Size of segments is and will be a hot topic in marketing and business, in general. Despite the development of certain mathematical models that, people say, are supposed to solve such issues by extracting the optimal solution out of a black-box, the problem still remains... And this is normal, as all these algorithms are trying their best, in imperfect contexts.

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No matter how much we expect mathematicians and statisticians, British researchers or famous PhDs from Insead to come up with revolutionary and final solutions, well, surprise! We still have to keep our brains tuned on in order to take some judgemental decisions on segmentation. Of course, it's not only about segmentation, but that's the topic of this article, so we stick to it :)

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To keep the flow in a quite attractive area, we continue with a couple of examples from the vast realm of hobbies.

A life-style segmentation may reveal the existence of a certain segment in the population attracted to sports. We dare to say, that would be quite normal in a decent population.

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However, how do we treat sport lovers. Are we dealing with ONE segment or we have actually to do with several distinctive sub-groups? Let's think about sport magazines or portals. How many successful businesser are top of mind? How many magazines can we find in a shop on sports in general and how many on fishing, body-building, football or biking? The idea is pretty simple: people don't identify themselves as sport addicts but more as fans of different sports they enjoy. Targeting sports fans maybe a dillution of efforts, while going for individual segments may hit very homogenuous & interesting groups.

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Let's zoom in on extreme sports. Some marketers attack this area. There was a time when there was a common thread in all such sports. It was all about adrenaline. This was the connection line between all extreme sports addicts. However, as sports developed, we could hardly discuss about extreme sports people in general. There are addicts of freeride skiing, climbing, or anything else in the category. The "extreme" umbrella became too large and lost relevance. Yes, we all know there is a very successful RedBull out there in the market that appears to talk to these people. Please treat this case with care: on one hand, it is a tremendously well designed and consisten strategy. Second, they are not talking to this segment as one, they see the diversity within and capitalize on it.

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The same reasoning goes to passions. Some marketers may consider "passions" a proper platform. Indeed,as in times of crises, people find balance in following passions. However, people are not necessarily interested in discussing and seeking info on passions in general, but on THEIR passion. That's the right umbrella, that's where relevance occurs. Few successful stories on campaings related to hobbies or passions. Many nice ones though, when we think of gardening, collecting, photography, travel, etc...

To keep the story short: how do we "border" a segment? Is this a simple output of a data analytical tool. Many talk about "putting flesh on the segments". I strongly recommend to do this, in order to understand what data may try to reveal...

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