

Chief Marketer Consumer Special Report

Keeping Pace with the Consumer's Journey

Connecting with customers in multiple ways on the path to purchase

Marketing today is a shell game. Consumers have access to a dizzying number of channels, and marketers need to be under every cup to connect with potential buyers at the right time.

The customer journey “is very convoluted,” says Missi Tate, senior brand manager, Delta Faucet. “In our industry it’s either a really short journey or a really long journey, and either way there are so many different touchpoints.”

Therein lies the challenge for marketers. Which touchpoint offers the biggest bang for the buck? Does it make sense to use already stretched budget dollars to try something new that may—or may not—work?

Let’s take a look at how three major brands—Delta Faucet, Plum Organics and Coca-Cola— injected one unusual pathway along the multiple roads they rely on to connect with consumers in an unexpected way.

A DASH TO THE SHOWER

For Delta Faucet, one of those unconventional places is one of the messiest events around, the 5K Warrior Dash mud run. Delta is partnering with five of the events this summer where hundreds of people stomp, jump, slide, slip and thrash their way through the track. At the finish line, each and every muddy runner is greeted with the opportunity to take a shower, courtesy of Delta Faucet.

“Rather than them using a pond or hose to clean off, we said let’s provide them with a shower station and be part of the Warrior Dash,” Tate says. “It’s a great fit from that perspective, but also that’s the demo-



The lines were long to shower off in the Delta Faucet shower station.

graphic that we go after—ages 25 to 54 both male and female. Warrior dash really fits in that sweet spot.”

For the Warrior Dash last month in Crawfordville, TX, sports marketing firm rEvolution built a massive high-end shower station with wooden decks where Delta could show off its 164 Delta H2Okinetic showerheads that use up to 40% less water than a standard showerhead.

To make the Delta event even more exciting and to tap into runners’ deep-seated competitive drive, the call went out to set a Guinness World Record title for the most people showering simultaneously at a single venue. Some 331 people took advantage of showering off, breaking the old Guinness record of 300.

While Delta Faucet had plenty of branding around the showers, it wanted to move the mud runners far-

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Some 331 people took advantage of showering off, breaking the old Guinness record of 300. Olympic Gold Medalist, Summer Sanders (left), was one of them.

ther along the customer journey toward purchase. Knowing that the runners wouldn't be able to carry cellphones through the mud, a photo booth was set up at the end. There, consumer information was captured to email the photos. Runners were also asked to opt-in to receive additional information from Delta Faucet.

"We usually get about 10% to 15% opt-ins, but we were well above the 50% range," Tate says. "That gave us a data point to be able to contact those people again and we offered them a rebate."

So how do the Warrior Dash events fit the brands multiple pathways to purchase strategy?



Delta Faucet added branding to its shower installation.

"It was just a different experiential way to get after a group of consumers," Tate says. "As we know, not all those consumers are going to touch us in all those different points, so we try to think outside of the box. It comes back to being where that consumer is."

Dozens of Warrior Dash events take place each year. rEvolution and Delta Faucet will have a smaller footprint of 40 shower heads at their last two events this summer in New Jersey and Colorado. Warrior Dash events help raise money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

"It's all about experiencing our products and for our industry that's really tough," she says. "Showrooms will have working units, but it was another way to get people to experience our products. It's about how to get it in their hands. If they loved what they had there hopefully we'll see more people purchasing our products."

In addition to this experience, every campaign Delta launches still relies on TV, print, social, in-store, events, online and through influencers to ensure it is catching the consumer wherever they may be.

"It is an in and out path and we see people doing a ton of research," Tate says. "Our goal is to be in all those different touch points so we can be there when the consumer is because everybody's path seems to be different. We always launch with a 360-degree campaign to make sure we're in all those places but we know that's not how our customer is shopping."

THE HUMAN FACTOR

Universal truths. Human truths. Whatever you want to call them, it's a marketing strategy that is really taking hold with consumers, capturing their attention and moving them closer to a purchase as they stand at shelf deciding which brand to buy.

"AS WE LOOKED AT THE MARKETING LANDSCAPE WE SAW JUST HOW DISCONNECTED THE IMAGES AND MESSAGES WERE FROM REALITY IN THE BABY PRODUCTS INDUSTRY.

—BEN MAND, PLUM, PBC

For example, Pampers new video, "Hush Little Baby," was viewed more than 6 million times in the two weeks after it launched. It shows a variety of relatable scenarios around babies. The mom singing "Hush Little Baby." The Dad taking the late shift. The uncle that's going to quit smoking so he can be around to see

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THE JOURNEY WITH MOBILE CONTENT

Traditional forms of digital advertising like banners exist to capture attention and/or sell a featured product with the hopes that it will “stick,” whereas mobile content marketing’s emphasis is on consumer engagement and creating the ultimate consumer journey.

While the goal is to get the consumers to buy a product or become a regular shopper of a particular brand—the way in which this is fostered is in a different manner than that of current advertising practices. Instead of showing a consumer a seemingly relevant ad on, for example, a pair of running shoes simply because the consumer visited a running app in the last 30 to 90 days, content marketing technologies utilize historical data and digital preferences on an ongoing basis to deploy highly targeted, informed communications.

Those communications are not ads, but content marketing experiences. For example, while in a running shoes branded app the consumer views the shoes and also receives updates from a popular running shoes enthusiast blog that highlights the features of the brand’s sneakers and a video clip from a recent race in the consumer’s geography that shows the winner crossing the finish line wearing the featured running shoes.

The goal: create brand loyalty with consumers so that they prefer to spend time perusing their favored brand’s app. As a result, by presenting products in the right context, mobile content marketing can increase sales by creating an enticing customer journey. —Marla Schimke, vice president of marketing, Zumobi

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the child grow. The little girl not happy at all about having to share her toy with the new baby. In it’s messaging, Wells Fargo used the scenario of a young Hispanic girl coming home with her first paycheck and sharing that excitement with her multi-generational family, among other universal truths.

For another company, Plum Organics, the country’s top organic baby food brand, keeping in touch with parents on a very personal human level along their purchase journey is its marketing mission.

The brand’s first national advertising campaign, “Parenting Unfiltered” is a call to action through print, video, significant social media and influencers for parents to share their experiences as parents—not just the happy, shiny moments, but the meltdowns, the fights over tablet use and pumping breast milk at work.

“As we looked at the marketing landscape we saw just how disconnected the images and messages were from reality in the baby products industry,” says Ben Mand, senior vice president of brand marketing and innovation, Plum, PBC. “We want parents to recognize that you can have an open con-



A print ad supporting the #ParentingUnfiltered campaign

versation about that other 99%. It’s real and if you’re doing your best and you love your little one, you’ve got it. That’s how we arrived at how to resonate with our consumers.”

With help from lead agency LeadDog Marketing Group, the idea is to get all shapes and sizes of parents to be vulnerable, to post outtakes instead of that perfect family shot, which all parents know is a fleeting moment in time. Parents are encouraged to share challenges they face and it’s working. The hash tag #ParentingUnfiltered has seen nearly 2,000 submissions and counting since the April launch.

Tumblr is the hub for Parenting Unfiltered. It’s where the launch video debuted April 30—also on Facebook and YouTube. It shows images all parents can relate to: a new mom back at work using a breast pump at her desk, a baby crying in the night and a mom hiding in the bathroom reading a book. It drew more than 1 million views in the first 48 hours and is now close to 4 million.

“The bulk of all those views are organic,” Mand says.

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5 TIPS TO MAXIMIZE MEDIA SPEND

In an age of immediate access and increasingly complex buying processes, brands are pushed to find new and creative ways to effectively get in front of consumers.

However, the crucial mistake many marketers make is in optimizing the initial message, but not managing the end-to-end customer experience throughout the buying process. Media dollars are spent filling the top of the funnel, but holes in the funnel are letting transactions slip away. The good news is that by managing the consumer experience through testing and conversion optimization, marketers can achieve more with the money spent on media, and seal up these undesirable holes.

Here are five tips on how to maximize your media spending:

1. **Segmentation & Targeting.** The success of any campaign is entirely dictated by the ability to get in front of the right user at the right time with the right message. To capitalize on your media spend, it is critical that media-centered conversion optimization efforts account for where the user is in the customer journey. The goal is to address these users appropriately via capabilities such as retargeting and geolocation, and then direct them to content tailored specifically for the purpose of moving them further down the path.
2. **Message & Theme Continuity.** With media campaigns set up to segment and expose targeted messaging to users, it's important to maintain the theme of the creative used in the ad throughout the customer journey. Essentially, the user has already "voted" for the theme with a click—they're ready to see more! Complementary website creative and messaging that carries the same theme as the ad creative can pay large dividends and make every media dollar go exponentially further. Leverage testing and behavior-targeting tools to ensure that these hand-raisers are best served once they arrive at your site.
3. **Planning & Prioritizing.** Often the most obvious test areas are those on homepages or further down the funnel on lead forms, these are the easiest sell to stakeholders and the simplest option for determining a winner. However,

effective media and conversion rate optimization programs are about filling the funnel and getting users to take the next step, whatever that may be. In media planning, the biggest wins can be found by prioritizing landing-page tests that get users to explore more. For just a fraction of the dollars that might be needed to acquire users through direct-response campaigns, companies can optimize the landing pages—the first impression for users—and maximize every dollar.

4. **Defining Success & Learning from Failure.** Every test executed in a conversion optimization program should have a success metric stated clearly before the test has begun. Not every test is about generating a lead or sale, however; some, as discussed earlier, are about getting users to take the next action down the desired path. On media landing pages, successful actions might simply be non-bounce behaviors (more than onepage view), or users clicking to learn more about your company. Knowing and communicating the primary goals before the test will help greatly in managing expectations. Further, while tests might have primary goals/success metrics, deliberately selecting variations and therefore establishing anticipated learnings from the test are key. Understanding why a test variation did not win (and what that means) is nearly as valuable as having found a winning variation. In all of these learnings and "failed" tests, you gain knowledge about how to build your messaging and experience.
5. **Collaborating on Ideas, Big & Small.** Although it is important that conversion optimization programs incorporate web experience expertise into developing tests and variations, this does not mean that all ideas need to arise from one team. The best ideas come from evaluating the shared learning and perspective of other stakeholders, from incorporating data gathered through clickstream data (analytics), and from qualitative data gathered by surveys or other means. Encouraging thoughts and feedback from multiple groups not only brings out the best ideas, but also gives others a sense of ownership in what you're testing. —Andy Batten is the Director of Digital Analytics & Optimization at Red Door.

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ParentingUnfiltered.com is an aggregator of influencers, video, comments, long- and short-form content and other information for parents. One section, #UnFilteredFriday pulls together a roundup of some of the team's favorite unfiltered parenting stories from around the web that week. There's a place to ask and share questions and badges can be earned and shared like the "Geometry Badge," earned for arranging seven food groups into an eight-by-six lunch box (with two napkins and a water bottle!).

"The parent badges recognize some of the little things that go on that might not seem like a big win, but for parents it's a major win," Mand says.

Plum Organic's team hand picked seven influencer parenting sites that would represent both moms and dads equally. They include Doyin, Daddy Doin

Work; Jill, Scary Mommy; John, Ask Your Dad and Kristen, Rage Against the Minivan.

The brand strategy is about engagement and conversation to ease parents into a purchase.

"There is a moment when mom is searching online about food or when she begins to start breast feeding. At that moment we need to use conversion tactics like coupons, but sales are only part of the equation," Mand says. "We want to be part of the conversation and not always in sales mode. We recognize we need to show up under their terms, when they need us so someday when they are at the store shelf we are in that consideration when they are thinking about their purchase decision."

Plum brought in LeadDog last summer. The teams worked together to reconnect the sole of the brand to what the brand was about. It was founded by a

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SAMPLING ESSENTIALS

The concept of product sampling seems incredibly simple: you give consumers a little piece of your product with the hopes of a favorable experience, a purchase and ideally, loyalty to your brand. Sampling can be an extremely effective strategy when executed properly, but distributing samples at random can result in wasted time, resources and money.

These five strategies will help you create a successful product sampling strategy and avoid wasting time.

1. **The Target Market.** Picking a target demographic is the first step. Asking yourself who you want to distribute your samples to is crucial in developing your brand. Decide why you're sampling to this group. Who do you visualize using, enjoying and benefitting from your brand? Whether you're sending out a baby product or an energy drink, knowing who will care is step one. By identifying this group early on in the process, you also have a better chance of reaching others in your target demo through recommendations. A Nielsen report found that 70% of consumers said that recommendations are the number one factor influencing purchasing decisions.
2. **The Medium.** The next step is discovering how to spread the word to your target demographic. You've identified your key group but how do you reach them? Say goodbye to only handing out product in-person or at events. They could be stay-at-home moms who read parenting blogs or possibly, college students who follow the same "Insta-famous" celebrity. Discovering where they are, what they watch and who they listen to is imperative in getting your samples in the right hands. Utilizing online platforms and social media is an out-of-the-box way to get actual

results from sample requests and increase sharing among friends.

3. **A Call To Action.** Every strategy needs a call to action. Why are you sampling? Are you gathering feedback, boosting a social media following or increasing purchase? What is your target demographic being redirected to do? Asking yourself these questions will help you collect the data you need to further develop your brand and maximize ROI. With social sampling, you only need to ask a consumer for minimal information that he or she is likely already used to providing online, like an email address.
4. **Key Performance Indicators.** Identifying your key performance indicators is essential to your plan for success. How will you deem your campaign successful? Determine key performance indicators that provide a high amount of insight and have a short and long-term impact. Learning the industry standards and setting clear goals that reflect various areas of your brand will help you properly execute your strategy and determine what works versus what doesn't.
5. **The Re-Marketing plan.** Now that you've got their attention, what are you going to do to drive that consumer to purchase? This is why it's important to collect consumer information when sending out free samples. Following up with a coupon, a newsletter or exclusive sweepstakes are just a few of the ways to keep the consumer engaged. Making sure consumers are aware of your brand is important and can be the final push for a product purchase—meaning, all of your hard work has paid off. —Marie Chevrier, CEO/founder, Sampler

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group of parents trying to solve problems. Through research the team discovered a number of insights including that parents want to tell the truth about their parenting.

"What we had hoped would happen is happening," says Lisa Hyman, partner and senior vice president of strategy and insights at LeadDog Marketing Group. "When brands are authentic, when consumers participate in the conversation the brand is starting, our hope is that we don't have to talk much about Plum that people will engage with the brand."

The idea is to create a halo effect of the brand. That Plum is standing for something, she says.

"We look at this campaign as not just one moment in time, it is our platform going forward," Mand says. "This is a much more cognizant effort to walk this walk and bring this to life going forward."

While Plum Organics has a strong focus on social media, in general, the two-way conversations on social are an important pathway as consumers have now come to expect that brands are not only listening, but responding to their individual social interactions when appropriate. When it comes to Twitter, the majority, 68% of consumers expect brands to

respond to tweets directed at the brand and one in three expect a response within 24 hours, according to kitewheel.

In addition, nearly 60% of consumers now indicate that they use social media to make comments about brand experiences. Some 65% of consumers believe that the most engaging social efforts must focus on individuals, not audiences, the kitewheel report found.

CAPPING HAPPINESS

As for Coca-Cola, its "Choose Happiness" campaign is already ubiquitous. It's on TV, playing out across social at sampling events, on billboards and any other place you can think of that can carry a marketing message. The brand evolves as its markets do. It innovates marketing at every turn, stays ahead of the curve and is unabashedly bold in attempting new marketing efforts.

One of its most recent endeavors is going on now in London. It has launched new Coca-Cola "Happiness Meters" at 300 digital billboards across the city. The meters shows the level of London's happiness by

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measuring the number of positive or negative mood words used on Twitter, as well as all the mentions of its hashtag #ChooseHappiness.

Riders in the London Underground and in rail stations see the meter, as do drivers at iconic roadside sites. The meters will be measuring happiness every week for the rest of the year and will also keep viewers apprised of sampling events and large-scale experiences. For example, Coca-Cola partnered with Capital FM radio to promote #ChooseHappiness and is giving away prizes to "happy" callers every Monday. Samples will be given out in Coca-Cola branded taxis and at major transport hubs this summer. People enjoying lunch in the city's parks may be surprised by the delivery of Coca-Cola branded cooler bags and Frisbees.



The Coca-Cola Happiness Meter add appears on billboards across London.



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THE MILLENNIAL CUSTOMER

For many brands, there's a big focus on reaching the Millennial consumer—anywhere along their path-to-purchase. Here's how a recent report from redpepper summed them up:

"I live in a very connected world. I'm hyper-aware of and concerned with the state of the world, more skeptical of brand marketing than the generations before me, and I celebrate authenticity and personalization. I'm very loyal to transparent companies, especially those who share my desire to better the world."



The report also found about Millennials:

- Most educated generation yet—61% have attended college compared to 46% of Baby Boomers.
- \$2.45 trillion purchasing power by 2015
- 63% will purchase non-favorite brands on sale
- 60% are often or always loyal to brand they currently purchase
- 61% are worried about the state of the world and feel personally responsible to make a difference
- 90% will switch from one brand to another if the second supports a cause
- 45% spend over one hour per day shopping online
- This group values real peoples' opinions over brand marketing

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