



2770 Arapahoe Road | Suite 132, PMB 233 | Lafayette, CO 80026
www.directhitmarketing.com | (303) 747-2603

Using Segmentation to Drive Registration Growth

By
John M. Coe and Steve Juedes

Who Attends Trade Shows?

The answer to this frequently asked question can be complex in these days of advanced data analytics and AI. As most of you know, we have been immersed in data analytics for many years but let's step back a bit and **simplify the answer** as at times, this data world gets too complex.

Here's one way to answer the question:

1. **Super Loyalists** – those who come to the show every year and some for many years. A special subset of Loyalists.
2. **Loyalists** – they come most years 65% to 75% of the time and they have attended recently, say within the last two years.
3. **Multi Year Attendees** – have attended before more than once but do not qualify as loyalists. Recent multi-attendees that attended the last two shows in a row are future loyalists.
4. **One Timers** – attended only one event over the last 5 years or more.
5. **First Timers** – attendees who came for the very first time last year. A very important group to message to.
6. **Prospects** – those who we think should or could attend the show but have not. These could be prospects that you have developed from organic list development, web inquiries, members, or trade relationships.

These six **segments** encompass the universe of all potential attendees, and our marketing objectives for each “behavioral segment” are rather simple.

- **Super Loyalists** – Recognize and thank them with special messaging. Perhaps reward their loyalty with a special event at the next show.
- **Loyalists** – Ditto the same as Super Loyalists.
- **Multi Year Attendees** – If they attended the last show, message to them on why they should not miss this year's event. Recognize that this is not their first rodeo and invite them back.
- **One Timers** – This is one of the harder groups to convert. They are older data sets of first timers. Thank them for their past attendance and provide ample reasons for them to



2770 Arapahoe Road | Suite 132, PMB 233 | Lafayette, CO 80026
www.directhitmarketing.com | (303) 747-2603

register for this year's Show or Expo.

- **First Timers** – Sell them to return a second time. Thank them for joining the attendee family last year and devote a campaign series to win them over to become repeat (multi-year) attendees.
- **Prospects** – This is the group that gets the standard messaging on all the show benefits and why they should attend.

Just a comment to be made here – many shows market to all their segments as though they are prospects. Many do not message to each of these groups with messaging tailored to their past attendance behavior.

We can we easily identify these segments; and, these individuals also know what segment they are in unless Alzheimer's has set in!

Most pre-show communications do not recognize these segments, and just blast away with the “show facts” to all in a clear, forceful and frequent manner. We assume that this communication approach is all that it takes to achieve registration objectives.

This harkens back to the old sales strategy of “**spray and pray**” – shoot, enough FAB's and you are bound to hit buyer's needs and make a sale. Unfortunately, in these days of communication clutter, spray and pray does not work well. The following formula does work, and will break through the ever-growing clutter.

SEGMENTATION → **RELEVANCY** → **ENGAGEMENT** → **ACTION**

The guiding axiom is – **the more relevant the message and offer, the greater the engagement and action**. The key that opens the “relevancy” door is segmentation, so let us dive into what data is available to describe the six behavioral segments to drive relevancy.

Behavior + Data = Relevancy

When developing any events marketing communication plan, start with these six behavioral segments and **add demographic data to create relevancy**. Here is a logical list of captured data from past registrations or is available from new lists.

- Job title or function
- Registration type
- Company or organization type
- Geographic distance from show venue
- Buying or purchasing influence
- Number of employees or company revenue range



2770 Arapahoe Road | Suite 132, PMB 233 | Lafayette, CO 80026
www.directhitmarketing.com | (303) 747-2603

- Product and/or service interests
- Other demographics or attendee behavior metrics captured or available

The combination of attendee behavior and several demographic facts can easily produce highly relevant messages and offers. Here's an example for email:

Behavioral segment: First timers
Demographic data: Company name, title and geographic distance

From: <name of sender>

To: *John J. Sample*

Subject line: *This year's show has more exhibitors for you*

Hi John,

We trust you enjoyed <name of show> last year. We know it was your first time attending, and are very much looking forward to your return this year. To pique your interest in returning we have added a number of new exhibitors that should be of value to <Name of company>, and in your position of <title> I'm sure you'll want to visit them and check out the new exhibitor list by clicking on <link to new exhibitor list>.

You will probably be flying in from <city>, and we have arranged for a group discount with these hotels <link to hotel list>. Last year these special rate rooms filled up on average 21 days ahead of the show so we encourage you to act now and reserve your preferred hotel location. You can always cancel if plans change.

Finally, only for our 2022 first timers, we have arranged a special onboarding luncheon to talk about the benefits of membership. The lunch is free and we know that you will enjoy the presentation. It includes a free drawing for an Apple Tablet (valued at \$995).

We also have 50% off food coupons to some great local restaurants if you attend this event.

Registration is now open, and here is your customized link to use – please correct any data we have pre-populated as things do change <pre-populated registration form>.

Sincerely yours,

<Name of sender>

Now this may seem a bit much to execute, but ask yourself the question – is it relevant and will it drive engagement? We think the answer is yes. Of course, this type of communication can be



2770 Arapahoe Road | Suite 132, PMB 233 | Lafayette, CO 80026
www.directhitmarketing.com | (303) 747-2603

delivered with multiple variations dependent on the data elements in the database.

Progression of Communications

At the start of registration, all of the six segments are in essence – static. The facts are the facts and until registration starts everyone is unregistered. The first communications should be as relevant as possible as the preceding example demonstrates.

Then the registrations roll in and the static state changes to dynamic – those registered and those not! Relevancy to drive engagement and action is now even more important as the show date nears. The six segments plus demographic data when viewed through the lens of who has and has not registered should be the basis of even more powerful communications.

Of course, even with highly relevant and timely communications you are not going to convince those who have decided not to or cannot attend to register. You are actually marketing to those on the bubble, and have not yet reached a decision. This is the exact moment where the relevancy and frequency of the message moves the registration needle.

John Coe is the Co-Founder/Partner of B2BMarketing.com, a B2B marketing consulting firm.

Steve Juedes is the President and Founder of Direct Hit Marketing. He can be reached at 303-747-2603 or e-mailed at stevej@directhitmarketing.com.

Find out more about our data analysis services at directhitmarketing.com/datasciencesolutions.

To learn more about Direct Hit Marketing, see our website: directhitmarketing.com.

P.S. Please check out Direct Hit Marketing's new Tradeshow Marketing Data Enrichment product: directhitmarketing.com/tradeshow-marketing-data-enrichment.