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???Rishi Kumar



Brands are desperately trying to close the experience gap – or the gap that exists between a customer's expectations and a brand's ability to meet them. As a result, many retailers are scrambling to unite their operational teams, with many needing to integrate traditionally siloed data points and platforms in order to provide not only a personal experience, but one that is consistent, profound, meaningful and differentiated.

Personalization 2.0

In 2020, the global pandemic accelerated a shift to digital commerce by five years. But consumers didn't simply stop buying products offline; rather, they incorporated digital commerce into a broader experience ecosystem encompassing a variety of purchasing and fulfillment choices, ranging from at-home delivery to buy online, pickup in store – and at curbside. As consumers clicked and bought, they expected the product they wanted available wherever they wanted to pick up it.

This change in expectation also changed widely held assumptions about personalization. Personalization is no longer limited to onsite recommendations featuring product based on purchase history, or placing a first name in an email offer.

Personalization is about providing a customized, considered experience across all touchpoints of journey – from product range and availability to fulfilment options and loyalty programs – in real-time. Now, even the nimblest retailers need to move faster and smarter.

On top of that, retailers must anticipate customer wants and needs, leveraging analytics to develop new products and services faster than their competitors can, and tailoring those products and services through personalized, human-centric experiences.

In short, retailers must develop an ***experience*** strategy that is predictive and adaptive; knowing what the customer will want tomorrow and having the right product at the right place and time. Let's unpack this:

- Predictive: anticipating what a customer will want tomorrow and being there to meet that unexpressed and unmet need they didn't know they had.
- Adaptive: customizing the experience to have the right product at the right place at the right time, whether in the permanent store, at the curbside, on the consumer's front porch, in a pop-up store, at an event, or anywhere the shopper is and will be.

Without predictive and adaptive intelligence, a business is only personalizing its existing products and services – which is important to do for today, but not sufficient to win tomorrow.

To be predictive and adaptive, a business needs a complete view of the customer – both who they are and what they do across the entire customer journey, whether they are on a company's website or socials, they're interacting with a chatbot online, or a sales associate instore.

Predictive and adaptive **intelligence** also requires a business to possess complete visibility into the supply chain so that they can deliver the right version of product at the right time. They need to know exactly what's in stock in every aisle of the store and at every fulfillment center at all times.

The Role of the Customer Data Platform Today

CDPs play a valuable role helping businesses create **personalized** experiences based on what a business knows about the customer. Leading CDPs, including Adobe and Acquia, create a unified view of the customer that makes it possible for businesses to accelerate the development of new products and services online, or as we like to call it, speed to market. Customer data platforms accelerate speed to market while providing the flexibility to meet the evolving needs of customers.

The Role of the Customer Data Platform Tomorrow

We see CDPs playing an exciting and even more essential role as experience ecosystems become predictive and adaptive. To help retailers understand and respond to customer preferences tomorrow, CDPs will provide an end-to-end view of the customer, regardless of channel or behavior.

For example, some businesses have the means to do extensive in-store behavioral tracking, such as using location data to understand consumer preference trends at the store level. Some have the means to study supply chain data in real time. But few businesses are marrying all this data to match

supply with demand today and tomorrow as effectively as they could.

The key is to rethink the role of the CDP as a customer visibility platform. And that visibility needs to encompass not only who the customer is and what their preferences are, but how those factors influence the entire business, ranging from supply chain to customer loyalty management.

The Outcome

The outcome of having a customer visibility platform is more nimble decision making. For example, let's say a consumer packaged goods brand wants to collaborate with a grocer to roll out a new line of cereal. The retailer, possessing complete visibility into the customer and the enterprise, can figure out not only where to stock the certain stores today but also weeks and months down the road. That's because the retailer can monitor consumer interest online and instore by deploying solutions that track sentiment, engagement, and customer dwell data. With complete visibility, the retailer can personalize the product roll-out by channel, geographic region, and time segment.

Contact Centific

To learn how to succeed with personalization 2.0, contact Centific.

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