How To Conduct Social Segmentation For Effective Targeting Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

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The Importance of Segmentation
Many media owners have highly-sophisticated targeting tools. Targeting options range from geographical locations down to the specific interests of a user. Despite that, companies still struggle to formulate targeting strategies with a positive or high marketing Return on Investment (ROI) as they simply do not know who to target.

Before the formulation of targeting strategies, businesses should have a clear idea on who they want to target. In order to determine their target segments, segmentation needs to be conducted.

What is Segmentation?
Segmentation refers to breaking up the entire universe of audience into specific and useful segments in order to craft customized strategies towards each segment, whereby individuals within each segment react similarly to marketing actions.

What to Expect in this Whitepaper?
This whitepaper seeks to understand social segmentation – the importance of it and how to go about doing it. Knowledge of social segmentation will position companies in formulating efficient and effective targeting strategies.

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WHY CONDUCT SOCIAL SEGMENTATION?

1. RELIABILITY OF SOCIAL DATA

**Mitigates Biasedness in Traditional Research Methods**
Biasedness has always been one of the limitations of data results attained using traditional market research methods. The use of social data, however, mitigates that limitation. Instead of forcing audiences into pre-defined boxes on surveys and questionnaires, social data takes unsolicited opinions and thoughts of the social universe.

High Quality Dataset
Moreover, the social dataset is made up of chatter by individuals who produced social content without external influences, instead of surveyors who approach respondents who might not even be indicative of the desired research subjects. Hence, social data provides a high quality dataset for analysis and segmentation purposes.

WHY CONDUCT SOCIAL SEGMENTATION?

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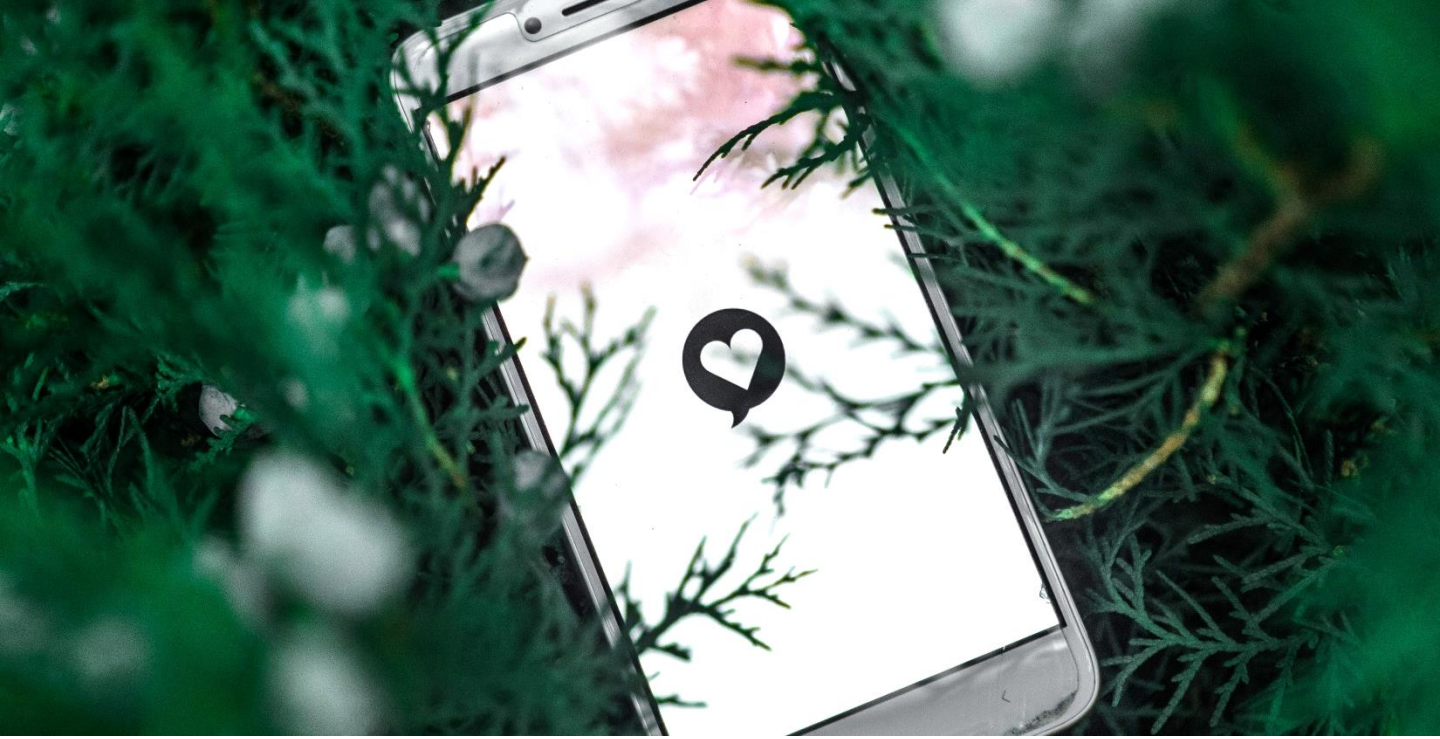
Limitations of Traditional Research Methods
Some traditional research methods tend to put inadvertent pressure on respondents, diverting them to provide answers that might not be representative of their true thoughts and opinions. When respondents have a preconceived mindset of the answers that the surveyor is looking for and feels pressured to answer in accordance to that, the authenticity of the dataset becomes questionable.

Social Data Consists of Unsolicited Thoughts & Opinions
As mentioned, social data takes unsolicited thoughts and opinions of the social universe. This means that the social dataset is limited to the chatter provided by the audience, making it accurate indicators of actual thoughts, opinions, and behaviors towards a brand, issue, or other subject matters. Hence, it gives an accurate picture of online personas, facilitating targeting strategies for marketing campaigns and brand positioning.

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WHY CONDUCT SOCIAL SEGMENTATION?

3. LARGE SAMPLE SIZE

Access to Larger Volume of Data
Since social segmentation taps into the entire social universe, there is access to more data as compared to traditional data collection. A large sample size reduces the uncertainty in the dataset, increasing the precision of segmentation results. It allows outliers to be pinpointed more easily, and outliers can be a point of interest for analysis.
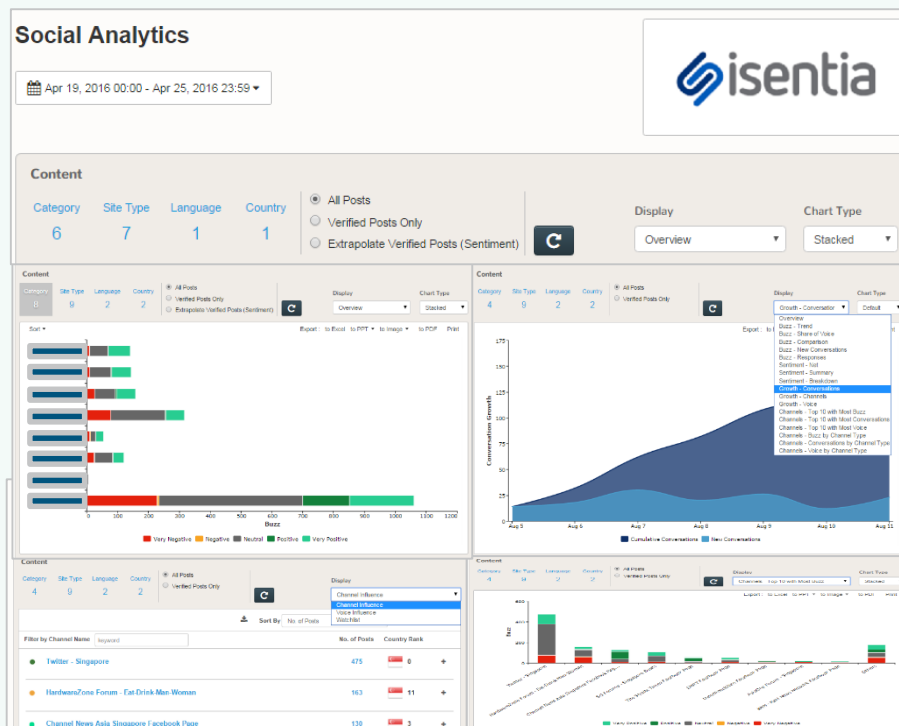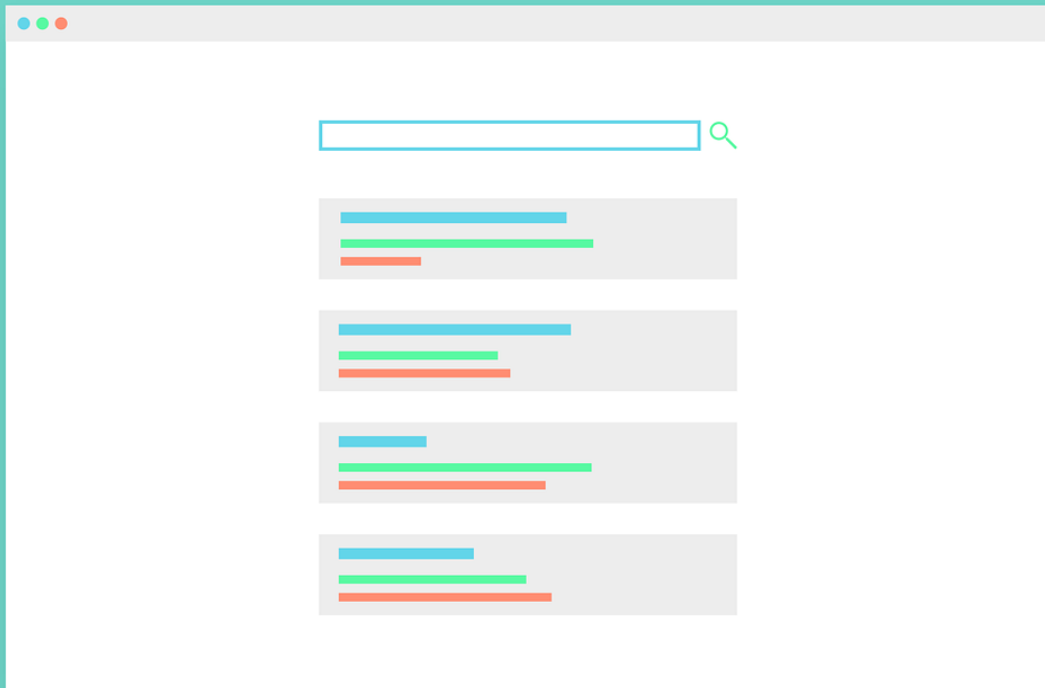
HOW TO CONDUCT SOCIAL SEGMENTATION?

1. AUDIENCE CONVERSATIONS

Tune in and listen to audience conversations. A great listener is able to understand the speaker when he/she focuses on the conversation, picking up the key pointers and emotions conveyed. Similarly, when companies do social listening, they can find out what consumers are talking about with regards to the brand or its products and services.

Social content that are talking about the similar topics and interests can be grouped together. The types of segmentation that can be achieved would be behavioral or benefit segmentation.

On top of that, sophisticated social listening tools tag a sentiment (positive, neutral, or negative) to each social content and provides an overall sentiment analysis on a dashboard. This allows brands to gain an overview of how the social audiences feel towards the brand.

Source: Isentia Singapore. Analysis Period: 1 – 31 July 2019

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HOW TO CONDUCT SOCIAL SEGMENTATION?

2. DEFINE A SET OF BROAD KEYWORDS

Another approach to conducting social segmentation is to define a broad set of keywords that is relevant to the target consumer. For instance, if a company specialising in kids' wear wants to target mothers, the keywords defined can be: Kids Fashion, Kids Wear, Kids Style, Kids Clothes, and so on. This helps them zoom into the segment of mothers who are talking about kids' wear.

Monitoring and exploring conversations under a particular set of keywords can provide learning on the opinions, behavior, concerns, and needs of that particular segment. For instance, if mothers are always talking about how quickly their kids grow out of their clothes, kids' wear companies can innovate and think of ways to prolong the "life expectancy" of those kids' wear.

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HOW TO CONDUCT SOCIAL SEGMENTATION?

3. MACHINE LEARNING

Social conversations can be put through a machine learning (natural language processing) aided analysis in order to retrieve distinct segments. Isentia conducted the analysis to derive four psychographic segments for the bubble tea market in Malaysia.

HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

HALAL SEEKERS

LOCAL PRIDE

ENVIRONMENT ENTHUSIASTS

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HOW TO CONDUCT SOCIAL SEGMENTATION?

SEGMENTS	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Health-Conscious	- Addressed the ingredients used in the bubble teas - Attempted to raise awareness on the effects of excessive consumption of bubble tea - Shared social posts on unhealthy sugar contents and advice on consumption in moderation	- Provide healthier options (E.g. Allowing preference of sugar level in their drinks) - Focus on ingredient marketing by highlighting its plant-based content and natural sweeteners
2. Halal Seekers	- Called for Halal certification	- Focus on ingredient marketing by highlighting that the ingredients are porcine-free, dairy and plant-based
3. Environment Enthusiasts	- Expressed concern over the high level of wastage in the bubble tea industry (plastic cups and straws) - Voiced out to for the industry to take the initiative in revising their packaging and marketing strategies to be greener	- Explore biodegradable packaging or bring-your-own-cups campaigns/discounts to encourage less wastage
4. Local Pride	- Suggested new local flavours	- Be innovative: Accept netizens' suggestions on new flavours and leverage on national pride

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CONCLUSION

The explosive usage of social media platforms provide a myriad of social data online. As mentioned, there are various ways that social data can be used to derive distinct marketing segments: Tuning into audience conversations, defining a broad set of keywords, and machine learning.

With knowledge of its segments, businesses can now put a firm stop to wasted dollars spent on targeting strategies that can be termed as shadowboxing. When media budget is directed to the right target audience, coupled with relevant marketing materials, businesses can anticipate a positive or high marketing Return on Investment (ROI).

Thank you.

To find out how else Isentia can value-add to your brand's marketing and communications strategy, please contact:

Isentia Singapore
t. +65 6593 9888
e. singapore@isentia.com

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