4 Steps to Smart Customer Profiling

Consumers no longer accept blanket messaging. Whether it's direct mail or email, they expect the brands they deal with to target them based on their habits, preferences, and needs. Consider these data:

- Half of online consumers block ads on their phones and computers.
- The average Internet user has eight social media accounts.
- Internet users spend 2+ hours a day on social media.

These data show just how fragmented consumers have become and why they are so hard to reach. If you are mailing non-targeted, non-differentiated messaging, you—just like online ads—will get blocked.

What's the answer? Highly targeted messaging based on customer profiling. Here are four steps to getting that messaging right.

Notes HubSpot:

With the power to choose what advertising and marketing they're exposed to, and when they're exposed to it, [consumers] are demanding more of what they want from brands, and less of what they don't.

"The Beginner's Guide to Audience Profiling" (HubSpot, 2017)

GATHER THE RIGHT DATA

Gather key data on who your customers are, how they behave, and what their preferences are. Here are some categories of data you should have on hand:

DEMOGRAPHIC   GEOGRAPHIC   NEEDS   BEHAVIORAL
PERCEPTIONS   PSYCHOGRAPHIC   INTERESTS   ATTITUDES

This data may be found in-house. If not, in-house data can be supplemented with surveys and purchased data.

CREATE PERSONAS

Personas are snapshots of customer "types." Take the example of recent college graduates. Regardless of where they live, their gender, or their ethnicity, recent college graduates are all facing similar challenges. They are starting their first jobs, furnishing their first apartments, and making choices about where they will shop and what brands they will buy. As a result, they share common attitudes, preferences, and triggers that help marketers craft messages that resonate with them.

MICRO-TARGET

It's important to understand the behavior and patterns of broad customer groups, but it's important to dig deeper into the dynamics of sub-categories, too. For example, new moms. New moms aged 18–25 have preferences, concerns, and shopping habits that are different from new moms aged 26–35.

LAYER ON THE PERSONALIZATION

Once you have your target segments and customer profiles for creating basic messaging, now you can layer on personalization. Use the recipient's name. Reference their location ("Moms in Baltimore, Maryland know the secret . . ."). Cross-sell and upsell specific products based on their buying history.

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Customer targeting doesn't have to be difficult. It just needs to be intentional. Need help? Just ask!