

Hey, Big Spender...

It was my birthday this month. My hairdresser sent me a note to say happy birthday and included a voucher for a free manicure next time I made an appointment.

Now as a customer, this attention to detail affected me several ways.

1. Although I must have given this information to her at some stage, every year it gives me a nice surprise and makes me feel good.
2. It reminded me to make a hair appointment.
3. I told my friends about the gesture.
4. I felt like a special customer who was valued.

From the hairdresser's perspective:

1. Her customer returned for further business.
2. The maximum the gesture would cost was about \$12. Actually I forgot the voucher (and have every year) so the cost was only time, stationery and a 50c stamp.
3. It had the potential to bring in a new customer.
4. It kept her and her salon at the front of my mind.

It's good use of her database and will keep me coming back. It's simple, inexpensive and effective.

However, there's a BUT. A friend of mine visits the same hair dresser every six weeks without fail. She spends an average of \$130 each time (compared to my average of \$30) but until recently received the same voucher and the same contact as me.

Let me ask you this – if you have some clients who faithfully spend nearly \$1000 pa with you, and some clients who just as faithfully spend just \$240 – who should you be looking after? Don't fall into the trap of using a one size fits all loyalty system which fails to acknowledge the 20% of your customers who provide 80% of your income!

With a few changes to the salon database and some new targeting filters, that excellent customer and others like her are now emailed with promotions, sent product samples, and offered two free manicures per year. The emails are very low cost, the product samples are provided by an eager supplier and the manicures are still only a small cost to provide.

Some birthday trivia...

- The melody for the Happy Birthday song was written by sisters Mildred and Patty Hill
- Happy Birthday' was the first song to be performed in outer space. It was sung by the Apollo IX astronauts on March 8, 1969.
- The Sultan of Brunei threw the world's most expensive birthday party in 1996 to celebrate his 50th birthday. It cost a whopping \$US27.2 million.

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A1 Working Solutions Ltd ♦ PO Box 343, Hawera 4640 ♦ P: +64 6 278 4838 ♦ M: +64 6 27 479 4720