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Sending Company and 87 Percent Report Increased Brand Loyalty

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Businesses that want to get closer to their customers should remember and

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Shoppers responded most positively to birthday greetings from the food and beverage industry, such as Baskin Robbins, Ruby Tuesdays or Starbucks. Ninety-two percent of consumers receiving greetings from such food and beverage establishments thought more positively about the sending company, and 96 percent reported an increase in loyalty.

While these examples are from large chains, similar studies have shown that even small businesses can benefit from inexpensive customer relationship and marketing systems. Online options from such companies as Constant Contact, Campaigner and Vertical Response, automate the email functions, as well as have the ability to remember customer birthdays and other information.

While nearly all birthday greetings received favorable consumer responses, those which included discounts positively influenced the greatest number of survey respondents. Greetings that included some type of discount or gift were 24 percent more effective in positively impacting consumer opinion than simple birthday greetings (87 percent and 70 percent, respectively).

“While marketers who recognize their customers' birthdays assume the message creates an even stronger relationship with them, our consumer research confirms the positive influence on both the brand's image and future sales to that customer,” said Tara Piazza, senior vice president, Fulcrum. “Firms deploying campaigns to celebrate their customers' birthdays tighten consumer relationships while also creating the opportunity to market additional products and services.”

The online survey was conducted earlier this year based on interviews with 500 consumers.

Age played a decisive role in how birthday greetings impacted brand loyalty. Consumers between the ages of 25 and 34 were far more likely to report increased

loyalty, at 92 percent, compared to those ages 55 and up among whom just 73 percent

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among all operational emails; they are essentially cost-free and lack the risk of a negative consumer response.

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