

What brand first comes to your mind when you think of the items below?

- a soda
- sportswear
- a laptop
- a cup of coffee
- a gaming console
- sunglasses

Are you a loyal customer of any particular brand? If so, say why.

Brand-businesses are facing a growing trend where customers seek to minimize interpersonal interactions, particularly in service-related settings – a phenomenon known as the Hermit Consumer. However, despite this desire for disconnection, the human need for connection remains strong. If brands want to win customer _____, they must understand this alone-together paradox. The challenge lies in actively _____ a connection with consumers while respecting their new desires. The fast-food sector has managed to meet this preference by targeting the drive-thru _____. While consumers may prefer the solitude of their car, they still need to belong, but this “belonging” is done differently as customers seek to validate and share experiences of their drive-thru visits on social media.

Along with the drive-thru, kiosks at fast food restaurants also _____ with the desires of the hermit consumer, allowing them to place an order on the screen, without the need to talk to anyone. By _____ technology, kiosks and drive-thrus have successfully managed to satisfy the dual need for disconnection and digital recognition.



You are going to read a text about a rising phenomenon among consumers, often referred to as the alone-together paradox. Say what you think this paradox might be.

Match the sentence beginnings (A–H) and endings (1–8) to complete each of the brand-building strategies.

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| A. Foster loyalty by delivering... | 1. ... a compelling story that shares values the targeted audience cares deeply about. |
| B. Weave a genuine narrative by telling... | 2. ... deep connections with customers through experiences that resonate on an emotional level. |
| C. Forge strong emotional bonds by nurturing... | 3. ... consistent quality and encouraging support from customers. |
| D. Strengthen relatability by showing... | 4. ... to positive change in the world. |
| E. Align with social values by contributing... | 5. ... a segment of the market with their needs and preferences. |
| F. Serve a niche by targeting... | 6. ... consistent and meeting expectations. |
| G. Leverage market buzzwords by using... | 7. ... how products have positively impacted the life of real customers. |
| H. Ensure reliability by being... | 8. ... trendy terms that generate interest and increase brand visibility. |