

**[YAS ANNUAL PASS]****[CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT]****Customer Engagement & Experience**

Customer loyalty is vital for brand growth & success, consumers champion brands who put customer over profit, this award will recognise those brands who live and breathe the customer first ethos and have developed and enhanced their relationships with their customers building trust and loyalty and always ensuring the customer experience is paramount.

This entry was submitted by Miral Destinations on behalf of Miral Destinations dated on 16 April, 2025.

**Executive Summary (500 words maximum)**

*Yas Island Abu Dhabi is one of the world's most iconic leisure and entertainment destinations, home to award-winning theme parks including Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Waterworld, Warner Bros. World™ Abu Dhabi, SeaWorld® Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, and CLYMB™. In 2021, Miral Destinations launched the Yas Annual Pass — a game-changing loyalty product designed to transform the guest experience from a one-off visit into a year-round lifestyle.*

*The pass was designed around a bold vision: put the passholder first, always. Instead of selling entry to parks, we sold access to a lifestyle — a community of thrill-seekers, families, and fun-lovers who now consider Yas Island part of their everyday lives. Members don't just get unlimited theme park access; they unlock exclusive events, island-wide discounts, early access perks, and curated experiences that build emotional loyalty — not just transactions.*

*In the last 18 months, the Yas Annual Pass has become the most successful customer product in Yas Island's history. Between January 2023 and mid-2024, passholder active members grew by 108%, from 39,000 to 81,000. This was not achieved through traditional discounting or mass promotions — but through relentless focus on customer value and experience.*

*In August 2024, in an industry-first move, we took the Yas Annual Pass off sale — not due to lack of demand, but to protect quality. This built even more anticipation, resulting in a waitlist of over 17,000 people. When we relaunched in January 2025, we rewarded existing members with a time-limited early renewal offer and a loyalty discount. The result? A record-breaking 83% renewal rate — nearly triple global benchmarks.*

*This wasn't just a product campaign. It was a redefinition of what loyalty means in the theme park and entertainment industry. At its heart was a belief that if you put customers first — with meaningful value, trust, and surprise — they won't just come back... they'll bring everyone they know with them to share the best day ever.*

**SUBMISSION (2000 words maximum, headers and references don't count)****What were your objectives and why was this important to the business? Max 10 points**

*The primary objective of the Yas Annual Pass was to create deeper, longer-lasting relationships with our guests. Rather than focusing on short-term visitation spikes, we aimed to:*

- *Position Yas Island not just as a destination, but as a part of daily life for UAE residents and frequent visitors*
- *Create a community around Yas Island — transforming casual visitors into superfans*
- *Build a recurring revenue stream through year-round memberships*
- *Increase guest lifetime value through repeat visits and upselling*
- *Enhance customer satisfaction by offering more personalised, meaningful experiences*

*This was a strategic imperative. As competition across leisure and entertainment sectors intensified post-COVID, customer expectations rose dramatically. Consumers wanted more value, more flexibility, and more reasons to stay loyal. We knew we couldn't win on price alone — we had to win on experience. The Annual Pass was designed to deliver exactly that.*

## What were the insights and data that led you to the strategy? Max 15 points

*Our strategy was rooted in robust customer insights and trend analysis:*

- *Visitor data showed high levels of repeat visits from local and UAE guests, particularly families who were already visiting multiple Yas Island attractions in a single year — but paying separately for each.*
- *Survey feedback indicated a desire for more value-added offers, exclusive access, and a “VIP” feeling for loyal guests.*
- *Benchmarking against global theme park brands revealed that existing loyalty models were outdated — often transactional and lacking emotional engagement.*
- *Subscription economy trends showed customers increasingly willing to commit to long-term products if they received ongoing value and felt part of a community.*
- *We also conducted social listening and sentiment analysis, identifying a strong sense of pride and connection among frequent Yas Island visitors — but no product that capitalized on this affinity.*

*These insights shaped the creation of a lifestyle-centric product: one that would offer park access, yes — but go far beyond that, integrating perks across dining, shopping, hospitality, and entertainment to create an ecosystem of value.*

## What new strategies and creative and innovative approaches did you take? Max 20 points

*The Yas Annual Pass broke all the traditional rules of loyalty:*

- **We created a lifestyle product**, not just a theme park pass. Perks extended beyond the gates — from island-wide discounts to surprise-and-delight upgrades, exclusive events, and curated brand partnerships.
- **We embedded emotion into the offering.** Passholders weren't just customers — they were insiders. We hosted member-only events, meet-and-greets, sneak previews, and moments that money simply couldn't buy.
- **We moved away from always-on selling** and embraced limited availability to preserve quality. In a bold move, we stopped selling the Yas Annual Pass at peak demand, turning a high-demand product into a coveted privilege.
- **We rewarded loyalty tangibly** — not with generic discounts, but with exclusive early access to renewals and additional benefits for long-time members.
- **We cultivated community.** Passholders were nurtured through bespoke content, email journeys, and personal outreach, making them feel valued — not just sold to.
- **Our omnichannel campaign** harnessed influencer advocacy, content marketing, and user-generated storytelling to create social proof and organic buzz.

*This was not just innovative in our sector — it was radical. We turned a product into a passion.*

## What were the risks, how were you brave? Max 20 points

*Perhaps our boldest move was in August 2024, when we voluntarily paused all new sales of the Yas Annual Pass — right in the middle of peak demand. This decision flew in the face of conventional business wisdom. But we believed that protecting the experience for existing members was more important than short-term growth.*

*The risk? Revenue loss. Customer confusion. Backlash. Instead, what we gained was unprecedented desire and loyalty. The waitlist grew to over 17,000, while satisfaction scores among existing passholders skyrocketed.*

*Going back on sale in January 2025 with a price increase was another risk — but we mitigated it by offering loyal members the opportunity to renew early at the original rate, plus a 10% loyalty discount. This not only drove a record-breaking 83% renewal rate but it also created a clear message: We value your loyalty — and we prove it.*

*At every step, we chose long-term trust over short-term gain. In today's transactional world, that's brave.*

## What were the measurable results? Max 20 points

*The campaign's impact has been transformational:*

- *Passholder growth: From 39,000 in January 2023 to 81,000 by mid-2024 — a 108% increase.*
- *Renewal rate: 83% in February 2025, nearly 3x the industry average of 20–30%.*
- *Waitlist: 17,000+ customers during the off-sale period.*
- *Revenue: Significant uplift in recurring annual revenue and secondary spend across retail, F&B, and hotel bookings by passholders.*
- *Customer satisfaction: Net Promoter Score (NPS) increased among Annual Pass members vs. single-visit guests.*
- *Social media: User-generated content grew organically, with thousands of mentions and stories celebrating “passholder perks” and events.*

*These aren't just numbers — they're proof that when you invest in customer value and trust, the returns are exponential.*

**How does your work advocate the reputation/importance of the Marketing industry? Max 15 points**

*This campaign demonstrates the transformative power of marketing to shape business strategy, not just support it. The Yas Annual Pass wasn't a bolt-on promotion, it was a core revenue product, designed, executed, and evolved entirely through marketing-led thinking.*

*We championed customer-first strategy over price wars. We fused data with emotion, insights with innovation, and loyalty with lifestyle. We showed that marketing isn't just about awareness, it's about relationships, retention, and revenue. And in an industry that often values footfall over feeling, we proved that meaningful engagement builds lasting success.*

*By prioritizing community, trust, and long-term value, we elevated the role of marketing as a driver of not just brand love, but business performance.*