How TouchBistro Loyalty and the Customer Web App Helped Kelly's Bake Shoppe Improve Customer Retention

In 2012, mother and daughter duo Kelly Childs and Erinn Weatherbie opened a special kind of bakery in Burlington, Ontario. Kelly's Bake Shoppe specializes in plant-based, gluten-free, and peanut-free cupcakes, cookies, ice cream, and other delicious baked goods. The bakery has a cult following that extends well beyond Burlington.

"We have people that drive for hours on end to just come to our bake shop, get a dozen cupcakes, and then turn around and drive home," says co-founder Erinn, who is Kelly's daughter.

Kelly's Bake Shoppe's challenge: A half-baked rewards program

Like many bakeries, Kelly's previously used physical punch cards to reward customers for their loyalty and entice them to keep coming back for more. After purchasing 12 cupcakes, customers would get a cupcake on the house. However, this punch card system had its problems.

"People would lose [the punch cards] and there was really no way for us to track loyalty and [see] who was spending more money and actually reward those customers for spending more money with us," says Erinn. "And if somebody bought brownies and they didn't want cupcakes, they weren't really being rewarded in the same way that people who bought cupcakes were."

Kelly's Bake Shoppe needed to find a "loyalty program that would allow us to reward all of our customers in the same way," Erinn says. "We needed something a little bit more robust and [that would let] customers see their points on their phone and feel like they were going to be earning something once they spent a certain amount and money with us."

Goodbye punch cards, hello digital rewards

After researching many options, Kelly's Bake Shoppe chose TouchBistro Loyalty, a digital loyalty program that works seamlessly with the TouchBistro POS.

"There are already so many pieces of technology within the business that I didn't need one more thing that wasn't talking to TouchBistro," Erinn says. "It just made so much sense to go with something that was integrated into our current point of sale."

With TouchBistro Loyalty, Erinn easily set up a rewards program and a branded Customer Web App that customers use to track and redeem points through an Internet browser on their smartphones, instead of downloading an app.

Customizing the web app's branding was "very, very smooth," Erinn says. "It was very user-friendly. You can put your own branded fonts in [the app] and your logo so it looks like your own, personal app."

It was also easy for Erinn's team to learn how to use TouchBistro Loyalty. "It's very user-friendly for our staff," she says. "When customers come in, we ask them 'do you have a loyalty account,' then plug in their phone number, and they are able to accumulate points and redeem them. It's a very simple transaction and that's what I love about it."

Kelly's Bake Shoppe customers are also adjusting well to the transition away from punch cards and towards a digital loyalty program. So far, nearly 3,000 customers have signed up for Kelly's Rewards, and they've checked in 5,508 times and counting.

"Customers were – and still are – super excited about [the customer web app]," Erinn says. "People don't want to carry around little business card-sized things anymore. They lose them or they just can't be bothered to hold onto one more thing. We're also so connected to our phones now that people are way more open to getting something on their phone. Everything now is so online that it's just a natural evolution."

Driving repeat business became a piece of (cup)cake for Kelly's Bake Shoppe with TouchBistro Loyalty

Kelly's Bake Shoppe got everything it was looking for and more by switching from punch cards to TouchBistro Loyalty. Erinn says that the new restaurant rewards program has led to more repeat business, new customers, larger orders, insights into customer behavior, and increased control.

"Customers are coming back more and more," she says. "They're very excited to come back and they're like, 'sweet, I'll spend 50 bucks on cupcakes because I know I'm getting points that I can redeem later as well.'"

Kelly's Rewards gives customers three points per dollar, which they can redeem for free baked goods and merchandise. So far, Kelly's Bake Shoppe customers have redeemed 176 rewards through TouchBistro Loyalty.

Erinn says the loyalty program has "helped solidify the fact that we really appreciate our customers and we want to give back to them as much as they've been giving to us over the years. [TouchBistro Loyalty has] helped to build those relationships."

Thanks to the gamification of spending through the rewards program, Erinn has also noticed that customers spend more to get more rewards points.

"People are coming back more frequently, and maybe even spending a little bit more money. Customers will spend more because they know they're going to essentially earn more," she says.

With the customer data collected through TouchBistro Loyalty, the team at Kelly's Bake Shoppe has been able to understand their customers better, and use that information to make smart business decisions.

"It is actually kind of cool to see what people are purchasing and understand the peaks and valleys in the business," Erinn explains. "In the summertime, we're seeing a spike in ice cream sales, of course, and then in the wintertime, it's hot drinks and lattes."

In addition to boosting repeat business, TouchBistro Loyalty has also helped attract new customers.

"We've done some posts on Instagram and Facebook promoting Kelly's Rewards. We have seen people come in as a result of hearing about it," Erinn says.

And, since all restaurant loyalty program activity is tracked digitally and integrated with the bakery's POS, the program is far more secure than the bakery's punch card system.

According to Erinn, "everything is much more secure and much more regulated. So as a business owner you know, we actually did sell this amount of product and the customer is getting rewarded fairly. It's not just willy nilly throwing out punch cards here and there."

A sweet ending

For restaurateurs who are contemplating using TouchBistro Loyalty, Erinn says, "Go for it. It is a win-win situation. Your customers are going to love it, you're going to love it and it's just going to create more repeat business for your business."