



# What is **attention currency** and **why** is it **important**?

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How many ads  
do you see  
throughout  
your day?

Find  
out

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Now, more than ever, we live in an attention-based economy. A customer's attention has become one of a marketer's most valuable commodities.

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Our attention is just like a currency in many ways. We choose how and where we are going to spend it. It may not accumulate exactly like a currency but we can become predisposed to where we are going to spend it. The truth is, thanks to changing consumption patterns and information overload or infobesity, customers have a very low attention span. In fact, every brand, product and service is vying for our attention at every turn. To put this into context, **the average person today sees or hears about 4,000 to 10,000 messages per day**; that's about twice the number seen in 2007. I wonder how many we pay attention to, or more likely, just ignore.

So why do some companies still market as if they have undivided attention throughout the customer lifecycle? There are many situations where companies do not put a value on a customer's attention. In some cases, they assume too early that they've built a relationship with a customer. One of my favorite examples of this is when a survey pops up within seconds after you have just landed on a new website. Asking a customer to fill out a survey at this stage can severely reduce the chance of having a positive customer experience. The irony here is the survey usually asks questions that are attempting to help measure net promoter score (NPS), which is based on how likely you are to recommend the brand to others, with the opposite effect often happening as a result.

In other cases, companies take attention for granted after you have become a customer and don't realize how quickly it can be lost. This happened to my colleague on a recent trip to a big box store. He purchased a badly needed light bulb for his refrigerator for \$1.58 and chose to have the receipt emailed to him. After replacing the lightbulb (and being pleased to see inside his refrigerator again), he assumed that would be the end of the transaction. However, the big box retailer treated this transaction as important as any he had ever made before. Even though the retailer had many years' worth of his purchase data, for items big and small, he continued to receive email after email asking him to rate the light bulb and reflect on his experience. This was only perceived as a big waste of his time and did not add to a positive customer experience.

With this in mind, marketers need to treat attention like currency and earn the right to engage. It's critically important to design content that attracts **focused** attention first. Focused attention is the brain's ability to concentrate on a targeted stimulus for any period of time. It is imperative, then, that the content be concise. Once focused attention is captured, the goal is to earn **sustained** attention with progressively more detailed content.





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Here's how to build credible engagement and real attention currency with your customers:

- 1. Ensure the content is relevant.**
- 2. Create an idiosyncratic fit with your audience, making them feel the message is just for them.**
- 3. Speak to each specific audience segment and where they're at in the customer lifecycle.**
- 4. Make sure your content is compelling and vivid – the more visually enticing, the better.**

When you start thinking about your customers' attention like a currency, it becomes much easier to put yourself in your customers' shoes. It will bring valuable clarity to your customer journey and you will be far more effective at acquiring, growing and retaining loyal customers in the long-term.

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