

How Lowe's Approaches Audience Verification

Interview | SEPTEMBER 2018

Ross Benes



An interview with:
Ryan Fagan

Director, Sales, Operations Planning
Lowe's

Brand marketers often utilize gated offers to make discounts available to targeted audiences. Ryan Fagan, director of sales and operations planning at **Lowe's**, spoke with eMarketer's Ross Benes about how the home-improvement brand overhauled the way it verifies which customers are eligible for discounts.

eMarketer:

How have you changed your approach to audience verification?

Ryan Fagan:

We were asking the cashier at that brick-and-mortar store to be judge, jury and executioner of reviewing people's identifications and then honoring a discount or not. But sometimes customers would forget their ID, and we'd run into an awkward situation of someone who is deserving of a discount and had gotten it in the past not able to receive it at that time, and that led to an inconsistent experience.

So we went live with SheerID in May 2017 to create a gate around the financial benefits for the target audience we were looking for. And we tied the verification into our loyalty program.

eMarketer:

How does it work?

Ryan Fagan:

We're able to append a customer's records so that you only have to verify one time with us. So we made it an easier journey for the customer, and they can get our benefits across all channels. So if you sign in at a store, you will receive a discount. If you sign in online, you can also get a discount.

Before, some of our store managers would apply the corporate policy for discounts, while other stores would apply their own rules. You had these multiple experiences where one store would give you a discount one day, but the next store manager might say no. Now we can offer the benefits with a frequency that the customers expect.

eMarketer:

What sort of data did your vendor have to process when verifying customers?

Ryan Fagan:

One example is we've given discounts to military members. To sign up for discounts, the customer will give us information such as date of birth, branch of service and date of honorable discharge.

There's a purge system on [SheerID's] side and ours, so we're not maintaining any personally identifiable information (PII). All we maintain on the back end is if you came back with a positive verification.

eMarketer:

Why did you make sure you purged PII?

Ryan Fagan:

If you think about all of the **data leaks in the marketplace**, we definitely wanted the consumer group to feel confident in the data security.

Interview conducted on September 26, 2018