Appendix A - Transcripts from Focus Group Consultations

PROJECT: Attitudes Towards Loyalty Programs

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(Transcriber's Note: Moderator makes opening comments on the purpose of the interview.)

M: So, why don't we go around the table and maybe you could each introduce yourselves and tell us your first name and a bit about yourself and what sort of work you do, if you work outside of the home, and who lives with you in your house, be that human or canine or a feline. Do you want to begin?

R: Well, my name is Lynda.

M: With a Y?

R: With a Y, yes. I do a lot of little things. I invigilate exams for professors.

M: You mean like bar examinations and things like that?

R: Yes, and others.

M: So, if you see somebody copying from someone else, you get to sort of punish them?

R: I protect them. I wouldn't even think about it. And I do other kinds of little things. I help my husband, he's a writer. And I'm auditing a course at York University in French, and I do volunteer work for newcomers to Canada. I keep pretty active. I have two kids, and they're both overseas. One is doing a PhD, and is going to be in Women in Leadership for the Third World. She's in Spain studying. And my son has gone back to Pakistan to help his father who has a terminal diagnosis.

0:03:34.2

M: And his father lives there?

R: My first husband, yes.

R: I'm Brad. I work in a special needs school, predominately autistic children. I'm not a teacher, but I assist the teacher.

M: So, does that make you like an EA?

R: Yes, well, I work for … so there is a teacher, and there is an EA. And I work for a private school. So, the teachers and the EAs cannot physically restrain the children, it's not in their contract. So, they have to hire people like myself.

M: So, you're allowed to restrain?

R: Yes, when the children become aggressive, then …

M: So, you're like the bouncer?

R: I'm the muscle. But I do everything an EA does, except when the going gets tough, the EAs goes away and I kind of restrain them. I have a photography website, I do photography as a hobby. I study film as a hobby, as well, directors and stuff like that. That's about it. I like sports. I wish I could play hockey soon.

M: Well, I'm sure we can find other ways to entertain ourselves, like being in a focus group.

R: I'm Peta. I'm currently on maternity leave, but I …

0:05:06.1

M: So, are you into the ethical treatment of animals?

R: I haven't heard that before.

M: Because I've seen that acronym for PETA.

R: It's not my full … there is a little more to it. It's shortened, just because it's easier. I'm on maternity leave, I have an eight-month-old boy and a nine-year-old. I'm a chiropractic assistant. I'm still a part-time student at York University, finishing up a kinesiology degree.

R: My name is Keesha Lee. I'm a full-time insurance broker. I live at home with my two kids and my spouse. That's pretty much it.

R: I'm Sylvana. I work full-time in an elementary school in Toronto. I've been there for 23 years. I did 15 years of retail before that. I have a son and a husband. My son is back in school. He wanted to go into policing.

M: I'm sure working in retail was good preparation for dealing with a class of …

R: I went into a school not knowing anything about working in a school, but I had 15 years of retail, so that was all they needed for me to work in an elementary school. And when I went there, and they said, you're going to be the head secretary … I was like, I know nothing about school. I know, but you were in retail for 15 years, you can do it.

M: It's customer service.

R: I guess I must be doing something right because I've been there 23 years. I'm ready to retire in a little while.

0:06:51.7

R: I'm Sonya. I work for the Federal Government, the Industrial Research Assistants Program. We basically assist small medium-sizes companies. I have two children. My son will be 18 in May, and my daughter is going to be 9 next week. My son is finishing high school and going into aerospace soon. And I have my partner at home. That's about it.

R: I'm Carlton. I work in finance, mutual funds. And before that, I worked in the travel industry, and for vacations I do a bit of travelling. It was fine for a while, but I decided to go back to school and get a business degree, and then I went into finance.

M: So, as you may have guessed from the questions we asked you when we invited you to the session, as I said before, we're going to be exploring the whole topic of customer loyalty programs. So, I want to start by asking each of you to tell us what loyalty programs, just off the top of your head, are you a member of, or how many memberships do you think you have? Keesha Lee, why don't we start with you?

R: I have three memberships. Actually, probably, four. Addition Elle, Sears, Canadian Tire and Wal-Mart.

M: So, Wal-Mart, Sears, Canadian Tire … what was the first one?

R: Addition Elle, it's a clothing store.

M: Sylvana?

R: Capital One, Sears, MasterCard, Visa …

M: But are MasterCard and Visa … these are all loyalty programs?

0:08:35.2

R: No, they're just regular cards.

M: I'm thinking like membership cards?

R: Costco.

M: And Sears you mentioned?

R: Sears.

M: Sonya?

R: I have HPC, Sobey's, Petro Canada, Air Miles Collector, and Shopper's Optimum.

M: So, that's like five.

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: Yes, I have the Body Shop.

R: Me, too.

M: Carlton?

R: I have Air Miles, HPC and Shoppers Drug Mart.

M: What about any gas stations? I guess some of them have programs?

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R: I have Petro.

R: Petro.

R: I was in Husky the other night. I went in there to get lottery tickets. And they said, would you like a loyalty card? Sure, why not.

M: What is Husky?

R: It's a gas station.

M: And what about Aeroplan or an airline loyalty program? Are any of you members of those?

R: Yes.

M: So, Lynda, what loyalty programs do you belong to?

R: Aeroplan is particularly a favourite with my husband. We have that. Optimum with Shoppers, Air Miles, PC, I really like that one, HPC, Petro Miles, Canadian Tire. Those are the ones I can think of.

M: There are many others?

R: There are others, yes.

M: Before you know it, your wallet is thick with cards, I guess. Brad, which ones are you…?

R: I do the Air Miles, I have the Shoppers Optimum. Petro Canada, AMC Movie Card.

0:10:45.6

M: Although, did they …?

R: They closed the Kennedy and the 401. But they have one at Yonge and Dundas.

M: Oh, hasn't that become a Cineplex now?

R: Possibly.

R: The Scene Card.

M: That's another one.

R: Yes, they changed the naming of them.

R: Yes, I don't have the Scene Card. I do have Body Shop. I totally forgot about it until you mentioned it. But I have two Visa cards and one gives me Air Miles, and one gives me Dividend points, Dividend dollars.

M: There is some form of an incentive?

R: Yes.

R: I think we are taken up by that.

R: I don't know if that's relevant.

M: Peta, what do you have?

0:11:26.8

R: I have the Shoppers Optimum, Air Miles, Petro Canada, I have a Body Shop one. I have the Scene Card, I love that one. What else do I have? I probably have a couple of others that I can't remember right now.

M: So, I think what we're going to do … because we're going to be discussing a lot of issues around loyalty programs … but I want to start off by having you work together in teams. And since you're an odd number, I guess we'll have Linda, Brad, and Peta as a trio, and then Sylvana and Keesha Lee will work together, and Sonya and Carlton will work together. And I want you to

take a few minutes and just discuss and make a short list of what are the pros and cons of loyalty programs in general. And those can both be from your perspective as a consumer, but also general pros and cons for society as a whole, given that there has been a proliferation of loyalty programs. I mean, 25 years ago, they didn't really exist at all. And I would imagine that the pros are probably relatively obvious, but also think about is there a downside, or are there things that you personally find to be a con to loyalty programs, as well. So, take a couple of minutes and chat amongst yourselves, and let's see what you come up with. (Respondents complete the activity.) Has everybody come up with some pros and cons? Let's start off with the pros and loyalty programs. Why don't we start with the three of you, what was the advantage?

R: Well, we basically … with our pros, we discussed that at the end. My pro, big time, is with my PC card, because I'm a real shopper, and I'm not buying anything except what I'm going to buy. So, I like that I get these points, because I can get more food.

M: The points are redeemable for …?

R: They're redeemable and I use them for food, which I would buy, anyway. So, I really get a saving. But it's not a real saving, it's actually everybody is overcharged, and if I'm not using my card …

0:16:23.5

M: That's a disadvantage.

R: Yes. So, that's why I use it because I'm actually disadvantaged here using money. I don't appreciate that. But, like I said, I know how to shop, I feel really confident. So, I make it work to my advantage.

M: Any other pros of loyalty programs, in general?

R: I was talking about the Scene Card, because I go to the movies a lot with my boyfriend. I think I've had about five, maybe six, free movie tickets. They add up because …

M: You see 10, you get 1 free?

R: Yes, you watch a movie, and then you buy something at the concession stand. You get a 10% discount. It's not much, but it's something, and then you get some more points for that, too. And then, before you know it, you have another free ticket.

R: I like the fact that if we showed up there on a Tuesday night, but you get one free movie. We thought, we should have come on a different night.

M: But you don't have to use the free one, then, you could always pay for it …

R: It's okay, I get a free movie, and I take advantage of it.

M: So, what did you two see as being the pros of loyalty programs?

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R: You get reward points for spending money that you were going to spend anyway. That's a reward. You can get free products. Especially at Sobeys, they give you $5.00 back when you … and then you can apply it to your purchase. It's like, oh, you have $5.00, and they just deduct it. And then, it coincides, you can get discounts, also. So, you can get free items at discounts. The cons …

M: Oh, we'll get to the cons in a moment, I just want to hear the pros from each pair. What about Carlton and Sonya, what did you see to be the pros?

R: The pros are the Air Miles and …

R: Yes, Air Miles is one.

R: You get discounts for shopping, especially (inaudible). I shop at Mitch a lot, so I might get a lot of coupons or other … they send me one in the mail, get a discount and things like that. So, it's good. And Sobeys, too, you collect points and you can get a discount off groceries.

M: So, the pros are, I guess, that you get rewards of some kind. Are there any other pros, in general? Not necessarily about one specific loyalty program, but about loyalty programs, in general. What else, is there anything else that is an advantage of the fact that they exist?

R: I think, also, like with The Bay (inaudible, voice too low) get notified.

M: You get promotions, yes. So, in other words, you get advanced notice of things sometimes?

R: Yes.

0:19:13.5

R: Well, Soft Moc does that.

R: But do they have a card?

R: Yes, especially because I work for the board, you can go online and, even though it's 30% off, you get an extra 10% off.

R: If you have the card?

R: Because you go online and you register your ID number. When you go to spend, you just give them that ID number, and automatically, it comes up.

R: I have another one. There was a store, I'm just remembering now. I can't remember, but there are shoes that I really need … particularly comfortable shoes. There is a store, which escapes me. It's a sports store. But if I buy 12 pairs, the 12th is free. So, I'm not spending extra. I'm getting what I need, and I need to get those.

M: And once a year, if you buy a pair of shoes a month, once a year, you get a free pair of shoes?

R: And it's anybody in my phone number. So, anybody from my household …

M: It all adds up?

R: I'm only doing it, but if I had a larger family …

M: It would accumulate.

0:20:22.7

R: So, I'm not spending more than I would, anyway. But they're appreciating my …

M: So, let's move onto the cons of loyalty programs. What do you see as … are there any cons, for one thing?

R: Well, the buy seven, and you get the discount, otherwise, if you buy three, you're paying the regular price. Well, I may not need seven of an item. In order to get the points, or get the extra Air Miles points, or …

M: So, you're being pushed to buy more than you need?

R: Yes, you're forced to spend more money than you would spend in the store. And to redeem your points is very difficult. Shoppers Drug Mart is a perfect example. I get an email saying, get your $10.00 off, well, you have to spend $50.00 to get your $10.00 off. So, I find it to be … I don't need to spend $50.00 just to get a $10.00 …

R: I was, pretty much, going to say the same thing. You go into a store, you have a rewards card, and you're going in there for specific items. And, all of a sudden, you see these signs, spend this much, and you get this much off. And even when you get that dollar amount off, you're still spending more than what you intended to spend, anyway. I go into Shoppers, I want to spend a maximum of $20.00. Then, they say, spend $50.00, they take off the $10.00, it's still $40.00. I'm still spending $20.00 more than I intend to spend.

R: And it's $50.00 over the tax.

R: Yes, not before taxes.

R: Before taxes.

0:22:07.8

R: We talked about marketing and positioning. When you go to the cashier, there is always something new to catch your eye, gum, or something. That's how they make their money, right? That's how they …

R: And we talked about, too … I know I had an experience and Peta did, too. Air Miles, especially, was a nightmare to collect. We couldn't get through, and you had to do this…

M: So, there is all this hype about getting all these points, and then you try to …?

R: And then you try, and they put you on hold for 20 minutes, and it's almost like they're wanting you to give up and not collect. And we also talked about the hidden, unexplained … oh, there is an expiry date. Petro Canada, you can get a car wash after $7,000 points, and now, it's 12,000 points.

M: They changed the …

R: Yes, there is no real …

R: Obviously, advertisement or communication around terms and condition of your collection of your points, and that's advertising 101. They just tell you all the good stuff, and then …

R: The tiniest little thing.

R: Yes.

M: There is also something that I think Lynda was alluding to, is that, do you think that, ultimately, the cost of these programs gets passed onto … like, everything …?

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R: Yes, you're paying for it. It's not really … there is no bargain here, we're paying. The movie tickets, they have gone up a lot.

M: I remember the days when it was $2.00 Tuesday.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: It's a big deal. It's a big deal.

R: Well, obviously, they do that, because, they know that half of the movies are out for a while, then all the videos come out, and then you can go rent the video, and it's cheaper renting the video.

M: But it's not the same experience.

R: It's not the same experience.

M: But tell me, what motivated any of you to start joining loyalty programs in the first place? I think most of us are old enough to remember when they were a bit of a novelty.

R: Well, I think that that's when most of us joined them. I mean, the Air Miles, I have had forever. When we joined, it could have been 20, 25 years ago, and the novelty was there, because for every 125 points you would get $20.00 in coupons and stuff like that. It's a lot harder to get that now.

R: Yes, they changed the terms and conditions.

0:24:56.2

M: So, the programs aren't as generous now?

R: No.

R: It's less, yes.

R: They're not.

R: It's doesn't entice you to go there because there is a lot of other stores that have the …

M: So, what about for you, Keesha, do you remember why you started joining loyalty programs?

R: I immigrated here five years ago. And back in my country, we don't really have this. So, I mean, for me, it was pure rewards, it's like, what, I can get points? So, when I was out shopping, I was like …

M: Where did you move here from?

R: From Trinidad/Tobago in the Caribbean. And then, I came here, and I went shopping, and it's like, do you want a card? I was like, yes, sure. I did it because of the … well, definitely a novelty here. I never experienced this before.

R: And it's easy.

R: Yes, it is.

R: Because most times, there is no upfront fee, you just …

0:25:43.4

M: You don't pay to be a member, no.

R: No, you just …

R: This thing is really interesting because I interact with newcomers to Canada, and I have for quite a few years now. And I spend a lot of time with this newcomer recently because one of the people who volunteers, he actually works privately to be a financial advisor. And not that I was trying to give him business or anything, but this guy, as a newcomer, was like, why do I need that, what is that? And so, I was trying to say, okay, you're new here, this is a whole different literacy thing. It's going to be so easy for you to get all these things. Like, particularly, at the university, oh, my god …

M: Before you know it, you have got 20 cards in your wallet.

R: No, it's awful, it is really, really, really awful, because these young people are getting these cards, and just like newcomers, even the banks are … it's all free, there is no charge, if you join this bank.

M: But then, that's also getting into credit cards, which is a whole other thing.

R: Sorry.

M: I want to talk specifically about loyalty programs.

R: Well, I was telling him this, that you have to be really careful, because you don't know what's coming. And you're going to have this enticement to spend more, and really, what this guy wants to teach you, not that I'm telling you to go there, there are a lot of other free programs, this is another education you need about living on your budget and not getting into a big ditch.

0:27:17.1

M: Sucked into the consumer culture or whatever you want to call it?

R: Yes, because there are people who never get out of it. They don't know how to handle it.

M: Now, tell me, and I'm asking this to all of you, do most of your favourite stores or companies have loyalty programs? When you think of the stores or businesses that you regularly interact with, is it almost expected that they're going to have a loyalty program, or are there places that you go to all the time that don't?

R: I think for the most part … I mean, I was even in Old Navy, and they don't necessarily have a loyalty program, per se, but you give them your email, and they send you coupons.

M: Right, so that is kind of …

R: Sorry, yes. And I find that everywhere I go, they are asking me for …

R: Unless it's a stand-alone boutique or something like that.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Actually, you asked about the downside, as well. The part that I really, really, really don't like is the privacy issues, because they have got … I can be tracked with these cards, where I went, how much I spent.

M: And we're not necessarily aware of that, either.

0:28:27.8

R: No. And I really … I mean, even physically, it's really weird, but before this happened, just two doors from me, two days ago, I was going out, and I was going to wear bright yellow. And then I thought, hmm, the area I'm going to be going to is a little bit sketchy, later …

M: And you don't want to draw that much attention to yourself?

R: People come up to me, they do, they just come, like I'm the information-giver, when I'm wearing a particular colour. So, I thought, no, no, no, no, I want to be a little bit faded in. And my daughter has been tracked online and had a really bad experience. And she actually, being in danger overseas, she did it to somebody else and found out that she was in danger. So, I know that these things …

M: There are privacy issues? We're going to get into that later on. But getting back to … by the way, would you say, with all the loyalty programs that you belong to, is there always a card that you have, or do some of them just …?

R: I think Peta said that now it's becoming more and more electronic.

R: Yes, it's not necessarily a card.

R: Or, I think, a card is very convenient, where it could fit on your keychain or something.

R: Or not necessarily a key …

M: Or, in some cases, you just give them your phone number, you mean?

R: Yes.

0:29:50.7

R: Or your postal code.

R: Yes. I don't know, on email now, from a new store … I went to a store and I was interested to get informed. Another thing, all these loyalty programs, so I don't want to miss out in case I can buy something that I really want to buy. I'm always worried about what I'm going to lose out on.

M: What you're going to miss out on?

R: What am I going to miss? Because, I figure, if I don't know, then I'm paying extra. So, you really have to be so …

M: You have to be shrewd, in other words, about it?

R: Yes.

R: Going back to the novelty, I used to love Subway, and even HMV, and I think, maybe, even Pizza Pizza, they would give you the paper card, and you got a stamp, and after 10…

M: Oh, you get 10 pizzas, you get one free?

R: Yes, and you get a free sub. And they don't really do that anymore. Now, HMV, yes, you collect points for a little percentage off.

M: But that's not really a loyalty program because it was kind of a transferable … like, it was just a piece of paper that anybody could …

0:31:08.7

R: And then, whoever found it, when you finished all of them, who would …

M: That was kind of a rudimentary version of a loyalty program, I guess, because it was encouraging you to buy and get one free.

R: Yes, because it enticed you to go to that store.

R: Yes, it gets you to spend more, that's what it is all about.

R: Even now, it's not like anybody … when you hand them your loyalty card, they're checking the name on it. They just take it, swipe it, and give it back to you.

R: Yes, even people lend it. I go to Costco and …

R: Yes, I was in line for Shoppers, and the guy didn't have an Optimum card. He goes, hey, you have one? I'm like, yes, he's like, use my points, take my points.

M: By the way, do you find that some loyalty programs are better than others?

R: Yes.

R: I think so.

R: Yes.

M: Which ones do you find …?

R: For me, I prefer to use Sobeys, because you can get it right away. And there is … it's not as instant. Whereas, even (inaudible), you can get it right away, but some of them, like Air Miles, you have to apply for it. So, that's why I like certain ones, like Scene, you go in, it's like, oh, you can get a free movie, and transfer it, okay, good, but other ones, you actually have to apply.

0:32:13.0

R: Everything, yes …

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: Jump through the hoops.

R: I like the instant gratification.

R: I used to like Starbucks. They would send me my free … any type of coffee I want. And it was great. Now, it gets put on your card, so you have to go online to see whether or not you're entitled.

M: And then, you have to print something off or you have to …

R: And then print it and take it with you. They used to send it in the mail whenever I was entitled to my free Cappuccino Venti with all the extra everything. It's almost like that commercial where that person spent $23.00 in toppings to get a free voucher for his Starbucks.

M: Sonya, do you prefer some loyalty program to others? Do you find some are more generous, or more …?

R: Sobeys I like a lot, but for me, I think it's where I go in most, and Sobeys, I do. I was saying to Carlton earlier on that I really like Air Miles because there are a variety of things. The downfall is that you have to go online. For summer I think it's good, if I've got company coming from somewhere, I get some Canada's Wonderland tickets or movie tickets, stuff like that, where that is huge savings. It's easy for me to accumulate 400 Air Miles points, but one ticket to Wonderland is almost $70.00. So, that's huge savings for me. Yes, the two in particular that are regular usage for me is Air Miles and Sobeys.

0:33:55.9

M: Have any of you ever recommended a loyalty program to a friend? Have you ever said to someone, oh, this a really great loyalty program, you should join?

R: No.

R: For Addition Elle. One of my friends, because she didn't know it, and I was like, oh, yes. She was buying her bras there, and I was like, just go and sign up, because we were shopping together and she didn't have one. And then, I did my mother-in-law for Shoppers, also. She just never had the time. I was like, just get the form, sign it up, and send it back and you get your card.

M: And she probably goes there often enough …?

R: Now I regret it, though, because now I don't get her points anymore.

M: Have you ever recommended?

R: The Scene points card. Like, even going to movies with friends, and I'm like …

M: I've recommended that one. I have friends that I go to movies with all the time, the number of times you have gone to a movie, you would have accumulated …

R: Exactly.

0:34:51.8

R: Do you have to have an account at Scotia Bank?

R: No.

R: No.

R: No, you don't.

R: No.

R: I don't have one, I just have the Scene card.

M: But it's funny, people sometimes think that. But I discovered is, you don't need an account with Scotia Bank to have a Scene card, but if you do have an account at Scotia Bank, if you use the Scotia Bank debit card or if you have a Scene credit card, then you also get points on your Scene card that also come from using the debit card. So, it basically means, if you go to Scotia Bank, then you have another avenue to accumulate points.

R: It's like you're doubling up on it.

M: Whereas, if you don't go to Scotia Bank, then you just get points for seeing movies, you don't get them from other transactions.

R: And online, it tells you how to get it?

R: Yes.

0:35:37.4

R: And you get it at the movie theatre?

R: In the mail.

R: Mail.

M: I think you can apply online and you get it.

R: It's just the Scene points card itself.

R: I just find this all really stressful, honestly, because …

M: Remember the olden days where a buck was a buck.

R: It's like, okay, everybody is trying to … well, I won't use bad language, but they're trying to get me. And I have to over-think this in order not to …

M: Fall behind, yes.

R: Yes. And it's not nice, it's not like you can just live a simple existence. You have to have all these layers of complexity.

M: Tell me, when you're deciding where to shop, how important a factor is the loyalty program that the business offers?

R: I prefer the loyalty cards over having the money. My husband doesn't know how to shop for me, 28 years of marriage, doesn't know how to shop for me. So, I always say, give me a gift certificate from Reitman's or give me a gift certificate from there, and LCBO, of course. And so, everybody knows that, and then it's got an email address, and then I get coupons.

0:36:55.8

M: But I guess, what I mean is, let's say you're deciding you need to buy some clothes, or you want to buy a book or something like that. To what extent will you shop in one store, instead of another, all things being equal, because the store has a better loyalty program?

R: Well, if I have the gift certificate from it …

M: Well, that's different, a gift certificate. But I'm talking about, just because a gift certificate is different than a loyalty program, that's the initial …

R: I know, but the gift certificate also allows you to …

R: I think it would be equality because I shop in … like, for groceries I like Metro because of the quality of the stuff that they have.

M: And they probably have a loyalty program, too.

R: They do.

R: I think, too, what Sonya said, the places that you frequent anyway, you touched on this, that you're going to get their card, anyway. But I don't think you would necessarily go out of your way to go to a different place and drive, maybe … how do you weigh, because they have a better plan or program.

M: But I think you're also sort of saying that, for major retailers, you almost expect them all to have a loyalty program of some kind, anyway, is that right?

R: Then again …

0:38:06.4

R: (Inaudible, over-talking) because a couple of times, even when I went in there, do you want this card, no, thanks, it's okay. Do you want this card? No. I just got that question 10 times in the last two weeks, I might as well just take the damn card.

M: Now, one thing I'm curious about, because I want to explore the whole notion of brand loyalty and loyalty programs, because, obviously you call them loyalty programs because you're supposed to be loyal. So, when you think of the companies or stores whose loyalty program you belong to, do you actually feel more loyal to those stores?

R: No.

R: No.

R: Not at all.

R: I specifically shop in stores that I have loyalty cards from.

M: So, you feel affiliated, in a way?

R: Yes, because I know I'm going to get rewards for it. Rather than not get anything for my money, I will shop in it. If I see something, I will buy it from Addition Elle, because I know I'm going to get extra points. I will shop at Sears because I will …

M: You like the Addition Elle?

R: Yes, precisely. And so, I'm not going to go … like, I do shop at Old Navy, but primarily, I shop at Addition Elle, because I know I'm going to get it back, I'm going to get the points, rather than wait for a coupon from Old Navy.

0:39:09.4

R: For me, even going back to your previous question, it really doesn't even make a difference for me. Grocery store-wise, I go to No Frills a lot, they don't have a loyalty program. And I look at flyers, I'm a flyer girl. So, if I have a loyalty … I have my Shoppers card. But for my son, for infant formula, if it's not on sale there, I'm going to Wal-Mart where it's cheaper, it doesn't matter if I'm not going to get points, because if I'm spending $6.00 more, but getting points …

M: But for example, if I'm a member of Air Canada Aeroplan, all things being equal, I'm not going to take a flight with American Airlines if I'm not going to get any points.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Exactly.

R: Yes.

R: I would rather pay the money with Air Canada than go with another airline because you don't get the points.

R: I think, too, for me, I grew up, I wear Levi's and Nike and I got the Petro Canada card, which I really like because you used to get car washes after a while. But now, because I've been going there for so long, and even Shopper's as well, that other places seem sort of … and this might be psychological, it's just not the same. So, maybe, on one level, it's like I'm going to a familiar, comfortable …

0:40:47.9

R: You're loyal.

M: So, whether you admit it to yourself or not, it has increased your loyalty?

R: It's swayed you.

R: Yes, because gas stations, I'll choose Petro Canada, and because, for 10 years, I've been going to Petro Canada, it feels a little weird to go somewhere else.

M: If there was no such thing as a loyalty program, do you think you would have been this loyal to Petro Canada all this time?

R: Not in the beginning. I think the word I'm looking for is conditioning. I'm just conditioned, over the years, to go to Petro Canada. And now it's like … even if I lost my points card or they stopped it, there would probably be something in me that subconsciously ….

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: I used to shop at Shoppers Drug Mart a lot, but I find that PharmaPlus, Rexall, the stuff you get a discount, you can get a discount, unlike Shoppers. And, also, they take Air Miles.

R: They do?

R: Yes, they do, they take Air Miles. I would rather shop …

M: But they don't have a loyalty program?

0:41:56.3

R: No.

R: But it's weird, the affiliation that you start to feel.

R: But you get a lot of discounts.

R: There is a new store …

M: You're a member of a club.

R: Yes. There is a new Rexall that opened close to me, but I'm used to going to Shoppers. So, it's like, just to walk in the door feels very strange. (Inaudible, over-talking) and maybe the price is better, and it's on special this week, but it's just like …

R: Conditioning.

R: There is something that is stopping …

M: But I guess there has always been brand loyalty, long before … people have always been loyal to some stores more than others.

R: It's not that I'm loyal to the store, it's almost like I'm doing something wrong walking in there.

R: Yes.

R: Something psychological is going on.

0:42:42.3

M: But I guess what I'm trying to get at is to what extent the loyalty program reinforces feeling that …?

R: It probably did, it got me to come.

R: I still go into a department store and want to be treated loyally. The loyalty card is secondary, but I want to be treated with good customer service when I go into the store. Yes, the card, but the card, I'm prepared to chuck it in the garbage if they treat me wrongly.

M: Especially because there is always another store that has a card of their own.

R: Because there is another store.

R: Everybody has a card.

R: I'm a terrible customer, being in retail for 15 years. If they don't treat me good, the first thing I say is, where the hell is the manager? And if he doesn't …

M: So, it almost sounds like, for a lot of stores and businesses, it's less that it's an advantage to have a loyalty program, but if you don't have a loyalty program, then you're kind of left behind?

R: Yes, I would say, just like the Body Shop, I never used this stuff before, but as I got older … I go there to buy hand cream now. Now, every year, every birthday, I get $10.00 off. So, I'll always go there, and it will feel weird … or I went to initially … because when I first went there, they introduced this card and it's kind of like they got me hooked in, it's like a cult. And I won't go somewhere else to buy …

0:44:23.5

R: But you're also treated well at that store.

R: Yes.

R: But even if I …

M: I guess he's saying that he wouldn't have gone out of his way to go back …

R: Or I'd go to the one in Scarborough, as opposed to the one in Yorkdale or the one …

M: Although, I think the loyalty program, it doesn't matter what store.

R: Yes.

R: You know what really worries me about all of this stuff, because getting older, aging, it's like, okay, if I'm just dealing with money, it's simpler. When I have got all this stuff, and all these layers of complexity, and if I'm not able to keep up, it's like I don't know if I'll be able to leave the house.

M: Well, it's interesting, also, to think of the liability. Can you imagine how many points there are in the world that people haven't claimed?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

M: Like, there is a gigantic …?

0:45:17.1

R: Yes, like, you shop at Sobeys regularly, but you never got the card.

M: But do you think that any of the loyalty programs you belong to have actually made you buy more from the company over time than you otherwise would have?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes, definitely.

R: Definitely.

R: For sure.

R: This is something I had to fight. I used to, and we're talking about it …

M: It's subconscious in some cases.

R: Like, even from PC, they used to send me this thing, if you spend $150.00, you'll get X-many more points. So, I said, okay, I'm going to save it, within the period of time, and if there is a holiday coming up, and I can do all this extra shopping, and I try to plan it, or whatever. Then, I would buy things more. Then, what did I do?

M: Well, I know, for sure, with the Body Shop, every so often they have some deal where if you spend … you'll get three products for $25.00. I always seem to end up having to buy a whole bunch of soaps in order to get over the threshold to get the reward.

0:46:17.6

R: Well, Metro does that, where you spend $50.00 and get five extra Air Miles.

R: (Inaudible, voice too low) I'm not going to overspend.

R: That's the thing, to try and stay focused.

R: It takes a while to develop that.

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: Do you sometimes buy more from a store than you otherwise would have?

R: Yes, especially if there is … whether it's a quantity or a monetary value they put on the reward level, you go in, okay, you have to buy three of a product to get it for this price. I picked up two already. Okay, fine, I'll pick up the third. Because sometimes if you don't pick up the third, you end up spending more, because the price is more if you just pay for the two. Okay, you get the three, but you don't need the three, but you rationalize it. You know what …

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: Have you bought more from a company over time than you otherwise would have because they had a loyalty program?

R: Of course.

R: Yes.

0:47:23.8

R: Yes.

R: Of course.

R: But I've been able to catch myself lately with that. Oh, yes, there was three for ten, or, if you buy it the other way, it's more expensive. Okay, you know what, let's stay focused, what did you come here to get?

R: Just don't buy anything else.

R: Even though they're offering these extra points, when are you coming back here to use those points again?

M: And will you ever use those points?

R: Exactly. So, sometimes, I will take the time to do that. I mean, if it's a crashing, smashing down deal, okay, fine. If it's like just, okay …

R: Save a little …

R: Yes, forget it.

R: If it's a deal, I'll take it, because later on, I'm going to end up needing it. If I'm not using it, I'm not going to buy it, but I know, later on, it will save me the money because I'm going to end up buying it in the first place.

M: Now, have any of you felt less loyal to a company because you were dissatisfied with the loyalty program? Not that you were dissatisfied with the service, but there was something about the loyalty program that irritated you or you found frustrating?

0:48:24.1

R: Well, my Shoppers Drug Mart, they're always sending me your 'get your $10.00 off', but you have to spend $50.00 that one time. You might not spend $50.00 at one time. I find that … and you have to go online to apply to get that discount in order to …

M: So, does that give a bad taste in your mouth?

R: It does, it's more work for me, just so that I can get $10.00 off.

R: I actually prefer places that have no plans, nothing, because I feel they don't have some disguised program to hook me. So, there are businesses who don't do anything.

M: Well, especially smaller ones, obviously.

R: Well, but even some bigger ones, like Honest Ed's. They have been in business for a long time.

M: But it's not a chain, it's a stand-alone.

R: Yes, a stand-alone. I appreciated that the price is the price. Maybe they have got a special this week, or whatever, but there is no extra complicated thing on this day and not that day.

M: But, I guess, what I'm trying to get at is whether anyone has ever been … let's say, you're all members of lots of loyalty programs. Have you ever had the experience where, I don't know, maybe they changed the rules or maybe you tried to redeem them and found it was really difficult, and you basically became dissatisfied with the loyalty program, and that caused you to become dissatisfied with the store as a whole because you had a bad experience with the loyalty program?

0:49:53.5

R: Yes.

R: I haven't experienced that.

R: I haven't.

R: I experienced … the only thing I can think of is Air Miles, but they're not a store, because if they were a store, I would never go back there again.

M: Because it's so difficult to redeem?

R: Yes, same story, they put you on hold for 25 minutes.

R: We all agree with that one.

R: They give you the run-around because they want you to give up, or they're completely incompetent, one of the two.

M: But they're not a store, they're a program. What kinds of benefits do you get through membership in your loyalty program? What are the kinds of rewards or incentives? What do you get? I mean, obviously, we mentioned money in some cases.

R: Well, Metro, they send me a quarterly statement, telling me how many points I have. And they send you coupons.

M: So, you get promotions?

0:50:54.3

R: Promotions for either gas or …

M: Do you get those as emails?

R: Well, they still send it in the mail. I still get the quarterly letter, where it gives me the breakdown and what's available through … whatever points I have, then what I can buy and stuff. I've got a free product from them.

M: You have gotten free product?

R: Yes.

M: What other benefits, free movies, I guess?

R: Yes.

R: Yes, free movies.

R: I'm satisfied with that.

R: I like the free car wash from Petro Canada. Every two or three months, I was able to get a free car wash, which I like.

R: The Air Miles, also, the Aeroplan, my husband is pretty sophisticated with that. So, we have taken trips. He really gets into the minutia on that stuff. It's not like we're taking this extra, but we may not have been able to …

M: Do any of the programs you participate in recognize you in a manner other than giving you awards or saving you money? Are there any other perks? I guess perks is the word I'm looking for. Are there any perks you get from being in a loyalty program?

0:52:16.9

R: (Inaudible, voice too low) cheap ticket because I do travel a lot. And every week, I get an email saying, this is on sale (inaudible, over-talking).

R: What's this one?

R: Cheap ticket.

R: Cheap ticket.ca, or something?

M: So, you get promotions from them?

R: Yes.

M: Are there any other perks that you get from being …?

R: Other than hounded by them to buy more or … the 1-800 numbers, they call you all the time and say, you can get 2,800 points if you …

M: I guess an example would be, like Lynda, you were with Aeroplan, if you accumulate more than a certain number of Aeroplan Miles a year, you become an elite member and you get access to the lounge, those kinds of … some loyalty programs, if you spend more than a certain amount …

R: That's right, you get into their social circle.

R: Yes, but then who is all that … so, sophisticated and time-managed and they make it in enough time to use it. But that is nice, that is nice.

0:53:21.1

M: But have any of your ever gotten, as a result of being a member of a loyalty program, special access to the store or to particular items? Do you ever get told, because you're a member of a particular program, you get advanced notice of the sale?

R: Yes, come on a particular day and time, yes.

R: Well, I guess …

R: Is it the Brick or Leon's, they sometimes have this VIP event where it's only people, I guess, that are a part of the program. The sale is only accessible to them for certain times.

M: But are you a member of that program, or this is just something that you have heard of?

R: No, it's another program.

R: There is another one, I guess. My husband … for Raptor's tickets. So, there are all these events that you get invited to where there is free food and it's kind of …

R: What is that?

R: Well, you have to subscribe to the whole season as a season ticket-holder.

M: If you're a season ticket-holder who spent a lot of money … yes, but that would be a bit different from a loyalty program in a store. But I guess that type … what about even a special phone number? Are any of you members of a loyalty program where, by virtue of being a member of that program, you can get a special phone number that gets you through to them faster, or …?

0:54:42.3

R: That would be nice.

M: Or do you ever get a special thank-you card from the company, from employees, or get recognition when you're …?

R: Yes.

R: I get that at Addition Elle.

R: A casino does that.

R: A casino?

R: If you spend a lot.

R: Going to a casino?

R: Well, you get a card, it's a Winner's Circle card, and every casino has their own. You get free valet and you get free meals.

R: That's for a casino, gambling?

R: Yes.

R: But when you say 'the perks', the perks are just the reward on the card. I can't see them doing anything more.

R: Yes.

0:55:27.7

M: I'm just imagining, I don't know if this is the case. But I mean, I suppose, hypothetically, you could have a store where, okay, if there is a long line-up, anyone who is an Optimum member, here, you can come into this express line or something.

R: It's like Canada's Wonderland. Season pass holder, you have special parking specifically for the season pass holder.

M: But that's being a season pass holder, as opposed to being just a loyalty member.

R: American Express, that's a credit card, I know you can get concert tickets faster. I like to get on that. But that might be what you're saying, a perk, because …

M: Keesha Lee, you were saying, that with a …

R: Yes, with Addition Elle, when Michael's Studio was launching their new line with Addition Elle, I got an email that says, come in for wine and cheese just for being a member.

R: I have to tell you, all of those things …

M: That sounds like a great program.

R: I would go drink all the wine.

R: All of those perk things really annoy me when I see them. It really makes me angry because every company, when I see them, because I figure it's all built into the price that they're … it's inflated.

0:56:39.8

M: But if you don't get the perk, then you get the …

R: No, but it makes me really angry about the company because …

R: There is no such thing as a free lunch, there is always a cost.

R: Exactly.

R: The money has to come from somewhere.

R: Exactly, and we're paying for it, but it's hidden.

R: But if you don't have the card, you're paying more.

R: Yes, and probably, the companies have got that margin that are not getting claimed 90% and they're pocketing that.

R: Well, of course they are. That's the point.

R: And they probably don't declare taxes or anything on them.

R: OG Lotteries, if you don't claim your million dollar ticket by a certain year, you lose that million dollars, it goes into their …

R: Exactly, and they probably don't pay taxes or anything.

M: Now, have any of you ever been asked for your opinion on how to improve a company's loyalty program?

0:57:30.2

R: Loyalty program, no.

R: They have surveys.

R: Surveys, but never that.

M: But not specifically about the program?

R: Online surveys seem to be popular, I know, with McDonalds and Subway.

M: But it is specifically about the loyalty program?

R: No.

R: No.

R: No, it's other stuff.

R: That's another section.

R: It's about the store and customer service.

R: Yes, how can we improve the store.

M: Now, are some loyalty programs better than others in terms of the value they offer? Do you find some are more generous and you get better …?

0:57:52.9

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Sure.

R: No two are probably exactly the same.

R: No.

M: But just off the top of your head, what would be an example of a generous loyalty program, compared to one where you really don't get a lot for your …

R: Well, Addition Elle, it's one of my favourite stores. They actually send you gift certificates, so I don't even have to go and redeem my points. When I spend over $100.00, I get a $5.00 gift certificate in the mail. And if I don't, and especially if I go in the store and I use it, if I spend

$100.00, I get a $50.00 start point to be used at a future date. So, it's usually like a two week window.

M: So, if you really shop there a lot, you can really get a lot of …?

R: Yes.

R: What is this store called?

R: Addition Elle.

0:58:38.4

R: Oh, that's for ladies clothes.

M: It's a women's clothing store, yes.

R: I get points all the time so I can change my phone if I want to.

R: And sometimes, it's to your detriment to buy into the loyalty programs. For example, I think, I don't know if it would come into that, Rogers wanted us to have even more service with them, for a better price.

M: For a bundle?

R: Yes, and my husband said, no way.

M: But that's a different issue. Do some loyalty programs make it easier than others to actually get the rewards?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Totally.

R: Yes.

R: Air Miles is at the bottom of the rest.

0:59:29.4

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: But you know what, that's calling them, right? You're talking about physically … but online, they're pretty good. Online, they'll say, okay, give us a two to three week window. Honestly, I've never waited more than a week.

M: And then, do they mail to you?

R: They mail it to you.

R: No, I tried online, but they're like, you need this PIN number. I called for the PIN number, and it didn't exist, and then I had to …

R: No, you make the PIN number. They give you a card, and then you sign up online, you have to create a PIN number.

M: But getting back to … Sylvana, you were saying, are some easier than others, in terms of actually getting the rewards?

R: Yes, they are, sure.

R: Even the banking, I mean, TD Bank has a great … where I can go and do my banking in there, and then, when my husband deposits money into my account, it's very easy. Just click, put in my password, and money is in my account, I don't have to worry about it. Some companies and organizations do make it easier.

R: It's like the Scene thing, which I'm not a part of. They were saying you just walk up, and then give you a free movie.

1:00:48.5

R: For me, I find it's a lot more (inaudible, over-talking).

R: Even for that, they'll just tell you, oh, you get a free DVD.

R: Some of them make it so difficult, that you don't … like with the Air Miles that you could redeem for … the same thing, comparing the exact same thing. PC points on the PC card, and Air Miles to redeem on a supermarket. Well, I have to arrange to have …

M: The transfer?

R: To have the paper in advance, whatever. And for PC points, every time I'm at the checkout, do you want to know how many you have got? You can redeem them. So, they make it convenient. Others, they …

M: Others, you have to go through a lot of hoops to get at them?

R: Yes.

R: Well, most of the places that you do have these convenient cards based on points, when your bill of sale comes … for example, when Zellers was …

R: HPC …

R: Right, HPC, when they finished your point of sale, at the bottom of the bill, it said …

R: Yes, it says how many points you have to use.

M: But then, how many times do you get to redeem them?

1:01:58.6

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

R: Well, then you have to go get the flyer, or go online.

R: And you have to go to the counter in the store.

R: Go to the HPC.

R: It's a number of whatever, and who has got the time? Somebody is waiting, you have got this to do, that to do, it adds more complexity.

R: But it also gives you choices. Like, I was able to transfer all of my Zellers points to my Air Miles. So, whenever I shopped at Zellers, I was able to transfer the points into Air Miles. Now, it doesn't exist anymore, but …

R: But, look, we're all literate, we're all able to walk here, there are people who don't have all these abilities, and they're at a big disadvantage.

R: I think Petro points are pretty easy because they're there. And if you want your car washed or something as you're paying for it, they just check your card, and they go, okay, you have enough, or you don't. And then, if you want one, it's like that. There is no, fill this out, or sign this, or mail this.

M: Now, tell me, when you signed up for any of your loyalty programs, what was the form like? What sort of information did you have to provide, anyone remember?

R: Address.

1:03:16.6

R: Name, address.

R: Most of the time, it's just postal code.

M: Just name and address?

R: Yes.

R: And then, when they send you the paper, oh, my god, can you understand when you read all the conditions?

R: Well, yes, (inaudible, group over-talking).

R: They fill it out for you, if you get those little kiosks and you walk in.

R: Yes, but I don't know. Sometimes, when I read it … because I do this now, whenever I enter anything, I want to read the conditions. And they say you agree that we can share this, and share that. And sometimes, when I can get free stuff, it's like, no, because I'm agreeing … and I have to tell you, unless I read all that little small print, I don't know what I've agreed to. And I'm a generally good, literate person.

M: But getting back to … was it just personal information, or when you were filling out the form, did they ever offer a question?

R: There are certain things. Like, if they were to ask you for your SIN number or birth date, that's confidential information. No one is allowed to ask you for that. So, whenever they start with

that, I say, forget it, it's not worth it. I won't give out that. And phone number, it's always a cell number that I give or a work number that I give.

1:04:34.5

R: Or an email address.

R: That's when you're sophisticated enough to know what could be dangerous to give. Sometimes … even to come here today, I was asked … was I asked for this? I don't remember, were we asked for our birthday?

R: To this one?

R: They did ask your age.

R: And I thought, yes, I know, so … actually, I gave it, because it's verifying my age. But then, I thought, hmm, I'm giving … this is extra information here. I understand you want to have it verified, your range, I got it. But I still thought it's getting a little borderline here.

M: But getting back to … what about purchase preference information? For example, did they ever ask you what categories of goods or services are you interested in, or …?

R: Are you kidding? They don't have to ask, they know, they're tracking me. I know I'm being tracked here, because online, I get all these ads coming into stuff, hello.

R: I think they only … I don't recall ever being asked that one.

R: No one directly asks, but they track me, thank you.

R: It's when you go to the websites, there is something on the website. It's one of those surveys that pop up, is when those questions are …

1:05:52.9

M: It'll be after the survey, but not just to sign up for the program?

R: No, it's pretty basic.

M: What about, do you have the option to opt out of future solicitations?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Do you want them to send you documentation, do you want them to email you …

R: There is a box.

M: Check box?

R: Yes.

R: I just finished reading a book that's on a bestseller list, Fast and Slow Thinking. It says you have got those ticks, to tick in or to opt out, psychologically, to tick. So, it depends on the wording. So, unless you're sophisticated to understand and to take those efforts …

M: Are you actually opting in or opting out?

R: Do you understand what you're choosing?

1:06:36.5

M: But what I'm just curious about is whether … so, there were options, things you could check off? Brad, do you remember that with any loyalty programs?

R: Just information, I don't remember them specifically saying …

M: But did you have to check off whether you wanted information?

R: Soaps or creams or car washes or …

M: No, but I meant, more like, where you might check something off to opt out or opt into to whether you wanted …

R: Oh, whether you would like to be sent or emailed certain things?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: And then, sometimes, you have the option, if you want mail, or just online, or even if you already are getting it online, if you don't want to get it online …

R: Yes.

M: So, that rings a bell that there is …?

1:07:15.8

R: But a lot of times, I find it phrased … it's give us your email address, it's not, you have the choice to give us your email.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: They don't make it clear that it's optional.

R: I would say, yes, again, I'm not giving you my email address, because I don't want anything coming. But you're right, some people might think, well, that's part of the deal to sign up.

M: They don't make it clear that it's not compulsory?

R: They don't necessarily go, 'these are your options'. They go, give me this, this, this.

M: What were you saying, Carlton?

R: I guess because (inaudible, voice too low) deal online it's faster, it's easier, than (inaudible, over-talking).

M: So, it's convenient?

R: Yes, it's more convenient, then everybody is doing everything online now.

R: I've been actually getting a number of emails that were not valid. And I contacted companies, banking, or what have you, and I said, do you know that this is … and it's actually not coming from them, because it's looking like … so, there is a lot of … we're sharing and giving and we don't know what we're doing. And sometimes there is a … there is a lot of danger.

1:08:31.9

R: There is a lot of junk.

M: Do any of you remember if, when you signed up with a loyalty program, whether there was a privacy policy attached?

R: Probably, but I didn't see it.

R: We just assume.

R: Yes.

R: Sometimes they do say, we won't give your information to unwanted solicitors.

R: They lie, the Brick sold a lot of my information. I know it's the Brick because that's the only one that I did. I don't believe them when they say that. The Brick sold my information.

R: It's because of the marketing, everything is about marketing.

M: I know Lynda has addressed this a bit already, but did any of the rest of you have any concerns about privacy when you first signed up for a loyalty program. Was there something that crossed your mind?

R: No, because I didn't give them personal information. I didn't give my SIN, I didn't give my date of birth, they just asked my age, I was like, okay. All they have, really, is my mailing address, and I could just chuck whatever I didn't want.

1:09:28.6

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes, it's usually just your mailing address.

R: Even Payless just asks me for postal code. Can I have your postal code?

R: It depends on how detailed they want, your information. If I see that they're asking for information where I don't think that they should be asking me for, then …

M: But could there still be privacy … even if all they know is your name and email address or whatever, could there still be privacy concerns?

R: Yes.

R: I guess your email could be given out. The amount of junk mail I get …

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: I get a lot.

M: Well, for example, how do you think that a company can use the information that you provide when you sign up? When you join a loyalty program, and you give them, let's say, your name

and address, how can that company use that information? I'm not saying in a bad way, necessarily, but what are the …?

1:10:31.6

R: Well, it tells them how many customers came into the store, for one thing. And then, they could also track point of sale of how much money … maybe not the individual person, but that account number that …

M: But for you, Sylvana, if you're a member, if you join a loyalty program, maybe I'll have your name attached to …

R: Yes, and every time they scan my card, they know that I have spent … I've gone into the store four times that week and this is what I bought.

R: I'm very concerned, as well, about using the criminal activity, for the reason that I get into a lot of databases. I work for elections from all levels. And with the birth date, there is … now, a lot of people make up their pass code. So, you know, you have your plan, you have your email, plus a pass code. And they want to remember, so they pick something they'll remember. And so, if you use that information and you just kind of play around with it, you might gain a lot of access to people's bank codes and everything, if you want to play around with it.

R: But that's the same with everything, your debit card, your credit card.

M: That's not specifically about a loyalty program.

R: Yes, somebody steals your wallet, and looks at the year you were born, and then takes your debit card.

R: Yes, you're right, exactly.

1:12:00.6

M: What about your purchase activity profile with the loyalty program?

R: Well, like you were saying, if they do have your age, and they find that they have 80% of their customers are over 40, and 20% are under 30, maybe they'll gear their product towards that focused group.

R: Also, the time of day when they're getting the most shopping done. If they're trying to determine when they're going to put out more … if they ever do put cashiers out, or whatever, that between 2:00 and 3:00, they're going to be busier.

M: But what about the issue that, when you join a loyalty program … let's say you're a member of Optimum at Shoppers Drug Mart. It means that there is a record of everything you bought at the drug store.

R: Provided you're using your card.

M: Provided you're using your card. So, what do they do with that information?

R: Market research, probably.

R: And inventory.

M: Well, inventory they know just … whether you're a member of the program or not, they know that stuff is being sold, but the fact that it's linked to you, do you have any ideas?

R: I think, basically, it's all about the product that you buy, and to position the product.

R: I know what some of the stuff could be done … for example, with the Shopper's card, if you're buying stuff for medications or over-the-counter stuff, somebody can guess if you have illnesses that could be used against you, because this can be very sensitive information.

1:13:46.2

M: Depending on what you're buying.

R: Yes. Like, already, I'm being targeted. I just turned 60, it's like, oh, my god, I've reached another demographic, and it's like I'm being asked … I'm being slotted and thought about in a certain term. Well, if they're going to find out that I use, let's say, things to test my sugar, hello, you know I have diabetes. I'm not diabetic, but somebody knows I am, and then, what are you going

to do with this information? Are you going to blackmail the insurance company, or where I work? I don't know.

R: Well, I mean, sometimes, as far as the information that they probably gathered from their consumers and whatnot, sometimes, when I walk into Shopper's, I feel like everything I need is on sale. I'm like, oh, my gosh, you guys knew what I was thinking.

R: I know.

M: But it's not customized to you, personally.

R: No, I know, but I feel like there are general things that everybody buys.

R: You're getting paranoid.

M: And there any rules about what limits there are on how companies can use this information, because they know what you're buying? They know what you're buying, are there any…?

1:15:00.1

R: They say that when you join the loyalty club, would you allow us to share information with others? And the more stuff you check off, the more your personal data is going to be out there, the least amount of stuff you put in. It's almost like Facebook. I mean, if you have got a

Facebook account and you don't put your profile, and you don't put your picture, then someone doesn't have all that information on you. But if you do that, then you're …

M: For example, do you find that, after enrolling in a loyalty program, do you get more ads and promotions than before?

R: Yes.

R: Well, especially if you have given your email address.

R: Yes, yes, yes, yes, and double yes.

R: I don't think there is anything nefarious about them tracking your …

R: I'm not saying it is, but it could be, it's a potential. If somebody wants to do that … my son is in … actually, his area is risk, high-level banking. And also, my daughter and my son both, their information has been abused.

M: So, identity theft and that sort of thing?

R: The banking whatever … mistakes have happened. So, these plans, too, who knows who could do what.

1:16:32.6

M: But I guess what I'm curious about is … so, you get more promotions and ads when you join a loyalty program. Are those ads ever useful to you? Do you ever find out about things that you might not have otherwise bought, or maybe it's something that you wanted, and …?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Like in your case, at Addition Elle, I deal with Reitman's. And if I spend $200.00, I get a coupon, once a year, for $25.00 and I have to spend it by a certain date, so that's an incentive. So, you do get the incentives.

R: Your question about more information that you get, in my case, because I'm a frugal shopper, I go onto all these flyers, and I read two newspapers every day. So, I do not find that, because these companies, giving me information … I stay away from that because I'm not getting more information. Like HPC, for example, they tell whatever. But if I go onto their site, and I do … I can find out the exact same information.

M: But do you think that what might happen is, let's say, with someone like HPC, if you go there regularly, and let's say you're always buying kitchen ware, for instance, they might start emailing you more promotions about sales on kitchen ware, but they won't bother sending you promotions about sales on clothes. Depending on what you're buying, it may influence what …

1:18:00.2

R: So, then, you don't get to know about something that you don't fit the demographics?

M: Well, they may tailor the information based on your profile, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, because rather than getting 20 emails a day, you're only getting the ones about the products that you buy a lot of.

R: That's true.

R: Interesting.

R: You don't get informed. Like I said, I'm getting slotted now. No, I don't take your diet this, no, I don't wear the panty thing.

M: Do you ever weigh … like, obviously, when you join a loyalty program, there are discounts, there are rewards. I mean, there are benefits. But you are also going to get more solicitations and more emails. There is that, as well, and the possibility that your personal information is going to be used for other purposes, marketing, etcetera. Do you ever weigh those as pros and cons,

like, should I join this loyalty program or not, because if I join, sure, I'll get some rewards, but at the same time, I'm going to get more junk. Is it ever … do you ever even think about that?

R: I do now.

R: I do now.

R: I think it depends on the frequency of the places that you go. If it's worth it for you to get those extra incentives for the places that you go to a lot, and if that means you get five extra emails, I see that it's not much of a problem, for me, personally.

1:19:25.8

R: You know what makes a difference for me, and is probably not the same with women, but I hate a thick wallet. So, if it's a store I don't go to a lot, and they want me to take a card …

R: It's like one more.

R: I'm like, yeah, I can't keep stuffing plastic in my wallet.

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: You don't want to carry around the card.

R: I see it as a pro.

R: For me, it needs to be something small and thin or give me a card that …

M: Or even one where you don't need an actual card, it's just a number that's stored in the system?

R: Yes, something, perfect. But if I have got to carry around this card and present it every time I shop, I'm like, I've got enough cards, and I don't really go to this store a lot.

R: If I go to a store once, I'm in the area, I go to the store, and they say, do you want our loyalty card? I kind of weigh the pros and cons, how many times am I going to shop here?

R: Yes.

1:20:29.0

R: Exactly.

R: And if I know that I'm not going to come back for another six months, it's not worth me giving out … even if it's minimal information to have the card, it's not worth it. Then, there are the ones you go regularly.

R: But then, sometimes, in that same situation, where you're talking about a store that you're not going to frequent as much again, but that one day if you sign up and get this loyalty card, you're going to get all these perks for that one time.

M: Because sometimes you get a big perk for signing up.

R: Yes.

R: I've done it.

R: Yes.

R: And, in fact, what happens …

R: And then you cut up the card.

R: And I've never gone there again.

R: Yes.

R: For myself, I've gotten more than, really, I need, and I forget that I have … and I wouldn't know even if it's missing. And if somebody else has that card, I wouldn't even know.

1:21:21.5

M: So, you're probably nervous with some loyalty programs, you don't even remember that you're a member?

R: Yes, exactly.

R: To go back, that's probably what happened with my Air Miles, because 15 years ago, I created a PIN number, and then, 10 days later, I went to redeem them. What's your PIN number? I have no idea.

M: Are there some kinds of purchases that are more private than others?

R: Sure.

M: Are there some things you buy where you …?

R: Maybe Shoppers Drug Mart.

R: Yes, medication, but other than that …

R: Or creams or ointments.

M: Like personal affairs?

R: Yes, I could care less if somebody knows where I buy my bras.

R: Exactly.

1:22:05.3

R: You have to cash it up anyway.

R: Someone is going to see it, yes.

R: You're going to buy it.

R: As long as I'm not hounded on the phone. If they want to send me emails, then I have the option of opening it up or not.

M: But getting back to some purchases are more private than others, for example, maybe you don't care if the world knows how much gas you buy for your car, but do you want the world to know how much alcohol you buy, or how many cigarettes you buy?

R: Well, if you go to Shoppers Drug Mart, they have a condom section, and they have other things that are more personal.

R: I think there are things that are more personal.

R: Sometimes I help people with their purchases. I help a lot of people. And somebody has got some psychological … or they're autistic or whatever, and they can't … some people have physical problems and they're not able to do things for themselves. So, somebody knows that this person is … okay, maybe, somebody is always buying convenient products. But maybe somebody is not able to do for themselves, and somebody gets to know, for whatever …

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: But I guess what I was wondering about, is when it comes to loyalty programs, let's say, hypothetically, can you imagine that someone might think, well, I'm not so concerned about privacy issues if I join a loyalty program at, let's say, Petro Canada. But maybe I don't want to join a loyalty program at Shoppers Drug Mart because then there is a whole database of everything that I buy at the drug store. Depending on the nature of the business, there may be more …

1:23:47.0

R: Right, that's medical, private.

M: I'm wondering if that's ever crossed anyone's … I think actual prescriptions are separate, those are always …

R: Yes, but over the counter, it's all there, hello.

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: Use your discretion, right.

M: But I'm just curious whether any of you have ever not joined a loyalty program because of …?

R: Not really.

R: No.

R: No.

R: If I don't want to use my loyalty card on this purchase, I have the option, I just don't use it. I like to go to LCBO on a regular basis, and if I don't want it to show up on my Air Miles, and they say, do you have your Air Miles, I say, no, I don't have it with me today.

1:24:31.5

M: Because, I suppose, just to play Devil's Advocate, if you do use your Air Miles all the time at the LCBO, somewhere, in the database, someone knows, oh, Sylvana so-and-so is out of booze. Some people might …

R: They actually let you know that, though, in particular from the LCBO. You get the update.

M: Imagine if you spend over $1,000 on booze and you start getting emails from the Addiction Research …

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: She works at a school, right, so let's say she applies to work at another school, and they're like, well, let's check her LCBO Air Miles purchases.

R: I fill in my declaration every year.

M: No, but hypothetically, that's where it could …

R: Yes, because I feel that way, too, about Facebook. If I ever started to apply for another job to work at schools, I would take it off my Facebook, because there are pictures of me with a drink in my hand. I don't want potential employers to look.

M: Has anyone ever tried to access the information a company has stored about you, as a result of being part of a loyalty program?

R: That's an interesting one.

1:25:43.4

M: Because if you're a member of any loyalty program, they obviously have some kind of database about you.

R: A profile.

M: Can you access that, is it even possible?

R: That's interesting.

R: I know at Addition Elle, you can. You create a profile, and you go in and, especially when you order something, before you order, I sign in, and then I see my little profile. But it just has my mailing address, my name, and that's it.

R: Do you know the danger of all these things? I'll tell you. For example, my daughter was visiting me in the summer, she used Facebook, she used LinkedIn, and she didn't log out. Well, now, when I do stuff on my computer, you know what I'm getting now? Even when I go to some other company sites … I've never gone into Facebook. But it is showing me stuff, linking to her, with her name, and then people can see.

M: So, people leave these footprints all over the place without realizing it?

R: Well, yes. Now, fortunately, she left it in my home.

M: But she could have been in an internet cafe and done that.

R: Well, in fact, my daughter was seriously, criminally harassed, and I don't know whether somebody potentially did that on purpose, or somebody did something, because she, innocently, using …

1:27:08.0

M: But getting back to this issue of … now, Keesha, you were saying that they have got a profile, but what about … they probably have a list of everything you have bought from them, since you became a member, right?

R: Well, I can see it myself. I go and I see orders, because you (inaudible, over-talking).

R: Previous …

M: You have got your whole history?

R: I can see what I ordered, especially Old Navy, also. You can see all of your purchases.

M: Now, they may also have you categorized in some way as being a …

R: Shopaholic.

M: Whatever.

R: We've got an alcoholic, a shopaholic.

R: I'm not that bad.

R: I'm a shopaholic.

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

M: I'm sure, any company, if you're a member of their loyalty program, they probably have ways to segment their members or whatever. And they probably have some kind of profile. You're probably profiled in some way or whatever. But shouldn't you have access to whatever information they have collected from you and about you?

1:28:04.4

R: Absolutely.

R: You should be able to destroy it, too.

M: Well, yes, if you leave the program, or whatever.

R: No, well, you should be able to …

R: I think, by law, you should … isn't it, once you're over 18, by law, you can look at your school records, you can look at your … isn't that a right?

M: Yes, but I don't know if that applies here, necessarily.

R: Air Miles, as long as you have got your PIN number that they have given you, and you put in your account number, you can see how many miles you have accumulated. It's the same thing with your Shoppers, your …

M: But do you think what you see is what they see, or do you think, when somebody at Air Miles looked up Sylvana, they probably see a lot more?

R: Well, that's only if you have provided them with all of that. I mean, if all you have provided them with is your name and your email address, then that's all that should come up on the thing.

R: They have got a track of every single thing you have purchased, not just your name and your whatever that you gave.

1:29:21.5

R: Well, of course your purchases are there.

R: But the question is, should you be able to view that, and I think that …

M: And how they have categorized you based on that, as well, because they may have a profile.

R: Unless they might have something in the fine print that you're not aware of, or they might flat out say … if I went to Shoppers Drug Mart, and I say, give me a list of everything that I bought, they might have it, but they might say to me, I don't know what you're talking about. How can I prove, how do I know for sure?

M: If you had a problem with a loyalty program, who would you contact? Has anyone ever had a problem where you …? Is there typically a 1-800 number, is there a …?

R: There is, usually.

R: On the back of the card, yes, they usually put a number to call.

R: Not all of them.

M: Has anyone ever had an experience with a provider de-valuing your points?

R: Yes.

M: Like, where they changed the levels, or where they …?

1:30:18.3

R: Yes, yes.

R: Or they raise it without you … like you get a car wash at 7,000, and now, it's 10,000. So, I go in with my 8,000 and go, give me a car wash, and they're like, oh, no, you need 10,000 now.

M: So, that happened to you?

R: Yes, it happens.

M: And Lynda, you said that that's happened?

R: Yes, that happened with Air Miles, with Metro. You get so many points, you can get so much food, and then they changed it. My husband is always saying, well, no, no, no, we don't want to do that because the points now are less, so we want to do something else with it. But you have to be a very sophisticated buyer to do this, with language or literacy.

M: Has anyone else had the experience of points being de-valued, or where they have raised the threshold? I know with a lot of airline things …

R: The Aeroplan.

M: Yes, they raised some of the thresholds. You used to be able to get a trip for 60,000, and now you need 70,000, that type of thing.

R: And all the hoops you have to jump, on this day, and not that day, and on this day.

R: What is the duration of time for that?

1:31:20.7

M: The expiry, too.

R: Yes.

R: Yes, expiry, I think is … because with Air Miles, I had no idea there even was an expiry date.

R: Yes, I once lost a credit card in the past because of that.

R: Points expire, or what you redeem expires?

R: Points.

R: Well, I don't know for sure, but some people have told me that Air Miles, they're going to start having an expiry date.

R: And then, what happens when you die?

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: I had some points that they didn't redeem me for, and I didn't realize, and I redeemed them and just didn't get a chance to use them. I think it was UPass or something. I looked and then I realized, oh, they're expired.

R: You know what I just thought of …

M: But you had redeemed it already? But what about actual points expiring?

1:31:58.2

R: No, I've never …

R: You know what I just thought of something that would be nice, if the loyalty programs said, if you do not claim your points in X-many years, who can we donate this to, what charity?

R: (Inaudible, over-talking) great idea.

R: What? Give away points when you die?

R: Canadian Tire, when they used to give out cash coupons …

R: The Canadian Tire money, they had a donation box, so you could drop it into the box.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Actually, my daughter's school …

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: But with Aeroplan, for example, some people can have 1,000,000 Aeroplan Miles that they have accumulated. That could be worth thousands of dollars worth of travel. So, you could leave that.

R: Yes, we have had some major trips.

1:32:52.4

R: Really?

R: Like, my husband is …

M: You travel a lot for work, you accumulate a lot of …

R: Yes. Also, if you're in your own business, and you have to buy a lot of equipment on your card and you develop points that are going to your Aeroplan or your whatever, it's like, yes.

M: Now, has anyone tried to transfer your points to somebody else? Have you ever …?

R: Never tried.

R: No.

R: Never had the option.

R: Why would I want to do that?

M: Well, I think, probably, the only situation where you might want to do that would be … let's say that your husband or a friend of yours had just less than the amount they needed to get a free trip with Aeroplan, and you wanted to transfer just enough so that they would get that. I guess that would be one situation.

R: Yes.

R: That would be great, but I think that would be too …

1:33:44.6

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: But have you ever tried?

R: The only thing I've ever done is transfer the Air Miles, the HPC, to …

M: But that's from your account to your account.

R: But you're saying different accounts.

M: Has anyone ever quit a loyalty program, or withdrawn from it, like have you ever cancelled your membership?

R: You just stop using it.

R: Yes.

R: Do you know how hard that is to do? Again, this book I read, it's written by … he won the prize, it was for economics. He's a psychologist who wrote this book, and it's his life's work. And he said this thing of coming out of a thing, it's like not ticking yes, but ticking the opposite.

M: Right, opt out.

R: Opt out, or to stop doing it. I mean, this thing that we see, this hoarders stuff, there is something going on here that is common to humans that we collect and we accumulate and we do this. So, to get out is not simple.

1:35:01.2

M: That basically, there are loyalty programs that you join that you basically just stop using. But do you ever actively say, I want to quit this loyalty program, do you have to withdraw?

R: Exactly, no.

R: No.

R: No.

R: I did that for Old Navy. I'm not a regular Old Navy shopper, so my girlfriend was going to shop one Christmas, and she was like, log on, and do all this stuff, because you get this coupon if you sign up or something like that. So, I did it for her, and then I just kept getting bombarded with emails from Old Navy. So, then, I was like, okay, I don't … cut me, take me off your …

M: So, how did you …?

R: That was through email. There was a pop-up box that said, if you don't want to continue anymore …

M: But were you actually withdrawing from their loyalty program, or you were just withdrawing from getting the emails?

R: No, both, because I actually had to sign up first to get their coupon. So, I was part of their loyalty program.

1:35:55.8

M: Now, do you know whether they erased whatever personal …?

R: I don't know.

R: That's an interesting one.

M: Have any of you ever read anything about any data breaches occurring with loyalty programs, or with credit cards, where …?

R: Credit cards? Big time, banking, big time. It's not always out there. Sometimes these things happen and no one is informed.

R: Not in loyalty cards, I've never heard of a scam of some sort.

M: I know, for example, card systems in the U.S., they're like … because most retailers don't necessarily operate these loyalty programs themselves. There are companies that are third parties that basically operate it for them. So, Card Systems, they provide gift and loyalty card services, and they were also the vendor that was responsible for $40,000 Visa and MasterCard cards that, in 2005, there was some huge data breach where all of these cards and information got leaked. It wasn't necessarily all used, but there was a data breach of some kind. Is that something that …?

R: I remember that happened with Winners or something a while ago.

M: Yes, that was it, with Winners, where somebody tapped into their lists.

R: Really?

1:37:10.9

R: I have to tell you …

R: (Inaudible, voice too low.)

R: I have to tell you, doing the kind of work that I do, I am so aware of people at the highest levels, if they can get away with something, they will get away with it, because why are they paying me?

M: But apparently, with Winners, what happened was there was some … I think it was actually a case where somebody hacked into their system from outside their building, and they were actually able to download the list of everyone who was a member of their loyalty program.

R: So, people working for those companies? They're not honest people, hello.

R: And what do they do with that information?

R: Exactly.

M: Well, I think, in that case, it may have been linked to credit card numbers and things like that, so that would be …

R: Because I have to tell you, even being in university classes, and the professor goes out of the room during an exam, I have to tell you, half the people cheat, half of them, if they can get away with it.

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

M: Do any of the loyalty programs that you have a social media presence?

1:38:18.5

R: Yes.

R: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn.

M: So, you follow it on Twitter?

R: Yes.

R: If you go to the web pages of any of these companies that you have loyalty cards to, on the bottom, you see the Facebook page.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: All of them.

R: Like our page, and get a coupon.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: And that's blatant marketing research.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

1:38:44.4

R: And now I'm getting the …

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

R: Yes.

M: So, do you think with the loyalty programs that you're a member of, does it have a Facebook page, or can you follow it on Twitter?

R: Yes.

R: All of them.

R: All of them have it.

M: Have any of you ever 'liked' a loyalty program?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: I have.

R: I'm very wary about Facebook, only because I work in an elementary school, and the police are always there giving workshops.

M: On cyber-stalking?

1:39:16.4

R: And I was hacked once, and I'm not a computer literate person. I was getting these demon emails. And he came and he said, someone is trying to hack into your Facebook. I said, get rid of it, get rid of it. And when the policemen come to the school and talk to the students, it's make sure that you don't give out that …

M: What about Four Square, has anyone heard of that?

R: What's Four Square?

R: Four Square is a statement that you can actually tell where you are. You can plug it in and you can tell your friends. People update it, and then you can just look. I have it on my phone, and you can actually see where they're located. If I said … actually, my friend broke up with her boyfriend because of that.

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

R: You can see …

R: They also know if you're not at your house, and they go rob your house.

R: Precisely, that's what happened to him. He told her that he was at somebody's house. He told her he was at the gym, and he was not at the gym. So, she's like, you're lying. You can actually see where they are.

M: That's a real privacy …

R: Yes.

R: Wow.

1:40:37.2

M: But have you ever decided to follow a loyalty program on Twitter, for example?

R: Yes, I have.

R: No, I get a little wary of social media at times.

R: Facebook, yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

M: How often do you see friends of yours interacting with companies?

R: Oh, god.

M: Because you'll often know when a friend of yours likes something.

R: You see it in the feed.

R: Yes. You're updated, your friend just liked Subway.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: I've seen my daughter. My daughter has got close to 400 friends, and she's overseas. And I know, in all these countries, all these people, they're all liking this and this and that. I'm like, okay, I'm just innocent here. But I know all this stuff.

1:41:31.6

M: Do you get those? Do you get notices if friends of yours are liking or following things?

R: I don't check. I'm on Facebook, but I rarely, rarely ever use it. And I've never clicked that I like anything because I'm afraid that I'm going to get advertisements, or something is going to come back to me.

M: Sonya, do you ever see that friends of yours have liked things or followed things?

R: Regularly, all the time.

R: Or if someone wants to be your friend, it sends you an email. So-and-so wants to be your friend, do you decline or do you accept?

M: Well, that's a different issue. I'm talking about when people are your friends, and you find out, oh, so-and-so likes Air Canada, or likes Addition Elle, or whatever.

R: Then you like it back.

M: How do you feel when that happens, when you're able to see people in your social circle, and you see what stores they like or what loyalty programs they like, or what they follow. What's your feeling about the fact that … 20 years ago, we didn't know any of this?

R: Bombarded.

R: It's too much.

R: There's no privacy anymore. I think that's a very important issue, to be able to have something that's private.

1:42:47.6

M: I mean, granted, it's your choice, no one forces you to like anything.

R: As far as, at least, it pops up in your feed, and whatnot, I almost feel it's almost like more junk mail. I'm trying to look for certain things, and you have all these various advertisements.

M: But does it impact your view of a company? If a whole bunch of friends of yours keep saying that they like a certain store …

R: Well, it was your friends that did it, not the company themselves.

M: Right, does that make you wonder, hey, I should check out that store?

R: Yes.

R: Sometimes it makes you curious.

R: It does.

R: Yes, it does.

R: Like, somewhere you wouldn't choose to go, you might … okay, let's see what …

R: Let me check it out, see what the pages looks like.

R: Or, also, the opposite, it's not a loyalty thing … I was doing a lot of research on individuals, and I was making a target list for this class that I'm in for a project that's suiting particularly demographics. And one of the people that I noticed, I saw somebody had said some really bad things about this person, and they were claiming it's not true. But you can really slander somebody.

1:43:58.6

M: But that's a different …

R: But even with this product stuff, if you did like, and you said someone doesn't like this, they could …

M: Yes, but you can only like things on Facebook, you can't dislike them. You can't dislike, you can only like.

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: Well, maybe, they could be liking products where are …

M: You can remove your like.

R: You can unlike it.

M: But I don't think people get a notification if someone unlikes something. It's like you can un-friend someone.

R: Yes.

R: Yes, but it could be kind of like, what they're liking can look pretty bad.

M: Do you ever see that people have checked into this store or that store? Is that something that you sometimes get in social media? I guess Four Square kind of works like that. So-and-so is now at HMV, or so-and-so is …

1:44:40.7

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: I see that all the time.

R: My daughter's 400 friends, I know where they go, what they're doing.

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: But you were saying, you have seen …?

R: I've seen it. And you can actually see how long they have been at Old Navy.

R: Really?

R: Yes, because it's like a little image and they just checked in. And all of sudden, she's checking into Shopper's now.

M: How do you feel about that? Does it bother you?

R: Not really. It doesn't interest me, either.

R: This bothers me a lot because I now know that so-and-so, who lives in London, Ontario, is checking to some place in New York. Ah-ha, their place is vacant.

1:45:17.9

R: Yes, but you make that choice to make that information …

R: (Inaudible, over-talking) knowing all this stuff, it's none of my business.

M: People make this information available because, in this day and age, our whole lives are an open book online. People don't always realize the consequences of being that open.

R: I think younger people do it. It's mostly young kids. My sister is 19, and she is always on. They're younger. For me, I don't really care, I don't care where my best friend is. I don't really visit her, I don't care. But younger kids, like 15 to 20, they love it.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

M: Well, in some cases, what about if there may be promotions where, if you check into a store publicly … like, let's say, if you walk into Addition Elle, if you're willing to do something where, when you walk in, it's on Twitter, or it's on Facebook, and all your friends know you have gone in, and that means you might get extra loyalty points. So, in other words, they're paying you to …

R: I would do it.

R: She's good.

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

M: So, in other words, they're paying you to let it be known that you're there.

1:46:28.4

R: I walked into Forever 21, and they said, do you have our app on your phone, do you have an iPhone? Yes. If you download our app, you'll get $10.00 off today.

M: But this is beyond an app, but it's also like …

R: Seeing where you are.

M: But it means that everybody who knows, know where you are. It's a bit of a … it's not necessarily a deal with the devil, but I mean, you are putting out more information.

R: For me it would have to be a really big reward, not just save $5.00.

R: I would do it.

R: (Inaudible, group over-talking.)

R: Listen, you're a guy …

R: I've got a neighbour across the street, who lives alone, and she does a lot (inaudible, over-talking.) She's terrified.

1:47:25.5

M: Maybe the Scene card has a deal where, every time you see a movie, you get double points if it gets posted. But it means that everybody that knows you, knows what movie you're seeing that night.

R: I've seen those options where you can post it publicly on your various social media, I never do. It does bother me to know that people know where I am, what I'm doing.

M: What movie you're seeing?

R: Yes. It's unnecessary, for me.

R: Exactly. We're getting led into this thing more and more and more, we don't understand what the potentials are.

R: That's taking privacy to the next level. And that could lead into a whole social network that, maybe, a lot of us are too naive …

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: Addition Elle, okay, she's there at 4:00 in the afternoon, as opposed to …

R: (Inaudible, over-talking) technology.

R: Like, for example, I'm at a poll, I'm in charge of a poll for an election. Nobody is allowed to take a picture in here. But people think it's okay to take a picture everywhere else? I don't think so. And to publicize it out there?

1:48:41.8

M: Now, the last thing I wanted to ask is … has anyone ever used any online loyalty programs? Like, for example, there is no card, it's a program that only exists online, where maybe, it's linked to your credit card or your smart phone and it's like, when you make purchases that are a part of a program, it's …

R: Tim Hortons does it, where our Tim Hortons card, when it reaches a certain level, it just gets topped up, dollar-wise, and you did it online.

M: I think another example would be, there could be some loyalty programs where you might even get points in exchange for tracking your web browsing activity. For example, there are some online loyalty programs where part of the deal is, if you let them track all of your web browsing …

R: Are we going to be told that we're being tracked? We get to agree?

M: Well, if you agree to be …

R: Listen, I lived through the Watergate, okay? People don't necessarily give permission.

M: But I'm just saying that those types of programs are out there, as well.

R: I'm really … I've got cold feet on the ground, kind of thing.

R: I think for Chapters Indigo, I don't … and I even set it up with the Body Shop, where I don't have to carry their card, I just give my name and phone number, and they can look it up, or email address. But I don't know if this is relevant … with Black's, I get emails from them, and just specific savings that I think only people on their email list get. So, I don't know if that's the same thing, because I'm getting perks that only a select group of people get.

1:50:51.0

M: I think some of these online loyalty programs are programs where you join it, and there is a whole bunch of different retailers that are members, and if you make online purchases … it's all online.

R: It's almost like EBay.

M: Well, it's almost like Air Miles, in a way, because it's a loyalty program that covers a whole range of different people, but as long as you make online transactions, they'll …

R: They don't have to even have loyalty things. If I go on, checking if Amazon has a book, my god, 'you will also like …'

M: And other people that liked this book, liked this book.

R: And that's even without loyalty. But they know what I'm doing.

M: Now, there is a good side, that's not all bad, because sometimes they might give you helpful suggestions of things that you would be interested in, right?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

R: That's a positive side.

M: Yes, I'm saying there is a positive side to it, also. Like, if I buy a book on Amazon.com, or on Amazon.ca, and then, they say, oh, by the way, here are 10 other titles you might also like because they're similar.

R: There are your pros and cons for having your loyalty card. And that was our first discussion.

M: Well, there, it's not even a loyalty card, it's just buying something.

R: But it's the same thing.

M: But it's a pro and a con at the same time. Okay, well, I think we have completed our discussion for tonight. We're just exploring the whole topic of loyalty programs and consumer's rights.

R: Go back to the 'buy 10, get 1 free'.

M: Thank you very much everybody, I hope everybody was entertained.

END OF SESSION

JR

PROJECT: Attitudes Towards Loyalty Programs

PN#: 7212

LOCATION: Toronto

DATE: November 15, 2012 – 8:00 p.m.

(Transcriber's Note: Moderator reviews confidentiality, describes the facilities, advises that the session is being tape recorded and that participants are being observed behind a one-way mirror.)

M: Why don't we go around the table and maybe you could each introduce yourselves and maybe tell us your first name and what you do for a living if you work outside of the home and who lives with you in your house, be they human or canine or feline or whatever. Do you want to begin?

R: My name is Douglas. I work at Tim Horton's part time. I've got a wife at home, a common-law wife, and I've got a dog, a Jack Russell. Actually, she's quite loyal to me.

M: What flea collar do you prefer?

R: I get the cheapest one on the line, $5.99 at Pet Value. For the collar that she wears around her neck, I have the most expensive one because she's a very strong dog. She's very lovable and I've

had her for four years now. At Tim Horton's what I do is I deliver donuts. The guy owns seven franchises. He has a store at Princess Margaret Hospital, and he cooks it fresh at Leslie and Eastern and delivers it to Princess Margaret Hospital so you have fresh donuts every day. So, people that come there to buy it at the kiosk there, they have fresh donuts every day. Twice a day, I do it Monday to Friday. Saturday and Sunday, once a day.

R: My name is Bobby and I work at TTC. I'm a rail check mechanic. I've been there for almost two years. I like the job. The job is paying good. I can't complain. Sometimes we do a closure. It's a big job, so sometimes the stations are closed.

0:04:35.0

M: You mean when they're replacing the track?

R: They are replacing the old rails and putting the new rails in because the rails are really old. So, we have sometimes the switches and I've got to maintain.

R: They get warped after the subway is on them all the time from the heat.

M: They have a lifespan.

R: Yeah, they've got a lifespan. And, I have a little dog. It's a Shih Tzu. She's about 10 pounds. I have wife. She's pregnant. She's at home. That's all.

R: Ashram. I'm IT manager at Hallmark cards. I have two girls making us busy all day long and all night long. No dogs, no pets.

M: How old are your girls?

R: Nine and five in about a couple of weeks.

R: Dionne.

M: We have the men against the women.

R: I work for Mount Sinai Hospital's Surgical Skills Centre, the University of Toronto Surgical Skills Centre. I'm a business office administrator for there and another centre, the SimSinai Centre in the Hospital. I just live with my roommate and that's about it.

0:06:09.6

R: Suat. I work for a financial institute. As well, I go to school part time at York.

M: What do you study?

R: Public Affairs. I went back four years after my BA, so it's quite challenging.

M: Is it like a Master's program?

R: Yes. So, it's quite challenging, but so far so good. I have no pets. I had a turtle but it died. I live at home with my brother and my mom.

R: Danielle. I work for Toronto Hydro, so a decent job. Angry people all the time.

M: Are you in customer service?

R: Yes, building a customer care. It's great. Angry people all the time every day, not a day goes by. I don't have any children. No pets. Just me and my roommate.

M: I have an 18 pound orange cat. My brother moved to Vancouver and I took his cat, but he's a good pet.

R: Calico?

M: He's orange. Well, he's kind of a light orange, so he's almost kind of a champagne colour.

0:07:33.4

R: Hairy?

M: He's kind of short-haired. He's sleeps on my bed.

R: My guy sleeps with me every night. Not the wife though.

M: We're doing this research tonight first of all for an organization called the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, which is a consumer's rights group I guess you could say. We want to explore the whole topic of loyalty programs, like customer loyalty programs that people are members of. I know that you were asked some questions when we recruited you to this session, but I'd like to go around the table and maybe you could each tell us a bit about, I know sometimes it's easy to lose count, but about how many loyalty programs are you a member of and which ones come to mind? Danielle, what loyalty programs do you belong to?

R: I have PC Financial, so I get automatically Air Miles, and Optimum.

M: That's at Shoppers Drug Mart.

R: Yeah, Shoppers Drug Mart. I'm sure I have plenty others that I don't even know about that I'm a part of. I have so many cards in my wallet, I couldn't tell you, but the three that stick out are the Air Miles.

M: There are probably points with some program that you've completely forgotten about.

R: To be honest with you, yeah.

M: But those are the three that come to mind.

0:08:47.9

R: To my mind. The ones I use the most I think would be the PC, Optimum and the Air Miles.

M: And, Suat, what about you?

R: Costco, Petro.

M: Oh, Petro-Canada?

R: Petro Canada, yeah. And the same thing, Optimum as well. Air Miles, Aeroplan. The one I just started now is TJX with Winners, Marshalls and HomeSense.

M: So, it's like a joint program of some kind.

R: Yes. They just started out.

M: Dionne?

R: I have Petro, all the car ones for gas, and the Scene.

M: Oh, the Scene card. You have that too?

R: Yeah, I do.

R: I want to find out how to get into that one. I want that one.

R: It's also attached with my bank account and my credit card. I have Optimum, Air Miles, and HBC. I think I had that one at one point. I don't know if I still have it. Basically all the same ones.

0:09:56.6

M: Some grocery stores have them too, don't they, like Loblaws.

R: I have an American Eagle one too. I have quite a few.

M: Ashram, what do you have?

R: They're similar. Air Miles. I have Sears Club points, Scene, PC. The TD Driver's Club, it used to be GM. Right now they call it a TD Driver.

M: Is that like a credit card that you get points towards?

R: Yeah.

R: CAA has points on their cards too.

M: Bobby?

R: I have a CAA. I have Optimum, Esso, Petro and PC. I have some more. I can't even remember right now.

M: Yeah, those are just what come to mind for you.

R: Yeah.

M: Douglas, what do you have?

0:10:48.8

R: I have PC Financial, a credit card, and I've got Air Miles, and I've got Optimum. And, there's a gas station I go to when I'm driving part-time cab. They give you $0.02 on the litre.

M: Which chain is that?

R: There's one at Victoria Park and Gerrard. It's a No Name gas station. The receipt they give you, on that receipt they have a code number, and when you go to No Frills to buy groceries, you get your deduction from that from the gas station. You don't need a card for it. You automatically get it.

M: Aren't there also sometimes clothing stores that have loyalty programs also, or book stores?

R: The student discount card.

R: SPC.

R: SPC, yeah.

R: Chapters have one.

M: Chapters Indigo, yeah.

R: Yeah, I have that one.

R: And American Eagle has one.

R: You've got to be able to go to those places. I go to the library to get my books.

0:11:56.0

M: Right. I mean obviously people tend to be part of the loyalty programs of places that they shop at, although not always. Sometimes people join them and they almost never go there.

R: I'd like to find out how to get onto the Scene one.

R: Go to the website.

R: I don't have a computer.

M: I think if you go to the movie theatre, you can get an application.

R: At Yorkdale they have a kiosk, so that you could just apply there.

R: Oh, yeah?

M: What movie theatre do you live closest to?

R: I live in the East York area, and I always like to go to the AMC at Dundas.

M: Oh, but I think over there they have a customer service counter where you can sign up there.

R: I'll check it out the next time I go there.

R: Scene does not apply to AMC.

M: It does now. They've switched. They became part of that chain.

0:12:39.5

R: They do, yeah.

M: The one at Yonge and Dundas is now part of Scene's now.

R: Cineplex, yeah.

R: Scotiabank does not deal with all the other theatres do. They're basically on a high-end, low-end.

M: For that chain. Okay, so what I'd like to do for starters is I'm going to have you work together in pairs. So, Douglas and Bobby will work together, and Ashram and Dionne will work together, and Suat and Danielle. Since we've started talking a little bit about loyalty programs, I want you to just talk with your partner and maybe jot down a little list of what are the pros and cons of

loyalty programs like the ones we've been talking about. The pros might seem kind of obvious, but are there any cons to them, either from your perspective as a consumer, or even just for the society that we live in? Is there any down side to there being loyalty programs? Get acquainted with one another and let's hear what you can come up with. (Respondents complete the exercise.) So, has everybody come up with some pros and cons?

R: Well, that's pros.

M: Okay, I'll give you a moment to think of the cons. Is there a down side to these programs? Let's hear what people came up with. Why don't we start with the pros? So, Ashram and Dionne, what do you see as being the pros?

R: It's the perks. It's what they give you for the value of your points, membership, whatever you want to call it.

0:18:26.5

M: So, what are the perks?

R: Tickets, (inaudible).

R: Cash back. It could be merchandise.

M: Rewards of some kind.

R: Rewards.

R: Prizes.

R: Flights.

M: Whatever you redeem it for.

R: Exactly.

M: Suat and Danielle, what do you have as being the advantages or the pros?

R: Some more cash values.

R: Customer appreciation, like when you get discounts.

M: So, sometimes as being a member of the program, you sometimes get additional recognition do you mean?

R: M'hmm, discounts.

0:19:04.3

R: The advantage to use the points at different venues, so you're not restricted to just that one. That's kind of cool, I guess you can say, because a lot of them are just like you've got points with us, you have to use them here. Whereas, some of them you get to use at …

M: They're pretty versatile.

R: Yeah. Just rewards and perks overall.

M: What about Douglas and Bobby?

R: You heard from our conversation. The free gas, on clothing and food. You get your discounts on that. But, as far as cons.

R: You spend money.

R: You spend money. There's some little bit of a cost there. I really think they turn around and they are charging you something for using their …

M: Even if it's not visible you mean?

R: It's not visible, but it is there.

M: Bobby, do you see that as being a con?

R: There's a con. I mean I think they want you to buy their stuff instead of going to something else. You're kind of locked up. You've got to use this card to get these points.

0:20:15.9

M: So, they're kind of making you become more loyal, like they're sucking you in.

R: Sucking you in, yeah.

M: So, what about Ashram and Dionne, what did you discuss as being a con, sort of the down side of loyalty programs?

R: We said it takes too long to accumulate enough loyalty points to be able to redeem them.

M: So, in other words, the programs aren't generous enough, you're saying?

R: Yes. The other thing is the information sharing. You sign up with one and you get bombarded with email, mail, phone calls from others, so they share your information.

M: You end up on a data bases and things like that.

R: Yes. Some of them they have limitation of their loyalty rewards. I know, say, like right now (inaudible) have the five years. She was saying which one they said it was like six months.

M: They expire you mean?

R: Yes, if you don't use them.

R: Like at American Eagle, if you don't come back within three months a year, the card goes back to zero.

M: Three months?

0:21:18.0

R: Really?

R: I didn't know and I go, oh I have an account, and I was like, I should have something there. And, they're like, if you don't come back with three months, this goes back to zero.

M: That's been pretty rapid.

R: Yeah, it's rapid. It's probably six months or three months, something along those lines.

M: Yeah, but it's not like it's ten years.

R: Exactly.

M: Anything else?

R: We said that it kind of limits you to where, again, I think it's where you shop with them. Like PC you have to go to only either Loblaws or No Frills. Air Miles you only go to the brands that are with Air Miles.

M: I mean obviously it's your choice to join the program, but the point is it's steering you towards.

R: Yes. And, again, there are too many of them. You lose track of what you have and which one you have in your wallet and you put right down. And, when you pass by a merchant, do I have their loyalty cards or not?

M: Yeah, it's like you can't even keep track of it all. What about Danielle and Suat, what did you have a being cons or disadvantages?

0:22:23.7

R: I said sometimes complications getting the points. For instance, if you're at Petro and you don't have the card, and then you go back and they'll be like, well, you have to call customer service, and then you're doing them through that, so it's just.

R: It's a hassle just to get the points.

M: Yeah, or to redeem them.

R: You don't have proof.

R: I was filling up with gas. So I'm looking for a gas station where the Essos are because I usually put Esso or Petro. So, I'm looking for one of them, so I can't find it, so I just keep going around and around. So it's just to con you and I'm spending more gas and time as well.

M: Of course, you're not forced. I mean you could go to another gas station.

R: Yeah, I could go.

M: You would become a member of that loyalty program.

R: Yeah, because I'm thinking in my head, I want to get the points.

R: I do the same thing. I was trying to wash my car but I didn't want to pay for it. So, where is there a car wash where it's a Petro? I know I have points. I didn't find one.

M: So, then you're always saying, like how much gas are you burning looking for a gas station or whatever?

R: It's like $1.00 or $2.00. It's no different, it's like the same.

0:23:37.6

M: What motivated you to start joining loyalty programs in the first place, because they haven't always been around? I think 30 years ago there was no such thing as a loyalty program.

R: It's the rewards, the rewards that they'll give you. Like Air Miles, they discontinued it and just have it for going for flights or transportation. Now they've gone further towards.

M: A bigger variety.

R: You go to the movies. You can buy Sheridan food at the Metro. They've got these different places that are contributing to the Air Miles. So, when you came in at like 3,000 Air Miles, you don't have to take a flight. You can now fill up your gas tank. You can get a car wash or you can get free food. Now that's quite an incentive right there.

M: Ashram, what do you remember about when you first joined the loyalty program? What was the attraction?

R: I think the marketing that they use to grab your attention. They always make it like it's the best thing ever when you watch the TV, that by joining them you're going to be able to do things that you can't do if you're not a member with them. I know, of course, it ends (inaudible), but again they do good marketing.

M: You're joining an exclusive club.

R: Exactly.

M: They're accepting you.

R: Exactly. You're becoming one of those premiere that who are you going to join. You're going to go in front of the line if you're a member of this group or that group.

0:25:05.7

M: Danielle, do you remember what made you first start joining?

R: They give really good things actually like 15 years ago or something. I used the Optimum card and it was just really enticing like he said, the advertising, the marketing, and the way they make

you feel like, hey, you're going to save this. Or, the cash value that you think you're going to get with joining that program.

M: Or, what you'd miss out on if you didn't.

R: Well, that's right. Like the overall savings and what you can get by being a part of this program.

R: And, one thing on top of this that they always tell you, you do not have to pay extra for membership.

M: It's free.

R: Yes, you're already spending your money for shopping, so why not get rewards for the money that you spend?

R: Well, you've got to buy at Shopper's Drug Mart to buy your medication and you get other specials.

M: So, it's like if you're spending money there anyway, what have you got to lose, except your dignity?

R: I had an SPC card when I was 15, 16. So, I really wanted to get clothes. Then I see there's a certain store, they just take only SPC cards, so it was 15% off, 20% off. So, by the time you're young, so you've got the money. I mean the SPC card costs $8.00.

0:26:14.7

M: What does SPC stand for?

R: Student Price Card. So, it costs $8.00. So, $8.00 lasts you about a year to expire. So, I think to myself. So, I mean I would save a lot of money if I buy the card, so 15% off if I buy clothes. But, they'll kind of hook you up. There are certain stores that you can go, but you cannot go to any other store and show your SPC card.

M: Do most of your favourite stores or companies have loyalty programs? Suat, were you saying that most of the places you go to have a program?

R: Most of them, no. Not all stores, no.

M: Who tends to have loyalty programs and who doesn't?

R: The bigger chains. The bigger companies.

M: The bigger companies.

R: I know smaller companies that I go to that have rewards.

R: I think grocery stores have it.

M: The grocery stores.

R: Yeah, something that's more essential to have and you do need it every day.

0:27:21.2

M: What about like clothing stores?

R: Clothing, yes.

R: I find that clothing stores are starting to have it more now compared to, before it was mostly department stores and now it's like clothing stores.

M: If it's a chain, like not so much an individual store?

R: Right. It has to be a chain. Even H&M started. They give you a card of like $5.00. If you come back the next time, you can use it.

R: HBC is one of them, Hudson's Bay. They give you a card.

R: That's how they trick you though. You're buying something and they'll be like, oh, if you have our card, you get like 10% additional.

R: That's the credit card. HBC credit card.

R: They usually have a scratch and save. So, you scratch it. The next time you come back, 5% off.

R: I've had an HBC card I feel like all my life since I've been having cards, but I've never redeemed nothing on that card in my life.

M: Have you ever checked to see whether you've …?

R: I've checked. I'm like, this is nothing. You have to have like ...

0:28:11.5

M: An astronomical amount.

R: Yeah, I don't shop there that much.

R: I bought three TVs at Zellers and then turn around and I can't even afford to get $10.00 off.

M: Is there always a card for the loyalty programs you belong to, or are some of them just like online programs?

R: We were talking about clothing stores. I find those ones tend to be phone number based.

M: You give them your phone number.

R: Yeah. Like we were saying before, if you forget your card, you're pretty much SOL because you don't have your card. Where I find like Dynamite, Garage, if you don't have your card, they pull you up by your phone number and you still get your points. So, I find that some of them are now phone number based.

R: I'm a GNC member as well. So, I've got a Gold Card. I mean if you've got a Gold Card, you get 20% off. So sometimes I forgot my card. I left it at home or whatever.

M: Which card was that that again?

R: GNC.

M: What is that?

0:29:07.4

R: It's a health and nutrition.

M: Oh, GNC.

R: So, yeah, if I forgot my card, if I remember the card number.

M: You could see the number on your smartphone.

R: Yeah. And, also they check your name.

M: So, they have you by name.

R: Yeah.

R: Not all of them have cards. Some of them they just keep track by … some airlines especially the American airlines they don't have cards, but you fly with them one time and you register for the loyalty program. They keep track of you.

M: Through your name or through your something or other.

R: Yes.

R: Actually, even my brother wanted to use it. So, he can go and say my name.

M: He can just impersonate you.

R: Yeah, he can do that.

M: Are some loyalty programs better than others? Are there some that you prefer that you find are more generous than others?

0:30:05.9

R: Well, Air Miles is more generous than most because you're getting Air Miles every time you go to the liquor store or grocery store.

M: You get them in a lot of places.

R: They turn around and they give you specific things to buy to give you more Air Miles. And, then that gives you more that you can afford on.

M: And, I guess because so many different stores give Air Miles, you can accumulate more.

R: You accumulate a lot faster.

R: I think it depends on where you shop. If you talk to the women over here, they're going to tell you they might spend more in the women's clothing stores or department stores. If you talk to men, it could be hardware stores. And, then where do you shop if you talk to a family guy or a mother, it could be the …

M: But, for you personally, do you find that there are some loyalty programs that you think are better programs?

R: I think Air Miles is getting to be a bit generous right now. There are widening their scope of stores that they are a member of the program. At least you're not tied to one chain. It's not like a Walmart program or a Sears program. Even Sears lately they are into the Air Miles. They give Air Miles even though they have their own program.

R: That's good to tie your card with Air Miles too.

0:31:22.2

R: Yes. And, you could get it by using the credit card itself just anywhere.

M: Right. Every time you do a transaction get you something. Are some programs better than other in terms of redeeming your points and actually getting rewards? Maybe some of them make it harder or easier.

R: I think Shoppers sometimes tries to make it a bit easier because they have sometimes 20 times the amount of your points if you spend this much.

M: That's accumulated.

R: You walk in and they say, well, you've got 20,000 points on your Optimum card. If you buy $10.00 worth of merchandise here now, you can get that for free. But, then on top of that, you've got to pay another $7.00 towards your merchandise. So, it's like they're enticing you to spend more to retain what you've already got.

R: Well, then they make it a little bit easier to accumulate because on those specific (inaudible, over-talking) it's 20 times the amount you would have originally got.

M: Twenty times.

R: Twenty times, man. I think it makes it easier to accumulate.

R: I think they are getting better right now to make you redeem on the spot. You don't have to call and you don't have to wait four or five weeks to get your redemption. Air Miles you do it right now at the cash back, Sears points, and I think Walmart they have a program.

M: So, it's more automatic now.

0:32:39.6

R: It's on the spot. You could redeem it while you are shopping.

M: Certainly with the Scene card, if you've accumulated enough points for a free movie, you just use it instead of cash.

R: Yes. It's on the spot. You could redeem it on the spot.

R: Once you redeem Scene, the next day you get an email saying this is what you have left in your points.

M: Yeah, I've noticed that. Have any of you ever recommended a loyalty program to a friend? Have you ever been in a loyalty program and then you've said to someone, this is a really good program, you should join?

R: I think everybody has everything nowadays.

R: I did for the Sears because I have kids so we shop for their clothes from Sears most of the time. So, you get the points for the Sears Club and the redemption is, as I said, it's on the spot. You could start using the points. So, I recommend that card with my friends. And, of course, Air Miles, everybody knows about it.

M: I know I've even recommended the Scene card to people I know who go to a lot of movies because not everybody realizes that they actually could benefit by using it.

R: And, you get 10% off the concession stand.

R: I like the free popcorn.

0:33:50.0

M: When you decided where to shop, how important a factor is the loyalty program that the business offers? Let's say, all things being equal, if you got two drug stores to choose from or two clothing stores to choose from, would you ever go to one and not the other because it had a better loyalty program?

R: It depends on the bargains themselves.

M: No, but I'm not talking about an individual bargain. I'm talking about the fact of the overall program.

R: I always shop at Shoppers because I can get points. I can go to Walmart. If it's convenient and Shoppers is there, I'm like, I can get points there.

R: The price changes. I go to a private pharmacy for my medication, but also Shoppers Drug Mart has got a more competitive price.

M: For the over the counter?

R: For certain things, right? Whereas the small pharmacy would have less and they boost their prices higher.

M: Getting back to this idea of whether you choose one store over another. So, like Ashram, you find you'll go to Sears instead of another department store?

R: Yes, absolutely. Again, because of the redemption and getting more rewards through my purchases. It absolutely affects my decision.

R: I always go to Costco for their cheaper things.

0:35:15.2

R: I hate the line. It's too long.

R: Yeah, you have to line up. It's just too long.

M: I want to explore the whole notion of brand loyalty and loyalty programs. Obviously we call them loyalty programs because they're supposed to make you loyal. So, when you think of the companies whose loyalty program you belong to, do you actually feel more loyal from this? For example, for you Ashram, I know it's kind of difficult to think about it in these terms, but do you feel loyal to Sears?

R: Yeah, you could say because I do lots of shopping there. I make the effort to find the Sears around to go, which they are almost everywhere right now, because I know I'm going to find what I'm looking for and I'm going to gain from their loyalty program.

M: Bobby?

R: Yeah. Sometimes I think about the gas, right?

M: Yeah. Oh, you were saying you sometimes circle around looking for …

R: Yeah. Some of stations they give 5 cents cheaper, lower than the regular at the gas stations. There's a pro and a con. I mean in one way it's good. You've just got to drive far wherever you want to go. If you have the car, it just makes no difference.

M: But, you were saying before, you will go out of your way. Do you feel loyal to a certain … like which gas loyalty program do you belong to?

R: I belong to Petro and Esso.

0:36:44.5

M: So, do you feel loyal to Petro or Esso when it comes to buying gas?

R: Actually, I have two cars. So, Petro if I see closer.

M: You have one car that goes to Petro and one car goes to Esso.

R: So, if I see Esso is closer, I will go to Esso. If I see Petro is closer, I go to Petro.

M: But, is that because you actually like Esso or Petro better, or is it because you're part of a loyalty program and that makes you feel?

R: I'm part of the loyalty program.

M: So, the loyalty program essentially adds to your loyalty.

R: Yeah.

R: What's the one that's yellow?

R: Shell.

R: I don't go to Shell because my gas cards are always in the car. So, I pick them up. It's either Esso or Petro.

M: Do you feel more loyal to companies whose loyalty program you belong to?

R: It depends on the item. So, gas, yes. I always go to Esso or Petro. It's mostly Petro.

M: What about Shoppers, do you feel loyal? Like if you were going to go to a drug store, do you feel like …?

0:37:51.9

R: I go to Shoppers most likely first because they have everything, but then their prices are high, so I like to buy sales.

R: Yeah, sometimes I think because they have … Walmart has a price match. So, if you go to Shoppers Drug Mart, they have higher prices. And, you go to Walmart, so you see a less price. You can't go Walmart to Shoppers and tell them do a price match, but they don't do the price match. So, I think I'd rather go to a Walmart sometimes instead of paying an extra $5.00. So, I'd rather go to Walmart instead of having my points. But, I'd rather go with them and save $5.00.

M: I guess what I'm curious about is whether there are cases where maybe you're more loyal to a certain store because you're part of a loyalty program, and it's not that that store's product is necessarily better. It's more that you're part of a loyalty program, and that in and of itself makes you feel part of their family.

R: It is family in terms of like sometimes with Shoppers Drug Mart. Whereas I will actually sometimes think, well if I go to Pharma Plus, I'm going to get Air Miles points, but when I go to

Shoppers, I'm more like my reward from using my points or accumulating points is going to be better than what I would get from Pharma Plus. So, sometimes I will wait out to the same price when I can't afford Shoppers if it cheaper.

M: In other words, if loyalty programs didn't exist at all.

R: Sometimes they just not exist. You just see who has a better deal.

M: Like for you Ashram, if we went back in time 30 years and there was no such a thing as any loyalty programs, would you still go to Sears because you think that they're the best department store, or do you think you would just not really care one way or the other?

0:39:45.2

R: I think at the time the price might affect my decision.

M: Just whoever had, yeah.

R: Quality, options.

M: Do you think any of the loyalty programs that you belong to have made you buy more from that company over time than you otherwise would have? Do you think that being a member of a loyalty program, do you think it sometimes does over a period of years you do end up buying more from that?

R: Yeah, basically for your Optimum and from Shoppers Drug Mart, but basically it's where I can get the cheapest price.

M: Right. So, you're not spending more overall.

R: If I need something, I'd rather go to Shoppers than go to a private pharmacy because I want to get those Optimum points.

R: I think the same thing too. I go to Esso.

M: You need gas.

R: Yeah. I mean Esso it's always about car wash. I like to see my car shiny, so I always go there so I can get my points.

0:40:58.3

M: What about you, Dionne, because I know sometimes there are promotions or whatever, have you ever found yourself spending more because you were part of a loyalty program and it was going to get you more rewards?

R: No.

M: Danielle, has that ever?

R: Not so much, no.

M: Suat? Like when they say 20 times the points or if you spend this amount, you'll get this many extra points?

R: It's enticing. For example, if I have to do, because with that Optimum program, it's spend $50.00 and 20 times the points. If I have something to do with $50.00 or $45.00, I'll be like, okay, I'm pushing for the $50.00. I'm $5.00 off. But, it's not something that actually grabs me and says, yes, I'm going to do it because of this. It's just a bit more enticing.

M: It's just that you might spend that little bit extra to get over that boundary or whatever?

R: Yeah, it's enticing.

M: It's an incentive.

R: Yeah.

M: Has anyone ever felt less loyal to a company because you didn't like their loyalty program or you had some sort of bad experience with it?

0:42:01.0

R: The HBC one, I just feel like it makes no sense to even have one because I've had it since I was a teenager and I've never redeemed anything, and the points are so …

M: But, do you still shop at HBC?

R: Not as much. I'll do the Bay, yes, but like Zellers, who knows where there's a Zellers nowadays, but when I used to go there.

M: Is HBC program inferior to Sears as a loyalty program?

R: No.

R: No.

R: No, I agree with Dionne. You need to accumulate a lot to be able to get something and you need to spend a lot. And, recently with the closure of Zellers, you have to go to the Bay now.

M: There are fewer places to accumulate.

R: Home Outfitters or the Bay, that's basically it for HBC.

M: What are the perks of being a member of a loyalty program? I mean obviously we talked about the pros and cons, but are there any other perks you get for being a member that are not necessarily awards or discounts?

0:43:14.4

R: I think sometimes when you go to see if there's a mall. I just went to Choppers Food Store. This guy comes up to me and he asks me, if you sign up right now, you get $20.00 off. I give you a card and this is $20.00 off if you sign up for this.

M: Right. That's just to get you to join in the first place.

R: Yeah.

R: Or, even I know M&M Meats, I have one of those cards too, and it's not even points. But, they give you I guess it's a special membership price for things and then they give you emails.

M: So, just by virtue of being a member you get a discount.

R: Yeah, you get a special email of special sales and stuff like that.

R: You get special promotions that other members get. It could be different pricing or it could be …

M: Or, you hear about them earlier.

R: Exactly.

R: Or, for instance, like for credit card companies like American Express, they have front of the line.

M: Oh yeah, to get tickets to things and stuff like that.

R: To get tickets, yeah. So, you get to view your movie screen before everyone else or you get to buy different tickets to some.

0:44:21.9

M: Do you ever get special access to the store or particular items like where they might have some big maybe Future Shop or a place like that has some sale, and if you're a member of their loyalty program, you can get in two hours or before everybody else?

R: If Future Shop and those guys have it, I think it would be like ridiculous.

M: I mean I'm just thinking of that as an example. Or, do you ever get more personal correspondence, like a thank you card from the company managers, or do they ever sort of roll up a red carpet right before you if you're a member of the loyalty program and treat you like royalty?

R: No, never.

R: No. All you get is thank you for shopping here.

R: Sometimes you get from customer relations you get problems. Let's say you're working with the girl at the counter and she might give you flack or a hard time, but I mean you don't get a thank you.

M: Do any of the loyalty programs, if you're someone who is like a very good customer and you spend a lot of money, are you ever considered like a gold member where you get some higher level of recognition?

R: Yeah, they do. Air Miles have different levels. You have a gold. So, for the regular you get I think one mile for $20.00. With the gold you get one for $15.00. With the platinum you get one for $10.00. I'm not sure about the others. I think Sears when you spend over a certain amount, you get more points. So, some of them, at least the ones I know, they do have different levels.

0:45:53.2

M: Does that mean that when you walk into a store, they bow and curtsy to you?

R: No, no.

R: It's all done behind the scenes.

R: That's what I'm saying. They just swipe the card, that's all.

M: There's no heel clicking and hand clapping.

R: No.

M: Have any of you ever been asked for your opinion on how to improve a company's loyalty program?

R: No.

M: They've never done a survey or anything? Are some loyalty programs better than others in terms of the value they offer? Are some more generous that others?

R: I think that's what Dionne was talking about with HBC. It's on the low end. Their loyalty program you need to accumulate a lot. I'm not sure about the Optimum. Air Miles they have good values, Sears cards, Scene. To answer your question, yes.

M: Some of them are more generous than others.

0:46:56.2

R: Yes.

M: I think someone said the Optimum can take a long time to accumulate.

R: Yeah, you need, like, 10,000 or something.

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking.)

R: Today it's 8,000. It's been a long time since I've had it. When they first started, it wasn't that.

M: You can go there for ten years to earn $20.00.

R: That's what happens. I've been there I think at least 10, 15 years, and I think I've redeemed $40.00.

R: I buy some perfume for my wife there. It was like $75.00 for perfume. I get maybe 1,000 points. I go like, what? That's just 1,000 points. That's all. I'm not getting any more.

M: It's not a point a dollar.

R: No, it's not. It's kind of like assigned per product.

R: I think that's one of the cons for the loyalty programs is that you do not know the value what you are accumulating until you redeem it. So, they don't tell you upfront when you are getting the membership, just by the way when you're signing for the Optimum, you need to make 200,000 to be able to get.

M: It sounds great, but then in reality you have to buy a warehouse full of shampoo to ever …

0:48:12.1

R: Exactly. They don't tell you upfront. They make it rosy at the beginning that it's the best thing, but they don't tell you.

R: Unless it's specified on a certain product how many points you're going to get on that product.

M: What about when it comes to actually redeeming the points, are some programs better than others in terms of redemption?

R: The only one I've come across is Air Miles so far.

M: It is easy with Air Miles when you want to cash them in?

R: Yeah. You just call them up on the phone or else if you've got a computer, you go through the computer and they send you the product in the mail.

R: It's actually getting easier right now. You could redeem it for products in the store right now.

M: So, it's actually gotten easier than it used to be.

R: For me it's easier too. I just go and tell them I need (inaudible) and then they give you a receipt and you show them.

M: I think in the past you'd have to phone and it was a big long …

R: Years ago, right. One time I redeemed something from Air Miles. It was for my sister. It was a like a table, like a child's picnic table. And, you had to go on the internet and you had to pick which one and all that kind of stuff, and then they mailed it out to me.

0:49:24.3

M: I want to move on to talking about the sign up process. When you sign up for a loyalty program, what's the form like? What information do you have to give them typically?

R: Your name, address.

R: Household.

R: Household, yeah.

R: Email.

R: Email. Sometimes your business number. They want to know if you're single or married.

M: Your marital status.

R: Your martial status, yeah.

R: Age.

R: Or, you can lie to them too, and you can get away with it.

M: Sure. You can say you were 21.

R: It's pretty hard to say that.

M: Do they ever ask you other things like purchase preference information, like what categories of goods or services are you interested in?

0:50:14.0

R: Rarely.

R: They ask you that for Shoppers Drug Mart. They would be like, oh, if you do this survey today based on the service that you received, and then you get extra points. You don't have to go online and do the survey and then that's when they ask you.

M: I see, but that's not enrolling in the program. That's kind of an additional thing.

R: Some of them ask after they've enrolled you because they don't want to push you away from the signing process.

R: Some of them ask you, can we turn around and use your name for our other advertising companies, your mailing address for other companies for advertising or benefits.

M: Do you remember did you have the option to opt out of future solicitations? When you joined, were there boxes you could check off to not get any emails or not get any other?

R: Yeah, there is.

R: Yeah, you have the option.

R: You've got to say yes or no.

R: Oh, and they make you sign too as well.

R: At the bottom.

M: But, if you sign up online, how do you sign, or do you?

0:51:24.9

R: It's a check box.

M: It's a check box.

R: I think it might be by law that they have to ask you that question. To solicit your information and send your information, I think it's by law they have to ask you that.

M: They have to ask your permission.

R: I think they still sell information regardless.

M: Whether you check it or not.

R: Exactly.

M: What about privacy policy? Do you remember when you signed up was there any policy on privacy?

R: They do. There is at the bottom. They always say something.

R: In small print.

R: In small print. You don't really see it. You just sign it.

M: It's the fine print, yeah.

R: Yes. And, you realize, oh, what did I sign into? You don't realize because sometimes you don't want an email. But you just sign and they're still going to send you the email because you didn't read the fine print.

0:52:13.3

R: Or, you're at the counter, so you don't have time to read it through.

M: If you do it in person.

R: In person, yeah.

R: Like I said, they always ask you if we can use you for other references to other companies.

M: Right, like trade your name.

R: You don't really read the policy at the bottom of the line. You just sign it and they give you the card and away you go.

R: Oh, by the way, that's when you say no. Never say yes to that.

M: But, lots of people do. Do you have any concerns about privacy? When you first signed up for a loyalty program, was that something that you even thought about or had concerns about? I mean obviously you joined loyalty programs regardless.

R: Absolutely. Identity theft is big. At least me being in information technology field, identity theft is big, and I make sure when I sign something that even though I don't read everything in the fine print, but at least I make sure that I don't put any information that would put me at risk.

0:53:12.8

M: What information puts you at risk?

R: Birth date.

M: Birth date, yeah.

R: Full name, they can get it, but birth date, social insurance number. Those two are big.

R: Even on the driver's licence, you know, sometimes they ask you for your driver's licence number.

R: Yeah, they ask for that all the time though.

M: Sometimes there are things that are optional and people don't realize that it's optional. You don't have to give that information.

R: Like your middle name sometimes is optional.

M: Getting back to privacy concerns. Danielle, the first time you joined a loyalty program, did it even cross your mind?

R: No, I was too young, to be honest. I was really young at the time, so it wasn't anything I didn't. I probably didn't even have credit at the time. But, obviously times have changed. I've gotten older. Yeah, now it's more of a concern than it was then.

M: So, what's the concern?

R: Well, like you said, I don't want to go through any identity theft. I've already had my hassles with every other possible …

0:54:09.4

M: When it comes to privacy concerns around loyalty programs, is it really all about identity left or are there other privacy concerns?

R: For me, I just don't want to be bombarded with the emails. That's my thing. I hate to be bombarded with those emails. We have this. We have that.

R: Sharing the information, it will end in some wrong hands that could use it in a different way. If we are sure that when they are sharing information, they are sharing it between good people, sure, but you don't know who the second hand is.

M: The database, how many people have access to it.

R: Exactly.

M: How do you think a company could use the information you provide when you sign up? Let's pick an example of a Scene card. Let's say you joined Scotiabank's Scene card, right? What do you think they do with that information?

R: They might send it to somebody else. I see some random email comes up to my account, probably Lava Life. I'm not interested. I have a wife and she's sitting at home. What's going on there? Are you dating somebody? I thought there's no way I'm to date. It's probably just a random email coming forward.

M: They have traded lists or something.

R: They use this information to determine shopping habits and references. Where do you shop? What do you for?

M: What are your patterns in other words.

0:55:32.7

R: What time, the gender of the person who shops. They use it to do all those analyses from your habits of shopping using that loyalty program. I think that's the main goal any merchant or any stores joins.

M: It's to analyze.

R: Or, the distance that you're willing to drive to get to that specific store. So, I guess if they were building a new one.

M: The next question kind of gets at what Ashram was just saying. What about your purchase and activity profile? When we talked about privacy concerns, everybody started talking about identity theft, but what about the fact that you join a loyalty program, that company knows the whole pattern of what you buy, where you but it within that loyalty program. So, if you're a member of Optimum at Shoppers Drug Mart, for example, someone at Shoppers Drug Mart, probably more than one person, can look you up and basically everything that you buy is there.

R: I never thought about that really.

R: But, now that you say it.

M: I'm not saying that it's necessarily … It could be perfectly harmless, but the point is that these databases exist, right?

R: But, they use this information for the shoppers too because they're going to recommend things for you that you don't know, but they are already making this recommendation according to your …

0:56:53.1

M: They look at a profile and they know what that you buy pantyhose all the time.

R: Right now if you go on Canadian Tire's website and you look for tires. They say, by the way, we recommend because you're looking for tires right now, how about hub caps or how about …

M: And, it could even be (inaudible, over-talking).

R: Yeah, but they saw that you are looking for tires, so they are recommending.

M: Or, maybe they see that you have been buying tires once a month for the last three years.

R: Yeah, so they use those for the shopper's benefit.

M: Do you think there are any limits or rules on how companies can use this information? If you're a member of, let's say, Sears, and you're a member of their loyalty program and they have this profile of your purchase patterns and behaviour, are there any legal restrictions on what they can do with that information?

R: As long as they don't share it without my knowledge.

R: That joins in with the policy program when you sign up for the policy. They're not allowed to share.

M: Are they not allowed to share?

R: They're not allowed to share unless you would say so.

R: Unfortunately, they do anyway.

0:57:53.7

M: Dionne, do you think that they can do whatever they want with it?

R: Yeah, they do it anyway, because I see the most random junk mail on the site. I've never signed up for this. And, as much as I always say block all, you still get them.

M: Actually, my next question was going to be, did you find when you first joined loyalty programs, do you get a lot more advertisements and promotions than you did before?

R: Yeah.

R: M'hmm.

R: Yes, I got a lot of promotions. You see an email and probably you see in your mail sometimes they send you flyers and they'll tell you to use a PC card or whatever, then you get a certain percentage off.

R: I wish my junk mail only had junk mail for things that I signed up for. It has all sorts of …

M: Even things you didn't sign up for.

R: Yeah, exactly.

M: So, Ashram, you were saying you get more. I mean not that it's a bad thing.

R: No, I actually wouldn't blame just loyalty programs, because right now with the Bell directory, they could go by postal code and they know that M1M or whatever, I know I have ten households, I'm just going to send everybody the flyers for this product. It's not just because of the loyalty programs.

0:59:17.3

M: Yeah, I guess those would be flyers in your mailbox. But, I'm thinking even emails or things that you get that are addressed to you.

R: Do you really know that it's addressed to you? When it comes to there, it might not be coming to you specially.

M: No, but if you're a member of Sears and you start getting email from the loyalty program that you're a member of, obviously it's linked, right?

R: Yeah.

R: M'hmm.

M: Or, if you're a member of Air Miles, you probably get emails.

R: They're linked.

R: Because I think they made it a part of the registration form.

R: Yes.

M: Yeah.

R: And, that's another thing. I'm like, well, if you want me to register, why do I have to give you my email? I don't see that it's necessary. But, I think with Air Miles, I have to.

1:00:03.3

M: When you get all these ads and promotions, are they sometimes useful things? They might be telling you about promotions and they might be things that you would be interested in, or is it more of a nuisance?

R: Well, some of them are, and they also give you maybe something. Like the Optimum for Shoppers Drug Mart, they'll give you a free sample of a new product that's coming out. It's handy that way maybe for a shampoo, but in other aspects if they send you garbage. If they give you lets say a $1.00 off coupon for an item that's worth $50.00, I'm not going to go and buy this $50.00 item because I'm going to get $1.00 off of it. Like the men's hair of your age and my age, you want to get rid of the grey. So you brush it in …

M: Grecian Formula.

R: It gets rid of most of the grey, right? The thing is, when you get the package, the package says you may be allergic to some of these (inaudible, over-talking).

R: And, then you're thinking maybe I'm going to die after I use it.

R: You tend not to use the product.

M: Obviously when you join the loyalty program, we know that the perks are you get discounts, you get rewards whatever. On the flip side, you get more solicitations. Some of your personal information is going to be traded, so there are pros and cons. Is that ever a consideration? When you're thinking about whether to join a loyalty program or not, do you even think of it in those terms, in terms of weighing the pros and cons?

R: Not until now.

M: Have you ever thought of it that way, Bobby?

1:01:57.9

R: Yeah, sometimes I think forget about it. It's not worth it. It depends on my mood sometimes I guess.

M: Ashram?

R: I do think about it, yeah.

M: Are there times when there are programs that you thought of joining and you didn't because you thought the pros don't outweigh the cons?

R: Yeah, not just because of the information whatever. It could be because this place I'm just going to be there only once.

M: You just don't go there enough.

R: Yes.

M: We talked about purchase profile, the fact that they have a database of your patterns on what you buy. Are there sometimes purchases that are more sensitive than others in terms of privacy? Are there some things that you buy where you don't really give a damn if the whole world knows what you buy and there are other things where maybe you don't want there to be a database of what you bought?

R: I'll leave that to the women to answer that question because I really don't care.

M: Bobby?

R: If I'm going to buy something like underwear or whatever, so I don't want them to see what I buy. I mean obviously they're going to see what I buy and what I'm looking.

1:03:12.7

M: But, that's more private than if you're buying gasoline or something.

R: But, they've got cameras everywhere, so I get it that they can see what you're purchasing.

R: But, still, in your mind.

M: When you go to a drug store, for instance, oftentimes you're buying personal care products. You can be buying skin lotions. You could be buying hair dye for your hair, things that …

R: Or, tampons for your wife.

M: That too. You might not care if people know that you bought a tank of gas at Petro-Canada, but maybe you don't want the whole world to know that you bought hair dye.

R: Actually, I really don't care.

R: You go to Shoppers Drug Mart and they have the make-up and stuff. Men we think, oh, we should just go home. Even though I go sometimes to get acne wash, so sometimes I feel kind of awkward.

R: We are living in a world right now, and we tend to use credit cards all the time. So, this information …

M: It's all collected.

1:04:25.0

R: It's not collected by loyalty. It's collected by credit cards. So, it doesn't make a difference.

M: On the credit card it doesn't always. It gives an amount. It doesn't say exactly what the items are.

R: It shows a description of the item. I mean to get your statement of whatever your credit card, it's going to say maybe a small description, but it would show that you bought an underwear. It will say underwear.

M: Don't you find at Sears, it will just say the name of the store.

R: It will say the description.

M: But there are other things. What about if you buy a lot of alcohol at the liquor store, do you want the world to know how much booze you buy or that you buy cigarettes? I mean there are all those sin things or whatever. The reason I ask is, does that affect loyalty programs you decide to join? So, for example, maybe somebody might think, well I'll join the loyalty program at Petro Canada, but I don't want to join the Optimum program at Shoppers Drug Mart because I don't want there to be a database of what I buy at a drug store that's being traded around? Is that something that ever crosses your mind at all?

R: No, definitely not.

R: No.

R: It makes me think about it now.

R: I couldn't care less.

1:05:41.7

R: It's more like when they see where most of my points are coming from. I think it's the Air Miles, just again, because most of mine come from the liquor store.

M: Have you ever tried to access the information that a company has stored about you as a result of being a member of their loyalty program?

R: How would you go about doing that?

M: Ashram, you work in IT. Have you ever tried to figure out what does Sears know about me?

R: From my shopping habits?

M: Yeah.

R: No, you cannot get this. You will get access only to personal information. You are not going to be able to see that I bought five shirts on January and two pants. You will not be able to see that.

M: You can't even look that up about yourself?

R: No. They do not make this public, at least for the programs I'm a member of.

R: Winners does, that TJX card. Well, not now because of Christmas. They give you the option where you have 30 days to return the item. After it's ten days, but with the card you have 30 days. So, if you go online you can see what you purchased and the date you purchased, so you can keep track.

1:06:49.0

M: But, does that go back indefinitely or just only a short period?

R: I don't know. I just got it, so I'm assuming a few months or maybe just for 30 days and then after that it expires.

M: Should you have access to the information?

R: Yes, you should be.

M: They've profiled you and your pattern. Should you be able to know what they've done with your information?

R: Yeah, it should be vice versa, because they take your information, so we should take their information. If I'm interested, I want to take your information and make sure I know what's going on.

R: Like if Bobby gassed up last month and turned around and he wants to find out how much he paid for this tank of gas and this month it cost him this much for a tank of gas, he should be able to access the last month's.

R: That's not from the loyalty program that he can get it from his credit card number. How is this going to help me? What's the benefit to me knowing that? Again, I personally would leave it to them because they have more expert people who could do those analyses.

M: Yes. I mean I suppose you might be just curious to find out what segment they put me into or something.

R: I would leave it to them. They are more capable of actually telling me because you bought those five shirts in this store and these pants from this store, if you go to this store, you might get better deals than that store. They know their marketing programs better than me.

1:08:13.3

M: Have you ever had any experiences where you've been a member of a loyalty program and they've changed the program where your points have been devalued in some way?

R: They did that to the TDG cards because when they switched it to what they call the Drive Rewards I think right now, all the points were gone with the wind.

M: They were gone altogether. But, what about them being devalued, where maybe it used to take 7,000 points to get a car wash and now it's 10,000, where they've increased the levels.

R: Shoppers did that. Shoppers did it because when I first had my Optimum card, I can't remember what it was, but after a while, it was just like, I don't get to redeem anything yet. And, when I looked, it was like, oh, they've increased it. I think it was 5,000.

M: And, they raised all the levels.

R: Yeah

R: The same thing with Air Miles. As of January 1st of this year they said if you do not redeem your Air Miles, that they will be all lost because they're going to start a new program.

M: That's another issue. They're not just devaluing them. They're setting an expiry.

R: An expiry date.

1:09:24.2

M: Yeah, an expiry date.

R: If they're expired, they're no longer usable.

R: I think the loyalty program is still valuing the rewards according to whatever information because you are getting merchandise with those rewards points. So, the value of that merchandise inflates with the normal inflation, so they have to increase the amount that you have to use.

M: For example, let's say that you're accumulating Aeroplan Miles and I'm accumulating miles because if I get 60,000 miles, I can get a trip to Europe. Well, what if one day I suddenly discover, oh, now you need 100,000 instead of 60,000 miles to get to Europe?

R: Because if you are paying for a ticket at the time you thought it was going to be $600.00, by the time you get it, if you're paying cash, it is $1,000.

R: The price of inflation.

M: Yeah, but it's also more expensive to accumulate the miles as time goes on.

R: But, they update you though with the changes.

M: Right.

R: You get a percent if they're going to get rid of that.

M: They're telling you, but at the same time, is it unfair that points you've been accumulating have suddenly been devalued?

1:10:34.5

R: I think sometimes they don't really care because they have …

M: They have a captive audience.

R: Yeah.

R: They don't care about you no more. You're just an obsolete number.

M: I think Douglas mentioned this. Have you ever heard of points that expire if you don't use them? I think, Dionne, you mentioned that.

R: Yeah, my American Eagle expired. I probably won't buy another shirt in there for a while, so they will be expired by the next time I go in there.

M: You were saying it's like three months?

R: Three to six months. Yeah, it's ridiculous. It just basically wants you to come back and buy something more, so can get emails and this kind of stuff.

R: Air Miles said that as of January 1st, but not as Doug said. It used to unlimited forever, but they're setting five years.

M: Five years. And, then you get like a warning saying, here you've got these many miles that are going to expire if you don't use them.

R: They just started it this year.

R: Actually the warning that we got was on the TV. That's the only warning we got. We never got the warning in the mail. By word of mouth and by television, Air Miles will discontinue your points after a certain time.

M: But, like for you, Ashram, how would you feel about Sears if you found out that if you don't use these points by such and such a date, they will expire?

R: If I am being told and, as you said, you get enough warning, which should be a courtesy for the relationship between me and the loyalty program.

1:12:05.6

M: There would have to be a certain grace period.

R: Yes, but if they don't, I would be pissed off. I would drop them.

M: If you just woke up one morning and it was discontinued.

R: I would discontinue using that business.

M: But, if you felt you had reasonable warning?

R: Yeah, if I had warning, why not. I understand there's something different.

R: I'd say let me go do something to redeem points.

M: Supposedly if you think of all of the points that people have in loyalty programs, like there are billions and billions of dollars worth of liability from points people have accumulated in loyalty programs that have not been used or redeemed, including people who have died with them. Well, you can leave them there. I know Aeroplan Miles you can leave in your will to somebody.

R: Are you serious?

M: Yeah. There are people who travel a lot for work who could die with a million Aeroplan miles and that could be like thousands of dollars worth of flights, but you have to leave it to somebody.

R: I didn't know that.

1:13:06.1

R: Really, eh?

M: Yeah. I don't know if every loyalty program works like that.

R: Air Miles does it.

M: Aeroplan. Maybe Air Miles too.

R: It's the same plan, isn't it?

M: No, Aeroplan is Air Canada and Air Miles is a different program.

R: Okay.

M: Have any of you ever withdrawn from a loyalty program, not just stopped using it but actually quit, like actually called them up to say I want to end my membership?

R: I should do that for my Plum card because I don't use it. I have it but I don't use it.

R: HBC is (inaudible, over-talking).

M: So, did you actually phone them and say, I don't want it any more?

R: Yeah, I cancelled everything. I just cancelled. Like a credit card with HBC was just pointless.

R: I just leave it there. If I don't like something, I just don't want to bother.

1:13:53.5

M: Yeah, because it's not like there's an annual fee, right?

R: Well, mine was like a credit card, so that's why I cancelled it.

M: That was a credit card. What about with a loyalty program?

R: Yeah, but it was a credit card with points. That's why I cancelled it. Had it not been a credit card, I probably would have just left it.

M: You would have just left it.

R: Probably.

M: When you quit, did you also try to have your personal information removed?

R: No.

R: It's still there.

M: It's still there. Well, especially if you just stopped using it as opposed to actually phoning them up and saying end my membership.

R: I figure it's been erased since I'm no longer with them.

M: Nothing gets erased.

R: That will be one of the fine print lines that we sign without looking. It says, even if you cancel, we might keep information.

M: Forever. Have you ever heard of any data breaches occurring with loyalty programs or credit cards? Does everyone know what a data breach is? What's a data breach?

R: Well, we had one at our company. Well, not really a data breach, it was more like someone who has unauthorized to access information. So, there was the risk of people's information being out into the public.

1:15:00.9

R: No, not in my instance.

M: Have you heard of data breaches?

R: Yeah. A couple of years, CIBC, they had one of their employees carrying information on a couple of hard drives and left it in his car and his car got broken into.

M: And, it had credit card numbers and account numbers.

R: T.J. Maxx had theirs as well too about a year ago.

M: And, I think Target had some kind of an incident.

R: Yeah, Target.

R: And, Winners which is T.J. Maxx.

M: In that case, I think it was actually someone who was able to hack into their system by standing right near their building and getting through a close proximity.

R: Computer hacking.

R: Using debit cards. Because some people tried a few times to get somebody trying their debit card and they tried it and they couldn't get in, so then they just stopped.

1:15:58.2

M: It's interesting because one thing that a lot of people don't realize is that loyalty programs are typically run by third parties. If you join the loyalty program let's say at Old Navy or whatever, they probably hire a company on the IT side of the loyalty program, and that company probably does the back office for lots of different loyalty programs. Recently there was a company called Card Systems in the U.S. They provide gift and loyalty card services for countless companies, and they were also the same vendor that was responsible for 40 million Visa and MasterCard cards that in 2005 there was a data breach for millions of credit card numbers got leaked or breached, which meant that people could get access to your credit card number. So, in any case, I'm just saying that that potential is there. So, does that concern you at all? As a member of a loyalty program, do you feel that if there was a data breach, are you at risk the same way you might be as a result of a credit card that you have being breached?

R: Not necessarily, no. I mean it depends on the tax bracket you're in and the percentage what you make per annum, you're not really at a risk. They target people with a million dollar bracket or more than just a smaller person.

M: What do you think, Dionne, if there was a data breach and the loyalty program you were a member of, let's say all of that data somehow got leaked and fell into the wrong hands, what happens?

R: What can you really do about it?

R: You've got to complain.

R: Complain, withdraw my card. My information is out there already.

1:18:08.1

R: Who are you going to complain to?

R: Exactly.

R: And, are they going to listen?

M: It worries you?

R: It worries me.

R: It worries me, yeah.

M: Your loyalty card doesn't have your credit card number on it, so they can't charge things to you, but it just means that that data is out there.

R: You don't know what this information is going to be used for. The information could be used for doing illegal things, that's what worries me. Especially, I mean, having the multi-culture country and the city that we live in. Names are repeated everywhere and last names, you get so … You could find somebody by the same name and last name.

M: There could be some sort of identity theft or whatever.

R: Yeah. It could happen and that person is not that person.

1:18:59.4

M: I know I'm definitely the only Derek. There's nobody else with my name because there's only ten people in the world with my last name because my ancestors kind of simplified the last name, so our family is the only one that has my last name spelled.

R: What's your last name?

M: Leebosh.

R: I've heard that one before.

M: It's probably not spelled the same way.

R: No.

M: So, I know for a fact there's nobody else on this planet that has exactly my name. But, other people, if you're John Smith, there could be millions of people. Do any of the loyalty programs you belong to have a social media presence? In other words, a Facebook page or you could follow it on Twitter or Foursquare?

R: They have apps.

M: They have apps, yeah.

R: They have a commercial on Facebook you can sign in, it just pops up. Even an email on the side you will see, would you like to sign up for this or sign up for that, sign up for the card.

M: What were the loyalty programs that you belong to Bobby?

R: Petro, Esso and Shoppers and SPC.

M: So, with those ones, can you like those on Facebook or can you follow them on Twitter, like those loyalty programs?

1:20:25.2

R: I could.

M: Danielle?

R: I could.

M: Have you ever?

R: Not really. I had one of them friend me, which I thought it was odd.

M: You were friended by a loyalty program?

R: Yeah, but it was an American one. It was like a hotel loyalty program and it friended me.

M: We didn't even talk about that. That's another loyalty program. Hotel chains all have loyalty programs too.

R: It's too expensive to stay at a hotel.

M: Dionne, have you ever followed a loyalty program on Twitter?

R: Twitter, no.

R: Most of them have apps now on iPhones.

M: So, that, in effect does it. Do you ever see friends of yours interacting this way with companies? Do you ever see that people you know like certain companies on Facebook?

1:21:18.2

R: Yeah, Facebook.

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking.)

R: I highly recommend you go to this company.

R: You'd like always. Only because you would get a free sample of something, I'd like it, but once I got my sample, I unliked it.

M: You unliked it. A lot of people probably don't bother unliking afterwards. But, when you like something, don't your friends also get the notification that you now like something?

R: Isn't there an option that people can't see what you're …?

M: What you like or don't like?

R: Yeah.

R: That's why I closed down my Facebook. I had everybody blocked.

M: Do you engage in social media, Ashram, at all?

R: Even though we get permission from (inaudible), I do not like spending time there. It's not for me. So, I would not follow a loyalty program to answer your question.

M: Right, or like it on Facebook or anything.

R: No.

1:22:09.4

M: But, are you aware that this is something that they do?

R: I spend at least ten hours a day on computers, so yeah.

M: So, do you sometimes see that friends of yours like something?

R: Yes, I get that all the time.

M: Are any of you familiar with Foursquare?

R: I've heard about it.

M: It's like you check in with different things and what to see.

R: Yes.

M: Oh, Danielle has entered the Body Shop. Danielle has got.

R: Foursquare is bad. People could follow you literally.

R: Yeah. Or, even when you enter your status, it tells you where you were at the time, and it would be like location.

R: What do you mean? Are you typing it in or does it know where you are?

R: No, automatically it'll know where you are through your smartphone.

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking.)

1:22:59.6

M: A lot of people are signing up for things and they don't realize how much they are exposing of themselves.

R: Thank god I don't have none of that.

M: What do you know about Foursquare?

R: I mean I don't use it, but I know that you could check into places and they use this information at those places that you are checking in again to create a shopping profile for you. Because they know that every Tuesday at 5:00 you go to that specific coffee shop to buy your coffee, or every Saturday morning you go have breakfast.

M: So, when you're going to arrive and it's like, ah, we've been expecting you.

R: Or, your friends know where you are at all times.

M: Do you want that?

R: No.

R: But it's a form of advertisement that you're doing.

R: You're on the highway driving, then you know, I mean hey. You see sometimes on the iPhone you see they have a map. They'll tell you exactly where you are. If your friend has the same iPhone as yours, you can check on him.

M: But, at the same time, if you see that several friends of yours have all liked a store, what's your reaction to that? Does it ever make you think, gee, maybe I should check out that store because a lot of friends of mine seem to like it?

1:24:11.1

R: Yeah, sure. Why not?

M: Or, they lied maybe.

R: Not really because usually my friends will share the information, like word of mouth. Oh, there's a sale.

M: Or, maybe some of your friends have bad taste. If he likes it, I'm not going anywhere near it. What about when you see online that people you know have checked in to a store, what's your reaction to that?

R: You're doing advertisement to the place that you're checking in.

R: I didn't quite hear you.

M: You don't have a computer you were saying?

R: No.

M: Right. But, I mean people with computers sometimes you'll see …

R: On Twitter you'll see this person has arrived and she picked this. Who cares? I don't know. I don't like that.

M: But, it's a form of advertising. And, in some cases would you check into a store publicly if it meant that you would get loyalty program points? Like let's say for example you're a member of the Scene program at Scotiabank. So, let's say, I'm just making this up, they said well you'll get double points if you click so that everybody that you're friends with on Facebook knows that you went to a movie tonight and that you're a Scene point member. You know what I mean?

1:25:34.3

R: Yeah.

M: This is something that's probably going to happen more and more.

R: That would be an invasion of privacy.

M: But, it's your choice. You're giving up privacy in exchange for extra points.

R: No, I won't do that because I don't want someone else to see where I am.

M: But, a lot of people do. The thing is obviously a lot of people do it because if you participate in social media, you see all kinds of people checking. So and so has gone to Old Navy, so and so has gone here or gone there.

R: In my case it depends on the clothing that I'm wearing. If I got a nice jacket and I bought it at Old Navy for $19.00. I turn around and you go to Sears.

M: You got a nice jacket for only $19.00.

R: This one is free. If it's got a good price here, you tell your friends, instead of going to another store that's going to cost you triple the price.

1:26:47.6

M: But, what may happen is, let's say for example that you're someone who goes to Old Navy semi regularly and they have a loyalty program and they say, well, check this box. And, every time you set foot in an Old Navy store and you have your smartphone on you, it will automatically send out a message that you've come to Old Navy, but you're going to get double the points.

R: It is different, yeah.

R: I don't want it.

R: If I'm getting like dollar value, I'll do it. Like at Scene if they tell me we give you free points where it's equivalent to a free movie, I'll do it.

M: Yeah, who cares if everybody knows what movie you went to? Unless you go to a movie that's so bad, you don't want anyone to know that you're seeing it.

R: Personally, I'm selective to who is on my Facebook, so I mean at the end of the day I don't mind if they see it.

R: The problem with this, it limits you to the device that you're using too. Not everybody is using the same device that they're not publishing their app on.

M: Sure. But the point is, in a sense maybe bribe is too strong a word to use, but the loyalty program is essentially bribing you to advertise for them.

R: To work for them.

M: Yeah, to work for them. Yeah.

1:27:59.3

R: If it's working for you, it's working for them as well.

M: Yeah. It can be mutually beneficial. I'm not saying it's a bad thing. With social media, this is something that's happening more and more where you may be given points as a reward for tweeting that you've gone to this store or something like that.

R: I guess you'll find people outside. Maybe none of us in this group like this or would do this, but I'm sure you're going to find lots of people.

M: Well, especially younger people who don't really know what privacy is.

R: They have a game in the theatre nowadays that you can play while you're on your phone. Do you collect points? I don't know. I saw a movie this weekend and I don't know if this connects with your Scene card.

R: No, I don't think it connects to your Scene card.

M: I have just one last question to ask of you. Have any of you ever used or are you aware of online loyalty programs that are like loyalty programs that only exist online where when you make online purchases that accumulate, you get points?

R: Amazon has one.

M: Amazon.

R: Old Navy does. They don't have a card, so it's like through your email address. They send you a coupon and you print it or you can just show it.

M: But, I was thinking more of something that's like a program that might be lots of different companies together, almost a bit like Air Miles, but where it's linked to your smartphone or your credit card. Is anyone aware of that at all? I mean in some cases they might even have a loyalty program where in exchange for tracking your web browsing activity, you'll get points towards.

1:29:38.5

R: Yeah, I'm with Fido as well, so Fido has given me a point card. And, so they send me an email all the time. Okay, you have this much points, so you can come and get a phone, or this phone you can get for this amount. So, it's just kind of loyalty.

M: But, in this case, I'm talking about where in some cases you might sign up online and you'll actually accumulate points even for visiting the website of a company or for tracking your web activity or things like that. This is something that's happening in the U.S. but it hasn't really come to Canada.

R: I wouldn't do that though because I got hacked one time. I signed in and they sent me a bill. Solo is a company. So, they sent me a bill. You owe us $55.60. So, I tell them. They don't want to explain anything. They go you signed in. Now you have to pay for it. Then I have to give them my information. In the hotel, they've got to pay for it. I told them no, I can't pay for it. I

mean I'm not going to pay at all. So, they go, no you have to pay for it. Then I talked to the manager. I signed in. It showed you here you win something. Because they're telling me I win something.

M: By the way, I'm just curious, when we talked about the pros and cons of loyalty programs in the beginning, are we really getting discounts through these programs, or, is the cost of the program also being passed on to the consumer? Obviously, to operate a loyalty program and to give people rewards and points, it adds to the cost of doing business. Are we really as consumers, are we better off for them, or is it that we're actually having money taken with one hand and given back with another?

1:31:36.6

R: I think the company almost breaks even. When you really think about it, we don't get that big a discount.

R: They break more than even.

R: Oh, yeah, probably.

R: They give you $10.00 back on like 80,000 Air Miles.

M: The amount of extra buying you do.

R: The amount is probably at least $50.00/$60.00 more.

R: If the store that you go to has a loyalty program, it makes sense to join, because if you don't, you're still going to be paying.

M: Yeah, as an individual you're better off belonging to the program than not belonging to it.

R: Or, go to a store that doesn't have it.

M: Right. But, I'm thinking more if none of these programs existed at all.

R: Would there be that big of a difference?

R: I think it would. Like for Costco, you have to pay the membership. I think if they had no customer going in there, they wouldn't have the stores.

M: Well, then they would have a different set-up I guess.

1:32:34.7

R: I think it depends because some stores they would opt for not increasing the price on their merchandise for getting more sales because getting your shopping habits so you come more. It depends.

M: Do you think in some cases also, because some of you talked about with some of the programs you actually have to buy a hell of a lot of stuff to get it even for free, they're kind of creating this illusion that by being a member of this club, you're getting all these benefits. But, in fact, it's much more beneficial to the company.

R: Yeah.

R: You pay for your points.

R: Yeah, rewards versus the value of the dollar you spend.

M: Yeah, and increases, because they build customer loyalty. They build a database of people they can email to that are regular customers.

R: Well, it's like Walmart. They want you to sign up for their new credit cards. You're spending there and you're using their card at the same time, so it eliminates the competition.

R: And, then you get a (inaudible) card. Same spot. You're not going anywhere.

R: You're not going any where. And, then they expand it to groceries and all this stuff.

M: But, it sounds to me like it's almost gotten to a point now where having a loyalty program is almost the cost of doing business. Maybe not if you're going to like a little individual store. But,

would you say it's gotten to a point now where if you go to any big store that's part of a chain of any kind, you almost expect there to be some kind of loyalty program?

1:34:06.2

R: Yeah, I prefer that. It's a big store so I might like something and I want to buy it, so I want the points at the same time.

M: Wasn't someone saying that Future Shop doesn't actually have points.

R: They don't have those kinds of things.

R: Myself I don't like going to Walmart.

R: But, one thing that certain stores are doing, like for instance Starbucks. They're doing Family Day, so their employees and family members can go on that specific day and get percentage off. I've noticed that certain stores are starting to do that now more often.

R: As you said right at the beginning, it's becoming part of running a business. We as consumers, we expect when we walk into a big brand new store, where are my perks because I'm spending my money in your store?

M: Particularly if you're a regular customer.

R: Absolutely. If I'm going to come here every week or every month spending a couple of hundred bucks or whatever amount, I should get something back.

R: Right. Although it's interesting now that you mention it that Future Shop is a pretty big store and they actually don't have a loyalty program.

R: Coffee shops don't have a loyalty program.

R: Imagine if Tim Hortons had a loyalty program. Imagine that. Stores like Future Shop, their main things are to sell you electronics. Electronics cost a lot. Imagine if you got $1.00 for every 100.

M: Let me put it this way. If there was a direct competitor to Future Shop and they did have a loyalty program, it would give them a competitive edge probably.

R: Theirs is Best Buy.

R: They're the same.

M: Well, Best Buy is the same company as Future Shop. Okay, well I think that covers everything we have to discuss for tonight. So, as I said, this is basically just a deep dive fishing expedition on the whole topic of loyalty programs.

END OF SESSION

JS

PROJECT: Attitudes towards Loyalty Programs

PN#: 7212

LOCATION: Ottawa

DATE: November 19, 2012 – 5:30 p.m.

(Transcriber's Note: Moderator reviews confidentiality, and advises that the session is being tape recorded and that participants are being observed behind a one-way mirror.)

M: Why don't we go around the table and maybe you could each introduce yourselves and maybe tell us your name and a bit about yourself, like what sort of work you do if you do work outside the home and who lives with you in your house, be they human or canine or feline or whatever. Do you want to begin?

R: My name is Docnina, and the C is like the K in knowledge. It's silent. My name is derived from the Saint of Charity, which is the saint de charité. My partner is from Cuba. I am living in Orleans and I'm currently working at Delarima.

M: Do you live by yourself?

R: Yeah.

M: Do you have dogs or cats?

R: No, none of that.

M: And?

R: Not nearly as exciting. John. I think I was named after Pope John, but don't hold that against. I'm a married guy with two young children. I work in the education business, so that's topical right now.

0:03:00.8

M: The education business. You mean like as a teacher?

R: In school I'm administrator, school administrator. I'm middle management, so I get to see the fun and games between the parent and student and teacher and the province.

M: All the different stakeholders.

R: Yeah.

M: Okay. And?

R: My name is Justin. I am a security guard/stage hand, so I'm involved in behind the scenes stuff to make a concert happen. I'm also a security guard. I care for my father, who's unfortunately slowly drifting into senility, so I live with him taking care of him. We've got one really annoying but lovable miniature poodle and my cat. Did I cover all the bases?

M: Yeah, it sounds like it. Yeah, I have a big orange cat myself.

R: My name is Eli. I live Kanata. I'm married with two daughters, both attending Carlton University, as I did. And, I do immigration and refuge law, practicing for the last 15 years.

M: You're a lawyer then?

R: Advocate consultant.

M: An advocate consultant. So is that like being a paralegal of sorts?

0:04:14.0

R: More or less. We have a society that regulates us which is the counsel, which is regulated by the government so we are a step above.

M: So, you're kind of a regulated profession.

R: Yes. Licensed and accredited. We do everything the lawyers do except go to the Supreme Court.

M: And, you probably get paid less than the lawyers as well.

R: That's right.

M: So, if I ever need an immigration lawyer, I can go to someone like you and I can pay much lower fees I guess.

R: You can pay $500.00. You can pay $200.00/$150.00, yes. If it's not too, too complicated (inaudible, over-talking) in most cases.

M: Okay.

R: Hi, I'm Brenda. I live in the Britannia area. I'm right now unemployed. My two best jobs were working for … well three actually, Revenue Canada, for Jean Pigott as a dishwasher, and for NCC. I live in housing rental income. I live with my cat and that's it. I love my sports and miss my hockey.

M: Okay, and finally.

R: I'm Steven. I live with my wife. We have no kids, no dogs, and I'm a programmer electronics person for Wintel testing.

0:05:44.0

M: Wintel testing. Now that we've gotten acquainted a bit, as you may have guessed from the questions we asked when we invited you to this session, we're going to be exploring the whole topic of customer loyalty programs. And, and we're doing this on behalf of a consumers' organization called Public Interest Advocacy Centre, so we're not doing this research for a loyalty program. We're doing it more from a consumer's perspective just looking at loyalty programs in general. I want to start off by asking each of you, why don't we start with you, Justin, about how many loyalty programs would you say you're a member of.

R: I've gone through my wallet. I know I have an Optimum card.

M: With Shoppers?

R: Yeah, with Shoppers, and Air Miles. I primarily both of those at Shoppers. And, then I've got an Esso Points card.

M: Any other retail stores that you have, or those are the ones that come to mind?

R: Those are the ones that come to mind. I probably have obtained other ones throughout the years, but those are the ones that I regularly actively use.

M: Do a lot of you find that the programs that you join, that you probably forget that you were ever a member of?

R: Most definitely.

0:07:08.0

M: John, what about you, how many are you a member of?

R: Two that I can recall. One that I use a lot is Amex Air Miles. The other one is Aeroplan that I continue to accumulate points on, yet I've never redeemed anything from it, so those are the two.

M: But, you don't have enough points to go places.

R: I don't know that I do. I use the Aeroplan. It was initiated through I think it was Home Hardware, so I typically only use it there and I'm not buying thousands of dollars worth of stuff, so when I remember to use it I use it there. But, I'll have to get online and see how many points I've gotten.

M: That's with Air Canada, right?

R: Yes, Star Alliance.

M: Docnina?

R: Yeah, I also have a Shoppers Optimum and I also have an HB, which is the Hudson's Bay. So, I can use it both in Zellers and the Bay, which is awesome. But, now that Zellers has switched over to Target, I'm not too sure what exactly will happen to the points however. I guess I'll have to redeem them soon if I want to take advantage of them.

M: Are there any others that you can think of that you're a member of?

R: No. There was again, Chapters Indigo, sort of a program that I was involved with, but again, it just …

0:08:36.8

M: A reward type of?

R: Yes, that's right. Yeah, so I was a part of that at some point in time but then I just started going in other directions for my readings, so that's how I stopped with … Well, not that I stopped. (Inaudible) just been accumulating. Mostly the Optimum and the HB would be…

M: Steven, how many would you say you're a member of?

R: Ten.

M: Why don't you list? Maybe some you'll mention that others it might ring a bell for.

R: President's Choice, Aeroplan, Marriott, Air Miles, Enterprise Car Rental, Esso, Best Western.

M: So, a lot of hotel chains have them.

R: Yeah, you can sign up for Rogers. I went to Australia and New Zealand, and signed up and you would get free links just by signing up, so I got discounts and stuff on the price of meals.

M: Do you travel quite a bit? Is that why you're a member of a lot of …?

R: I do travel, yes, and I also run a business on the side.

M: Brenda, what can you tell us about your loyalty programs?

R: Air Miles, President's Choice. I don't know whether Costco counts. Does that count?

M: Yeah. Are you part of Costco as well?

R: Zellers. I'm like this lady here. I have to decide when I'm going to have a look into the redemption of the points and stuff.

0:10:22.6

M: What the exchange rate is.

R: Yeah. I'm just hoping that when they do change over that they do keep one particular cat food, the Mixed Grill because my cat and my mother's cat loves that.

M: He likes his Mixed Grill.

R: Oh yeah. It's like dill weed to rabbits. They just inhale it. They don't eat it. They just (sucking noise) and it's gone.

R: I wonder what they put in that.

M: Eli.

R: Almost like Justin, exactly the same, except I add Starbucks as most frequently used in my case. I use it on a daily basis.

M: What does their loyalty program consist of?

R: You earn reward points. You go there and you have a free coffee after so many purchases. You could get a latte, or you get something that is $4.00/$5.00/$6.00. And, Optimum and Esso I use

a lot because I drive a lot. The rest is kind of hidden. Esso and the driving and coffee are more visible and being used every day. Aeroplan is once in a while.

M: What I'm going to have us do now is break up into two teams since there are six of you. Why don't the three of your work together and the three of you work together, and why don't you just discuss amongst yourselves for a few minutes what do you see as being the pros and the cons of loyalty programs in general like the ones that you've named. And, these could be pros and cons from your perspective as a consumer, or they could be pros and cons in terms of just are they a good or a bad thing for society as a whole, the fact that they're proliferating. I mean the pros are probably relatively obvious, but I curious particularly if you can think of any kind of down side or any disadvantage to the proliferation of loyalty programs. So, why don't you talk amongst yourselves and get the ice broken as the saying goes. (Respondents work on exercise.) Has everyone come up with some pros and cons? For the three of you, what are the pros of loyalty programs?

0:15:48.3

R: One thing I have to point out is that I can take different loyalty programs and can combine that with a third. So, hotel, gas, I can put to Aeroplan.

M: So, you can bundle them or you can accumulate in different places.

R: Yeah.

R: Yeah, so I don't accumulate the points say at the Marriott. I accumulate it for Aeroplan.

M: Right. You mean because of the partnerships that they have and things like that.

R: Yeah. And, then you have to choose which way they go.

M: No double dipping. What else in an advantage or a pro?

R: Well, I think it's good when you redeem your points. You get things for your points.

R: Free groceries.

R: Free coffee.

R: It's not costing you. I think that's the good point. But, it does take a while to accumulate those points. At the end of the day some do it.

0:16:47.1

M: It can take a long time to accumulate.

R: Well, yeah, it can. In somebody's case like mine where you're on a limited income right now.

M: You're not spending thousands of dollars.

R: No, not like it used to be. Twice a week I'd be out buying stuff.

M: Any other advantages?

R: Well, it helps with Christmas. Yeah, if you can start Christmas shopping. After Christmas is done one year, you can start doing that as well. It helps.

M: What about the three of you, what did you come up with as being pros or advantages?

R: Probably a similar thing, free stuff. When you accumulate points, you get free stuff.

R: I don't have much more to add to that. However, it also allows us to continue to consume our favourite products from these companies and make points while we're a part of it.

M: It gives you a feeling of affiliation.

R: So, it's almost like an equal exchange. And, also I guess it's nice to feel included. So, for example, I didn't know that Costco would be included, but I like the idea of being able to show that card and being able to get the extra.

0:18:29.3

M: Membership has its privileges.

R: Of sorts, and that feels good.

M: Obviously every loyalty program has different rules, but some of them do give you more incentives.

R: More incentives.

M: John, what are the advantages to you?

R: The obvious advantage was free stuff in whatever form that's going to be, if it's a product, if it's some kind of dollar amount discount. The one con that I identified was changing of the reward system. So, for example, the one I'm acquainted with is Amex, where let's say it's not the exact figure but for the sake of argument, if 10 reward miles got you this amount of product, it now cost 15 miles.

M: So, they've kind of devalued the points.

R: Yes, exactly. I saw that as a drawback.

M: What about the three of you in terms of the cons or the disadvantages?

R: It was my 50th birthday, so my wife and I went on this trip, so we did it in style. And, I thought I'm going to get all sorts of points and I'm going to get it upgraded and all this stuff. It turns out only a fraction actually counted towards status. Oh, so I have all these points, but only part of them will get the status, and they expire.

0:20:01.1

M: Sometimes you have to kind of use them or lose them type of thing you mean?

R: So, you can't accumulate over a longer time. You have to accumulate over a shorter time.

M: Any other disadvantages?

R: I was basically the same thing. Use them or lose them. It's either cash in.

R: I have a brother-in-law who's in business, and he will purchase for his bakery as much stock and inventory that he can using Visa, Amex or whatever the reward card is, simply because it does provide points for travel, and he uses it almost exclusively for air travel.

M: So, you think in some cases it may subconsciously make you buy more than you ever would because you want to aim for a certain threshold?

R: I think for some folks it would. His is fairly regulated by the demands of his business. The market dictates how much product he will buy and create, but I would imagine some folk feel compelled or they get hooked on. I can see that happening.

M: That can be a con, not necessarily for you personally, but that you could see as a potential.

R: For me that's a con because I've done …especially at Costco, I've done it.

R: That's the whole notion behind the loyalty is to help you, the consumer, to be …

0:21:29.4

R: A very good customer.

R: Semi blinded. They just want you to spend and spend and spend. Let's say Esso for example, you go and …

M: They're certainly not doing it as a favour to you.

R: No. It's a capitalist system. That's how the system centres. Let's say I go on a weekly basis twice to Esso, and somehow I'm blinded. I'm not looking left and right to see the price at other stations. So, I got used to going to that corner thinking I'm going to get a reward down the road, but I may have saved four or five cents at another station.

M: You actually might have saved more money by going somewhere else.

R: We are creatures of habit. The same thing with Costco. It's so expensive on certain items. You could have bought it at Loblaws for half the price for a special. But, you go (inaudible). So, the corporation wants you unconsciously to do things.

M: It's building your loyalty. The loyalty program makes you loyal.

R: It is a hidden trap and consumer beware. In my case, I go to Starbucks. I get a coffee every week free and I'm still going there, but you've got to be careful.

R: It's so true.

R: I think maybe Costco is sort of like bulk. Everything is so large, so that's what I basically go for. I stock up.

M: What about the idea that they may be giving you things for free, but are we all paying indirectly?

0:23:02.1

R: Well, of course, we're paying indirectly for it because, for example, like at Shoppers you can get X amount of points if you purchase the Life Ibuprofen rather than your gel capsule Advil. And, so you say okay, well, it's Ibuprofen. I'm saving or what have you, but ...

M: But, it's extra points.

R: Yeah. But, then it's going out of your way. It's inconvenient and you're conscious so that you can get these points. Or, you have to get two. I mean that's another thing, and I'm sure you probably get that with PC possibly sometimes. They're better than Metro. At Metro you have to buy two things to get the cheaper price. But, then it's still, okay, we're saving in the long run. My budget was for (inaudible). This is exactly what I was coming for. So, I understand where Eli is coming from, and to add to what you were saying regarding your Esso example. My parents are Petro card points people, and I find that we go out of our way to always go to the Petro rather than, well, why don't we go to Pioneer? It's like $1.15 here. Why are you going to Petro where it's $1.16.9. So, it's essentially almost at the $1.17 mark.

M: So, you're sometimes paying slightly more because you're a member.

R: Sort of, so it becomes a con.

R: The same thing with Shoppers Drug Mart. We somehow are considered like their individual army of bees fighting Pharma Plus. They are using us to fight each other. Pharma Plus and Shoppers Drug Mart are different. We are the tools.

0:24:55.1

M: Pharma Plus has a loyalty program.

R: That's right. (Inaudible, over-talking.)

M: In their competition.

R: We are the market share.

R: We are their underground kind of body, fighting on their behalf.

R: We're foot soldiers, eh?

R: Yeah, but it's also the time factor. We got sucked into, oh, if you spend a little bit more, then you'll get a gift card for gas at Shoppers Drug Mart. Okay, we'll do that. And, then it expired before I could use the card. It was a one week.

R: But, they didn't tell you before that time frame. They didn't say nothing. They offer it by they don't.

M: Do any of you remember what motivated you to join? Because I'm sure most of us around the table are old enough to remember a time when loyalty cards didn't really exist. Loyalty programs were introduced in the late 1980's or thereabouts. Before that they didn't really exist. John, do you remember how you first got attracted to joining one?

R: I'll tell you why I joined. I was one of those folks that didn't really like the idea of having a credit card balance. I was pretty careful with my budget and my finances. I needed a credit card because I wanted to rent a vehicle on holiday, so I got a credit card. I didn't really use it and then I started to use it a little bit. If I change over to this credit card, if and when I use it, it'll give

me something back. So, that's what attracted me to it. It was the loyalty I guess to the card that it would reciprocate back.

0:26:37.4

M: Justin, do you remember what made you first join a loyalty program?

R: Probably a similar answer to everyone else. It's just the idea of being able to accumulate points and eventually get something for free.

R: So, the point I was going to make. It's a con and it applies to Shoppers. I will go to Shoppers to buy a number of books. This was last Christmas. Yeah, they sell books now. So, a girl later firing hornets' nests and all that jazz, so my female companion at the time had to have all three. So, I purchased all three to the tune of a decent dollar amount. But, what I'm getting at here is that I went there purposely because I knew I was going to use my Optimum card and buy all these books and accumulate the points. But, guess what? The clerk neglects to ask me for my Optimum card and I neglect to provide it. So, I get back home and I just spent $170.00 on books. I should have accumulated points.

M: You should go back with the receipt.

R: I tried to and I was refused. I went back 48 hours later and spoke to this very snotty girl. Like I'm 33 years of age, and she couldn't have been much older than 16 or something.

M: Then, on top of it, it could have also turned out that you could have bought the same books slightly cheaper at another store.

R: If I went to Chapters or wherever. I could possibly save money, but I went purposely to Shoppers to accumulate the points.

0:28:28.8

R: That was a pretty good point. And, as we're getting our examples out, I'm discovering two or three other reward cards that I've got that I don't even think of them as reward cards.

M: Like what?

R: Sears.

M: That's a loyalty program.

R: And, I got it exclusively for the loyalty part. So, I'd be a person who would buy a shirt. This shirt I bought at Sears. I would buy that with my Sears card and I would say to them, so what's my balance? Okay, that's $46.00. Let me pay that off right now. I'd pay that with my debit card. I'm one of those folks that don't like an accumulation of debt. I like to get things squared away. But, it didn't even dawn on me that, yeah, I guess I have two or three other places that are loyalty. My parents only travel through Sears because of that.

R: Is it true that the first loyalty program ever envisioned in Canada is Canadian Tire?

R: Oh, I have a Canadian Tire card.

M: You're correct in that. But, I think with the Canadian Tire money was that it wasn't like they had a database. You weren't in a database because you didn't have a personalized membership. They would just give you their sort of monopoly money.

0:29:58.0

R: But, that would make you come back.

M: But, you didn't have like a card that was accumulating.

R: But, that's the beginning.

M: That was a precursor to a loyalty program.

R: Amazing marketing and it's still going on.

R: It's one of the original rewards I would think.

R: Apparently somewhere in Western Canada, they're trying to propose where you just get a card instead of getting the paper back because (inaudible, over-talking) whole purposes.

M: When you think of the stores or companies that you frequent, and I'm asking all of you, do most of them have a loyalty program? Is it almost kind of expected that stores that you regularly go to?

R: Well, now they do. For example, my partner's daughter, she is like a big fan of all of these hip new stores, like Joshua Perets or the Justin and so on and so forth. So, essentially you just give them your email address and they'll give you like exclusive member emails where they can give you in-house sales and that sort of stuff. I'm not sure if he had to pay to be involved with this.

M: You probably just give them your name and email.

R: Your name and email. I think that's as far as it goes.

R: That's right, and I sign up to get clothing discounts. And, every week I get an email.

M: Two for one shoes.

R: This was (inaudible). Any way, there was a class there. We always go down and buy clothes. I forgot about that one.

M: Another loyalty program that a lot of people often referred to is the Scene card for the movies.

0:31:45.0

R: Oh yes. I'm not a member. I should though. That's Scotiabank and Scene?

M: Yeah. But, that's like a loyalty program for a chain of movie theatres.

R: Right. I guess they're related to … I mean not at my bank, at least not yet.

M: You don't have to bank at Scotiabank.

R: You don't?

R: You don't have to bank there.

R: Oh neat. I don't know who you're working for, but I'm going to (inaudible, laughter) as soon as I'm done today. Oh, that's great. I thought it was just through Scotiabank that you can be a Scene card member.

R: It's through Scotiabank, but you don't have to be a customer of Scotiabank.

M: Just to digress quickly. If you bank at Scotiabank, then you also get points for using the debit card. But, if you don't bank at Scotiabank, then every time you see a movie, you get 100 points.

And, every time you get 1,000 points, you get a free movie. It's just that if you don't bank at Scotiabank, you only get points for going to movies. Have any of you ever recommended a loyalty program to a friend? Justin?

R: It just pops in my head. I don't know if it's called Urban Spice. You live in Britannia?

R: Yes.

0:33:05.7

R: You know you've got Carling and Richmond, there's that plaza there where you've got the Britannia Pub. And there was like a health food type place there.

R: Rainbow.

R: Yeah, Rainbow Foods. That place is awesome because you can get a membership card there, only you didn't actually have to get issued a card. So, I didn't have to stick another bloody card in my wallet. They had to add me to database. There was no charge for the membership and all I had to do was give my phone number. I bought banana chips there ten times and walked out with the 11th bag free. It was awesome.

M: So, have you recommended that to people?

R: Yeah, because it was so painless. It took nothing.

M: Steven, have you ever said to someone, oh, you really should join this?

R: I don't know about Phase 2. They're gone.

R: I miss Phase 2.

R: A clothing store.

R: Yeah, I believe where Shoppers is now.

R: This was a used clothing store, that had great clothing costs. Yeah, I tell people. And, also I have to admit the President's Choice stuff, we've redeemed thousands of dollars in groceries, and we didn't change our spending habits. Instead of paying cash, we just paid credit.

R: And, I think the way you and I think is probably not the norm.

R: No.

M: Because you're paying it off right away.

0:34:42.8

R: Yes.

R: Yeah. And, I think that other folks probably well intended and they're buying into something that makes sense, I think they get drawn in sometimes further than they should.

R: Most people.

R: That's probably representative of most people, yes.

M: But, of course, there's a difference between a loyalty program that it's sort of credit card based, as opposed to where you just get points for just making cash purchases.

R: I put my house foundation, when it had to get repaired, on that. One minute the guy said well you can pay by credit line. I had the cash luckily at the time to fix my house and I just charged the whole thing. And, then I paid it off.

R: I do that as well.

M: Thinking particularly about retail stores and that sort of thing, how important a factor is the loyalty program when you're deciding where to shop? For example, I don't know whether you really think Starbucks has the best coffee in the world, but would you ever find yourself going to Starbucks instead of, let's say, Second Cup because they have a loyalty program? Does it even subconsciously end up steering you to shop at one place instead of another?

R: No. Basically, no, I could go to Timothy's. I could go Second Cup. The card doesn't play a major role in me deciding to go to Starbucks.

0:36:25.4

R: I participated last year in the Roll up the Rim contest with Tim Hortons, which I would consider that to be a non membership reward system so to speak because you're likely to roll up something.

R: That's not a loyalty?

R: Not necessarily. But, with the Roll up the Rim, you do have a certain amount of time where you can redeem stuff. I've never really won anything ever in my entire life besides maybe lunch with the principal in Grade 5. I got to go to McDonald's with him and that was fantastic. However, I ended up winning two $100.00 gift cards. These were ridiculously loyal because when I sent off the winnings to the Prince Edward Island head office, I even sent it off registered, and they had given me the facts. But, then I became more loyal to the Tim Hortons chain, plus it's more convenient. They're everywhere. And, also part of the Tim Hortons I was very (inaudible) because they had someone to evaluate the Starbucks so on and so forth. However, it was more of a (inaudible, over-talking).

M: A rudimentary kind of, same idea.

R: Exactly. So, then I had to go there more because I'd be like, okay, I'm only two away and I could treat my friend to one and get a free one the next time.

R: You're not stuck on the brand for the particular flavour, right, like if it's a coffee?

R: I am now. I do like the way that Tim Hortons prepares their coffee. However, I do like the Guatemala medium from (inaudible) as well.

M: As you know, companies are always trying to build brand loyalty. I guess what I'm curious about it when you think of the companies whose loyalty programs you belong to, I know people don't usually like to admit this about themselves, but do you think that the loyalty program actually does make you feel more loyal to the company itself?

0:38:43.3

R: In a sense, yes.

R: Well, yeah, I go to Shoppers more than Rexall. I mean even if they had some sales, they would have to have at least five items that I would need.

M: If the loyalty programs didn't exist, you probably wouldn't go out of your way to go to Shoppers?

R: That's right.

R: Precisely. I go past a Chapters to get to the Shoppers to get those books. So, that's being loyal to Shoppers.

R: The point system for President's Choice. You can go to Metro and buy milk. I guess you can go to Canadian Tire to buy milk, but that's cheaper but it's a pain in the ass.

M: But, you also chose to get the President's Choice card instead of another card.

R: Yeah, the free banking and all of that.

M: I guess the President's Choice, the loyalty program, is that that's where you're banking, right?

R: Yes, I'm banking with them also.

M: That's where your card is?

0:39:37.3

R: Yeah. That's with MasterCard. They're actually two separate. One is CIBC and one is MasterCard. But, if you're going for groceries, it's like if you go to Metro, they've got specials on such and such, but we can go to Loblaws and make about $60.00 on points. And, if you walk out, you've spent $3.00 and you bought $60.00 worth of groceries.

R: Plus the market value.

R: There's a way to these loyalty programs.

R: The must have done focus groups before.

M: Oh yeah. And, also, when the first company introduced one, their competitors all had to match them.

R: You think they would know by human nature the way that we are. Anybody who gives you a gift for some reason, you start feeling alive. You are feeling warm. It is mass psychology or whatever.

M: That's why when you're in a bazaar in the Middle East, they'll give you a cup of tea before they start bargaining with you.

R: The handshake that you make it. Like I have nothing in my hand. So, I'm giving you a gift of a coffee or something. It is something to make you feel good.

R: See I tried that. I get in a compelled moment. I could feel, okay, I got something.

R: Positive.

R: Free. I got something out of it and I feel more or less.

0:41:14.8

M: Do you think you've ever bought more from a company because of the loyalty program than you otherwise would have?

R: Oh, yeah.

R: Geez, I don't think so.

M: What would be an example of that?

R: Well, just the one-day sale. No, I don't think so. I haven't changed.

R: I'll explain. I'm not drawn to that. I don't think I will overspend.

M: Right. It's not necessarily over-spending. You might well be able to afford it, but I'm just thinking more a situation where maybe you would only buy one pad of paper but you bought two because by buying two, you got more points. You bought more.

R: Occasionally at the liquor store, you get more Air Miles. I pay extra for this bottle of wine versus the other. It doesn't matter. The whole co-op thing is okay, fine, it doesn't matter.

R: I know my wife does that, women more than men. We are a little bit thirsty.

R: Take it easy. What do you mean?

R: Like I said, I kind of work it the other way. For my Amex card, I work it to my advantage. It's sort of a long story, but I'll give you the Reader's Digest version. So, my wife is on a medication that's very pricey. For six weeks it's $3,500. So, thank god my job has me covered with some healthcare benefits. So, I had said to my loving beneficiary, instead of paying that directly to the drug provider, how about I pay for it on my Amex card and you issue me a payment. And, they said, that wouldn't be a problem.

0:43:05.4

M: And, that way you'd get the points. Well, that's a lot of points for you.

R: That's awesome.

R: See that's how I would look at one of these cards. Rather than buying more of, I would say, how can I use this.

M: But, it's a bit of a different situation because that's like a credit card as opposed to a loyalty program where you actually have to buy the product based on the fact that we actually do have to purchase the drug.

R: Right.

M: It's going to happen one way or the other.

R: Yeah. I know this kind of sucks in one sense, however there is a rainbow.

M: Have any of you ever felt less loyal to a company because you've had some sort of bad experience with the loyalty program? Like there was a store that you regularly went to. You were part of a loyalty program. You came to the conclusion that it was kind of a rip off and it made you feel …?

R: So I terminated it.

R: Why? I'm curious.

0:44:03.1

R: They reduced the percentage that you get back Canadian Tire money. So, I used to only pay cash. And, then it's like, no, wait a minute. I'll go to my loyalty program and get my points on my MasterCard. I get more from it than I do in Canadian Tire money. It used to be 3% and now it's like 1.5% that you get at Canadian Tire.

M: So, that kind of made you think.

R: I stopped using it.

M: Do you still shop at Canadian Tire?

R: Occasionally. But, I had to, I needed a battery.

M: When you do redeem points, what do you typically get?

R: (Inaudible), so, I get easily like $20.00. I accumulate enough to get at least $20.00, which isn't much.

R: You get a discount off something because you've got enough points.

R: Yeah.

M: Is it usually a discount, or do sometimes they have actual things?

R: Oh, no.

R: For me, I'm supposed to be independent. My wife and I, I have Amex and she has Visa. She will gain Air Miles points exclusively for that purpose for flying, and she'll catch them for flights. Mine gives me an ability, because I drive a fair bit, to redeem my Air Miles for a cash coupon like

a fuel certificate. So, knowing that every second year we have a fairly long summer trip in a car to the East Coast and back, I will put everything toward the fuel certificate for the trip. For me, I don't mind saving that over a couple of years because I don't really cash it in for anything else. So, I'll come out with maybe, and that will definitely change now with this new drug purchase, but I'll come out with $400.00 or $500.00 or $600.00 in fuel certificates, and that'll be our ride down and back.

0:46:09.3

M: So, that's what you get. At then at the other end of the spectrum, Eli, you were saying you get a free coffee periodically at Starbucks.

R: Yeah, that's tangible.

M: So, that's something tangible.

R: And, as you said, they make you feel part of their family somehow. You walk in and you give them that card. They start to know you by name and it gives you that warm feeling.

M: Do any of the programs that you're members of recognize you in a manner other than giving you rewards? Do you ever get some sort of personally acknowledgement?

R: Even if they do, it means that they have special happenings, special programs.

M: Do they roll out the red carpet?

R: Actually, yes, when I check in as a silver member, I get a bottle of water. When I check in to the Aero Loon in Lake Placid, I get a little kit bag and inside it they had some power bars and stuff like that. And, that's special.

0:47:30.1

M: Yes, the hospitality sector I guess would have something if you're a frequent guest. You would get a basket of fruit in their room or whatever.

R: If you spend that much money, yeah.

M: What about, for example, do you ever get like a special phone number to expedite customer service issues? I know some loyalty programs if you're a member, there might be a sale where you'd get to buy stuff several hours before the rest of the general public.

R: At Justin's.

R: I never used it but Amex has a front of the line service.

M: Oh, for buying tickets.

R: For tickets and for concerts and things like that.

M: Have you ever been asked your opinion on how to improve a company's loyalty program?

R: No.

M: What about when it comes to actually redeeming rewards, are some loyalty programs easier than others when it comes to actually redeeming?

R: I think they're all (inaudible). Just the other day I got rid of a stack of this much Canadian Tire money. It would be a piece of cake if it was a little card sort of thing. Now, if I'm not in, I think well I'm going to go in that direction. Again, I think that it's coming along, but I would love it if they just had a card for Canadian Tire money. But, no, it was really easy to deal with them and it's easy to deal with Shoppers. They always circle the points for you. They tell you, okay, so this is what you have.

0:49:07.5

M: What about with Air Miles? How do you redeem those?

R: I never get enough.

R: You can do it over the phone or online.

R: But, the phone number I believe for Air Miles has been changed, because my mother had a phone number on the back of the card on her card and I didn't even think of checking online. There was a phone number, and she's got a newer card than I've got, and apparently the number when she called was out of service. They turned around and gave her another number and here she was talking to some woman in Texas, who wasn't even part of your parcel to Air Miles and so on and so forth. I can't say now how easy it is.

R: Maybe the travel agency or the travel agent would check it out.

R: I know I've redeemed through Amex pretty simply and pretty easily.

M: So, it hasn't been a big hassle?

R: No, I've done it online now. I'll probably do that for Aeroplan. And, I've got two young children, so with the amount of time you get on a computer changes. I haven't been too successful.

R: It's easier by phone.

R: Probably I'll have to go that route.

R: It's actually quite easy by phone.

R: And, no trouble with Costco. Last week we were there and I had a slight problem, so they politely gave the information and in no time at all, looked on the computer, got everything I required.

0:50:41.3

R: But, I do have problems with communications to head office to get to pick my groceries. And, it'll say communication error, communication error. Sorry, you can't use your points today.

M: Is that when you're at the cash?

R: Yeah.

M: And, that's with which store?

R: Loblaws.

M: By the way, when any of you first signed up for loyalty programs, do you remember anything about what you had to fill in, like what information you had to provide?

R: It varies.

R: You get the form. It's a genetic form. They start asking now for emails and things like that. There are some optional things and some mandatory things. So, there is a privacy issue there.

R: But, they do give you a free bag of (inaudible).

M: A free bag of what?

R: When I signed up (inaudible).

R: Right?

0:51:40.9

R: Not now, not what I did.

R: So, I look on my grocery list. I guess I'll give this a try. (Inaudible, over-talking) because my credit, I'm just trying to. I'm kind of like you right now, I find that it's just I'm home. I don't even know if that could even work. But, another reason why I chose to sign up was because I got (inaudible).

M: Do you remember if they just wanted your name and address?

R: Oh, they actually wanted my licence, yeah, just to verify my address.

R: It's monetary. It's actually money. It's not as if you're getting free coffee, which is not very monetary. A free coffee, you're talking about cents to them.

R: The problem that I have with those forms is email, cellular phones. There are still those of us that don't have these things because we're not rich enough to have them, and I'm one of them.

M: Would they ever ask you when you were signing up for preference information, like are there certain categories for goods or services?

R: Yes.

R: Yes.

M: I'm interested in books and clothes.

R: Yeah.

0:53:02.9

M: Do you remember whether there was an option to opt out of future solicitations?

R: Yes.

R: Yeah.

R: Sometimes you have to remind them I guess.

R: I get solicited from President's Choice when I said not to.

M: Like emails and stuff like that?

R: Yeah. Emails are (inaudible). It's easy to lose, but a phone call is an interruption.

M: Do you remember if there was a privacy policy when you signed up?

R: It depends on how much information there was on the form?

M: Does anyone actually remember there being a privacy policy?

R: I always look for a privacy policy.

M: Was there one?

R: I'm pretty sure for Optimum member there was a privacy policy. Anything I sign, I read through from top to bottom.

M: So, what do you remember about the privacy policy?

0:53:56.0

R: Something with that sort of standard, we promise not to share your life with the world kind of statement.

R: (Inaudible.)

R: Yeah, exactly. That sort of question.

R: But, I plan to tell you before going to third parties on our behalf. Or, the call centres that call you up, they'll say that.

M: Because I want to get into this whole issue of privacy. When you first signed up for loyalty programs, did any of you have any concerns about privacy?

R: I do.

M: Did that cross your mind at all?

R: Any form that looks for any identification, I don't want to fill out unless it is a bank.

M: You mean asking for your SIN number and things like that?

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking.)

R: Canada Post wants your SIN to stop your mail.

R: But, there is a danger that some corporations they do sell the database that they have the names and the contacts to another institution.

0:55:03.3

M: Yeah, but you don't necessarily have given your SIN number, but just the fact that they have a record.

R: Your name and what you buy and demographic trends, whatever you buy at any store and they swipe it, there are people just sitting analyzing your shopping habits and all that stuff.

R: Even at the checkout, I'm thinking of returns, but I can understand why. I've returned whatever to, let's say, Canadian Tire. They'll want to know my name, address and telephone number. But, I'm sure they want to make sure I'm not a person that brings back 90% of what he buys there, and that's fine with me.

M: Eli mentioned an example of this, but how do you think companies use the information you give them when you sign up? Let's say if you join Air Miles?

R: I guess they would do the same thing as the Gmail with Facebook nowadays. They'll probably be able to check certain patterns and they'll be able to target you for other stuff that you would be interested in. I think that's a possibility. I don't know how that quite works.

R: I think it would be marketed to like.

M: Marketing research information sort of thing.

R: Similar to private corporations. Even probably to the …

R: Data is valuable.

R: I don't know if I'd consider it (inaudible).

0:56:33.0

R: John Tesh on the radio show. There was a study at Harvard University the other day, they could predict 91% of the time the danger of a family breaking up or a divorce by the kind of purchases they purchased or the hotel they go to or what kind of flowers.

M: So, what hotel and flowers predict?

R: They studied the data and they can predict X, Y, Z.

R: Maybe it was the No Tell Motel.

R: So, they do study these things. They know about you and me more than you think.

M: When it comes to even your purchase and activity profile. Let's say if you're a member of any loyalty program, whether you're a member of Optimum at Shoppers Drug Mart, for example, they must have some record of every transaction you put on there, are there any limits or rules on how they can use that information or what they can do with it?

R: Yeah, whatever you've signed off on that form.

R: I know I've had amendments to these contracts. Sometimes there is a referendum, for example, on garbage. This is what it is. You have to switch our dates and that's the name of the game. I don't know. I'm curious if they would be allowed to use our information.

R: (Inaudible).

M: How many people have really read all the fine print?

0:58:07.7

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: I read it.

R: On the back of the form.

R: It's so small.

R: I only read …

M: Except for Apple.

R: Oh maybe Apple.

R: It's hard enough to read with reading glasses because it is so small.

R: Buyers beware.

M: Have you ever found that after enrolling in a loyalty program, you get more ads and promotions than before?

R: Yeah.

M: Like emails and things like that?

R: Phone calls.

R: I would get a thousand probably Chapter Indigo emails that every time I see it on my email, I just click, put in my Chapter folder and that's essentially.

0:58:48.2

M: And, how often do you go through everything in that folder?

R: Right. Thank you very much. It's true. Maybe like once a month I peruse if I'm looking for a book or I'd like to know where things are at.

M: Justin, do you get emails from Shoppers?

R: I've probably flagged them as spam or something like that so I don't get them. With any of the telemarketers or anything like that, if they call, I simply ask them to put me on their no call list.

They have to do that. And, then once they do that, as you were saying, they pass the numbers from one company to the next. If I say put me on your no call list, it's like striking my name off the records.

M: What about even getting stuff in the mail like promotions and things like that?

R: I get nothing in the mail.

R: I've gotten stuff in the mail. Some things I've sort gone after so to speak.

M: It's not necessarily a bad thing. You might get information about promotions that are things that you might want.

R: Mark's will give you the $10.00 discount if you spend $50.00.

R: You've got Sobeys that they send on a regular basis I think a quarterly summary of the points you have or what you've got for the whole family, so they send it every three months. And, even what you've got so far.

1:00:07.3

R: And, in the mail I've been finding I've been getting a lot more coupons for things.

M: Do you get those because you're a member of that loyalty program?

R: Yeah.

M: It means you're on their list or whatever.

R: Yeah.

M: Is that necessarily a bad thing? For example, when you're thinking of joining a loyalty program, does it ever cross your mind, okay, if I join this program, I'll get discounts and I'll get points that I can redeem but I'll probably also get more emails and more stuff in the mail because once you join a loyalty program you're in their database?

R: Yeah.

R: I do, and then that's why I use a different email and a different address.

M: But, you still join the program. But, it hasn't made you not join a program?

R: No.

R: No, it just stuffs the mailbox at the UPS store.

R: The mailman keeps putting it in.

R: I know sometimes I can't get the stuff out of the box.

1:01:12.6

R: But, then for me getting the coupons and stuff, is sort of good for me because maybe I won't use everything, but there are other people that I know that can use these coupons and do use these products, so I pass them on.

M: But, getting back to the record that they have on your transactions, are there some kinds of purchases that you feel are more private than others?

R: Certainly.

M: Like what?

R: At the drug store. I don't want Shoppers to know how many prophylactics I purchase let's say.

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking, laughter.)

M: You might not feel it's a big deal if what you buy at the grocery store is shared, but what you buy at a drug store might be more sensitive.

R: Yeah.

M: Even things like buying hair dye or personal hair products.

R: Or the liquor store. That would be the only thing. And, I would buy everything there on my Amex.

M: Does the LCBO have a loyalty program?

R: Yeah, they're Air Miles. You could get tracked probably through Air Miles.

1:02:45.2

R: Well, yes because (inaudible, over-talking.)

M: That's what I'm wondering about. The reason I'm throwing this out there is, okay, just hypothetically, and since Justin raised this, you said you're a member of the Optimum program, right? So, hypothetically, I might think, okay, I fill up my car with gas every couple of days, so maybe I'll join the Esso program because even if I become part of some database, the most anyone could ever find out about me is that I buy gas every couple of days, like me and five million other people. But, if I become a member of Optimum at Shoppers Drug Mart, every single thing I buy at the drug store is now attached to that file. That means theoretically there is a dossier about me.

R: How do they get that information?

M: Because I think when you buy prescription drugs and everyone gets that …

R: But, I don't think they can get it going through prescription drugs.

M: No. But, there are other things you're buying there that you might feel a little embarrassed about the world knowing about.

R: They can also find your habits of where you go.

R: (Inaudible). You're not in a certain spot. You're outside of your normal place. That information is stored too. I guess it depends on your level of comfort, right? I've always kind of chuckled. I have a name that is … my first name and last name John Stewart.

M: There are thousands of them.

R: There are oceans, so they could do a thousand of me. I could care less.

M: If you had a name that was more a one-of-a-kind name.

1:04:31.5

R: I probably would, yeah.

R: There's dozens of me.

R: If I had an identified background, I'd probably be very mindful. That's a profile.

M: Have you ever tried to access the information the company has stored about you as a result of being a member of their loyalty program?

R: No.

M: Do you think you could ever find out?

R: Well, I had to replace my HBC card for the Hudson's Bay thing. I had to replace it because it was misplaced for a temporary period. They weren't able to get any information for me from Zellers at all. So, that was kind of cool I guess because that's what you guys are right about. So, they can't track me. I've been accumulating the points from one card to the other, and when it gets replaced. So, that's again a good thing, but then it's a bad thing because then you won't be able to get those points that you already had.

M: This goes back to what Eli was saying before about some of the profiling. If you're a member of a loyalty program, they probably have a file about you that doesn't just list how many coffees you buy a week, you're probably then segmented or whatever.

R: But, you can (inaudible). You go sometimes to Starbucks and the computer system spits out a free survey, and that survey you fill and you win a coffee. That survey when you go and fill it on your computer, they ask you all kinds of questions about work, is it close to work or home, what is your gender, what is your ethnic persuasion, how much money you make a year, annual salary.

1:06:22.8

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking).

M: But, is that a survey that's linked to your personal … do they actually know your membership number with it?

R: No, but I think the accumulation of that, they would know the kind of customers they have.

M: Let's say, for example, with a program like Air Miles, do you think if you're a member of Air Miles, that you can easily see what they have about you that someone working at Air Miles knows about you?

R: You can see what points you've accumulated where. You can see that.

M: But, if somebody who works for Air Miles, do they see more about you than you can see about yourself do you think?

R: Well, I don't think there's anything more for Air Miles because all your purchases are on the statement and they're rolled out at point of sale.

M: But, it might show how much you've redeemed and how many?

R: Air Miles?

R: I don't have Air Miles. However, when I do make purchases at LCBO, if I see that person in front of me having an Air Miles or the one behind me setting themselves up for the purchase and they have Air Miles, I'd try to allocate my points that Air Miles might.

1:07:37.0

R: You can't though.

R: They do. That's what I was going to mention. So, maybe that's why people (inaudible) and maybe they do track. Well, this individual here is purchasing the (inaudible) and Shiraz wine, you are. So, maybe you're right on that because I'm curious. So, why is that? I'm giving him permission. It's not a big deal. Points are just points. Yeah, they don't quite let us do that anymore.

R: You signed for that. Agreement of usage of the points' card.

M: You probably signed away a lot and you don't realize.

R: Absolutely.

M: It's not to say that anything evil is going to happen. Should you be able to have access to the personal information the loyalty program has about you?

R: I think we should.

M: Because they may even link you to other databases and stuff. I'm not trying to plant fear or paranoia in your minds.

R: They've developed the algorithms and the software to analyze your data and everything else, so they're going to aggregate that. So, what they have about you is not about you, it's going to be …

1:08:53.2

M: It's an aggregate of other people.

R: Right. So, you're not going to get that information because that's theirs.

M: But, it's not personalized of you, you think. It's more you're being grouped with other people.

R: Yeah.

R: Spending habits but not of Steven.

R: I do it all the time, analyzing data. It's not important of the person. It's important of the trend.

M: But, wouldn't they possibly in some cases if you're someone who buys a lot, you might cross a certain threshold and then internally they may see you as being a high valued customer.

R: Well, no, but you're just going to be binned in that bin of high value.

R: I don't think that you've got anything to worry about.

R: The one that I go back to is the one that I think I have almost exclusively and I don't have others, the Amex. I've got to think that the amount of reward Air Miles I would reach would inform their practice or they would shoot out an email or send off something in the snail mail to say, guess what, we're taking you from $5,000 to $10,000. You're pre-approved. And, I've had those and I've chucked them. If I wanted to be pre-approved at that, I would ask for that, but I don't want that. So, I think that would inform them to pre-approve, which in turn would up their line.

1:10:26.6

M: I know a couple of you touched on this already. Have you ever had a situation where the rules around your program were changed, where let's say your points were devalued and you started to need more points?

R: I did at Hudson's Bay one time when I used to have a Bay card.

M: What happened?

R: Well, I got into a bit of a kafuffle with them. I wasn't pleased. You're going to keep me talking for 20 minutes, holding up a line-up. I'm not impressed. No, I ended up cancelling the card. I said forget it. I don't want your card anymore. Take me off. I said, no more of this. I said it's ridiculous.

M: Is that because they devalued the points?

R: Yeah, the gypped me out of some points and I wasn't pleased.

M: That's like John, you mentioned, right?

R: I sort of went after them a little bit and they weren't happy with me, so I just …

R: There was a devaluation of points. The example was, instead of this fixed amount of reward costing you ten points, the same fixed amount now cost 15 points. I kind of look at that and I go, that's like everything else in life.

R: And, it's written in fine print. They tell you to change the rules at their discretion.

R: I'm never banking on it. It's like found money. Well, whatever, sure, that was going to happen anyway.

1:11:59.3

M: For you, Justin, have you ever had that experience, let's say, where you've found out that the points you thought were going to get you a certain reward and then they suddenly changed the levels and suddenly you need more?

R: Yeah. I can't tell you specific instances. I know, for instance, I can always come back to Optimum. But, yeah, Optimum has changed the rules before.

M: So, they're less generous than it used to be?

R: Yeah, I recall being close to being able to get a Blu-ray player, and then all of a sudden, sorry, you need an extra 5,000 points.

R: Plus this amount of cash.

R: Yeah, plus now we require an extra $50.00.

R: (Inaudible, over-talking.)

R: Two weeks ago Starbucks changed the rule. They used to send you a card by mail from their head office in Houston or somewhere giving you a free coupon, a card, that comes to your mailbox and you take it to Starbucks then. This is because they (inaudible). Now they're supposed to send you an email and they're not sending it. You're supposed to go to the teller and tell them please check if I qualify and have a reward at Starbucks. So, it's a more, if people are standing in line, how many times are you going to say …? So, first of all they save money by sending it by mail. They hook you to have the card now. Now they change the rules to minimize the giving.

1:13:30.1

M: I have heard another group of people that have said when they first heard a lot of loyalty programs in the beginning, you could actually accumulate points pretty quickly and get some pretty good rewards, and now you need more and more points to get less and less reward.

R: But, I don't know if it's strictly because it's rewards or what have you. I think it's possibly just the state of our economy. There is a lot of (inaudible).

M: I'm not saying who's at fault. I'm saying what points are being devalued.

R: That may well be true, but it's not true for Starbucks because they are opening thousands of stores all over the world. It's the nature of the beast. They give you in the beginning. You feel good, and then they start to take it away slowly.

M: And, you're hooked and you're like a lobster in water.

R: You don't like it, thanks a lot, but they did their job.

R: I think that's why we did cash for HBC. That probably was the reason because that happened about four years ago.

M: Have you ever had points expire? Have you ever had that where you're told if you don't use these points by …?

R: Oh yeah.

R: Yeah.

R: Aeroplan would expire.

1:14:55.4

M: Yeah, I think the points that are more than seven years old, if you don't use them by a certain date, you lose them.

R: Well, Subway, but that's nothing.

R: They don't (inaudible) any more.

R: Is that okay to say?

M: Is that a loyalty program?

R: Yeah, I have gone in there for a 12 inch sub, and they're like, sorry, ma'am you can't redeem your stamps any more. I'm like, what do you mean? They gave me the card and we circled the points there. Sorry, ma'am, we're not doing that any more either.

M: But, is that because they got rid of the program altogether?

R: Yes. They got rid of the program altogether, which is so silly because that's …

R: Starbucks has an expiry date.

R: Subway was due to the fact that employees were trying to sell the tickets.

M: How does it make you feel about the company if you're accumulating points and you find out that they've expired but that you didn't use them?

R: Well, the one-day sale at Shoppers or the gas card. I'm not going to Shoppers just to get a gas card because I may have just filled up on Friday and the sale is one-day on Saturday, and I only have until Friday to fill up my tank, so I'm not going to be able to use it.

1:16:20.5

R: I think there should be a little bit more communication, like they should send you a letter.

M: You should know well in advance that you've got to use them or lose them.

R: Yeah.

R: This came for only one week.

R: But, if that's the case, then we get annoyed by those emails too, right.

R: Well, yeah, some people do, and some people will just ignore them and trash them. I mean for us little guys that don't have half a brain sometimes as we're getting older.

R: I view it as part of the game, like a politician promising something. It's a corporation and they're in the business for money. They change the rules in the contract.

M: But, do you as a member of the program, shouldn't you have any rights that your points shouldn't be allowed to be devalued retroactively?

R: It is written in the fine print.

R: If you signed for it, then you (inaudible).

R: And, plus they're giving you that reward system. It's not like they have to begin with. At the end of the day we need that gas. At the end of the day we need that note.

1:17:21.6

M: Yeah, remember that that gas company is competing with other gas companies that all have rewards. They're doing it to compete with one another.

R: Right.

R: And, you don't like it?

R: (Inaudible).

R: That's right.

R: The cancel it. It's up to you.

M: Have you ever actually quit a loyalty program?

R: Yes.

R: Yeah, I did at the Bay. I quit because they were not giving me my …

M: So, you actually said, I don't want this. Cancel it.

R: I said here's the card. Cut it up in front of me now. And, they did.

M: Was that like a credit card?

R: It was both.

M: I guess if it's a loyalty program that it's kind of a credit card type of thing, and then you would actually cancel it. But, what about loyalty programs where you don't actually pay anything to be a member, do you actually quit or just stop using it?

1:18:21.9

R: No.

M: Does anyone ever resign?

R: Rogers video. The video stores are now few. Do they even exist any more?

R: No.

R: For a while they implemented this like you had a membership card from them and every time you rented a movie, you got points. And, then I think for every ten points, you got a free movie. I had accumulated something like 100 points, and all of a sudden I arrived at a particular Rogers and discovered it isn't there any more. And, then I started phoning around, and, oh, we're systematically shutting down all the Rogers Video stores.

M: Could you cash that?

R: I asked. I had 100 points on this card.

M: You didn't get anything for it.

R: I could rent every new release that's come out in the last month.

M: What happened?

R: Buckets. They told me sorry, they're shutting them down. I even tried to negotiate well can this go towards … I also subscribe to some of your products, such as your cell phone.

1:19:33.8

M: Yeah, can you get a credit?

R: Can you transition this into some kind of a courtesy credit in light of the fact that I have spent all my hard earned money renting movies at your store?

M: But, that wasn't an example of you quitting them. They quit you in way as opposed to you quitting them.

R: There probably were other Rogers Videos that I could have commuted to, and I said forget it. I won't deal with you any more.

M: Is that defunct now?

R: I guess it is.

R: In terms of this card, can you just go at any time?

R: Yeah.

R: At least you surrender the card upon the request.

M: What about when you decide to quit a loyalty program, do you ever say I want my personal information expunged as well?

R: No.

1:20:24.1

M: He didn't say that. He just told them to (inaudible, over-talking).

R: Whatever they have, they have on record.

R: Two managers, a cashier. I didn't say take off my.

M: What about data breaches? Does anyone know what a data breach is?

R: Sure.

M: What is it?

R: When the data is released like for the car, the personal information to lease the security and the people go home with it.

M: For example, there's a company called Card Systems in the U.S. which provides gift and loyalty card services. Because a lot of these loyalty programs, it's not necessarily Shoppers Drug Mart itself that administers Optimum. There are third parties where the business of running loyalty programs and they probably run loyalty programs for countless different companies because that's what they do, and they have all the data. So, Card Systems they do loyalty program services, but they're also in charge of 40 million Visa and MasterCard accounts. In 2005 they had a big data breach where millions of pieces of data got leaked. And, I think Winners stores had something happen as well where there was a data breach as well. Now, obviously when you hear about a data breach that involves credit cards, that's one thing because you think people are going to start charging things to your credit card. But, what about if you're a member of a loyalty program and it's not a credit card, but it's just there's a data breach and people can have access to your name and address and your buying patterns at this particular store. It doesn't mean they can charge anything to your credit card, but that information is still out there.

1:22:12.6

R: Is that the same as having your bank card compromised?

M: Not really. Because I guess when your bank card is compromised, then someone could actually start stealing your money.

R: No, that's what happened.

M: Whereas, in this case, it's not that they're necessarily going to be able to steal anything. It's more just that the information (inaudible, over-taking).

R: They leaked information. Now the world knows where I live.

M: And, knows what I buy at the drug store every month.

R: I don't think I'd lose any sleep over that, knowing that that could possibly happen.

M: Who would be that interested?

R: Right.

M: But somebody could find out, for example, exactly how much alcohol you buy every month or whatever. That's one example.

R: Well, that's a good thing because maybe they'll give me a nice package of my Shiraz wine.

1:23:21.0

R: Well, they could put a classification.

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking).

R: If there is a law suit and the lawyer is digging deep. (Inaudible). It could be blackmail.

M: Someone might want to discredit you somehow.

R: That's why I said by putting them in a classification age.

R: If you're a public figure, so one of us feels the nod to go into public service. Now, all of a sudden, so, John, are you still drinking as heavily as you used to drink?

R: Yeah.

M: Or, when did you stop beating your wife kind of thing?

R: Exactly.

R: So, that's a good point.

M: But, you don't even have to be a politician for that to happen. It could just be somebody who doesn't like (inaudible).

R: Are you suggesting that that should be something that one should do when one gets home, maybe make a few calls and confirm (inaudible).

M: Not necessarily. I'm just raising the issue.

1:24:26.6

R: That's what crossed my mind, the classification alcoholic.

M: The last thing I want to touch on is the whole issue of social media around all of this. Do any of your loyalty programs have a social media presence?

R: Of course.

M: Like what?

R: Well, Shoppers for sure has one.

M: Do they have like a Facebook?

R: They have a Facebook group and a page and they'll give you like some extra special discounts.

M: Do you follow them on Twitter?

R: That I don't know because I don't tweet. I'm sorry. I should get into tweeting more. I should.

R: Costco does. Because my fiancé is the one that has the computer.

R: Social media is the media of the modern times, so I'd imagine most of these leading edge reward programs are probably linked pretty highly to the most streamlined ones.

M: They would have a Facebook page.

R: And most of them have those sidelines, right?

1:25:27.8

M: You can follow them on Twitter. Does anyone know about Foursquare?

R: Foursquare?

M: Foursquare. Foursquare is something where it's like you check in everywhere you go.

R: Yeah. I'm at Walmart. I'm at Irene's mom. I'm at … I don't care for it at all.

M: Now do any of you ever follow or like any of your loyalty programs on Facebook or on Twitter?

R: No.

R: I view it as a necessary evil for some of them.

M: But, do you ever see friends interacting this way with companies? Because, you know, a lot of times on Facebook, you'll see, oh so and so likes Starbucks.

R: Or, you get suggestions, which kind of are annoying.

M: Do you ever get that?

R: Yeah, generally I ignore it. I try to eliminate it from the feed as much as possible.

M: But, they could be Facebook friends of yours.

R: Not necessarily. No, now they've got it. With smartphones or iPhone and the Facebook app is garbage. And, yeah, I get bombarded with why don't I like this, why don't I like that, what don't I like that. It's not my friend liking this. It's literally companies that are telling me to like.

1:27:05.1

M: Well, that's one thing. But, I guess what I'm curious about is what's starting to happen more and more are friends of yours will like something and then you'll get a message, oh, Charlie likes the loyalty program at Walmart, or Mary just went shopping at Shopper's Drug Mart, or Jim just saw a movie using his Scotiabank Scene card. You'll get these things in your Twitter feed or on Facebook or whatever. Have you ever had that experience, Steve? Were you aware of that?

R: I think it's happening with the younger.

R: It's like social media bullying.

R: Or, marketing/bullying. Why are you not liking such and such? That would tick me off.

R: Yeah, for sure.

M: But, it also is peer pressure and stuff. But, then on the positive side, if a lot of friends of yours whose opinion you respected, were saying that they liked a certain store, would that possibly make you think, oh maybe I should check it out?

R: Yeah.

R: The way I see it too is like the candle parties or the Tupperware parties. What's Melissa's agenda trying to push me to get these products that I may not necessarily need? Will she be getting extra points through the loyalty program?

M: I'm glad you asked because one of the things that is starting to happen more and more is let's say you're a member of Optimum. What if they have a deal saying, well, get an extra 100 points by liking us on Facebook? So, basically you've gotten points just to click like. Then everybody who is a Facebook friend of yours gets a message saying Docnina likes Shoppers Drug Mart Optimum. So, in a sense they're paying you to advertise for them.

1:29:15.7

R: That's right.

M: Has anyone heard of that?

R: The like button.

R: There's also a PBC, right? I've read about that, Pay per Click.

M: Yeah.

R: So, then the companies will get a certain percentage knowing the fact that people are actually going to the particular links and so on and so forth.

M: Do you ever see when people check in to stores? Justin, do you ever get notes?

R: The Foursquare type of thing?

M: Yeah.

R: Yeah, I find it very annoying. I don't care if you're at Walmart.

M: How would you feel if all your friends knew where you were shopping or going?

1:29:58.7

R: Well, they wouldn't because I don't involve myself with such a thing.

M: But, you know that this is something that's becoming more and more popular. What do you think of that as a phenomenon?

R: It's scary. The 1984.

R: I think those folks who sort of unwittingly will be pressured by that kind of marketing. I feel badly for them. I know Justin and I probably couldn't care less if people knew where we were shopping.

R: But, you wouldn't go out of your way either to tell them that you're shopping there.

M: But, you might inadvertently sign up and not realize that you've signed up for something whereby people do know every time that you go into the store or whatever.

R: I don't think that would bother me.

R: You mean the store is actually now transferring where you are as opposed to you transferring where you are?

M: So, if you used your rewards card at the store and the store says, oh, Justin just shopped at Optimum. I think in some cases what might happen is you might just check off a box or you might sign up for something where you might get extra points for saying, oh, yeah, you can announce every time that I shop here. People don't realize what they've signed up for. Let's face it, they'll probably deal with people a lot younger than us. People who are in their late teens now probably have grown up feeling there's no such a thing as privacy. Your whole life is lived online.

1:31:38.7

R: So true. It's so unfortunate.

R: We were never allowed to use calculators in school. We had to take books from the library.

M: But, then again, what would you think? For you, Eli, if Starbucks said okay, well, you can get double points if you check off a box that says every time you come into Starbucks a note will go out on Twitter saying Eli just came and bought a coffee at Starbucks today? That would be public information.

R: I think I would stop going. I'm not going to Starbucks to be used as a tool for their money scheme. If I don't feel good about having that coffee, recharge the battery, doing some writing or reading, so I wouldn't go. I wouldn't even have the card. I would go and just pay cash.

R: But, you see, our generation has more of that social consciousness. I think a 17-year-old would say giddy up, I'm getting a free coffee. I don't care. I live my life in public. I think it's two different marketplaces because I would feel the same way in a sense. I would say, no, I don't think it's a good moral choice to support that kind of a movement.

M: Like make my life that public.

R: Yeah.

R: Maintaining your anonymity.

R: And, I've never been a person that got twisted out of shape that the government has too much data on me.

M: However, there are people that are paranoid.

R: Yeah, there are folks who are like that, and I could probably see that invasion of privacy. I don't know if it's a term that's used, but I guess I'd call it a social consciousness. Is this a good choice for me to make knowing that this may influence someone else maybe not in a good way?

M: Well, I suppose maybe what you're saying also is that when you're young you might sign up for a whole bunch of things like this and not realize what a gigantic online footprint you're leaving.

R: Because apparently on that with a South Park episode with the characters essentially, the little kids, didn't know what they were getting themselves into when they got themselves their latest iPod. They're showing the disclaimer that they had turned right. Anyway, it became a very exaggerated hotline. It's true there's not much literacy anymore among children. I don't think that they care as much we were conditioned to.

M: Because what was probably cut down in the pipeline as far as loyalty programs is that they'll start saying, well you can accumulate points if you're willing to trade your privacy. I say privacy. It may not matter. Maybe if people know that you do shopping at Starbucks or whatever. The point is that may be the next step is going to be not only do you get points for your transactions that we interpreted this bond with you, but by the way, you'll also get extra points if you like us on Facebook.

R: I'm thinking of a tune, I think it was a Johnny Cash tune. I sold my soul to the company store.

1:35:01.8

M: Yeah.

R: Well, you did because you signed up everything at the company store. So, they loved it because you work for them and you bought from them.

M: Well, it's like playing on a team that's sponsored by somebody and if for their products.

R: (Inaudible) background education in social stats, everyone. If the (inaudible) is going to be your mother and father and your neighbour and your acquaintance and they're babysitting you, then what the hell is that? If they're going to (sounds like, pry) me to have a social Facebook, pry me to bring my friends and pry me to do this and that, then it's my responsibility to bring it up or our responsibility to tell the children, here, this corporation is here for their own interest. You beware. If there is nobody to tell the children that (inaudible), they're going to be victims. This is social governism.

R: It doesn't feel right because somebody can create a new lifestyle.

M: Identity theft.

R: Yes. They're stalkers. You can find a person. Find out what they do. That person could disappear, yet still look like they're still around.

R: Wasn't there a recent case regarding the woman that had a critique on Mambo Restaurant and Market. And, then she started to take the information that she received from that restaurant sort of thing and used it against her, and now she's doing some time.

R: Three months isn't it?

1:36:40.7

M: The last question I was going to ask is, we've been talking a lot about loyalty programs that are essentially sort of card based in one form or another. Has anyone ever heard of sort of online loyalty programs that are all based on online transactions? Has anyone ever heard of this?

R: Well, eBay and PayPal have a component like that.

M: Do they have a loyalty program of some sort?

R: You don't get rewarded though. You just get status like with eBay.

R: Right, but you'll get PayPal

R: More sales.

R: Yeah, you get more …

M: Like better reviews.

R: Yeah, exactly. The more I purchase an item and pay promptly, and then the feedback I get as a result accumulates points. The higher the points actually, the more you're all going to want to deal with me.

M: You don't get actual.

R: It's the clout. It shows all of you that …

M: But, the reason I ask is that I think there are some new loyalty programs that are being created in the States that are based on online transactions. In some cases you might get extra points in exchange for letting them track your web browsing activities and things like that.

1:37:55.6

R: Oh god.

R: Oh no.

R: Wow, that's crazy.

M: It hasn't really gotten into Canada yet.

R: The thing that fascinates me about it is why the Lottery Corporation doesn't have a loyalty program.

M: Well, casinos have loyalty programs.

R: Yeah, but when you're buying lottery tickets, there should be something there.

R: I don't know why they haven't started that.

M: But, I know that people who go to casinos are often members of … well, they have their own card.

R: (Inaudible) or evenings.

R: Yeah, they issue that.

1:38:34.1

R: But, not the OLG, not the Ontario Lottery Corporation. This is amazing. How come?

M: But, they also have a bit of a monopoly, right? It's not like there's competing.

R: I guess it's been an update on all the scares.

R: But, they find a number of entities in society, right? They dump money into …

M: But, they are also a Crown corporation. (Inaudible, over-talking).

R: Buy a community back-up, $26,000.

R: So they fund Trillium.

R: I guess because they are not a private business. If they were a private business because the government probably has to (inaudible) them, otherwise they would have …

M: I would imagine also that is that it's a monopoly, is that OLG, it's a Crown Corporation and on top of that there are always issues around even though it's a crown corporation, to what extent does government want to go that extra step in terms of encouraging people to gamble.

R: Right.

R: (Inaudible, multiple over-talking).

R: And, they want to destroy our horse racing at the slots. It's ridiculous. It's not fair.

M: Anyway, I think we've more or less gotten to the end of our discussion for this evening. Tell me, what have you learned about loyalty programs from our conversation tonight, or what do you take away from all of this?

1:40:12.1

R: Well, you don't have to be a Scotiabank member to get a Scene card.

R: That's right. That one is for sure.

R: I think there's a bunch of great minds at this table.

M: We're doing this research for a consumers' organization because we wanted to understand the phenomenon of loyalty programs. There are obviously benefits because you can get rewards.

R: The free stuff.

M: There's free stuff, but are there any problems?

R: They risk to lose our loyalty if they change the rules. I think our variety of conversations have demonstrated that it probably requires a regulatory body of governance and it's eventually a no level. And, then to protect those, who, like me, would sign something. Okay, it's not a mortgage, it's not a car.

M: But, it's probably binding in some way, yeah.

R: But, it would be binding, and perhaps that data would be shared and in the back of my mind I thinking, yeah, well, whatever. However, other folks may not feel the way I feel, and that may be very private data that they do not want shared.

M: Now, it's interesting because one thing that one of the participants in Toronto raised when we were doing sessions on the same topic, is for every company that has a loyalty program, there's a cost associated with operating that program and paying all those rewards, and that has to come from somewhere. So, you might be all paying slight higher prices for everything as a result of the loyalty programs. But, of course, if you don't join the loyalty program, then you're both paying the higher prices and you're not getting the rewards.

R: That's so true. Shop lifting is an example. Shop lifting expense is adding indirectly to the item you buy because they have a cent or half a cent added to cover.

R: It's the same thing.

M: Because it does add to the cost of …

R: Merchandise.

R: What I came up with, there are so many things lurking in the background and you gave us many things to think about. I think we're getting into unchartered territory regarding social media and how loyalty programs are going to progress. There are many dangers there.

M: So, ultimately each of us is going to be a member of half a dozen loyalty programs and that will basically cover your whole online presence.

R: It's going to change the nature. It's going to be dicier.

M: Okay, well, I think we're all done for this evening, so thank you very much everyone for coming. I hope you found this entertaining.

END OF SESSION

JS

SUJET : Attitudes envers les programmes de fidélisation

PN : 7212

LOCATION : Ottawa

DATE : 19 novembre 2012 – 8 :00 p.m.

M : Moi je m'appelle Derek comme vous voyez et je vous souhaite la bienvenue à cette discussion. Ceci est la quatrième et la dernière d'une série de quatre discussions sur le même sujet que nous faisons. Et moi je travaille pour Environnics Research, qui est une maison de sondage d'opinion publique. Alors souvent j'ai fait des questionnaires quand nous faisons des sondages par téléphone ou sur l'Internet, mais aussi j'anime beaucoup de discussions comme ça. Et comme vous voyez, je suis anglophone, mais j'anime des groupes en français de temps en temps aussi parce que c'est toujours important d'entendre des perspectives dans les deux langues officielles. Mais si je trompe avec ma grammaire, vous allez pouvoir me corriger. Car nous sommes ici pour entendre votre opinion, plutôt que la mienne. J'ai aussi deux collègues qui sont de l'autre côté du miroir qui sont du Québec. Une équipe de recherche qui prend des notes aussi. Qui sont en train de boire du champagne et manger j'ai du caviar. Et l'animatrice vous offrira un dédommagement à la fin de la séance, vers dix heures moins quart à peu près. Alors juste pour commencer, peut-être qu'on peut faire un petit tour de table pour que chacun et chacune de nous puisse s'introduire et peut-être nous raconter un peu le genre de travail que vous faîtes. Si vous travaillez à l'extérieur et si vous habitez avec des chats ou des chiens ou des enfants ou des poissons d'or ou quelque chose comme ça à la maison.

R : Moi c'est Patrick.

M : Patrick.

R : Je suis enseignant et je suis père.

M : Alors quelle langue est-ce que…

R : Anglais et français.

M : Anglais et français, ok. Alors qui peut me corriger si je me trompe.

R : C'est correct.

M : D'accord, j'essaie en tout cas.

R : Moi c'est Renée… Renée.

M : Renée, d'accord.

R : Puis je vis à Gatineau, seule dans mon appartement, puis je prends des études (inaudible). En ressourcement.

M : Ok. Et…

R : Mon nom c'est Philippe.

M : Philippe, ok.

R : J'ai ma propre entreprise en construction. Avec un fils de 18 mois.

M : Ah, d'accord. Et…

R : Daniel Shoudene. Je travaille pour le gouvernement comme un formateur. Puis trois enfants, trois gars à la maison.

M : D'accord. Et…

R : Marc, mon nom c'est Marc. Bon, je travaille pour BMO groupe financier, ça fait 28 ans que je travaille pour eux-autres. J'ai deux enfants, deux gars. Et j'ai 45 ans.

M : D'accord.

R : Moi je suis Suzanne.

M : Oui.

R : Je travaille sur semaine pour le gouvernement fédéral. J'ai trois enfants et un chien, puis on commence tous à vieillir. Il y en a un qui vient de quitter le nid, les deux autres ont (inaudible).

M : Et le chien ne quitte pas le nid?

R : Non, mais mon plus vieux vient d'avoir un chien puis il apporte son chien à la maison et il n'est pas social. Il l'est trop. Ça fait qu'on a beaucoup d'amusement le dimanche soir quand on a le souper de famille à la maison, puis les grands-parents sont là, puis…

M : Puis les deux chiens aussi, oui.

R : Les deux chiens se chamaillent un peu.

M : D'accord.

R : Moi c'est Johanne.

M : Johanne.

R : Je travaille pour le gouvernement en ressources humaines. Le gouvernement fédéral. J'ai deux filles, un chien. Moi je n'ai pas d'enfants à la maison, mais je suis grand-mère d'une petite de 4 ans.

M : Ah, d'accord. Et finalement…

R : Je m'appelle Gen.

M : Gen.

R : Je travaille avec trente-deux avocats. J'ai deux enfants, deux chiens, puis un mari de 43 ans.

M : Ah, ah. Moi j'ai un chat orange qui pèse à peu près 18 kilos. Comme une dinde. En tout cas, comme vous avez pas mal vu au début, les questions que nous vous avons posées

lorsque nous avons eu cette séance, ce soir nous allons explorer l'univers des programmes de fidélisation de la clientèle. Et nous faisons cette recherche pour une organisation qui travaille sur la voie de la consommation, qui s'appelle … Centre (anglais). Alors ils font une recherche juste sur tout l'univers des programmes de fidélisation de la clientèle et du phénomène de ces programmes et quelles sont leurs forces et leurs faiblesses, etc. Alors peut-être pour commencer cette discussion, on va faire un petit tour de table encore une fois. Et je veux que chacun de vous peut-être puisse nous dire à quels et à combien de programmes de fidélisation vous adhérez. Alors, Dan est-ce que tu peux commencer? Je sais, c'est toujours difficile.

R : Air Miles.

M : Air Miles, d'accord.

R : PC financial.

M : Oui.

R : Amex, Costco Amex.

M : Costco, oui.

R : Ils donnent des points AeroPlan.

M : Air Plan, alors c'est…

R : Canadian Tire. Quel autre?...

M : Alors ce n'est pas difficile (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Cinq, six?

M : Ça fait sept déjà.

R : Sept?

M : Oui.

R : Ok, sept.

M : Ce n’est pas difficile, ça ajoute à la série finalement.

R : Oui, oui, oui.

M : Et Phil?

R : Moi j’ai Air Miles également. Canadian Tire, Sobeys.

M : Sobeys, oui.

R : Oui. Petro Canada, Esso. Je pense que c’est ça.

M : *You mean* les points Esso?

R : Je pense que c’est ça.

M : D’accord. Et Renée?

R : Moi j’ai AGC, j’ai Shoppers Optimum.

M : Oui.

R : J’ai Air Miles, puis je sais que j’en ai un autre, mais je ne sais pas c’est quoi en ce moment.

M : Ok, je sais qu’il y a beaucoup même de boutiques qui ont des programmes de fidélisation ou quelque chose comme ça.

R : Oui.

M : Patrick?

R : Moi aussi j’ai Air Miles.

M : Oui.

R : Canadian Tire, j’ai aussi Shoppers Drug Mart, là.

M : Oui l’Optimum.

R : Optimum, c’est ça. J’ai Canex.

M : Qu'est-ce que c'est Canex?

R : Bien le Canex, c'est comme Walmart… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : Ils ont quand même une carte.

R : C'est ça, oui, oui. Tu accumules des points, puis c'est ça. J'en ai plusieurs, c'est ça.

M : Je sais, on oublie quelque fois.

R : C'est ça.

M : Souvent on a beaucoup de cartes dans notre portefeuille qu'on n'utilise pas tellement souvent c'est ça.

R : Il y avait Subway même, mais ils ne le font plus.

M : Oui, c'est ça… (parlent tous en même temps)

R : Oui, oui c'est ça, j'en ai eu comme cadeau, ça fait que…

M : Oui mais est-ce que c'était une carte-cadeau ou c'est (parlent tous en même temps)

R : Ils m'ont donné des points.

M : Oui.

R : Une carte-cadeau avec des points, mais là c'est que je peux les dépenser, puis les accumuler, ces points.

M : Ah ok, d'accord. Et Gen?

R : HBC.

M : Oui.

R : J'ai Sobeys, Petro-Can, Mr. Sub, The Pompom New York, JC Penny, Air Miles, AerpoPlan, (inaudible). C'est tout.

M : Je sais que souvent les gens ont la *scene card* avec Scotia Bank aussi.

R : Oui, oui absolument.

M : Celle-là aussi. Johanne?

R : Moi j'ai Air Miles, HBC, President Choice, Financial. J'en ai une couple pour des boutiques.

M : Oui.

R : Mais je ne me souviens pas de tous les noms. Magasin d'enfants, il y en a trois, quatre comme ça. C'est à peu près ça.

M : D'accord et Suzanne?

R : Moi j'ai la carte Scène pour le théâtre, Petro-Can, Canadian Tire, HBC, Sears, Costco.

R : Sears.

M : Sears.

R : Je suis certaine que j'en ai d'autres, mais elles sont quelque part… (parlent tous en même temps)

M : Juste quand on fait le tour de table, tout le monde commence à se souvenir qu'ils en ont d'autres.

R : Oui.

M : Et Marc?

R : Air Miles, Sobeys, HBC, Petro-Can, Delta les hôtels, Starwood les hôtels, Fairmont les hôtels, puis Porter, l'avion là. Puis *that's it*.

M : D'accord. Tu voyages beaucoup?

R : Un peu.

M : Ok je sais souvent que les hôtels ont souvent des programmes de fidélisation.

R : Individuels, oui.

M : Oui.

R : Ah Via Rail aussi, j'en ai une.

M : Oh Via Rail aussi, ça c'est une autre raison. Alors j'aimerais qu'on forme des équipes de deux pour discuter du sujet des programmes de fidélisation. Alors Patrick et Renée vont travailler ensemble. Et Philippe et Dan. Et Suzanne et Marc. Et Gen et Johanne. Et je veux que vous discutiez avec vos partenaires, quelles sont les forces et les faiblesses des programmes de fidélisation de la clientèle du point de vue d'un consommateur. Et pas nécessairement les forces et les faiblesses pour toi personnellement, mais juste en général. Le phénomène des programmes de fidélisation. Je suppose que les forces sont assez claires, mais est-ce qu'il y a aussi des faiblesses ou est-ce qu'il y a un côté mauvais de ça aussi? Alors si tout le monde peut juste discuter un peu, ensuite on va voir ce que chacun a discuté.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps)

M : Alors on va commencer avec une petite discussion des forces, comme quels sont les avantages des programmes de fidélisation. Alors peut-être qu'on commence avec Suzanne et Marc. Quels sont les…

R : Les quoi?

M : Les forces.

R : Ah on parlait, tu m'as demandé, tu as dit des faiblesses plutôt, alors on parlait des faiblesses spécifiquement, là.

R : Oui.

M : Oui mais juste en général, n'importe qui, quelles sont les forces? Est-ce que c'est…

R : Bien une des forces pour moi, c'était avec la carte American Express de Costco.

M : Oui.

R : Je m'en sers partout maintenant. Puis je n'ai pas l'habitude de me servir des cartes de crédit, mais celle-là je m'en sers simplement pour avoir des points.

M : Oui.

R : Puis à la fin de l'année quand je reçois 400, 500, 600 …

M : Des récompenses, oui.

R : Ça vaut la peine.

M : Oui.

R : Puis je veux dépenser plus.

R : C'est la même chose avec ma Master Card de Canadian Tire.

M : Oui.

R : Oui.

R : Puis l'année passée à Noël j'avais 800 piastres. (inaudible)

M : Alors les récompenses… (parlent tous en même temps)

R : Ça monte. Comme ça, ça m'a coûté presque rien pour mes cadeaux de Noël.

R : Oui.

M : Oui.

R : C'est de sauver de l'argent, oui.

R : Tu parles du côté du consommateur?

M : Oui.

R : Oui.

M : Mais quelles sont les forces du côté des compagnies?

R : *Loyalty*… (parlent tous en même temps)

M : Oui.

R : Définitivement. Puis reconnaître, être reconnu.

M : Oui. Est-ce qu'on est reconnu par les programmes de fidélisation?

R : Bien je trouve que si tu vois les personnes avec des cartes, tu sais tu vois quelqu'un avec une carte de crédit qui est toute Platinum, quelque chose comme ça, là.

M : Oui.

R : Alors tu vois toujours les autres choses de l'autre, puis… Ils peuvent se faire identifier de l'avoir dans ta poche.

M : D'accord.

R : Ce n'est pas compliqué comme programme, ça c'est une autre affaire aussi généralement. Tu sais, c'est pour un certain montant, ah bien regarde donc ça tiens, je peux l'utiliser.

M : Oui.

R : Tu sais, ça sauve de l'argent de même.

M : C'est presque automatique, c'est comme juste de l'argent, alors.

R : Oui, c'est ça. C'est rendu comme Canadian Tire, pendant longtemps tu sais, je venais puis on ne me le rappelait pas. Ah j'ai dit c'est vrai, j'ai des points, je suis mieux d'acheter quelque chose. J'oubliais de les utiliser.

M : Oui.

R : Tandis que là, je retourne puis quelqu'un me dit ah, veux-tu utiliser tes points? Ils ont commencé à faire ça maintenant, heureusement. Regarde ça là, ah oui c'est vrai, ah bien regarde donc ça, j'ai déjà assez de points, je n'ai pas besoin de payer, quoi.

M : Oui.

R : Puis c'est le *fun*… (parlent tous en même temps)

R : Si tu ne dépenses pas, bien sans intérêt… (parlent tous en même temps). Tu as une ligne de crédit ou quelque chose (inaudible) de l'utiliser au fur et à mesure pour avoir plus de bénéfices. (Parlent tous en même temps)

R : Ils vous donnent encore des points pour tel montant, après ça…

M : Mais est-ce que c'est vraiment gratuit ou est-ce qu'on paye indirectement pour?

R : (Inaudible) justement. Petro-Can c'est le meilleur marché pour la gazoline.

M : Oui.

R : Ok. Quand c'est un dollar et vingt-huit puis j'arrive, puis je mets soixante piastres dans mon RAM…

M : Oui.

R : Puis ils ôtent cinq cents, chaque litre…

M : Oui.

R : Ça monte.

M : Alors quelles sont les faiblesses des programmes de fidélisation? Air Miles?

R : Suzanne en a une bonne, elle a dit si tu n'utilises pas les points jusqu'à telle ou telle date, tu vas tous les perdre.

M : Oui, parce qu'il y a…

R : Indépendant de quel programme. (Parlent tous en même temps). C'est ça, là.

R : Puis tu ne peux pas avec des Air Miles.

M : Oui.

R : Au téléphone, tu ne peux pas nécessairement voyager quand tu veux.

M : Oui, il y a des restrictions.

R : Il y a des restrictions même quand tu prends un hôtel c'est la même chose. Si on a du classe peut-être, mais on ne peut pas aller (inaudible). New York sans avoir une chambre.

M : Oui.

R : Une autre faiblesse, bien une autre, moi ça m'a inquiété des fois, c'est parce que là, ok c'est un gros programme, ça va durer combien de temps?

M : Oui.

R : Si j'arrive puis j'ai comme cent piastres là-dedans, puis là tout à coup ils annulent le programme.

M : Ce serait annulé.

R : Bien tu sais, c'est comme, bien qu'est-ce que je fais? Qu'est-ce que…

R : (Inaudible) Canada.

M : Oui.

R : Quand ils changent le plan, ils disent toujours qu'il y a (inaudible).

M : Mais ça c'est est-ce qu'on est vraiment protégé…

R : Non.

M : S'il y a un programme de fidélisation et on ramasse beaucoup de points, est-ce qu'on est vraiment protégé si tout à coup la compagnie décide d'annuler le programme?

R : Non, pas du tout.

M : Oui.

R : Non, non, non. Je fais juste dire ça comme ça, parce que… (parlent tous en même temps). Oui, c'est ça.

R : Oui, mais…

R : C’est juste parce que la compagnie, je ne parle pas de la compagnie, c’est comme un exemple que j’ai donnée c’était Subway.

M : Oui.

R : Je n’en ai plus. Ça fait que là, un moment donné, ah bien regarde donc ça, c’est bête. C’est vrai au moins on nous a avisé à l’avance.

M : Oui.

R : Mais c’est juste que…

R : Oui. Moi, si j’avais 800 piastres dans une place comme Canadian Tire, c’est 800 piastres que je n’aurais pas. Comme ça aussi, il me dit *too bad so sad*, c’est logique. Si c’était 800 piastres de ma poche, ça serait logique.

M : Ça c’est une autre histoire.

R : Oui mais de l’autre côté, si ce serait sur une autre carte, là ça serait…

R : Ouais là, non ce n’est pas mon cas, mais pas du tout. Parce que pour aller en Angleterre, il faut que je voyage au moins dix fois en Angleterre puis payer ça de ma poche pour y aller. *Forget it.*

M : Alors c’était trop difficile pour amasser assez de points?

R : C’est trop *slow*.

M : Oui.

R : C’est trop *slow*.

R : Il y a des faiblesses entre les programmes. Comme lui est fort, tu sais ça va être moins cher pour aller prendre des avions, l’autre c’est louer une auto. Puis tu sais, c’est tout… Alors si tu veux varier le maximum de tout, il faut les avoir tous individuellement.

M : Oui.

R : Ce n’est pas sans ressource. Nous autres, (inaudible)

M : Oui.

R : Ok. (Inaudible). On achète le billet *one way*.

M : Oui.

R : Je ne peux pas faire ça avec mes Air Miles. Il faut que j'achète…

M : Avec le tout, oui.

R : Et je n'en veux pas parce que j'en ai de l'argent là que je ne peux pas le sortir du payer.

M : Oui.

R : Juste avec l'exemple que je donnais, c'est parce que des fois, par exemple PC. Je trouve que le magasin est un petit peu cher.

M : Oui.

R : Oui.

R : Mais c'est ça. Ça fait que si eux autres… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : C'est que quelques fois, on n'est encouragé de magasiner dans (inaudible), parce qu'il y a un programme de fidélisation, mais peut-être que c'est plus cher, ce n'est pas nécessairement le meilleur…

R : C'est ça, c'est ça.

R : À la longue il faut évaluer, ça vaut tu la peine. Des fois ça vaut la peine, mais là si tout à coup ils enlèvent le programme, bon bien là, tu viens de perdre. Tu viens de te faire avoir.

M : Ou bien avec le programme enfin, ça va prendre toute une vie pour ramasser assez de points pour acheter quelque chose vraiment à son goût.

R : L'autre…

M : *Please* Suzanne?

R : Moi les faiblesses que, peut-être plus comme une femme, mais que les hommes peut-être ont la même tendance, c'est qu'il y a tellement de programmes maintenant, j'étais donc une fois que j'avais une vingtaine de cartes qui ont des points pour quoi que ce soit. Si je change de bourse, j'en laisse la moitié à la maison. J'ai besoin d'un calepin, je ne l'ai pas. J'ai besoin, je ne l'ai pas.

M : Oui.

R : Et c'est frustrant de…

M : Ça rend la vie un peu plus compliquée.

R : Bien ce serait intéressant s'il n'y avait pas une carte, comme disons un casse-croûte, parce que j'ai une carte pour les restaurants, mais il y a six, sept restaurants.

M : Oui.

R : Il y a un choix. Mais avec ceux-là, tu n'as pas le choix que de trimballer toutes les cartes avec toi chaque fois que tu te promènes.

M : Est-ce que de plus en plus avec les programmes de fidélisation on n'a pas besoin d'avoir une carte? Quelque part on peut juste donner le nom ou le numéro de téléphone et ils peuvent trouver votre… (parlent tous en même temps)

R : Non, personne ne laisse faire ça.

R : Non, pas beaucoup. (Parlent tous en même temps).

M : Alors, pourquoi est-ce que vous avez… Qu'est-ce qui a d'abord motivé votre adhésion à des programmes de fidélisation de la première place? Parce qu'en fait, c'était juste à la fin des années 80 à peu près que ces programmes ont été inventés. Avant, je pense qu'en fait ça a commencé avec les lignes aériennes American Airlines, c'était le premier programme de fidélisation. Sauf si on compte Canadian Tire avec le Canadian Tire money. Mais ça c'était un peu différent parce qu'on vous donne de l'argent ou des (inaudible) personnellement. Mais est-ce que vous vous souvenez comment vous avez décidé de devenir membre de ces programmes?

R : C’est l’attraction, parce qu’ils ne nous ont pas dit oui.

M : Oui.

R : Bien souvent dans mon cas, si j’étais là souvent, bien ça valait la peine. Mais vraiment l’autre fois, je n’allais pas souvent à un magasin mais on vient de me donner comme un gros montant de points.

M : Oui, la promotion.

R : Juste pour la promotion. Je vais être capable d’acheter quelque chose avec quand même, ça fait que oui tant qu’à y être, pourquoi pas, j’avoir quelque chose gratuit.

M : Oui.

R : Tu sais, c’est ça.

R : Pour certaines étapes…

R : Parce que je ne veux pas dire mon nom de jeune fille.

R : Moi c’est drôle parce que la plupart des cartes que j’ai eues ou certaines des cartes que j’ai eues, c’était après les Fêtes ou avant les Fêtes. Tu fais beaucoup d’achats pour Noël.

M : Oui.

R : Puis tout à coup ils disent bien, si tu as une carte de membre, ça ne coûte rien, ça t’enlève un autre 10, 15, 20 pourcent.

M : Oui.

R : Ça fait que tu as eu des réductions dans le magasin, plus tu as un… Ça fait que tu vas prendre la carte. Puis sans y penser, chaque fois que tu y vas, bien encore c’est un avantage.

M : Oui.

R : Dans le fond, le programme, c’est comme ça que j’ai commencé.

M : C’est gratuit.

R : Oui.

M : Et ensuite on peut épargner de l’argent.

R : Oui.

M : Et est-ce que la plupart des magasins ou des entreprises que vous favorisez disposent de programme de fidélisation? Comme est-ce que c’est à peu près une norme presque partout où on fréquente qui ont un programme de fidélisation ou est-ce que c’est…

R : (inaudible)

M : En tout cas les grands magasins.

R : Oui, dépendamment. Tu sais des magasins de linge, de vêtements de mode, il y a des programmes comme ça.

M : Oui.

R : (anglais)

M : Est-ce qu’il y a des petites boutiques individuelles?

R : Non, bien c’est plutôt comme les grands magasins que tu connais qui sont comme (inaudible).

R : Ça ne m’empêcherait pas d’aller à un autre magasin parce que je n’aurais pas une carte.

M : Oui.

R : Oui, ça c’est…

R : Je peux aller à un magasin que je veux aller, même si je n’ai pas une carte.

R : Exactement.

M : Oui. Mais est-ce que tu ne penses pas que si on est membre, comme s'il y a deux magasins et il y en a un où on est membre de leur programme de fidélisation et l'autre où on ne l'est pas, on n'est pas attiré?

R : Ça dépend. Ça dépend si… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Exactement, si c'est moins cher ça va plus, tu sais… (inaudible)

R : Ça dépend si c'est quelque chose que tu aimes aussi. Moi je ne vais pas aller dépenser là juste parce que j'ai une carte si je n'aime pas vraiment cette affaire-là, puis je l'aime mieux à l'autre magasin.

R : Puis moi, je surveille beaucoup les ventes.

R : Oui.

R : Ça fait que je n'irais pas nécessairement à un magasin parce que j'ai des points. Si je sais que je surveille les ventes puis je trouve quelque chose de cent dollars de rabais, mais je vais avoir des points de… c'est cent points contre une économie de cent dollars.

M : Mais pensez-vous que ça arrive quand même que souvent les gens seront attirés à magasiner quelque part parce qu'il y a toutes sortes de promotions avec le programme de fidélisation et on pense qu'on sauve de l'argent, mais enfin peut être qu'on paye plus là-bas? Et bien sûr qu'on va recevoir des points, mais peut-être que les points…

R : Ne vaut pas.

M : Non, ça ne vaut pas. Mais que c'est une certaine, comment est-ce qu'on… Pas séduction… C'est une…

R : Fausse?

M : Une fausse économie?

R : On peut dire.

M : Oui.

R : *Well*, si tu vas m'intéresser, puis vous avez des cartes comme ça, faut tu connaisses les prix.

M : Oui.

R : Parce que moi, la fin de semaine je prends mon journal.

M : Oui.

R : Le Ottawa Citizen. Puis je regarde tous les (anglais) qu'ils ont.

M : Oui, pour comparer les prix.

R : Pour comparer les prix. Comme ça, même s'ils disent qu'ils donnent des points.

M : Oui.

R : Tu sais par exemple, je ne sais pas, *aspergus* parce que le monde aime ça.

M : Oui.

R : Bien si c'est meilleur marché dans un autre magasin où il y a plus de choses que je peux avoir…

M : Oui.

R : Je vais aller à l'autre magasin. Je ne fais pas mon marché pour avoir des points.

M : Oui.

R : Parce que ça, ça ne me sauve absolument rien.

M : Mais est-ce que ça arrive quand même que quelque part, quelques fois peut-être, on achète plus à cause du fait que bon, si j'achète deux fois tel ou tel produit, je vais gagner encore plus de points et comme ça je peux traverser un certain niveau?

R : Non, pas moi.

R : Je l'ai fait ça chez President Choice, chez Loblaws (anglais).

M : Oui.

R : *Sure*.

M : Alors comme ça…

R : Puis encore, si le prix est bon, *right*?

M : Oui.

R : Des fois c'est moins cher, puis si tu l'achètes… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Shoppers Drug Mart fait ça. (Parlent tous en même temps). Si tu as besoin de faire le plein sur quelque chose, puis tu es déjà proche d'un certain montant, bien là des fois ça vaut la peine. Mais autrement si tu es à la base, ça ne fait rien.

M : Oui.

R : Oui honnêtement, j'en ai manqué souvent mais quand même, je le sais je suis là, ok, alors je suis déjà là, tant qu'à y être.

R : Ah oui?

R : Non, mais non c'est parce que la plupart du temps… (parlent tous en même temps)

M : C'est quelque chose que je vais utiliser, si ce n'est pas aujourd'hui…

R : Bien exactement oui, c'est des choses consommables.

M : Oui.

R : Ça fait que ça va être utilisé, pas gaspillé.

M : Oui.

R : Disons le programme Air Miles, tu fais comme cinq ou six ou sept individuels marchands, là. Comme après ça tu vas avoir la liste oré

M : Oui.

R : Ok puis comme ça, ça va coûter 25 % moins cher que d'habitude. Bien ça, ça vaut la peine pour moi, là.

M : Oui.

R : Bien, dépendant de ce que j'achète au (inaudible) de compagnie. Après ça tu sais, tous les autres Air Miles… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : Je sais que pour avoir les statistiques, il faut avoir un certain nombre de vols par année. Alors c'est très proche et on va choisir entre Air Canada et West Jet. Et un vol de plus avec Air Canada ça veut dire qu'on a ce statut d'or (inaudible).

R : C'est ça.

M : Ça c'est un exemple ou peut-être on paye un peu plus pour quelque chose à cause du programme de fidélisation.

R : Mais à la longue, ça va te sauver de l'argent parce que c'est un *return*.

M : Oui.

R : Comme s'épargne sur le vol.

R : Oui.

M : Oui.

R : Dans ce cas-là, ça vaut la peine.

M : Et je vais explorer aussi toute la notion de fidélité à la marque et aux programmes de fidélisation. Avez-vous le sentiment d'être… Parce que c'est certain que les grandes entreprises veulent toujours encourager la fidélité à la marque. Ça c'est ça que les magasins font, c'est ça que les entreprises font. Mais avez-vous le sentiment d'être effectivement plus fidèles aux entreprises dont vous êtes membres du programme de fidélisation? Comme est-ce que ça marche? Enfin, est-ce que le… Parce que, bon, quand les entreprises décident de créer un programme de fidélisation, ce n'est pas juste parce qu'elles veulent être généreuses à toute leur clientèle. C'est parce qu'elles veulent…

R : C’est sûr.

R : Elles veulent faire de l’argent.

M : Elles veulent faire de l’argent et elles veulent créer fidélité à leur marque. Mais pensez-vous que ça marche, qu’enfin les programmes de fidélisation finalement ça vous rend plus fidèles à la marque elle-même?

R : Moi mon opinion, c’est oui.

R : Pour moi, non.

R : Non.

R : Parce que c’est comme s’il y a une même chose dont j’ai besoin puis il y en a deux, je vais aller avec celui qui va me donner la récompense.

M : Oui.

R : Certainement. Alors est-ce que ça marche? Oui, ça fonctionne bien.

M : Oui. Et peut-être aussi sur un nouveau sous-conscient. Est-ce qu’on se sent comme si on appartient, on a une certaine appartenance, quelque chose comme ça?

R : Non.

R : Pas moi. Non, c’est de l’argent.

R : Non, c’est exactement ça. Je sais que la compagnie vraiment, elle s’en fout. Elle a un beau programme, mais elle s’en fout elle veut de l’argent.

M : Oui.

R : Puis moi aussi je veux de l’argent, je veux gagner. Ça fait que je dirais on est fidèle au programme. On n’est pas fidèle aux affaires dans le magasin.

M : Oui.

R : C’est comme ça que ça se passe, c’est ça.

R : Parce que, juste en discutant, il semble que peut-être neuf magasins sur dix offre un système de récompenses, donc.

M : Seulement les grands magasins.

R : Oui. Aller au magasin A ou au magasin B, bien tu sais, ce n'est pas…

M : Oui mais probablement, même si neuf sur dix magasins ont un programme de récompenses, il y a probablement juste deux ou trois où toi tu as déjà amassé autant de points que ça vaut la peine d'essayer de ramasser encore plus. N'est-ce pas?

R : Pour moi ce ne serait pas nécessairement la récompense comme telle, c'est plus ce qui est offert dans le magasin.

M : Oui, oui.

R : Qu'est-ce que toi tu ne veux pas, tu as dit moi. Peut-être pour…

R : Je parle que moi qui vais aller acheter. Dans une station de gaz…

R : (inaudible)

R : Non c'est beau. Dans une station de gaz, disons que lui va aller en char, il va me donner des Air Miles, mais le Mr. Gas ou l'autre gars, pas Mr. Gas, (anglais) peut-être, qui n'ont pas de récompenses mais ils ont une cent moins cher, je vais aller le faire à une cent moins cher.

M : Oui.

R : Ou les deux cents ou le *whatever*. Ok? C'est ça qui m'attire le plus dans ce cas-là.

M : Oui.

R : Ok.

M : Mais autrement dit, s'il n'y avait pas de programme de fidélisation, achèteriez-vous quand même davantage chez elle qu'ailleurs? Ou est-ce que vous pouvez avouer que ça arrive quand même que quelques fois on devient de plus en plus fidèle à une certaine

entreprise parce qu'on est membre de leur programme de fidélisation et on ramasse des points?

R : Non.

R : Ça dépend des programmes. Vraiment ça tombe avec ce qui est le plus commode.

R : Oui avec ce qu'il y a de proche.

M : Oui où il y a les meilleurs produits, ou…

R : Et il y en a tellement, comme il y en a tellement, là…

R : Ah oui. (Parlent tous en même temps).

R : On paye pour, on ne le sait même pas mais on paye pour dans le prix parce que tout le monde faut l'avoir tu sais.

M : Oui, mais ça c'est enfin, c'est une autre faiblesse que personnellement on a discuté, mais enfin ça coûte aux entreprises quelque chose pour avoir les programmes de fidélisation.

R : C'est toi qui va le payer.

M : Pour donner des récompenses aussi. Alors finalement, je suppose que tout le monde paye un peu plus pour tout, pour payer le prix, pour les dépenses que ça cause. Ça ne veut pas dire que c'est mauvais que ça existe, mais enfin, l'argent doit venir de quelque part.

R : (Inaudible)

M : Oui.

R : Parce que moi j'ai une carte de JC Penny dans ses débuts, ok?

M : Oui, oui.

R : Je m'en vais pour le *Black Friday*.

M : D'accord.

R : Ça fait que là, le soir je pars puis je vais là. Ils ont quand même des bons prix, c'est pour ça que je me sers de mes points. Comme l'année passée, j'ai eu un Calvin Klein.

M : Oui.

R : Un manteau de Calvin Klein, j'ai payé 59 piastres. C'était 400 piastres ici en vente.

M : Ah ok.

R : C'est parce que je me suis servi de mes points.

M : C'est un bon solde.

R : Ah non, je suis toujours comme ça. Quand j'achète mon char, je vais à London, Ontario. Parce que ça coûte 5000 piastres de moins qu'à Ottawa.

R : *Really*?

R : *Yes*. Puis après ça elle paye mon gaz puis mon… (inaudible)

M : Ça me surprend que même dans l'Ontario… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Ils sont juste l'autre bord, les États-Unis sont proches.

R : Non, ce n'est pas ça en essence.

M : Non?

R : C'est parce que moi j'ai une Toyota. Puis il y a quatre places que tu peux acheter une Toyota à London, en Ontario.

R : Ah oui?

R : Comme ça, il peut y en avoir. Ici à Ottawa, comme on dit en anglais, *you got to do your homework.*

M : Faire les devoirs

R : Non c'est vrai, parce qu'en Ontario, il y a Tony Graham, à Ottawa.

R : En Ontario, à Ottawa.

R : Puis là toutes les franchises de Toyota sont à Tony Graham maintenant.

R : Ah oui?

R : Ils vendent le plus de Toyota dans notre partie de l'Ontario. Puis la quatrième personne vendeuse de Toyota au Canada. Comme ça, j'ai appelé quelqu'un chez (anglais) à London, je lui ai dit donne-moi les noms. Puis il me paye mon (inaudible), il paye mon… Si je prends l'avion ou le train, il paye ça. J'ai sauvé 5000 piastres.

R : Wow, ok. (Parlent tous en même temps). Est-ce que c'est différents propriétaires là-dedans? C'est ça?

R : Oui.

R : Ok, c'est pour ça, ils *compétitionnent* entre eux autres. En tout cas moi il n'y en a pas parce que c'est le même propriétaire.

R : Comme je dis, il faut que tu fasses tes devoirs pour tes clients, tu comprends. Parce que maintenant je suis dans un programme de Toyota. Je ne sais même pas ce que c'est, mais je l'ai.

R : (anglais) Je niaise là, mais…

R : Non, non mais, *yeah*.

M : Mais une autre question que j'ai aussi, c'est est-ce que ça arrive aussi que quelques fois on devient moins fidèle à une compagnie parce que vous étiez insatisfaits de son programme de fidélisation ou vous avez eu une mauvaise expérience?

R : *Oh no, oh well*.

R : Moi je dirais avec le vol. Air Miles oui. Je dirais que… (parlent tous en même temps)

M : Mais Air Miles n'est pas vraiment une entreprise d'ici.

R : Ok, entreprise.

M : Mais quand même?

R : Non.

M : Non?

R : Non.

R : Moi avec Sears, pour une période de temps j'ai refusé d'aller magasiner parce que j'ai perdu 300, 400, 500 points.

M : Oui.

R : Ce qui était une valeur quand même, je pense à peu près…

R : 130 dollars.

R : Oui… (parlent tous en même temps). Il y avait une expiration.

M : Ah, ok.

R : J'avais déplacé ma carte, puis quand je l'ai retrouvée, j'ai commencé à regarder mes points, j'arrive là puis ils disent ah, tu n'as plus de points.

M : Ah, ok. (Parlent tous en même temps)

R : Et ensuite les prix de Sears ont commencé à augmenter parce que la compagnie avait…

M : Des problèmes.

R : De la difficulté. Les prix, je remarquais si j'allais ailleurs, les prix étaient moins chers. Ça fait que d'avoir des points, mais je peux l'avoir pour la moitié prix ailleurs…

R : Oui.

M : Oui.

R : Ça fait que c'est, vous avez entièrement raison, c'est de magasiner puis de faire vos recherches avant.

R : Oh oui.

R : Même l'épicerie, tu sais tu vas sortir tous les dépliants, puis peu importe la carte et les prix que tu vas avoir, si tu veux avoir une dinde dans le temps des Fêtes, parce que là je surveille pour les dindes…

M : Oui.

R : Puis je vais l'avoir pour 99 cents, mais je n'ai pas de points ou je vais l'avoir pour 2,99 $ puis j'ai des points. Ça vaut quoi, là?

R : Oui.

M : Oui.

R : Puis tu sais avec tous les prix qui augmentent partout, tout augmente, les factures augmentent, les prix augmentent, il faut vraiment magasiner.

R : Oui.

M : Oui.

R : Il faut que tu surveilles les ventes. (Parlent tous en même temps)

M : Ça c'est le mot que je cherchais, déception.

R : C'est ça.

M : Et c'est ça qui est arrivé à Suzanne. C'est exactement ça que je voulais, ce que j'ai pensé, c'est l'idée que ça peut arriver qu'on ait une mauvaise expérience ou il y a une expiration des points ou on a des problèmes à rembourser les points. Et à cause de ça, ça nous donne une mauvaise impression de toute l'entreprise.

R : Fidélité envers quoi?

M : Oui.

R : Je ne peux pas dire que c'était (inaudible). Oh mautadit, j'en avais un million de points.

R : Un million?

R : Je voulais avoir une Volkswagen.

M : Elle était millionnaire.

R : Non, non. Mon mari dit, chut, chut, tu ne peux pas. J'arrive au magasin puis j'ai acheté quelque chose et la jeune fille ma dit veux-tu donner tes points, on pourrait… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : Je sais qu'avec ces programmes souvent on a des récompenses et on épargne de l'argent. Mais est-ce qu'il y a d'autres avantages aussi? Comme je crois que Marc disait qu'on a quelques fois de la reconnaissance si on est comme un membre d'or ou quelque chose comme ça. Mais en général quand on est membre d'un programme de fidélisation, est-ce qu'on est reconnu dans l'entreprise, du tout, ou est-ce qu'il y a d'autres…

R : Non.

R : Non.

M : Non?

R : Tout le monde l'a. Il n'y a rien de spécial, tout le monde l'a.

R : Ça dépend… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : Mais je sais comme par exemple, quelques fois si on est membre d'un programme, on va recevoir des courriels pour nous dire qu'il y a un solde comme en avance.

R : (inaudible)

M : Oui.

R : (anglais) je suis membre chez … plan

M : Oui. (Parlent tous en même temps)

R : Il m'a appelée un soir, c'était une voix, il ne me connaît pas, on va en avoir un vente pour les membres.

M : Oui.

R : Quand je retire mon compte, je sauve 25 % au moins.

M : Oui.

R : Au moins je peux sauver. Comme ça, ça m'a coûté 50 dollars pour trois cents. Je gagne.(anglais)

M : Oui. C'est un exemple que, je suppose qu'une fois qu'on est membre on est dans la page de données de cette entreprise, alors je suppose qu'on va recevoir plus de communications.

R : Mais il n'y a pas de distractions avec Fiber Plan. Je peux entrer dans le magasin, ils n'ont pas (inaudible). Puis je vais avoir mon *discount*. 25 % au moins. Sur des draperies puis des affaires comme ça, c'est 50 % (inaudible).

R : Moi il y avait une place qui s'appelait qui s'appelait *Christmas in a card*, puis il y avait une autre carte, je ne me souviens pas laquelle, où une fois par année dans le temps des Fêtes… Parce que *Christmas in a card* c'était plutôt toutes les décorations de Noël. Il y avait d'autres choses durant d'autres saisons, mais Noël c'était gros. Les villages de Noël et tout ça. Puis c'était (inaudible), mais tu pouvais avoir une carte puis tu accumulais des points. Une fois par année dans le temps des Fêtes, ils fermaient les portes, ils invitaient les clients qui avaient des cartes de membres, ils les invitaient pour une soirée. Il y avait du champagne, il y avait toutes sortes de gâteaux… (parlent tous en même temps). C'était superbe.

M : Alors ça c'était… (parlent tous en même temps). Plus petits magasins, pas les grands. Tu sais comme Sears ne donnera pas une réception.

R : Birks, tous les magasins de Birks partout au Canada, je pense que ça va être le 19 cette année (inaudible) invitations à tout le monde qui a des cartes de Birks.

M : Oui.

R : C’est par un système de points. Ils vous invitent puis du champagne, puis des truffes, puis toutes sortes de choses comme ça. Puis ce soir-là ils vous donnent des pourcents. 20 % sur quelque chose que tu achètes.

R : Sears faisait ça aussi un moment donné. Une soirée dans le temps des Fêtes, ils fermaient les portes, mais ils ouvraient seulement pour les clients qui avaient des cartes de membres. Et puis c’était une soirée où il y avait des réductions sur…

M : Alors si on est membre, on a accès à des soldes en avance du grand public?

R : La soirée, c’était les portes ouvertes puis il y avait des réductions additionnelles pour les gens qui étaient membres.

M : Ah, ok.

R : Puis maintenant chez Birks, tu n’as pas de points, mais si tu achètes assez souvent, tu as une réputation. Ou si tu as une carte de Birks.

M : Est-ce que vous autres êtes au courant de ces avantages comme ça?

R : Bien le seul que j’avais remarqué, c’était celui que Marc avait mentionné.

M : Oui.

R : Avec les voyages puis tout ça. Ça fait que là bien, tu dois … gazoline et autres privilèges. (inaudible).

M : Oui.

R : Puis ça te donne quelques autres privilèges, tu sais.

R : Oui, dans le…

R : Ils sont un petit peu plus de bonne heure, puis des affaires de même.

R : Oui.

R : Je veux dire toutes sortes de choses.

R : Oui, le Maple Leaf lounge et tout ça.

R : Oui, c'est ça, c'est des choses comme ça. Mais à part de ça…

M : Oui. Comment était le formulaire des questions à vos programmes de fidélisation? Quels renseignements avez-vous dû fournir? Est-ce que c'est juste nom et adresse? Est-ce que vous vous souvenez de quelles sortes de questions on vous posait?

R : Bien général oui, c'est juste une feuille, c'est assez simple, ce n'est pas compliqué.

R : Oui. Je l'ai fait au Shoppers il y a peut-être une semaine. Je mets mon adresse, ma signature, mon courriel.

M : D'accord.

R : C'est ce qu'ils m'ont demandé dans une feuille, pas grand-chose. Le courriel…

M : Juste votre identification d'utilisateur?

R : Oui, des choses pour nous envoyer des papiers.

M : Mais est-ce qu'il n'y a pas, je sais que souvent il y a peut-être aussi des questions, des renseignements sur vos préférences d'achat, comme des catégories de biens ou de services qui vous intéressent? Est-ce que vous n'avez jamais…

R : Seulement sur Internet.

M : Pardon?

R : Seulement sur Internet.

R : Non.

M : Non?

R : Pas vraiment.

M : Oui bien des renseignements sur vos préférences de récompenses? Parce que je sais qu'avec certains programmes comme ça, peut-être qu'ils vont vous poser des questions

sur vos noms et adresse et tout ça, mais il y aura aussi des questions sur vos préférences. Parce qu'ils veulent créer comme un profil pour vous.

R : Mâle, femelle, de quel âge à quel âge.

R : Oui, pas mal.

R : C'est souvent ça.

M : Oui.

R : Je sais qu'il y en a aussi qui demandent, j'ai juste le terme en anglais là, mais household income.

R : Oui. (Parlent tous en même temps)

R : Ce n'est pas de leurs affaires.

R : Non, je le sais que tu n'as pas besoin de répondre à ça.

M : Mais aussi est-ce que quelques fois on vous donne le choix de vous faire exempter de sollicitation future? Comme si vous voulez recevoir des courriels sur des soldes ou pas.

R : Oui, oui c'est ça.

R : (anglais)

R : (Parlent tous en même temps)

R : Justement moi, j'en ai pour 2000 dollars puis tiens, envoie 50 000 courriels puis si tu vends quelque chose, félicitations. Bien ça, ça m'écœure.

R : Ah, on en reçoit tant.

M : Et vous souvenez-vous si des politiques de protection de la vie privée étaient jointes au formulaire d'adhésion?

R : Ils n'ont pas le choix. (inaudible)

M : Mais comme quand tu étais en train de remplir un formulaire d'adhésion dans un programme de fidélisation, est-ce qu'ils ont montré sur le formulaire, voilà notre politique de protection de la vie privée?

R : Moi je ne me souviens pas, non.

R : Tu dois l'avoir vue, ils n'ont pas le choix, au Canada, il faut. (Parlent tous en même temps).

R : Personne ne le lit, mais…

R : Si tu l'as par courriel, si on t'invite à avoir une carte de membre ou quoi que ce soit, par courriel normalement, avant même d'aller plus loin, tu dois cocher que tu es en accord d'avoir cela privé.

R : La seule façon, ils peuvent donner les renseignements privés, mais il faut qu'ils ôtent ton nom et ton adresse.

M : Oui.

R Puis ton numéro de téléphone, puis tout ça, c'est le gouvernement.

M : Oui.

R : Il n'y a pas une compagnie… Je travaille avec les avocats.

M : Oui, oui c'est ça, oui.

R : Il n'y a pas une compagnie qui a le droit de donner vos renseignements sans avoir votre permission. Tu peux remplir tout ce que tu veux.

M : Oui.

R : Puis personne n'a le droit de faire…

R : On n'a pas le droit de conduire plus que 100 kilomètres à l'heure sur l'autoroute non plus.

M : Mais vous ne pensez pas qu'une fois que vous êtes membres d'un programme de fidélisation, on est dans une base de données où ça montre votre nom et votre… *your*

pattern of purchase, comment est-ce qu'on dit le… (Parlent tous en même temps). Et ils ne partagent pas les listes avec d'autres?

R : Oui mais on ne peut dire qu'ils font ça.

M : Oui.

R : Ok.

R : (Inaudible) Comme Sobeys. Si peut-être chaque semaine je dépense 100 dollars.

M : Oui.

R : Mais ils ne savent pas exactement qu'est-ce que j'ai eu.

M : Combien de bananes, combien de…

R : Exactement. Ils peuvent voir que ah, elle a acheté une banane, mais elle a payé 1,24 $. Ça ne dit pas combien je paye.

R : C'est comme ça qu'on s'envoie des courriels, on peut dire aussi. Parce qu'ils vont voir qu'elle achète beaucoup de bananes, alors leurs courriels sont... (Parlent tous en même temps). Alors ils vont étudier exactement ce qu'on achète.

M : Oui.

R : Pour nous vendre encore plus.

M : Non mais c'est vrai ce que Marc dit. C'est qu'enfin, dans le futur, ils vont voir, se rendre compte de vos achats et…

R : Mais ils l'ont déjà, c'est celui de… Le montant qu'ils ont manqué donc.

M : Oui.

R : Il y a beaucoup de dépenses. Ils peuvent dire que je dépense à Canadian Tire. Mais on ne sait pas… (Parlent tous en même temps)

M : Mais peut-être qu'ils ont la base de données d'exactement ce que vous avez acheté. Parce que c'est tout là; on est à la caisse et on paye pour…

R : Ça dépend si c'est quelque chose d'autre. Chez Sobeys, c'est leur système.

M : Oui.

R : Alors leur système, ton numéro avec leur système, tu peux l'avoir toute l'information. Mais si tu as une Master Card, ça échange toutes les informations.

M : Oui exactement. Et c'est Sobeys qui a le programme de fidélisation. Alors ils sont au courant d'exactement ce que vous avez acheté.

R : C'est ça que je dis, c'est… (Parlent tous en même temps). Marc avait acheté ses *Wheeties* on sait que (inaudible) vont les vendre, là… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : Aviez-vous des soucis de respect de la vie privée lorsque vous avez adhéré pour la première fois à un programme de fidélisation?

R : Non.

R : Pas vraiment.

M : Non?

R : Non.

R : Parce que ça devient tellement routinier de remplir des choses comme ça, je pense.

R : Je l'ai demandé, écoute monsieur, chaque fois que j'ai eu une carte, qu'est-ce que tu vas faire avec mes renseignements?

M : Oui.

R : Si je n'ai pas la réponse, *sorry babe*, tu ne fais pas d'affaires avec moi Ce n'est pas parce que je suis paranoïaque ou rien comme ça.

M : Oui. Non.

R : Mais c'est privé et ça finit là.

M : Oui, mais la plupart d'entre vous n'avez pas vraiment des soucis envers le respect de la vie privée dans le contexte des programmes de fidélisation?

R : Pas trop, trop.

R : Non, non.

R : Moi j'y pense à chaque fois que je mets ma signature quelque part.

M : Oui.

R : J'y pense, mais…

R : Il faut que tu penses aussi à quelle information tu leur donnes.

M : Oui.

R : Alors si tu ouvres la porte là, ils vont rentrer. Alors tu donnes l'information minimum.

M : Oui.

R : Comme ça, ils ne vont pas t'achaler. Je ne veux pas qu'ils savent où je demeure, mon numéro de téléphone. Un courriel, ça peut être n'importe où, *fine*. Si tu me demandes plus d'informations que ça là, est-ce que j'ai des enfants et ils ont quel âge, je ne pense pas. Alors je ne m'inquiète pas parce que je ne leur en donne pas plus que c'est nécessaire.

M : Mais est-ce que c'est quand même une partie de votre vie privée, juste le fait qu'ils connaissent ce que vous achetez?

R : Non ça, ça ne me dérange pas, pas du tout.

R : Non.

R : Pas du tout.

R : Mais c'est privé, mais par contre s'ils te demandaient de faire partie de…

M : Oui de l'association.

R : De (inaudible) de cette façon-là, tu sais qu'il va y avoir des calculs un moment donné, possiblement des achats que tu fais dans leur magasin.

M : Oui, c'est ça.

R : Ça fait que pourquoi est-ce que j'aurais un programme?

M : Oui.

R : Parce que ça c'est un des avantages pour eux autres, c'est d'être capable de voir ok, quels produits qu'on achète le plus, un individu à la fois. Mais quels produits ils vendent le plus pour dire on va n'acheter plus ou sinon on va arrêter d'en acheter. Ça fait que peut-être que ce serait logique aussi qu'ils le fassent.

R : Moi ça me dérange un peu s'ils commençaient à se partager toutes les différentes informations d'une compagnie à l'autre.

M : Oui.

R : Pourquoi? Attends une minute, là.

M : Et je ne sais pas, il y a des limites ou des règles concernant l'usage que les compagnies peuvent faire de ces renseignements?

R : Je crois, oui. Je crois.

R : Oui.

M : Vous pensez qu'il y a?

R : Oui.

M : Est-ce qu'il y a des… Les renseignements comme par exemple, quel programme de fidélisation est-ce que tu étais avec?

R : Lequel?

R : N'importe quel.

R : Bien, Air Miles.

M : Ok, Air Miles. Bon alors si Air Miles a pris ton dossier avec toutes les choses que tu avais, toutes tes transactions avec Air Miles.

R : Oui.

M : Est-ce qu'il y a des limites ou des règles concernant l'usage qu'Air Miles peut faire avec ces renseignements? Ou est-ce qu'elle peut partager ces renseignements?

R : Je n'en ai aucune idée.

R : Oui.

M : Oui. Et je pense (inaudible).

R : Oui je le sais. Parce que j'ai eu un cas comme ça.

M : Oui.

R : Puis c'était une compagnie qui a donné des renseignements pour une dame.

M : Oui.

R : Puis il est venu voir nous autres, les avocats, puis on a fait la recherche. Puis il ne peut pas donner tous les renseignements comme ça sans avoir sa permission.

R : S'ils ne sont pas autorisés.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps). Ça coûte beaucoup d'argent parce qu'ils ont donné un pas mal gros montant à la madame, la compagnie. Parce qu'elle était…

R : Ils avaient partagé son information avec d'autres?

R : Oui, ils ont donné des renseignements à une autre compagnie. Ça c'est arrivé en 2006, je crois que c'était à Vancouver si je m'en rappelle comme il faut, puis la madame a dit vous n'avez pas le droit de donner des renseignements sur ma famille puis tout ça à une autre compagnie, puis monsieur, on va vous voir en cour. Puis voilà.

R : Comment est-ce que tu fais pour savoir que ton information…

R : Parce que les autres compagnies vous appellent.

R : Oui mais… on ne sait pas toujours

M : Estimez-vous qu'à la suite de votre adhésion à un programme de fidélisation, vous recevez plus de publicité et de promotion qu'auparavant?

R : Oui.

R : Ah oui.

R : Par courriel, oui. Ça n'arrête pas, il faut avoir une autre adresse courriel juste pour des affaires comme ça. Chaque fois que c'est quelque chose, moi j'ai cette adresse-là. Sinon j'en ai trop à chaque jour.

R : À moi, je fais *unsuscribe*, *unsuscribe*, *unsuscribe*.

M : Mais est-ce que ces publicités nouvelles sont quelques fois utiles? Comme quelques fois peut-être on va voir des promotions ou des informations sur des soldes? Parce que certainement si on devient membre d'un programme de fidélisation et on commence à recevoir des courriels provenant de cette entreprise, quelques fois peut-être qu'il y a un solde sur quelque chose que vous voulez. Ce n'est pas nécessairement inutile, n'est-ce pas?

R : Si je suis au courant qu'il y a quelque chose que je veux acheter, je vais aller voir leur site Web moi-même.

M : Oui.

R : Exactement… (Parlent tous en même temps).

M : Alors il y a des inondations d'informations?

R : C'est partout. On n'a pas besoin (inaudible) comme ça.

R : Oui, mais en même temps il faut dire que, tu sais comme Canadian Tire.

M : Oui.

R : Tu sais, j'ai des courriels à chaque semaine. Tu sais une affaire, la *patente* qui ouvre le garage automatiquement, là. On en avait besoin d'un, puis tu sais (anglais), tout d'un coup j'ai dit ah oui ok je vais l'acheter.

R : Oui.

R : Alors oui, ok, ça va me donner peut-être… Je dis ça dans le cas des *flyers*, parce que je ne regarde pas les courriels habituellement, mais... Parce que je sais qu'il y a trop de choses que je veux acheter dont je n'ai pas besoin non plus. Ou bien…

R : Bien c'est ça.

R : Alors, aujourd'hui c'est ça oui.

R : C'est ça le but.

M : *Yeah*.

R : C'est ça le but qu'ils envoient tout ça.

M : Mais est-ce que ça arrive quelques fois que… Avez-vous déjà mis en balance les rabais et les récompenses qu'offre le programme de fidélisation et la possibilité que vous receviez plus de sollicitation et que vos renseignements personnels soient utilisés à d'autres fins? Comme c'est-à-dire, bon, si on décide d'adhérer à un programme de fidélisation, l'avantage c'est qu'on reçoit des récompenses. Mais est-ce que ça arrive quelques fois que vous faites le calcul et bon, peut-être que je vais recevoir des récompenses, mais probablement que je vais recevoir aussi un tas de courriels sur toutes sortes de promotions et de soldes et tout ça. Est-ce que vraiment ça vaut la peine?

R : Non, je ne l'ai pas calculé comme ça non.

R : Non, pas du tout.

M : Non? Est-ce qu'il y a certains… Quand vous discutez justement de la vie privée et de vos achats et tout ça, y a-t-il certains genres d'achats que vous estimez plus personnels que d'autres?

R : Oui, mes médicaments.

M : Les médicaments c'est un peu différent, parce que ça c'est complètement…

R : Oui, mais j'étais à la pharmacie au Shoppers Drug Mart du Canada.

M : Oui, oui.

R : Puis j'avais acheté des choses que mon mari avait besoin, puis il m'a demandé pour *Optimum Card*. Puis j'ai dit non, non, non, non. Ce n'est pas les affaires de la compagnie (inaudible).

R : Sur prescription?

R : Oui. Ils ne sont pas supposés.

R : Ouais, non ils ne sont pas supposés.

R : Non.

R : Non, c'est ça.

R : Puis il m'a demandé, j'ai dit non. Puis il a dit pourquoi pas? J'ai dit c'est des affaires personnels. Mon linge, s'ils veulent savoir ce que j'achète, what the heck

M : Oui.

R : Mais on a tous la même chose.

M : Mais là ce n'est pas juste des médicaments, mais aussi d'autres choses. On peut acheter des choses dans la pharmacie qui ne sont pas des prescriptions, mais peut-être le fait que vous colorez vos cheveux ou quelque chose comme… Je ne sais pas. (Parlent tous en même temps). Non, non mais on peut dire des *personal care products* ou des choses

comme… Peut-être qu'on a tous des choses qu'on achète qui est peut-être un peu plus gênant ou quelque chose.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps). Au magasin que tu l'as acheté. (Parlent tous en même temps).

R : Tu utilises tes points de ta carte ou tu ne les utilises pas.

M : Oui.

R : C'est ton choix, tu n'es pas obligé.

M : On n'est pas obligé de montrer sa carte.

R : (Inaudible) des choses personnelles.

M : Oui.

R : Ça finit là. Des choses qui sont plus…

M : Mais je vais juste créer peut-être un scénario hypothétique. Comme peut-être un adolescent achète une crème contre l'acné ou quelque chose comme ça et soudainement, à cause du fait d'être membre d'un programme de fidélisation à Shoppers Drug Mart, il commence à recevoir un tas de courriel de comment avoir un visage plus…

R : Beau.

M : Plus beau ou quelque chose comme ça.

R : Bien c'est comme ça que ça arrive un petit peu, comme sur Facebook.

M : Oui.

R : Je sais que ça n'a vraiment pas rapport.

M : Oui.

R : Mais comme des fois là, je vais aller sur Google puis je vais chercher quelque chose sur Google, puis je vais sur Facebook, puis je vais voir des avertissements sur la droite. Tu sais ce que je veux dire, comme?

M : Oui.

R : Et tout le monde va toujours avoir des petites informations sur toi. Puis vraiment, ce n'est pas quelque chose de super gênant, ce n'est pas…

R : Ce n'est pas un secret qu'on achète du papier de toilette.

M : Oui, tout le monde l'a, oui. Et (anglais).

R : (inaudible)

M : Avez-vous déjà tenté d'accéder aux renseignements qu'une compagnie peut stocker à votre sujet à la suite de votre adhésion à un programme de fidélisation?

R : Non.

R : Dis ça encore, *please*.

M : Parce que certainement, si on est membre d'un programme de fidélisation, il y a certainement un dossier sur vous.

R : Oui.

M : Avec cette compagnie.

R : Oui.

M : Est-ce qu'on a le droit de le voir?

R : Oui.

R : Oui. À titre d'information.

R : Oui.

M : Comme par exemple si vous voulez voir avec Air Miles quel est votre numéro…

R : De profil?

M : De profil et de dossier sur toi, est-ce qu'on peut le… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Voici ton information, y a-t-il quelque chose que tu veux changer, marié, célibataire…

M : Oui mais ça c'est juste l'information. Ce que je veux dire c'est que probablement qu'ils ont un dossier sur toi avec beaucoup plus d'informations que juste ton nom et ton adresse.

R : Oui.

M : Il y a probablement…

R : (Parlent tous en même temps)

M : Qu'est-ce que vous avez acheté et à quelle fréquence est-ce que vous magasinez ici ou là. Comme ils ont probablement tout un profil de toi comme consommateur.

R : Oui.

R : Oui mais ça, ça peut être bon pour toi.

M : Oui.

R : Parce que…

M : Non mais je ne dis pas que c'est mauvais, mais est-ce qu'on a le droit de le voir?

R : Oui, oui.

R : Oui. Je n'ai jamais essayé là, mais… (parlent tous en même temps)

M : Mais *access to information* je crois que ça c'est quelque chose. Le gouvernement…

R : Ce n'est pas seulement le gouvernement.

R : C'est partout, c'est partout. C'est partout ça.

R : Oui.

R : C'est fédéral, c'est ça c'est fédéral, c'est partout au Canada.

M : Oui.

R : C'est partout dans le Canada, parce que j'ai fait 25 ans au gouvernement, puis je travaille dans *access to information* depuis des années.

M : Oui.

R : Puis on n'a pas le droit d'utiliser des renseignements de personnes pour le gouvernement. Puis si un (inaudible) renseignements, puis tu as la preuve si c'est à toi, *you have to prove who you are*, ils n'ont pas le droit de les garder. Comme medical history (anglais).

M : Oui.

R : En Ontario, mais ce n'est pas la même chose au Québec. Vous avez le droit d'aller à leur bureau et de leur dire je veux voir mon dossier que tu as sur les clients.

R : Ils n'ont pas le droit de vous le refuser, pas du tout. S'il y a une autre loi au Québec, je ne la connais pas.

R : Le fait de la protection des affaires, c'est ça au Québec?

R : Je pense que c'est ça au Québec, oui. Mais au Québec ils font… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : L'autre question que j'avais aussi, c'est que… Je sais que vous avez déjà dit que ça avait été meilleur. Avez-vous eu l'expérience où vos points dans un programme de fidélisation ont été évalués?

R : Mais je suis sûre que je…

R : Dévalués?

M : Évalués. Comme peut-être l'année passée on avait besoin de 10 000 points pour avoir quelque chose. (Parlent tous en même temps). Alors ils changent les niveaux et soudainement les points n'ont pas la même valeur.

R : Oui, oui, oui. Petro-Canada si je ne me trompe pas.

M : Petro-Canada?

R : Bien il y a une carte, ce n'est peut-être pas Petro, c'est peut-être un autre là, mais il y a une carte puis avant ça prenait tant pour avoir tant de points. Ou ça prenait tant to redeem comme tes points pour avoir une carte de 25 dollars.

M : Oui.

R : Là ça prend plus de points pour avoir une carte de 25 dollars.

R : Oui mais c'est parce qu'ils font maintenant (inaudible).

R : Parce qu'ils en donnent plus par exemple.

R : C'est tu ça?

R : Ah peut-être, peut-être.

R : Si c'est quelque chose comme ça…

R : Parce qu'à Petro-Can, tu avais besoin de 15 000 points, puis ça te donnes du gaz de… Ils baissent le prix de la gazoline. Cinq cents le litre.

R : Ok. (Parlent tous en même temps) 250

M : Mais je sais que ça arrive de plus en plus que les points sont dévalués. Que pour avoir certaines récompenses on a besoin de plus de points qu'avant.

R : Oui.

R : Pour 250 litres à cinq cents *off*. Ça dépend aussi, c'est comme n'importe quoi que nous achetons, il y a des choses de moins cher.

R : (Inaudible), puis je paye 1,23 $.

M : Oui.

R : Il y a d'autres choses qui sont moins chères et d'autres choses qui sont plus chères.

M : Oui.

R : L’économie ça change. Alors oui, ça va changer avec les prix des affaires.

R : Oui.

M : Oui, mais quand même, est-ce que c’est juste que si peut-être on ramasse des centaines de mille de points avec un certain programme et tout à coup ils disent la valeur de tous vos points sont réduits de 50 % parce qu’on a changé tous les niveaux? Comme par exemple, Aero Plan, comme si c’est 25 000 pour un vol n’importe où en Amérique du Nord et tout à coup c’est 40 000 au lieu de 25 000.

R : Ça c’est… (parlent tous en même temps)

R : Moi justement c’est que, bien il y a une augmentation dans le prix pour l’avoir.

M : Oui.

R : Alors les vols, la gare, tu sais tout ça c’est plus cher. Oui ça va coûter plus cher.

M : Oui.

R : Puis ça va arriver tout le temps. Même si on achète un Coke ou une plume.

M : Oui.

R : Ok, alors moi je dis que moi ce que je vois ok, ce n’est pas la valeur des points, c’est que ce que tu achètes avec les points, ça augmente ou ça réduit, ça va augmenter ou ça va réduire.

R : Oui.

R : Simplement.

R : Moi ça m’est arrivé avec une carte qu’ils ont dévaluée. Ça prenait beaucoup plus de points.

M : Oui.

R : La carte, je l’ai coupée en deux.

M : Oui.

R : Je n'ai jamais retourné. Bien pourquoi t'appellerais ça un programme de fidélité quand le client en bout de ligne ne veut rien dire pour toi? Tu regardes à ta poche d'argent, puis là il faut que tu montes les choses, puis tu as déjà le monde de saisi, bien non, pas mon compte.

R : Non, je suis d'accord.

R : Je n'en ai pas besoin.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps). Ah, tu en as eu un million, mais maintenant on va vous donner 105 000. Ça n'a rien donné.

M : Oui.

R : Oui. (anglais)

M : Ou bien une autre chose qui peut arriver, c'est d'avoir une situation où il y a une expiration de points.

R : Comme Sears.

M : Comme Sears.

R : Air Miles l'ont introduit l'année passée.

M : Oui, alors si les points sont plus de quelques années…

R : Cinq ans.

M : Cinq ans, oui.

R : Oui mais tu peux l'avoir en dollars, en monnaie, en *cash*.

M : Air Miles?

R : Air Miles?

R : Moi je les change en *cash*. C'est ce que je fais. C'est le meilleur revenu.

R : Oui je le sais, c'est pour ça que je le fais moi aussi.

R : 175 points pour 20 piastres, là.

R : Je fais ça. Ou bien…

M : Ou est-ce que ça arrive aussi que quelques fois qu'on veut utiliser les points et c'est très difficile de les utiliser?

R : Air Miles pour les vols.

R : Aero Plan c'est pareil.

R : Puis pour les autres…

R : We have two seats, but …(inaudible). Pas de Noël, pas de ci, pas de ça, pas de fin de semaine.

M : Alors…

R : Tu ne peux pas rester à tel hôtel.

M : C'est ça.

R : Si tu veux rester dans un bon hôtel (inaudible).

M : Alors c'est surtout avec le voyage que ça…

R : Ça c'est pire.

M : Oui.

R : Puis Aero Plan, Air Miles, c'est les pires qui ressemblent à ça.

M : Oui.

R : C'est pour ça qu'Air Miles, je prends toujours des cartes de gaz.

M : Oui.

R : C'est 20 piastres pour… Tu sais ce que je veux dire.

M : Avez-vous déjà quitté un programme de fidélisation? Comme pas juste cessé d'utiliser, mais que vous avez activement dit je ne veux plus adhérer à ce programme, enlevez mon nom de votre page de données?

R : Non.

R : Non jamais, jamais.

R : J'ai perdu plusieurs cartes un moment donné, puis il y en a d'autres que je n'ai jamais réappliqué pour des cartes parce qu'il y avait d'autres options entre-temps, je n'en avais pas besoin, alors dans ce cas-là oui. Mais je n'ai pas comme lâché, j'ai perdu ma carte puis je ne l'ai pas renouvelée, c'est tout.

M : Oui.

R : Ce n'est pas comme… Toi tu veux dire tu as vraiment comme été au magasin ou appelé le magasin pour canceller la carte?

M : Oui. Pas la carte de crédit, mais la carte de fidélisation.

R : Oui, oui… Non.

M : Avez-vous déjà lu à propos des fuites de données de programmes de fidélisation ou de cartes de crédit?

R : Des fuites de données?

M : Fuites de données. Ça veut dire quand, peut-être comment dire, en anglais, ça veut dire que quelqu'un a accès…

R : Quelqu'un a entré dans un site Web puis a volé nos informations?

M : Oui.

R : Non.

M : Ou quelqu'un a entré dans la base de données d'un programme de… Comme je crois que quelque chose comme ça est arrivé il y a quelques années avec Winners, où quelqu'un a… comment on dit *hacking* en français, ils ont…

R : *Hacké*.

M : *Hacké*. Quelqu'un a fait du *hacking* dans le système informatique de Winners et ils avaient accès à toute la liste des millions de gens qui étaient membres de leur programme de fidélisation et ils étaient capables d'enlever tout ça avec tous leurs numéros de cartes de crédit. Alors ils étaient obligés de canceller…

R : Ça c'était déjà vu avec une banque. Québec Épargne.

M : Oui.

R : RBC, ça fait cinq ans passés, quelque chose comme ça.

R : Ah oui?

R : Ils ont eu du trouble comme ça.

M : Oui.

R : Mais ça ce n'est pas toujours relié à une carte de fidélisation.

M : Non.

R : C'est sûr.

M : Mais ce que je voulais savoir, c'est qu'avec les cartes de fidélisation, est-ce que c'est quand même un souci le fait qu'on peut avoir une fuite de données comme ça?

R : Je ne crois pas, ça ne me fait absolument rien à moi. Parce que c'est une carte de fidélisation, ce n'est pas une carte de crédit.

M : Oui.

R : S'il veut avoir mon numéro de carte, je n'ai peut-être…

R : C’est comme elle dit.

M : On ne peut pas enlever de l’argent comme ça.

R : Non.

R : Quelqu’un… La fidélité c’est de l’argent.

M : Oui.

R : C’est ça.

R : S’ils font des affaires de même là, c’est pour l’argent.

R : C’est trop (inaudible) de faire ça pour des points.

R : C’est ça, non ça ne vaut pas la peine.

M : Mais est-ce que ça peut être quand même, ça veut dire que quelqu’un a quand même un dossier avec ton nom, ton adresse, combien d’argent que tu as dépensé…

R : Il y a des dates.

M : Oui.

R : Ça peut aider à ça un peu.

M : Oui.

R : Peut-être un peu, mais…

R : C’est la seule chose dont je peux penser en ce moment en ce qui concerne… Comme j’ai dit avant, je ne donne pas l’information financière, familiale ou quoi que ce soit, dépendant de quelle sorte de programme.

R : Le seul temps où ça pourrait peut-être être une inquiétude, c’est si tes points dans la banque de données de la compagnie, ils ont ton nom, disons…

M : Oui.

R : Il y a des points, mais tu as aussi une carte avec eux-autres.

R : Oui.

R : Une carte de crédit…

M : Oui, qui est liée avec ces deux informations-là.

R : Qui est liée avec ça, bien moi ça serait ma seule inquiétude.

R : Oui.

M : Oui.

R : Si c'est lié à une carte de crédit pour le…

M : Ou peut-être quelqu'un peut vider tous tes points, les enlever et les ajouter à leur compte.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps). Comme on dit en anglais *get a life*, c'est seulement des point.

M : Est-ce que certains de vos programmes de fidélisation sont présents dans les médias sociaux? Comme Facebook ou Twitter ou quelque chose comme ça?

R : Air Miles.

M : Air Miles? Est-ce que Air Miles a une *Facebook page*?

R : Non, c'est tout dans un petit carré. Si tu regardes dans Facebook à droite.

M : Oui.

R : C'est tout des petits carrés. (Parlent tous en même temps) Ils font ça.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps) L'étape de fidélité.

R : Ouais, je ne le sais pas, je n'ai jamais…

R : Oui mais je sais que…

M : Mais je sais que de plus en plus, avec beaucoup de programmes de fidélisation comme Air Miles ou HDC ou quelque chose comme ça, on peut cliquer, on peut cocher suivre ou Aimer sur Facebook ou sur Twitter ou quelque chose comme ça. Alors comme ça, ils ont déjà une dimension d'être sur les réseaux sociaux. Mais est-ce que vous étiez au courant de ça? Du tout?

R : Oui, mais…

R : Oui, mais…

R : Ça t'envoie des courriels, puis… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Je n'en ai jamais vu sur mon Facebook.

M : Mais comme par exemple sur Facebook quelques fois on peut même voir si vous avez des amis qui ont coché Aimer sur Air Miles ou quelque chose comme ça.

R : Oui. C'est ça, comme il y a des aubaines, ça veut dire comme surtout pour des places où tu vas manger. Comme disons, la seule chose que je peux penser en ce moment, (anglais).

M : Oui.

R : Comme deux pour ça et ça, ça prend les images, on dit tu cliques dessus.

M : Oui.

R : Et c'est des choses comme ça. Comme si tu as, c'est plus une salle de (inaudible).

M : Voilà.

R : Mais à part ça…

M : Mais peut-être aussi, si on est membre de leur programme de fidélisation, ils vont te dire cliquez *Like* et vous allez recevoir 100 points.

R : Je n'ai jamais (inaudible)

M : Mais ça peut arriver?

R : Un repas d'un *shot.*

R : Je vais aller fouiller.

R : Ceux qui sont mes amis?

M : Oui.

R : C'est mieux d'aimer. Air Miles, Aimer.

M : Oui.

R : Non, non, non. Et c'est mieux de ne pas me faire ça à moi. Parce que je ne veux rien savoir de ça. Il y a certaines cartes que j'aime, je m'en sers toujours, mais ça finit là.

M : Mais quand même et je pense que souvent c'est ce qui arrive, peut-être que c'est plutôt avec les gens qui sont beaucoup plus jeunes où c'est assez normal de partager presque n'importe quoi sur les réseaux sociaux.

R : Elle est jeune.

M : Mais peut-être ce qui arrive, ce qui commence à arriver c'est qu'on est membre de tel ou tel programme de fidélisation et si on coche Aime, ça veut dire que tous nos amis sur Facebook voient instantanément.

R : Oui, oui je sais.

R : Oui mais tu peux l'enlever ça maintenant.

M : Oui, mais pas tout le monde est assez…

R : Bon dans ça, je sais.

M : Oui. Alors, mais c'est quoi ta réaction quand tu vois que quelques-uns de tes amis aiment tel ou tel magasin, ou tel ou tel programme de fidélisation ou qu'ils en parlent. Ou même quelques fois on voit que quelqu'un vient juste de rentrer dans un magasin parce que la (anglaise) par exemple. Le moment qu'on entre dans un magasin, c'est comme un *broadcast* sur Facebook ou sur Twitter.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps). Il faut qu'ils mettent *check in at the place*.

R : Oui mais quelques fois ce n'est pas juste *check in*. Quelques fois…

R : Que quelqu'un donne ton nom, parce que vous êtes l'ami de quelqu'un, il vous marque ami d'un (inaudible). Puis quand ça arrive, c'est toi qui est (anglais). Ça finit là. Mais non, non, non.

M : Mais comme par exemple, visiteriez-vous un magasin publiquement si ça vous valait des points ou des récompenses de programmes de fidélisation?

R : Pourquoi pas?

M : Pourquoi pas?

R : Pourquoi pas? Bien oui… (inaudible). Ça peut arriver.

M : Oui.

R : Comme, je ne sais pas, s'il y a quelque chose.

R : Ce n'est pas une aubaine (inaudible).

R : Moi si c'est un magasin comme où je veux aller, pour moi de le prendre, ce n'est pas méchant.

M : Oui.

R : C'est certain, à Starbucks ils donnent des cartes de points, moi je ne bois pas de café.

M : Oui, mais à chaque fois peut-être, si on est membre du programme de Starbucks et on coche sur un certain carré, ça veut dire que pour le reste de ta vie, chaque fois que tu entres dans un Starbucks, tous tes amis sur Facebook vont recevoir un message, Geneviève vient juste d'entrer dans un Starbucks. (Parlent tous en même temps).

R : Moi je ne veux rien savoir de ça.

R : Mais moi le côté électronique, c'est ça qui me fait peur un peu. Parce que je sais que j'ai des membres de famille qui ont coché Toyota, j'aime ça. Puis tu ne sais pas qu'est-ce qui arrive arrière de ça. Parce qu'on en entend parler beaucoup avec Facebook.

M : Oui.

R : Dès que tu coches quelque chose, tout le monde le voit ou le monde en arrière des… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Exactement, même si tu fais juste cocher. Parce que ça ouvre tu ton compte? Est-ce que les gens en arrière peuvent (inaudible).

M : Je suis curieux aussi du phénomène que bon peut-être, je suis membre avec Starbucks et ils vont me dire ah voilà, juste cocher cette petite boîte et chaque fois que vous entrez dans un Starbucks, vous allez recevoir 100 points. Mais ça veut dire aussi que peut-être je ne réfléchis pas du fait que pour le reste de ma vie, chaque fois que j'entre dans un Starbucks, tout le monde que je connais est au courant d'exactement où je suis.

R : Je pense que ça c'est comme individuel à chaque personne. Comme moi je ne le ferais jamais, mais je sais que mes amis peuvent l'essayer.

R : C'est différent avec les personnes.

M : Oui.

R : Mais c'est quoi, ce n'est pas bien expliqué ces affaires-là.

M : Oui, quelques fois on ne sait pas toutes les conséquences… (parlent tous en même temps). On peut quelque part ouvrir la boîte de Pandora.

R : Oui mais ça c'est du monde qui sont (inaudible). J'ai fait un (inaudible) pour voir si tous mes amis vont le voir. (Parlent tous en même temps).

M : Et je sais aussi qu'une autre chose qui va arriver, c'est que de plus en plus il y aura des programmes de fidélisation qui peut-être vont vous offrir des points et des récompenses en retour de la surveillance de toutes vos activités de navigation sur Internet.

R : Jamais vu ça.

R : Moi j'ai (inaudible).

M : Oui. Mais je vous dis que ça c'est quelque chose qui…

R : Qui s'en vient.

M : Qui s'en vient.

R : Ce n'est pas sûr.

M : On a toujours un choix, comme ce n'est pas obligatoire, mais c'est quoi ton interprétation de l'idée de recevoir plus de points dans un programme de fidélisation…

R : *No way*.

M : Et en échange, ils vont suivre…

R : Non.

R : Non, jamais.

R : *No way*.

R : C'est comme j'ai dit… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : Bien, ils ont déjà ça dans des autos, un système comme ça.

M : Oui?

R : Quand je suis perdue, *ok how do I get there*? (Parlent tous en même temps). C'est peut-être un autre système, une autre manière de faire.

M : Oui mais c'est un peu différent que voir tous les sites Web que tu as visités.

R : Ça devient trop personnel.

R : Oui.

R : Ce n'est pas les affaires de personne qu'est-ce que je fais, où je vais ou ce que je regarde.

R : C’est ça.

R : Je suis d’accord avec toi, mais…

R : (Inaudible)

R : Mais Facebook le fait déjà en terme de... (parlent tous en même temps). Toute la bannière de publicité est par rapport à ce que tu as sur les choses que tu aimes sur ta page ou… Je ne sais pas comment ils font pour… (parlent tous en même temps).

R : S’ils vont sur mon Facebook pour voir les photos de mes enfants, ce n’est pas correct.

M : Oui.

R : Puis j’ai eu toutes sortes de… (parlent tous en même temps).

M : Juste le fait qu’on devient, et je ne dis pas ça pour décourager des gens de devenir membre des programmes de fidélisation, parce que moi-même je suis membre de quelques-uns aussi, mais de plus en plus, peut-être qu’on n’est pas au courant du fait que ça devient comme une comment on dit web.

R : Oui.

M : On devient tout un réseau où l’information de tout ton comportement est dans de plus en plus de bases de données et avec les réseaux sociaux et avec l’Internet et avec tous les différents programmes de fidélisation. C’est comme, on perd beaucoup de…

R : Oui, oui, mais on n’est pas…

R : D’autonomie?

R : (Inaudible)

M : Oui, mais pas tout le monde est capable de vraiment… Il y a pas mal de recherches qu’il faut faire avant de vraiment savoir.

R : C’est mal expliqué aussi.

M : Et ce n'est pas toujours expliqué non plus. En tout cas, je ne veux pas faire peur à tout le monde, mais c'est juste que c'est un nouveau monde, on peut dire.

R : Ah oui.

R : Mais il faut savoir, exactement moi j'enseigne, bénévole, comment faire des budgets aux enfants aux écoles secondaires, puis je parle justement de ça. Quand il y a quelque chose, puis l'information où quelqu'un veut votre identification ou quoi que ce soit, des cartes de crédit ou *whatever*, il faut être conscient de l'information qu'on donne, à qui et pourquoi. Alors il faut que nous autres, comme consommateurs, on soit plus éduqué ou savoir quelles sont les implications si je donne l'information à qui que ce soit.

M : Oui.

R : Alors il faut, c'est notre éducation à nous autres, tout le monde.

R : Mais je vais te dire quelque chose, dans (inaudible), puis ça je le sais parce que j'anime des (inaudible). Si tu ne donnes pas des *mortgage payments*, ton salaire, tu n'as pas de carte.

R : Tu n'en as pas? Ah oui?

M : Oui. Ils vont dire que…

R : Ils veulent savoir quelle banque, combien ça coûte par mois ta maison, si c'est à toi, qu'est-ce que c'est ton salaire.

R : Moi quand j'ai ouvert mon compte, ça fait une quinzaine, vingtaine d'années…

M : Alors ils ont oublié de te dire que ces informations ne sont pas obligatoires, mais si tu ne leur donnes pas… (parlent tous en même temps)

R : Il faut absolument que tu les donnes. Absolument. Qu'est ce qu'ils font, ils décident, parce que je l'ai demandé une fois, j'ai dit comment ça se fait que (inaudible) de passer sur ma carte de crédit JC Penny, il m'a dit ah…

R : Ça c'est une carte de crédit, on parle des fidélités, là?

M : Oui.

R : Oui mais, maintenant avec leur carte JC Penny . Puis il dit bon, si vous avez commencé à 49 par année, on a décidé après cinq ans que si tu fais moins que 50 000 parce que tu restes dans le Canada, on ne monte pas le montant. Alors on fait…

M : Vu que nous faisons cette recherche pour juste faire une petite étude sur l'ensemble des programmes de fidélisation, pensez-vous qu'il y a des soucis avec ces programmes? Ou est-ce que c'est quelque chose qui marche assez bien ou est-ce qu'on a besoin de plus de règlementations?

R : Je crois qu'on a besoin de plus de réglementations, simplement parce qu'il y a du monde, malheureusement, qui ne savent pas qu'il y a certains renseignements que tu ne donnes pas.

M : Oui.

R : Il y a certaines choses que… Tu prends comme Air Miles…

M : Oui.

R : Moi j'ai trouvé quand j'ai eu (inaudible) Air Miles, il y a toujours des choses cachées.

M : Oui.

R : C'est vraiment (inaudible)

M : Mais l'autre chose est même la protection de nos points dans le programme de fidélisation. Parce qu'enfin, c'est vrai que la compagnie a toujours le droit d'annuler le programme. Mais d'autre part, peut-être que pendant dix ans j'ai fait tous mes achats dans une certaine compagnie parce que je voulais ramasser des points, est-ce que j'ai des protections aussi que ça ne serait pas tout effacé juste comme ça?

R : Je pense que pour les compagnies c'est nécessaire de…

M : Je ne sais pas, est-ce que c'est un souci ou bien est-ce que c'est…

R : Pas moi, là.

R : Ça dépend comment tu vis le programme, toi. Tu dis que tu vas le faire au fur et à mesure en disant, comme j'ai dit avant, tu l'utilises au fur et à mesure que tu l'uses, sinon c'est comme de l'argent dans une banque qui n'a pas d'intérêts. Alors pour moi, je ne fonctionne pas comme ça.

M : Oui.

R : Alors moi, j'ai moins de souci.

M : Oui.

R : Dont tu parles, parce que je les utilise au fur et à mesure. Tandis que si je perds, je ne vais pas perdre beaucoup, perdre grand-chose tu sais. C'est comme ça que je regarde les programmes, comme ça personnellement.

R : Bien ce n'est pas mauvais d'avoir plus de sécurité, parce que comme Sears, quand les points sont expirés, tu le perds.

M : Oui.

R : Mais j'ai fait des achats. J'ai mérité les points que j'ai.

M : Oui.

R : Moi j'aimerais ça qu'il y aurait quelque chose. C'est un peu comme les cartes-cadeaux que les gens achètent.

M : Oui.

R : Avant, ils mettaient des dates d'expiration, mais tu as dépensé 100 dollars pour une carte-cadeaux.

R : C'est ça dans le fond. (Parlent tous en même temps). C'est ça, du *cash*, c'est du *cash*.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps). S'il me dit une bonne journée, ah tes points ne valent rien, je vais dire, ah je vais aller dans un autre magasin.

M : Oui.

R : Parce que j'étais là pour avoir des points. (Parlent tous en même temps)

M : Il y a quelque chose avec ces programmes enfin, les entreprises ne créent pas les programmes de fidélisation pour être gentils avec leur clientèle.

R : Non, ils veulent faire de l'argent.

M : Ils veulent faire de l'argent.

R : Non, ils m'aiment, c'est ça qu'ils nous disent.

R : Mais il y a une chose, on oublie qu'il peut me donner 10 000 points (inaudible)

M : Oui.

R : Mais si le service n'est pas bon…

M : C'est ça, oui.

R : (Parlent tous en même temps). Il y a ça aussi.

R : C'est ça, donnez l'offre au monde.

R : J'aime ça avoir des points.

M : Oui.

R : (Inaudible)

M : En tout cas, je pense que nous avons terminé notre discussion pour ce soir. Alors merci beaucoup tout le monde.

R : Merci.

M : J'espère que tout le monde ne sera pas trop paranoïaque sur les…

R : Non.

R : Un petit peu.

R : Non, non. (Parlent tous en même temps).

M : Au revoir.

R : Bonsoir.

R : Salut.

FIN DE SÉANCE

B&S

Appendix B – Summary of Focus Group Consultations

Attitudes towards Loyalty Programs – Qualitative Research

Prepared for the:

Public Interest Advocacy Centre

January, 2013

Environics Research Group

33 Bloor Street East, Suite 900

Toronto, ON M4W 3H1

P7212

Introduction

Environics Research Group is pleased to present this qualitative research report to the Public Interest Advocacy Centre. The report provides an overview of attitudes towards customer loyalty programs among individuals who use them. The research was designed with the following objectives in mind:

- To understand consumer perceptions of and experiences with loyalty programs, including the perceived advantages and disadvantages;
- To explore the perceived impact on consumer behaviour/shopping habits;
- To explore the extent to which consumers are concerned about privacy issues related to loyalty programs; and,
- To determine whether loyalty programs are perceived to act acceptably with regards to changes in program terms and withdrawals.

A total of four focus groups were held with individuals who are members of at least two loyalty programs. Two groups were held in Toronto on November 15 (in English) and two groups were held in Ottawa on November 19, 2012 (one in English and one in French). Environics recruited both men and women from a range of age groups and income levels.

The discussion guide used in the groups can be found in the Appendix at the end of this report.

Experience with loyalty programs

Participants have widespread experience with loyalty programs. Each was able to list at minimum four to five programs to which they currently belong, with the maximum about eight to ten. In addition to Air Miles and Aeroplan, these programs ranged from retailers (e.g., Shopper's Optimum, Addition Elle, Body Shop, Sears, Costco) to gas stations (e.g., Petro Canada, Esso), grocery stores (e.g., Loblaws/President's Choice, Sobeys), movies (Scene card) and travel rewards (e.g., Marriott, Porter, Fairmount Hotels).

Not surprisingly given their own membership levels, participants generally believe that most stores have a loyalty program, particularly large chains, such as grocery stores or clothing stores, but that it is less likely for stand-alone stores or boutiques.

Participants identified several reasons why they joined loyalty programs in the first place, most commonly because of the rewards (which are believed to have been more generous in the past) or the dollar savings on purchases. Other attractions included the novelty of loyalty programs at the start, the sense of exclusivity or acceptance of being a member, the marketing, and that there is typically no fee for signing up.

> *"They gave really good things actually like 15 years ago or something. I used the Optimum card and it was just really enticing like he said, the advertising, the marketing, and the way they make you feel like, hey, you're going to save this. Or, the cash value that you think you're going to get with joining that program."* (Toronto)

The general consensus was that loyalty programs are increasingly becoming electronic, accessed by telephone number, for example. While participants recognize that cards are still used, they are considered inconvenient to carry around and easily forgotten (either left at home or not presented at the cash register). However, a few pointed out that a benefit of a physical card is that it can be transferred to someone else, even a stranger, to earn points.

> *"That place is awesome because you can get a membership card there, only you didn't actually have to get issued a card. So, I didn't have to stick another bloody card in my wallet. They had to add me to a database. There was no charge for the membership and all I had to do was give my phone number."* (Ottawa)

While many participants have been asked for their input on how a company could improve its customer service, none had ever been asked about ways to improve a loyalty program.

Benefits of loyalty programs

For participants, the most obvious advantage to loyalty programs is the rewards they receive, such as free products (e.g., groceries, movies, flights), cash back or discounts.

> *"You get reward points for spending money that you were going to spend anyway. That's a reward. You can get free products."* (Toronto)

Relatively few participants identified benefits related to member recognition, such as receiving promotions or advance notification of events meant for members only. Participants linked these types

of perks more widely to products like credit cards or season passes (e.g., hockey ticketholders) than to loyalty programs.

Preferences for loyalty programs

Participants believe that loyalty programs differ considerably in terms of the value/rewards they offer as well as how easy it is to obtain the rewards. They express preference for loyalty programs with the following features:

- automatic or on-the-spot points redemption (rather than having to apply to redeem points);
- a variety of rewards to choose from (e.g., Air Miles); and,
- a wide variety of stores where they can accumulate points.

With loyalty programs where they feel they are getting particular value, participants are likely to have recommended the program to friends or family members.

Impact on consumer behaviour

Participants acknowledge that membership in a loyalty program is one factor in their decision where to shop. All things being equal, they will shop at the store where they will accumulate points. However, several pointed out that price is just as important, if not more so, and that they sometimes choose to buy where a product is on sale even if it means not collecting points.

Some participants also believe they spend more with a company than they would otherwise because of the loyalty program. The loyalty program gets them in the door, after which they may buy products they would typically buy elsewhere (e.g., milk at a pharmacy) or be upsold. This is especially the case with special offers that require them to buy more of a product than they typically would to get the discount or reward. At the same time, participants describe themselves as becoming more savvy shoppers, who can better recognize such situations and calculate whether it truly represents a savings for them.

Although participants believe loyalty programs have an impact on their shopping behaviour, they are resistant to the idea that these programs *create* feelings of loyalty for a store. That is, the loyalty program is insufficient if the store does not deliver to expectations with its products or service. It is seen as more likely that you acquire a loyalty card for a store you are already loyal to and/or are going to be shopping at anyway.

> *"I still go into a department store and want to be treated loyally. The loyalty card is secondary, but I want to be treated with good customer service when I go into the store. Yes, the card, but the card, I'm prepared to chuck it in the garbage if they treat me wrongly." (Toronto)*

Hand-in-hand with the view that loyalty programs do not lead to company loyalty, very few participants described a negative experience with a loyalty card that led them to become dissatisfied with – and thus less loyal to – the store itself.

Drawbacks of loyalty programs

Participants identified three main disadvantages to loyalty programs:

- **Cost**: some participants recognized that the cost of a loyalty program is passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices, which could reduce or even negate their membership rewards. Some believe they are better off belonging to the loyalty program at a store they frequent because it offsets higher prices they are paying to support the loyalty program.

- **Influence on behaviour**: some participants think loyalty programs entice people to spend more than might otherwise and/or influence where they choose to shop (i.e., limits their store selection to where they can earn points).

- **Program rules**: drawbacks of the programs themselves include problems redeeming points, rules that change or points that expire, and the extended length of time it can take to collect enough points to redeem.

  "You're forced to spend more money than you would spend in the store. And to redeem your points is very difficult." (Toronto)

  "There's a con. I mean I think they want you to buy their stuff instead of going to something else. You're kind of locked up. You've got to use this card to get these points." (Ottawa)

Privacy concerns are not top-of-mind for loyalty program members. Participants had only a vague recollection of the information that was solicited from them when signing-up for a loyalty program, other than name and address. Some recalled providing an e-mail address or phone number, or basic demographic information like age and marital status. Recall was mixed about whether they had provided information about the product categories they are interested in (i.e., purchase preferences).

When specifically asked, most recalled being asked whether they wanted to opt-out of future solicitations. However, there was some scepticism that retailers respect these wishes, since some had experienced having their contact information sold and distributed to other companies. While many also recalled seeing a privacy policy on the signup form, at some level, there is an assumption that it was included because it is legally required. Few mention spending time or attention reading or trying to understand it.

While participants did not seem to have actively thought about privacy issues related to loyalty programs, they did recognize the potential harm. Their first thought is about identify theft, although they do not link this to loyalty programs any more than to other sources of fraud, such as credit cards.

Participants acknowledge that their purchasing behaviour is likely being tracked and used for market research purposes, to determine how best to target products. However, they generally trust that companies will use this information in good faith and are not working with nefarious purposes in mind.

Participants are also well aware of receiving targeted advertising or promotions after enrolling in a loyalty program. There are mixed views about whether this represents a benefit to them in the form of

information that is useful or valuable or a drawback in terms of the sheer volume of advertising they receive. Participants suggest they are becoming more mindful of this trade-off when deciding whether to sign up for new loyalty programs.

What does not appear to hold back participants from joining loyalty programs is concerns about certain purchases (e.g., alcohol, medication) being more private or sensitive than others. Participants related that they would simply choose not to use their loyalty card if they didn't want a certain purchase to be recorded.

In some cases, participants have accessed their purchase history on a loyalty card. However, none had ever asked to see their "profile" or the personal information that a loyalty program has collected from them or about them. There is an awareness that companies use the individual-level data to explore aggregate patterns in purchasing and preferences, but are not particularly concerned that that data is not readily available to them.

Program terms

Participants do not get particularly worked up about potential problems related to how loyalty programs operate (i.e., that are not privacy-related). There is widespread awareness of and experience with programs that have devalued points (examples include Air Miles and Shopper's Optimum) or introduced expiry dates (such as Aeroplan). Participants seem to accept this as just part of how loyalty programs work and say they are unlikely to get upset as long as they receive a reasonable amount of advance notice.

Participants generally believe it would be straightforward to contact a loyalty program about a problem, if one occurred, most likely through a 1-800 phone number listed on the back of their loyalty card.

There is not a lot of experience with other aspects of loyalty programs where they might encounter problems. Participants have not tried to transfer their points to someone else nor have they actively quit a loyalty program. The latter has occurred only for credit cards where a loyalty program was involved (such as an HBC credit card); in most cases, they will just stop using the loyalty card without actively cancelling it. Moreover, there was little concern about the status of the personal information that remains even when an individual stops using a loyalty program.

Similarly, participants are aware of data breaches and name instances they have heard about relating primarily to credit cards. Yet they express little concern about a data breach with their loyalty programs, for various reasons: because it has never happened to them, because they can't control that situation, or because they don't believe such a breach would involve critical or sensitive information.

> *"I don't think I'd lose any sleep over that, knowing that that could possibly happen." (Ottawa)*

Social media and online loyalty programs

Participants are widely aware that their loyalty programs have a social media presence, primarily through Facebook and Twitter. Relatively few say they actually "follow" or "like" loyalty programs

themselves, but they do see friends interacting with companies and loyalty programs. Reactions to having friends who engage with a company in this way range from simply ignoring it, to annoyance at being bombarded with more advertising, to an admitted curiosity to check out what their friends are talking about.

> *"The way I see it too is like the candle parties or the Tupperware parties. What's Melissa's agenda trying to push me to get these products that I may not necessarily need? Will she be getting extra points through the loyalty program?" (Ottawa)*

There was little awareness of or experience with programs such as FourSquare that allow people to check someone's location through their smartphone. "Checking in" to a store publicly in exchange for loyalty program points or rewards was not particularly appealing to these participants, mostly because of the related privacy or safety issues. There is a sense that this is something that would appeal most to younger people who want to know where there friends are and who would not necessarily have the same privacy concerns. At the same time, there was some concern that this is a direction in which consumers are being pushed without really knowing the risks involved.

Participants were not familiar with online loyalty programs, which are currently more prominent in the U.S. than in Canada. When described the general idea of getting points or rewards in exchange for tracking your web browsing activity, participants tended to be skeptical about the merits of joining such programs and concerned about potential risks.

> *"I think we're getting into unchartered territory regarding social media and how loyalty programs are going to progress. There are many dangers there." (Ottawa)*

November 13, 2012

Discussion Guide
Environics Research
Attitudes towards Loyalty Programs
PN 7212
Public Interest Advocacy Centre

1.0 Introduction to Procedures (10 minutes)

Welcome to the group. We want to hear your opinions. Not what you think other people think – but what you think!

Feel free to agree or disagree. Even if you are just one person around the table that takes a certain point of view, you could represent many Canadians who feel the same way as you do.

You don't have to direct all your comments to me; you can exchange ideas and arguments with each other too.

You are being taped and observed to help me write my report.

I may take some notes during the group to remind myself of things also.

The host/hostess will pay you your incentives at the end of the session.

Let's go around the table so that each of you can tell us your name and a little bit about yourself, such as what kind of work you do if you work outside the home and who lives with you in your house.

2.0 Loyalty programs - initial attitudes (15 minutes)

As you may have guessed from the questions we asked you when we invited you to this session, we are going to be exploring the whole topic of customer loyalty programs. Let's go around the table so you can each tell us what loyalty programs you each belong to and how many you think you belong to.

I would like you to break up into pairs and spend a few minutes making a short list. I want you to discuss and write down what you see as the "pros" and "cons" of loyalty programs in general - like the ones you have named - then we will see what you come up with. NB: These could be pros and cons from your perspective as a consumer, but also general pros and cons for society as a whole of the proliferation of loyalty programs.

Pros:

Cons:

What motivated you to start joining loyalty programs in the first place? What was the attraction?

Do most of your favourite stores or companies have loyalty programs?

Do you have an actual card for all the loyalty programs you belong to or are some online “virtual” programs that have no physical card?

Are there certain loyalty programs that you prefer over others? Why?

Have you ever recommended a loyalty program to a friend? Why?

When you decide where to shop – how important a factor is the loyalty program that the business offers – or lack thereof?

3.0 Impact on consumer behaviour (15 minutes)

I want to explore the whole notion of “brand loyalty” and loyalty “programs”. When you think of the companies whose loyalty program you belong to, do you actually feel more “loyal” to them?

IF YES: Is this because you actually prefer their products/services to other companies in the same category or is it just because the loyalty program itself makes you more loyal?

In other words, if they had no loyalty program, would you still be buying from them more than from others?

Do you think any of the loyalty programs you belong to have made you buy more from the company over time than you otherwise would have? Has the loyalty program made you more of a repeat customer?

Has anyone felt LESS loyal to a company because you were dissatisfied with the loyalty program or had some sort of a bad experience with it?

4.0 Loyalty program benefits/rewards (15 minutes)

What kinds of benefits do you get through membership in your loyalty programs?

Do any of the programs you participate in recognize you in a manner other than giving you awards or saving you money? **PROBE**: e.g. Do you get special access to the store or particular items? Do you get a special phone number to expedite customer service issues? Do you get any more personal correspondence (e.g. thank you card) from company managers or other employees?

Have you ever been asked for your opinion on how to improve a company's loyalty program? **IF YES**, have you seen any action taken based on the views or recommendations you have suggested?

Are some loyalty programs better than others in terms of the value they offer and the incentives they have?

Do some of your loyalty programs make it easier than others to get rewards or discounts? Or are there any that make you go through too many steps?

5.0 Signing up process (5 minutes)

When you signed up for any of your loyalty programs, what was the form like? What information did you have to provide?

PROBE: Personal identification info only? Purchase preference information (e.g. what categories of goods or services you are interested in)? Reward preference information?

Did you have the option to opt-out of future solicitations? What other options were presented on the signup form, if any?

Do you recall if there was a privacy policy attached to the signup form? If so, did you read it?

6.0 Privacy concerns (15 minutes)

Did you have any concerns about privacy when you first signed up for a loyalty program? **IF YES**, What were they?

How do you think a company can use the information you provide when signing up?

What about your purchase and activity profile with the loyalty program, can they use that in any way? Are there any limits or rules on how companies can use this information? When you signed up was there any fine print about this?

Do you find that after enrolling in a loyalty program you get more advertisements and promotions than before or is there a change in the types of ads/promos you get?

IF YES: Are these new or different advertisements ever useful to you? Do they get you to buy anything that you would not otherwise have bought?

Did you ever weigh the discounts and awards from the loyalty program against the potential for more solicitations and the possibility that your personal information would be used for other purposes? (i.e. pros and cons)

Are there certain kinds of purchases you feel are more private than others? (e.g. personal care products compared to gas for your car) Like what?

Does this ever affect what loyalty programs you decide to join? (e.g. someone might avoid joining a drug store loyalty program due to privacy concerns they might not have for a gas station)

Have you ever tried to access the information a company has stored about you as a result of you being a member of their loyalty program? (Do you know if a third-party runs the loyalty program or the company itself?)

Do you feel you should have access to the personal information loyalty programs have collected from you and about you?

7.0 Program changes/terms, breaches and withdrawal (10 minutes)

If you had a problem with the loyalty program, who would you contact?

How would you feel if the provider devalued your points (i.e. so that you would need to redeem more points for the same item)? Has this ever happened to any of you?

Have you ever been in a situation where your points could only be redeemed for certain items (limitations on redeeming points, such as only for certain airline seats)?

Have you ever tried to transfer your points to someone else? **IF YES:** Was it easy or difficult?

Have you ever had points expire? How did it affect your view of the company?

Have you ever quit (stopped using or withdrawn membership) a loyalty program? Why? **IF YES:** Did you try to have your personal information removed? What did it take? Did the company charge you a fee?

Have you read of any data breaches occurring with loyalty programs or credit cards? (e.g. Card Systems (in the United States) provides gift and loyalty card services; was also the vendor responsible for 40 million VISA and MC card data being exposed in 2005). Does this affect your decision to enroll in loyalty programs?

9.0 Social media/networking integration (10 minutes)

Do any of your loyalty programs have a social media presence? What does it consist of? **PROBE**: Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, FourSquare profiles or other social network accounts?

Do you ever “follow”/“like” them, or check on them? How often?

How often do you see friends interacting in this way with companies? Do their “likes” or “follows” show up on your own feed? How often?

How do you feel when that happens? Does the fact that a friend “liked” or “followed” a company impact your views towards that store/company?

How do you feel when you see (online) other people “check in” to stores?

Would you “check in” to a store publicly (i.e.: twitter or Facebook) if it meant that you would get loyalty program points or rewards? Would you be comfortable if this check in/reward process was automatic?

10.0 Online loyalty programs (5 minutes)

Do you use any online loyalty programs?

How do they compare to card-based programs?

Have you linked your credit card or your smartphone to an online loyalty program?

How would you feel about a loyalty program that gave you points and rewards in exchange for tracking your web browsing activity?

Thanks for your participation!