

Digital media bootcamp: Personalise or perish

By [Adam Mitchell](#), issued by [Ninety9cents](#)

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We all know how digital has exploded in recent years to become a crucial component of advertising. This has resulted in the digital realm becoming crowded and consumers being constantly bombarded by brands and their messages.

The key to cutting through the noise? *Personalisation*.

When considering personalised advertising, you're probably thinking about expensive data management platforms and cumbersome technology. But have you considered personalisation through media targeting? 'Personalisation' in this context doesn't refer to an email that addresses you by name, but rather how your message relates to a group of people with common interests or traits.

We can assume that customers will always favour tailored messages over the generic, as recipients are likely to feel more connected to the communication. When looking at online audiences, personalisation should not only focus on influencing behaviours, but in predicting them.

I want to show you how to think about creative and cost-effective ways of customising media to your target audiences.

Here are three considerations to get you started:

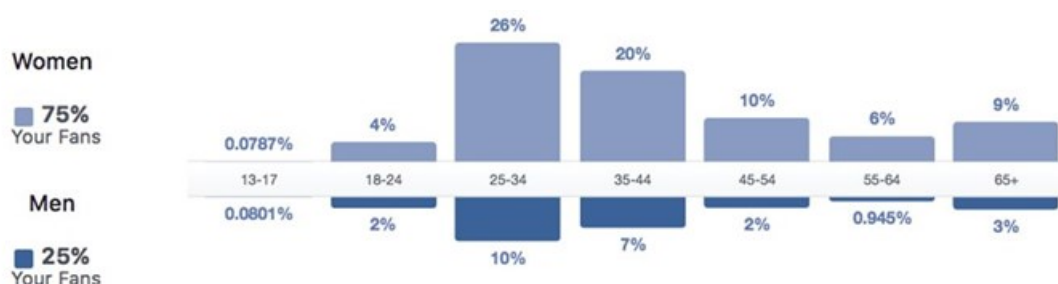
1) Demographics

If you have a social media or analytics account, look at your demographic data to determine who has the highest reach and who is most engaged by gender and age.

Facebook Page Insights:



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Facebook Ads Manager:



In the above examples, there are clear skews towards females in terms of reach and action.

Using this information, ads could talk to each of these audiences differently - either by grouping products or services separately for male and female, or by simply changing the language used in the ads. For example, “Women like you...” or “Guys like you...”. By personalizing the experience you will significantly lift responses in your target group. The same could be applied to age, tailoring how you speak to Millennials versus Generation X audiences.

As a result, the customer instantly feels like they are being spoken to, rather than shouted at.

2) Customer relevance

If you are buying display or video ads, think about where your ad will appear, and make your communication contextually relevant to your audience’s environment.

Are they reading news, or checking the weather forecast in their area? If you’re targeting a website with multiple categories (sport, parent, business, etc.) think about the different messages that could be applied to each section and the audiences that will most likely engage with them. For example, if you’re selling a wide range of clothing that extends through kids, men and women categories, the ads for toddler clothing would be best placed on a family or parenting platform, and the message would address parents.

Facebook even allows you to target or exclude existing members of your community. This could assist in differentiating how you communicate to new prospects versus existing community members.

Consider incorporating life event targeting to segment promotions for different mindsets or need states, such as someone who recently moved areas, got engaged, or started a new job.

These targeting options can be used to personalise your creative and copy. For example, you can layer targeting together to customise creative based on gender, relationship status and life events, such as an upcoming anniversary to promote his/hers gifts to couples at suitable times.

Most digital advertising platforms can target devices by location right down to a city, suburb or a specific radius around a map pin. This is important information to use as a personalisation tool, especially if deals and promotions differ per area. Elements in your campaigns can be customised to the location of the receiver, such as distance to the nearest store or area-specific cultures and languages.

3) Storytelling

Remarketing is the easiest way to start building a first party audience, which can be used as targeting for digital advertising campaigns. Most of us are familiar with dynamic remarketing, which follows you around with banners that are personalised to the exact products you browsed on a website. Remarketing can also be used in other ways. For example, if you’re planning a prospecting campaign you can use remarketing to only reach people who have never previously visited your

website or app.

Simply create a list of everyone who visits or views your digital asset and add them as an exclusion to your media targeting. After prospects become customers, use remarketing to adapt targeting and communication accordingly based on customer status and browsing behaviour.

YouTube has a feature that allows you to automatically sequence video ads to people based on their engagement. This can be used to educate or promote in sequence to each person who sees your ads, telling a story over multiple touchpoints.

Perhaps you have a series of product releases, are selling something that is highly researched (like a motor vehicle) or are simply releasing a campaign in phases. There is an opportunity to use remarketing to build tailored ads for your customers as they move down the path from awareness to consideration and, ultimately, purchase.

Or if you're running a lead generation campaign in order to build a database for future marketing. You can create target audiences of people who viewed the lead form, but didn't complete it, or you could show a series of ads to these people thereafter to further communicate the benefits of signing up.

Never abuse remarketing, limit impressions, choose appropriate advertising durations, customise creative at each step and thereafter leave people alone.

You don't need to know a person's name or their hair colour, but you can begin personalising your marketing plans using data, insight and media targeting.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Mitchell connects brands to audiences through performance driven campaigns. He is Head of Search and Digital Media at 99c, with 10 years of digital advertising experience. He focuses on adding value to clients and their customers by integrating strategy, creative, media and analytics. When not optimizing campaigns, he is most likely to be found on a mountain bike trail.

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