

{  Sales & Marketing }

# MARKETING GETS PERSONAL

Targeting customers with custom, intent-based marketing can jump-start sales.

With traditional marketing, a company unleashes an avalanche of messaging and hopes that – like throwing mud at a wall – some will stick. This approach is obsolete, some experts say. Instead, intent-based marketing can be more effective.

Intent-based marketing uses data about an individual customer's preferences to help craft a marketing campaign. Data sources include "likes" on Facebook, website visits, or purchasing history; all of which Google and other providers track. Instead of simply sending direct mail or other ads to people based on their age, profession, or gender, potential customers can be targeted by web-viewing habits and other activity that more accurately predicts their interests.

➤ GREATER ACCURACY

"An intent-based marketing campaign is much more targeted when compared to a traditional one," explains Lauren Karasek,



group vice president of social media strategy at MWPR, an East Rutherford-based public relations agency. "It's not just who you are, but what we know you like, and what you're likely to do. An intent-based campaign lets you understand more about the consumer and action they're likely to take; enabling merchants to tailor their ad

campaign in a more precise manner."

She says this approach is not only good for the company doing the marketing but it's also more appealing to the person who's on the receiving end of the advertising campaign. "Some people say they don't like to receive ads, but if you dig deeper you'll find out that what they really don't like is being on the receiving end of poorly targeted advertising," Karasek reports. "A good campaign will deliver them information that is relevant to their specific interests; it's more of an enablement and less of a push."

➤ SOCIAL MEDIA IS KEY

Today, people share so much on social media – from politics to products – that Facebook, LinkedIn, and other channels have become treasure troves for marketers.

"Facebook can cross-reference with your customer database and drill down to users' age, home ownership, and other information, so advertisers will know



## { Intent-Based Marketing 101 }

Shakira M. Brown, managing principal of Hamilton-based SMB Strategic Media LLC, provides the need-to-know basics of this approach to marketing.

**What it is:** An intent-based marketing strategy allows a brand to deliver custom messages closely

based on a customer's individual buying cycle and therefore allowing the brand to be very specific, using data from multiple marketing platforms. This data provides brands and marketers with an unprecedented opportunity to better understand both organic and potential demand.

**What's involved:** Brands must have access to data from their customers. This allows small and/or medium-sized businesses to stimulate a desire with nearly in-market customers who are most likely to desire their product. The data harvested from online advertising and brand website analytics,

among others, will help identify people most likely to move away from the status quo and become in-market buyers.

**Who should do it:** Any business that proactively markets should consider intent-based marketing. When you have better signals about a buyer's

intentions you can segment your audience and focus on buyers that have the greatest propensity to take a desired action.

Brands can glean more intent data from the customer along the way and serve that consumer different messages throughout their decision-making journey.