The Art of Engagement

For zealous online shoppers, the most appealing emails they open are the ones with an offer or an announcement that speaks directly to them. Think of all of the meaningless, one-size-fits-all email-blasted nuggets individuals delete throughout a day and then think of the ones that instantly make you click to a website: a concert ticket pre-sale for your favorite band or a flash sale on a beauty brand you need. These messages, whether through email, text, or app notification, are the kind that make individuals feel heard as customers and keep us coming back. But how do the brands do it?

Ehren Maedge knows. A seasoned customer communications expert, Maedge was Em-

You know your customer is online. So how are you communicating with them?

ployee Number One when the Indian company, MoEngage, known for its innovative mobile-first marketing platform, recently opened its first U.S. office in San Francisco. Now Vice President for North America, Maedge and his team enable brands to engage and retain their customer base through “the most effective form of messaging.”

The key, he adds, is to use customer data to create content “just for them.”

Mass marketing, the one-size-fits-all method of old, isn’t just annoying for consumers; it’s a colossal financial gaffe that can destroy a brand’s reputation and bottom line.

MoEngage’s customer engagement platform enables companies to weave through the data, make suggestions for the timing and format of its use, and create customer journey flow charts to share within the organization.

“Brands,” Maedge says, “have to know how to effectively communicate with their customers.” In decades past, there were fewer options. Brands advertised on TV and in magazines, choosing the show or magazine based on the demographic data provided. Fast forward to now: online users are accustomed to seeing content chosen for them based on social media algorithms, their website visits and history, or even their preferences/behaviors across email and mobile apps.

“Customers demand more personalized communication. They want a one-on-one experience,” Maedge says. In fact, younger consumers, digital natives, expect it.

This is where digital customer data comes in. MoEngage empowers companies to use the data to create content and messaging that customers respond to. Better yet, if a customer isn’t responding, the system helps a company send stirring follow-ups. It remembers what method of communication a customer is most likely to respond to. If a customer hasn’t purchased anything but has visited a brand’s website, MoEngage formulates future messaging to include products and services that match what the shopper already viewed.
online.

“Data-driven marketing technology has existed for some time, yet brands are just starting to embrace personalized messaging,” Maedje says. “Even the biggest brands still make the mistake of sending the same messages to all of the customers in their database.”

For instance, Maedje receives three emails a day from his favorite denim brand, but the emails only occasionally feature a promotion he’d be interested in. Even though he’s never purchased a pair of women’s jeans, he receives daily emails that promote them.

MoEngage was designed to avoid slipups like that. “With digital, you can get more information about a consumer, even if you don’t know their name,” Maedje says.

With MoEngage, brands use the information to tailor a marketing message in the shoppers’ own voice, and should a brand have a customer-facing app, the platform can push notifications through it. Or, if a customer is using an app for free, the brand can share the benefits of upgrading to a paid version of the app to the customer in different ways, like text or in-app messages.

“If a brand delivers the right message at the right time, customers will be more likely to see the value in upgrading.”

MoEngage does that and then enters the information for marketing teams to evaluate and create flow charts to document a customer’s experience.

“It saves time and headaches. Our features and functionality are included in one platform,” Maedje adds.

While the brand creates the content they send to customers, MoEngage’s platform “listens” to which variations perform better and get more clicks.

“We help brands figure out what works,” he says, and the computer guides them for future communication. What “works” varies across the globe, but Maedje has a motto: Relevancy wins.

“I say that quite a bit: ‘Is this relevant?’”

With all the insightful and impactful data, marketing teams have the opportunity to fine-tune what customers see and hear from a brand. “And when a customer truly feels engaged, brand loyalty is established,” Maedje says.

It doesn’t happen overnight, of course. Once a client starts using the MoEngage platform, it takes about four weeks to see an increase in usage and revenue. Maedje advises clients to take a phased crawl, walk, run approach to rolling out the platform, focusing on the customer engagement campaigns and activities that will generate the most value first. Once installed, it can be accessed by dozens of internal users, making teams significantly more productive.

With vast experience at huge companies like Samsung’s offices in India, Nestle in the United Kingdom, and other brands in 30 countries around the world, MoEngage’s fresh perspective has been a hit in America, generating clients like Ally Bank and McAfee.

Even Asia Pacific has embraced the technology. Their vision, product, and global scalability led to MoEngage being named a leader in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Mobile Marketing Platforms in October 2020 and Battery Ventures named the firm a Top 25 Company to Work For during the pandemic.

“We’ve emerged as a premier resource for brands who want to develop that brand-customer connection,” Maedje concludes. “Brands have the data; they just need to use it.” — By Victoria Kertz, California Business Journal

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