

REVIEW ARTICLE

Customer loyalty: a current look at customer organizations, strategies, acquisition and experience

ABSTRACT

The great challenge that organizations face is to remain competitive, seeking to grow sustainably and profitably in the face of change. In this context, it is important to consider these variants as an opportunity to get the best out of each one and offer added value that is perceived by customers. In this paper, key aspects of customer loyalty have been developed from a current perspective in organizations, considering customer strategies, acquisition, and experience. Likewise, the data contained in this research were obtained from various bibliographic reviews in scientific journals, which were summarized so that readers can have useful content that strengthens their knowledge and can be put into practice in a company. The purpose of this research is to carry out a theoretical analysis with updated references on loyalty, being of utmost importance that those interested have a summary document of various papers carried out by researchers and experts on the subject at the national and international level. Finally, it seeks to provide key and useful tools to leaders of organizations that focus on the sale of products and services, so that they can rethink and adapt their strategies aimed at the growth and profitability of the company.

Keywords: adaptability; customer experience; innovation.

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INTRODUCTION

It is important to note that customer loyalty plays a fundamental role for companies to survive, and is also useful for raising service levels compared to the competition. With the changes that have occurred after the pandemic, customers have become more demanding (Bastos 2006, as cited in Tocas *et al.*, 2018). This situation has caused companies to generate different sales strategies to stand out in the competitive market, offering more personalized services and training focused on their needs, finding potential customers (Maldonado Noriega and Ahumada Carranza, 2023).

Kotler *et al.* (2022) state that customer loyalty is the process of creating and maintaining a long-lasting relationship with consumers. These actions seek to satisfy needs and exceed expectations that allow the construction of strong long-term relationships. Loyalty is the proximity and closeness to services and products, where the ties and bonds that have been created are cared for, to generate strong relationships (Pierrend, 2020). Loyalty focuses on knowing and captivating the tastes of customers, providing timely offers, based on the information collected from each shopping experience (Blanco, 2013, as cited in Bustamante, 2022). According to Zambrano (2020) it is much more than analyzing certain periodic behaviors; it is about evaluating the psychological behavior of consumers; thus, the most assertive way to reach them is through close and fast contact, which will guarantee their loyalty, remaining as a customer for years. However, the problem is that sometimes there is no monitoring or control to measure satisfaction levels, which makes the company vulnerable, since the competition can use powerful tools and aggressively remove them from the market.

Adding to the above, digitalization and automation are trends in global markets; therefore, they must be given the importance they deserve, because they will guarantee the source of income and the acquisition of new customers and markets to be highly competitive. Both seek to change certain business patterns and styles, so that they encourage automation and time optimization through modern connected systems that will provide the

necessary content for decision-making, thus contributing to the satisfaction of customer needs. In addition, both have the functionality of anticipating the future desires of consumers, before customers perceive it (Olórtégui-Alcalde *et al.*, 2023). Betting on digital transformation not only helps to gain efficiency in processes, it also saves costs and offers the agility needed to adapt to an ever-changing economic environment; it also drives the culture of innovation in the company. However, some companies do not want to invest in it or are resistant to change, which is why it is important to maintain and generate an optimal digital culture through assertive internal and external communications (Rodríguez Rodríguez and Villegas Guzmán, 2023).

Another important aspect is to fulfill promises when it comes to customers, focusing on the relationship with them so that they remain loyal over time; in this way, they will have greater security about the steps that are required to start new negotiations. It is also necessary to work so that the services and products are adaptable to the specific needs of the customers, so that this transcends emotions.

In order to strengthen relationships, it is highly valued to collect data from users, generating a personalized profile for each one, which will contribute to better decision-making by allowing the identification and visualization of well-segmented potential customers (Jedrzejczyk, 2021). Marketing guidelines also highlight the importance of customer satisfaction (Pérez 2010, as cited in Ramos *et al.*, 2020), which refers to the fact that personalization plays a key role in obtaining a good recommendation, since it is about achieving closeness in customers through the brand, as interactions become more pleasant and enjoyable (Tyrväinen *et al.*, 2020). These interactions form strong bonds and promote customer loyalty, which means that if a brand manages to exceed expectations, the closest consequence will be repurchase. Therefore, to this end, it is vital to know the needs of customers and anticipate responses to their requirements (Kini *et al.*, 2024). To this end, it is important to use powerful instruments that will allow the consumer to be analyzed, which will contribute to improving sales (Gonzales Sulla, 2021).

Thus, loyalty programs become key tools for marketing. Many of them are born from technological advances that are created to collect exclusive and valuable data, allowing the creation of unique and personalized offers. In this regard, artificial intelligence has a high potential to achieve the user experience, increasing its positioning in the market, which is why it is sought to enhance it from a modern approach, the purpose of which is to demonstrate that new trends are the most effective in achieving the proposed goals (Chen *et al.*, 2021). Various studies have shown that most companies pay more attention to the part of customer acquisition and making the sale; after that, they neglect the strategic part of after-sales, others do not know about it. In this regard, customer commitment makes the difference, which is why the importance of companies investing in loyalty campaigns is highlighted (Ng *et al.*, 2020). When a customer is provided with first-class service through positive experiences, the company has already won because all of this is part of the investment made to position themselves in the long term. The attitudes and skills that employees acquire to build a solid culture are those that have an impact inside and outside the company (Christman, 2024).

METHOD

A theoretical analysis of the variable customer loyalty has been carried out based on bibliographical references from 2019 to 2024, which in turn were studied by other authors in previous years. The material used was rigorously chosen according to the objective of the research, using sources from national and international journals whose contents are selected and reviewed by experts. Papers that presented too general information on the subject were discarded, thus obtaining a reliable number of papers that cover more details of the research carried out on the subject, with an innovative look at customer organizations, strategies, acquisition, and experience. The search process consisted of researching in various databases such as Scopus, LACCEI International, ProQuest, Dialnet, and repositories of Universidad Privada del Norte (UPN), and Universidad de San Martín de Porres (USMP). Some sources used were Science Direct Magazine, Pro Science Magazine, International Magazine of

Universidad de Sevilla, and Management in the Third Millennium Magazine of Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM), among others.

The keywords used were “customer experience”, “marketing management”, “customer loyalty trends”, “post-pandemic customer loyalty”, “marketing strategies”, “startup retention”, “marketing inbound”, “innovation and digital transformation”, among others. The search period was from August 2023 to June 2024.

Regarding the thematic analysis, a review of qualitative and quantitative papers was carried out, and as for coding, segments with words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs that were significant and consistent with the topic investigated were used.

Below is a summary of the papers reviewed by a select list of expert researchers on the topic:

Country: Russia

- **Publication.** *Regional Science Policy & Practice* journal.
- **Institution.** Regional Science Association International.
- **Paper title.** Trust as a critical driver of customer loyalty in the pharmaceutical market: A study of Kazakhstan.
- **Main topic investigated.** Focus was on customer loyalty, the factors that influence it, and end-user attitudes.
- **Author.** Orazgaliyeva, E., Abuzhalitova, A., Sokhatskaya, N., Smykov, M., and Kazybayeva, A.
- **Year.** 2024.

Country: United States

- **Publication.** *Technological Forecasting & Social Change* journal.
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** A neural network-based predictive decision model for customer retention in the telecommunication sector.

- **Main topic investigated.** The study analyzed customer retention strategies, using a decision model based on neural networks that make up a data set.
- **Author.** Thangeda, R.; Kumar, N., and Majhi, R.
- **Year.** 2024

Country: United States

- **Publication.** *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice Magazine.*
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** The Magic of Customer Service in Veterinary Practice.
- **Main topic investigated.** Emphasized that internal customer service is as crucial as external customer service to unify a solid culture and quality service.
- **Author.** Christman, A.
- **Year.** 2024.

Country: United States

- **Publication.** *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services.*
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** Going beyond the role: How employees' perception of corporate social responsibility fuels proactive customer service performance.
- **Main topic investigated.** Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the proactive performance of employees, who are essential for corporate performance, were studied.
- **Author.** Huang, M., Geng, S., Yang, W., Law, K., and He, Y.
- **Year.** 2024.

Country: Korea

- **Publication.** *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity.*
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** Brand loyalty in FinTech services: The role of self-concept, customer engagement behavior and self-brand connection.

- **Main topic investigated.** Focus was on how relationship quality and consumer predispositions affect loyalty, customer behavior, and the brand.
- **Author.** Nayak, A.; Savitha, B., and Thonse, I.
- **Year.** 2024.

Country: China

- **Publication.** *Heliyon* journal.
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** Effect of financial innovation and stakeholders' satisfaction on investment decisions: Does internet security matter?
- **Main topic investigated.** The focus was on studying the dimension of technological innovation, which influences the satisfaction of stakeholders (customers and employees).
- **Author.** Baptiste, J., Yao, H., Mulindwa, G., Dorian, P., and Dior, J.
- **Year.** 2024.

Country: United States

- **Publication.** *Journal of Business Research.*
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** Feeling rewarded and entitled to be served: Understanding the influence of self- versus regular checkout on customer loyalty.
- **Main topic investigated.** Focus was placed on buyers being prepared to manage self-payments, which creates a rewarding experience.
- **Author.** Nusrat, F., and Huang, Y.
- **Year.** 2024

Country: Argentina

- **Publication.** *LACCEI International Multi-Conference for Engineering, Education, and Technology: "Leadership in Education and Innovation in Engineering in the Framework of Global Transformations: Integration and Alliances for Integral*

Development”, Hybrid Event, Buenos Aires - ARGENTINA, July 17 - 21, 2023.

- **Institution.** LACCEI.
- **Paper title.** Digital Transformation in the Customer Experience Consumer: A Systematic Review of the Scientific Literature between 2018 and 2022.
- **Main topic investigated.** Topics related to digital transformation in the consumer experience were identified, including digital strategy, value proposition, Big Data and the company-customer relationship.
- **Author.** Vasquez, F., Llaque, G., Valderrama, M., and Calvanapón, F.
- **Year.** 2023.

Country: Peru

- **Publication.** *Revista de Comunicación.*
- **Institution.** Universidad de Piura.
- **Paper title.** La motivación, la lealtad y compromiso como precursores de las comunidades de marca.
- **Main topic investigated.** The focus was on determining whether motivation, loyalty and level of commitment favor interest in generating brand communities.
- **Author.** Cristancho, G., and Cancino, Y.
- **Year:** 2023.

Country: Colombia

- **Publication.** *Cuadernos Latinoamericanos de Administración.*
- **Institution.** ProQuest.
- **Paper title.** Una mirada del marketing sensorial en las redes sociales: Explorando la influencia del marketing sensorial en la experiencia del usuario en las redes sociales.
- **Main topic investigated.** Its purpose was to study the role of sensory marketing in social networks and see how it influences consumer decision-making.
- **Author.** Grisales, C., and Hernández, J.

- **Year.** 2023.

Country: Peru

- **Publication.** *SCIENDO* journal.
- **Institution.** Universidad Nacional de Trujillo.
- **Paper title:** Estrategias de ventas y fidelización de los clientes en una empresa de capacitación virtual.
- **Main topic investigated.** Its purpose was to determine the relationship between sales strategies and customer loyalty in a virtual training company.
- **Author.** Maldonado Noriega, C., and Ahumada Carranza, K.
- **Year.** 2023.

Country: Argentina

- **Publication.** *Intersecciones en Comunicación* Journal.
- **Institution.** School of Social Sciences, Universidad Nacional de Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires.
- **Paper title:** Transformación digital en las agencias de comunicación estratégica en Costa Rica.
- **Main topic investigated.** It focused on the digital transformation of strategic communication agencies.
- **Author.** Rodriguez Rodriguez, D., and Villegas Guzman, A.
- **Year.** 2023.

Country: Mexico

- **Publication.** Book.
- **Institution.** Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí.
- **Title of the book:** *El reto de la multimodalidad y la transversalidad en la era digital y los tiempos de pandemia.*
- **Main topic investigated.** Evaluated psychosocial risk factors related to work in the

digital age, to strengthen safety and health at work.

- **Author.** Azuara, V., Gutierrez, J., Martinez-Cerda, M., and Sanchez-Macias, A.
- **Year.** 2022.

Country: Spain

- **Publication.** *Sustainability journal*.
- **Institution.** MDPI.
- **Paper title.** Net Promoter Score (NPS) and Customer Satisfaction: Relationship and Efficient Management.
- **Main topic investigated.** The objective was to study the NPS index by analyzing the relationship between the model and customer satisfaction.
- **Author.** Baquero, A.
- **Year.** 2022.

Country: Spain

- **Publication.** *IROCAMM, International Review of Communication and Marketing Mix*.
- **Institution.** Universidad de Sevilla.
- **Paper title:** Marketing relacional como estrategia de fidelización de clientes en una industria panadera.
- **Main topic investigated.** Its objective was to determine the relationship between relationship marketing and customer loyalty.
- **Author.** Caja, F.
- **Year.** 2022.

Country: Peru

- **Publication.** Universidad San Martín de Porres Repository.
- **Institution.** Universidad San Martín de Porres.
- **Title of the thesis:** *La importancia de la atención al cliente para lograr la fidelización en la empresa Epicur Club*.
- **Main topic investigated.** It focused on the importance of customer service as a means

of loyalty, through different channels to establish relationships before, during and after sales.

- **Author.** Bustamante, H.
- **Year.** 2022.

Country: United States

- **Publication.** *Journal of Business Research*.
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** Three decades of research on loyalty programs: A literature review and future research agenda.
- **Main topic investigated.** It focused on key industries such as retail, competition and the impact of technological advances.
- **Author.** Chen, Y., Mandler, T., and Meyer, L.
- **Year.** 2021.

Country: Spain

- **Publication.** *aDResearch: Revista Internacional de Investigación en Comunicación*.
- **Institution.** ESIC University.
- **Paper title:** Efectos de la inteligencia artificial en las estrategias de marketing: revisión de literatura.
- **Main topic investigated.** It focused on studying the main contributions that have been generated between artificial intelligence and marketing strategies.
- **Author.** Cuervo, C.
- **Year.** 2021.

Country: Poland

- **Publication.** *Procedia Computer Science*.
- **Institution:** Remington University Corporation.
- **Paper title.** Managing Customer Relationships and Value in Organizations with the Use of IT Tools: Customer Segmentation on the Market of Eco-Innovative Services.
- **Main topic investigated.** Focused on customer segmentation, relationship management

and value in organizations, adapting products and services to customer expectations.

- **Author.** Jedrzejczyk, W.
- **Year.** 2021.

Country: Peru

- **Publication.** *Gestión en el Tercer Milenio.*
- **Institution.** Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos.
- **Paper title:** Comportamiento del consumidor y su proceso de decisión de compra. El nuevo camino del consumidor.
- **Main topic investigated.** Focused on digital transformation, the impact of the pandemic, consumer behavior and the purchasing decision process.
- **Author.** Gonzales Sulla, A.
- **Year.** 2021.

Country: Ecuador

- **Publication.** *Pro Sciences: Revista de Producción, Ciencias e Investigación.*
- **Institution:** Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo Profesional (CIDEPRO).
- **Paper title.** Tecnologías en la inteligencia artificial para el marketing: una revisión de la literatura.
- **Main topic investigated.** Its purpose was to analyze AI technologies applied to marketing and strategic decisions for advertising oriented to customer tastes.
- **Author.** Medina-Chicaiza, P., and Martinez-Ortega, A.
- **Year.** 2020.

Country: Ecuador

- **Publication.** *Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo Profesional.*
- **Institution.** Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar.
- **Paper title:** Fidelización en el sector cooperativo de carácter institucional en Ecuador.

- **Main topic investigated.** Focused on customer loyalty as a measure of desertion control and mitigation and determined the influence of the work factor on loyalty.

- **Author.** Zambrano, K.
- **Year.** 2020.

Country: Peru

- **Publication.** *Gestión en el Tercer Milenio.*
- **Institution:** Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos
- **Paper title:** La Fidelización del Cliente y Retención del Cliente: Tendencia que se Exige Hoy en Día.
- **Main topic investigated.** The purpose of this study was to analyze the importance of policies so that customers generate positive opinions about the company and influence their purchasing decision.
- **Author.** Pierrend, S.
- **Year.** 2020.

Country: Peru

- **Publication.** UPN institutional repository.
- **Institution.** Universidad Privada del Norte (UPN).
- **Paper title.** *Estrategias de fidelización al cliente en las empresas turísticas: una revisión sistemática de la literatura científica de los últimos 5 años.*
- **Main topic investigated.** It focused on managing loyalty programs, taking into account the latest trends.
- **Author.** Jesús Ramírez, R., and Vereau León, A.
- **Year:** 2020.

Country: Peru

- **Publication.** *Epistemia Revista Científica.*
- **Institution.** Universidad Señor de Sipán.
- **Paper title:** Metodología Canvas y Plan de Marketing para Fidelización de Clientes en el Rubro de Dulces Artesanales Chiclayo.

- **Main topic investigated.** It focused on proposing a marketing plan through the Canvas methodology to achieve customer loyalty.
- **Author.** Ramos, E.; Reaño, M., and Zuazo, N.
- **Year,** 2020.

Country: Finland

- **Publication.** *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Science Direct and Scopus.
- **Institution.** Not indicated.
- **Paper title.** Personalization and hedonic motivation in creating customer experiences and loyalty in omnichannel retail.
- **Main topic investigated.** Focused on the effects of personalization and hedonic motivation on customer experience and loyalty outcomes in omnichannel commerce.
- **Author.** Tyrväinen, O., Karjaluoto, H., and Saarijärvi, H.
- **Year.** 2020.

RESULTS

The results obtained provide a deep appreciation of how customer loyalty manifests itself in organizations, and in customer acquisition, strategies, and experience through various studies carried out from 2019 to 2024, with a total of 8 national papers representing 22% and 28 international papers (United States, China, Russia, Finland, Poland, Korea, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, Spain, Australia, Mexico, Venezuela, and Uruguay) representing 78%, that are in line.

Historical and conceptual evolution of customer loyalty and retention

Initially, in the 1950s, companies paid little attention to close ties with customers, as they focused more on manufacturing. Then the interest in working on building loyalty with a focus on customers began to contribute to the greater profitability of companies (Capon, 2009). Likewise, loyalty is the combination of repeated purchases of a product or service, together with the psychological attachment that the customer develops with a supplier (Day, 1969,

as cited in Sarmiento Guede, 2015). Likewise, authentic loyalty occurs when a customer, despite knowing several competitive offers, enthusiastically and determinedly wants to buy the services and products from the company that initially caught their attention. In this way, the company that offers the product or service builds value in the customer that will allow it to grow and position itself (Oliver, 1997, as cited in Sarmiento Guede, 2015).

Years later, customer retention concepts emerged, which consider the following: first, acquiring new customers may be more expensive compared to maintaining existing ones; second, a satisfied customer will buy again; and third, customers will pass on their recommendation to three others (Bardakci and Whitelock, 2003, as cited by Pierrend, 2020). That is, a consumer who remains loyal over time will refer to it positively; that is, if he identifies with and likes the product or service, he becomes less sensitive to price increases (Guadarrama and Rosales, 2015, as cited by Pierrend, 2020).

Importance of customer loyalty: indicators and factors that affect retention

It is important to note that, even if customer retention figures are positive, customer loyalty should never be neglected; even a slight reduction in satisfaction would have a negative impact on profitability, limiting the company's growth. Customer loss is a major disadvantage, caused because consumers stop buying due to factors such as low satisfaction, lack of attention to detail, poor communication, information that does not generate value, better prices from competitors, outdated and discontinued products, lack of knowledge of customer needs, excessive neglect of complaints and claims, and other factors that can affect customer retention and loyalty. Because of this, customer loyalty is based on three indicators: behavioral loyalty; attitudinal loyalty; and cognitive loyalty (Czepiel and Gilmore, 1987, as cited in Caja, 2022).

- **Behavioral loyalty.** It is the way in which a customer acts with respect to a specific brand over time, when they receive a service or product on a recurring basis, adding a close connection to the sales process that strengthens

communications and ties to build loyalty (Ballester, 2010, as cited in Caja, 2022).

- **Attitudinal loyalty.** It refers to the willingness to recommend through rating, showing gratitude and respect for the service, which ultimately become the emotional factors that indicate that true loyalty is the psychological connection that is established (Ordoñez, 2017, as cited in Caja, 2022).
- **Cognitive loyalty.** It refers to purchasing behavior, which becomes the consumer's psychological involvement with the brand, leading to favorable attitudes and intentions to buy again (Ordoñez, 2017, as cited in Caja, 2022). This leads to the action of repeat purchase, which is the result of voluntarily choosing a certain brand when the buyer has a specific reason, as a result of collaboration (Caja, 2022, 42).

Importance of a comprehensive and long-term strategy for customer acquisition and loyalty

Customer acquisition and loyalty must be considered in the long term, so that the organization can face the aggressive and rapid adaptation of the competition. According to Henry (2020), the procedure involves a wide variety of factors and actions that include promotion, marketing, advertising, sales, public relations and customer service, all designed to meet the proposed objectives, persuading them to buy, managing to satisfy the highest demands. Corporate social responsibility also plays an important role because it impacts products and services. Therefore, it is recommended that companies have the support of internal groups for their implementation, which are made up of owners, employees and customers. In addition, it is crucial to understand the perceptions about the actions of companies because they will determine the motivations for the purchase (Huang *et al.*, 2024).

The importance of internet security and supplier selection in the digital age

It is important to highlight the Internet, which is a powerful tool that helps to

spread knowledge about customers and the company, through which not only content and network of contacts are generated, but it is also the main tool to close transactions. Unfortunately, these operations are not always successful; therefore, it is recommended that companies manage effective controls to protect their information and that of their customers, since it can be catastrophic without adequate management (Pea-Assounga and Bindel Sibassaha, 2024). Likewise, customers should carefully choose their suppliers, checking that they have secure policies, procedures and tools, and that they comply with the requirements requested at the national and international level. Likewise, the indicators related to price optimization, better supply and demand, are those that will contribute to determining their competitive value (Orazgaliyeva *et al.*, 2024). Ethical challenges in collecting and using customer data for customer loyalty are crucial to building trust with consumers and ensuring that data use contributes to responsible and effective loyalty. Data collection and use must be done with informed customer consent; lack of transparency in these processes can lead to mistrust and legal issues. The information collected must not be used to manipulate customers' purchasing decisions; therefore, companies must act ethically.

Impact of technology on customer experience, strategies for retention, challenges and opportunities

Advances in technology have transcended and evolved in the minds of consumers and the way they perceive the customer experience. An example of this is the usefulness of self-service channels that can bring great advantages to take advantage of time, using fewer resources to have greater profitability (Nusrat and Huang, 2024). Likewise, although companies may have different methods and strategies to retain their customers, customer loss turns out to be a big problem in developing countries; therefore, companies must look for a varied list of actions to keep them. However, when they

find a useful tool, in most cases they do not use it because they are used to working under their own methods (Thangeda *et al.*, 2024). According to Walton (1980, as cited in Tschohl, 1997) the objective of the company should not only be to provide the best service, but it should be legendary. Its delimitation must be made up of strategies to attract and retain customers, which will allow rethinking and strengthening the different tactics that a sales team must have.

Below, six strategies to build customer loyalty will be shown, followed by a detailed explanation of each one (Tomas, 2024).

Strategy 1. Communicating as if you were human

The first strategy deals with something very obvious that everyone knows, but that is often forgotten because, when it comes to people, human communication must be placed at the center of the entire process. This first strategy aims to establish close and personal connections, which provide the necessary and unique value that will allow generating strong and long-term ties (Chiesa, 2013, as cited in Durán, 2020, 10). It is not easy to provide close and personalized contact, although it may seem otherwise; therefore, communication must be friendly, given that daily experiences, emotions and actions arise from the way in which the message of the environment is transmitted and interpreted through the senses, which is why daily connection in communication channels has become a source of meaningful interactions.

Likewise, Grisales and Hernández (2023) point out that when there is a complicated problem, customers must be supported in a timely manner, giving a broad clarification of the information and a varied list of options. Likewise, when it comes to digital communication, it is important to personalize it; that is, that customers feel that the company cares about their needs and that they are close to them. The interaction can be started by calling them by their name, using humor and empathy in the communication; these are concepts that are known but that are not usually used on a daily basis due to lack of time because it may be thought that they do not have value or because there is

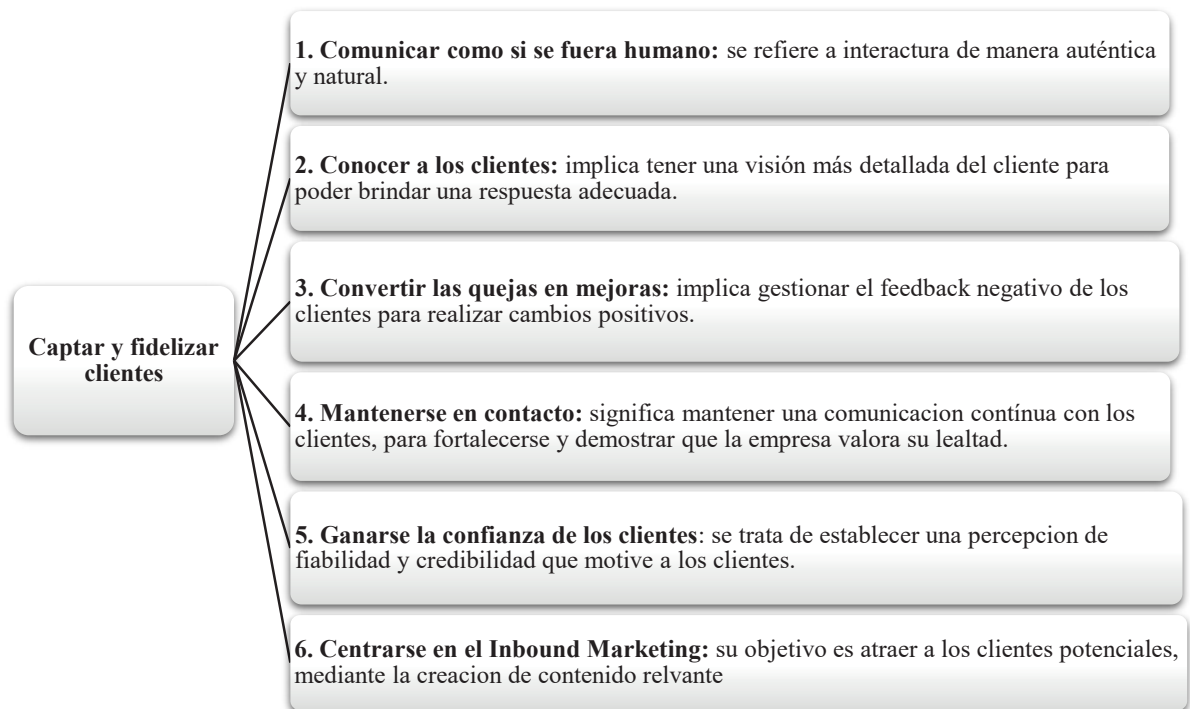
no area in charge of carrying them out. In addition, it is the customers who interact with the services and products, showing their sensitivity. For this reason, there are many brands that are already putting aside being the symbol to become the best promise that the customer expects, providing a differentiated experience that includes an emotion and finding an effective solution to their problems (Lindstroms, 2008, cited in Grisales and Hernández, 2023).

In short, it should be noted that interrelations with customers are key because they strength trust. Consider that those forms of communication such as posts, an email sent to the customers or a signal from browsers, are useful to strengthen relationship bonds and make communication effective from the human point of view.

Strategy 2. Knowing your customers

When you have a large customer portfolio, personalization can be lost. To prevent this from happening, it is necessary to spend time analyzing the database to get to know them thoroughly. This is obtained through online information that includes real-time data, which will provide feedback to the customer's decisions through a virtual platform. Research tools such as social profiles can also be used, where socio-demographic data is obtained. When it comes to companies with a history in the market that already have the information, it will be necessary to determine what information will be useful, having the database updated, as well as permanent contact with customers, either virtually or in person. In both cases, their purpose is to know customer data for effective decision-making and to define what type of product or service will be offered according to the need. This will add value to leaders so that they can define, segment and differentiate the type of sales and marketing strategies to be used (Medina-Chicaiza and Martínez-Ortega, 2020).

Along the same lines, Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays an important role, with the objective of imitating the intellectual capacities of a person's thinking, with a mechanism of rapid adaptation according to the programmed data, which will contribute to the development of savvy methods to achieve loyalty in environments

Figure 1*Six strategies to attract and retain customers*

Note. Adapted from Six strategies to attract and retain customers, by Tomas, 2024, Ciberclick.

with high participation. Furthermore, organizations that implement AI are promoting and strengthening their value chain, which focuses on customer service and attention, billing, and the evolutionary advancement of products and services (Medina-Chicaiza and Martínez-Ortega, 2020). In addition, creating content with AI stands out for the optimization of time and resources so that attractive promotions can be generated for consumers that result in positive feedback in accordance with reality, in such a way that it is not only knowledge without practice, but that it brings out the best in them according to their own experiences (Cuervo, 2021).

In short, the company must find a way to distinguish itself from the competition and motivate itself to create different ways of presenting the product or service, standing out by creating valuable content to get closer to customers; in this way, it will be easy to identify the unique business characteristics that enhance the brand and highlight the most valued products.

Strategy 3. Turning complaints into improvements

Some companies may be afraid of comments that customers may make, whether online through their platforms and social networks, or verbally, which could harm them; however, this should be seen as an opportunity to improve from different areas. Therefore, every time the company receives a negative comment, it is necessary to find a way to reverse it and improve the service, making the experience positive. One way is to create a complaint management plan that consolidates the most recurrent needs of customers, so that they can be supported and resolved by sales leaders, offering a quick solution, turning a problem into a success story.

Another way to assess user satisfaction and loyalty is by applying surveys with metrics such as the New Promoter Score (NPS), coined by Reichheld (2003). Companies should focus on working on the customer experience, and then apply a survey with the NPS to customers after making purchases or acquiring products

or services. Its objective is to know customer satisfaction, to use that information to convert them into loyal customers.

In short, it is important to listen and act quickly. If you are apologizing, do so sincerely and promise only what you can deliver. Companies need to have a good level of knowledge and understanding of their products and services so that they can serve and guarantee customer loyalty.

Strategy 4. Staying in touch

It is important not to forget the micro moments, the customer experience and the interconnections, having at least a mechanism to maintain the connection. However, this does not mean that the contact is maintained without meaning, quite the contrary, if the person in charge does not have information that covers a need or that adds value, it is advisable not to make the contact. Therefore, it is suggested to have a communication plan and that it is applied at least once a month; dissemination of information that will be key if it becomes a system that creates long-term interactions and relationships that may involve the launch of products, events and announcements. Along the same lines, after interactions with customers, it is advisable to work with a follow-up plan by phone, email and social networks; messages must be friendly in such a way that they please customers and make them want to read them (Duran, 2020).

In short, social media has become an essential element that serves to boost business development, thanks to its many advantages. The first is that it increases the exposure of the company to its target audience, and the second is that it increases the degree of consumer satisfaction, allowing them to feel valued by the company.

Strategy 5. Gaining customer trust

Customers perceive companies as if their main objective was to sell; to change this, an approach that provides value is necessary so that they feel they can trust and be connected. Customer perceptions can determine the final purchase decision because they act on the things they believe and a degree of influence

is generated in positive or negative opinions, which affect the actions they take (Pérez-Martínez and Topa, 2018).

Adding to the above, gaining the trust of customers can sometimes be easy and other times it can take longer; this is why having a long-term vision is necessary. What transactions will be made tomorrow is not important, but how many there will be and which ones will be recommended. In that regard, for the customer to feel comfortable, close, humane and empathetic attention must be provided. In addition, it should not be forgotten that trust must start from the first contact, with the company committing to comply with the agreements, since it is about the customer perceiving a unique value and that it stays in their mind. Gaining trust will depend on who serves them; therefore, the staff must be sincere and kind and, when there is a mistake, they must recognize it and understand that these problems will happen, and perhaps they will have a cost, but they will try to repair them by being flexible (Abarca *et al.*, 2022). Sagués De la Maza (2022), for his part, states that business culture is one of the main pillars because it is built through value, emblem, belief, and ways of transmitting messages.

In order to have a solid culture, this recognition also indicates that another way to gain trust is through customer experience, which has gained great importance and has to do with emotional connection.

Strategy 6. Focus on inbound marketing

It refers to potential customer acquisition and engagement through digital tools and techniques, the purpose of which is to produce lasting connections. That is, instead of interrupting customers to get their attention, try to make them approach the company, which is why it is useful to have a content strategy that is disseminated through the creation of articles, digital formats, among others so they can become potential customers (Dakouan *et al.*, 2019). Thus, the benefits of inbound marketing stand out because they generate lasting relationships and interactions, which will allow improving the links between both parties, knowing the benefits and creating high-impact and high-value material.

In short, its benefits focus on the growth of the company through greater exposure, it increases the reputation of the brand as such, it generates emotional ties with customers and, on the other hand, its difficulty has to do with implementation, since not all companies consider it in their work plan, because it may require an investment and technical knowledge.

According to Dakouan *et al.* (2019), the stages of inbound marketing are as follows:

- **Attract.** This first step seeks to attract and obtain online visits from customers, which implies capturing their interest through differentiated actions, generating high value in the consumers' mind. The aim is to connect with potential customers, so that they find an immediate response, in such a way that customers search for the company on social networks, e-commerce, website, the training platform, among others, so that traffic is generated on the network through key browsers that are of interest to the user. Thus, the most appropriate way to achieve this result is through the Search Engine Optimization (SEO¹) strategy and its recommendations (Saorín and Pastor-Sánchez, 2020).
- **Convert.** After the creation of traffic on the network, a transformation is carried out, which consists of making the consumer carry out an activity through a website. In the first stage, web analytics is operated strongly with data management, given that there is already traffic customers use in digital media. In the second stage, customers are converted into potential customers, so that they interact with the content; and in the third stage, the conversion is carried out by using more extensive content that requires user registration, which can be sector studies, webinars, forms, chatbots, among others. This is how information and the customers' permissions are obtained to start a business relationship (Saorín and Pastor-Sánchez, 2020).
- **Close.** In this stage, business completion is sought thanks to the acquired information, and two techniques are proposed, which are ratings and personalization. In the first, the potential audience is qualified until they complete their purchase, and the second, personalization, refers to the fact that the content must be developed according to the customers' profile, seeking to strengthen and motivate them to make the purchase; both techniques are developed progressively (García Garnica, 2020). Care must be taken to ensure that the lead or potential customer is part of the portfolio, since they must be accompanied throughout their journey, until they are ready to make the purchase. Once they are in the database, it will be a matter of time to close the negotiation that was started (Tomas, 2024).
- **Delight.** This last stage is related to the customer experience since the value promise made at the beginning must be fulfilled on a permanent basis. Therefore, the levels of effectiveness in the relationships must be high and the content useful enough for the customer to acquire a new product or service. In addition, considering that the scenarios are digital, to a greater extent, the transition in the behavior of customers and their new forms of consumption have generated new motivations. Consequently, customer acquisition and loyalty strategies allow organizations to have a more accurate outlook for their development in the coming years, to turn them into opportunities (García Garnica, 2020).

DISCUSSION

According to the discussion in this paper, customer demands are higher every year; therefore, building loyalty involves rigorous and constant work, requiring a team to take charge of this task. This is consistent with the research of Flores-Bautista *et al.* (2023), who consider that building user loyalty is achieved by applying a series of marketing strategies and methods

¹SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization.

so that they continue to acquire and use the service, converting them from frequent or regular customers to loyal ones. It also agrees with Pierrend (2020), who states that it is very important for an organization to have solid standards to guarantee the quality provided and that, consequently, the product or service continues to be highly requested. Therefore, it is important to have the necessary technology in optimal conditions to facilitate user access to the various forms of key content. In addition to the above, consumers must remain alert and show interest in using the product or service, to the point of recommending it and establishing close ties that guarantee their loyalty (Zambrano, 2020). Thus, there is a consensus on the effectiveness of certain loyalty strategies, which is valuable because it provides a guide based on evidence and accumulated experience for companies seeking to improve the loyalty of their customers. By following these six strategies developed in the research, which have been validated and recommended by experts and supported by data, companies can increase the probability of success in their loyalty efforts. In this way, the organization will understand which factors are the safest, which will allow generating more personalized panoramas and scenarios to keep customers loyal, and enhance the integration of new ones.

The lack of agreements and commitments to customers can have repercussions by causing a loss of brand loyalty (Flores-Bautista *et al.*, 2023). That is, if the company stops paying attention to covering and meeting the requirements, needs and demands of customers, they will perceive this and look for a new alternative, in addition to the fact that the new product offered by the competition may exceed the expectations that consumers initially had. All these actions can be detrimental to the company because the facts do not just stop there, but can also transcend into bad recommendations.

When applying the six customer engagement and retention strategies in different contexts, in the Business to Business (B2B) sector, loyalty programs focus on building and maintaining long-term relationships through personalization, high-quality customer service, and service integration, while in the Business

to Consumer (B2C) sector, repeat purchases and customer experience are key. Industries also show differences in the strategies that are most effective, reflecting the unique characteristics of their markets and customers. By adapting the six loyalty strategies, companies can maximize their effectiveness and build stronger, longer-lasting relationships with their customers.

Finally, digital transformation allows traditional loyalty strategies to evolve, offering greater personalization, multi-channel interaction, operational efficiency and real-time data analysis. These innovations offer significant opportunities to improve the customers' experience and foster loyalty, but they also require continuous adaptation and a strategic approach to make the most of the available technologies. Just as big data plays a crucial role in customer loyalty by allowing deep customer knowledge, by analyzing large volumes of data companies can gain a detailed understanding of customer preferences, behaviors and needs. This allows for more accurate profiles to be created and personalized experiences to be offered that can increase loyalty.

CONCLUSIONS

A theoretical analysis of customer loyalty has been carried out, with the aim of providing researchers on the subject with a document summarizing the various papers written by researchers and experts on the subject at the national and international level.

Thus, it can be concluded that customer loyalty has been gaining value in organizations, since it plays a fundamental role for businesses. The content of the research has been carefully selected to understand the importance of current trends, and the great impact they can have on companies to survive and stand out in the face of the abrupt competition that increases day after day, taking into account that companies must respond strategically to the changes that the pandemic has generated in the minds of consumers, making them more demanding. Due to these reasons, companies have had to modify and enhance the sales strategies that worked before, since the recent customer profile requires greater personalization and that workers are constantly trained

to meet and exceed the expectations of their customers, thus generating close relationships by modifying certain patterns of psychological behavior of consumers. In this regard, without adequate monitoring and control of loyalty strategies, organizational leaders could face significant difficulties, delaying their recovery or even facing liquidation. This is why it must be taken into account that digitalization and automation are trends that have a huge impact, allowing them to reach customers more effectively. Thus, leaders must adjust their actions and response to the competition, offering products and services through agile tools that facilitate closing sales more effectively, using creativity and innovation to attract, retain and provide a superior customer experience.

The six strategies for attracting and retaining customers provide key and useful tools to business leaders who focus on selling products and services, so that they can rethink and adapt their strategies to positively impact customers by optimizing processes, saving time, and anticipating their future desires. Likewise, digital transformation provides agility inside and outside the organization, allowing for powerful communication, highlighting the importance of having a culture of anticipated innovation, thus enabling the company to fulfill its promises to the customer, adapting services to specific needs, promoting adequate segmentation through well-structured databases, which generates strong links and fosters customer loyalty. Also, the importance of AI is highlighted to respond to customer needs, collecting detailed data that are powerful tools to close sales and offer a differentiated experience.

However, some limitations and biases were found on the part of authors who studied customer loyalty, as they were based on case studies, which limits the understanding of how loyalty strategies evolve over time. Others focus on specific industries or limited geographic markets, which can make it difficult to apply the findings in other contexts. Also, some international studies conducted in traditional countries do not consider the latest technologies or digital tools that are transforming customer loyalty. In other cases, biases were found

on the part of authors who reflect personal opinions, experiences and perspectives, especially if they have ties to certain companies or industries, as well as authors who reflected a cultural bias, with research that could be influenced by the cultural norms and business practices of the region where the study is conducted, limiting the applicability of the results in global contexts.

Considering these limitations and biases, it is crucial to state that this research has been carried out with a critical and multifaceted view of existing studies on customer loyalty, at the national and international level.

Future lines of research

From the findings obtained in this research, some areas were identified that could benefit from further exploration: integration of advanced technologies, extreme personalization, sustainability and creating meaningful experiences. Although the present study has provided a list of six strategies to attract and retain customers, further research is recommended to use advanced AI, to more accurately predict customers' needs and preferences, before they even know it themselves, allowing for extreme personalization of products and services. The use of enhanced chatbots and virtual assistants, which have the ability to understand and respond in a more human and effective way, is also suggested. These assistants will be able to handle most customer interactions, offering 24-hour support, which will allow for a better understanding of the theoretical analysis with updated references on loyalty.

The application of AI in traditional countries may face significant challenges in customer loyalty due to resistance to change, reliance on outdated methods, and a potential disconnect with global trends and modern consumer expectations. Therefore, it would be valuable to conduct similar studies that expand on the importance and impact of social and cultural barriers, as they can hinder the implementation of new marketing and customer service strategies that are more effective. They

can also limit companies' ability to assess the applicability of findings in different circumstances. Thus, with the development of new studies, future research could benefit from the implementation of augmented virtual realities, methodologies that could offer a more detailed view of hyper-realistic virtual environments from the comfort of their homes, and having augmented reality devices that will offer real-time visual support, improving the customer experience in the store and at home, thus overcoming the limitations found in this study.

In terms of evaluating the long-term impact, this study focused on developing six strategies to attract and retain customers in a relatively short time from their deployment in the company; therefore, future research could focus on evaluating the long-term effects to determine their sustainability and continued effectiveness. This research offers valuable guidance for other researchers interested in improving their work and exploring new theories in the field studied.

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Conflict of Interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

Author Contributions

Erika Jennifer Bocanegra Tunjar (lead author): conceptualization, formal analysis, investigation, writing (original draft, review and editing).