



THE SUPERFAN
W.A.V.E

W.A.V.E. *GOODBYE* TO DISENGAGED CUSTOMERS AND
HELLO TO DELIGHTED SUPERFANS

BRITTANY HODAK

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INTRODUCTION

I've been obsessed with the phenomenon of fandom for as long as I can remember.

By age four, I had memorized every line of every episode of *Duck Tales* and owned every licensed product and clothing item I could get my hands on. By kindergarten, I was routinely writing and drawing my own *Duck Tales* fan fiction.

I was so fixated with NASA that I spent my entire fifth-grade year trying to teach myself Russian with books from the library, in hopes of better communicating with my future comrades on the International Space Station.

As a teenager, I called into my local radio station so many times that they offered me a job. That's me, on the right, at my first gig as a radio-station mascot.

During those formative years, I was equally interested in the fandoms that exist around brands. I grew up in a strict Dr Pepper household. If it wasn't Dr Pepper, we didn't drink it—period! That practice continues to this day.

Some fandoms are chosen for us—like Dr Pepper for me, or the fact that I'm a third-generation *Peanuts* superfan, now





raising a fourth-generation fan who didn't have a say in the fact that his nursery was decorated with dozens of Snoopy items before he was born.

You may have been born into fandoms for certain sports teams, or taught that one brand of toothpaste or tomato sauce is superior to all others. While these connections are fascinating, I'm even more interested in the brand decisions we make for ourselves—the products, services, and companies we opt into as fans and take with us throughout our lives.

Fandom and identity are intrinsically linked. The things we love become part of our personal stories and influence the way in which we see the world.

I'm fascinated by our nature to self-select brands and experiences to invite into our personal stories. Why do we love some things but not others? Why do we give our time, energy, and money so freely to things that captivate us?

I've spent the majority of my life asking variations of that question ... and helping brands, entertainers, and marketers tap into the answers to build more affinity among their customer bases.

The psychographics of fandom are the same across all demographics and verticals: We pay for things and experiences because of the way they make us feel. In my experience, the motivating factors behind the buying behavior of a 68-year-old Dolly Parton fan are very similar to those of an 8-year-old KIDZ BOP fan.

Over the years, I have found that if your brand can consistently engage customers, everything else will fall into place. You'll make more money, find more success, and become more relevant. What's more—you'll become "uncopyable," all while enhancing the lives of your customers. Talk about a win-win!

In the following pages, I'll introduce my *Superfan* W.A.V.E. methodology. It's an easy-to-remember mantra that will help create experiences and interactions your customers won't be able to forget ... and, more importantly, won't keep to themselves. I hope you'll find it as transformative as I have in your quest to convert customers into superfans.



*"Do what you do so well that they want to see it again and bring their friends."
—Walt Disney*

SUPERFANS 101



The word "superfan" has been part of American vernacular for generations, although its popularity has grown in recent years.

Merriam-Webster [notes](#) the first known use of the term in 1918, and defines it as “an extremely enthusiastic or dedicated fan.”

Fun fact: The word "stan" [entered](#) the popular lexicon (and the pages of Merriam-Webster!) almost exactly 100 years later, nearly two decades after Eminem sang about the superfan of the same name.

And while "superfan" is often used to describe sports, music, or pop-culture fans, it's a general term that can apply to any vertical. Superfans exist for every category of product and service — they come in all ages and from every background and income bracket.

WHAT IS A SUPERFAN, EXACTLY?

After nearly two decades of working with and studying superfans, I've crafted the following definition:

a customer who over-indexes in their affinity for a brand, product, service, or entity, thereby increasing the likelihood they will advocate on its behalf as part of everyday life

There are a few important words to note in my definition. The first is "customer." It's important, because there is a real-world transactional value to superfandom. If someone isn't spending money on your offering, they aren't a top fan you should be focusing on at the moment—at least not yet.

While it's true that someone can have *affinity* (key word number two!) for your brand without first being a customer, they can't *advocate* (that's the third!) in a meaningful way until a transaction has occurred.

You probably know someone who wants to buy a Tesla or a Rolex one day. While they may already demonstrate affinity for those brands –and even do some advocating–their lack of a transactional relationship with the brands disqualifies them as superfans in my experience and by my definition, because their advocacy (or testimonials) don't hold the same weight as ones from those who've used the products. Think of it as the difference between a recommendation from a pilot and one from someone who runs flight-simulation programs for a living.

The fourth and final key term to note in my definition is "as part of everyday life." We're not talking about people who advocate as paid spokespeople, influencers, or affiliates, or through any other financial relationship. These are true fans, offering their unfiltered, unprompted reviews as customers. More later on why that distinction is important.

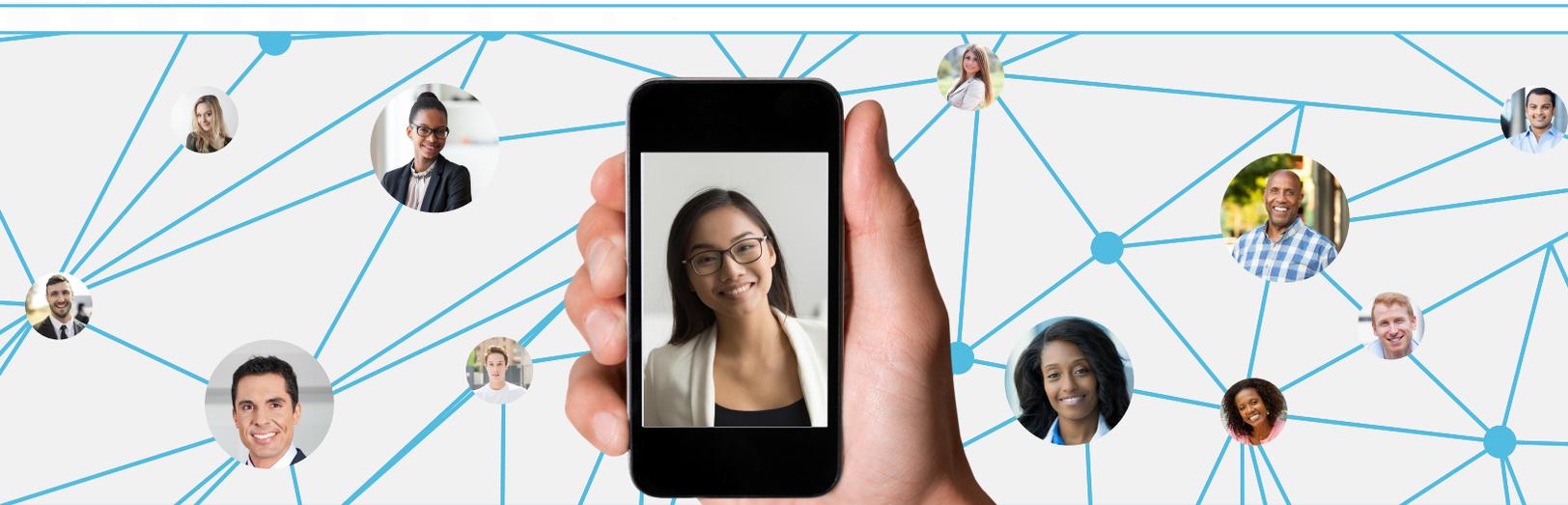
WHY DO SUPERFANS MATTER?

Influencer marketing gets a lot of attention these days (and lots of dollars, too: Brands are [projected](#) to spend \$10 billion with influencers in 2020).

But there's a category of influencers that gets a lot less attention, yet can be much more significant for brands and service providers: everyday customers. [According to Nielsen](#),

83% of people trust recommendations from their friends and family members.





That's by far the most trusted method of earned, paid, or controlled advertising. And while most people may not consider themselves influencers, the truth is that we're all more influential than we realize: 72% of Americans [use](#) social media regularly to connect with hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of trusted peers.

Our words and recommendations hold weight. Don't believe me? Just ask some of the almost 200 million people who [visit](#) Yelp each month looking for reviews!

Although customer service isn't always a sexy topic among marketers, its importance cannot be overstated. In fact, in a recent [study](#), 97% of consumers said customer service plays a role in their choice of and loyalty to a brand.

While customer service alone doesn't create superfans, the lack of it can single-handedly derail a sale: More than two-thirds of consumers have switched brands or service providers based solely on poor customer service, at an annual cost *Forbes* [estimates](#) to be more than \$75 BILLION in lost revenue for brands.

In a recent global study, 85% of consumers surveyed reported being fans of something, including 97% of 18-to-24-year-olds. A separate study reported that 86% of millennials believe that

"fans have at least some ownership of the things they're fans of."



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MARKETERS?

Identity is a powerful thing. Once we identify as a fan of something, it becomes part of the fabric of our everyday lives. As *Variety* put it:

“When we define ourselves as fans, we do more—we watch more, share more, buy more, evangelize more, participate more, help more.”

If you can do your job correctly, your customers will talk about you. Likely without your even asking them to. Learning to engage your customers

doesn't just get them talking about you (and, more importantly, get their friends listening!)—it makes them feel a sense of ownership in your brand. Your story becomes part of their story.

The *Superfan W.A.V.E.* helps keep this reality top-of-mind for your team and creates a process for ensuring that interactions with your brand will be positive. Put simply, brands that learn to harness the power of fandom are unstoppable—like a marketing tsunami.

Let's dive right in!

“Customer service shouldn't just be a department; it should be the entire company.”
—Tony Hsieh



INTRODUCING THE W.A.V.E.

When you hear the word wave, what image comes to mind?

If you're a sports fan, you may have fond memories of jumping up and sitting back down in a stadium with fifty thousand other fans. Maybe you're a surfer, and the word wave makes you want to hit the beach.

Or maybe you—like me—have a toddler at home, and the word conjures an image of an adorable, chubby hand bouncing clumsily back and forth as you exit a room.

Most of us use a wave as a greeting or a way to say goodbye. It's a habit—a ritual. That's why W.A.V.E. works as an effective mnemonic device for customer engagement.

It stands for Welcomed, Appreciated, Validated, and Engaged.

For the next several pages, think of an ocean wave: the energy that moves through water to create enormous power.

Think, too, of the act of waving to greet a customer at the beginning or end of a meeting, because the principle you're about to learn should be used in every encounter you have with your customers ... just like the

act of waving hello or goodbye is repeated in our real-life encounters.

When applied consistently, the *Superfan W.A.V.E.* will result in loyal, engaged customers. Every time you say hello or goodbye to an existing or prospective customer—whether you're conversing virtually or in real life—think of the *Superfan W.A.V.E.*

If you can answer “yes” to each of the prompts in the acronym (“Am I making this person feel Welcomed, Appreciated, Validated, and Engaged?”), you will increase your level of customer engagement.

In time, you'll find yourself waving to a dedicated group of superfans.

One important note: Although the word "customers" is used frequently throughout this eBook (and in the superfan definition you just read), the same principles work for every audience. For a brand to be successful, it's critical to have engaged employees and partners as well.

At the end of each section, reflect on other key constituencies in your business (employees, investors, mentors, vendors, etc.), and ask yourself what small actions you can take to ensure they're all on the way to becoming (and staying) superfans of your business, too.

*"The more advocates you have, the fewer ads you have to buy."
—Dharmesh Shah*





W IS FOR

WELCOMED

Feeling *welcomed* means a potential customer feels a sense of belonging after being greeted in a sincere way.

You want them to think, “This is the place for me,” whether that “place” refers to a physical storefront, a landing page, or the feeling they get on an introductory phone call.

WELCOMED

In order to create a culture of superfandom, you must make people feel welcomed.

Although this may sound like a given, I'm sure you can think of a time when you were made to feel unwelcome in a place of business.

I know I can.

On more than one occasion, I've been made to feel unwelcome at a business where I had planned to spend money—although this was likely unintentional on the salesperson's or business owner's part.

Whether it was a rude look from an employee, a strange glance from a restaurant hostess, or a blog post or meme on a business's website making a "joke," there have been several occasions where I felt like the rug was being pulled out from underneath me, rather than that a red carpet was being extended in front of me.

Think of a time when you were made to feel as if you didn't belong.

How did it feel?

It sucked, right?



*"A man without a smiling face must not open a shop."
—Chinese Proverb*



And sometimes we internalize these experiences and think there's something wrong with us, when in reality, it's the business that needs to change its dynamic.

I've taught the *Superfan W.A.V.E.* at speaking engagements and workshops around the country, and people often say things like, "Well, the salespeople ignored me, but it's probably because I was dressed in gym clothes."

What a crummy feeling! Do you think those potential customers are going to return? No. They'll take their dollars—and their influence—elsewhere. More often than not, they'll head straight to that business's competitors, who might be prepared to wow them.

You may have heard some variant of the saying "rejection hurts," and it turns out science backs that phrase up. Our brains process the emotional sting of feeling unwelcome, excluded, or ostracized very similarly to how physical pain is processed. You don't need to be a neurosurgeon to know that causing any type of pain to a prospective customer isn't smart business.

Making people feel welcomed is the foundation upon which all other stages of the Superfan W.A.V.E. build.





Its seeming simplicity can be deceptive, especially given that the first impression a customer forms of a brand almost always will be based on an interaction with someone other than the CEO.

One sometimes scary reality for business owners is that everyone at your company will, at some point, almost certainly be responsible for someone's first impression of your brand. It might be at work, but it's equally likely that person—who is in many ways representing your business from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to bed, including their every social- media post—will help inform someone's opinion of your company while in a social setting.

This is why it's critical that every person in a company is taught why it's so important to create an environment and culture where everyone feels welcomed.

REFLECTION

- Think of a specific instance when a brand or business has made you feel unwelcome. What went wrong, and how could the situation have been remedied? How do you feel about that same business or brand today?
- What specific steps are you taking to make potential customers feel welcomed in the places they interact with your brand online? Over the phone? In person?





A IS FOR

APPRECIATED

Feeling *appreciated* means a customer knows his or her business matters to you, and that you're thankful to have it.

You want them to think, "They're glad I'm here, and so am I!"

APPRECIATED



If one of your best friends told you she felt perpetually, unappreciated by her boyfriend, what would you tell her? You'd likely say to kick the guy to the curb, because she deserves to be with someone who treats her well, right?

That's because appreciation is a crucial part of a healthy relationship—one where each partner recognizes the value of the other.

Your customers should know that you value them.

If they feel like their patronage doesn't matter—as if they're just another number or purchase order—there's a strong chance they'll start looking for a partner who treats them better.

A great rule of thumb to follow is the "Platinum Rule." This is a phrase coined by Doctors Tony Alessandra and Michael J. O'Connor in their excellent [book](#) of the same name. It takes the classic "Golden Rule" one step further. (You probably remember that one from childhood, but in case you need a refresher, it reads: Treat others the way you want to be treated.)

The Platinum Rule argues that every person is an individual with different wants and needs. In other words, not everyone wants to be treated the same way. Therefore, the rule to follow is this: Treat others the way *they* want to be treated.

Like most things in life, the key to success here is communication.

Don't be afraid to ask potential and existing customers what's important to them. *Really* listen to their answers. Ask follow-up questions as necessary



until you fully understand their individual points of view. And, most importantly, overuse “thank you”—but always sincerely!

If you’ve visited a Chick-fil-A, you’ve probably noticed that appreciation is a core competency of their culture. You will be thanked (without fail) by employees and hear “my pleasure” as a common response.

It may seem like a little thing, but the sense of appreciation they’ve fostered has helped them become one of the most profitable and fastest-growing franchises in the world.

Many cable, satellite, and Internet providers are notorious for treating customers like nameless faces in a crowd, which is why they’re often among the lowest Net Promoter Score benchmarks. How loyal do customers feel to those types of companies? Not very.

In fact, feeling unappreciated is the number-one reason customers [switch](#) away from products, services, and companies.

Now ask yourself how you can ensure your customers (and potential customers) feel appreciated.

“People will forget what you said, forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”
—Maya Angelou

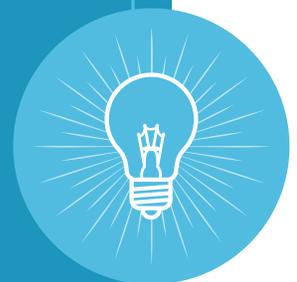
t h a n k y o u

Then put in place specific systems and processes (beyond the *Superfan* W.A.V.E.) to make sure this is implemented at every level of your company.

Finally, repeat the process to review the job you’re doing, showing that same level of appreciation to your employees, vendors, and other key people surrounding your business.

REFLECTION

- What are some brands that have made you feel unappreciated or as if your business didn't matter to them one way or another? How quickly did you seek out an alternatives?
- What specific steps are you taking to make potential customers feel appreciated in the places they interact with your brand? (Hint: You should be using the words "thank you often!")





V IS FOR

VALIDATED

Feeling *validated* means a customer knows his or her thoughts and concerns matter to you.

You want them to think, “My opinions are important. This company cares about what I think, feel, and ask.”

VALIDATED

I could tell you why it's important to validate your customers' concerns, but first I'm going to call in a higher power instead: Oprah.

On her final daytime-talk-show broadcast in May 2011, Oprah Winfrey shared with her viewers the most important lessons she had learned about people over the years. Here is my favorite:

“I’ve talked to nearly thirty thousand people on this show, and all thirty thousand had one thing in common: They all wanted validation.

They want to know: ‘Do you see me? Do you hear me? Does what I say mean anything to you?’

... It has worked for this platform, and I guarantee you it will work for yours. Try it with your children, your husband, your wife, your boss, your friends. Validate them. ‘I see you. I hear you. And what you say matters to me.’”

When we feel *validated*, we feel like we matter. We begin to feel like we're part of something bigger than ourselves. This forms the beginning stages of community, which is a precursor to engagement—the ultimate level in which superfandom can truly begin to take form.



*“Your customer doesn’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”
—Damon Richards*

You've probably felt unheard at some point by a customer-service representative. Maybe you were voicing your frustration or talking about an issue, only to be told something like, "We've had ten thousand happy customers, and no one has had this issue before."

In a situation like that, nothing is worse than talking about someone else's experience, because it does not matter to that customer. Their experience is the only one that matters.

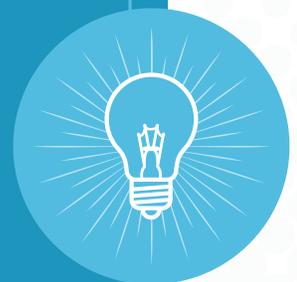
If a girl you were dating said, "I know you think I cheated, but that's crazy, because none of the guys I've been with before accused me of cheating," that logic would enrage you, right?

Of course it would. Don't conflate someone's experience with your brand/business/product/etc. with anything else, including the experience of other customers. Listen, ask questions, and learn. Validation is the foundation of understanding.

Give it a try. Then try it again and again and again until it becomes second nature, like waving. "I see you. I hear you. And what you say matters to me."

REFLECTION

- Think about time that you were made to feel invalidated when voicing your concerns to a business or service provider. What was your emotional response?
- What specific steps are you taking to make potential customers feel validated when they share feedback with your team?





E IS FOR

ENGAGED

Feeling *engaged* means a customer is excited about his or her active participation with your brand, product, or service.

You want them to think, “This is great! I can’t wait to tell everyone about it.”



ENGAGED

Did you know that increasing customer retention rates by 5% has been proven to increase profits anywhere from 25% to 95%?

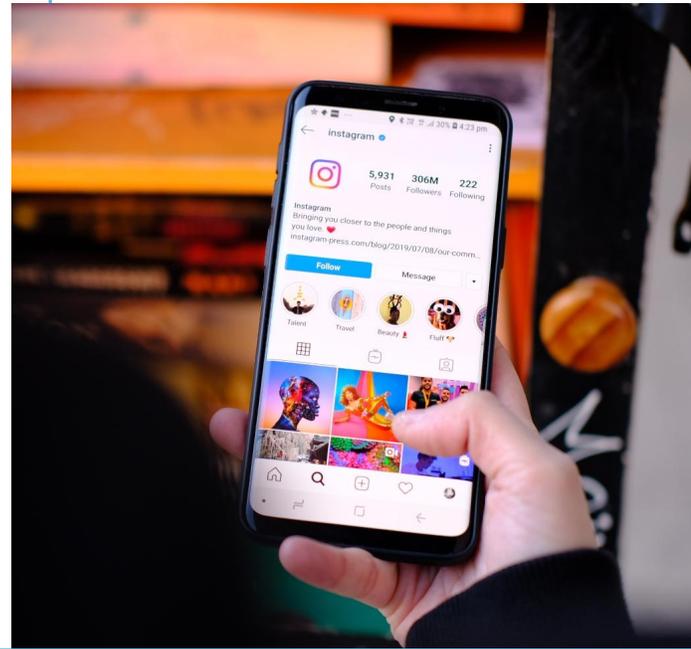
Or how about this: Customers will spend 17% more to do business with companies that deliver excellent customer service.

The math is clear: Your business has got to find a way to engage customers at any cost! The good news? That “cost” is almost always less than you think. That’s because people remember the way they were made to feel long after they’ve forgotten everything else, including what they bought and how much they paid.

Forrester defines customer engagement as “creating deep connections with customers that drive purchase decisions, interaction, and participation, over time.” I like to think of it in terms of a romantic engagement: When two people are engaged, they aren’t looking for anyone else. They’ve made a commitment to be together. When a customer is engaged, it’s a similar dynamic: They love your company (or product or service) and aren’t going to seek out competitors, because you’re “the one.”

So how do you make your customers feel engaged? That's the million-dollar question.

Here's the million-dollar answer: It's different for every company. That's because you've got to use your unique brand DNA to formulate an authentic experience. But if you're incorporating the *Superfan W.A.V.E.* as the backbone of your customer-engagement strategy—and ensuring all your customers are made to feel Welcomed, Appreciated, and Validated by your brand—then engagement will follow.



*“There are no traffic jams along the extra mile.
— Roger Staubach*



If you're stuck, try asking yourself, “What is my company uniquely positioned to be great at when it comes to serving our customers? What can we do that no one else can copy or replicate?” The answers will form the basis of your superfan strategy.

For many business owners, the answer is as simple as having regular dialogue with customers — making yourself or your team available to chat wherever the customer is: in person, over the phone, via email or newsletter, social networking sites, etc. And it's not just about troubleshooting or traditional “customer service”; instead, it's about creating and sharing helpful content and information your customers will

enjoy consuming and (you had to see this coming) engaging with.

One of the best ways to create a customer-engagement strategy is to ask current customers what they love most about your business. This is one of the most powerful ways to learn how to better serve your clients—and (bonus!) it will help you engage more deeply with your existing customers, too, because people generally love being asked to share their opinions and experiences.

And here's the icing on the cake: When customer delight is deployed as a priority across the company, it's good for employee engagement, too. McKinsey found that ***companies that make a concerted effort to improve their customer experience see employee engagement rates go up by an average of 20%.***

Zappos founder Tony Hsieh says it this way: “We take most of the money that we could have spent on paid advertising and instead put it back into the customer experience. Then we let the customers be our marketing.” The strategy has worked great for Zappos and can help transform your business, too.

REFLECTION

- What are some companies you've encountered in the past twelve months that truly engaged you? What are some "just okay" examples that you probably won't be loyal to in the future? What have been the differences between the two?
- What specific steps are you taking to engage customers when they first connect with your company? How are you keeping them engaged as their relationship with your brand deepens?



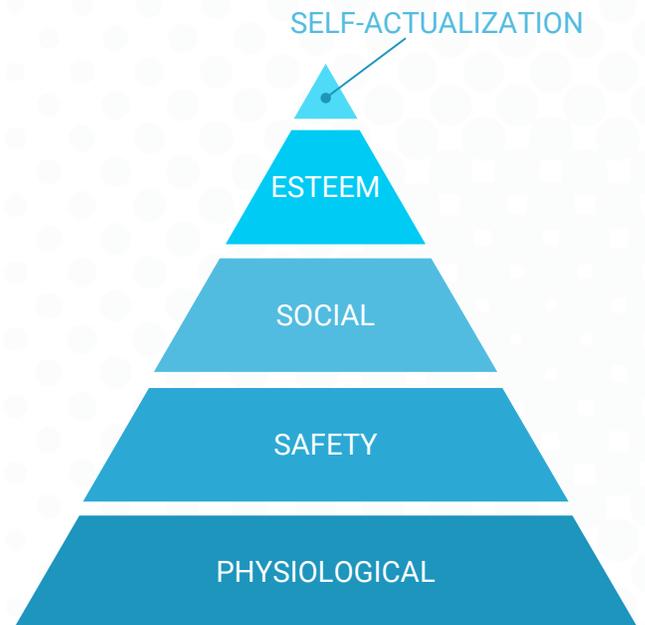
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Each level of the *Superfan W.A.V.E.* must be satisfied before the next level can be attained.

Someone who feels unwelcome cannot feel appreciated, just as someone who does not feel validated cannot truly engage.

Think of the *Superfan W.A.V.E.* like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. You've got to start at the bottom and go up to the top.

Just as a person can't worry about self-actualization when their physiological and safety needs haven't been met, it's impossible for a customer who feels even mildly unappreciated to truly engage with your brand.



The W.A.V.E. resets each time a customer interacts with your brand.

He or she does not stay in a perpetual state of engagement. That's why it's critical to make sure each step is addressed and performed regularly by every member of your team. One misstep can have a major impact, even if an existing customer previously enjoyed favorable interactions with your product or brand.

Although the best customer service can seem spontaneous, it's usually instead the result of systems and processes.

Complete the chart below with at least two specific examples of how you can satisfy each level of the W.A.V.E. for the given audiences. Then list at least two more categories of stakeholders—employees, vendors, investors, etc.—and repeat the exercise.

REFLECTION

	WELCOMED	APPRECIATED	VALIDATED	ENGAGED
Potential Customers, First interaction:				
Potential Customers, Subsequent interactions:				
First-Time Customers:				
Repeat Customers:				

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not a single act, but a habit.”

—Aristotle

THE RIPPLE EFFECT



The true magic of the *Superfan* W.A.V.E. is in the "Ripple Effect": the qualified referrals your engaged customers create.

Just as ocean waves are created by energy passing through water, referrals are created when energetic customers tell their friends and family about their experience with your brand, product, or service.

Every business owner knows that referrals are the Holy Grail of selling. They're low- or no-cost, highly qualified prospects that can (literally) multiply exponentially. And, according to

HubSpot, referrals are more likely to close than almost every other type of lead—often faster, for higher dollars, and with fewer hurdles than their non-referred counterparts.

On average, American consumers tell 11 people about each great experience they have with a brand. Millennials tell about 17. That's an ROI every leader should be able to get behind!

Customer-centric marketing is critical to the success of companies—especially those who offer similar or identical products to others. Differentiating yourself on your service is a practice that will always pay off in the end. As the adage goes, "poor customer service always ends up costing more than good customer service in the end."

I encourage you to put the examples you filled out on the previous page into practice right away to ensure your customers feel Welcomed, Appreciated, Validated, and Engaged. I guarantee you'll begin to see a positive ROI—and a rapidly developing base of brand-loyal superfans—almost immediately.

IT'S TIME FOR ME TO W.A.V.E. GOODBYE



I hope you've enjoyed learning about my *Superfan* W.A.V.E.! If you did, please make sure to visit my [blog](#). That's where I share regular tips, tricks, and insights that will help you create your loyal audience of superfans, whether you're running a Fortune 500 company or an Etsy shop.

If you have questions about making the *Superfan* W.A.V.E. work for you —or about anything else related to customer experience and customer retention —let's chat! I'm @BrittanyHodak on every social platform, and I would love to hear how you're using the process to make waves (ha, ha) in your industry. Use #SuperfanWAVE if you really want to put a smile on my face.

You'll find more about me (in super-fancy third person) on the last page. I'm a speaker and superfan strategist who has helped dozens of celebrities and brands cultivate superfandom as a core competency in their fan-engagement playbook. If you'd like to learn more about my keynotes and workshops, let's talk!

"Loyal customers don't just come back, they don't simply recommend you, they insist that their friends do business with you."

— Chip Bell

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

One of the things I enjoyed most about putting this eBook together was narrowing down dozens of amazing quotes by visionary business leaders for each section.

Because there were far more favorites I wanted to include, here are a dozen bonus bits of wisdom to help inspire you on your mission to build superfan- worthy service.

**"THE CUSTOMER'S PERCEPTION
IS YOUR REALITY."**

Katherine Zabriskie

**"MAKE A CUSTOMER,
NOT A SALE."**

Katherine Barchetti

**"THE GOAL AS A
COMPANY IS TO HAVE
CUSTOMER SERVICE
THAT IS NOT JUST THE
BEST BUT LEGENDARY."**

Sam Walton

**"CUSTOMERS DON'T
EXPECT YOU TO BE
PERFECT. THEY DO EXPECT
YOU TO FIX THINGS WHEN
THEY GO WRONG."**

Donald Porter

**"THE MORE YOU ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS, THE CLEARER THINGS
BECOME AND THE EASIER IT IS TO DETERMINE WHAT YOU SHOULD
BE DOING."**

John Russell

"BEING ON PAR IN TERMS OF PRICE AND QUALITY ONLY GETS YOU INTO THE GAME. SERVICE WINS THE GAME."

Tony Allesandra

"KNOW WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS WANT MOST AND WHAT YOUR COMPANY DOES BEST. FOCUS ON WHERE THOSE TWO MEET."

Kevin Stirtz

"DON'T TRY TO TELL THE CUSTOMER WHAT HE WANTS. IF YOU WANT TO BE SMART, BE SMART IN THE SHOWER. THEN GET OUT, GO TO WORK, AND SERVE THE CUSTOMER!"

Gene Buckley

"EVERY GREAT BUSINESS IS BUILT ON FRIENDSHIP."

JC Penney

"IF YOU'RE NOT SERVING THE CUSTOMER, YOUR JOB IS TO BE SERVING SOMEONE WHO IS."

Jan Carlzon

"CUSTOMER SERVICE IS JUST A DAY-IN, DAY-OUT ONGOING, NEVER-ENDING, UNREMITTING, PERSEVERING, COMPASSIONATE TYPE OF ACTIVITY."

Leon Gorman

"WE SEE OUR CUSTOMERS AS INVITED GUESTS TO A PARTY, AND WE ARE THE HOSTS. IT'S OUR JOB EVERY DAY TO MAKE EVERY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE A LITTLE BIT BETTER."

Jeff Bezos

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brittany Hodak is an international keynote speaker and award-winning entrepreneur. She is widely regarded as the go-to source on customer engagement and retention and teaches leaders to cure apathy by harnessing the power of superfandom.

She has been invited to speak to organizations across the world including American Express, WeWork, Inc. and the United Nations. She has published more than 350 thought-leadership articles for media including *Forbes*, *Adweek*, and *Success*, and has been featured on CNBC, Bloomberg, NBC, CBS and Shark Tank.



Brittany co-founded, scaled, and successfully exited The Superfan Company, a fan engagement company whose roster included Walmart, Disney, Amazon, Luke Bryan, Katy Perry, and more under her eight-year leadership. She has been named to *Advertising Age's* 40 Under 40 list, *Inc.'s* 35 Under 35 list, and *Billboard's* 30 Under 30 list.

She is a summa cum laude graduate with a B.A. in communications from the University of Central Arkansas, and she holds an M.S. in marketing from CUNY Baruch's Zicklin School of Business.

She has been studying, researching, and writing about the phenomenon of fandom for nearly two decades ... and even longer, if you count her years as a radio-station mascot, which she considers the “front lines” of fandom research!

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