



Customer loyalty defined by customer experience and innovation

For more than 35 years, Coco Republic has been one of Australia's leading furniture and design brands, understanding that a focus on customer experience and continuous innovation go hand in hand with high quality products. Paul Spon Smith, Founder and Chairman of Coco Republic talks the impact of surcharging for high end retail and why he thinks that being Surcharge Free is key to both digital and bricks and mortar success.

Coco Republic's point of difference is our family owned and operated design heritage, combining innovation with the finest craftsmanship and quality. We service a diverse and dynamic customer base across our four divisions: Coco Republic (retail), Coco Republic Interior Design, Coco Republic Property Styling and Coco Republic Design School.

We're focused on our customer experience; continually innovating to improve. From opening a café in our flagship Alexandria store in 2015, to the introduction of a new website with shopping functionality this year, we always strive to deliver a seamless journey that is distinguished by exceptional service. For us, the decision not to surcharge is part of that quality of service.

Customers should be able to choose how they pay for things without being penalised. Many of our customers like to use their cards to take advantage of various point schemes and other offers. With our customer base and price point, our average transaction value is relatively high and lots of our customers want to make the most of the rewards points on offer.

I believe the decision not to surcharge is even more important in high-end retail where customer expectations of service and quality are set high.

Our Surcharge Free status means our customers can be confident that there are no hidden transaction fees. Maintaining this customer confidence is important to us - it's part of the reason why people choose to shop with us.

Brands that offer customers a seamless customer experience both in-store and online are the ones that are going to thrive. Introducing a surcharge is limiting and creates negativity in that customer's journey. I also personally believe that it sends the wrong message about where a business' priorities lie. The cost of surcharging to customer loyalty and brand reputation is just too high a price to pay.