



OTA SPOTLIGHT: Customer Engagement...
without an “ASK”

1. What is it?

- **Defining Customer Engagement without an “Ask”**

2. Types of Customer Engagement

- **Cognitive Engagement**
- **Emotional Engagement**
- **Behavioral Engagement**
- **Transactional Engagement**

3. “NO ASK” – Customer Engagement

- **OTA Strategies**

1. What is it? What does it mean to have customer engagement without asking for anything?

Customer engagement without asking for anything is the act of providing value-driven interactions that strengthen a brand relationship and foster long-term loyalty. This approach focuses on making the customer feel valued, understood, and connected to the brand organically, **rather than as a means to a sale.**

It differs from transactional engagement, which focuses on prompts that lead directly to a purchase. Engagement without asking for anything includes proactive, personalized, and helpful interactions that serve the customer's interests first.

Key components

- **Creating a connection beyond the transaction:** Rather than defining the relationship by what a customer buys, this strategy nurtures an emotional connection with the brand over time. It can include sharing helpful content or recognizing and celebrating customer milestones.
- **Valuable, relevant content:** Providing customers with unique and useful material, such as guides, articles, or webinars, adds value to their lives and builds trust.
- **Proactive, personalized support:** Instead of waiting for a customer to have a problem, a company anticipates their needs and provides support in advance. This can involve personalized communication, educational resources, or helpful updates.
- **Community building:** Creating spaces for customers to connect with each other, such as forums or social media groups, helps them feel a sense of belonging to a larger movement.
- **Rewarding loyalty authentically:** Engaging a customer's loyalty goes beyond a basic points program. It includes offering exclusive content, early access to products, or other perks that make the customer feel truly valued and appreciated.
- **Thoughtful interactions:** Every touchpoint with a customer, both online and in-person, can be an opportunity for engagement. This includes how customer service representatives interact with them and the overall experience of using a company's website or app.

Examples in practice

- **Grammarly:** The service sends personalized monthly emails to users that summarize their writing activity and productivity. It's a useful data summary that builds user habits and loyalty without trying to sell anything.
- **Gymshark:** The athletic wear company fosters a loyal community by creating content and experiences, such as workout tutorials and social media campaigns, that connect with customers based on shared interests and values.
- **Nike:** Through its Nike Plus membership and apps, the company provides personalized workout routines and rewards to its users. It focuses on motivating its community to achieve personal milestones rather than simply promoting products.
- **Starbucks:** The mobile app's rewards program gives customers access to perks like free refills and Wi-Fi. The company also uses socially responsible initiatives to build a stronger emotional connection with its customers.
- **Chewy:** Hand-painted pet portraits: Some customers receive surprise, hand-painted portraits of their pets from Chewy. These unique, unrequested gifts create a powerful and lasting emotional bond. Sympathy flowers and cards: After learning a customer's pet has passed away, Chewy has been known to send flowers and a sympathy card, a gesture that is widely shared and appreciated by pet owners.

2. Types of Customer Engagement

Customer engagement types include Cognitive Engagement (content and information), Emotional Engagement (personalized connections), Behavioral Engagement (specific actions), and Transactional Engagement (purchases). Other frameworks distinguish engagement by activity level, such as Active, Passive, and Interactive, or by the channel, including Digital Interactions, Feedback, Loyalty Programs, Direct Interactions, and Content Creation.

By Type of Connection

- **Cognitive Engagement:**

Involves customers mentally interacting with your brand, often through valuable content and information that educates them.

- **Emotional Engagement:**

Fostering a deep, emotional connection with customers through personalized experiences and interactions that build rapport.

- **Behavioral Engagement:**

Encouraging customers to take specific actions, such as visiting a website, using a product, or participating in a loyalty program.

- **Transactional Engagement:**

Engaging customers through the exchange of value, like making a purchase, booking a service, or completing a transaction.

3. “No Ask” Customer Engagement – OTA Strategies

To engage customers without asking for anything, focus on providing value and building genuine relationships through meaningful, personalized, and accessible interactions. Instead of sales-focused communication, this approach centers on being a resource for your audience. **Offer valuable, educational, and entertaining content.** Focus on providing free resources that address your audience's problems, interests, and goals. The goal is to establish your brand as a helpful and trusted authority in your field.

This strategy is about keeping 1 eye on tomorrow and 1 eye on the future.

Personalized Communication

- Use customer data to send relevant, non-promotional messages. This makes customers feel seen and valued as individuals.

OTA Strategy: Happy Birthday Emails

OTA Strategy: Notification of Community Event (they might be interested in)

OTA Strategy: Good Luck Note (with test, game, etc.)

OTA Strategy: Slideshow Video “Wishing you...” Series (New School Year, Halloween, etc.)

OTA Strategy: Celebrating Milestones (Welcome back to your 3rd Summer Camp with OTA!)

Show Genuine Appreciation

- Use small, thoughtful gestures to make your loyal customers feel special.

OTA Strategy: Thank You Notes (Letter and Email)

OTA Strategy: Exclusive Discount

Surprise and Delight

- Send customers unexpected, personalized gifts or small rewards. This kind of tangible gesture is a powerful way to make a positive impression.

OTA Strategy: Send OTA Hats / Water Bottles / T-Shirts / Coffee Mugs / ETC.

OTA Strategy: Send OTA Coupon

OTA Strategy: Donating to Community Partners (Money or Scholarship or Free Service)

Newsletter (Digital or Hardcopy Mailer)

- Send out newsletters with helpful information, industry insights, or curated resources rather than sales pitches.

OTA Strategy: Email Newsletter (seasonal)

OTA Strategy: Hardcopy Newsletter (end of year)

Social Media Posts (Blog Posts)

- Write articles that provide actionable tips and guides relevant to your customers. Using an “FAQ” strategy is a great way to frame this communication.

OTA Strategy: Facebook

(Example Topics: Youth Sports Parenting, Sportsmanship, Player Skill Development)

OTA Strategy: Instagram

(Example Topics: Health and Fitness, Family Activities, Student/Athlete Balance)

Storytelling

- Share your company's mission, values, and behind-the-scenes stories to create a more personal and authentic brand image.

OTA Strategy: YouTube Channel

(Example Topics: Feature employees and share their stories to remind customers that there are real people behind the brand)

OTA Strategy: Podcast

(Example Topics: Feature Teachers, Tutors, Principals, League Commissioners, Coaches, Directors of Travel Sports Programs, College Counselors, Guidance Counselors, Pediatricians, all to remind customers of community partners and to share expertise)

How To Videos

- Create tutorials or demonstrations that teach customers something useful, like how to best use your products/services or master a related skill.

OTA Strategy: Video – Tips for being a Volunteer Youth Coach

OTA Strategy: Video – How to make Healthy Snacks

Host Events

- Organize meetups, industry events, or virtual sessions where customers can interact with your team and other users.

OTA Strategy: Neighborhood Sports POD or Community Park Play Day

OTA Strategy: Reserve Table or Booth at Community Event

OTA Strategy: Virtual Event with Live Q&A (Can include Special Guest)

Just for Laughs

- Strive to make your community smile.

OTA Strategy: Youth Sports Video Bloopers

OTA Strategy: Youth Sports “Dad” Joke of the Week/Month

“We’re Listening”

- Sharing Feedback, Testimonials, and Customer Reviews with emails and social media posts.

OTA Strategy: Seasonal Testimonial Sheet (based on position – Principal, PTA, etc.)

OTA Strategy: Parent Customer Review Highlights

Helpful Content

- Send emails to parent customers and/or community partner contacts, like PE Teachers, YMCA Sports Directors.

[OTA Strategy: How to Avoid Common Playing Injuries](#)

[OTA Strategy: OTA iPlay Series](#)

Keep in Mind

Overtime Athletics operates in a unique space.

We are a business entity that must remember our

Community Partner Responsibilities:

For a company to be a community partner means entering into a collaborative, mutually beneficial relationship with individuals, organizations, or groups to work towards a common goal, often addressing social, environmental, or economic issues for the local area. This goes beyond mere sponsorship, involving a shared commitment to a mission, joint responsibility, and a reciprocal exchange of resources and expertise to create positive impacts for the entire community.

Key Aspects of a Community Partnership

- **Collaboration and Shared Vision:** A company and its community partners work together, sharing a common vision and goals, rather than operating in isolation.
- **Mutual Benefit:** While the community benefits from the company's involvement, the company also receives benefits, such as improved brand reputation, enhanced customer relationships, and greater understanding of the community's needs.
- **Long-Term Commitment:** Unlike a one-off donation or sponsorship, community partnerships are often long-term, strategic relationships built on trust and consistent effort.

- **Leveraging Strengths:** Partners leverage each other's strengths, expertise, and resources to build a more resilient and self-sufficient community.
- **Focus on Community Needs:** The partnership is focused on addressing specific issues within the community, such as health, education, economic development, or environmental concerns.

**Keeping these key Community Partnership aspects in mind
will assist with planning your Customer Engagement Strategy
and incorporating methods that don't involve an ASK!**