

The psychology of branded giveaways and promotional products

What are giveaways and promotional products, and why are they so influential? For brands, companies, and events to be successful, they need help from their supporters. A way that this is done is through branded giveaways and promotional products. Giveaways, being a form of gifting, prides themselves on creating connections and spreading awareness through their items and audience. This paper will look into the psychology of branded giveaways and promotional products by looking into their meanings and purposes. Then, it will look into how these marketing tools make us, its supporters (clients or employees) feel. Lastly, this paper will look into how giveaways influence how we perceive ourselves and the “rules” for successful giveaways.

What are giveaways and promotional products?

Promotional products are branded products that promote a company or an event. This can be done through personalized hats or pens with the company or event’s logo and name displayed on it. These products tend to be distributed free of charge, such as through giveaways. According to Merriam-Webster, a giveaway is defined as the “act of giving something away free staging a promotional giveaway”. Giveaways are important for businesses and their promotional products for a few reasons:

- It makes them memorable
- It helps to spread the word
- It serves as brand recognition
- It encourages new customers
- It opens the door for collaboration with other companies
- It displays loyalty and appreciation to customers

How it makes us feel

In response to promotional products and giveaways, we are in return, meant to feel a type of way towards the company, or at least this is what is expected. We tend to react positively and kindly when given gifts. Especially when the gift is meant to show the company's appreciation for their client's loyalty or their employee's hard work. This provokes motivation within the recipient of the gift (Sun, Nazlan, Leung, & Bai, 2020). Those that conduct giveaways base their success on the so-called 'moment of truth' or the emotional reaction to the gift exchange, but it comes to be that the recipients focus more on the product's value (Galak, Givi, & Williams, 2016). Thus for emotional reactions and feelings to occur in the first place, the promotional products and giveaways need to be appealing and desirable.

For a successful giveaway

The giveaway and its products need to be successful to have a good reaction from it and thus positive promotion. In a corporate context, successful giveaways to the employees will encourage motivation. Whereas in a social media context, successful giveaways to their target audience will encourage the better promotion of the brand. Giveaways can be commonly seen and promoted through social media such as Instagram and YouTube. To enter the possibility of winning the giveaway, there are several steps that the giveaway asks you to do. This can be from sharing the brand's name on social media or recommending it by telling friends. This process tends to require some time and effort, thus, the products and giveaways need to be successful and "worth it" to the audience.

PULE

It doesn't only have to be B2C to follow the PULE rule. For gifts to be successful, they should be personal, useful, long-term satisfactory, and should provide an experience (Mahajan,

2021). As mentioned above, the reaction to the gift is important but what is the most significant is the value of the gift. Not in terms of price but the all-around value, meaning, and experience that the gift provides the recipient.

Appreciated

Giveaways make us feel appreciated for ourselves and our actions. There is value in the gift but also in the way it makes us feel about ourselves and how people perceive us. By being valued we develop our sense of self, this is done as we gather positive feedback from our environment and apply it to our self-worth. It also gratifying to feel seen. It is the fact of being us and our actions to be noticed. It provides meaning to our lives. Victor Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist, and Holocaust survivor coined an approach in psychotherapy called the “logotherapy” in which humans are motivated by a “will to a meaning”. This means we live successfully when we provide meaning and purpose to our lives (Amodeo, 2016).

Social beings

We are also social beings, so we love to connect and giveaways, like gifting, are all about social connection. When we think of corporate giveaways, they are meant to promote their brand but they also want to emphasize the relationship between themselves and their supporters, clients, employees, or even other businesses. Gifting between businesses is no different from gifting between people. We are social beings and giveaways enable a conversation, and social exchange to occur.

Conclusion

Promotional products and giveaways primarily center themselves around promotion. But by looking into its psychological aspect and its comparison to a form of gifting, giveaways and products are more than just promotions. Giveaways act as a social exchange between businesses

and individuals. These social exchanges create connections and strengthen relationships, and this creates a loyal and trustworthy community of supporters for businesses to thrive.

Resources

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