

Brands should stop using creepy marketing tactics

 By [Rob Anderson](#)

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It is a new year, in fact, a new decade, and with it comes a new mindset to start shifting to customer-led marketing growth. Why you may ask? To put it simply, push marketing is losing relevancy fast, especially when consumers are being served hundreds of advertising messages by brands daily. We find ourselves in an advertising era defined by creepy, stalker-like marketing behaviour.



Image source: Gallo/Getty Images.

Website popups, auto-play videos, push notifications and remarketing 'stalk' consumers with the same ads everywhere they go and this type of marketing forms part of most digital strategies. While we are not disputing their place in the marketing mix (they do of course serve a purpose and give a favourable ROI), brands often go overboard and start to freak people out with too many of these techniques too often. (That 'am I being listened to?' feeling)

'Push' marketing becomes off-putting

In fact, a [survey](#) which was conducted on *Privacy and Personalisation in Marketing* found that 68% of people will tell friends or family about a 'creepy' brand experience, which ultimately results in negative word-of-mouth and a reduction in engagement and brand trust. For many people, ad blockers have become a standard part of browsing online, with one report estimating that 30% of global internet users use ad blockers.

Distrust in social

Another negative factor holding push marketing back is the proliferation of 'fake news' and consumers becoming increasingly sceptical to what they are being exposed to. From misleading clickbait headlines to phoney reviews, people are wising up to what is being pushed to their devices.

However there is a silver lining and for many brands, as reward-based marketing is earning its stripes.

2020 – The year of reward marketing

Instead of digital marketing being centred on Push Marketing tactics, customers should be the centre focus of all marketing strategies. This year, we saw this kind of marketing first hand, when Facebook introduced its new 'Top Fan' update, which

rewards the consumers who like and engage with brand content more frequently with a digital Top Fan Badge.

With this new feature, brands can easily connect, engage and communicate efficiently to drive more interactions. Some brands even started building monthly loyalty campaigns to reward consumers with product hampers or gifts for the highest engagement within the month.

Top Fans can also act as your brand advocates and generate influence and impact on others. Most remarkably, brands were given the invaluable opportunity to conduct focus groups or surveys with these top fans to garner insights for future campaigns and launches.

Another example of a rewards-based model that is finally making headway in South Africa is affiliate marketing, where influencers who help to drive sales for a product are rewarded with a portion of the sales they make directly, and their followers get a discount code from the brand.

More than just a badge

Going back to the Top Fan Badge – it was a brilliant and cost-effective way to foster authentic engagement and interest from consumers and was a great indicator that consumers like being rewarded for engaging with brand content.

It raises the question, why are they not being rewarded for every like, click, share and comment. Consumers are doing all the hard work - they are using their data to log on to say Facebook, where they are served your ad, which they are expected to respond to. However, as the Top Fan example has shown, they may be more encouraged to watch and share if they are rewarded in some way.

Brands need to start rewarding consumer engagement

In an international study, it was found that 75% of consumers want to be rewarded for watching and engaging with content like videos and surveys.

Everyone loves freebies

Rewarding consumers for engaging with brand content can help businesses drive consumers further down the funnel toward purchases. It also helps brands key in on your best customers and offer something they will genuinely value.

It is my belief that the rewards-based pull marketing strategy is going to change the face of marketing in 2020.

ABOUT ROB ANDERSON

Rob Anderson is the CEO and founder of Brand Hubb. Brand Hubb is at the forefront of rewards marketing, and although primarily an e-commerce store, the business was founded on the idea that ordinary people should be rewarded by brands for sharing and engaging with their content and surveys.

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