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eCommerce Controversy



Hey. Ezra here, for Smart Marketer. I caught Bigcommerce's hand in the cookie jar, or so I thought. I received an email from them, and immediately after I received this email, **I started thinking, "That's wrong. That's immoral. They shouldn't be doing that."** Then I realized I do the same thing in my marketing. I'm going to show you this email. I want to show you what they were doing and what they are doing, and I want to get your opinion on whether or not you think it's bad, immoral, and wrong and whether or not you



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do something similar in your marketing. Let's head over to the computer and check it out.

Here we are. We're in my Gmail inbox. You can see immediately, the subject line is 'Re: Your Yahoo Store.' What I find fascinating about this is the outbound sales team at Bigcommerce is using email marketing best practices to increase the open rates of their emails. We have not had a conversation about my Yahoo store. They just 'Re:' because **when you put 'Re' in front of the email subject line, people think it's a conversation that they been already engaged in, so they're more likely to open it.** The sales staff over there at BC is paying enough attention to their outbound marketing that they're split testing subject lines on cold emails.

The next thing that we see, if we scroll down and look what they said, they say, "Hi. After researching your online store, I think you have a great store, but I'm confident that you could dramatically improve your sales by moving your business to Bigcommerce." Basically, they've scraped the database, it appears that they've database of the Yahoo stores and they're emailing, because I got this on a bunch of different Yahoo stores that I own. They're emailing all the Yahoo store owners and trying to get them to switch to Bigcommerce.

Let's break this down. The first thing they say is, "You're doing awesome. I'm confident that after I've had a look at it, that you could improve your business by switching over to our product." Then they say a little bit of social proof:



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"Hundreds of Yahoo store owners have already switched and increased sales, in some cases by as much as 40%, thanks to our advanced marketing tools, mobile-optimized stores, and in-house ecommerce consultants." They're basically like, "A lot of people have already done this, and here are the specific benefits that you're going to get by moving to us: Mobile optimization, advanced marketing tools that are built into our platform, and we've got people to help you." Then they say, "Even better, we do not charge transaction fees so you keep more of your money." **That's just a stab, that's just a direct attack, really, against Yahoo and all the features that some people don't like about Yahoo stores:** There's a fee and they don't have quite as good built in tools. Every platform has it's ups and downs, but they've really done their research here and they're coming out and they're going after every Yahoo store.

Then they come and they say, "In fact, we're so confident we can help your business, we're offering to move your entire store to Bigcommerce at no charge." They will actually move the store for you. "I'd love to set up a free consultation to go over exactly what we do and how Bigcommerce can help you sell more. When would be a good time to meet this week? I look forward to hearing from you. PS, I can create a store for you if you'd like and you can do so using this link. Creating directly from our website would route your info into someone other than me. Please use this link, i.e. my affiliate link." The question is, is this like what all the outbound salespeople are doing or is there one random person who's on their sales team who's scraping all the Yahoo stores? I think it's fascinating that they come



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down and their call-to-action is for a consultation. Get someone on the phone, talk to them. That's how you would close a deal like this. This would be a longer sales cycle. You'd have to cover people's fears of loss.

It's just such a brilliantly written piece of marketing copy. It's fascinating. What I've mentioned was that **I do this same thing in my business. The way that I'm doing it is I'm targeting other people's fan pages with Facebook ads**, and I'm doing certain groups of people who are interested in Magento stores, people who are interested in Bigcommerce stores on Facebook. I'm targeting the fans of those businesses and I'm displaying my e-commerce ads and my content marketing ads to them; the videos that I create content, that I syndicate on my blog, like this video. I'm actually targeting with advertising, companies like Bigcommerce and people who are fans of their page, other people in my community who have big followings, groups. It's just a fascinating way that these guys are doing it. This is a little bit more direct when you're actually scraping the customer data and doing a direct response campaign. My Facebook media buys are not a direct response campaign in as much as I'm not targeting one single direct user and making a communication and saying, "This is who I am." That would be like somehow scraping the email list of one of my competitors and then sending an email. I would never do that. **I think this is a fascinating look at what is ethical.** I'm very curious what you think is ethical. Do you think this campaign is ethical? Would you do this? Are you



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doing something similar in your business? I'd love to know. I just thought this was such a fascinating email to get. I'd love to hear what you think of this whole thing. Thanks so much. I'll talk to you soon.

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