

How to Map and Make Sense of Engagement Metrics that Matter

New eMarketer report looks at how to build an effective customer engagement plan

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Customer engagement is a priority for many, but no single action plan exists for how to measure it. Some brands simply identify and tally customer engagements, while others truly understand the value of each action.

To understand how a marketer should structure a customer engagement plan, eMarketer's Lauren Fisher spoke with Jennifer Zeszut, co-founder and chief customer officer of Beckon, for the eMarketer report, "[Understanding Customer Engagement: How to Map and Make Sense of the Metrics that Matter](#)." The report contains a framework for making sense of customer engagement metrics at one's organization. It shares requirements for putting that framework to use, and gives examples of companies successfully navigating customer engagement efforts.

Beckon works with brands to build customer engagement scores and ratios that can be predictors of real business outcomes, such as lifetime value (LTV) and sales.

The marketing intelligence software provider defines customer engagement as any customer-initiated action that shows some sort of intent, interest, connection or collaboration with the brand. These actions can differ by channel. "If it's an email communication, it might be an open. If it's a display ad, it might be a click. If it's a social platform like Facebook, it might be a 'like,'" Zeszut said.

Brands can look at a basic volume count of total engagements, for example, 1.2 million customer engagements in a quarter, and that can be used as a benchmark against prior quarters.

"Some brands choose to weight or score engagements more highly than others. They might say a 'like' or a favorite is more valuable than an open. A formula is created, and whatever weight formula a brand chooses to place on an engagement is calculated as well. Brands can discount some of the engagements that are low value and increase the importance of those that are more valuable," Zeszut noted.

Engagement rates and ratios can be more informative when it comes to gauging how well a brand or marketing team is engaging consumers. Indeed, rates and ratios tell a much better story of either brand health or customer profiling, or the effectiveness of the marketing or messaging.

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JENNIFER ZESZUT
CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER, BECKON

A marketer might measure engagements per customer—your total number of customers and total number of engagements. Another example could be engagements per individual customer. Brands that can track engagements at a customer level are able to create a metric to see which customers have the highest level of engagement.

"This starts to profile the customer base in terms of loyalty or engagement with a brand. You can understand what makes a very engaged customer. That engagement per customer suddenly tells a powerful story, because it shows which customers are more engaged than others," Zeszut said.

These metrics can be a way to discover segments of buyers, and who is ready to move through the funnel or what kind of sales lift to expect. Other marketers use these metrics to test creative and different messaging.

"For some brands, some engagement-type metrics are very predictive of revenue. But predictors of sales and revenues are different from attribution, causation or return on investment [ROI]. You're looking for a bellwether for the brand—something that will move reliably with revenue," she added.