both questions. However, these two questions did not exhibit a statistically significant correlation with each other. Additionally, there was a disparity in preferred communication channels: those engaging with outreach for incentives preferred email, whereas a stronger correlation was observed between the likelihood of responding to outreach with incentives and a preference for social media. It's noteworthy that there were no clear motivational factors strongly associated with prior engagement due to incentives, whereas the likelihood of interaction with incentives correlated with a desire to be helpful and an interest in monetary rewards.

The absence of a correlation to age or gender in the observed patterns holds significance for the generalizability and inclusivity of the findings. When demographic factors such as age or gender do not show a consistent relationship with responses related to company outreach and incentives, it suggests that the observed patterns may be applicable across various demographic groups.

Importantly, this lack of correlation indicates that the impact of incentives on consumer behavior and engagement is not restricted to specific age ranges or gender categories. The findings are more likely to be representative of a broader and diverse audience, enhancing the generalizability of the study's conclusions.

From a practical standpoint, this implies that incentive-based outreach strategies may be effective across different age groups and genders, allowing businesses and marketers to implement such approaches in a more inclusive manner. It reinforces the idea that incentives can be a universally influential factor in encouraging consumer interaction, irrespective of demographic differences.

However, it's essential to interpret this lack of correlation cautiously and consider other potential influencing factors. While age and gender may not exhibit a strong correlation, other variables, such as individual preferences or cultural factors, could still play a role in shaping responses. Nevertheless, the absence of a clear correlation with age or gender broadens the potential applicability of the study's insights.

The findings resonate with prior research, particularly studies emphasizing the effectiveness of non-monetary rewards and intrinsic motivations. Altruistic motives align with established theories of customer behavior, showcasing that customers derive satisfaction from feeling helpful. That positive
opinion towards a company and the length of time the respondents have been a customer leads to increased outreach interaction also connects to Raïes et als. (2015) and Tran, Taylor, and Wen’s (2022) study regarding cumulative customer commitment over time.

The significance attributed to employee behavior and personalized outreach corresponds with literature emphasizing positive customer experiences as pivotal factors.

The exploration of self-reported motivational factors reveals that altruistic motivations significantly correlate with consistent engagement, with 52% of respondents expressing a willingness to engage based on altruistically motivated desire. While intrinsic motivations lack a strong correlation, extrinsic motivations, tied to tangible rewards, demonstrate a substantial influence on consistent engagement, with 50% of respondents engaging almost always.
Conclusions

This study has focused on exploring strategies and approaches aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of customer incentivization in company outreach efforts. The study has provided valuable insights into the dynamics of customer engagement with company outreach, particularly focusing on the role of incentives and communication channels.

The research has successfully established a statistically significant effect of incentives on enhancing participants' willingness to interact with company outreach. Both altruistic and extrinsic motivational types demonstrate a robust correlation with the frequency of outreach interaction. These results underscore the importance of incorporating incentive-based strategies in company outreach efforts to effectively engage and motivate customers.

An encouraging outcome of this study is the generally positive opinions expressed by participants towards incentives. Importantly, these positive sentiments are consistent across various incentive types, indicating a broad acceptance and favorable perception of incentives among the target audience. This positive reception aligns closely with the observed impact of incentives on actual engagement.

The study emphasizes the significance of allowing consumers to choose their preferred channel of outreach. The ability for consumers to make this choice is crucial in maintaining a positive outlook on outreach efforts. By aligning outreach channels with consumer preferences, companies can avoid potential deterrents and foster a more favorable environment for interaction.

The insights gleaned from this research have practical implications for companies aiming to optimize their outreach strategies. Implementing incentive-based programs, considering both altruistic and extrinsic motivations, can significantly enhance customer engagement. Moreover, tailoring outreach efforts to align with consumers' preferred communication channels is pivotal for ensuring a positive and effective interaction.

In a landscape where customer engagement is paramount, understanding the nuanced interplay between incentives, motivational factors, and communication channels is indispensable. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on effective strategies to incentivize customer response to company outreach. As companies continue to refine their approaches, incorporating these findings can pave the way for more meaningful and mutually beneficial interactions with their customer base.
Limitations and further research

It is important to acknowledge certain limitations in this study, such as the reliance on self-reported data which may introduce biases or inaccuracies. Respondents might provide information based on memory, perception, or social desirability, impacting the overall reliability of the data. Self-reported data is susceptible to issues like recall bias, where participants may not accurately remember or represent their experiences. Additionally, respondents might tailor their responses to align with perceived societal norms or expectations, leading to a potential lack of objectivity in the findings.

External factors, such as economic conditions or industry-specific changes, could influence customer behavior and responses. These external elements might not be fully accounted for in the study, impacting the generalizability of the findings.

One notable constraint in the study lies in the single response option provided for intrinsic motivations. The survey design, by offering only one choice for this category, may oversimplify the complex and multifaceted nature of intrinsic motivational factors that drive customer engagement.

Intrinsic motivations, being inherently diverse and subjective, may not be fully captured by a single response option. Customers’ internal motivations, such as personal enjoyment or sense of achievements, can vary significantly among individuals. The limitation arises from the potential suppression of rich and varied intrinsic motivators that respondents might possess but are unable to express within the constraints of the survey format.

This limitation may impact the precision and depth of insights derived from the study. Differentiating between various intrinsic motivations could have provided a more nuanced understanding of how individual customers are driven to engage with company outreach. The limitation raises the possibility that the study might not have fully captured the spectrum of intrinsic factors influencing customer behavior.

Future research could delve deeper into specific demographic considerations and explore the long-term effects of incentive-based programs on customer loyalty. A more granular examination of demographic factors could unveil variations in responses and preferences. For instance, certain age groups might be more responsive to specific types of incentives, and understanding these nuances could inform targeted marketing approaches.
While the study may have assessed immediate responses, exploring how customer loyalty evolves over an extended period post-incentive implementation provides valuable insights. Longitudinal studies could track customer behavior beyond the initial interaction, shedding light on the durability of the incentivized customer engagement.

Future research endeavors could benefit from incorporating a more extensive and detailed set of response options for intrinsic motivations. Utilizing open-ended questions or a structured list that allows participants to express a range of intrinsic factors influencing their engagement could offer a more accurate portrayal of the diverse nature of these motivations.
Sources


Cowhitt, T. Butler, T. and Wilson, E. (2020) Using social network analysis to complete literature reviews: a new systematic approach for independent researchers to detect and interpret prominent


Appendix

Appendix 1

Customer Incentivization Survey

Thank you for participating in our survey. This survey will form the foundation for a bachelor’s thesis relating to enhancing customer incentivization in company outreach. Please provide honest responses to the following questions.

What is company outreach?

Company outreach is when a company reaches out to customers in search of a response. This involves all communications from a company to customers. It can be marketing messages, customer reviews, discount offerings or simple newsletters among others. This is often done in the hopes of companies seeking to build lasting connections and foster brand loyalty.

Section 1: Demographics

1.1. Age:

18-29
30-44
45-59
60 or older

1.2. Gender:

Male
Female
Non-binary or third-gender
Prefer not to say

1.3. Location:
-Country drop down list

1.4. Occupation:
Employed
Self-employed
Student
Unemployed
Retired

Section 2: Outreach Experience
Company outreach is all communications from a company to customers. It can be marketing messages, customer reviews, discount offerings or simple newsletters among others.

2.1. Do you receive company outreach? (In the form of emails, texts, ads, newsletters)
Yes
No

2.2. Through which channels do you usually receive company outreach? (Select all that apply)
Email

Text messages

Social media

Physical mail

Phone calls

2.3. How do you feel about receiving company outreach?

I’m happy to interact with it

I ignore it

It varies by the kind of outreach

It’s annoying

Section 3: Incentive Effectiveness

3.1. Have you recently received incentives to respond to company outreach (rewards, cash-back, etc.)

Yes

No

3.2. Have you interacted with company outreach primarily because of the incentives offered?

Yes

No

Sometimes
3.3. How do you feel about the different types of incentives?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive</th>
<th>It’s good</th>
<th>It’s bad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discounts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive offers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Free products or samples</td>
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<td>Cash-back</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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Section 4: Motivation Factors

4.1. What motivates you to interact with company outreach? (Select all that apply)

- The quality of the product or service the company offers
- My opinion of the company
- The length of time I have been a customer of the company
- The outreach effort feeling personalized to you (example: mentioning you by name)
- Non-monetary awards like badges or status symbols
- If the employees have been pleasant or accommodating
- I like being helpful
- Monetary rewards as in discount offerings or the like
- I won’t respond to company outreach
4.2. Would you be more likely to respond to company outreach if they offered you incentives?

Yes

No

Section 5: Response Behavior

5.1. How often do you interact with company outreach?

Almost always

Sometimes I respond sometimes I don’t

I only answer when I’m particularly happy with the product or company

I only answer when the company or product has been particularly bad

Almost never

5.2. Through which channels do you prefer to receive company outreach? (Select all that apply)

Email

Text messages

Social media

Physical mail

Phone calls

5.3. Would you be more likely to interact with company outreach if offered incentives?
Yes

No

5.4. If offered incentives would they increase or decrease the amount you interact with company outreach?

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<th>Increase</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
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Section 6: Barriers and Challenges

6.1. Are there any barriers or challenges that prevent you from interacting with company outreach? (Select all that apply)

Lack of interest in the products or services

Receiving too many outreach messages

Concerns about privacy

Complexity of the response process

Mistrust of the company
6.2. Would the knowledge that the company offers incentives impact your opinion of them?

Yes, I trust the company less

Yes, I think that it is smart

Maybe

No, they are just doing business

Thank you for completing our survey. Your feedback is valuable and will contribute to our understanding of customer incentivization in company outreach.
Would you be more likely to respond to company outreach if they offered you incentives?

![Bar chart showing responses to company outreach with incentives.]

- Yes: Paid (80%) vs. Unpaid (60%)
- No: Paid (5%) vs. Unpaid (10%)

![Bar chart showing preferred methods of company outreach.]

- Email: 120%
- Text messages: 100%
- Social media: 80%
- Physical mail: 60%
- Phone calls: 40%

Legend:
- ★ people receiving company outreach via emails preferred
- ★ people receiving company outreach via texts preferred
- ★ people receiving company outreach via social media preferred
- ★ people receiving company outreach via phone calls preferred
What motivates you to interact with company outreach?

Motivation | Average contributing factors
---|---
Altruistic motivation | 4
Intrinsic motivation | 6
Extrinsic motivation | 5
Amotive | 8
Are there any barriers or challenges that prevent you from interacting with company outreach?

- Lack of interest in the products or services
- Concerns about privacy
- Mistrust of the company
- No challenges apply

Would the knowledge that the company offers incentives impact your opinion of them?

- Yes, I trust the company less
- Yes, I think that it is smart
- Maybe
- No, they are just doing business

Paid vs Unpaid responses