

Step Four

Module Three
Mini Lesson Guide

the
marketing
Democracy™

Welcome!



Chances are, when you identify the most influential marketing channels for engaging with your customers, your competitors will be there, too! Your job is to win the battlefield. You can't win by out-shouting your competition, but you can out-smart them. This module focuses on how to select the right marketing channels for your situation and how to stand-apart from your competitors who will likely be there, too.

- Judy

Module Overview

In this module, we are going to focus on four key ideas:

- In [Lesson One](#), you will learn the difference between media exposure and media influence.
- In [Lesson Two](#), you will learn a technique for understanding which marketing channels your customers find most influential for your product category.
- In [Lesson Three](#), you will learn how to set priorities and focus on the channels that really matter.
- In [Lesson Four](#), you will learn strategies for winning the competitive battlefield in highly influential and highly cluttered channels.

To help you determine which channels are highly influential and which channels are a waste of your time and resources, you can purchase a "Marketing Channel Influence Audit" Framework. This downloadable PDF is fully functional if you open it in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Be sure to click on the "listen" icon in the lower right-hand corner to learn more about this helpful tool. And, for additional inspiration, you can watch the real-world example video to see this lesson in practice.

Congratulations on taking this important step in your journey to developing world-class marketing for your business.



Lesson One

The Difference Between Media Exposure and Media Influence

Why This Matters

When it comes to selecting the right media channels for your marketing strategy, many believe you should surround your customers with your message at every turn. This is known as 360 degree marketing. We believe that 360 degree marketing is stalking. Instead, you should select media channels to engage with your customers at the right time and in the right place. This lesson will introduce you to media influence theory. Different media channels are influential for different situations. If you understand which media channels your customers find influential for your category and situation, you can focus your resources on the right media channels and let go of the rest.

5 Key Takeaways

- There's a big difference between "reaching" your customers and "influencing" them. Marketers should leverage media channels that customers find most influential in shaping their decision to buy certain products and services.
- Media influence is category-specific. What we find influential for one product category can be vastly different than what we find influential for another.
- Know the Media Generation of the customers you wish to influence. Different Media Generations will find different media channels influential for shaping their decisions in the same product category.
- Large marketers have used media influence audits for decades to steer their investments toward media channels with the greatest payoff. Now, you can benefit from the same approach.
- Media influence can be used to measure the efficiency of your marketing expenditures. You can factor costs up or down by their degree of influence to level the playing field between cheap impressions and influential impressions.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Two, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Do you know which marketing channels your customers find most influential for your product category?

Do your customers cross a broad range of ages? Chances are they won't use the same media channels as one another and you will have to plan different approaches for different age groups.

Do you tend to use the least expensive marketing channels? Would you be willing to invest in a more expensive channel if you knew it would deliver better results?






Lesson Two

Determine the Most Influential Channels for Your Business

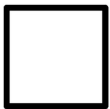
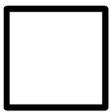
Why This Matters

In lesson one, we introduced you to the concept of media influence. Certain media channels are more influential than others when it comes to your category and situation. How do you determine which media channels are most influential? You need to ask the customers you wish to engage with and learn from them. This lesson will help you to gain important insight from your customers by conducting a media influence audit. This simple tool will help you to sort media channels into categories of influence so that you can focus on the channels that count.

Key Takeaways

-  You can determine the most influential marketing channels for your business by conducting a marketing channel influence audit. We are providing you with the training and the tools you need to get the job done.
-  One of the most important steps in the audit process is to determine “who” the audit is for. Different customer segments will likely have very different answers on the audit.
-  It’s important to think broadly about all the different marketing channels to learn about. Any interaction that can either support, reinforce or change perceptions should be included in the audit. Include both traditional and non-traditional marketing experiences.
-  Don’t be surprised when you discover that the overwhelming majority of marketing channels in the audit are scored low on the influence scale by your customers.
-  Chances are, the most influential channels will also be cluttered with competitive activity. Auditing both influence and competitive clutter will help you to evaluate the true impact of various channels.

CHECKLIST



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Three, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

If you were to conduct a marketing channel influence audit for your business, which customer segments would you like to use for your survey? Remember different customers will likely answer differently.

Can you think of all the different ways beyond traditional media that you communicate with your customers? Think outside the box and make a list of every "brand contact point" across the customer journey.

When you ask your customers about competitive activity, you can either ask about competitive clutter in general, or you can ask about a specific competitor. The choice is yours.

Lesson Three

Set Your Priorities: Let Go of Marketing Channels that Don't Matter

Why This Matters

When you ask your customers which media channels they find most influential for your category and situation, you may be surprised by the results. You may find that your media channel strategy is focusing on the wrong channels. This lesson will help you to set your priorities: focus on the media channels that count and let go of the others that don't. World-class marketing is all about making smart choices. And, when it comes to your media channel strategy, the smart choices will help you to show up in the right place and at the right time to engage with your customers.

Key Takeaways

- Marketing is all about making choices. Set your priorities and be willing to let go of marketing channels that don't really matter. Focus your effort on the few channels that can make a big difference.
- Cut any activities that fall below the influence line. Don't waste time and resources on activities that your customers do not find influential. Even if it's your owned media, be prepared to walk-away.
- You may discover that some highly influential channels are missing from your strategy. Add them into the mix, using the time and resources you saved by cutting low-influence channels.
- Improve your experience in highly influential and highly cluttered channels. These channels may be the most important and the most difficult to break-through.
- You know the saying, "If it isn't broken, don't fix it." Keep doing what you do best as long as your customers find the experience worthwhile.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Four, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of this lesson?

Do you currently spend too much time on channels that your customers do not find influential? If the answer is yes, it's time to adjust your strategy.

What's missing from your current marketing plan? Your customers will tell you what's influential and you can make the adjustments to add anything that's important.

It's important to know what you do well so that you can stay the course. If you have a strength, play to it!

Lesson Four

Outsmart Your Competition in Highly Cluttered Channels

Why This Matters

When you discover the most influential media channels for your category and situation, you will likely find that your competitors are there, too. The last thing you want to do is get into a shouting match with your competition. You need to outsmart them, instead. This lesson focuses on strategies to hold your own in what we refer to as the competitive battlefield. You can't avoid the battlefield. Instead, you can develop strategies to win the battlefield and engage with your customers in these important, albeit cluttered media channels. It's a fight worth fighting and winning.

Key Takeaways

- ① You don't need to out-shout your competitors in highly cluttered channels to win the battlefield. You can outsmart them. Shift your mindset from share-of-voice to share-of-mind.
- ① The best way to stand out in highly cluttered channels is with GREAT content. Spend the time and the resources to create truly great content that customers will want to engage with, remember and share with others.
- ① Figure out ways to use your competitors' activity to your advantage. Figure out ways to ride the wave of interest they are generating in the category. Let them do the heavy-lifting.
- ① If you can shift the conversation off a cluttered channel and onto an owned media channel, you won't have to deal with all the competitive distractions. Give customers a reason to visit your owned media and give them more reasons to keep coming back.
- ① Don't get discouraged by all the competitive clutter. Don't avoid a highly influential channel when many others are already there. Stay the course and swim in these waters. You don't have to be the only one, or the biggest fish to still have a great business.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to the action plan, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Do you have GREAT marketing content that can break through all the clutter? If the answer is "no" we encourage you to revisit Step Three of the Five Step System and create a GREAT brand story.

Can you think of ways to use your competitors' marketing activity to your advantage without getting into a shouting match with them? Are they creating visibility around topics that you can easily contribute to?

What steps can you take to move your customers from a highly cluttered marketing channel onto your owned media channel? Like us or follow us won't cut it. You need to give your customers reasons to make the shift.