

Breaking your market into groups of people with similar core needs and interests leads to more effective targeting, less wasted spend and maximized sales. That's why segmentation studies are so critical, and why most companies have done one.

But how long do you hold on to your segmentation before it's time for a refresh? And when you do a refresh, what steps do you need to take to create success?

Here we share five tips:

Know when it's time.

Holding on to what exists for too long can create opportunity costs for your business. When assessing whether it's time for a refresh, consider these two questions:

- Has your business changed since your segmentation was done?
 This includes a shift in company goals, products or customers.
- 2. Have market conditions evolved? This includes new market entrants, as well as cultural events and accelerators (Covid-19 as a prime example).

Embrace the process.

Flexibility, openness and continuous alignment are needed as you infuse a refreshed segmentation into your organization. Identify the stakeholders to involve at critical junctures, set expectations so they know what's to come, and keep them informed so they remain invested.

Frame your potential market.

Examine market trends, characteristics and consumer needs to determine whether to narrow or expand your pool of potential customers. In your framing, consider where the market is today, as well as where it's heading (your future potential).

Test drive your new segments.

Segments should feel like common sense. Gather feedback to make sure they pass the sniff test. Having proof-points will accelerate internal acceptance and adoption.

Create an activation plan.

The end of the segmentation project is the start of the journey. Having an activation plan that's adapted to your company's working culture is critical. Use creative formats and tools to break the information down, to show what's changed, to build energy and to create staying power.

