

Forget Demographics: How to Target Marketing in 2014

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17 February 2014

Targeted marketing can raise conversion rates by as much as 200% – here's how to improve yours.

Targeted marketing used to be a case of dividing a contact database along generic criteria such as age, gender, job role or location. With a 'best guess' approach, marketers could bombard their leads with product information that may result in a sale.

The internet has radically changed the landscape, however, with customers self-educating before reaching out to a brand. This means that marketers now need to reach potential customers during the research phase of the sales process. Most importantly, the information supplied by marketers must be:

- Relevant to the individual buyer and their needs.
- Personalised wherever possible.
- Designed to foster a relationship between the customer and your brand.

So how does the Modern Marketer better target their message for 2014?

1. Get cleaning

If your customer database is full of outdated contact information, any campaign it is based on will always fail to recognise its full potential. It is impossible to target leads properly when the information by which you segment them is incorrect.

The first step to improving your marketing for the New Year is to:

- Delete data that is known to be 'dirty' or outdated.
- Update records that are incomplete.
- Consider purchasing a targeted mailing list to provide a fresh dataset from which to work.

"SiriusDecisions estimates that B2B contacts become obsolete because of people changing jobs and companies at a rate of 2–3% per month, creating a constant stream of inaccurate contact data."

[Marketing Automation Simplified: The Small Guide to Big Ideas](#)

2. Get analysing

Once your contact database has been cleaned, you will already have a number of valuable insights which can be used to segment leads, identify

potential opportunities and more. The overall goal of analysis should be to prioritise segments which present the best potential returns to your business.

You should also be constantly collecting new data about leads and clients to ensure that you have a detailed picture of their preferences, habits and purchasing interests. This information can then be used to create 'personas' – useful for the content creation process.

3. Get planning

Your new marketing strategy needs to:

- Become more personalised.
- Leverage automation to better serve the customer.

To assist with automation, you need to identify the stages of the customer journey and the information you need to supply at each to help move them along the sales funnel. It is imperative to define triggers that are propagated by the client – the information needs to be pulled by, rather than pushed at, the client.

Trigger points include customer actions like website visits, document downloads, email enquiries and sales calls.

“Event-triggered marketing can potentially save 80% of your direct mail budget.”

Gartner Research

4. Get publishing

With the personas defined and triggers identified, your marketing team now needs to craft the messages that are given to the client. The more detailed your persona definitions and the finer the triggers, the more targeted the text, tweet or video content can become.

By being as tuned as possible, the content is of greater value to the lead, helping establish your brand's expertise and providing the information your lead needs to make a purchasing decision.

5. Get automating

With all the groundwork laid, you are now in a position to set the automation marketing machine in action. Your existing CRM system may provide the required functionality, or you may need to investigate a suitable platform that interfaces with your other business intelligence systems.

Automating the marketing process ensures that the right information is delivered to each lead at exactly the right time. Your team can then focus on converting the leads coming to you.

“Companies that automate lead management see a 10% or greater increase in revenue in six to nine months.”

Gartner Research

Your action plan for 2014

- Clean your existing contact data set and augment as necessary.
- Carefully analyse your data for new opportunities and insights.
- Map out the customer journey and personas.
- Create content targeted at each of your personas and segments.
- Implement automation to improve the experience for your customers and the returns on your marketing investment.

<http://www.b2bmarketing.net/blog/posts/2014/02/17/forget-demographics-how-target-marketing-2014?reload=1>