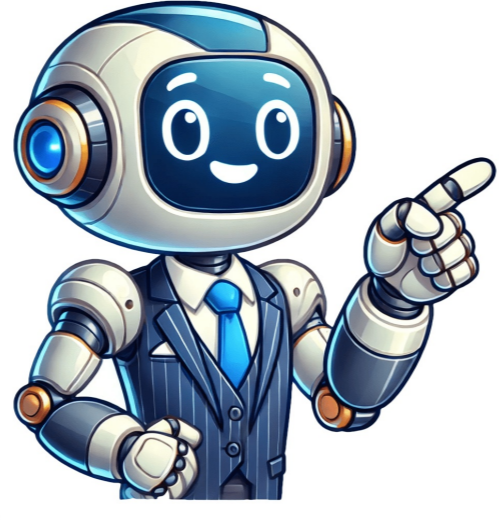


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wristwatches might appeal to a married 45-year-old man with a masters degree and a neatly-trimmed beard who works as an investment banker, drives a Mercedes convertible, collects classical music, and takes golfing vacations in Europe in his spare time. Though considered acceptable, advertising campaigns targeting general audiences are less likely to succeed because of the difficulty in getting the message about the product across to a broader spectrum of the population. For instance, specifying all people ages 20 to 45 who have jobs, own a car or truck, and like sports requires communicating with far too many people. As a result, advertising campaigns to general audiences often suffer from becoming too generic in their tone. Advertising campaigns that try to reach a target audience of everyone are rare and doomed to fail. Still, companies occasionally try to reach almost everyone by targeting primary and secondary audiences. For example, an actual ill-fated advertising campaign for a major frozen food chain targeted a primary audience of men and women ages 18 to 49 with low to middle incomes who buy groceries, along with a secondary audience of anyone ages 8 to 80 of any income level who shop in grocery stores. The most successful campaigns are those that have identified every possible demographic detail about their potential customers. Trying to reach a too wide or generic audience is usually a fatal error. Misinterpreting demographics can also lead to failure. For example, Procter & Gamble initially failed to sell its Swiffer line of floor mops in Italy because its advertising targeted women who wanted convenient cleaning products. When P&G figured out that Italians wanted cleaning power, it modified its advertising, thus making the Swiffer a huge success. With enough demographic data in hand, advertising firms employ several types of research methodologies in determining the ideal target audience. Here are a few. Usually conducted through conventional or online surveys, pre-campaign research is used to uncover different sometimes unexpected potential customer groups. Now easily set up and conducted using internet services like Survey Monkey, online surveys have become one of the most commonly used tools of market research. By allowing advertisers to determine the preferences of potentially millions of consumers without the need for in-person contact, surveys are a very cost-effective method of market research. A key part of pre-market product appeal research, focus groups are small but demographically diverse groups of consumers assembled to discuss a particular product before it is launched. By allowing the participants to physically handle and use the new products and offer their feedback about them, focus groups are often combined with demographics in designing advertising campaigns. However, while focus groups can help determine how products might be improved, they can also be harmful to the advertising campaign. They may include too small a segment of the chosen demographic group to get an adequate response, and they may be swayed by the group's moderator or by an overly aggressive group member. Despite its unchallenged power as an advertising tool, demographics alone has its limitations. While demographics expose who is likely to buy a product, it does not explain why certain consumers prefer one product over others. To understand what subtle internal, rather than obvious external factors like age and gender, motivate consumers, advertisers often combine demographic research with psychographic research to produce sensory marketing campaigns. Psychographic research strives to reveal what beliefs, feelings, thoughts, biases, and other psychological factors motivate consumers. For example, the Pepsi-Cola Company was experiencing slow sales of its newly acquired Mountain Dew brand soda because people viewed it as a product consumed mainly by low-income individuals living in the rural South. In simple terms, Mountain Dew was not considered hip, a psychological factor not taken into account by traditional demographics. In response, PepsiCo launched a new Mountain Dew advertising campaign targeting people ages 18 to 24 in urban areas. Ads featuring skateboarding star Paul Rodriguez and hip-hop artist Lil Wayne aired in major cities nationwide, implying that popular young athletes and musicians preferred Mountain Dew. With its new rock star image, sales of Mountain Dew soon increased. Demographics. AdAge, September 15, 2003, Targeting. Know Online Advertising, George. Demographics in Advertising Strategies. AZcentral, Alisa. How to Use Psychographics in Your Marketing: A Beginner's Guide. HubSpot, br-

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