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Ground Zero Targeting!

By Wild Bill Montgomery

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Every business has a "Ground Zero Target", meaning the ideal customer group that you should be targeting in your marketing efforts.

I have met small business owners who actually have never taken the time to know who their customers are, what they want or where they could be found. They just take anybody who comes their way and are grateful for the business. Their marketing strategies, if they have any, fails for the most part, because they don't know who they are supposed to be targeting or they target to wide of a market to be effective. They are doing business, but could be doing it so much better by finding and targeting the ideal group of customers. I want to be sure you take the time to know who your customers are and if you are targeting the right group.

What we're going to do today is give you the help to classify these customer groups and hopefully make it a little clearer what type of customer group should be your Ground Zero Target. Take some time and decide which of these groups are most important to you and your business. assign them a value say from 1 to 10, 10 being the most valuable, one being the least valuable. You can also add your own classifications to the list. Something that is important to your business.

Make a list of the type of customers you are currently targeting. Now comes the hard part. I want you to take a break, clear your mind and begin to think of other groups of customers that could benefit from your service/product. If you are having trouble coming up with other customer groups, don't rush it. Put it away until later. Take all the time you need. When you are finished (for now, because more may pop up later) compare them to the classification list and add up the value of each classification that fits that customer group.

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) They Have To Be Able To Afford You. There is no point in targeting a customer group who can't afford your service/product. A good example is a local company I found was targeting This is the group that has a budget set aside for the product you are marketing. They know that that will be buying, they just don't know it's from you.

) You Have Already Earned Their Respect. In this group you have the customer who is familiar with you and your services or products, and hopefully satisfied with the services and/or products you provide. You have gained their respect and their trust. They will seek you out again, if they need you.

) Little Or No Competition. You will find that the more you look, the more possible customer groups you can find for your service or product. You may find a that their is a piece of the market that most of your competitors have passed by or missed.

) They Want The Best. This is the customer group who will pay the extra buck for the best product or service they can get. You will always have the customer group who will buy conservatively and the group who is willing to pay through the nose as long as the know (or think) they're getting the best.

) Geography Is Important To Some. If your customer group is local, this is more than likely your number 10 here. There's no point in advertising to the world if you only service the surrounding communities. Do you only handle a local clientele? Do you have to? There are some companies that remain small local companies because they have not yet opened their market to a larger audience, who often turn out to be the better target.

) The Quantity Of Customers In This Group. Even if you have found the ideal target group there is no point in marketing to a group of customers who will to soon be exhausted. Make sure you have the quantity of possible customers in this group to support your efforts.

) You Can Reach This Group Easily. You want a group that you can expose your efforts to easily and often. You want to have a way of reaching your target group. Is this group seeing your promotion material, your advertising? Are they seeing enough of it? Is there a way to better reach this group than what you are doing now?

) References. If you had to choose, would you take on a large project for an unknown or new company, rather than a small job for a company who is prominently known for what they do? I hope you said the smaller job. Word of mouth from prominent business owners or managers can be a major boost in

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getting your business where you want it to be.

) They Don't Know It Yet, But They Need You. The group of people who need your product or service, just have to make them aware that they need you. You have to have a group of people you know that really need what you have. You may have your group that you are already targeting. Are you sure this is the group of people who need your service/product the most?

) They Need You And They Know They Need You. This is the group who has your service/product already on their mind, they just haven't found you yet. All you need to do is introduce your business and service/product. They are ready to buy, it's just the matter of proving yourself and your service/product is what they are looking for.

After it is all said and done, you should have one group of customers who come out on top. This is the group your marketing efforts should be focused

on. Consider the business you get from the other groups gravy on your plate. This is one of many exercises I have picked up. Remember, Marketing is an exact science and treating it as such will take you far.

Happy Marketing

E-marketing Basics: Pro And Cons Of Hour Targeting

By Otilia Otlacan

One of the main advantages of advanced internet technologies is the possibility of hour targeting for ads served to web sites.

Exactly how such targeting is done, that is a tech issue far beyond our e-Marketing topic. What is important to us, e-Marketers, is to be aware of this facility web servers have and use it towards making online campaigns more efficient.

Hour targeting is especially useful when:

– we already know the online buying habits of our target; – we want to create an association between our products and a certain time of the day when interest might be higher; – we try to avoid a certain category of customers that are known to be more active at a certain hour interval; – we know from previous researches that sites where we are advertising have different categories of visitors, with different interests and behaviour, active at certain hours.

Let us try imagining some examples of justified hour targeting:

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– Premium IT products (such as laptops) could probably use a business hours targeting, on the premises that active, working professionals have more buying power. Similarly, off-hours and weekend targeting could be used when promoting basic desktop systems with a lower price to a more younger audience with less buying power and/or buying decision.

– FMCG products might benefit from targeting ads within hour intervals when these products are more likely to be utilized. We would probably want to place ads for coffee on news-delivering web sites during the morning hours; and advertising creams and gels for muscular pains later in the afternoon or evening, when such pains are more likely to occur.

– It is widely known that surfers using a dial-up connexion get online in the evening and at night. Therefore, if we are to promote products or services destined to dial-up users (modems, access cards, offers to switch to a superior connexion) it only makes more business sense to target late hours.

Interesting enough, such hour targeting is not always successful. A media planner might be blinded by the revelation of a cool method to raise efficiency of online campaigns like an adserver, only to realise at a later time that it can be more of a bother. For example, a banner for a banking product placed on a business portal would not need hour targeting, as professionals visiting such portals usually have permanent internet connection whether it is at office, at home, or is using a mobile solution. A regular reader of Financial Times online might opt to access the site in the evening, from the comfort of his home, long after the regular "business hours", and would be a missed target if we employ hour targeting.

To conclude, hour targeting for online campaigns makes a very powerful and efficient tool, but needs to be performed after carefully assessing surfing and buying behaviours of the visitors on web sites where we advertise.

Otilia is a young certified professional with expertise in e-Marketing, currently working as independent consultant. She has recently launched MarketingWHO, a professional Marketing Directory (

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