

More than just a mailing

Building an intelligent data warehouse to drive marketing results

Marketing is a process, not just a series of events. It all begins with identifying your target audience. Building and continually updating an intelligent data warehouse is a vital part of creating marketing programs that employ a targeted approach and provide value to clients and prospects. Everything in a campaign should be measured and analyzed, and the results are the key to determining the next step in the marketing process.

The best agencies are focused on helping companies develop relationships with clients and prospects. They will manage a program from inception to completion using an incremental, results-driven approach where each phase is tried and tested before the next strategy takes shape.

Identifying prospects

When a client comes to you with a goal, such as to gain three market share points, you start looking at where you think you have the best chance of picking up that market share. Is it with getting more sales out of existing clients? Is it about taking clients away from competitors? Or is it about going to people who aren't buying anything at all and trying to get them to buy something from you?

A well-established data warehouse is critical to understanding these audiences. Building intelligence into that database draws out who the people are on that list that are loyal clients, that are doing business with your competitors, who bought something from you three years ago but haven't bought anything since, or who haven't responded to the last five mailings that you've sent to them with some sort of an offer.

A targeted approach

Tracking and capturing data to establish a data warehouse lets you place clients and prospects into groups, which can be broken into logical segments for the purpose of sending different messages. You can also supplement and improve the data warehouse by purchasing outside data that will enhance and validate current data.

You will have different strategies and messages for different targets. Marketing campaigns for your most valued clients are geared toward making sure you never lose those clients. If you're targeting prospects loyal to a competitor, you need to have a marketing campaign that specifically speaks to why they should switch their

preference. And then there's everybody in between. You may have six different campaigns aimed at these three different targets. You may send out one basic mailing but with several different messages.

"Test and learn" is another strategy of the incremental, results-based approach that allows you to learn from a small segment of a target before bringing it to a larger market. Testing an offer on a small percentage of your prospects is not only more cost efficient but lets you update your data and discover where to focus efforts in the future of the campaign based on which subsets — i.e. age groups, males or females — responded from your smaller audience.

Strategic execution

Next is to develop plans aimed at maximizing the results out of those individual targets. You may do a loyalty program with your existing clientele. When you have targets that are buying from a competitor, it could mean providing them with evidence of why they should consider switching. Or, perhaps you may try a sampling program, where they try your product to see that it's better than the one they're currently using. And then in the case of people who aren't buying anything, again it might be providing them with information about the value of your product and then possibly an incentive to buy. An incentive could be anything from a coupon to a BOGO (buy one, get one free) or a free trial.

Measuring results

Measuring progress can be tracking sales trends leading up to a promotion or a campaign and then watching what that campaign does to sales. It can be tracking rebate or coupon responses, website traffic or sales from an offer. You can include promotion codes that people will have to use, which makes it very easy to track results. What's more difficult to measure is the impact a campaign has on product awareness and branding in the marketplace. When you do a campaign you can measure hard sales, but it's harder to measure the influence that it may have on other people who see products that have your company's branding and whether that ultimately dictates a brand preference on a larger scale.

One thing will always be clear when employing this process to build and utilize an intelligent data warehouse: *it's more than just a mailing.*



With more than 20 locations across the country, The Shamrock Companies provides full service marketing communications and project management solutions to companies of all sizes.

Case study

When a \$76 billion-a-year consumer products company needed an effective marketing program for one of its 300 brands, it turned to The Shamrock Companies. For more than a decade since, Shamrock has managed strategic programs for this brand with impressive results. The campaign that has driven the product's recommendation share began with managing a data warehouse to identify the most strategic way to target to the segments of each audience niche: loyal customers, competitors' customers and non-consumers.

Shamrock determined that targeting people who influence consumers, rather than the consumers themselves, would achieve the best results. The campaign focused on leveraging professional referrals to create consumer confidence and brand awareness. Years of market research led to the implementation of several strategic, targeted programs that used incentives in the form of valuable information as well as offers and even free trial products to engage the professionals who would ultimately influence the consumer.

This program contributed to exceeding the client's target goals by double digits, thereby regaining a leadership position over its primary competitor.



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