

4 Keys to Understanding Context Marketing



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Context Marketing

('kän- ,tekst 'mär-kə-tiŋ), n.

Marketing plans and processes that take into consideration the context in which the target consumer will view and interpret the marketing message.



The digital era of marketing is here. In fact, it's been here so long we're seeing a new phase in how it's conducted. People, *prospects*, are ingesting information from so many sources on so many different screens now – sometimes two screens at a time (i.e. smartphone and computer).

A [study conducted by Google](#) this year found that **90% of people use two different devices sequentially in order to accomplish a task over time**, such as researching and shopping for a vehicle. They might start the task on their computer, but then go mobile and complete it on their smartphone. All the while, their attention is divided between the task and any number of other things going on around them—incoming text messages, emails and tweets, participating in other conversations, watching TV, the list goes on.

How's a marketer to cope? The best way to begin wrapping one's brain around it all is to understand four important pieces of marketing context:

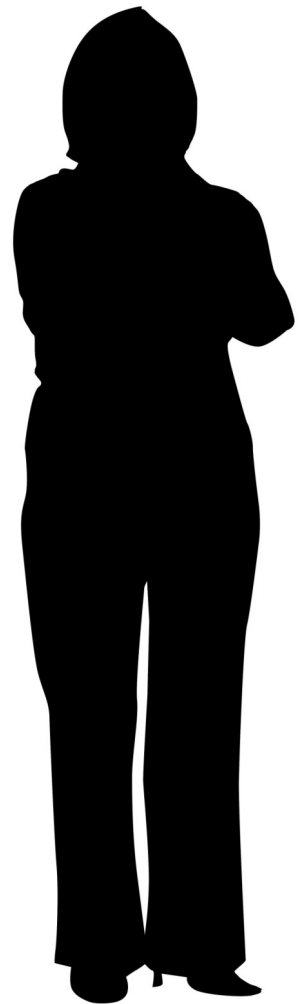
- . **Persona**
- . **Tone**
- . **Channel**
- . **Timing**

Persona

The building blocks of context marketing start with understanding your target consumer's "persona". A persona is a fictional character that encompasses the qualities and quirks that your targeted customer likely has. For example:

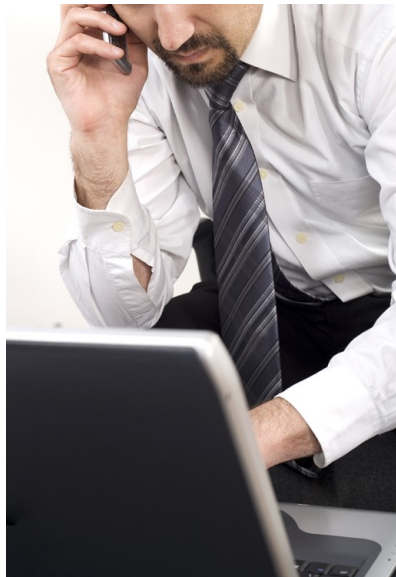
- 30-40 year old female
- Single
- Urban-dweller
- Uses public transportation
- Goes out on the weekends in mixed groups
- Interested in arts & culture

Once you've determined your customer's persona, you'll have a better idea of how, where, when, and why a customer accesses information related to your product or service. Then you will be able to address the next three pieces of the context marketing puzzle - **channel, tone and timing.**



Channel

Which communication medium or combination of mediums are best to reach your customer? The options are nearly limitless. Aside from traditional marketing avenues, new methods are being developed and fine-tuned. The changing ways that people use the internet and developing targeting systems are driving the change.



Having a good grasp on your customer persona is extremely important to deciding which medium is best for you and your company. If your potential customers are the on-the-go type, investing more of your time and energy into mobile mediums may be of great benefit to you. If they're not the web-savvy type, perhaps traditional media is your best bet. All of these decisions start with the customer persona.

Tone

The tone you use in each message should also depend on the context in which you are reaching out to the customer. As individuals, we do it naturally. The way we talk on social networks or other informal settings is much different than the tone we take in business e-mails. The principle holds for customer interaction. Not every communication medium should be used the same. For example, hard sales pitches on social networks are unlikely to receive much response. People's main purpose for being there is to socialize, so a social tone is appreciated.



Timing

The timing of your marketing messages is crucial. Consider the person who visits a vendor's website multiple times in the buying process. Are they moving through the sales funnel with each visit?

It's possible.

To address the issue of timing in the sales process, smart websites will recognize each visitor and present a different offer each time they stop by. As time progresses and the customer shows a deeper level of interest in the product or service, the offers they see will correspond to their likely place in the sales funnel.



Amazon executes this very well. When a customer logs into the site, their every click and purchase is tracked. Amazon then uses this data to suggest other products that the customer might be interested in and to alert them when the prices of various items have dropped.

Wrap-Up : Strategy

Now that you've learned what the four keys to context marketing are, it's time to develop a strategy to put them into action.

- Pay special attention to timing and make sure you keep the potential customer moving through the funnel. Don't regress by boring them or overloading them with information!
- Implementing landing pages for your various offers is a good idea. But don't serve up the same one to the customer every time they visit. Make sure they're seeing new content and offers on a regular basis.
- Context marketing goes hand-in-hand with content marketing. But whenever you write content, make sure your tone suits your audience and the channel through which the content will be delivered.
- Finally, when you execute a strategy, make sure you've thought about all 4 context marketing keys and have fitted your plans to your customer's persona.





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