

‘One man thousand’ are tougher than ‘sharks’

How to approach targeting to
increase market share

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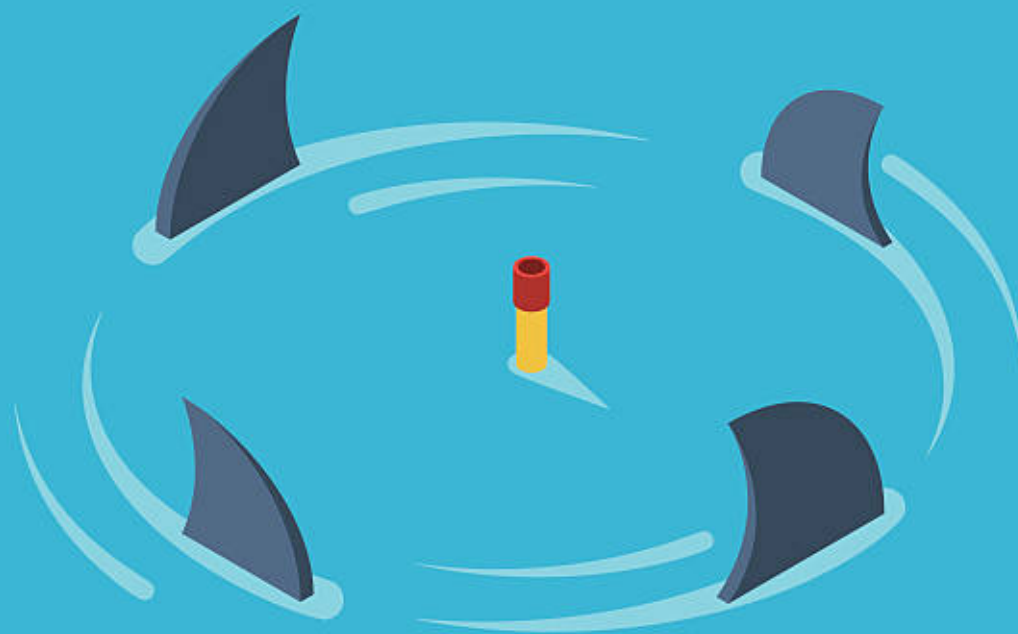
Beyond the Fluff

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Shark

/ʃɑː (r) k/ (noun)–An ambitious student who craves high marks in school and achieves those high marks through constant studying and cramming of the educative material

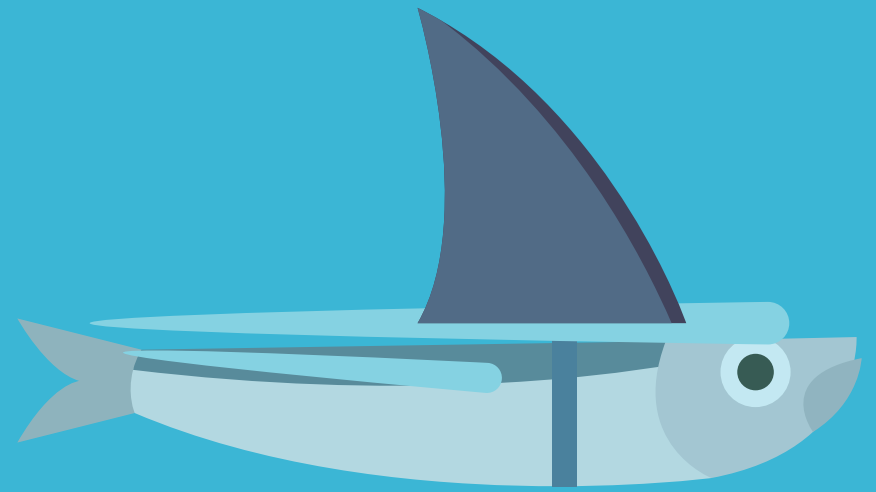
Sharks
can find
their own
food



**You remember the *sharks* in your school, right?
They always came to class early, always had their
heads in a book any chance they got and were
always top of the class.**

Teachers rarely worry too much about the class sharks because they know the *sharks* will always get good grades regardless. In a marketing context, these *class sharks* are like a brand's most loyal customers—their heaviest buyers. We'll call them *A+ customers* because if they were being graded on how often they purchased a brand, they would always get A's.

Just as the *sharks* in class don't need any special attention before they perform well, *A+ customers* don't need to be fed with heavy advertising before they buy a particular product—they already know what they want and will go for it. They're *sharks*, remember; they'll find their food themselves.



The usual suspects

Think about your typical grocery list with several items on it, ranging from food stuff to toiletries.

For a few of these items, if you went to the store today, you already know which brands you would buy because you buy the same ones all the time. You're part of those brands' *A+ customers*, and as previously mentioned, those brands don't need to heavily advertise to you.

For example, imagine you're a heavy Coca-Cola drinker, such that you literally drink it with breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Coca-Cola doesn't need to place a huge billboard in front of you to remind you to buy Coca-Cola. If anything, you're the one who's out and about looking for them! That then begs the question—who should brands really be focusing their advertising on?



Little fishes pack a punch

Remember the *class sharks* we discussed earlier? Well, they usually make up a small portion of the

class. In fact, most of the class consists of students who would do averagely well at best without extra attention. It's not that they're not as smart as the *class sharks*, but that they're probably not as interested in the topic, or they get easily distracted. It's these students who need a little more help from the teacher to improve their grades, and in the marketing context, represent a brand's non-regular customers—we'll call them the *C-customers*.

Even though *C-customers* don't purchase as often as *A+ customers* do, there are so many *C-customers* that they end up contributing to a lot of a brand's market share when they do.

If the *A+ customers* are *sharks*, then *C-customers* are *one man thousand* and it's this bunch of customers you should focus most of your advertising on as a brand manager, because for one thing, they're collectively bringing in a lot of your revenue and secondly, you're not the only one vying for their attention.

We need
more men
at the
table!



In the Ghanaian beer market, there's a particular international stout brand with a distinct bitter taste usually acquired over time, and as it's advertising has communicated over the years; it is drunk at the “table of men”.

As big as the brand is here in Ghana, the sleek black stout certainly isn't every beer drinker's favourite. It's bitter taste, and the highly competitive nature of the market are just a few reasons why the brand has so many *C-customers* who only buy it now and then. However, if you drink it yourself or know people who do, it should not surprise you that its *A+ customers* are hard core and almost unwavering.

This popular stout brand doesn't just settle for the comfort of their *A+ customers* though because they know those *C- customers* are always up for grabs and the competition is trying hard to attract them too—so how does this drink known for its strong and bitter taste, appeal to these *C-customers* and increase its market share?

Easy on
the
tongue,
please

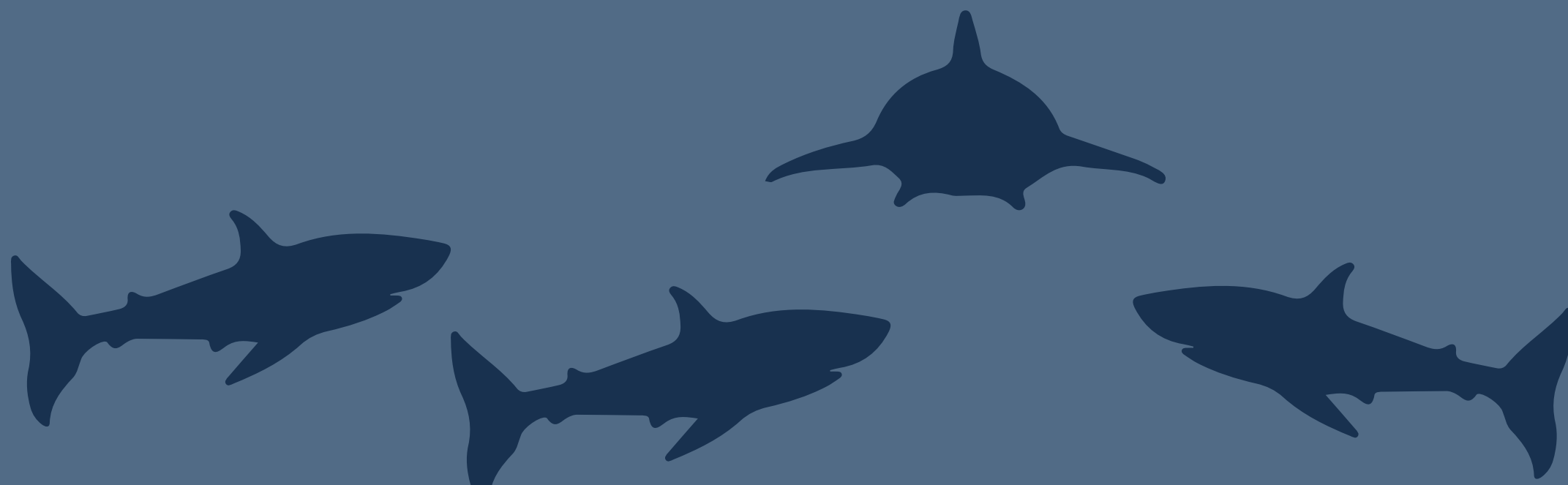


Over the past few decades, this black and gold stout has tried to win over these *C- customers* with different variants, including their chocolate stout currently in Cameroon, and most recently, a ‘Smooth’ variant, which is already in Ghana, Nigeria, and Cameroon:

“[Brand name] Smooth is the newest member of the [brand name] family and the most significant African variation of the stout in many years. Crucially, it brings a lower strength, sweeter, more price accessible variant for the region.” – The President of the parent brand in Africa

If you’ve seen the new bottle in stores, you’ll have noticed it’s wrapped with new bright golden labels around the neck and body to attract buyers. Aside from the new packaging, marketing efforts have also included traditional and digital advertising that communicates the drink's new smoother taste that’s “easier on the tongue”. If all goes well, the brand should gain a healthy amount of new customers who can now enjoy a smoother, less bitter stout, while contributing nicely to the brand's market share.

Stop
preaching
to the
choir



Politicians shouldn't campaign hard at their strongest supporters, religious leaders shouldn't preach too much to the strongest believers, and brand managers shouldn't spend too much of their advertising budget on their most loyal customers.

As a brand manager, your goal is to grow your brand's market share by increasing sales, and you can't do that by preaching to the choir. Loyalty programs are a nice way of letting your best customers know you appreciate them, but no one is going to buy more than they need, and loyal customers will always buy. If anything, you might just influence the period of purchase with customers trying to take advantage of price discounts.

What you really want to do is pay close attention to those *C- customers* and keep giving them new reasons to try you again and again, because when it comes to growing market share, ***“one man thousand are tougher than sharks”***.

Think your brand could do more
than it's currently doing?
Let's talk

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