



THE POWER OF PERSONALISATION

Get up close and personal with the reasons why personalisation is a must for the future success of your career or fitness business.





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Although the fitness industry has been taking a more personalised approach to customer service for some time, the pandemic and the resulting shift towards increased interactions online has made the personalised approach more important than ever.

As powerful as AI might be in delivering this personalised approach, we should not forget the importance of empathy in developing a loyal customer base.

UNDERSTANDING DATA AND USING IT PROPERLY

In the past few years, personalisation became synonymous with collecting multi-channel data – easily accomplished with the use of an efficient CRM (Customer Relationship Management) platform – and then analysing this information for a better understanding of who each customer is, his or her preferences, and for predicting their future behaviours.

Once you collect data, it becomes easier to add a personal touch to client interactions, thus enhancing your ability to refine marketing messages and services to the interests and likings of different member cohorts. Of course, when it comes to data collection, care must be taken as there is a point at which a business' level of knowledge can feel invasive – we've all had that experience when an ad pops up in your social media feed about a product or place that you just spoke about in a conversation with a friend!

Your members and prospects want to know that the data collected about them is going to enhance and facilitate the customer experience, rather than annoy them or 'creep them out'! To accomplish this objective, a well-balanced approach to personalisation is required.

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR MEMBERS AND CLIENTS

Understanding the different types of data that can be collected, used, and analysed is essential for creating a personalisation

strategy. This data typically falls into one of four categories:

- **Demographic:** age, gender, family status, occupation and geographic location
- **Behavioural:** club check-ins, the number of personal training sessions, or participation in group ex classes. It can also refer to interactions with your website and social media, as well as clicks, views and sign-ups (e.g., newsletters)
- **Transactional:** purchase history and invoices
- **Psychographic:** interests, personality and lifestyle.

To get started, it's imperative to evaluate where your business is right now. What data points can you easily access? Do you have the necessary tools and systems in place? And what resources do you have for obtaining and interpreting data? Keep in mind that every business is unique, and



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that getting to know and understand your members through data won't happen overnight.

You can begin by collecting demographic data, some of which typically doesn't change very often. This can be used to segment and target specific groups or individuals over a longer period. Then, learn what interests and preferences your members have, and what activities and products they enjoy. This can be accomplished through survey responses, opt-ins to newsletters, and confirming email and text frequencies (i.e., how often people want to hear from you).

If you're already collecting and using some data points but are looking to take a multi-channel approach to marketing, communication and customer service, then having a Single Customer View (SCV) is vital to your personalisation strategy. An SCV is an aggregated, consistent and holistic representation of a member's overall data held by an organisation and viewed in one place. This information includes all of the four categories of data outlined earlier, and is forever evolving as it's collected from a network of channels. Making good use of SCV means being able to assemble and use that data in meaningful ways, such as understanding how members like to be contacted, or what their typical roadmaps are when making purchasing decisions. This information will assist you to better anticipate and target their future needs.

SEGMENTATION AND ONE-TO-ONE COMMUNICATIONS

In one of its simplest forms, personalisation can be as easy as addressing clients by their first names in conversations, or by offering a discount on purchases during their birthday month.

Nowadays, businesses recognise the value in member's loyalty and are doing what they can to move well beyond these simple measures. This is because we know that members are more likely to do business with your brand if they create a positive emotional connection from the experiences and interactions they have with you. And it's for this reason that you need to approach personalisation from the place of creating a unique experience for the individual customer, by using an individualised, one-to-one conversation across all channels.

Long-gone are the days of 'one message for all'; segmentation of your member base must be an essential component of your strategy, moving forwards. This means, getting to know individual members, including understanding what motivates them, what drives them, and what they are feeling and thinking. The answers to these questions will enable you to create a personalised journey. Of course, to accomplish this there must be a clear plan, along with the necessary tools and training for your entire staff.

DIGITALISATION AND PERSONALISATION

With so much customer interaction now taking place online, the need for a digital-first approach is essential. 2021 is a year where companies will embrace Artificial Intelligence (AI) more than ever to optimise the digital customer experience beyond the traditional one. In addition to more robust CRMs, we can also expect to see an increase in the use of AI-conversational interfaces, such as chatbots and virtual assistants.

Despite the importance of digital transformation and AI however, there is a very important aspect that must be acknowledged – AI cannot provide emotional support to your customers.

THE HUMAN SIDE OF PERSONALISATION

The COVID-19 pandemic has given personalisation an even more profound meaning, unearthing a demand for human skills and abilities such as connection, patience, listening and empathy. Therefore, showing a true interest in who each customer is, and understanding their unique circumstances, needs, and expectations is vital to creating and maintaining customer loyalty.

Personalisation also equates to empathy, which digital experience and data cannot provide; those human feelings that are transmitted from one person to another builds lasting relationships that can only be fostered by authentic trust and loyalty.

As good as AI may be, it's not yet a stand-alone solution. In this current climate, your members and prospects are looking for satisfaction, reassurance, comfort and familiarity, which can ultimately only be achieved through a personalised approach. ♦