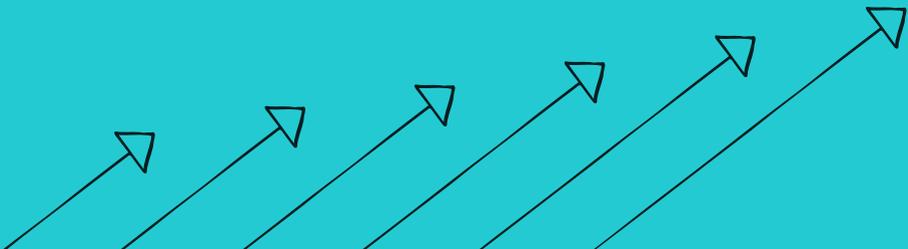


Maximising the performance of your strategic marketing campaigns

Whatever your objectives, results are everything. So how do you maximise the performance of your strategic marketing campaigns?

We think the following six points are key to get the best out of your campaign:

1. There's no such thing as the right answer
2. It's not who you know, it's how well you know them
3. Your vital statistics aren't that vital
4. Look out to look in
5. We've never had so much data yet been so ill informed
6. Teach your CEO to suck eggs



1. There's no such thing as the right answer

If you're waiting for the magic bullet, there isn't one, because there's no such thing as the right answer. The right answer might be different each time, dependent on all manner of things out of your control. When you develop your campaign message, what works today may not work tomorrow, simply because of what's in the news or because the sun's shining and everyone's doing something more interesting.

So, what's the solution? The primary lesson is test and learn. Develop multiple permutations of messages and headlines for your concept. Be agile, adaptable and responsive. Keep changing until you find what works. Go back to things that haven't worked in the past, because what didn't work today might work tomorrow. It's not a 'get it right first time or you've got it wrong' game.



No longer the World's Favourite Airline: Adapting to events outside your control

In 1989 Saatchi and Saatchi rebranded British Airways as The World's Favourite Airline. However, a series of dramatic global events unfolded between 2001 and 2010 that had serious consequences for the authenticity of this claim. At the same time, the low-price airlines were taking chunks out of short-haul travel, while Virgin Atlantic continued to attack the transatlantic market.

After 10 years of suffering huge financial losses and damage to their reputation, British Airways ditched the campaign, going back to their purpose of making travel a joyful experience. Enter To Fly to Serve.

2001

The attack on the twin towers in New York meant people stopped flying overnight

2002

The SARS outbreak resulted in a 3% drop in flight bookings

2008

Oil prices peaked making travel more expensive
The beginning of the global financial crisis wiped out savings

2010

Second oil crisis pushed cost of flights up again

2010

The Icelandic ash cloud grounded flights throughout northern Europe

2. It's not who you know, it's how well you know them

Effective Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is the single, most important element of ROI. If you aren't prepared to invest up front in your database, you're adopting a 'throw mud at the wall' approach to marketing.

Know (on every level) who you're mailing. Build a profile for each of them, develop a relationship, find out what they like or don't like and accept that two out of three times you contact them, it won't be relevant to them. It's about quality not quantity. Even then, it's about the whole nine yards: clean, verify, de-dupe your list. If you don't follow up your campaigns, your campaign is no more than brand building.

Using your CRM meaningfully: The Economist

In a bid to appeal to a younger, more digital savvy audience and change their perception that The Economist has a relevant point of view about global current affairs, they developed a campaign built entirely on their own target customer data. They knew when, where and how the new audience viewed and consumed content. This allowed them to develop relevant, topical, dynamic ads in real time, driving their target to a bespoke hub where they could read the article in full and subscribe. The campaign smashed its target of 650,000 new prospects, hitting 5.2 million prospects, leading to over 64,000 new subscribers, worth £51.7 million in lifetime revenue.



3. Your vital statistics aren't that vital

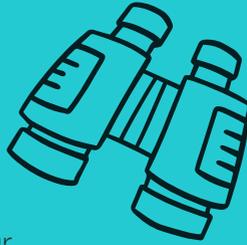
Everyone talks about ROI but if your ROI is about booked meetings then forget it. You're not going to get meetings if no one's looking at your website, if they don't know who you are or they're not ready to meet and buy yet. When your prospects do bite, you'll never know what it was that made them bite - the impact is cumulative. So the best performance measure is engagement. Set clear goals and KPIs at the outset, track your performance against them and remember they don't have to be financial.



The measures are more complex

Before digital, things were easier. The general rule of thumb for broadsheet financial advertising was to achieve a 5% margin. Meaning if an advert cost £100, any return over £2000 would be considered profitable. Then came digital and the proliferation of channels, click-through rates, and the headache of how to correlate channel spend with impact.





4. Look out to look in

No matter how well you think you know your world, if you reach out there will be surprises. Look out to look in. A successful campaign isn't about what you want to tell people, but what they need to hear. You don't need to spend a fortune, and light touch qualitative research is always relevant to mine for the best messages. It's helpful in ensuring your message is always topical and relevant. If it's delivered in your own inimitable way, it will also provide a window on your soul.



Research pays

Be cautious of customer segments defined on socio-economic grounds alone. The chances are their needs and drivers will vary greatly. One campaign with one message may be wide of the mark. Develop creative and messaging options and test them. Your client might unanimously like one route, but until you test, you won't know if it's the right way to go. It doesn't need to cost the earth and the results will pay dividends in the long run.



5. We've never had so much data yet been so ill informed

If a prospect sends in a coupon today, does that mean coupons work? It might have been the tipping point, but what led to that? It might have been pure timing or opportunity. It might have been the series of conversations with the relationship manager. It might have been the on-going direct mail, or the advert in a recent publication. The reality is a combination of all. So whilst we're getting more data than ever before, we can't be sure what it is telling us. The journey to an ultimate sale is not a straight or continuous one. It's about using all the channels available and ensuring the entire marketing mix is working hard to help build customer engagement.

Using the marketing mix to the max

The desire for the iPhone didn't happen overnight. It's part of a broader evolution of the Apple brand that has challenged our perceptions of technology. Yes, it's a beautifully designed product that makes technology simple, and has been promoted to reinforce this point. But there's a brand experience that starts with the packaging, moves onto the product, its aesthetics, functionality and operating system, and continues to the after sales care, where any problems are easily fixed by in-store blue shirts or knowledgeable telephone support.



6. Teach your CEO to suck eggs

Sharing these truths with you and encouraging you to accept them is only half the battle. Getting your CEO on board and supporting your campaign is something else. After all, it's your CEO or other board members that will be funding your campaign, and wanting to know how successful it's been. And it's highly likely they'll have unrealistic expectations of your activity. So, don't be afraid to take time with them every year to tell them what B2B marketing is all about and what you can and can't realistically measure. Actively involve them in partnering with you to create the objectives and KPIs. Get them to develop thought leadership. Analyse the learnings from each wave of the campaign and discuss how you can improve it next time. Ultimately you need to have a grown-up dialogue and effective engagement leading to sales on the outside. The good news is that more and more board members appear to have a marketing background. Emma Walmsley, CEO of GSK Consumer was previously the marketing director at L'Oréal. Dave Lewis, CEO at Tesco used to be a marketing director at Unilever. Steve Easterbrook, CEO at McDonald's was previously the chief brand officer. The list goes on...

An increasing trend of FTSE CEOs having marketing backgrounds

2011 - 15%

2015 - 21% or 40% when applied to consumer
& health care sectors*

*Heidrick & Struggles 2015



Conclusion

There isn't a simple answer or easy solution to maximising performance. It's a combination of many things, managed over time. Know your customers well; test, learn and adapt as you go; use all your channels to engage with them, as the journey to a sale isn't a straight line; and endeavour to take your CEO on the journey with you.

It's one thing to talk about, and another to deliver. We're not smarty-pants and we're sure you've got your own views. So why not enjoy the enclosed, and give us a call to talk about a solution that works for you.

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Frank, Bright & Abel is a creative communications consultancy, providing strategy, design and delivery to business-to-business, financial services and higher education.