

Health Promotion Practitioner

Practical solutions for health enhancement programming

Rewarding, Reinforcing Loyalty

Roll up the Rim to Win!

At 7:43 AM every weekday I pull up to Tim Horton's drive-thru speaker and order the usual: "Medium coffee, half decaf, half regular, with cream." I follow this routine without fail... because:

- It's on the way to work
- They make better coffee than I do at home (and way better than what we have at the office)
- I'm addicted to caffeine (don't be smug; so are most of you — just try going without it for a day).

My \$6.25/week, \$320/year habit classifies me as a pretty loyal customer.

So I really don't need the added incentive of their annual Roll Up the Rim to Win promotion (the equivalent of checking the bottle cap soft drink promotions), but it sure doesn't hurt. By the time I take the last gulp of cold coffee at 8:30, I'm looking forward to rolling up the rim on the paper cup to see if I've won a new car or dozens of other valuable prizes (I've won a cookie, 2 muffins, and a donut the last 6 weeks).

Although it doesn't mean Tim Horton's sells more to me, the fact they repeat the promotion tells me it's boosting overall sales, while rewarding patronage. That's precisely what health promoters can learn from this donut maker's promotion:

- We like a chance to win
- Even if we're committed, we like to be rewarded — it reinforces loyalty.

Here are some ways you can use the same techniques to attract new participants and strengthen commitment from regulars:

- *Summer Sweepstakes.* Run a promotion that awards summer-related items like tickets/passes to outdoor concerts, nearby major or minor league baseball games, theme/water parks, or national parks.
- *Fall Fitness Favors.* Just as in Summer Sweepstakes, reward regular exercisers with a chance to win fall prizes — like services for the home/yard, a weekend getaway at a B&B to see the fall colors, or college/pro football tickets.
- *Winter Wonders.* Hold a contest inviting participants to predict average temperatures or snowfall for the week. Award lift tickets or other winter event items.
- *Spring Into Motion Promotion.* Give consistent exercisers a chance to win spring spruce-up prizes like cleaning services or window washing.

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More Ways to Reinforce Commitment

Repeat participants are a health promoter's bread and butter. They improve their own health, recruit new participants, and — if you take the time to ask — help you fine tune programs and promotions. Some tips to keep them coming back for more:

- Respond quickly and thoroughly. Confirm registration, acknowledge compliments and complaints, and solve problems today. Your timely response conveys how important their participation is to you. Everyone reacts well to being treated as important.

- Demonstrate you care. A kind note, a word of congratulations, an expression of faith in their efforts will strengthen the bond between them and your services.
- Resolve complaints to their satisfaction. Correct errors, ask how you can make it up to them, then go a step farther to show you truly are sorry for any inconvenience.

A pleasant side-effect of building participant loyalty is drawing in new people as satisfied users tell their colleagues about positive experiences. 📧



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