

The **3** **E's** of the connected consumer

Selling your product or service is not enough. You have to understand why your customers need your product, and why choosing your product is beneficial to their wellbeing. You have to share pieces of yourself in order to show them that you care. You have to bond, relate, and **empathize** with their challenges, needs and desires. As a business, you are in a relationship with your audience. And that means you have to be sensitive to their position as it relates to your product or service, and you have to personalize their experience.

Education is a two-way process. You share knowledge. You learn from your audience. An educated consumer is your best consumer. The connective tissue between you and your customers creates opportunities for brand advocacy and loyalty. The more consumers understand the space in which you reside, and the more they experience the relevance of your company in that space, the more likely they are to maintain the relationship and share your vision and message with others. Education is a vital component of relationship building.

The connected consumer has multiple social streams through which to engage with your brand. Brian Solis writes in *The End of Business as Usual*, the “sense of belonging and an insatiable appetite for information... keeps us addicted and connected. Relevance, as we learn, is earned through constant participation and self-expression...” Everything you do could lead to a public conversation with your customers (and their friends). True **engagement** has to be authentic, transparent, and genuine – if you want your brand to resonate with existing customers and prospective clients. Everyone is watching and waiting. Will your audience pounce or welcome you with open arms?

Marketing today requires richer, deeper, stronger shared experiences with your audience. Consumers are co-creators of your brand. They want to be motivated. They want to motivate you. Are you in the game?

1 Empathy

2 Education

3 Engagement