The answer is definitely yes. However most organisations that Experian Marketing Services encounters have their offline and online teams operating in isolation with neither really understanding what the other is doing. This leads to missed opportunities to utilise traditional offline learnings about their base in the online world and vice versa.

It is important to remember that consumers don’t work in channel silos. They use a mix of channels; whether they are surfing the net, browsing your site, reading emails, looking at a catalogue or walking down the high street. So why not look at them holistically? It makes perfect sense that understanding behaviours across channels and delivering consistent tailored messaging will increase your ability to impact behaviours from acquisition through to retention.

Traditional offline analytics focuses on developing a sound understanding of the base acknowledging all customers are not equal. Basic insights include establishing the relative value of each customer, the recency and frequency of engagement plus the products and channels customers are interested in. By overlaying external segmentations such as Mosaic against these dimensions, brands can understand both cross-sell and up-sell opportunities within the existing base as well as identify the high value segments of the market they should be trying to recruit.

On the other hand, online analytics has tended to be more performance metric driven. Recruitment success is tracked by cost-per-click or cost-per-account across activity. Website tracking concentrates on the number of new and repeat visitors to site, page / product views and time spent on site. Onsite analysis explores visitor journeys to amend the usability and stickiness of the site to increase revenues. Whilst email has traditionally measured deliverability, open and click through rates on a campaign by campaign basis, this is one of the first channels to start to capture individual level information to feed into offline analysis.

Addressing these areas in isolation allows improvements within each silo but only by fusing insights will brands fully realise potential. The key is getting internal teams to work closely together which may seem a daunting prospect. But if you keep the approach simple you should get success. The following details areas where we are seeing significant successes with relative simple approaches to combining on and offline:

1. Recruiting the right customers
From offline analytics we know the most profitable segments - all acquisition channels including digital should be focussed on recruiting these. Analyse the profile each source is driving then re-align your activity to areas which drive the right
segments – potentially be prepared to invest more to acquire these knowing they will be higher value long term. This logic can be applied to targeting via affiliates; banner advertising and relevant keywords.

2. Segment personalisation
Different segments have varying interests based on purchase and browsing behaviours. By establishing links back to basic demographic information you can align creative messaging that is more likely to appeal to specific segments – both for customers and prospects. This is relatively easy in the offline world as you know the segments you are targeting. It becomes more challenging in online unless you have some way of identifying which type of customer/prospect has landed.

Online however gives far more opportunities to test. Align messaging within banner and affiliate advertising based on the profile. On site, varying the messaging based on the segment identified has been seen to increase both click through and conversion rates. Once you’ve got information on what works online this can be fed back into offline channels.

3. Enhanced engagement programmes
Many customer programmes are predominately delivered by email, however many still blast emails rather than creating long term customer engagement. Those developing a segmented strategy have seen large lifts in revenues from the approach.

First understand who is engaged with your email programme over a time period and define high to low engagement segments. Overlay this with your traditional offline analysis of demographic or recency, frequency and monetary segments to establish groups which you should vary your communications to make them more relevant. Further refinements can be made over time to integrate wider data and triggered activity.

Start simple:
Delivering the above may require linking data from separate systems but don’t be put off. The best way is to start simple, linking data within an analytical environment to develop initial learnings and plan a robust test and learn programme. The initial test results can then be used to develop a business case for better data integration if required, turning these activities into business as usual.

By fusing on and offline insights you can drive personalisation that benefits both the consumer and your brand.

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Debbie has over 20 years experience in leveraging data and insight to drive effective marketing strategies across both client and agency based roles.

Debbie specialises in managing and implementing customer insight, targeting, and planning led projects to deliver increased effectiveness of clients’ acquisition and customer management programmes. Recent posts have been consultancy based; building on client side experience as Customer Insight Manager for Britannia Building Society and Senior Analyst at Great Universal Stores.