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# Hitting a Moving Target

How to intelligently market to movers



# From One Marketer to Another

## Dear Marketers,

I'm so glad you're here! As a marketer in the relocation industry, I've seen the disconnect between people who are moving (movers as we call them) and businesses. More than any other consumers, movers need the help of businesses as they make time-sensitive purchase decisions around their move. Yet marketers have historically lacked the precision to reach this demographic. We now have the power to change this.

As you will soon discover, movers are a fascinating audience. Every year, millions of Americans want and need products and services related to their move. Yet, businesses struggle to reach them. With the right data, accuracy, and intelligence, however, businesses and movers can finally connect in the middle.

It's time to say goodbye to the days of too-late timing, generic advertising, and impersonalized mover coupons. At Updater, we've spent years perfecting how we reach movers. In this eBook, we share some of our most impactful ideas and tactics. We break down mover buying behavior, the move lifecycle, and offer a marketing strategy that actually works.

We invite you to leverage this knowledge to reach your ideal customer and position yourself as an integral part of the mover journey.



Always moving forward,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenna Weinerman".

**Jenna Weinerman**  
VP Marketing, Updater

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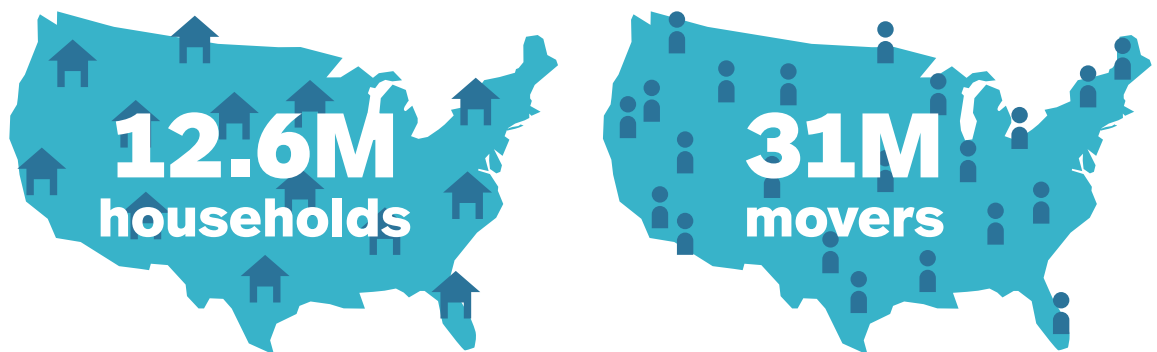
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# Introduction

## \$250B OPPORTUNITY

The United States is the most transient country in the world. Each year, **12.6 million households** move – a staggering **31 million** individual movers.



On average, these 12.6 million households will each spend **~\$20,000** in move-event purchases and long-term spend.

**12.6 million × \$20,000 = Over \$250 billion  
in annual moving spend**

Let's take a moment to appreciate this impressive spending power. This mover audience provides an opportunity for marketers to capture the attention of a demographic that's primed to spend, has the potential to expand a brand's reputation, and acquire additional lifetime customers.

In this eBook, we cover tactics to strengthen customer acquisition efforts. We dive deep into the mover mindset and what makes them an enticing audience, as well as current marketing trends and why these trends fall short in reaching and engaging customers. Until recently, movers remained an elusive audience for most marketers – those days are gone.

Let's get started with an exploration of the mover mindset and how it differs from an average consumer journey.

# The Challenge:

## MOVERS ARE A DIFFERENT KIND OF BUYER

### Changing Spending Habits and Loyalties

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When a person's lifestyle changes, so do their needs – this drastically alters buying behavior. Annually, **moving is the highest frequency trigger event in which households substantially alter their purchasing habits.** Close behind are significant life events such as marriage, divorce, the birth of a child, graduation, a new job, retirement, or a death in the family – many of which often trigger a move.

When all roads lead back to moving, we're left with an audience whose needs lie in multiple sectors across the market. **Not only do movers need a diverse array of products and services, but they need them all at once.** From shower curtains to insurance policies to cleaning services, the all-encompassing and time-sensitive needs of moving present a massive opportunity to influence spending behaviors. This is the most valuable time for attracting and retaining lifetime customers.

### An Impressionable (and time-pressed) Demographic

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With an overwhelming number of decisions to make, movers are less likely to spend as much time researching and comparing brands as they normally would. Instead, movers choose the most economical, fastest, and/or easiest option. If a mover is relocating to a different town or state, they're also looking for new local businesses such as gyms, grocery stores, pharmacies, and dry cleaners, just to name a few. As a result, **movers' brand loyalties are vulnerable, making them four times more likely to try new brands.** This means that over \$250B in spending decisions is up for grabs. Brands, however, aren't taking advantage of this potential. But why? The answer is simple: **Brands aren't reaching movers in the right way at the right time.** Let's take a closer look and why.

## Traditional Marketing Channels Miss Mover Deadlines

Until recently, the industry lacked the technology to effectively market to movers. Traditional marketing channels such as billboards, television commercials, search engine marketing, and direct mail don't capture movers in the right way, at the right time. Bombarding consumers with non-stop advertising *might* work, but in an age of information overload, movers expect more than a generic information dump.

The likelihood of a mover trying a new brand or choosing to stick with their current brand, increases if they're exposed to said brands 4-6 weeks before their move. But traditional marketing channels reach movers long after this crucial time frame – with brand messaging lost in a sea of depersonalized ads and offers.

**Traditional channels don't reach movers early enough in the move lifecycle.** Movers start thinking about moving tasks, on average, three months before their move. Movers then make most purchases, on average, 30 days before relocating.

Let's take a look at how current mover marketing tactics fall short, leaving billions of dollars on the table and millions of movers left to hack together solutions on their own.

	What doesn't work	What works
<b>Direct Marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Coupons arrive weeks after the move event</li> <li>✗ Ads are rarely personalized and often feel like spam</li> <li>✗ No insight into who coupons reach unless the coupon is redeemed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Direct response facilitates a desired outcome</li> <li>✓ Geo- or zip code-based targeting possibilities</li> <li>✓ Brand exposure to new movers</li> </ul>
<b>Search Engine Marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Most keywords and industries are extremely competitive</li> <li>✗ Difficult to pinpoint when a move happens resulting in false leads or poor timing</li> <li>✗ Impressions don't increase the bottom line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Curious audience already searching for your product or service</li> <li>✓ Easy to set up and automate</li> <li>✓ Controlled budget, pay per click</li> </ul>
<b>Brand Marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Spray-and-pray is difficult to track</li> <li>✗ Expensive and not as targeted as other channels</li> <li>✗ Multiple touch points requires to influence purchasing behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wide audience with numerous creative possibilities</li> <li>✓ Reaches audience when they're engaged and attentive</li> </ul>

# The Solution:

## MARKETING TO MOVERS WITH PRECISION

### Timing, Targeting, and Data Intelligence

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We know that movers' brand loyalties are vulnerable, their spending is high, they need a wide range of products and services all at once, and they need them fast – the potential is massive. Yet, traditional marketing channels don't reach movers in the right way at the right time, leaving businesses to miss out on potential revenue. So, how can marketers fulfill their business potential with movers?

The answer lies in **Precise Timing, Targeting, and Data Intelligence.**

In this section, we explore what makes timing and targeting truly “precise” and how together they form the perfect strategy for marketing to movers. Later, we'll get into how to execute this strategy by utilizing mover information in a way that's never before been done.

To fully understand the importance of precise timing and targeting when reaching movers, let's first take a look at the move lifecycle. Understanding the mover mindset – and how it differs from a typical consumer – is what gives marketers an advantage when targeting this demographic.

## Precise Timing: Anatomy of the Move Lifecycle

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Mover needs are different in the weeks leading up to their move than in the months after. Many marketing teams and tactics, however, don't make this distinction. It's crucial to recognize that the move lifecycle has two stages: **pre-move** and **post-move**.

Treating the move lifecycle as a single event rather than a series of events causes marketers to miss their window of opportunity. It's crucial to focus on what movers think about and when. This mindset allows marketers to deliver the right products and services at the right time; presenting themselves as a welcomed solution rather than just another item on their to-do list. Below is a breakdown of movers' thoughts, needs, and buying behaviors throughout each stage of the move lifecycle.

### Pre-Move Mindset

In the 1-2 months before moving, **movers make 70-90% of their biggest purchases**. This time period is when movers map out their needs in terms of moving-centric services such as moving companies, cleaning services, and moving supplies. Movers are also thinking about the space in their new home, as well as the distance from their new home to frequent destinations such as work, school, and the gym.

Some common mover questions are:

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| “What moving company will I use?”     | “What will my commute be like?”   |
| “Where can I get a cleaning service?” | “Where is my child's new school?” |
| “What do I have too much of?”         | “When should I set up my WiFi?”   |
| “What am I missing?”                  |                                   |

These questions concern movers and require help from home improvement professionals, retailers, moving companies, painters, and financial services, just to name a few. Since movers are looking to make decisions quickly, this is a rare time when they want businesses to actively seek them out. Businesses that are proactive during this time with moving support, discounted services or special offers are the businesses that will influence purchasing decisions and ultimately attract new customers.



## Precise Timing: Anatomy of the Move Lifecycle

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### The 1–6 Weeks Before Moving Day

Movers are in crunch time. This is the most stressful stage in the move lifecycle as movers rush to complete their moving-related tasks. This stress causes movers to make emotionally-charged purchases. If a business connects with movers during this time and is able to assist in easing their stress, this business is likely to earn a loyal and long-term customer. It's recommended that businesses develop mover-specific and solution-oriented marketing messaging and collateral.

During these critical pre-move weeks, movers pack their belongings and rid themselves of large items such as furniture and appliances that they will not be moving into their new home. This presents an opportunity for furniture and appliance retailers to market to movers with special offers such as discounts on delivery. Movers during this time also decide which providers to carry over or what new plans to purchase. Providers of home or renters insurance, TV and internet, and utilities need to be on high alert with relevant mover messaging during this time. Movers in this stage make quick decisions, so marketers need to move fast. Immediate action and optimization is key to winning in this fast-paced window of time.

### Post-Move Mindset

During the 1–6 weeks after a move, post-movers think less about services that pertain to moving and more about services that pertain to their new life. From grocery stores to pharmacies, gyms, doctors, and furniture stores, post-movers familiarize themselves with their new neighborhoods and are 88% more likely to Google “\_\_\_ near me” during this time. **Businesses that get in front of movers first in the pre-move stage are more likely to influence purchases in the post-move stage.**

Now that we've covered how to reach movers at the right time, let's dive into how to reach them in the right way. In the following section, we'll discuss best-targeting practices.

## Precise Targeting: Personalize or Desensitize

When targeting movers, marketers have a choice: either personalize their offers or risk movers becoming desensitized. Spraying and praying is an ineffective and expensive tactic that doesn't engage movers. As an example, take the notorious and extremely impersonal direct mail coupon. Direct mail coupons scream into the void: "Give me your money, whoever you are!" Movers are completely desensitized to their message.

**So how can marketers personalize their offers?** Knowing pieces of information such as homeownership status, email, and where individuals are moving to and from, drastically helps a business connect with new customers. This data information is essential for knowing who the mover is, what they need, and if your business is relevant to them.

For example, people moving to rural Indiana don't have the same needs and preferences as people moving to downtown Boston. Renters also don't have the same needs and preferences as homeowners. According to SmarterHQ, 72% of consumers say they now only engage with marketing messages that are personalized and tailored to their interests. Put bluntly, if something isn't relevant to a particular move, it's going in the trash. Take a look at the chart below that shows how needs differ by generation.

	Generation Z (18–24)	Millennials (25–40)	Generation X (41–56)
<b>Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recent college graduates and young adults</li> <li>Renters with a limited budget</li> <li>Cost-conscious consumers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newlyweds and/or expectant couples</li> <li>Renters or homeowners</li> <li>Increased spending to meet new lifestyle requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the peak of their careers with the highest salaries</li> <li>Homeowners</li> <li>Making room for children moving back home, or elderly parents moving in</li> </ul>
<b>Products and services needed</b>	Furniture, appliances, mattresses, electronics, boxes, Internet, home decor, streaming services, box subscriptions, etc.	Furniture, appliances, mattresses, electronics, boxes, internet, home decor, moving help, home care items/tools, home renovation, home security, baby items, daycare, pet care, etc.	Furniture, appliances, mattresses, boxes, storage, internet, moving help, junk removal, home renovations, accessibility renovation for seniors, etc.

## **Data Intelligence: How Updater Delivers with Intelligent Data**

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Updater is America's #1 moving app – helping Americans complete moving-related tasks weeks before their move takes place. Updater is where timing and targeting meet data intelligence, ensuring a better experience for movers nationwide. Here's how:

### **When it comes to timing...**

Updater helps marketers reach consumers on average four weeks before their actual move. Our technology informs us immediately after a lease is signed or a home is purchased or sold. This allows businesses to reach consumers before it's too late. During the 1-2 months before a move – when a mover makes 70-90% of their long-term purchasing and brand loyalty decisions – Updater is first on the scene to help.

### **When it comes to targeting...**

Updater partners and integrates with thousands of real estate companies to provide their clients and residents with a one-stop shop to complete all of their moving-related tasks. Updater prioritizes a mover's geographic location, move date, and homeownership status to easily filter out which businesses are (and are not) relevant to movers. From selecting TV and internet plans to forwarding mail and transferring insurance, movers are given options that fit their specific needs.

But don't take our word for it. See our [Case Studies](#) for how we put our technology to the test and yielded real results.

# Case Studies

## NATIONAL RETAILER CASE STUDY

### The Test

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Updater and one of the nation’s largest big-box retailers (“Retailer”) tested the timing of Updater’s pre-mover information against the Retailer’s own mover information sources.

#### The Goals

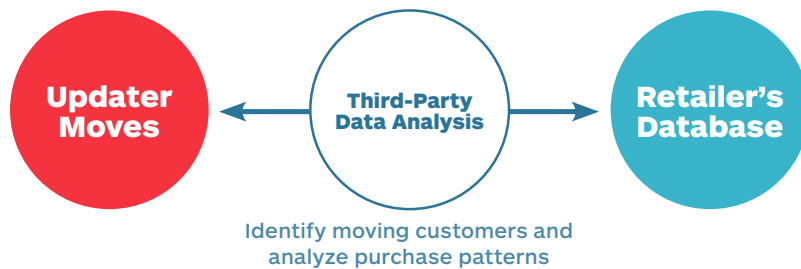
1. Demonstrate that Updater knew a household was moving earlier than the Retailer’s previous sources.
2. Demonstrate that Updater identifies more new moves than the Retailer’s previous sources.

### The Process

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An independent third-party data company was retained to gather data and perform the requisite analysis.

1. Updater provided the data company with information on household moves from a sample month of August.
2. Included in this data was the date that Updater could have shared this information with the Retailer.
3. This information was then compared against the Retailer’s own customer list that flags customers the Retailer believes are soon-to-be movers.

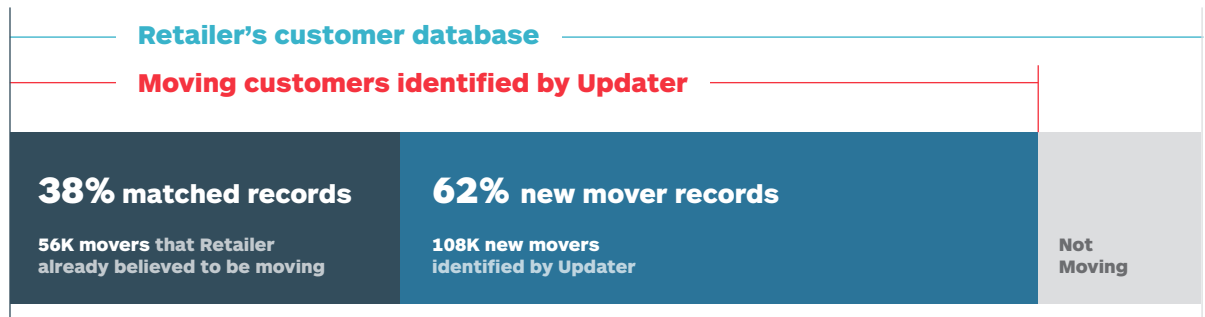


# Case Studies

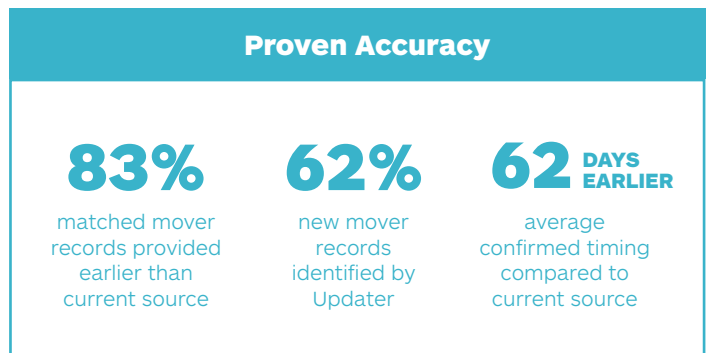
## NATIONAL RETAILER CASE STUDY

### The Results: Updater Identified More Movers Sooner

Of the mover information provided by Updater, 38% matched to the Retailer’s existing customer mover database. This means that **62% of Updater’s database was identified as new movers from the Retailer’s pre-existing customer list.** These moves were previously missed by the Retailer’s mover information sources.



- For 83% of the matched mover records, Updater was able to identify these individuals as movers, on average, **62 days earlier** than the Retailer’s current mover information sources.
- Updater provided **over 108K new mover records** to the Retailer.



# Case Studies

## NATIONAL HOME IMPROVEMENT RETAILER

### The Test

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Updater and the Retailer compared the timing of Updater’s pre-mover information to other sources of mover information previously available to (or purchased by) the Retailer. Updater and the Retailer also compared mover purchases and purchase timing against the move lifecycle.

#### The Goals

- 1. Establish a known/unknown baseline:** Map Updater mover information to the Retailer’s CRM to establish counts of known vs. unknown movers to the Retailer.
- 2. Validate signal:** Determine the overlap between the Retailer’s known movers provided by Updater vs. the Retailer’s current mover information sources.
- 3. Assess mover quality:** Validate mover behavior through sales patterns around the move timeframe.
- 4. Verify mover freshness:** Demonstrate the freshness of Updater’s mover information by comparing the data Updater knew a household was moving vs. when the Retailer’s current sources could have provided that signal.

### The Process

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A third-party data company was used to organize, match, and perform the requisite analysis.

- 1.** Updater provided the data company with information on household moves from a 2-month sample period of July and August.
- 2.** Included in this data was the date that Updater could have shared this information with the Retailer.
- 3.** Updater’s information was then matched to the Retailer’s entire customer list, including those they had indicated as movers.
- 4.** The Retailer also tracked and reported back what items Updater users purchased and when those purchases were made.

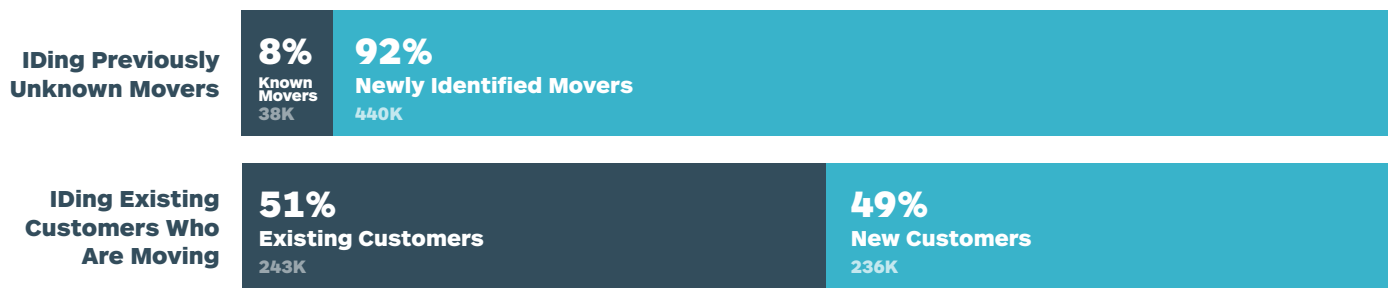


# Case Studies

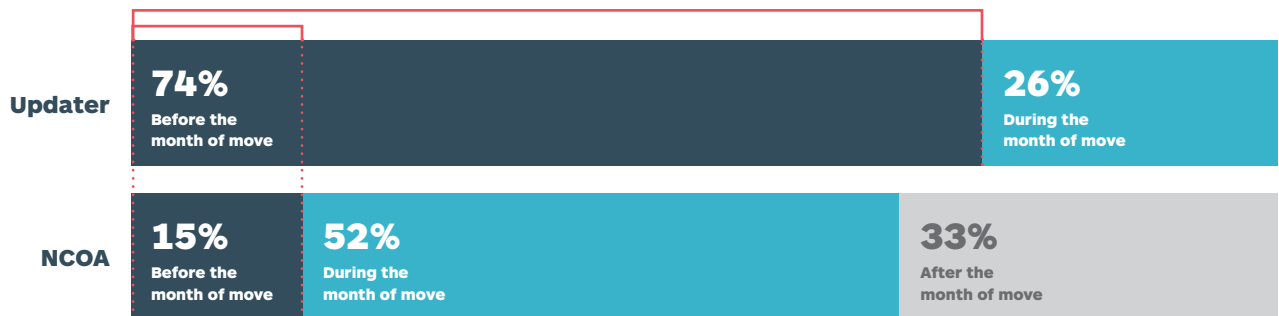
## NATIONAL HOME IMPROVEMENT RETAILER

### The Results: Updater Identified More Movers and Purchase Insights

Updater sent a total of 479K mover records to be matched against the Retailer’s current mover data sources. 92% of Updater’s mover signals were previously unknown to the Retailer. The Retailer’s current mover data sources only identified 8% of the 479K records as movers – **a difference of over 440K households** compared to Updater’s records.



Updater identified **59% more households** earlier than the Retailer’s current mover source:



Demonstrated in the data provided by both Updater and the Retailer’s current mover sources, **households are highly likely to make purchases prior to their move date.**



# Putting it All Together

Now that we've seen which marketing tactics are effective and how they relate to Updater's technology, let's see how they apply to a few additional real-life examples. We've included some messaging tips below to get your creative juices flowing.

## Local Business Messaging

For millions of Americans each year, moving means having to form dozens of new local relationships. Even a short 10-mile move can prompt movers to consider more convenient local services.

### Goal

To attract lifetime customers who are new to the community.

### Messaging should be:

**Hyper targeted:** Hone in on a niche audience whenever possible.

**Personalized:** Messaging should be personalized around moving details such as location, homeownership status, and move date.

**Locally focused:** Through your business offer, make the mover feel like part of the community.

### Example

**Type of business:** Gym

### Why a gym?

Fitness centers are great examples of local businesses looking to attract new lifetime customers.

**MIGHTY**  
FITNESS CENTER

**Pay us a visit:**  
123 Main Street  
Riverton, NY 12345

**Contact us:**  
(123) 456-7890  
getmighty@mightyfitness.com

Get in shape and make new friends?  
**THAT'S WHAT WE CALL A WIN.**

Whether you want to deadlift with pal George or take a yoga class with bestie Julia, Mighty Fitness Center is here for you and those you love. We attract top instructors and personal trainers—not to mention cool yogis, powerlifters, and casual treadmill-runners.

Friends who train together, stay together. *So, get your free visitor pass for you and a friend today.*

— Your Mighty Team

**FREE VISITOR PASS +1**

MIGHTY FITNESS CENTER



## eCommerce Business Messaging

As previously mentioned, the average mover spends \$9,000 during a move. That's almost 20% of the nation's yearly median household income. Helping movers feel secure in their purchases and advising them on how to leverage limited resources helps movers quickly make decisions.

### Goal

To attract new customers by satisfying the many needs triggered by moving.

### Messaging should be:

#### Expertly advised:

With so much to purchase, it only makes sense that movers want to invest in the best. Convince them that's you.

#### Appropriately framed:

Reframe your product or service as a moving essential. Explain to movers what you can do for them that no one else can.

#### Timely and exclusive:

Create exclusivity and urgency around your offers by making them available for a limited time. This helps influence shopping decisions when movers are most likely to be easily distracted.


### Example

#### Type of business:

Smart home systems

#### Why smart home systems?

Smart home systems are a great example of an eCommerce business model that uses relocation as a trigger to attract new customers.



**HomeAutomation**  
solutions

### In the chaos of moving, who wouldn't want to make their life a little easier?

SmartAssist can switch the lights on from anywhere, help you keep an eye on the kids, and save you money on your electric bill.

Wonder what else it can do?

[Explore SmartAssist](#)

# Moving Forward with Precision

## It's up to you now, marketers.

We urge you to take a hard look at your marketing tactics that aren't working and take steps towards implementing a strategy that does. If you need help identifying your next marketing moves, ask yourself these questions:

*Am I leveraging **timing** to market to movers?*

*Is my product/service geared toward a **pre- or post-move purchase**?*

*How am I **nurturing relationships with movers** over the entire move lifecycle?*

*Are my offers and promotions **personalized**? Do they prove **relevance and value**?*

By asking yourself these questions, you'll drastically improve your marketing efforts towards movers. At Updater, we're constantly thinking about how we can provide more value to movers. Optimizing moving-related purchases is at the top of that list. If you're a marketer who's ready to connect with movers in the right way at the right time, let's talk.

**Happy marketing!**

# About Updater

Updater is the nation's first relocation technology platform designed to make moving easier for the 31 million Americans that relocate each year. Updater helps users seamlessly connect TV and internet, find and reserve reputable moving companies, update accounts and records, transfer utilities, forward mail, secure insurance, save money through exclusive offers, and more. Updater's proprietary relocation technology platform is an industry standard, enabling a personalized and trusted all-in-one app for the relocation process.

**To learn more about how your business can partner with Updater, visit [Updater.com/businesses](https://Updater.com/businesses).**

# updater.

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**Sources:**

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Updater Internal Model, 2021. Includes Internet & Video, Insurance, Moving Transportation, Home Security, Home Warranty, and Home Services verticals. "Long-term spend" covers the duration of an average home subscription contract within each vertical.

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"Introducing the State of Engagement." Marketo, An Adobe Company