

261. GAMIFICATION IN BUSINESS DRIVING ENGAGEMENT THROUGH PLAY

Laziuk D. T., Pashkevich M. V.

*Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics,
Minsk, Republic of Belarus*

Ryabykh V. A. – Lecturer, Master of Arts

This article explores how gamification transforms business through customer engagement and employee motivation, using real-world examples and best practices.

Modern business is constantly looking for ways to keep customers' attention and motivate employees. Gamification, the introduction of game elements into non-game processes, has become one of the most effective tools of the last decade. From loyalty programs to staff training, companies around the world use points, tiers, and competitions to achieve real business goals. However, like any technology, gamification requires a well-thought-out approach in order to be beneficial and not turn into pointless entertainment.

Gamification in business is the use of game mechanics such as points, leaderboards, and levels in a non-game context to engage people and achieve business performance. Its power lies in addressing basic human needs: the desire to compete, gain recognition, and see one's own progress. Research confirms the effectiveness of this approach: 90% of employees feel more productive due to gamification, and engagement in such companies increases by 60% [1].

Gamification has become a real breakthrough in the field of customer retention. Starbucks created the My Rewards loyalty program, where customers save stars for purchases and exchange them for drinks or goods – this simple mechanism brings the company 40% of all sales. Nike has turned solo runs into a social experience through the Nike Run Club app with challenges and virtual rewards, creating a strong community around the brand. Other companies, such as KFC and Pizza Hut, use game mechanics in mobile applications and advertising campaigns: arcade games for winning food and augmented reality make brand interaction emotional and memorable [2].

Gamification also effectively solves internal business problems. The Duolingo language learning platform is built entirely on game mechanics: "streaks" (a series of daily activities), levels, and lives keep users engaged and motivate them to return every day. Instructure implemented a leaderboard in the corporate social network to encourage employees to share content. In two months, this led to an increase in the number of publications by 3846%. Uber uses gamification for drivers, awarding bonuses and unlocking new levels for trips during rush hours, which effectively solves the problem of a shortage of cars at peak times [3].

A separate area is the use of gamification to collect data and promote values. Lancôme used the "guess the word" game to educate customers about the composition of a new perfume before giving out a sample: this increased engagement and gave the brand valuable marketing data. Biotherm created a catapult game for collecting virtual garbage in the ocean, linking it to an environmental campaign, which enhanced the brand's positive image. And GRDF, using a simple quiz, allowed employees to choose a new uniform, significantly increasing their sense of involvement in the life of the company.

For gamification to work effectively, experts recommend adhering to several key principles. First of all, it is necessary to define a specific business goal: sales growth, staff training, or data collection, and not just "implement a game for the sake of the game." It is important to think about the long term, avoiding one-time promotions and building a system of levels and seasonal events that will retain interest for years. One should not focus only on material prizes – public recognition, such as lunch with the CEO or a mention in a general chat, often motivates more than gift cards. Finally, the rules should be completely transparent: participants should clearly understand how points are awarded and what needs to be done to win [3].

Gamification in business is not just a fashion statement, but a working tool for solving specific tasks: from customer retention to increasing employee productivity. The examples of Starbucks, Nike, Duolingo, and many others prove that well-designed game mechanics can produce measurable results. However, success comes only when there is a clear strategy behind the bright wrapper, a deep understanding of the audience, and a willingness to adapt to feedback.

References:

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