

Zueuz Tecnologia e Negócios Ltda - ME

Better Customer service through Level Ups

Gaming happy Customer



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Level ups are a common concept in gaming. Players complete certain tasks in order to achieve higher-ranking levels and rewards. This concept most often used in games, from role-playing, to first person shooters.

In addition, besides actual games, game portals use Level ups to give incentives to users to purchase more games, participate in the community, and even help other gamers.

The Level up “recipe” has been working for years, in an industry that has grown to a whopping 91 Billion Dollars in 2016 alone¹ – not far from the projected 99 Billion².

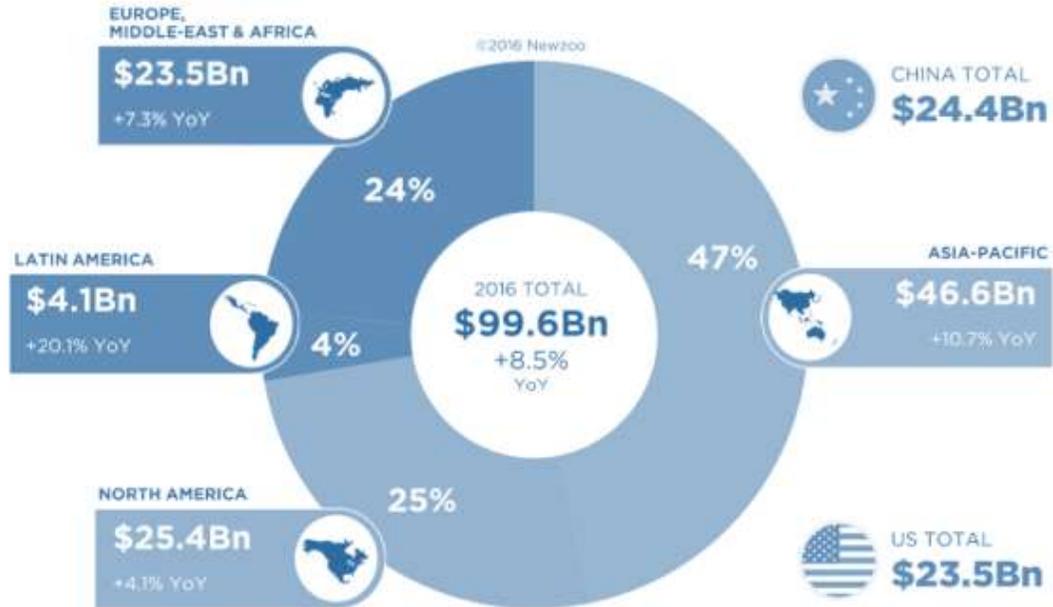
¹ <http://www.gamesindustry.biz/articles/2016-12-21-2016-games-industry-brings-in-usd94-billion-superdata>

² <http://venturebeat.com/2016/04/21/video-games-will-become-a-99-6b-industry-this-year-as-mobile-overtakes-consoles-and-pcs/>



2016 GLOBAL GAMES MARKET

PER REGION WITH YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH RATES



Source: ©Newzoo | Q2 2016 Update | Global Games Market Report Premium
newzoo.com/globalreportpremium/

1 Gaming Revenue World-Wide Projection for 2016

What can we learn from the gaming industry that could possibly help customer service improve? If you are a gamer, or have ever played online games, then you might already have had a spark going off in your mind.

Why Level Ups?

However, before we jump into the grinders, let me paint the picture of a customer service issue that prompted this idea.



Recently, at the local Gym where I have been a loyal customer for 7 years now, and have had the 7am time slot to workout with the personal trainer. Nevertheless, due to a new customer who wanted to train at 7am as well, the owner asked me if I could switch my schedule to 8am instead.

He had also just implemented some changes in the billing process and was requiring me to sign up for a 6 months contract, because he did have several problems with customers the years before.

Can you see the customer service issues in this situation?

Loyal customers should never be punished because of bad customers! Moreover, most importantly, faithful customers should always be given priority over new customers. Why, you might ask? After 7 years, it is much more likely that a loyal customer (myself) will stay, and the new customer leave (as most do, after 2 to 3 months), leaving that time slot open again. Now, I was tempted to look for another gym, simply because I felt mistreated and devalued as a loyal customer. Is this situation common?

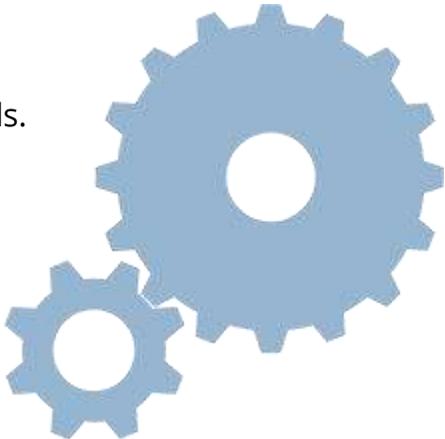
It has become all too frequent that loyal customers receive the same, or worse, treatment as average or bad customers, turning the customer service industry into a nightmare for customers in general.

Therefore, the Level up approach not only fixes the issues of customer satisfaction, but also helps companies place the proper rank into customers, using as a guide for promotions, price level changes, bonuses, privileges, and even the most basic phone support, or priority scheduling and services.

Customers with higher ranks, or levels, may receive bigger incentives, benefits, respect, and even visibility towards marketing campaigns and success stories.

Computing Level Ups

There are several ways to compute the customer levels. Either daily using a scheduler, or updating when the customer performs any type of action (payment, xp earnings, etc) or whenever there is an interaction between the customer and the system (either manual or via automated code).



The best approach would be a mixture of all three options, optimizing the computation of XP (gaming experience) and minimizing system overhead.

In any case, at least, a few fields should be stored in the Level Up system:

Customer Level

Customer ID (int)	Level (int)	XP (int)	Last Level UP (dateTime)	Last Success (dateTime)	Last Failure (dateTime)	Last Event ID (int)
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Customer ID has a foreign key in the customer table

Last Even ID has a foreign key in Event Logger table

The **Customer Level** table records the current state of the customer level, with simple data that informs the system the rank of the customer, as an up-to-date snapshot of the “player” and customer. This table is the focus of the approach, keeping things simple to digest. If, in any situation, more information becomes necessary, to backtrack or analyze the customer level up history, then use the *Event Logger* table as reference. There are three fields with date and time information that help keep track of more important events without having to refer back to the *Event Logger* table. These fields – Last Level Up, Last Success, and Last Failure – keep dates and times for events that serve as landmarks for recurrences and anniversaries.

For example: in order to compute successful payments in the account, the table tracks when the last successful event happened, based on the Event ID 04 (see *event types* table) and is able to process an addition of XP based of this data alone.

Customer Badges

Customer ID	Badge ID (int)	Date Received (dateTime)	Latest Badge (bool)
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Customer ID has a foreign key in the customer table

The **Customer Badges** table, although optional, records the badges or titles customers receive upon leveling up, or achieved certain rewards. This table further implements the gaming mentality, where customers see the incentive to participate more, and to accomplish more tasks, in order to receive specialized badges. As with the *Customer Level* table, auditing and backtracking of badges are recorded to the *Event Logger* table.

Event Logger

Id (int)	Customer ID	Event Id	Description (nvarchar(255))	Date (dateTime)	Actor (int)
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Customer ID has a foreign key in the customer table

Event ID has a foreign key to Event Types table

The **Event Logger** table records all the events that incur changes in the customer rank – either when leveling up, or down – as well as badges earned, interactions, and so on. The number and granularity of the events logged will depend on how complete the business wants to keep its interactions with customers. This table may have several thousand lines of entries, and will mainly serve as an audit trail for customer leveling up or down, as well as badges earned.

Event Types

Event ID (int)	XP Points (int)	Event Code (char(10))	Description (nvarchar(255))	Inserted (dateTime)	isCurrent (bool)
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The **Event Types** table holds vital information regarding what events will add to or

Event ID	Description	XP Points
01	Completed Profile	+100
02	Add Direct Debit	+100
03	1st On-time Payment	+200
04	On-Time Payment	+30
05	1st Anniversary	+200
06	Anniversary	+100
07	Testimony	+300
08	Forum Post	+100
09	Forum Reply	+50
10	Polite Interaction	+50
11	Scheduled Fulfilled	+100
12	Moved new Address	+200
13	1st Late Payment	-30
14	2nd Late Payment	-50
15	3rd Late Payment	-70
16	Collections	-300
17	No-call-no-show	-80
18	Broken Equipment	-50
19	Impolite Interaction	-50
20	Cancellation	-100

subtract XP points from the customer, effectively changing their level. It is important to notice that some events may subtract from a customer's XP, such as bad payments, late payments, no-call-no-shows, and so on, possibly forcing a customer to level down. There are other events, which will add to the customer's XP, helping leveling up.

Levels

Level ID (int)	Level Name (nvarchar(255)) *optional	XP Required (int)	Updated (dateTime)
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The **Levels** table holds information on the necessary experience points (XP) in order to level up, or level down. The description, though optional, can offer valuable clues as to what each specific level offers or requires in order to be achieved.

Is even possible to add an extra table for **Star Ranks** in case you want feedback to work both ways, such as Uber does with both the driver, and the passenger. In this case, training and focus will be necessary in order to provide valuable and realistic feedback, without any prejudices or hurt pride. In any case, star ranks can work a long way in developing a sense of correct behavior into customers that are known to be belligerent, as well as to reward those that are always a delight.

How to implement Level UP?

Although it is a known fact that very few businesses actually employ any sort of Customer Relationship Management System (CRM), the level up approach can be adapted to any solution, with little effort. Regardless, the Level Up approach does not require much in terms of programming, nor system infrastructure, and should be viewed as an asset to the core values of the business, and a powerful tool to transform turnover into an exciting game for customers.

Is Level Up Customer Service For Me?

In sum, the goal is to use gaming style Level Ups to reward customer loyalty, and inform the business about the status of each customer, and yet to promote a new

channel of quality and satisfaction among customers, as they can regard the Leveling up as a fun game to participate in.

Business can profit out of Level Ups because they serve as a training tool, as well as an assessment tool regarding customer value. Customers that reach higher levels tend to place stronger values into the effort they have exerted in order to achieve those levels, as well as a sense of ownership of their accomplishments, inviting them to become better customers in order to continue to level up.

Customers can greatly profit from Level Ups because business will offer them rewards for achieving higher levels. That simple! Whenever a customer is playing a game they enjoy, and are rewarded for accomplishments, they will invest into leveling up whenever possible, increasing their value in the community (as their levels is public – optionally) and showing off their consumer “skills”.

Carlos A. A. Casalicchio, information technology professional with over 13 years of experience, created this approach concept.

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