

Belong, believe, behave: The drivers underpinning real engagement and value for both customers and brands

By [Glenn Gillis](#), issued by [Irvine Partners](#)

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Brands have had to adapt rapidly to a new reality, not only because of the impact of Covid-19 but also because of the exponential impact of technology on our customers' expectations. Before we rush ahead and innovate for innovation's sake, however, it's critical that we keep some fundamental human truths as our guiding light. Sometimes the truth is much simpler than we imagine, and stripping away, or at least hiding the tech smarts from view, can add the most value in our shared experiences.



Lighthouse, recently launched by the award-winning game design studio [Sea Monster](#), is a white-label game and content platform that allows brands to engage with their customers in a way that unites digital and real-world experiences. It uses a combination of quiz mechanics, mini games, vouchers and other check-in functions to reward and connect customers to their brands.



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Underlying the development of the platform, which features world leading web-based technologies, is years of experience in understanding the subtleties of human behaviour and what truly motivates people. To ensure humans remain at the centre of the design process, the platform can be summed up by the fundamental drivers we all share: how do we belong, believe and behave?

Belong:

Now, more than ever, we need to feel connected to one another. That feeling extends to our brands, and how they define our digital and real experiences.

It used to be that customers had to prove their loyalty to companies. Now it's the other way around. In fact, most loyalty schemes are only reward schemes, where your attention and spend is motivated by short-term, extrinsic motivation. That's

not a bad thing of course; we all love free stuff and, thankfully, these offers are now more data-driven, relevant and contextual.

But true loyalty comes when we are also intrinsically connected to a brand or organisation. Driven by creativity, self expression and a sense of shared purpose, we seek out experiences which make us part of a community. We need to belong.

Believe:

We all need to believe in something. We want to believe the world makes sense to us, whether by divine inspiration, scientific discovery, our own efforts or just plain old luck. When it comes to brands, so many of our interactions seem structured around luck. Competition entries, for example, hardly make us feel like we have agency in the interaction. And our call centre and in-store experiences can sometimes feel so random.



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Good games have simple rules with emergent complexity (chess is a great example), whereas reward schemes start off complex and try to drive simple behaviour change. Games make you believe that through your own actions you can earn more coins, status or whatever else is on offer. While reward schemes aren't about luck, in some cases interpreting their rules is a truly dark art. Surely the deepest beliefs come when we can balance our own actions, and are given more agency by the brands we want to connect to, with occasional good fortune?

Behave:

The old model had us believe that awareness drove engagement or that more elusive goal - behaviour change. In today's attention economy, we have our eyeballs to exchange for entertainment, social and commercial value. The theories around behaviour change have become immensely more nuanced, with the massive data trails we leave from our every action converted into micro-engagement on social media. From there, return on investment can be a little blurry and we can't always correlate real world and digital behaviour.

As we compete in these increasingly congested and expensive channels, what we know is that voluntary engagement is key – whether it's the choices on Netflix or people opting out of certain digital platforms because of the barrage of ads and other interruptions. We prefer to choose how and when we engage with brands. Our time and attention matters to us (it's all we have really), and it should matter to our brands – not in a way that leads to exploitation, but one that leads to authentic connections.

Lighthouse isn't designed to compete with social media or reward schemes. Rather, its purpose is to create a cost-effective way to glue together experiences that drive real engagement and value, for both customers and brands. It is hugely data-driven, with the express intention of offering users more agency in their relationships, and brands greater insight into their customers. It is truly innovative, but in a way that appeals to our underlying human motivations. It will create much more authentic and deeper connections to one another, and isn't that what we all really want?

Visit [Lighthouse](#) for more.

Glenn Gillis is the co-founder and CEO of [Sea Monster](#), a leading animation, gaming and augmented-reality company. Sea Monster utilises games to increase engagement, improve learning and strengthen the impact of learning outcomes for corporations across Europe and Africa.

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