



Marketing automation systems like Oracle Eloqua are designed to make your job easier and your campaigns more effective by leveraging data and content to deliver personalized messages at the perfect time. However, you can't expect it to do all your work for you. Neither should you be overly cautious and miss out on what it can truly do. Let's look a little closer at one of the most potentially problematic areas: failed segmentation. By using the Eloqua segmentation campaign canvas, you can create multi step campaigns that guide your target audience through precise nurture tracks.

Ensuring your contact fields are carefully maintained will streamline your marketing efforts and help you compare contact fields to develop relevant messages. Moreover, if you want to transform your approach to lead nurturing, consider how best to handle shared filters or a filter shared list that captures dynamic segments. Identifying the right moment to send email or to incorporate a custom object into your segmentation strategy can significantly enhance the customer experience.

Eloqua Segmentation & Marketing Automation

Though the term is recent, [marketing segmentation](#) has existed for over a century. Historical marketers who relied on physical mail alone still had to sort their contacts into different groups to determine who displayed continued interest and who might need nurturing. Unfortunately, modern marketers often

struggle with segmentation even with the help of technology.

Contemporary Eloqua users can harness advanced technology to build segment rules that specify criteria such as email address domain or specific contact fields. This approach to segmentation Eloqua ensures that you focus your marketing efforts on the right target audience. In addition, exporting email performance reports can help you analyze campaign engagement, measure lead generation success, and refine future segmentation strategies.

The Most Basic Segment: Customer vs. Prospect

The simplest possible segmentation is customer vs. prospect. Any business owner knows the difference between a customer who has made purchases before and someone who just window shops. Keeping these two groups separate creates the first step of your marketing strategy. Previous customers can be offered new products or promotions related to their purchases, while window shoppers receive more generic marketing materials.

You can also reuse several of the same marketing materials for both segments when appropriate. This initial [marketing segmentation](#) process is quite simple, yet can make a significant difference in your strategy. Within campaigns Eloqua, this basic segmentation tactic can be enhanced by analyzing digital body language.

By monitoring the actions of individual contacts—such as opens, clicks, or web visits—you can craft a multi-step campaign to support those who show higher engagement. Additionally, you might consider creating a shared list of leads who have demonstrated strong interest, effectively building a segment of prospects that can be nurtured with dynamic content tailored to their profile data.

The Problem

Marketing segments get more and more narrow as you hone in on specific customer groups for nurturing. While this step is crucial, some marketers view it as too complex or expensive to attempt. Some even assume that they have to segment down to the most minute details like individual products purchases. As you construct your marketing segmentation strategy, remember:

Don't make it harder than it needs to be.

If classifying your customers in Eloqua feels too difficult, stop and take a broader approach. You may have been thinking too deeply, forming unnecessarily tiny segments that make your job difficult, or nurturing customers who won't be a source of revenue. You should avoid:

- Aggressively marketing to customers who have been inactive for years
- Pouring huge amounts of money and time into customers who rarely buy from you

- Marketing products to customers who only want services or support

Additionally, remember that even beneficial activities can end up requiring too much time and effort that could be better used elsewhere. For instance, don't pour all your time into:

- Defining what a customer is for your business
- Having your sales reps' flag which accounts should be considered customers
- [Scrubbing your database of expired or unprofitable data](#)
- Creating a complex ERP integration

All of these are good ideas, and arguably essential for a successful business. But they're also not the ultimate goal. Don't focus on a single step while neglecting everything that comes after. And definitely don't take on all these tasks at once—you'll overwhelm yourself in no time.

Keep Your Focus

Some organizations also explore other platforms like Salesforce Marketing Cloud or Twilio Segment for their data management needs. However, if your segmentation approach becomes overly granular too quickly, you may spend unnecessary time analyzing filter criteria or attempting to create segment rules that produce minimal ROI. Ultimately, it's crucial to keep a focus on the customer experience, ensuring that your marketing messages remain relevant and streamlined across every platform.

In a data driven environment, taking the time to compare contact fields or manage a filter shared list can be helpful, but should not overshadow the broader goals of generating leads and closing sales. For instance, if a specialized marketing cloud integration is beneficial, it should still align with your overall campaign objectives and not become a distraction.

Eloqua Segmentation: A Simpler Approach

Implementing your new segmentation strategy takes time, and it doesn't have to be perfect at first. Let your marketing team be content with most of the value of customer segmentation with a much simpler [marketing segmentation plan](#).

Every quarter, have your accounting department assemble a list of customer companies. Even an incomplete list is a good start. You can then upload this list into Eloqua and flag them as customers. Congratulations—you've just segmented by customer! The data will be usable within hours, allowing you to make meaningful progress on your marketing campaigns.

In Eloqua, creating segments can be streamlined by starting with a shared filter that identifies the core attributes of your customers. With this simpler approach, you can gradually refine your filter criteria, compare contact fields for additional insights, and continually segment build as your strategy evolves.

Over time, these smaller, more manageable improvements allow you to scale your segmentation efforts without overwhelming your team.

Building an Effective Marketing Campaign

Customer segmentation does more than just make your data spreadsheets look neat. Knowing which customers need nurturing is the first step in a truly successful marketing campaign. And with a reliable, easy-to-use software like Eloqua, segmentation is a walk in the park. Check out our white paper [“Segmentation Before Integration”](#) for more information.

Within the Eloqua campaign canvas, an Eloqua user can orchestrate a multi-step campaign by progressing each contact segment through a carefully timed series of emails. By tailoring content to your target audience, you can maximize lead nurturing opportunities as you send email messages at pivotal moments. Ultimately, this personalized approach fosters a stronger relationship with both existing and potential customers, driving better long-term results.

Remember, building an effective campaign is not just about your messages, but also about how you handle customer data. Ensuring that each contact field is accurately populated will allow you to effectively track digital body language, manage the buyer journey, and respond strategically to each person's evolving needs.

Ready to improve your marketing segmentation plans? [Get in touch](#) and let us get you started.