

## How to implement an effective segmentation strategy into your email programme

Increased inbox competition is driving the need for marketers to become more sophisticated with email marketing through personalisation and targeting. The smart segmentation of your database is the key to achieving highly relevant and personalised email campaigns. However, one of the biggest obstacles can be knowing where to start with your segmentation strategy. In this 'Ask the Experts' article Simon Bowker, eCircle's UK MD takes you through the main areas that should be considered when planning your email segmentation strategy.

**1) Setting your objectives:** When deciding how to segment your database it is important to identify your main objectives. What will make the campaign a success for you? What do you want to achieve? It doesn't have to be complicated just remember that when planning an email campaign customers and prospects need to be treated differently. You may have new purchasers or regular purchasers for example each one will have a slightly different relationship with your brand so it is important to recognise this. Objectives you could consider are increasing relevance, increasing your ROI or growing your response rates.

**2) Selecting the right data:** There are many different database segmentation options. The best place to start is to determine which makes the most sense for marketing your product or service. Looking at your current database and what information you already have that could be useful is a must. You should consider all the points at which you collect data and how effective this data capture process actually is. A key area of segmentation is whether you can identify your prospects from your customers, if you can this will allow for strong email marketing strategies. Making sure you review the statistics from your current messages will also allow you to obtain valuable information on individual preferences to identify key segments.

**3) Profile based vs. behavioural based – What is the difference?** Profile based segmentation is basic demographic segmentation through profile data (age, gender, geographic location etc) and can be one of the most simple and effective ways of targeting your message. Most of this data should be captured at the initial contact/capture stage. Whilst profile-based data forms a strong basis for a customer focused email strategy it is reliant on customers giving you information. A powerful way of segmenting your database is to look at click behaviour and browsing or purchase history. This highly valuable information will allow you



to understand your customers on a more deeper level, making it possible to tailor and personalise messages to each individual.

**4) Utilising segmentation effectively:** Once you have segmented your data you will need to integrate it into your email creatives. Methods of implementation include simple subject line testing or more advanced techniques where the creative contains user-based content such as date based trigger campaigns that allow you to contact and reward customers on a certain date i.e. Birthdays, subscription renewals etc. for example.

I hope that this article shows you that segmentation isn't as scary as it sounds. Put simply by diving up your database into smaller chunks of people who share similar characteristics you can begin to treat them differently with more targeted email shots to build relationships and improve campaign performance.

This article is a summary of eCircle's newsletter "Inside Digital Marketing". If wish to receive further news from the email marketing sector yourself you can subscribe here: <http://www.ecircle.com/en/newsletter>



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