engage

From Real-Time Value to Real-Time Loyalty

Operationalizing Loyalty in the Moment of Decision

Len Covello | Chief Technology Officer - Engage People Inc.

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. All concepts set forth in this proposal are of a proprietary nature and are subject to non-disclosure. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Loyalty Evolved

Innovating and impacting loyalty programs around the world.



engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

What We'll Explore Today...

- Recap: Why Real-Time Value Matters
- The Gap Between Vision and Reality
- The Real-Time Loyalty Stack
- Payments as the Activation Layer
- Designing for the 10-Second Rule
- What Changes for Each Stakeholder
- The Strategic Inflection Point
- Q&A



engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

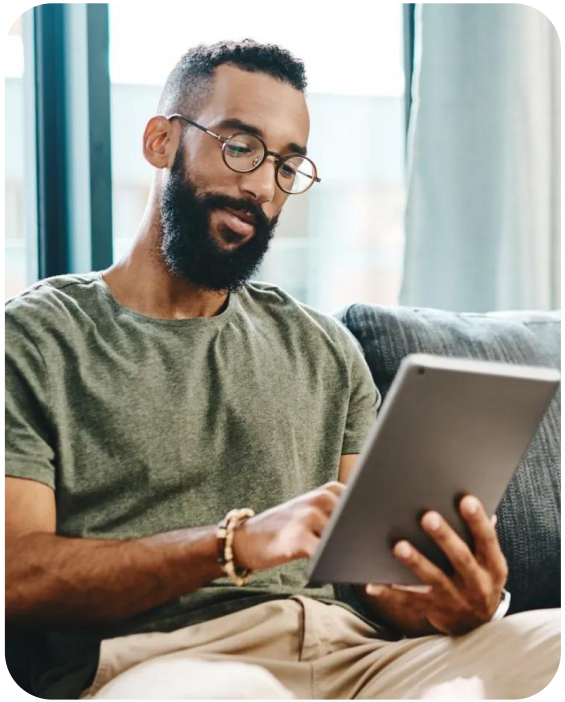
Opening Set: The Tension…

Let me start with a simple question…..

- When was the last time your loyalty program actually changed a customers decision?

- Not rewarded it…..
- Not followed up after…..
- But changed the decision in the moment?

Because that moment - **that is where loyalty is either won**…..or completely irrelevant

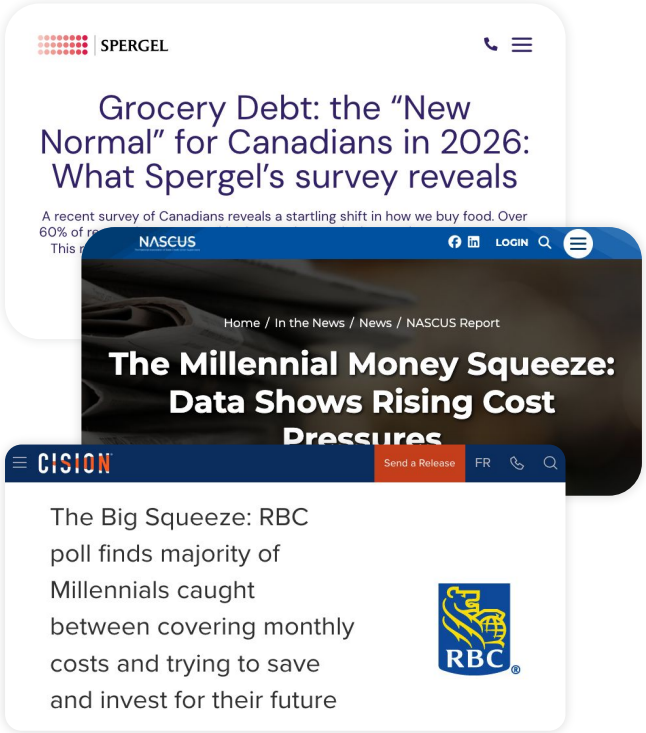


engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Loyalty Isn't Declining—It's Being Redefined by Value

- Consumers aren't disengaging—they're reprioritizing.
  - **~70%** say financial pressure impacts where they shop
  - **~50%** prefer instant savings over future rewards
  - Frequent redemption = **2–3x** higher engagement
- Loyalty is shifting from aspiration → utility



engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Recap: What We Established

1

Immediacy

Loyalty is being redefined by immediacy

2

Moment

Value must show up at the moment of purchase

3

Not later

“Earn later” is no longer sufficient

4

10 seconds

The 10-second rule defines relevance

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

The Core Idea

Loyalty must influence the purchase—not just reward it afterward.

Value needs to be visible, relevant and usable at checkout.

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Real Time Value Changes Behaviour

Real Time Rewards drive:

- Higher redemption
- Increased engagement
- Greater purchase confidence
- Stronger trust



engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

If real-time value is the expectation… Why isn’t it the standard today?

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

The Gap Between Vision and Reality

⚠ Where most programs are today		✓ What real time demands
Batch processing	>	Real-time processing
Delayed redemption	>	Instant redemption
Fragmented systems	>	Connected systems
Post-transaction engagement	>	In-the-moment engagement

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

The Real Challenge is Execution

Real-time loyalty depends on four connected capabilities.

1. **Loyalty Platforms**
2. **Payment Rails**
3. **POS Constraints**
4. **Issuer Support**

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

From Program Thinking to System Thinking

- Connect data across the ecosystem
- Embed redemption in the payment flow
- Make transaction-level decisions, supported by AI
- Align loyalty decisions with real-time authorization



engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

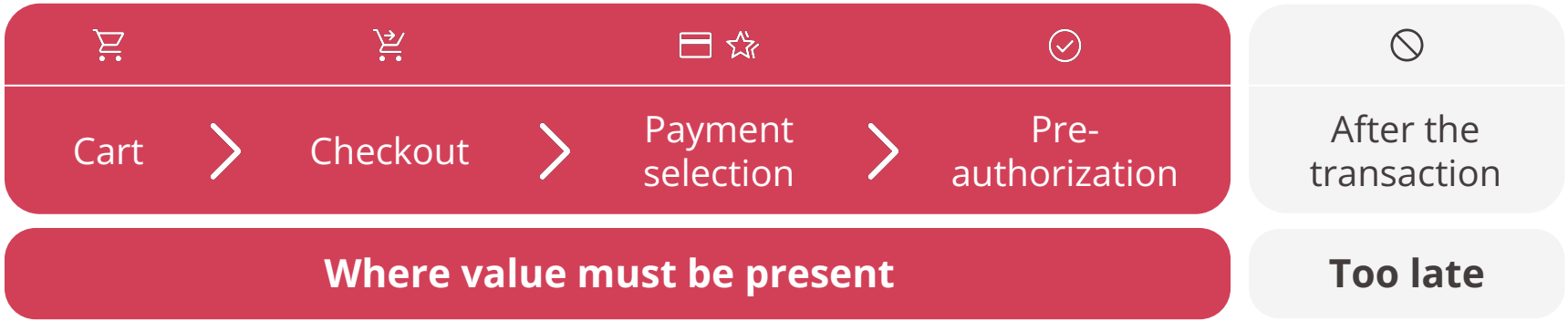
The Real-Time Loyalty Stack

Issuer	>	Points source
Loyalty engine	>	Rules, valuation and AI agents
Merchant / POS	>	Where the purchase happens
Payment network	>	Authorizes the transaction
Redemption interface	>	Where the customer sees and applies value

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

The Moment That Matters



Loyalty must act before the payment, not after the transaction. After the transaction, the opportunity to influence the decision has passed.

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Payments Activate Loyalty

Make redemption part of paying.
Not a separate task afterward.



Card =
Identity

Payment =
Decision Point

Loyalty =
Financial Instrument

engage

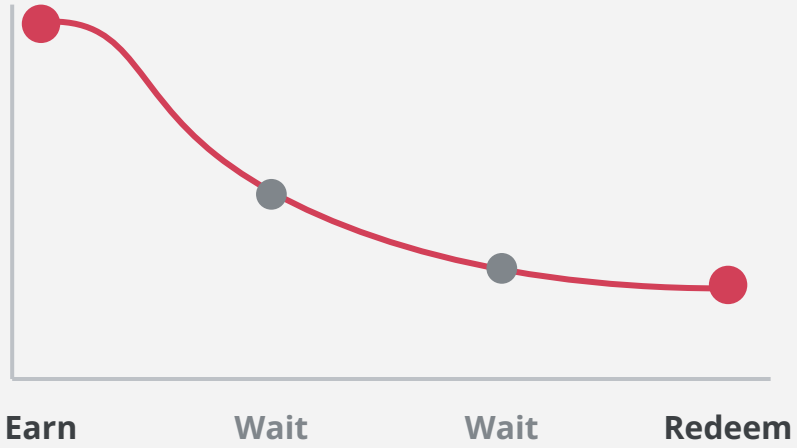
*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Why Points Feel Invisible

1. **Traditional Model: Earn → Wait → Wait → Redeem**
2. **Value and connection fades during delay**
3. **Temporal discounting: delayed rewards lose impact**
4. **Time erodes perceived value**

Temporal discounting

The Cost of Waiting - Later Is Worth Less!



engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Designing for the 10-Second Rule



“Can I use my rewards now?”

“How much do I save now?”

“Can I apply value immediately?”

If the value is not clear at checkout, it is unlikely to influence the purchase.

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

The S.A.V.E. Framework: Recap + Expansion

S

Surface value at point of action

Make rewards visible when purchase decisions matter

A

Activate personalization in context

Deliver rewards based on purchase behaviour and context

V

Verify value instantly

Consumers need to see clear savings

E

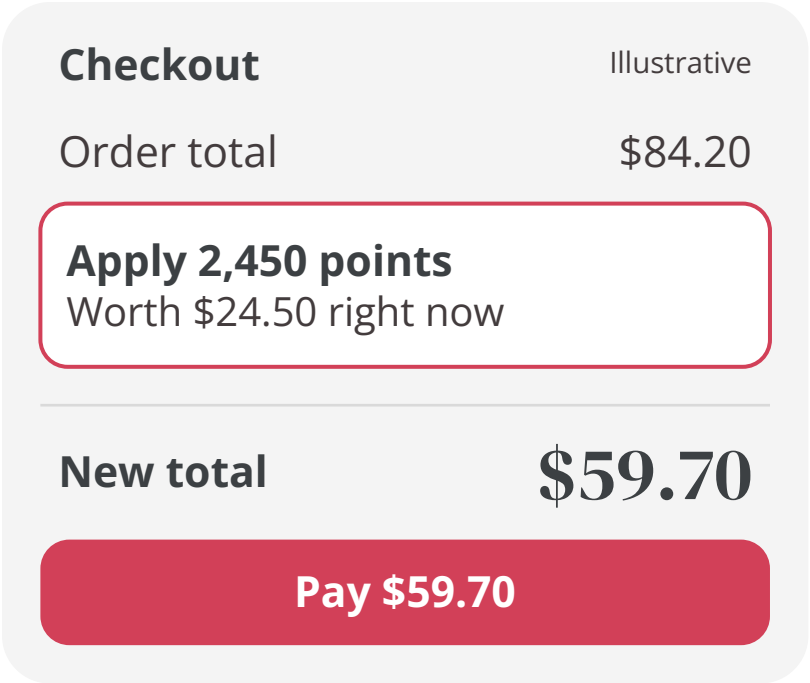
Enable everyday use across categories

Groceries, dining, retail, travel and daily spending: make loyalty part of every purchase

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

What Good Looks Like: The Experience Layer



1. Points appear as cash equivalent
2. One-click redemption from a real-time offer
3. Instant discount applied
4. No friction between intent and value

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Case Study Pattern Across Industry

Common traits of **successful models**

Where it lives
Embedded in payment flow

How often
High-frequency environments

How it works
Simple redemption logic

Why it matters
Immediate financial relevance

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Value for Each Stakeholder

Issuers

- Greater redemption
- Dynamic valuation
- A more relevant financial product

Merchants

- Potential to improve conversion
- Basket size and repeat behaviour

Consumers

- Clearer savings
- Less friction
- More control over their spending

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

The Strategic Choice

Option 1

- Continue optimizing traditional loyalty

Option 2

- Build connected, real-time value into the purchase journey

The opportunity is to make loyalty part of the transaction—not an afterthought.

engage

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Loyalty is no longer what happens after purchase. It is what influences the purchase itself.

And that only works in real time!

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. ©2026 Engage People Inc.

Thank You

engagepeople.com

*This document is confidential & contains privileged information. All concepts set forth in this proposal are of a proprietary nature and are subject to non-disclosure. ©2026 Engage People Inc.