

Your starting point:

Strategy refresh with a focus on customer needs.

It looks like your marketing strategy could benefit from a stronger connection with customer needs. When your brand is facing competitive and market pressure, your customers can act as a beacon that will guide you to clarity. We recommend starting your adaptive journey here.

Starting steps:

1. Cozy up to your customers

- We get pulled in so many directions—by our team, by executives, by competitors, by shiny new technologies—that sometimes we lose focus on the vital component of any winning strategy: customers.
- Remedy this by setting out to gain a fresh perspective on your customers.
- We find that many organizations are filled with untapped data and insights. So be sure to look for existing sources of reliable customer insights before you conduct new research.
- Many research methods (performance data, customer service logs, social media insights) can provide useful insights, but qualitative research is especially crucial. Quantitative data is excellent for understanding what customers do. But to really understand why they behave the way they do, you'll need to talk to them. So take this opportunity to learn as much as you can about their mindsets, needs, desires and behaviors.
- Once you have mined existing data and conducted new research, map out what you've learned and identify potential implications (or working theories) for your strategy. Be prepared to conduct follow-up research to validate and expand the findings.

2. Turn insights into useful tools

- Identify the commonalities between the different customers you've met and sort them into groups based on their needs, demographic profiles and/or relationships with your organization.
 - Use these groupings to formulate personas that can act as a tool for your team to use in devising marketing strategies.
 - Summarize the key things you know about each persona, including what each one is thinking, doing and feeling, and the barriers each persona faces in relation to your brand.
 - Provide context about each persona's lifestyle and life stage, and highlight the typical media usage.
 - Make them human, with faces, ages, names and stories.
 - Develop and validate these personas with your team to ensure that everyone is in agreement about who they are.
 - This will also leave room for experts on the team to add important details based on direct experience. For example, if you have a call center or a customer support team, use this opportunity to tap into their front-line expertise.
 - Input and collaboration from your team will further sharpen the personas, while giving your team a sense of ownership and trust in the personas.
 - Once you have defined your personas, bring them into your strategic planning and decision-making processes. And share them with others in your organization as a way of explaining how you formed your strategy.
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3. Reframe your strategy around your customers

- Rewrite or modify your strategy around the key audience types and insights identified in your research and persona development.
- Keep in mind that your strategy should be the meeting point between your organizational vision and goals and the customer needs and opportunities identified in your research.
- Ask yourself, "What are we uniquely able to promise and deliver to meet customers' needs?"
- If you have many personas, you'll need to prioritize. A common pitfall is to try to be all things to all people. This inevitably leads to mediocrity—when you try to serve the needs of everyone, you end up serving the needs of nobody.
- Focus your resources where they will have the most impact. Concentrate on the personas that have the greatest needs and richest potential (current and future).
- Make sure your marketing objectives are specific and based on what you want these priority groups to do, think and feel.

- Your strategy should identify key audience groups and why and how you will meet their needs through your marketing program.
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Book a free one-hour consultation

Get started with (even more) confidence by adding nuance and context to these recommendations.

To book your free one-hour consultation with our team of experts, drop us a line at start@themoderncraft.com.

“If you’re on a mission to make change happen, you want Modern Craft in your corner.”

-Jon Mamela, CMO, Tourism Toronto