

Using the WQA Consumer Opinion Study to Define Your Marketing

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Dataman Group Direct - 2021

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A Brief Introduction

The New 2021 WQA Consumer Opinion Study Provides Valuable Data

Kudos to the WQA for continuing to provide this powerful data to members. Solid market survey data is not cheap. But it forms the basis for many decisions.

The data in the 2021 WQA Consumer Opinion Study informs us about what products consumers want and when they want it. It gives us a picture of their attitudes and beliefs. It helps us draw conclusions about consumer preferences. In short, this data helps us direct our efforts.

We all know that consumer behaviors have changed as a result of the pandemic. The benefit of water quality has taken on a new dimension. A majority of consumers feel that the pandemic has changed how they view life.

Over half of respondents indicated that the pandemic has made them more concerned about their home's water supply. This includes people who are now working at home. And, many consumers remember the beginning days of the pandemic, when bottled water was in short supply.

Using Market Research Data

Valuable Information for your Dealership

Many businesses use market research data to identify new opportunities. Others use the data to make decisions about pricing and promotions. Other businesses use the data to provide context to better understand the current environment of their industry.

Market research can help you identify areas of your business that require updating or change. Acting on these is a vital step in addressing customer and market needs, and growing your sales.

Research Data May Show Your Need to:

- review your business plan
- update your sales plan and improve marketing strategies
- improve your sales practices
- update your products or services
- rethink your retail design
- reconsider your branding.

Defining Your Competitive Advantage

Keep Up with Market Trends

The sooner you act on the market research conclusions, the more it will benefit your business. Over time, your marketplace, customers and competitors will all change.

Because of this, market research continually needs to be updated. Many successful businesses see market research as an ongoing process that helps them keep up with market trends.

Again, I give the Water Quality Association a lot of credit for providing consistent information to the field.

This White Paper will focus on using the 2021 Consumer Opinion Study from a marketing perspective.

By using this research data , we can fine tune the top segments for our products.

We will examine how to use the findings to tailor our targeting. We can also use the information to tweak the creative.

In short, this data helps us define our competitive advantage.



75% of Water Softener Purchases were made in the first year of Home Ownership



Encouraging Water Softener Users

FACT:

Twenty-five percent of Americans who responded to the survey say they have a water softener.

75% of those softener purchases were made in the first year of home ownership.

Most of the homeowners bought their softeners for aesthetic reasons (water clarity, rust).

Marketing Strategy:

New Homeowners are a primary target for dealerships who sell softeners.

The creative should show homeowner pride in the beauty of pristine sidewalks. Emphasis should feature the enjoyment of a clear glass of water.

The verbiage should highlight the advantage of buying a softener early on in homeownership. Show prospects that they can benefit from soft water now.

Concept is amortizing the cost into the lifetime value of the home.

Inspiring Water Filtration Buyers

FACT:

Forty percent of respondents indicated they have some sort of water filtration system in their home.

According to the Study, consumers who added a filtration system into the home were primarily driven by a desire to remove contaminants and enjoy better health.

By the way, this is different than the findings of previous studies. In the past, the over-riding reason to buy a water filtration system was to improve the taste of water. Secondly, it was to remove contaminants.

Consumers are now focused on quality of life.

Marketing Strategy:

Target health-conscious homeowners.

This group is most likely to respond to products and offers they believe will improve their enjoyment of life.

Photos need to feature healthy active individuals, enjoying crystal clear water. Verbiage should highlight quality of life.

Consider overlaying modeled credit data on the health-conscious homeowners prospect list to insure they can afford a system. This is also a good time to highlight the credit solutions you offer.

In this case, dealers can promote the concept that a quality life is more important than the cost.

Motivating Families with Children

FACT:

Households with children are more concerned about the quality of the household water supply versus households without children.

They are also more likely to use bottled water rather than tap water.

Marketing Strategy:

Target families with children.

Your job is to show these families that a water filtration system is an investment in their family's health.

A visual might be a photo of a mom with two kids in a shopping cart trying to lug bottled water.

Focus on the parent's obligation to provide a safe, healthy future for their children.

Quality water provides a great head start in life.

Verbiage also needs to illustrate the dollar savings of using filtered water as opposed to continuously buying bottled water.

Focusing on The Environment

FACT:

Consumers are concerned about the environment.

The number of consumers who say they bought a filtration system so they wouldn't feel the need to buy bottled water is twice as high as it was in 2019.

Additionally, the study found that adults age 18-54 are more likely to change their behavior (i.e. buy reusable water bottles and install a water filtration device) as a result of the "green" movement.

Marketing Strategy:

Target green homeowners or younger homeowners.

Illustrate how water filtration is a long term solution to plastic waste.

Add in dollar savings, health and convenience.

Many of the largest brands are jumping on the sustainability bandwagon. Many companies are advertising their carbon footprint goals.

Consumers are paying more attention to the green movement than ever before.

The water quality industry is supremely positioned to be an integral part of this change.

Reaching Prospects by Ethnicity

FACT:

African American and Hispanic households are more likely to add a water treatment system after a move than Caucasians or Asians.

Hispanics without systems in the home are more likely than any other segment to add a water treatment system in the future.

Marketing Strategy:

Marketers can select prospects by ethnicity.

Dealerships located in predominantly Hispanic markets may want to consider using “Spanglish”.

This is where you blend both Spanish and English into your marketing campaign. English is still the primary language but the concept here is to integrate Spanish phrases, quotes, and terms to truly connect to Hispanic consumers.

While you want to incorporate Hispanic imagery into your campaign, be careful to not stereotype or single Hispanics out.

And, remember – all Hispanics are not the same. There are regional and cultural differences that you need to consider.

Capitalizing on Replacement Business

FACT:

Twenty-five percent of water filtration system installations are replacements of an existing system.

Whole house filtration systems are becoming more popular. They are also perceived as having greater effectiveness.

Consumers are willing to invest in devices to eliminate or reduce contaminants.

Marketing Strategy:

Dealers need to continually engage past customers.

There are opportunities for replacement and trading up.

To make this work, Dealers need to make sure their customer lists are current. That means the physical address, telephone number and email address.

Technology can update addresses through NCOA (national change of address).

There are also services to correct and append email addresses and telephone numbers to your list.

You can also add in cell phone numbers.



Final Remarks: Customer Retention Management

Make sure you have a good CRM (customer retention management) system.

Effective CRM systems don't just include your customers contact information.

They are designed to surface the details of every customer interaction.

This means phone calls or emails, your customer help desk and certainly any face-to-face encounters. This includes sales deliveries and service calls.

All of that data is stored and correlated. This way you know who had contact with a customer and when. You also know if the customer purchased and if they are happy with that purchase.

From this, you will also know what to suggest they buy.

This information is used to fuel the sales pipeline, prioritizing deals and assigning sales personnel per policies or direct manager intervention.

This not only powers the sales pipeline, but it also helps build customer loyalty, boosts upsell opportunities and helps grow your business.



Dataman Group Direct

working with Water Quality Dealers since 1982

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