

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/using-your-mission-to-find-your-customer/>

Alexandria Zatarain, co-founder and VP of brand and marketing at Eight Sleep, explains how her company refined their brand and target audience by looking inward and understanding their core values. Once they understood their mission, she says, they were able to find their customer and build the company like a movement.



Transcript

- We took an approach that is sort of, 00:00:07,470 we call DNA-based, meaning we had been through five years that were torture.. Where we're like, this is impossible.. We can't keep trying to find a new customer segment and trying to refine our messaging and trying to change our brand every six months, right? So we looked inwards and we said, "Okay, who are we as founders and why are we building this company? And what are the core beliefs that we have about sleep, technology and sleep, health, the long-term vision of the company?" So putting it all out there, it was kind of like therapy.. And by describing that DNA and that soul of the company is when we came about with that concept of sleep fitness.. We said, "Well, we're actually a mission-driven company, and we are building our own category because the way that sleep is being talked about is not what we believe is correct or how we should be thinking or talking about sleep.. So here's our point of view, which is what brand is, it's just what is your point of view." And with that point of view, then we went to the second phase, which is who's our customer? And the decision of who we targeted was based on who do we believe this message will resonate with the best? That was the thinking is if this is who we are, this is what we're building, this is why we're building it, who's our community? So I always describe it the way we build the Eight Sleep brand is like a movement.. So we think about it more like we're a movement.. We believe that sleep is like fitness.. We believe that sleep is something that you should be prioritizing, measuring, optimizing.. That just like fitness, you can get better at..

You're not a bad sleeper or a good sleeper.. It's a journey that technology can help you achieve sleep fitness, right? And so then we go out there as founders, and Mateo, who's my co-founder and our CEO is the leader of that movement 'cause this is his story.. This is why we started the company, and we're just trying to find people to join this movement.. And that's how we identified that initial customer segment.. And that's what changed everything for us.. And so what we identified is that, essentially, who we needed to speak to were individuals who already believed, just like us, that sleep is actually important for their health and their wellbeing.. We didn't have to convince them about that.. There are other people in the world to whom we have to convince them that sleep's important, but we are gonna focus first on people who already know the importance of sleep.. And second, they're already doing something about it.. They are investing in wearables..

They are investing in other products, they're spending in their sleep and their mattresses and their pillows and their linens.. And you know, they're trying to build good habits, even if they may not be perfect.. So it was easier to evangelize to

them.. 'Cause again, we think about it as a movement.. And then once we understood that, and then we started mapping them more in terms of demographics and income, like all that other stuff came after.. For us, the most important trait in who we're speaking to is actually this relationship with their sleep is what we say.. That is what brings our customers together.. - If the relationship 00:03:10,926 was there.. - Yeah.. 00:03:13,350 Is their belief that sleep is important, and that they're already investing in it, they're already doing something about it..

That is what brings all of our customers, even today, five years after, together.. And then there are other traits around their income that may be, obviously, you see some patterns, but the reality is the most important one is that relationship to sleep...