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The future of marketing is data-driven, creative, and people-based

By Shaune Jordaan

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For most of its history, digital marketing has largely involved adapting traditional marketing methods to the digital space. Whether in the online, mobile, or social spaces, agencies have largely stuck to the same old methods of coming up with a piece of creative and broadcasting it to the widest audience possible.



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Thing is, there's plenty of evidence that those methods no longer work, not in the sense that they're supposed to: increasing sales of a product or use of a service. All the metrics so beloved of digital advertisers – views, clicks, engagement, time on site – mean little if they don't produce meaningful results for the client.

And when you're sending out marketing messages to the broadest possible audience, there's no way you can guarantee those results.

That's about to change in a big way. Digital advertising is set to become a great deal more personal, with the data companies sit on allowing them to target highly relevant messages at an individual level. That, in turn, has the potential to produce real business results. It's an approach called people-based marketing and it's a total game-changer.

What do we mean by people-based marketing?

To illustrate what people-based marketing entails, it's worth taking a look at how current attempts at targeted online marketing work. Let's say you visit your bank's website. A cookie will be served and ads for your bank will follow you around the web. But because the only information that cookie generated is your interest in the bank, there's a good chance that the ads you're served will be for products you already use.

This approach is predicated on the idea that agencies somehow hold the key to all the data a business should use in its marketing efforts. In truth, however, most agencies can only access data provided to them by third parties – such as Google or Facebook.

In reality, most companies are sitting on a veritable treasure-trove of data, most notably in the shape of their CRM databases.

Knowing this, people-based marketing narrows things down much further. So, for instance, if you were looking for a car online, you might be served ads for special rates on the relevant financing offering from your bank.

It is, in other words, an approach which recognises that you're an individual with your own unique wants and needs.

How does it work?

People-based marketing uses data layering, user location, online user behaviour, purchasing behaviour and publisher data to create custom profiles. These profiles are then matched with advertiser needs to ensure that people receive marketing that is relevant to them and which serves the best business interests of the consumer.

Technically how does it work?

From a technical perspective, people-based marketing entails combining first, and third-party data by building data management platforms (DMPs), and then connecting this data to DSPs (Google double click manager) to communicate to people interested in an advertiser, via digital media.

It might sound complex, but really, it's the best way to target real people. Even better, it's an approach will allow its practitioners to customise tech integrations and consult on the best tech solutions – all depending what data advertisers and brands are sitting on.

The companies who do people-based marketing well will take things one step further. Not only will they customise your data, integrate and build tech, they'll also know how to engage and communicate with these audiences once created and segmented.

The data that companies are sitting on is a goldmine. Used properly, it can completely transform the way a business talks to its consumers.

ABOUT SHAUNE JORDAAN

Shaune Jordaan is the co-founder and chief commercial officer at Hoorah Digital. He is passionate about delivering world class results to brands and building a digital culture that drives change. He is the former co-founder/CEO of an award winning performance digital agency with an extensive global client list. He's worked extensively across the globe, growing digital portfolios and leading digital transformation. He is one of Africa's most experienced digital leaders.

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