

Frandship

The emotional relationship between a consumer and a brand

The ultimate goal for many brands is to achieve an **emotional connection** with a consumer. Online, brands do this through accumulating followers and creating communities, with the hope of building **brand loyalty**.

However, to become friends with a consumer, there are **ten rules** that brands must follow to ensure their 'Frandship' is successful...



First impressions count

Make sure all communications at all touch-points represent your core brand values

1

31% of consumers browse online daily for products or services to buy or to help them with their purchase decisions, and they use a variety of touchpoints to do this.

Of all those who purchased in the last 12 months,

21% consulted retailer websites

15% price comparison websites

15% checked manufacturer/service provider sites

9% consulted a user review and comments on a blog/forum

8% checked a user review on a review site or professional online review

3% read comments in a social network



Buy us presents

We like to be treated with gifts i.e. vouchers, coupons and freebies

19% of consumers have brands as friends, but they want presents in exchange for entering a 'frandship'.

70% of people will enter a 'frandship' for personal benefit through offers and promotions, but only **56%** do so because we actually like you.

Don't forget you need to remind us why we like you – we are in five other 'frandships' and over **160** real people to keep in touch with!

2

Remember the important things

Like our birthdays, where we like to eat, our hobbies, where we shop and what we buy

74% of people in 'frandships' prefer websites that can be personalised to their own requirements.

73% admire imaginative and unique communication platforms.

By utilising new and engaging social media sites brands can target specific individuals. e.g. Four Square, where freebies and discounts can be awarded for loyal customers, and ads can be sent to people who have 'checked-in' nearby.



3



Hold our hands in troubled times

During times of hardship we may need your support, even if we aren't spending as much with you

In this tough economic climate where consumers are time poor but not cash rich – brands should recognise that in addition to good value they need to provide added value in terms of their product offer and point of purchase.

This includes an intuitive online offering which understands their needs as an individual. Tesco is a great example, it adapted its cost structures and ranges to help customers save money when they need to and treat themselves when they want to through their rewards scheme, recognising that 'every little helps'. Tesco is now amongst the top 5 visited shopping sites in the UK.

4

Don't talk about yourself all the time

We don't want to always hear how good you are, listen to us occasionally

As a brand you need to give them something to talk about or engage in a two-way conversation rather than just talking about yourself all the time.

33% of the UK digital population publish messages on their social network account daily.

30% comment or respond to other people on their social network account.

17% find brand messages intrusive when browsing the internet for leisure.

When talking at or to consumers, remember that resistance to brand interaction is highest within email **27%**.

Closely followed by multi-media and entertainment (**24%**) and knowledge & educational (**23%**) content.



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Frandships are for life not just for Christmas

So engage with us all year round

87% of people online access the internet daily; more so than any other media touchpoint.

Daily use of social media and email via mobile (**46%** and **52%** respectively) demonstrates a need to be, and stay connected.

35% of people join a brand community because they enjoy supporting brands, and **31%** join a brand community to get more information about a brand.

So brands need to ensure fan pages are available, build dialogue, and engage all year round.

6

Keep in touch, but not too often

Don't overdo the contact
as we have busy lives
and no-one likes a needy
'frand'

17% find brands in
social media intrusive and
27% find them intrusive
in an email setting –
showing that brands can
overdo it.



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We will talk about you behind your back

We love a gossip so
be prepared, treat
us badly and we will
tell our friends &
their friends

UK social networkers read as well
as write comments on brands.

26% of online users have written a
positive or negative comment about
a brand.

And even those who don't 'spread
gossip' will happily listen to it –
25% of social networkers have
taken other people's comments into
account when making a purchase
decision.

8

Don't embarrass us in public

If you make a mistake we may not stand by you, particularly if you don't own up and say your sorry

87% people engage in some form digital activity daily and at least a quarter generate or listening to brand related comments on social media, reputation is everything.

When the iPhone 4 launch was hampered by reports of signal issues, its delay in responding sent ripples of frustration across the internet.

Speedy responses and good crisis management planning is essential for brands to maintain good online reputation.



9



Don't cross the boundaries

We are friends not lovers, our loyalty has boundaries and we don't want to feel used

65% of consumers get into 'frandships' on social networks because they have an attraction to a particular brand.

But loyalty can be tested, **69%** of people in 'frandships' saying the ethics of websites strongly affects whether or not they will consider using them.

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