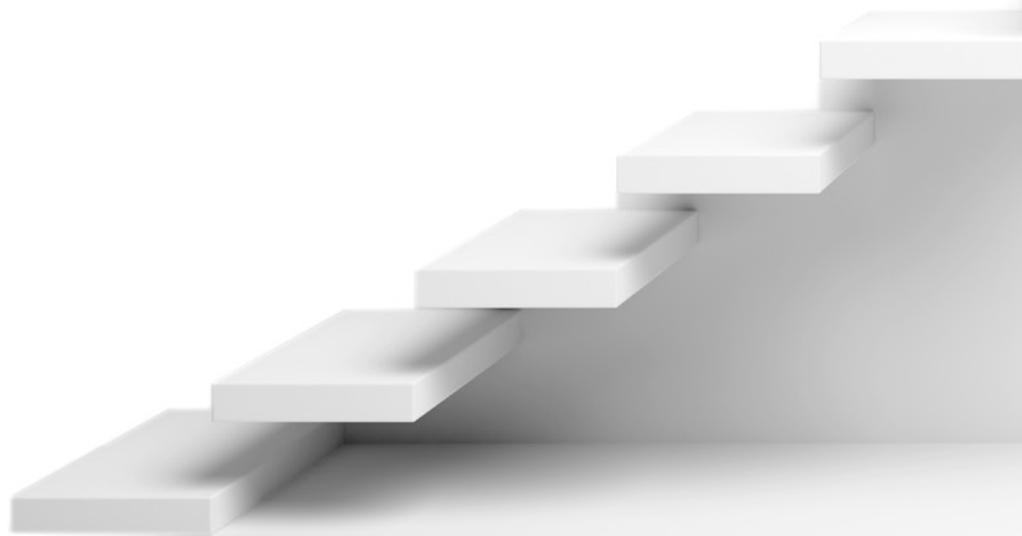# 5 STEPS TO MAKING AUDIENCE DATA CENTRAL TO YOUR DIGITAL STRATEGY

It seems like a no-brainer to plan campaign messaging and creative around the audiences the product or service will be most relevant to; however, most marketers still plan their campaigns around the media platform they'll be executed on. Making data central to your digital strategy can sound overwhelming considering all of the disparate channels and technologies generating data from marketing activities. It doesn't have to be; putting data at the center of your digital strategy simply means planning your campaigns with an 'audience-first' approach with data at its core.

Centralized audience planning boosts campaign effectiveness by utilizing data to increase reach, reducing media waste by suppressing irrelevant audiences, and enabling advertisers to deliver customized messaging based on where audiences are in the buyer's journey. While these benefits are obvious to data-driven marketers, many advertisers still face challenges building a marketing organization that champions this strategy.

Data adds meaningful dimension to what you may already know about your customer. Use this to scale and develop your communication strategy with them.
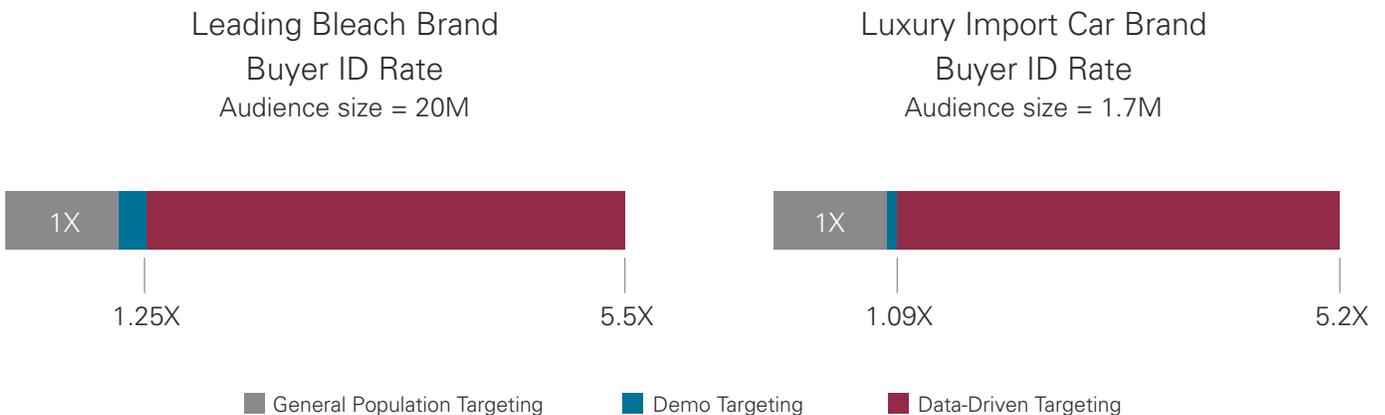
STEP 1:

ASSESS WHERE YOU ARE TODAY

There is a spectrum of maturity in advertisers who use data-driven strategies and, specifically, an audience-first approach—also known as centralized audience planning. For example, a beginner may just be getting started using 3rd party data tactically on a campaign-by-campaign basis and focusing on cost-per-acquisition metrics. A more mature organization could use its 1st party data assets and combine them with 3rd party data to suppress recent buyers or create look-alike audiences based on existing customer profiles. Lastly, an advanced organization may use an always-on audience approach where its entire marketing funnel is powered by data at all times, measuring campaign effectiveness in-flight and optimizing their campaigns in real time.

You've already taken your first step on the journey to becoming audience first just by taking the quiz, but, it's essential to have organizational buy-in.

Audience-first campaign strategies start by building an organization that leverages data in every stage of the consumer buying journey. At the core is understanding the differences between your current customers and your prospects, knowing things like how frequently they buy, what their brand affinities are, and how they shop. This will help you define audiences that matter most to your brand.

These audiences should then become the beating heart of your marketing initiatives, meaning that your strategies for TV, social, digital, programmatic, email, etc., are all driven from the same audience data.

DATA-DRIVEN AUDIENCES FIND MORE POTENTIAL BUYERS

Leading Bleach Brand Buyer ID Rate Audience size = 20M	Luxury Import Car Brand Buyer ID Rate Audience size = 1.7M

1X — 1.25X — 5.5X

1X — 1.09X — 5.2X

■ General Population Targeting   ■ Demo Targeting   ■ Data-Driven Targeting

WHERE DO YOU STACK UP?

LEVEL 3

LEVEL 2

LEVEL 1

DECENTRALIZED

Just beginning your centralization journey? You may be tactically using 3rd party data at this stage along with pre-built audiences as part of that strategy. Those a little further along the path may incorporate custom-built audiences and use 1st party website data.

CENTRALIZED COMPETENT

If you are centralized competent, you use your 1st party site and/or on-boarded CRM data in combination with 3rd party audience data. You may be using a private taxonomy for your audiences and deploying them across multiple platforms.

CENTRALIZED AUDIENCE EXPERT

As a centralized audience expert, you are deeply engaged in a centralized audience-planning strategy. You've defined your core audiences by utilizing 1st and 3rd party data and deploying them across all channels that make up your marketing strategy as a whole. Also, you likely invested in advanced measurement solutions and established key metrics like sales lift and causal ROI—meaning you can directly tie online behavioral actions to actual sales.

1

2

3

STEP 2:

ALIGN YOUR PARTNERS WITH YOUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Step 2 is the most important step. It's imperative that your whole team—both internal and external—is aligned not only with your campaign goals and objectives, but with your marketing objectives entirely. From your agency and your media partners to data providers and more, consider all of your support organizations as trusted advisors. Their motivation for strategic decision making both technological and otherwise should be your success, which isn't always the case.

It's often beneficial for all parties to have a seat at the table from the start. Make sure your team is there when you begin planning which audiences you want to reach, through to when you read out the results of your campaign. You should all be aligned on:

- The audiences you create at the core of your campaign
- The audience size you should target
- Which creative and media placements to activate
- Which KPIs to measure

EXAMPLE AUDIENCE PLAN

Target Audience: Natural/Organic Buyers who are growing or stable

Objective: Increase natural and organic breadth of categories shopped

Strategy: Deliver relevant content — education, new item introduction, regarding natural and organic products

Campaign Tactics: Always-on social platform strategy, leverage circular content

KPI: Incremental sales, increased natural and organic conversion

RECOMMENDED AUDIENCES

1.

Core Natural/Organic Buyers
Identify core shoppers of natural/organic categories

2.

Growing/Stable
Focus on those whose segment migration is Growing/Stable

3.

Natural/Organic Buyers (3P)
Add those who purchased organic products across CPG and Retail

4.

**Proximity**
Find shoppers close to your stores

LET YOUR CAMPAIGNS TAKE FLIGHT

These next steps discuss how to tactically deploy your audience-first, data-driven approach.

STEP 3:

COORDINATE YOUR DATA ACROSS CAMPAIGNS, PLATFORMS, AND OBJECTIVES

Combining your 1st and 3rd party data and activating those audiences across campaigns, platforms, and objectives will enable you to increase reach and campaign effectiveness by reducing waste. First, you can eliminate non-buyers and duplication across campaigns. Leveraging custom audiences lets you customize messaging based on where consumers are in the buying journey, as well as the media your campaign runs on.

AUDIENCE 1   AUDIENCE 2

CAMPAIGN

SNAPCHAT   FACEBOOK   PAID ADS

ORACLE
Data Cloud
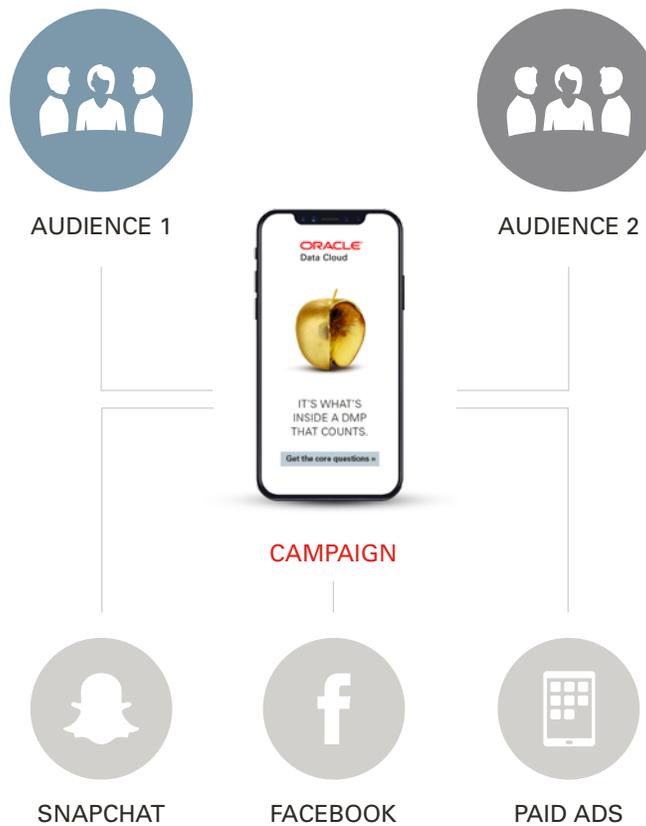
STEP 4:

INTEGRATE ACROSS 1ST AND 3RD PARTY SOURCES WITH BOTH OFFLINE AND ONLINE DATA

This is the next level of audience planning and enables you to apply customized treatment to your audiences because it incorporates offline data. It may include onboarded purchase data to let you deliver true, consistent cross-platform messaging. This piece of the strategy is extremely successful for driving customer retention and loyalty because it allows you to communicate on a deeper level with your customer. For example, if you know a consumer visited your site multiple times, but never purchased, you're now enabled to serve them messaging to incent them to click the purchase button.

"

We're moving from broad and generic demographic targets like 'women ages 18-49,' to 'smart audiences' with precision and scale—like 'first time moms,' 'new homeowners,' 'first time washing machine owners,' or 'light TV watchers' enriched with data to know we're reaching the people we want, with the highest probability of buying. This helps brands precisely reach more than 90% of their 'smart audiences'—way up from a few years ago. It's helping brands dramatically increase media reach without the waste and with greater impact."*

– Marc Pritchard, CMO, Procter & Gamble   *P&G*

*Source: 2018 ANA Digital & Social Media Conference

STEP 5:

MEASURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR CAMPAIGNS

Measuring campaign effectiveness helps marketers drive stronger campaign results through a test and learn approach. If you are finding ineffective consumer groups, you can eliminate them from future campaigns. Advanced marketers at this level of capability can measure online KPIs and offline sales.

Because your creative and media teams are working together (see Step 2), your results (especially if you are seeing them inflight) will help creatives and planners better understand what will motivate each target audience in the future. This allows them to build concepts based on those motivations, enabling them to return and refine their work.

SUMMARY

No matter where you are in your journey to becoming a centralized audience planning expert, the bottom line is using data cannot be linear. It needs to be part of your marketing organization's process from start to finish. With your audience at the core of your marketing initiatives, your brand will deliver a better consumer experience by delivering the right message, to the right shopper at the right point on their purchase path. As marketers, we're constantly being asked to do more with less, and the benefits of audience-first strategy can turn marketing from a cost center to a revenue driver.

THE DATA HOTLINE — **oracle.com/thedatahotline** I Turn big ideas into great campaigns

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