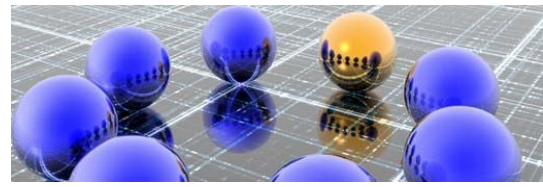


Can You Afford to Ignore 'Advocacy'?



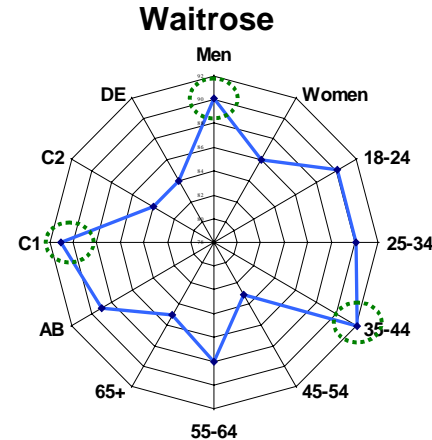
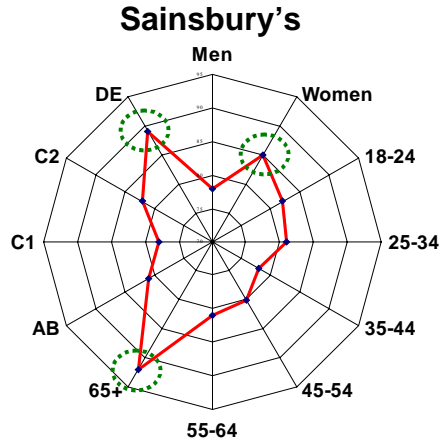
Advocacy marketing, often referred to as 'word of mouth' is rapidly becoming one of the most powerful techniques available to the sales and marketing armoury.

Advocacy is hardly new – seeking the advice of others before making a decision is something people have always done and will continue to do. So why has advocacy marketing suddenly become so important?

There are two major reasons: the first is that consumers and business audiences are now bombarded with so many sales messages that they actively look for advice from others before making a decision.

The second is that increased mobility, wireless telephony and the internet mean people of all ages are more connected than ever before. For instance, an email can quickly be sent to friends, colleagues and peers to get their views and opinions, with responses expected within just a few hours.

It is this 'connectedness' that is now allowing the true power of advocacy to be unleashed. This is because the strongest advocates are also the ones who are most connected. Indeed, a common factor between people who make the best advocates is that they actively seek to find *and* share information. This creates an effect known as the 'Pareto' rule, with which you are probably already familiar. Put simply, this means that strong advocates, who typically represent about 20% of a population, actually reach more than two-thirds of the population overall. So, reach them and the



Comparison of ideal advocates for Sainsbury's ('DE' females aged 65+) and Waitrose ('C1' males aged 35-44)

ROI of your marketing budget will increase significantly! Given this, a question that inevitably arises is how best to identify the advocates most likely to support your company and brand?

There are various ways this can be achieved, each of which is likely to suit the requirements of different organisations. The above chart shows an example based on inexpensive research data for grocery retailers. Although this obviously refers to consumers the principle for B2B audiences is exactly the same.

The profiles show consumers who would recommend Sainsbury's and Waitrose to friends and acquaintances. It is immediately obvious how different the profiles are for each. Interestingly – and perhaps surprisingly – the ideal advocate for Waitrose would be male, while for Sainsbury's it would be a female.

There is also a significant difference between age groups, with 65+ year olds being the best advocates for Sainsbury's versus 35 – 44 year olds for Waitrose.

Finally in this example, while DE socio-demographic audiences are the best advocates for Sainsbury's, it is the C1s who are best for Waitrose.

There are, of course, other factors that should be considered in conjunction with this type of profiling. For instance, while men are revealed as being more inclined to recommend Waitrose than women, they are also less likely to be involved in the social networks that drive grocery purchases.

To learn more about word of mouth/ advocacy please visit our dedicated web site, which can be found at:

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