How to move people up the value chain

Emily Abbott,
Senior Director - Communicate
How to move people up the value chain

Telling Marketing that intention to buy, brand preference, or a KPI they want to focus on is at a particular level is one thing; but telling them how to move people from low to medium, and then to high intention to buy, preference etc. is quite another.

Our challenge is to advise clients how to convert those who are ‘warm’ to their brand to become buyers, and how to increase the size of the available pool that’s ripe for conversion to sales.

Here at Future Thinking we achieve this by making brand research work harder by:

- Capturing the influencers on behaviour
- Seeing how the influencers impact on the brand KPIs (intention to buy, preference etc.)
- Focussing in on the aspects that the brand is able to influence
- Using modelling to understand what moves people along the value chain
- Understanding the messaging that will increase the probability of moving a consumer along the value chain

The influencers on behaviour

The theory is that behaviour is influenced by opportunity, capability and motivation:

- Opportunity reflects the external factors that help or hinder us. These would include social influences on how and when we consume; we all know how a situation can influence our behaviour
- Motivation is where emotional (System 1) and rational (System 2) decision making sits. System 1 uses shortcuts and past experiences to make quick decisions, without our conscious brains even being aware of it; it’s where the brain makes fast, automatic, emotionally-driven, and often seemingly illogical decisions. System 2 is the opposite: it’s about your conscious brain working slowly, methodically, and rationally to make logical decisions. At Future Thinking we add another layer to measure people’s implicit associations with a brand and how these strengthen or weaken over time
- Capability encompasses the resources available for consumers to use e.g. time, money, ability, knowledge. In research we often assume that people have all they need, and will arrive at the correct decision and then go on to do what they intend to, but in reality these resources are always limited, impacting on decision making

At Future Thinking we understand these influences, and add another layer of understanding to measure people’s implicit responses...

- To a brand, and how these strengthen and weaken over time. This is Timed Emotional Response (TER) and we add this to much of our brand research to identify and measure differences in people’s emotional connection to brands
- To changing a particular behaviour. We use a psychological technique called the Trans-theoretical Behaviour Change model to identify people’s true underlying predisposition to change, and what stage of the ‘behaviour change’ process they’re at
Measuring the impact on brand

Our analytics team use drivers analysis to tell us the relative importance of each potential influence on the brand KPI (e.g., intention to buy, preference etc.). How a consumer feels about a brand is usually at the top of the list in terms of influence – but which of these emotional connections are most influential will vary brand by brand.

At this stage we also identify the relative influence of factors such as product knowledge, word of mouth, consumption habits, income, and age on the brand KPIs. It tells us how much influence a brand can have on moving a KPI, and how much is out of its control.

Where can brand influence?

Imagine all the influences on behaviour – they would explain 100% of how we behave. Some of these influences can be affected by how brands communicate and deliver to consumers; others are outside of the brand’s control. In our most recent studies we have found that up to 40% of how consumers behave can be explained by factors that are out of the brand’s control. Our advice is to focus on the 60% of the decision making process that can be influenced by the brand.

In our example, the 60% the brand can influence could include raising awareness, creating interest, reflecting the most influential brand values in comms, increasing brand chatter by reducing barriers to actively engaging with the brand on social media etc..

Relationship with the brand

The drivers of behaviour vary depending on where the consumer is in their relationship with the brand.

We bring the significant influences that drive the target behaviour together and can see how these vary along the path to purchase.

We model movement from low to medium to high intention to buy, preference, consumption etc.. This analysis reveals the messages that will, at each stage, increase the likelihood of a consumer moving up the value chain and on to the next stage in their path to purchase.

We believe that this approach is strengthened even more when we incorporate an initial qualitative exploration to understand the opportunities, motivations and capabilities that are most pertinent to the behaviour you want to influence.

Relevant messaging

Our work has shown how important it is that a brand demonstrates the right tone of voice to spark initial interest. As consumers move up the value chain the importance of how a brand values its customers increases. We see, for example, how the relative importance of tone of voice, product and customer focus change along the value chain, helping marketing to get the mix right.

We can show you how to move different target audiences along your value chain, helping you to increase the size of the available pool that’s ripe for conversion to sales.
About us

The Communicate Team at Future Thinking are brand and comms experts, helping brand owners to communicate relevance and meaning to drive competitive advantage. Working across all sectors we help clients understand their opportunity to build relationships through branding, advertising, brand partnerships and sponsorship. Our work also covers evaluating all types of content, from TV and radio through to websites, apps and social media.

We help brands, media owners and media agencies with in-depth and actionable insight through brand tracking (from one of health checks to global tracking studies) and campaign development, evaluation and tracking.

Suzy Aronstam, Managing Director - Communicate

Suzy Aronstam has been at Future Thinking for 17 years and heads up the Communicate team. She works with major brands in the UK and internationally running both tracking studies and one-off evaluations. Suzy set up our extensive norms database for sponsorship, and helped develop Campaign Optimiser, our tool for evaluating multi-platform campaigns, and Content Optimiser which is used to measure the value of content (within, for example, TV, print or online). She also instigated the use of Timed Emotional Response in all of our brand and campaign work.

suzy.aronstam@futurethinking.com
+44 (0) 20 7843 9777

Emily Abbott, Senior Director - Communicate

Emily is a Senior Director in Communicate, joining the brand and comms team a year ago. Over the last 20 years her experience has ranged from branding to employee; from retail to mobile; and across B2C and B2B markets. Recently her focus has been helping clients to grow their customer base, retain and maximise their value. At Future Thinking she has been working with clients to maximise the value they get from their brand research, and focusing on finding the barriers and triggers to moving customers and prospects up the value chain.

emily.abbott@futurethinking.com
+44 (0) 20 7843 9792