

NextBee's PACE Methodology

Principles for Creating and Encouraging Valuable User Interactions

NextBee Media
PACE@nextbeemedia.com



Methodology Introduction

NextBee created the PACE Methodology to distill our experiences in the market into an easy-to-follow guide for shaping the success of nearly any program. We know that your approach and community of users is unique. What is needed is not some marketing gimmick that will work in the short term, but a method of approaching each participant in a way that will carry you through nearly any scenario.

This is what we have designed the PACE Methodology to provide.



Personal

- Nurturing a strong personal relationship through your program requires active collaboration with your users. This helps them establish emotional touchpoints and provides them with a sense of purpose, which will keep them feeling fulfilled. Offering a personal relationship through your program is one of the best ways to provide a quality experience and earn support.



Adaptive

- Designing a structured program which can adapt as your users progress leads to both stability and growth. Listen as your users' actions tell you what works. Discover the rewards and incentives that inspire them. Focus your best efforts on bringing the program to your users. Both your program's functional operation and its design layout should continuously match the demonstrated preferences of your users.



Controlled

- The difference between flexibility and chaos is smart control. Extensive tracking of program user activity allows you to maintain momentum and direct your users' engagement in the most effective way possible. This approach also ensures secure data with automated protection protocols to ensure that the integrity of your program is never in question.



Exciting

- Keeping your program fresh, intuitive, and fun works to increase excitement and helps your program users remain engaged. Developing a strong focus on both how participants interact with your program, and why, requires a constant dedication to clarity and consistency. By following how your users enjoy using your program, you can develop increasingly addictive activities that your users will return to again and again.

NextBee has worked with over 300 leading brands, both large and small, to engage multiple communities of customers, supporters, employees, friends, family and everyone else – with the goal of rewarding positive outcomes and creating or increasing a strong base of dedicated program participants.



- PERSONAL - CREATING A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

The early adopters' experience is key. Your program participants will be looking at the program from the personal lenses of how it will help him or her influence, engage, and feel appreciated, much as like any other business relationship you would seek to nurture. At first, it may seem odd to equate business goals with relationships. Doing so keeps focus where it belongs, which is on designing a program that can interact with its intended audience on a personal level. Knowing what that experience is like, inside and out, is the path towards improving it at every possible interaction.

Making your program truly personal involves following three important steps:

Empathize (with the participants' experience)

Make every effort to walk in the shoes of your early adopters. Go through the process you envision each participant following for every touch point (contacting customer service, interacting with educational and creative assets, etc). At each stage, explore the different incentives and forms of encouragement that could deepen the relationship.

Ask (your key stakeholders why they support you)

Think of your favorite user. Whomever just came to mind, reach out to them. Discuss their favorite features. Inquire as to the effect the program features have on their quality of life. Encourage an open discussion. Let them tell you what kind of encouragement they need. As the program grows, regularly send surveys to your top program users.

Respond (as your users' needs evolve, so should your program)

Seek out ways of demonstrating that you both listened and heard. If users offer a thoughtful perspective through a survey response, use them in your next promotional campaign. Thank your users, perhaps publicly, and offer a small reward. Nearly every action your users take should result in responses that recognize their contributions.

The more personal the experience you offer to your users, the more likely they are to share it with those nearest to them as well as to the wider world around them.

Using your program to identify preferences and favorite activities, and developing more of the same, is how you prove that these relationships matter to both yourself and your program members.



- ADAPTIVE - DESIGNING AN ADAPTABLE PROGRAM FROM THE START

Everyone is constantly changing. User preferences will be driven by both internal and external factors that evolve over time. Within your overall program's architecture, you must adapt at the personal level previously discussed. Far from being a challenge that must be overcome for your program to be successful, adaptation should be an integral part of the approach itself.

This should be seen as the end result and primary benefit of the program's features, while expressing the following characteristics:

Review (how your program is used)

Schedule at least one hour per week to review all relevant data regarding your users with your team. Include information beyond program activity data, such as interactions tracked through your CRM system.

Refresh (your approach to engaging key stakeholders)

Aggressively schedule program updates. If an initial test of a new message, incentive, or reward on a particular segment demonstrates a high potential for success, quickly implement it across the entire program. Encourage all program stakeholders to pursue ways of reducing friction and increasing engagement.

Change (as you grow, and keep up with your program's participants)

Always have your program doing something, even if it means going with your gut. This does not mean inventing busy-work. Change should be highly automated. It does mean taking risks in pursuit of optimization, but of course you should always minimize exposure by testing ideas on segments before introducing them to a broader audience.

Adaptability means growing in a way that meets your users where they are, instead of asking them to come to you. Market conditions change. Individual attitudes change. Your program's goals do not change, and your program does not have to either. Remember, a quality program is not about reinvention and marketing ploys. It is about forming those deep relationships that can adapt, and even grow, when conditions beyond our control force change.



- CONTROLLED - IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGY OF CONTROLLED GROWTH

User-tracking abilities have grown enormously in just the past few years, creating an opportunity for developing highly specialized segments and channel sales in a way that simply was not possible just a very short while ago. These capabilities allow you to control the growth and momentum of your program by offering targeted and timed incentives and rewards to keep your program participants engaged.

This means agreeing to guidelines on what does, and does not, qualify as actionable information that can be used to direct to program's growth. Developing and using your own guidelines is how program control can be maintained. Those guidelines should, in general, follow three important tenets:

Customize (for different segments as much as you can)

You should consistently be looking at your segments and discovering more. Basic demographics are both the standard and just the beginning. Segmenting by rewards preference may indicate something interesting that can be further explored. You simply do not know until you try, and segments allow you to always be trying, without the risk of testing new ideas on your entire base of active program participants.

Map (the journey of your best user)

Know the path you want your users to take. Sketch out how they join the program, what they do first, what they do next, how long you expect it to take to gain the first reward, and more. Create unique incentives for each interaction, and know that not every interaction requires one.

Plan (ahead, so you're ready when it's time to re-engage)

A controlled response is always a well-prepared one. Familiarity breeds acceptance, and success leads to even more support. It is easy to find fans of a sports team when the team is winning. Likewise, many of those users who demonstrated little interest during your program's launch will become much more interested as the program's success becomes more and more apparent. As your base of users continues to expand the use of the engagement tools available to them, seek to leverage their activity by returning and re-engaging your original base of early adopters.

Individually, attention to the types of details that allow you to exert ever-greater control over your program may seem no more than a polite way to conduct business. As the number of users participating in your engagement program increases, patterns will begin to emerge that can help illuminate the most valuable direction a program can take, as well as offer insights on how to encourage your users to take you towards growth. While the value of a controlled program can be immediately apparent, its true worth becomes demonstrated over time.



- EXCITING -

THE PROGRAM STAYS DYNAMIC, YOU IMPLEMENT SOLUTIONS

Effectively using your program to generate excitement is part learned intuition and part smart design. Generating excitement must be smart if it is to be successful. Though some individual interaction may occur - such as a direct follow-up to a survey response - individual interaction is not the goal. The goal is to make the program better.

You know the ideal user's experience already. By making use of every participant's activity data, you can come to understand what within their collective experience they value. Creating this opportunity for a systemic increase in user engagement generally requires following three important steps:

Specify (each step to successful engagement)

Make certain that you retain complete focus on the value you want to bring to your users' experience *and* the benefit to you. Explore where that experience can be improved and plan out those enhancements. Always ask yourself, and your top participants, how the essential elements of the experience you offer can be leveraged for greater engagement.

Distill (your program goals into distinct engagement activities)

Focus the goals of your program and separate each of them into different engagement points. Develop, deploy, and test different incentives for each engagement point. As you continue to progress and engage across multiple platforms, and in multiple ways, look for methods of streamlining your approach.

Motivate (with incentives that provoke an intrinsic value)

Provide incentives that invoke an intrinsic value you share with your users. If unsure, then make this a point of inquiry when asking your favorite program members. Then combine that intrinsic value with the inherent value of the incentives you choose. It is often a balance between the intrinsic value and perceived monetary value of different incentives and rewards that drives user activities.

Every program involves tasks in pursuit of a goal. Both the design of the tasks, and the rewards, contribute to the overall enjoyment of the program. The best programs make all of their tasks so fun and exciting that completing them becomes addictive.



-NEXT STEPS - CHALLENGE NEXTBEE

The goal of realizing the benefits of improved engagement and a more valuable relationship with every participant requires a single-minded focus on understanding and improving the user's experience.

NextBee's extensive expertise and success extends from maintaining this exact focus, as well as ensuring we understand our client's needs in the following ways:

Your Feature Requirements – You know the community you seek to engage best and likely have an idea of those must-have features needed for launch. Let us know what they are and we will describe how they will be achieved for your program.

The User Interface (UI) Design – You have likely researched several approaches to creating an inviting experience, please let us know if any stood out. This will help begin our work of creating a great design that is unique to you.

System & Platform Integrations – Tell us about your marketplace and shopping cart, along with the CRM you may use. We're happy to take the lead in researching available API documentation and contacting other vendors to discuss integration.

Throughout the life of your program, NextBee will always remain your partner. We will continuously work to provide new features and the expert management necessary to create, sustain and advance a successful program.

Visit NextBee.com to schedule your personal demo.