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Personalization: Think big, act incrementally

Adobe Experience Cloud can help you steadily close the gap between ambition and execution

Nearly every company interacting with consumers recognizes the growing importance of personalized experiences. The latest research from Deloitte Digital highlights this shift:

20% more consumers emphasize its value

&

50% more brands have made it core to their customer strategies compared to two years ago.*

As a result, brands are reimagining customer journeys, aiming to make every message timelier, every offer more relevant, every interaction smoother. Yet tackling this level of transformation can be daunting, leaving some brands in a no-man's-land between bold ambition and faltering execution.

Fortunately, the research shed light on how to bridge that divide. It showed that successful brands are forging ahead with ambitious personalization strategies— and they're doing it by recognizing that achieving a big vision requires incremental steps, not giant leaps. Through our extensive work with clients, we've seen that Adobe can be a powerful ally in making steady progress. We've even identified four key actions that brands can take to lay the groundwork for impactful personalization.

> ### INCREMENTAL ACTIONS = MONUMENTAL RESULTS
>
> Brands with mature personalization capabilities **exceeded their revenue goals by nearly 10%** in 2023, compared to just 1.7% for brands with less-mature capabilities.

Connect and leverage your data sources

Successful personalization depends on having a strong blueprint for connecting and leveraging the right data. That's why user-friendly customer data platforms (CDPs)—which collect and organize data from multiple channels into unified customer profiles—are the gold-standard foundation for orchestrated personalized experiences. With a robust CDP, brands can recognize customers wherever or however they interact, across different channels and devices.

The next generation of CDPs will empower marketers even further, incorporating generative or predictive AI that can help brands better understand and respond to shifts in customer behaviors and needs, and even identify emerging patterns across customer profiles.

With the evolution of CDPs and their heightened level of responsiveness comes heightened responsibility. As brands enrich their own customer data with data from trusted parties, it's paramount to combine data in ways that honor privacy regulations and consumer permissions, particularly in highly regulated industries. To bolster brands' compliance and confidence, Adobe's Real-Time CDP already has built-in guardrails, with embedded governance capabilities aimed at safeguarding data privacy and security.

Integrate robust decisioning capabilities

Once data is unified, the challenge of using it wisely and in real time begins. Personalization is about being agile, responding swiftly and appropriately to changes in customer behavior or context. To do this effectively, brands need strong analytics to generate insights—and decisioning tools to act on them instantly. However, Deloitte Digital's research revealed that:

45%

of surveyed brands described their analytics and modeling capabilities as lacking.

To close this gap, brands need to steadily build intelligence capabilities that stitch data into real-time customer profiles. Integrating tools like Adobe Customer Journey Analytics and Adobe Journey Optimizer can help improve a brand's understanding of a customer over time by gathering relevant information from each interaction, drawing insights that help define the right offer and channel— and making these insights accessible and actionable across the organization, from marketers to product teams and more.

Accelerate and improve your content life cycle

The next step is creating and delivering personalized experiences to the customer. With consumers expecting meaningful content across all channels and interactions, brands are seeking to streamline and expand the end-to-end content creation and delivery process—without compromising quality or brand standards. Yesterday's time-intensive, manual processes for content planning, production and review simply can't keep up.

Forward-thinking brands are overcoming these challenges by tapping tools that foster transparency throughout the content life cycle and help drive velocity. It starts with the planning process. In Adobe Workfront, team members gain a comprehensive—and detailed—view of any campaign that's planned or in progress, thanks to AI-enabled tools that turn an imported brief into clear, delineated tasks.

As personalized campaigns go into production, creative and marketing teams need to seamlessly work together to ensure asset variations that meet the needs of different target audiences and markets throughout the entire content life cycle. In tandem with Workfront, Adobe Experience Cloud's suite of creative tools help accelerate collaboration and reduce revision cycles, keeping campaigns moving forward. Approved assets are delivered directly into Adobe Experience Manager, where they can be easily searched, activated and measured for performance in real time so that brands can make quick adjustments that boost customer engagement. This integrated toolset not only supports the immediate campaign but also creates a feedback loop of continuous insights, shaping and accelerating the success of future campaigns.

Harness the combination of GenAI and automation

Generative AI (GenAI) has emerged as a promising way to accelerate the creative process. In fact, over a third of surveyed brands in Deloitte's research have already invested in GenAI to support their personalization efforts, with another:

51%

planning to do so by
the end of 2024.
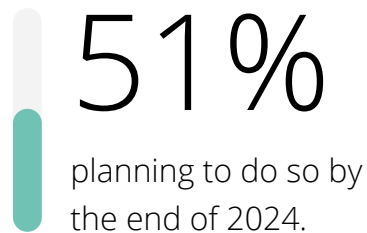
Yet even those brands that have begun using GenAI tend to first use it outside of their production workflows, which creates rather than eliminates bottlenecks. To realize its cost- and time-savings benefits, brands need to integrate GenAI into automated workflows while still ensuring human oversight. For example, Adobe GenStudio relies on marketers' upfront input to create and manage personalized assets for different channels or campaigns. Its automated review processes confirm that AI-generated copy and images align with brand standards, are appropriate for targeted customers and include accurate, up-to-date product information—before final human approval. Integrating GenAI into marketing processes helps people work more efficiently, improves the quality and timely delivery of content, and ultimately elevates customer connections.

Reimagining retail with data-driven personalized experiences

THE CHALLENGE

This legendary department store chain had always prioritized customer satisfaction for shopping experiences. But it recognized that it needed to transform how customers experienced the brand: they sought more personalized recommendations, content and offers. To enhance its connection with customers, Macy's recognized that it needed to shift from traditional single-channel campaigns to personalized customer journeys that focused on driving five behaviors:

· Transitioning customers from first to second purchase

· Reviving down-trending customers

· Engaging "Silver status" credit card holders

· Encouraging customers to "complete the look"

· Increasing omnichannel spend

THE SOLUTION

Macy's engaged Deloitte Digital to help it establish the foundational capabilities of data, analytics, content production and experience orchestration, setting personalized shopping experiences in motion for its customers. By tapping the power of Adobe Experience Platform, we helped unify Macy's customer data into a single source of truth and enriched it with real-time intent signals to support the activation of omnichannel journeys.

We then worked with Macy's to:

· Segment and orchestrate personalized customer journeys using Adobe Journey Orchestration to allow automated and optimized communications across email, web, app and push notifications

· Build unique experiences for each target customer using the Adobe Experience Manager, which helped Macy's create fresh content and storytelling, and personalized offers fine-tuned to customers' needs and buying behaviors

· Track and analyze the performance of customer journeys using Customer Journey Analytics, which empowered Macy's with the insights needed to monitor engagement data, measure results and make iterative changes

THE OUTCOME

Since the launch of the personalized program, Macy's has effectively harnessed data and regularly reaches over 30 million customers with personalized offers. The brand has improved conversions and driven stronger cross-channel engagement. Most important, it is now fostering meaningful connections with its customers through more personalized shopping experiences.

Turn personalization opportunities into reality

The incremental steps needed to achieve your personalization goals may be slightly different for your organization, depending on your brand identity, customer needs and current personalization capabilities. While there's no single path to follow, Deloitte Digital's **FULL RESEARCH REPORT** can help you evaluate where your greatest opportunities may lie.

To learn more about how Deloitte Digital and Adobe can help you take proactive steps to go from big ambitions to seamless execution, reach out to set up a meeting with our team.

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