Increasing Customer Engagement

Last week I shared some ideas about “customer engagement” that I gleaned from a panel of folks at the B2B LeadsCon conference. I have been asked by several readers how to use these ideas for all customers beyond the B2B customers. The quick answer is “many can be broadly applied” and I will use the same source of ideas to select some that may help.

Ruth Stevens, president, eMarketing Strategy.

➢ **Top Lead Nurturing Channels:** The top media channels for lead nurturing programs are email, phone and mail. But it’s a good idea to mix up your nurturing stream with event invitations, press releases, tweets, infographics, podcast, surveys or questionnaires, videos or newsletters to keep people interested.

➢ **Clean Data:** You can’t engage your customers if your data is wrong, and B2B data degrades at the rate of 3-6% per month. The number one way to clean data—this will surprise you—is to key enter the data correctly in the first place. Train your personnel to follow the input editing standards of your database, and use address-checking software at the point of entry to promote deliverability.

➢ **Customer Preference Centers:** Encourage your customers to maintain their own data on your website. Build a password-protected Customer Preference Center, where they can manage the data you have on them, and indicate how they want to hear from you. You might consider offering an incentive, whether better terms or a discount, to obtain higher levels of compliance.

Lianne Wade, vice president, account director, Wilde Agency

➢ **Digestible Content:** Provide at-a-glance, digestible value-add content, such as lists, infographics to prospects and customers. As part of this, provide content that is also usable and shareable with end users so clients/prospects can be prepared to start a conversation with their clients.

➢ **Have a 360 View:** Consider a 360-degree view of your clients since they are people too, with both personal and professional needs and interests. Obtain insights to develop an effective strategy that will be personalized and relevant.

➢ **Men and women process information differently:** Women typically want to take care of others and are constantly trying to balance their work/personal life priorities. Men are competitive and respond to facts and figures. Test different approaches to cater to their unique concerns.
Samir Bagga, vice president, marketing, HCL Technologies

➢ **Customer Advisory Council**: If 20% of your clients generate 80% of your revenue and future growth, consider creating an advisory council to tap into those valuable customers and facilitate peer-to-peer cross selling. HCL councils with members across the globe and they love giving advice.

➢ **Mentorship Programs**: Show your clients you value them by making them your internal champions. Get them to come in and coach your teams on their industries. The more they feel invested in your brand, the more they will support you.

➢ **Gatekeeper program**: Remember to show appreciation for the folks who can help you connect with their executives. They can have a huge influence on their bosses and provide valuable insight into the company. Consider sending tokens of appreciation on holidays and birthdays like gift cards or chocolates.

➢ **Give them an experience**: Create a customer experience zone to help showcase technology that can help showcase how your solutions can solve their pain points and help them experience the brand.

➢ **Content Workshops**: Client workshops where customers can meet their peers are invaluable. Whether you run one-day intensives or four-day events, workshops can position your brand as a thought leader on industry issues and give your customers ideas they can take back to the office. Nothing works like workshops.

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