Council Post: 14 Tips For Personalizing Marketing Campaigns On A Budget

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Forbes Agency Council COUNCIL POST

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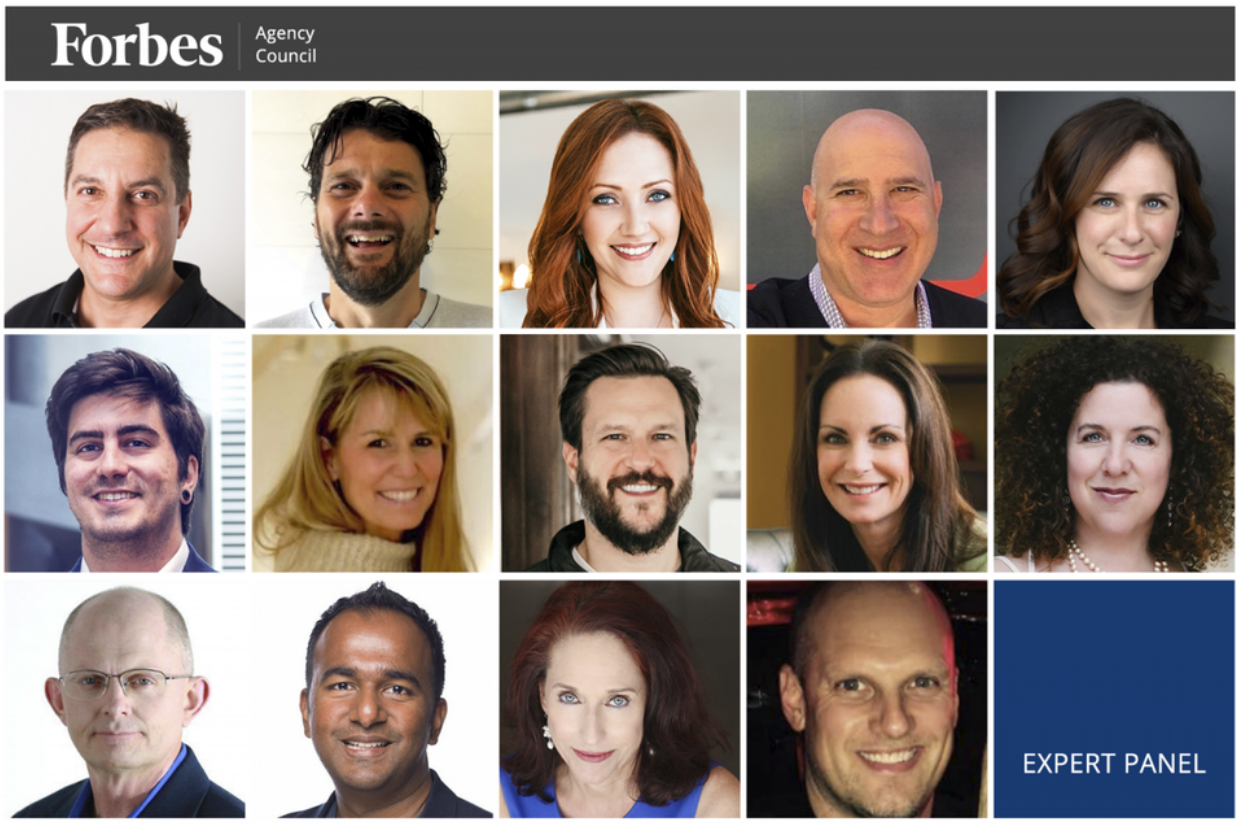
Successful PR, media strategy, creative and advertising executives from **Forbes Agency Council** share trends and tips.

One of the downsides of being so interactive with customers is that they tend to expect personalized advertising. Gone are the days when a broad-blanket ad would attract attention and drive sales. Now, consumers are focused on themselves, and it's up to the business to follow that trend and give them what they want.

However, companies still need to pay attention to their budget. How does a company approach personalized advertising in a way that doesn't break the bank? These 14 members of Forbes Agency Council share how a business could engage in customized marketing without having to spend too much on its implementation and without sacrificing efficiency.



Members share tips for creating cost-effective personalized marketing campaigns. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.

1. Personalize At Multiple Levels

Personalization should happen at various levels. Yes, outreach and brand touchpoints that are at the individual level are highly effective. But we've found it to be incredibly powerful to market at the company and industry levels, and even at the job title level. Mix it up for the best results. - Tom Shapiro, Stratabeat

2. Focus On The Creative

We've done a lot of work in personalization. One thing we continually run up against is insufficient and ineffective creative. Brands all want to personalize, but to be effective, they need to have effective creative, or personalization fails to achieve its full impact. You still need to communicate through your creative -- it's got to be targeted, compelling and engaging. - Vance Reavie, Junction AI Inc

3. Leverage List Segmentation

Our database for digital marketing is expansive for our industry, and in an effort to make sure our campaigns feel personalized and relevant to the audience, each contact is tagged for multiple categories such as region, position, business type, etc. This allows us to do larger-scale "personalized" outreach that still hits thousands of contacts at once. - Meredith Xavier, The Ligné Group

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4. Create Useful Segmentation Criteria

Start with creating useful criteria for segmentation. Just because you can segment into 150,000 categories of target audiences doesn't mean that doing so is worth all of the time and management it will take. Identify your goals and objectives first, then segment against them. Focus segmentation only on audience criteria that matter according to your objectives. - Stefan Pollack, The Pollack Group

5. Use Creative Partners And Customized Content

Powerful AI can help deliver hyper-relevant content based on a user's behaviors, purchases and preferences. For brands looking to deliver personalized marketing, I suggest working with a dynamic creative partner who ensures that ads change according to each shopper’s preferences and browsing history in order to deliver the message that’s most likely to engage the consumer. - Jessica Breslav, Criteo

6. Use Data Scraping With A Personal Touch

A good combination of automatized data scraping and a manual check goes a long way. Exporting data in CSVs will save time, but it's crucial to manually check each row to see who is really in target and who is not. And after that, it's important to craft a tailored email copy for each industry to give a personal touch. - Alessandro Bogliari, The Influencer Marketing Factory

7. Show How You Can Help

Show -- don’t just tell -- your buying community how your business can help them. Word-of-mouth, peer reviews, and customer and employee advocates are increasingly important to drive growth. To multiply this network, empower those who use and build your product to be brand champions in creative ways: champion industry think tanks to collaboratively solve

urgent global challenges. - Michaela Dempsey, Scout RFP

8. Focus On Brand Advocacy

If brand managers really want to personalize, they need to stop focusing on “brand voice” and be confident enough to use “brand advocacy.” Brand voice is comfortable and safe, but customers want authentic personal communication. Ramping up an influencer campaign and letting creators talk about their product in their own words and style is an extremely effective personalized approach. - Bradley Hoos, The Outloud Group

9. Create Customer Personas

A central aspect of the inbound marketing approach, customer personas are an effective way to personalize marketing campaigns. They fit seamlessly into automation efforts and help marketers create compelling content that is capable of attracting the right audiences to the brands that are seeking them. - Mary Ann O'Brien, OBI Creative

10. Go Back To Your Origin Story

The best way to personalize marketing is to tie it to the origin of your company -- why did you start, what inspiration sparked your path, and what beliefs, dreams and values set you on the course toward success? Reliving that origin story in your marketing messaging is a way to tie the brand to meaning and keep it fresh. - Lynne Golodner, Your People LLC

11. Write For An Audience Of One

The big mistake with personalization is thinking that showing someone’s name makes it personal to them. It doesn’t. When a topic is so compelling to someone that they cannot resist it, that they cannot help but click, that’s personalization. This approach requires focus on an audience of one. Some marketers produce content for the masses and then stick a person’s name on it. That rarely works. - Randy Shattuck, The Shattuck Group

12. Create Smart Content

We were amazed by the effects of creating smart content. If you have a person who revisits your website, you would want them to see something more related to their journey. The first time is just an ad, the second time you show them a free e-book, and the third time a purchase coupon. Personalizing content is the next phase of giving them what they want when they want and being of value. - Solomon Thimothy, OneIMS

13. Leverage IP Address Tracking

IP address tracking offers a powerful way to improve cost-effectiveness around personalization with prospective customers. By working with a data provider to secure contacts aligned with company IP addresses that have digitally demonstrated “buyer intent signals,” you can target personalized campaigns at contacts who are “ready to buy now” or

who have already expressed an interest to purchase. - Paula Chiocchi, Outward Media, Inc.

14. Have Different Email Drip Campaigns

It takes a little time upfront, but then it can run on autopilot in the background. We have four different email drip campaigns running at all times. If a customer identifies themselves (downloads a particular lead magnet, clicks on a certain ad, etc.) as one of the four, we will automatically move them into that email campaign. We can talk to them personally while still being efficient and effective. - Marc Hardgrove, The HOTH

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