



Moving Information Forward

Tips for Multichannel Communication

A multi-channel communications strategy gives businesses more opportunities to interact with customers in the way that customers prefer to interact. Dasher offers these general guidelines for a successful multichannel campaign:

- Test which channels work the best in different situations. Organize around a specific product or service and establish a control group for overall evaluation of the multichannel effort. Communicate information to the control group in the single communication channel used most frequently.
- Communicate the same message through various communication channels to the remainder of the group. Offer multichannel access to the information, including mail, e-mail, text, internet, telephone. Then track which channel preferences are dominant for segments of the target market.
- To evaluate return on investment (ROI), compare responses from the control group to the group targeted for multichannel communication. Resist the temptation to evaluate ROI by communication channel since they often work in tandem. For example, a message requesting a response can be sent through various communication channels. A high percentage of responses *received* via telephone could lead to the erroneous conclusion that telephone is the most effective communication channel for *sending* messages.
- Regardless of communication channel used by the customer, information about the customer, the channel used, and the product or service, must be available to customer service representatives in the organization. This is essential for ensuring that ongoing communications occur through the customer's preferred communication channels.
- The product or service information must be identical regardless of communication channel in use. The direct mail piece and the internet landing site should be identical. Many people view information in a variety of settings and through a variety of channels. Inconsistent messaging creates confusion.
- Take specific steps to ensure the quality of data collected online. Information about all communication channels (mailing address, phone, e-mail) should be collected accurately regardless of preferred communication channel. Even though a customer prefers one communication channel over another, it may be necessary to utilize other communication channels at some future time.



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- Enable customers to respond or take another action using the communications channel that is used to communicate the message. Do not require customers to use a different communication channel to purchase or respond. For example, sending an e-mail that requires a phone call or a fax to receive service can frustrate customers who prefer electronic interaction.
- Identify segments of the market that are not multichannel users and communicate with them only through their preferred channel. This eliminates wasted paper, postage, call center minutes, and increases customer satisfaction.