

Mall of America Starts New Membership Program

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Joining the ranks of several other malls, the Bloomington institution has debuted a new rewards program in an attempt to keep shoppers coming.

[Mall of America](#) has launched a new membership program to lure more shoppers amid a continually shifting landscape for the retail industry.

The mall announced this week that its guests can now sign up for “[MOA Insiders](#)” for free on the mall’s app. Once they’ve signed up, members can earn one point for every dollar spent, which can be redeemed for various rewards inside the app, such as attraction passes, birthday rewards, and offers at participating stores. Upgrading to a \$35 annual membership will give guests five points for every dollar spent while allowing them to progress through tiers to gain additional benefits.

Beth Perro-Jarvis and Mary Van Note of the Minneapolis consultancy [Ginger](#) told *TCB* they aren’t surprised that Mall of America has launched the new program.

“They’re always experimenting,” Perro-Jarvis said. “They’re innovators. They’re trying new things or doing things people think are audacious, starting with an amusement park in the middle of a shopping mall. Forty

years ago, that was a crazy notion, but they did it. So we're not surprised that they're at the forefront of this because they try stuff. That's in their DNA."

Other mall owners have launched [insider loyalty programs, including Simon Property Group](#), which owns Southdale Center in Edina, Miller Hill Mall in Duluth, and Premium Outlets in Eagan and Albertville. But Perro-Jarvis said the Mall of America's program is more akin to what's offered to Disney goers.

"The MOA is an entertainment destination," she said.

Perro-Jarvis added that MOA's program is in addition to other reward or loyalty programs offered by the stores it leases space to. Almost any customer-oriented business should be thinking about loyalty programs, she added.

"We work a lot in this space and it's absolutely a super smart thing to be doing," she said. "If you don't have a loyalty program at some level, you probably should be looking into it because every customer and guest is seeking a value proposition that gives them more for less money. That's what people want and loyalty approaches do just that."

By connecting with people through email, the mall's loyalty program also allows it to tailor promotions to the way patrons interact in the space, Van Note said.

"It's common in the marketing business now to really try to create these multifaceted programs," she noted. "Customers love it because they already love the place they get more out of it, and the brands love it because it further merchandises their relationships with customers so everybody wins."

While anyone can use the program, it will particularly benefit a subset of "super fan" mall goers who use multiple services at the mall, Van Note said. For example, parents with young kids might frequent the Nicolodian Universe Theme Park. "Then maybe you do back-to-school shopping, you go to a restaurant or a movie."