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### Channel Preferences Matter More Than You Might Think

There are many channels that allow you to communicate with your customers. From direct mail to email and social media, the options have exploded. But not every customer prefers the same channels, and depending on the type of communication, customers might prefer different channels for each. Get the channel right, and you make it easy for customers to communicate and buy. Get it wrong, and customers can tune you out, even if yours is a product they want or need.

This is why it's important to know your customers' channel preferences and work within them. If your customers consistently order out of your product catalog, for example, don't switch to email simply because you think it saves money. Don't send them a postcard if your customers are more likely to remember appointments when sent text reminders.

Brands are becoming increasingly responsive to these issues. According to one Keypoint study ("Annual State of Transactional Communications," Keypoint Intelligence 2020), 74% of customers want to be able to choose the channel that a brand uses to communicate with them. Asking (and honoring) channel preferences not only increases response rates but also improves customer loyalty. By respecting customers' preferences, you show that you care. Customers want to do business with companies that care about them.

How can you find out your customers' channel preferences?

Just ask them. Use surveys, feedback forms, customer service interactions, email, and even the point of sale. Each time you interact with your customers, allow them to provide or update their preferences. This is also a great way to gather additional data, such as mobile numbers.

You can also watch what they do. Did they respond to the catalog or the email? The postcard or the Facebook ad? Add channel response as a field in your customer database. If customers consistently use specific channels for certain types of interactions, you need to know that.

Knowing customers' channel behavior and preferences is foundational to any multichannel marketing program. Need help gathering those preferences? We can help.