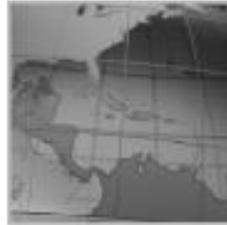


Analysis



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OneTouchPoint: Delivering on the Promise of Customer Intimacy

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Key Highlights

- The lifetime value of a customer is more important than the value of the initial transaction.
- Customer intimacy is the combination of technology and data-driven insight to deliver relevant, personalized communications across all channels.
- Kohler partnered with OneTouchPoint to capture consumers when they were interested in making a purchase.

Introduction

Great customer communications are the foundation of creating a strong, profitable business. In this day and age, customers and prospects have access to more information than ever before. Without leaving their homes or offices, individuals can assess and evaluate an array of products and services. They can use the Internet to price shop on a local or even international basis. The most successful firms understand that the lifetime value of a customer is more important than the value of the initial transaction. Businesses of all sizes want to stand out from the competition and maximize the value of long-term customer relationships.

Customer Intimacy at OneTouchPoint

I had the opportunity to interview Chris Illman, President of OneTouchPoint (Oak Brook, IL). OneTouchPoint is a privately-held company with \$140 million in annual sales, 950+ employees, more than 1,000 clients, and additional facilities in Arizona, Colorado, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. According to Illman, OneTouchPoint realizes the value of forging strong customer relationships. He elaborates, “People are bombarded by choices that are not easily differentiated. Today’s buyers trust their own ideas and advice from friends more than they trust advertisements. We want to work with our client base to create strategies for long-term relationships. This means that every single touchpoint must matter, and this starts with customer intimacy.”

Illman describes customer intimacy as the combination of technology and data-driven insight to deliver relevant, personalized communications across all channels. Each and every touchpoint must be personalized. Illman continues, “The basis of building an intimate customer relationship is leveraging data to demonstrate that you really know your customers. We work directly with our customers to identify our campaign objectives. We then analyze the customer’s data so they can deliver intelligent, insightful communications.”

OneTouchPoint works with its customers to help transform the masses of data that today’s organizations have into insight. To really know customers, companies must be able to segment data and pinpoint the high-value customers that offer the best long-term potential for the organization. High-value clients must be cultivated and then nurtured. OneTouchPoint can augment existing data files while also providing data analytics support to interpret the differences between new, existing, and lost customers. The company analyzes sales of various different product lines to identify which products have traction with which specific customers. Finally, since all companies are seeking growth opportunities, OneTouchPoint will blend customer data with campaign data to model prospects and identify those with the highest propensity to accept an offer. Illman notes, “A focus on the customer is critical to our clients’ success, and it’s fundamental for all of our campaigns.”

For OneTouchPoint, execution becomes the focus once the campaign objectives and data are in place. Illman explains, “We help clients choose the right combination of tools to build their brand with a powerful, consistent message. It might be a targeted print campaign or an online push with mass appeal. The key is that we provide an integrated and focused execution for our customers’ branding and messaging strategies to help build those intimate relationships.”

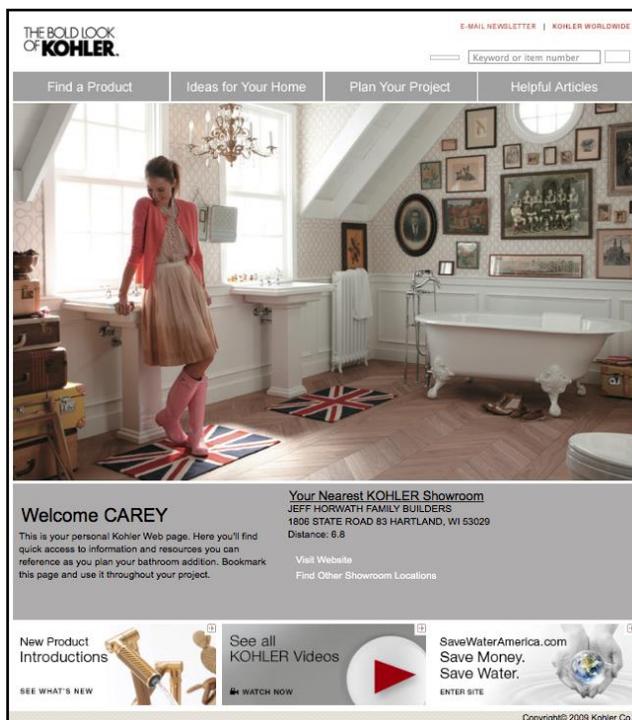
The ability to measure and analyze results is a critical component of every campaign. OneTouchPoint holds itself accountable for providing tangible results. The company provides detailed information on all facets of a campaign, and data that is gathered in one campaign can be used as vital input for the next major marketing initiative.

Driving Customer Intimacy for Kohler

Kohler Co. (Kohler, WI) offers a broad array of products and services, but the company is a recognized industry leader for providing a variety of kitchen and bath plumbing fixtures. As is the case for other firms, it is critical for Kohler to capture and nurture leads and transform them into loyal customers. Larry Neustel, Kohler's Manager of Advertising and Production, states, "We must find a way to quickly respond to the individuals that have requested information about our products and then turn these prospects into lead generation opportunities for our sales teams and distributors. With our old process, there were cases where we couldn't respond to the prospective buyer or get the lead to the sales team for up to four weeks."

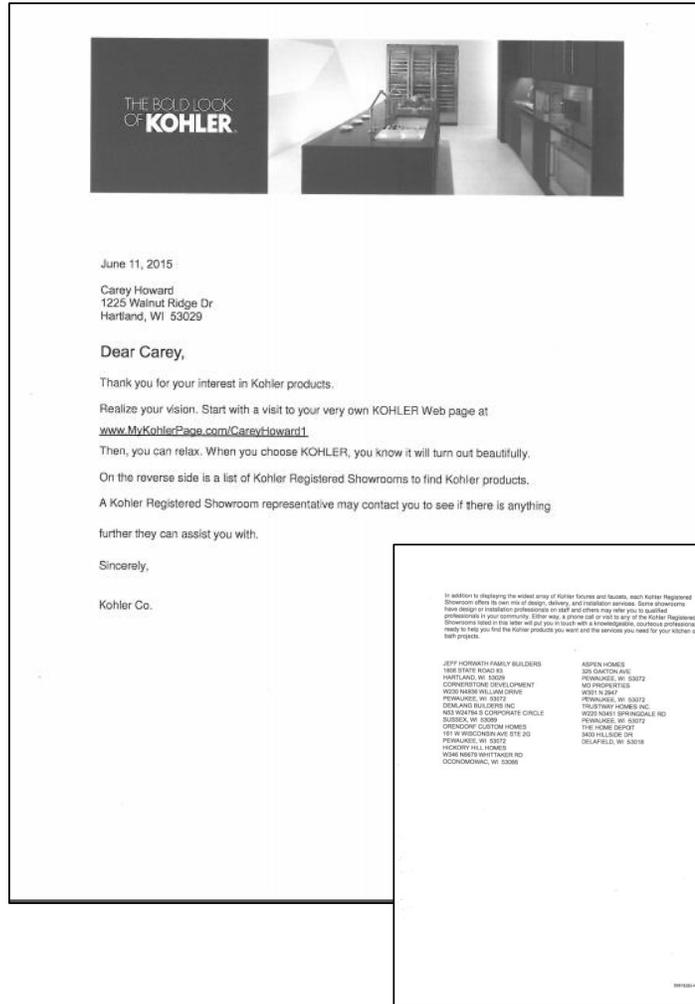
Survey data has shown that taking too much time to respond to leads or failing to respond at all can be quite costly. Long response times can drastically reduce the chance of success. Neustel recognized a need to capture the consumer's interest while they were still in a "buying" frame of mind. It was also essential to deliver a communication that was relevant to the recipient. To help accomplish this, Kohler partnered with OneTouchPoint to re-engineer the customer communications/sales lead process. When requests for literature came in through the website, from a call center, or via a business response card (BRC) from a magazine, OneTouchPoint responded in real time. If the prospective buyer provided an e-mail address, OneTouchPoint created a personalized URL with a custom landing page that directly correlated with the individual's area of interest. This custom landing page also highlighted the Kohler showrooms that were in closest proximity to the recipient.

Figure 1: Personalized URL from Kohler



For prospects that provided a physical address and requested literature via the mail, OneTouchPoint created a personalized letter. The company’s fulfillment operations were able to include appropriate materials in the mailing package that provided information on the closest Kohler showrooms and distributors. This was completed within 24 hours of the initial request, and all leads were electronically transferred to sales teams and distributors within 24 hours for follow-up.

Figure 2: Personalized Letter from Kohler



According to Neustel, “The value to Kohler of our partnership with OneTouchPoint was significant. We could communicate with customers via the right channel with information that was relevant to them in a very timely manner. The initial communication is the start of establishing intimate customer relationships. We moved leads to sales teams quickly and got great visibility into the products that generated the highest levels of interest.”

The Bottom Line

The partnership between OneTouchPoint and Kohler underscores the importance of understanding customer intimacy and building programs to deliver on the promise of continually enhanced customer relationships. It's important to let customers know that you understand their needs and are well-positioned to help them. To successfully implement true customer intimacy, service providers and their clients must collaborate to:

- Maintain an **integrated** view of the customer base.
- **Plan and target** communications **at the right time via customers' preferred channels**.
- **Align** marketing initiatives with **the customer lifecycle**.
- **Act on every response!** Trigger sales and account management automatically to act on tracked behaviors and responses.
- Continuously learn and **enrich customer personas** with tracked behaviors and responses.

Leveraging data, technology, and the right partners can develop a level of customer intimacy that leads to deeper, long-lasting customer relationships. This can result in better revenues, a higher lifetime customer value, lower customer acquisition costs via lower churn, and greater share of wallet. It's time to get intimate with your customers!

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About the Author



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A digital printing and publishing pioneer as well as a marketing expert, Barbara Pellow helps companies develop multi-media strategies. She assists companies in creating strategies to launch new products, building strategic marketing plans, and educating their sales force on delivering value.

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