



“IT’S THE MAGIC BULLET OF MARKETING”

For Zendesk, Mariana has been their ‘golden doodle’ for optimizing lead generation and targeting (a golden *what?* Read on!).

WHO’S ZENDESK?

If you’ve ever used online customer service, there’s an excellent chance you’ve encountered Zendesk and its SaaS CS solutions. Zendesk apps allow clients to manage customer service requests in approximately 40 languages, in sectors including telecom, education, consumer technology, retail/ecommerce and more. Headquartered in San Francisco, it’s got over 1,400 employees serving 75,000 paid customers in 150 countries and territories.

THE CHALLENGE? IMPROVE THEIR LEADS AND TARGETING

Zendesk had been doing “a lot” of SEM and PPC, according to Paul Godfrey, their Director of Engineering, investing sizable spends over the years. But, “the results we got were really a mixed bag. We wanted to be much more conscious about who we’re serving ads to.”

Ad networks, as Paul points out, are actually disincentivized to provide highly precise targeting, because it might logically result in smaller ad buys. But for a marketer, as he explains, “if I can go out there and hit only the people who fit my marketing persona, that’s ideal. That’s our utopia: We wanted to find the exact list of people who would buy our software.”

HOW DID YOU COME ACROSS MARIANA IQ?

“We were doing research into how we could do very granular targeting,” Paul says. “We were looking for a partner to advance our targeting capabilities, and their name came up; there’s not a lot of people who do what they do.”

WHAT DID YOU THINK AFTER FIRST MEETING THEM?

To Paul and his team, “it sounded too good to be true. But what have we got to lose?”

Soon enough, his new vendor was proving its mettle, and the way the Mariana team collaborated with Zendesk as part of that. “It really felt like they were an extension of our team, which is really uncommon,” Paul says. “We’ve got a really high bar in terms of what we expect for customer service, since we sell customer service. They had great synergy, great attitudes, and when they’re delivering value and you’re happy to pay for that value, it all goes pretty damn smooth.”

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SO WHAT'S YOUR OPINION OF MARIANA IQ TODAY?

"It's the magic bullet of marketing," Paul says. With 35,000 customers in the USA, "we sell to a lot of different arrays of personas and clusters." But Mariana's machine learning allowed Zendesk to now identify those far more precisely. "We can create them on the fly with Mariana, and we've been surprised at how it works. Like magic."

HOW DID MARIANA IQ'S PERSONAS COMPARE TO ONES YOU'D BUILT BEFORE?

Paul was actually able to benchmark Mariana IQ's AI-crafted personas against traditional segmentation and persona-building. At the same time they were bringing Mariana on board, Zendesk had been "simultaneously going through customer segmentation analysis internally, over several months, to answer questions about who to target, who to double-down on, et cetera.

"By doing these in parallel, we were able to see validation of machine learning," he says, "because what Mariana did in just a few days matched up with what we'd been doing on our own."

As he notes, "Without parallel proof, you might question the results of machine learning, but Mariana's results keep cropping up in our own studies. So they were being validated by the hands-on, data-scientist, consulting-with-analysts approach."

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IS THERE ROI YOU CAN SHARE WITH US..?

"Within a few short months of partnering with Mariana, we've been able to markedly improve the quality of leads we're bringing in through our advertising programs," Paul says. "The side effect of better targeting, of course, is you're able to then spend your ad dollars more efficiently and in turn make those investments go further. We've effectively been able to increase the lead volume by 4X from our previous content marketing efforts and all the while improve the quality of incoming leads — it doesn't get any better than that."

WHAT ABOUT YOUR COST PER LEAD?

Paul's been extremely pleased with the CPL he's seeing with Mariana IQ. "There's a direct correlation between the quality of an audience and the cost per lead," he points out. "When you target quality audiences, the farther your money will go. The CPL is very attractive because the audiences are so fine-tuned; we're getting brand exposure in front of people we know are our audience.

"Being top-of-mind in their social channels means when they come around to the buying process again, they'll have Zendesk in mind, even if they weren't converted the first go-round," Paul says. "There's very little waste versus traditional advertising."

IN A SPECIFIC CHANNEL?

"Earlier," Paul says, "we were spending about 2 to 3 times as much on LinkedIn, but we saw a ton of misfires using their targeting." With Mariana IQ, the quality of leads has allowed Zendesk to make more efficient, more targeted spends in social channels -- doing more with less, in no uncertain terms.



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**CAN YOU CITE A BEFORE-AND-AFTER
 CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE “BREAKTHROUGH
 ADVANTAGE” YOU’RE GETTING WITH
 MARIANA? (IT SOUNDS AMAZING!)**

Paul and the Zendesk team realized that through MarianalQ, they could actually “quantify our whole universe of buyers and market to them directly through advertising. The people we identify through Mariana are people we can get in front of: We can get 50% penetration into a list of 100K in just three days,” because those prospects are using social media channels with high frequency, and MarianalQ has already identified them there through social targeting.

“The result is really quantifiable,” Paul says. “You can take a prospect through the entire lifecycle of learning about your product using advertising, versus the traditional funnel model.”

In the timeworn sales funnel, leads need to be engaged at the top of the funnel and nurtured toward conversion. “Typical conversion rates are 2%,” Paul explains, “leaving 98% of your traffic on the table. But with Mariana, you’ve got such an attention

share with these people in social, you can walk them through that process via advertising. That’s a breakthrough advantage.”

**THAT’S IMPRESSIVE, ALL RIGHT.
 ANY OTHER ADVANTAGES?**

The people Zendesk targets will keep making similar buying decisions for the rest of their career, even if it takes them to other jobs. With MarianalQ, “if I can identify somebody who’s reached that level, there’s no reason I shouldn’t market to that person in perpetuity,” Paul says. “Mariana has changed how we invest our dollars, because you get so much more efficiency out of your dollar.”

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**WHAT ABOUT ITS EASE OF USE?
 ITS ACCOUNTABILITY?**

“It’s absolutely a big step forward in ease of use,” Paul says, especially versus other lead providers, which he compares to a ‘black box’: “You give them criteria and they ask for your money, and you take it on faith they’ll deliver. And the results are never very effective for the dollars you’re spending. From a quantitative and scientific standpoint, we can see the exact audiences Mariana is building, and that’s really nice.”



HOW WOULD YOU SUM UP THE VALUE YOU GET FROM MARIANA IQ?

"Mariana gives us the ultimate advantage of being able to differentiate ourselves and compete against way bigger competitors, because we're finding new customers by using data insights more intelligently," Paul explains.

"We're competing against Oracle, and Salesforce, and so on. If you compete symmetrically, you're going to get outspent. By finding new customers using data insights more intelligently, we're able to compete against those guys."

WHAT WOULD YOU TELL OTHER MARKETERS ABOUT MARIANA IQ?

"I would rather other marketers not use them, actually. At least not in our space. I don't tell many people about Mariana, especially not people I compete against."

Paul's convinced Mariana IQ's use of AI will shape the future. "I'm dead-on convinced this is how companies will be spending their ad dollars five years into the future. When you sit somebody down who works in demand gen or advertising and walk them through this, they say 'I need to be doing this, too.'"

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IF MARIANA IQ WAS A DOG, WHAT KIND OF DOG WOULD IT BE?

"It would be a golden doodle," Paul says. "A golden retriever bred with a poodle, so you get this super-smart dog that doesn't shed and is hypoallergenic. It's intelligent and convenient at the same time."



MARIANA IQ

www.marianaIQ.com

