Getting the message across to your target customers is key to business. However, finding the right audience isn't easy, especially on social media. It takes a lot of analysis which is why businesses struggle to see results, regardless of their powerful & creative content.

Does that sound like the problem you are facing? Then you are at the right place. In this blog, we will guide you on how you can find and target the right set of your audience on social media.

What is a target audience?

Why is it important to find your target audience?

How to identify your target audience?

1. Analyze your existing customer base
2. Market research
3. Monitor your competitors

What is Target Audience?

The Target Audience refers to the specific group of consumers who are most likely to be interested in engaging with your content or buying your product or availing your services.

Why is it important to find your target audience?

According to Statista.com, there are 5 billion internet users in the world and among which 4.65 billion are active social media users. But not everyone who is on the internet or using social media could be your target audience.

As the owner/marketer of a business, your time and money are extremely important. The cost of reaching an audience is an important consideration & your marketing effort will be wasted if you choose the wrong ones who will read your messages but ignore them as it's irrelevant.

For example, an industrial tyre manufacturer who is targeting his messages to urban youths who are no way inclined to consider the product.

How to identify your target audience?

Let's now look at a few ways to identify the target audience.

1. Analyze your existing customer base
2. Market research
3. Monitor your competitors

1.Analyze your existing customer base

To know who is currently engaging with your content or buying your products or availing your services you will have to analyze your existing customer base with various demographics, geographical, and other data points.

Here are a few data points you may want to consider:

a) Age, Location & Gender

Age data helps you understand which age group of your audience is purchasing your products or availing your services. Based on this you will be able to target a specific group of audience for your products and services.

Gender data helps you understand the gender segment of your audience for your product/service. Generally, men & women have different shopping wish lists & intents for buying the products. Considering this while targeting your messages will be appropriate.

Location data will help you understand which geographical area you should target to get more product purchases and brand visibility.

b) Language

This helps you understand which language your target audience speaks. Here don't assume that they follow the same language which you follow. Don't assume they speak the dominant language of where they are located.

For example – An author could target his book based on 'language' rather than the location where the language is spoken. This can cover a larger audience across a wider area who will be interested in that book.

c) Interests

You can target your audience based on hobbies, pass time, choice of entertainment etc. For eg, If you are a sports goods manufacturer like a cricket bat, you can target based on interests in sports or specifically cricket.

When it comes to Meta (Facebook & Instagram & Messenger) it gives you two different categories to find the interest of your targeted audiences and they are **Browsable interests** and **Searchable interests**.

Browsable Interest: In the browsable interest category you will be able to find a list of categories and subcategories with those subcategories still having more specific ones under them. By being more specific with your targeting options, you can reach out to more niche audiences, but too much specificity might result in a smaller audience.

The main Facebook browsable interest categories are:

Business and industry

Shopping and fashion

Entertainment

Technology

Family and relationships

Fitness and wellness

Food and drink

Searchable Interest: For the purpose of finding the right interest for targeting the appropriate Meta users, you can type in a specific keyword when searching for an interest. You might not find the exact interest you're looking for if you target a very niche audience. The more specific your query, the more specific Meta's interest suggestions will become.

The number of interests available for targeting is endless, but a comprehensive interest targeting research will help you narrow your targeted audience down to the most relevant ones.

Remember, there is a limit of 25 suggestions when you look for a specific interest to target. Be more specific with your query if you cannot find the exact interest you are looking for.

d) Behaviours

Social media platforms are effective in tracking the behaviour of individuals like travel patterns, digital activities like downloads, mobile app usage, those who do online courses etc. If your product & services are particularly suited for a behaviour, targeting customers based on that will be a workable one. For example, if you are a travel agency, you can target your ads effectively to frequent travelers.

e) Spending power and patterns

You can group your audience based on their spending power & pattern. Consumer spending power is the amount of money they spend on goods and services. A consumer's buying pattern refers to the why and how behind their purchase decisions. Consumers establish habits and routines based on the products and services they buy which can be used for effective targeting. They include frequency, timing, quantity, etc.

f) Stage of life/Relationship status

Are college students among your target audience? Are recently married couples among your target audience? Are families with teens among your target audience? Are senior citizens among your target audience? You can use this to understand your audience's stage of life.

Companies targeting B2B should also consider:

g) Size of business & Industry

This helps you to understand, which types of businesses you sell to and engage with and whether they are start-ups or enterprise-level brands so based on this you can make marketing decisions.

h) Who are the decision-makers

In order to sell your product and services in the B2B market whom you should target? The company's CEO? or the HR manager? or the Admin manager? or the CMO?

2.Market research

Doing market research can provide a wealth of information to understand your targeted market and its trends. The insights can help you decide whom to target and whom not to target.
There are two types of market research

 Primary market research and
 Secondary market research

Primary Market Research

Primary market research is conducted by a company or an individual on behalf of the company to gather the targeted or potential customer's information like age, employment, gender, location, hobbies, income, education level, who they trust, what they read/watch, what they consume, etc so based which they could take important business decisions.
Here the company or the individual who is assigned or hired to gather information on the company's behalf reaches out to the targeted customer or potential customer directly to gather the required information.
For example, taking a customer's, potential customer's interview either through telephone or by having face to face meetings. and other examples of primary market research are conducting online Surveys, Questionnaires, Focus groups, Visits to competitors' locations, etc.
Conducting primary market research could be more expensive and time-consuming than secondary market research, but it provides more conclusive results than secondary market research.

Secondary Market Research

Secondary market research is different from primary market research because here the data which we may require for the research has already been collected, organised and published by someone else which we can use for our reference.
Secondary market research is done when companies/businesses have less budget and less time for conducting market research to gather certain information related to customers/ potential customers to make important business decisions.
For example, If you are doing market research on buying behaviour of the Indian audience then you don't have to conduct any PAN India survey here, you just have to Google the topic using certain keywords and you will get n number of articles/blog on the same topic which you can use it for your reference but make sure the article/blog that you are referring to is up to date. Other examples of secondary market research are reading recent industry publications, journals, and magazines, visiting libraries, etc.

3.Monitor your competitors

Many of your competitors' goals and target audiences overlap with your own, which makes it possible that you and your competitor have many of the same objectives. So it's always advisable to monitor your

competitors' social media handles to know what difference they are making to achieve their specific goals and what mistakes you are making and failing to do so.

For example – Who engages with their posts? How are they attracting a specific audience with certain keywords? Who else are they following? How often do they publish their content? What kind of content do they publish? These questions can provide valuable insight into your competitors' target audiences, which can help you decide whether you should target those same people as well or not.

Now that you know who your target audience is, Identify where your target audience spends most of their time.

Conclusion

Targeting is an important strategic skill in digital marketing effort. The more focussed the targeting is, the more relevant & appropriate the message becomes. This elicits the right response like download, purchase, subscribe etc ensuring higher ROI for your digital marketing budget. If you are looking at advice / support on improving your targeting to yield higher ROI, reach out to your experts.