

Reach the Right Audience for your Marketing Campaigns

If you've ever conducted an advertising or marketing campaign for contact lenses, you were probably not overwhelmed with the results of your efforts. While a number of factors likely

contributed to the campaign's poor performance, this article will address what I believe is one of the most important reasons why contact lens marketing campaigns fail: an improperly targeted audience.

What Lenses Do Patients Want?

Historical demographic information about contact lens wearers focuses primarily on the entire population and is very broad in scope. Until recently, eyecare practitioners haven't been able to readily access demographic information for consumers who express an interest in a particular brand of contact lenses. (Visit ResMarkConsulting.com to request a free copy of "Contact Lens Brand Demographics: A Guide to Who Wants Which Brands"). This meant that if you wanted to narrow the target audience for a particular contact lens brand offering, you had to guess the target demographic.

In reality, because ECPs don't have targeted demographic information readily available, what typically happens is everyone gets sent the same broad marketing message. Response rates for this type of campaign tend to be very

low because the message misses the mark (is off target) for a large portion (segment) of the recipients.

Too many practitioners have made this mistake, decided that direct marketing is too expensive or just doesn't work and subsequently given up trying to promote contact lens wear in their practice through ongoing marketing activities.

The fundamental problems here are a lack of understanding customer segmentation and its relationship to targeted marketing as well as a lack of benchmark demographic data to use as a target. I'll explain the importance of customer/patient segmenting and why targeting improves marketing results.

Why Segmentation Works

Imagine you have \$1,000 to spend on a direct mail campaign. For simplicity's sake we'll assume your cost per piece is \$1.00. If you mail 1,000 pieces (all the same) to the first 1,000 patient names in your mailing list, you shouldn't expect more than 10 appointments (a 1 percent to 2 percent response rate with a 50 percent conversion rate). This

means each appointment costs \$100.

If you segment your mailing list to meet certain target market criteria (sex, age, prescription needs) and create three or four highly targeted, product-specific direct marketing pieces, a response rate of 10 percent is not uncommon. Applying the same 50 percent appointment conversion rate yields 50 appointments, each costing only \$20.

Of course, segmenting and targeting takes more work (which is why most small business owners/marketers don't do it), but this example highlights the benefits of completing the task.

Segmentation

Customer segmentation is the subdivision of a market into discrete customer groups that share similar characteristics. Customer segmentation can be a powerful means to identify unmet customer needs. Companies that identify underserved segments can then outperform the competition by developing uniquely appealing offers.

Customer segmentation procedures include:

- Deciding what data will be collected and how it will be gathered.
- Collecting and integrating data from various sources.
- Developing methods of data analysis for segmentation.
- Establishing effective communication among relevant busi-

