

Monthly Musings



courtesy of Fletcher Consulting

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NOT-SO- **SMART** CUSTOMER RELATIONS:

Pizza Hut "Pizza Pickup" Tests People-Free Experience

We had to see it coming. First, McDonald's and Wendy's placed ordering kiosks in their stores to make the ordering experience "more efficient." Translation: *With these kiosks, restaurants could cut more staff in response to rising minimum wages.*

Walk into one of these stores today and you'll probably find some millennials using the kiosks out of sheer curiosity, but those of us from the baby boomer generation will stroll right past them to order from a real, live human being.

Pizza Hut is taking the next step in a process that will allow customers to order, pay for and pick up a pizza without ever talking to another person. Fox News reports that the pizza chain is testing its digital cubby system at a location in the Land of Fruits & Nuts—Hollywood, California.

After placing an order, customers can pay online or through the Pizza Hut mobile app, after which they can pick their food up from a cubby at the restaurant.

The intent is not to replace the customer service experience—at least, not yet—but to be "an easy alternative for time-strapped carryout customers," according to *Nation's Restaurant News*, which reports the concept will work alongside the traditional in-store experience rather than replacing it.

Customers can also place the order in-store, but that defeats the purpose of having a contact-free experience, doesn't it?

Pizza Hut's chief customer and operations officer says that many people live on the go and don't have time to wait in line, particularly in urban areas. Pizza Hut is rolling out this "seamless

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and innovative" carryout experience to eliminate the lines, wait and conversation, meaning customers can simply grab and go.

The system will reportedly have 12 cubbies. Once an order is ready, customers can pick their food up from the latched cubby that displays their name.

The concept is very similar to Amazon's rollout of hub locker pickups at Whole Foods, QuikTrip, Stein Mart, banks and pharmacies, but those lockers are for packaged products rather than hot food.

What's next? Will Pizza Hut utilize robots to make our pizzas and do away with their staff entirely? *Inquiring minds want to know!*

SMART **PRIORITY:**

Brand Intimacy, the Chick-fil-A Way

Customers develop extreme affinity for their preferred brands. Brand intimacy is the science of how we bond with the brands we use and love. The concept harkens back to what Disney has preached for years: *Emotions Trump Everything!*

The most successful brands strengthen and leverage the emotional bonds their customers have with them. These bonds are reciprocal, meaning the brand reaches out to the customer just as the customer reaches out by purchasing from the brand.

Customers actually relate to their favorite brands in three ways:

- Brand intimacy
- Brand passion
- Brand commitment

The most successful brands embody all three of these components, as you can read from the chart from the University of Mannheim.

[The 2019 Brand Intimacy Study](#) released by marketing

agency MBLM measured customers' fondness and emotional bond toward the fast food brands they "use and love."

Chick-fil-A has gradually risen to the peak of the category, supplanting Starbucks at the top. The coffee brand tumbled to the third position, followed by Dunkin', the company known for its donuts, sandwiches and coffee.

The brands were rated by several criteria, including:

- How customers felt in terms of indulgence (moments of "pampering and gratification")
- Nostalgia (memories of the past marked by warm, poignant feelings)

Chick-fil-A was strong in all categories and was particularly strong with women and millennials.

When combining all categories, Disney was right at the top, followed by Apple, Amazon, Chevrolet, Netflix and Harley-Davidson. Chick-fil-A was number 10.

1	Chick-fil-A	54.7
2	DUNKIN'	46.1
3	Starbucks	42.4
4	McDonald's	37.4
5	TACO BELL	34.8
6	SUBWAY	32.2
7	Wendy's	29.3
8	BURGER KING	27.3
9	AROLD'S	24.6
10	KFC	24.3

What have you

done to create a sense of intimacy—which extends far beyond just loyalty—with your brand? How are you engaging your customers on a more personal and emotional level? If these criteria are not on your intentional marketing plan, you are vulnerable. Feel free to reach out to me (john@thefetch.org). We may need to talk!

SMART RECOVERY:

Disney Bounces Back with Target Stores

The most outstanding customer service providers push aside their missteps and continue to put their best foot forward. For the best example of this, look no further than Disney.

You may have read that Disney has struggled with the launch of its Star Wars/Galaxy's Edge attraction at Disneyland. The company raised the single-day ticket prices at the park to \$149 on peak days and, at the same time, raised the prices of its Disney hotels. Customers with season passes were not allowed to use them on peak days.

The result has been a decline in attendance and a reduction in brand intimacy with Disney. While Disney currently scores at the top of brand intimacy, missteps of this nature will certainly impact the company.

Disney always has something in the works, and their latest project is a retail partnership with Target. [USA Today reports](#) that the magic of Disney is coming to Target, with 25 mini Disney stores located inside Target stores.

In addition to the Target locations across the country that will launch in October, a new Disney-focused digital experience has



launched at [Target.com/Disneystore](https://www.target.com/Disneystore). The website indicates that Disney sections will be inside the Target stores at 1401 W. Glade Road in Euless and at 150 E. Stacy Road in Allen.

The new Disney Store-Within-a-Store will span about 750 square feet and carry more than 450 items, including over 100 products that were previously available only at Disney locations.

The store openings will coincide with the arrival of merchandise from Disney's "Frozen 2" (in theaters Nov. 22) and "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" (in theaters Dec. 20).

Stores will carry a variety of merchandise featuring Marvel, Junior Disney and classic Disney characters, plus other products in the apparel, home and holiday arenas.

Leave it to Disney to recover spectacularly from one less-than-successful enterprise!

Also on the immediate horizon is the launch of Disney+, the ultimate streaming service for movies and shows from Disney, Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars and National Geographic. That streaming service is set to launch on November 12.

And one more Disney mention: After misplacing her pass to Disneyland over 30 years ago, a woman finally found it this summer and attempted to use the pass to enter the park. Much to her surprise, **the park honored the free ticket with no hassle.**

Tamia Richardson visited Disneyland when she was 14 and won the ticket as part of the park's 30th celebration in 1984. She discovered the ticket in a box of keepsakes and decided to see if it was still valid.

That pass, worth \$16.50 34 years ago, was worth \$149 on the day she used it this summer. **What a glowing example of Disney's magic customer service!**

THE Tiebreaker

Waffle House Wedding Decoration Takes the Cake

[A couple took their love of Waffle House to the extreme](#) by having their wedding cake shaped to resemble an actual Waffle House restaurant.

Waffle House did not report the significance of their affinity for the couple's relationship, but the two celebrated in style nonetheless. I wonder if there's some bacon hidden under the roof, and perhaps the brown coloring is actually maple syrup!

