

How Handy Became Known for More than Just Its Home Cleaning Services

Article

For many consumers who have seen early ads for Handy, they may know the company solely for house cleaning. It focused mostly on marketing that segment in the beginning, but it also

provides a range of other services, including home renovation and installations.

The reason for its advertising imbalance is simple: Installations and renovations happen either a few times a year, or once every few years—but house cleaning is a predictable, high-volume service that happens at expected intervals. That made the company's early marketing focus a straightforward one, according to Alex Levin, Handy's senior vice president of growth.

But the company decided to make a messaging pivot in 2017 when it noticed an uptick in inquiries from customers about whether the company could help install furniture. Handy jumped on the opportunity to fill a need in the massive home services market and began partnering with Walmart and Wayfair to provide installation services to customers through those retailers.

Levin said that Handy's B2B2C (business-to-business-to-consumer) approach has been pivotal to growth. He spoke with us about this model, why the company evolved its messaging over time, and how its marketing strategy has changed since getting acquired by ANGI Homeservices in October 2018.

How do you define Handy's B2B2C relationships with retail partners and customers?

Major retailers were noticing that customers were coming to their stores and saying, "You know, I love that TV, but I don't want to install it myself," or "That bathroom looks great, but I want somebody to put it together or install those products for me." Some of those retailers don't have an installation network, or they don't have a way of serving that customer the installation.

Handy offers a turnkey solution for retailers, where they can offer a Handy installation at point-of-sale both online and in-store, so that when a customer walks in and says, "I'd like a piece of furniture assembled," they say, "Sure, of course. Here's Handy; for \$75, you can have it assembled by them."

Handy has always offered installation services on top of house cleaning, but the installation part of the business seems to be a bigger focus now. Why did you decide to go this route?

In the middle of 2017, we noticed a lot of customers were asking us to assemble their purchases. We thought that there must be a more seamless experience for them. That's when we approached Wayfair and Walmart. We worked with them to figure out how to make it so

that customers didn't have to first go into a store and buy a product, and then go to Handy and buy a service.

What we noticed is that there are a lot more incremental sales when you offer those things together. Previously, if you were a customer and you weren't handy—for the lack of a better term—you might never buy the product in-store. But by offering the product and the installation at the same time, retailers are incentivizing a customer who otherwise wasn't going to buy.

How has your brand messaging strategy evolved over the years as the company went from marketing mostly its cleaning services to this B2B2C formula?

In the beginning, we offered all of these services: cleaning, furniture assembly and TV mounting. We never solely marketed cleaning, but given the volume of that service and its universal appeal, it did make sense to focus on that aspect of our platform to attract customers.

With installation services, we waited a little bit longer to make that switch. We had to make sure that instead of being seen as only a cleaning service, we were seen as more. Even in our New York City subway ads, we list other services available on the Handy site. If you get an email, we list a lot of our services, and if somebody were to come organically to our site, we make sure to position everything we offer.

However, if somebody is a customer who's coming through paid marketing about cleaning, all of the paths that they go through are going to be very cleaning-specific. On the other hand, if somebody is a customer coming through a retail channel where they're introduced to our installation offerings, all of the paths that they're going through are very installation-specific. We try to make sure that the customer stays within the context that they know so that they don't land on Handy and say, "Wait a second, this is not the company I thought it was."

Today, when you look at this new B2B2C channel, it has been wildly successful. And now a large majority of customers know the brand through our installation services, not through direct-to-consumer.

Has the company's growth strategy or marketing strategy changed at all since the ANGI Homeservices acquisition?

Today, within ANGI Homeservices, there are three very well-known brands in the US: Angie's List, HomeAdvisor and Handy. All three companies have separate marketing strategies, but

it's been very helpful to have some cross-pollination of ideas between the three, because it enables us to learn from each other and make changes to our marketing in ways that we couldn't before.