



ROGER HURNI

9 Tips to Transform Your Organization with Behavioral Marketing



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Your brand's marketing personalization needs to go far deeper than putting someone's name on an email or sending them an offer on their birthday to truly impress and influence potential customers.



Successful marketing isn't just a message—it's a personalized experience.

By understanding and responding to customer behavior, your business can create personalized, relevant, and ultimately more-successful marketing campaigns. Behavioral marketing has the power to turn your customer personas into personal communications and experiences.

Ready to elevate your behavioral-based marketing initiatives? Get ready to discover the principles of behavioral marketing, integrate them into your strategy, and watch as your brand resonates with your audience in ways you never thought possible.

What is behavioral marketing?

Too often, businesses rely on clever ideas, quirky characters, or a massive awareness media campaign to drive their marketing efforts. What actually works is both demonstrably simpler and significantly more difficult: infusing the feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions of consumers into your marketing.

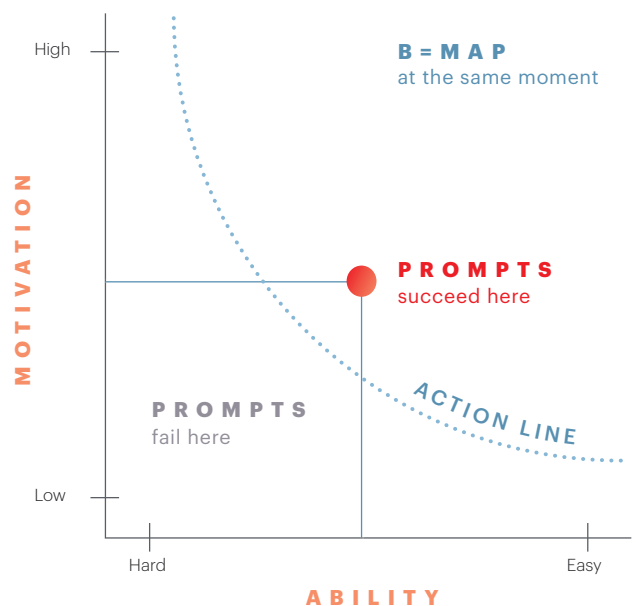
Behavioral marketing is about connecting with a customer on an emotional level. It taps into their motivations and drives them toward a deeper connection with your brand.

Every human behavior has three elements:

 Motivation  Ability  Prompt

A behavior will happen given sufficient motivation, the ability to perform it, and a prompt at the right moment.

To truly change behavior, you must factor in the elements of human behavior, then fine-tune the particulars to create a level of unmatched personalization and customer experience. When adjusted properly, these three elements (motivation, ability, and prompt) will facilitate the behavior you want from your customer—which is exactly why behavioral-based marketing initiatives can create incredible results.



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01 If you take the time to understand your audience, you will understand what is important to them.

Now that you can recognize the three elements of every human behavior, you can start to at least analyze who your audience actually is and what the difficulty of the behavior is that you're asking them to do. How are you nudging them to make that behavior happen?

Remember, the importance of finding the right audience goes beyond just tapping into motivated individuals. You have to adjust for their ability to perform a behavior as well as to identify and time the prompt accordingly. Looking at the complete picture is where personalization can take hold and brands can realize unprecedented results.

02 The worst thing you can do is publish information. Providing information doesn't change behavior. Tapping into motivation does.

Information doesn't change behavior. Even if you offer somebody a coupon for a deal, it's not the information that's changing their behavior. It is that person's motivation to save money, which causes their behavior to shift.

The information is the prompt that enacts the behavior change, but the information itself isn't what's changing behavior. When you don't tap into your customers' motivations, there's no personalization, no relevance, and no reason for anyone to feel compelled to react to that information.

Don't be mistaken in thinking that information alone can motivate a consumer. It can't. Information can help with motivation—if it is attached to something meaningful.

03

The customer journey isn't always logical. Move away from the funnel mentality to create an actionable customer journey that builds lasting relationships.

Although it may have some value, the funnel is process driven and not behaviorally driven. But people don't make decisions in a linear fashion. They don't move from one checkpoint to the next until they are ready to throw down some coin.

Instead of going down the funnel route, a better option is to rely on behavioral archetypes and apply them to the customer journey, which can build lifelong customer relationships.

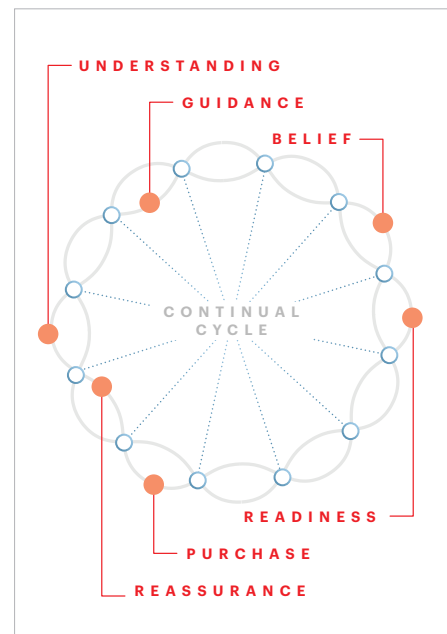
What is motivating the customer at this moment? How do you message and tap into that interest to make the experience and communications align with those motivations? Look at your different prompting materials—marketing, social media, operations, etc.—and find what is most relevant and effective on an individual basis.

Don't get sidetracked into outlining explicit steps that the prospective customer will follow or that you believe they will follow.

TRADITIONAL FUNNEL



CUSTOMER JOURNEY



04

Don't focus on increasing motivation. Focus on motivational alignment.

You can't increase a person's motivation, but you can understand the factors that create a high motivational state in your target audiences and target the potential reasons behind their motivation. While motivation can be created by something intrinsic, extrinsic, or easy, there are three factors to motivation that affect the action:



Inducement



Emotion



Life Changes

The important thing when examining motivation is to understand the emotions behind someone's motivation. For example, perhaps there is a brand you loved and used as a kid, and you are emotionally bonded to it forever because of nostalgia. Aligning your marketing with this intrinsic motivation allows consumers to relive those memories and those feelings.

Most extrinsic motivations, however, are due to life-changing events. Sometimes, it can be rooted in tragedy, other times in massive changes that alter your lifestyle, like getting married, having kids, changing careers, or meeting someone very influential.

Examine whether someone's motivation is something internal, some sort of external force at work, or something just plain easy. Combine that knowledge with the factors of inducements, emotions, or life-changing events. By doing so, you'll be able to understand why customers make the decisions they make, especially if it comes to purchasing products or services.

05

Eliminate barriers to help make your customer's behavior as simple and as easy as possible. Ease is a powerful element of motivation.

Most companies constantly want their audiences to do too much. In other words, the behaviors that brands want their audiences to perform are, more often than not, too difficult or complex—they're beyond the audience's ability. What are you doing that makes it harder for your customers to do business with you?

Perhaps you are making it too difficult for customers to find your business or speak to a customer service representative? Perhaps your contracts are too complex? In turn, you are making your customers take longer to sign—if they get signed at all. Maybe you don't take Apple Pay or Venmo? Take a hard look at it from the customer's point of view, then decide what you can change to remove those Behavior Blockers and give your customers a greater ability to buy.



Breaking down a larger behavior into smaller, less complex actions that can be performed over time helps consumers realize the value before acting and helps build brand loyalty.

06

When designing your marketing to prompt for a behavior, ensure that the prompt is associated with the behavior you want to have happen.

Once you understand the motivation behind a behavior you want to happen and have made that behavior as easy as possible by increasing your audiences' ability, you are ready for the third component of a behavior change: the prompt. The reason the prompt is so important is because it is the catalyst that makes the behavior occur.

Before you jump into identifying prompts you think will work, there are some prompting considerations you need to consider. When you are designing a prompt for a behavior, there are four factors you need to plan for:



Channel

This is where the prompt will be seen.

Framing

This is how the prompt will be presented.

Repetition

This is how many times the prompt will be seen.

Frequency

This is how often the prompt will be seen.

The best prompts consist of selecting the best channel with the right creative framing, then repeating it enough times at the right frequency and at the right time to clear the way for a behavior to occur.

07 Don't overlook the importance of one-time behaviors. Increase long-term customer value by turning smaller behaviors into a habit.

Too many companies overlook the importance of customers performing a behavior once. The analysis is simply not in their marketing plans. As such, those businesses overlook marketing work that can be the start of a customer journey and can bring an immense amount of value to the organization.



You can make a big difference by adding up those one-time behaviors over a period of time so that they become routine—a habit that continues from now on in which the brand benefits.

A habit is the difference between getting sales or getting customers. Sales can lead to short-term success, like increased revenue. But having customers for life allows an organization to build long-term value—not just in terms of revenue, but also recommendations, larger audiences, and brand reputation, to name a few.

08 Determining which customer behaviors you should operationalize comes down to who, what, and when.

Break down the behaviors you want to elicit from your customers into a simpler question: who would you want to do what and when?

This question simplifies a behavior into its three component parts:



a person or
your audience
(insert name)



performs this action
(name activity)



in the context of the
situation or time frame
(when something else
happens or at a specific
time, day, month, year, etc.).

Staring at a hundred potential behaviors can feel daunting, which is why it is critical to organize them by two factors: effectiveness and feasibility. Analyze which behavior can have the greatest impact on your outcome or aspiration. Which behavior can actually be done? Do you have the resources (time, money, personnel, etc.) to implement the elements of the behavior?

After you've decided on the most effective and feasible behaviors, start with only one or two in your marketing efforts. After those are successful, you can always choose others or go through the process again because your situation may have changed.

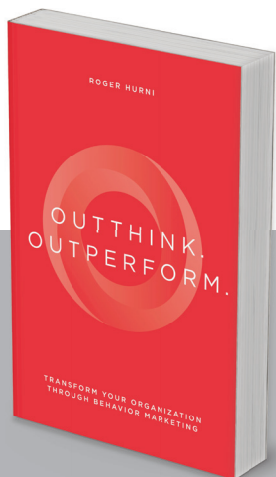
09 Create smaller campaigns designed for each behavior and each channel.

Creating one campaign to work across all channels is no longer effective. So, in your campaign development, stay away from one idea that goes across every single media channel. That practice used to work when the media landscape was small. But there are so many channels now, and each of them has its own purpose and use by an audience. That factor is why designing behavioral messaging throughout the customer journey is critical. Think of it this way:



The idea is to create smaller campaigns for each of the behaviors you want to see happen and adapt them over time as your audience interacts with them. It's the best way to deliver the right message to the right person at the right time and at the right place.

These nine steps are simple, but they do require some effort to put them into practice on a consistent basis. Success will follow those who do.



Curious to learn more and go deeper on how to apply behavioral science into your marketing initiatives? Check out my book [*Outthink. Outperform.*](#)