

Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half.

Attributed to John Wanamaker 1838 – 1922

Three Keys to Unlock Successful Advertising

You've developed customer benefits, clarified your USP and know what makes you special; how do you get the right information to the right customer in the right way?

Firstly, get to know your customer type:

- An Experimenter, if it's new it's of interest and will be tried. The extreme of this type of customer is the DJ who is always looking for something new and interesting to talk about. The message for this individual is ***"try me I'm new"***
- A Switcher, prepared to consider options, will buy something once it's becoming established in the market and is prepared to switch brands; the old advert ***"Persil washes whiter"*** was aimed here – washes whiter than what? – Whichever brand you're using at the moment.
- A Diehard, more of the same, has bought the same product for umpteen years, goes on holiday to the same place at the same time each year and has the same dinner every Sunday; the message should be a reinforcement of the product such as ***"I'm glad I bought a Citroen"***

Secondly, get to know your customer's habits:

- Social style – what interests does the core customer have away from home or work? This might include networking events as well as cinema or golf. It provides a point of interest that is not intrusive and may lead to common places to meet informally to do business
- Lifestyle – what interests them at home? Do they buy things for the home or are very family or pet focused; do they have to have the latest technology? If you're advertising to the home, or to people who work from home the likely area of interest will provide an additional hook
- Work style – what are the pressures and drivers at work? Is the core customer very busy or have large gaps in the day? If very busy (the CEO) short punchy messages work best, if with gaps (the publican) then a long and well composed letter is most appropriate

Thirdly, get to know your customer's business

- Clinical – working to facts and figures, emotion doesn't play a part, so the communication will follow suit; for example dog food advertised to the dog breeder would point out the benefits of the vitamins, minerals and pH balance
- Sensible – a recognition that the company is dealing with people and needs to communicate more than facts and figures; the dog food is now advertised with a thoroughbred dog but the emphasis is on how the dog enjoys the food and that its health is properly maintained
- Emotional – very people and group focused, leading from the heart and taking others forward by a vision of the future. The dog food is now advertised with the message that the dog is part of the family and will love you for buying a particular brand

If you develop the right permutation for each specific market you will reduce advertising wastage and no doubt be more successful in attracting customers.