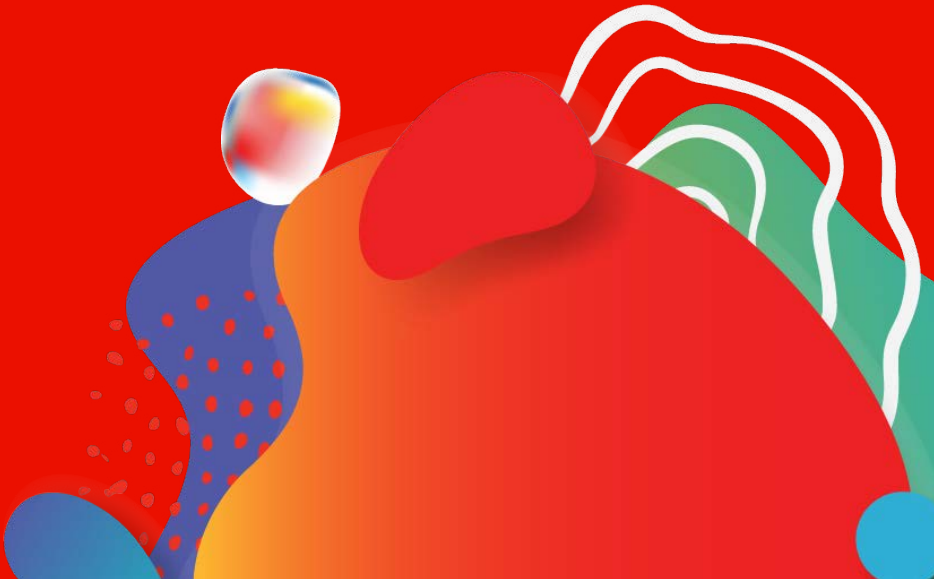# Ask more from your email marketing and customer journey management solution.

Solve your real-time personalisation problems.

Alyssa Raine, Group VP of Customer Marketing Platforms at Walgreen's, knows the importance of customer experience. "Our mission at Walgreens Boots Alliance is to help our customers lead happier, healthier lives — and one of the ways we're making that happen is through hyper-personalised customer experiences," she explains.

But Alyssa knows that delivering those hyper-personalised experiences is both a technical and logistical challenge. There is so much to consider, from delivering post-sale emails to customers at scale, to reacting to real-time events with tailored push notifications.

Email marketing plays a huge role in the customer journey. But there's much more to it than sending emails – from real-time profiles to digital asset management..

There are many different strands to tie together, ever-changing considerations to make and a wealth of data to learn from. This isn't exclusive to Alyssa – it's the challenge facing any digital marketing professional today.
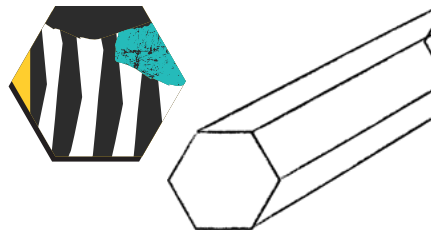
"Consumers are in control when it comes to how they engage with brands," says Sundeep Parsa Head of Product Strategy, Management and Marketing for Adobe's Customer Journeys portfolio.

Consumers feel so strongly about great customer experience that they are willing to pay a 16% price premium for it (PwC). As a marketer, it's your job to remove the obstacles in your customers' paths, facing your own obstacles on the way.

But customer journeys are becoming increasingly complex.

" The journeys of existing customers have changed rapidly, with 56% reporting new paths to research and purchase.

Adobe Digital Trends 2021
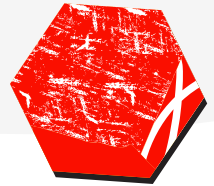
A great option for marketers is Adobe Journey Optimizer. Launched at Adobe Summit 2021, this new application helps brands to personalise each customer journey and interactions. This is what Alyssa Raine at Walgreens has to say about it.

"We're excited about what Adobe Journey Optimizer offers," she explains, "a powerful combination of real-time data, AI based decisioning and the added value of built-in best-in-class asset management capabilities with Adobe Experience Manager Assets Essentials, which will enable us to show up for customers when and where they need it."

Deploy your customer journeys fast and smart.

Choosing a solution is just the first step. To set your team up for a successful implementation, follow these customer journey best practices.

Understand the importance of customer journeys
A customer journey is the decisions made by the customer as they interact with your brand through whatever means available to them.

It's your job as a marketer to make that journey as frictionless and enjoyable as possible. Unified customer profiles — real-time data that comes from active listening and intelligent decisioning — combined with omnichannel orchestration and execution via all desired delivery channels are the technology underpinnings of great customer journeys.
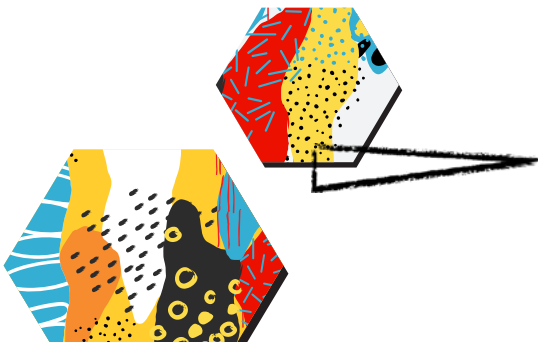
Customer experience drives over two-thirds of customer loyalty, more than 'brand' and 'price' combined.
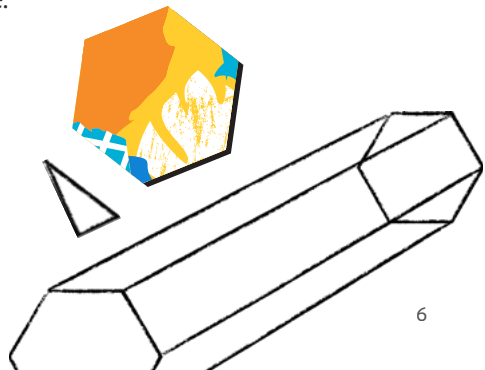
Gartner

But most consumers continue to be disappointed by brands. They are struggling through paths that are steep and strewn with obstacles.

"Improving the customer experience has never been more important," we wrote in Adobe Digital Trends 2021. The pandemic has changed everything – rapidly accelerating buying trends already under way:

- Over 30% of respondents say customers are less loyal to products or brands.

- 50% say existing customers have exhibited new buying behaviours.

Most companies are now competing on customer experience. It has become the strategic imperative.

> More than 8 out of 10 companies now compete on customer experience.
>
> Gartner

Know Your Customers and Engage Them "Now"

In the best customer journeys, the customer encounters exactly what they needs and wants, at the right moment, and they reward a business by committing to it. Great, but how do you recognise customers, know useful things about them and know what they are doing right now?

> **"** "In the era of instant gratification, consumers expect brands to understand them and anticipate their needs."
>
> Sundeep Parsa, Adobe's Customer Journeys portfolio

A **unified customer profile** pulls together all the useful customer information — behavioural, transactional, financial and operational — from all the systems that create and observe it. Once you have a comprehensive view of each customer, you can listen more effectively.

By fusing these diverse data together, suddenly you have engageable insights. You can discern why customers are engaging and better predict what will excite them. You can drive more responsive and personalised customer journeys and design better segments for your campaigns.

Previously, the unified profile has reflected the past — last year, last month, last week. With the advent of real-time capabilities, you can interact in the customer's timeframe, responding immediately to the signals coming from customer behaviours.

"Real time" is your conduit to the customer's "now."

For example, a media site texts breaking news about a player to all fans of a certain football team, capturing customer traffic from customers who want to know more. Or the instant a customer takes up an offer while online, they're removed from the text blast that makes a conflicting offer.

" Most companies today are rich in data volume, but only 23% of executives rate their organisation as "very strong" in their speed of gaining accurate insights.

Adobe Digital Trends

Without the insights and the real-time data, companies fall back on simplistic segments and history. They treat "Chrome users on Sundays" as a uniform segment and show content that was popular last month.

Don't drop the customer experience ball

Your company has a customer profile, right? Maybe even a few different ones? Data sources are built into every tool used by marketers and customer-facing organisations — there's no shortage of data. But the point is to have a 'single source of truth' across the entire organisation, not a bunch of disparate data sources — as good as they might be.

Chances are, not one of them on its own is enough to inform or power the connected customer journey. A unified real-time customer profile is fundamental and essential to journey-wide customer engagement. If your digital marketing, email campaigns, purchase and support history, are not fused together — and augmented with fresh insights — customers are destined to hit unproductive detours, or worse, dead ends.

Imagine this:

- Your customer reacts to a great email offer

- Pursues it via your mobile app

- Arrives kerb side to pick up her item

- And finds it's not there

Ball dropped. Poor customer experience.
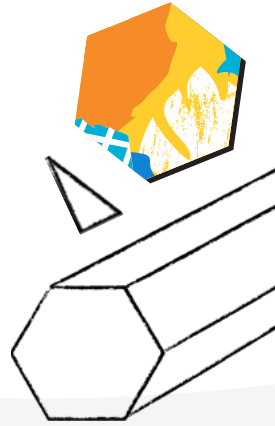
“ Organisations using a cloud-connected platform to integrate their customer and marketing data are more than twice as likely to be "very strong" in speed to insight than companies with an in-house platform or ad hoc solutions.

Adobe Digital Trends 2021

Harmonise Marketing Actions and Individual Engageable Moments

Your customers expect to seamlessly shift among channels while experiencing their customer journeys and your marketing campaigns. Adobe recently found that companies with the strongest omni-channel customer engagement strategies enjoy a 10% Y-O-Y growth, a 10% increase in average order value and a 25% increase in close rates.[1]

But many brands are not there yet.

- **87% of consumers** think brands need to do more to provide a seamless experience [2]

- **60% of marketers** would possibly or definitely get frustrated as a customer of their own digital experience [3]

What does it take to modernise your omnichannel customer journey and deliver consistent personalised experiences across channels?

Let's face it, managing customer journeys can be a tricky business. Whether you're a lifecycle marketer or a product manager, you're trying to strike the balance between 'marketing to' and 'having a conversation with' your customer. Harmonising these efforts has been challenging — if not impossible — in the past.

Not only have marketing teams often operated in their own swim lane, with their own demand and conversion goals, but disparate tech stacks have perpetuated a siloed approach to CX. If a centralised cross-channel profile is the engine to power customer journey management, a unified application that sits on top of it is the cockpit where the action takes place.

Imagine an application that facilitates cross-journey workflows and at the same time connects customer insights and impacts every step of the way.

Practitioners want a solution that enables intuitive journey and message design with easy access to brand assets and content — as well as clear goal setting, analytics and reporting — in a single canvas. Less heavy lifting, more productivity. The lack of streamlined workflows connecting interactions across the customer lifecycle — from marketing through operational notifications — has hobbled marketer productivity and effectiveness since the advent of digital marketing, but it is within reach in 2021.
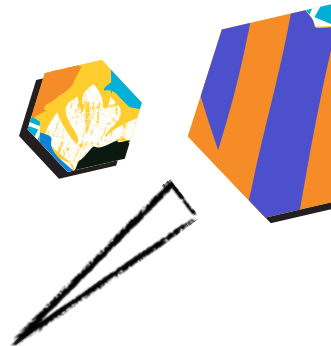
Automate decisions to achieve personalisation at scale

Of course, you want your customer journeys to be brilliantly nimble. All you must do is:

- Support the million different steps customers might take

- And the trillions of ways they might take them.

In today's B2C environment, billions of customer records and events occur daily, reflecting billions of decisions.

It is humanly impossible for a marketer to manage this manually. You need automation for modelling, predicting and decision making, handling millions of messages in minutes. But having AI somewhere in your portfolio doesn't cut it.

You need…

- An intelligent automated decision engine to analyse customer context and choose the next best offer or action for a customer.

- AI/ML to find the best results for every customer.

- Reliable predictions on customer engagement, optimal times for messaging and proven content.

With this intelligence, you can achieve a level of personalisation that spans the journey across time and channels, a journey that is personalised to the customer's "now".

And all these capabilities need to share the same data, the same business goals and the one window you use for all things "customer".

In this environment, your emails hit customers when they are most likely to read them, with the most engaging subject lines. When receiving mobile messages, customers are directed to content and offers that are most likely to interest them and keep the interaction moving forward.

This intelligent decisioning and prediction platform would instantly know the next best offer or action at first touch, such as for a customer arriving at a product page from a Google search.
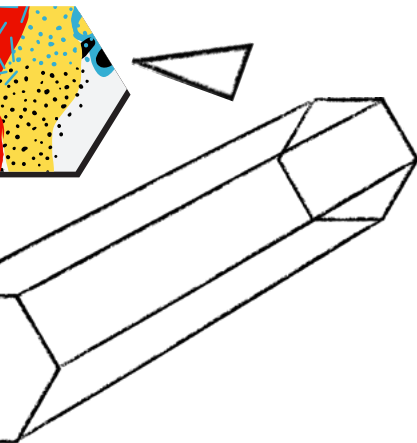
Summary

Most companies aren't in position to bring their customer journeys up to customer expectations. The top three barriers to great digital experiences are:

- Workflows & collaboration

- Legacy tech

- Lack of digital skills.

In addition to the unified customer profile, the single canvas, the AI and decisioning engine, your company must be organised, measured and motivated to use them.

There must be a strategy and goals to support the changes that customer journey improvements invariably demand.

A good starting point is understanding your company's plans for a unified customer profile and what technology limitations might impede adoption of cloud native services that will put the unified app at your fingertips.
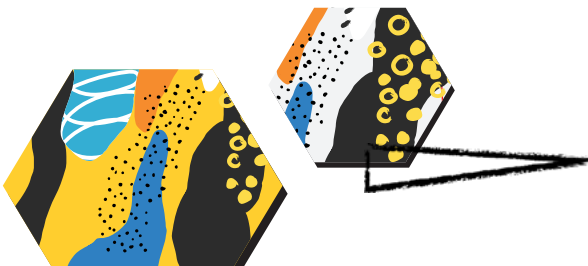
Benefits of Adobe Journey Optimizer

1. Super-fast email messaging at scale

Cloud-native services within Adobe Journey Optimizer ensure brands can deliver communications at cloud-scale and -speed during demanding peaks like "Flash Sales" or breaking events (think sporting events or world news). Additionally, intuitive goal setting, reporting and dashboards enable marketers to see and report on key metrics to optimise their business.

2. Customer profile segmentation

Adobe Journey Optimizer, built natively on Adobe Experience Platform, combines a variety of data types, including behavioural, transactional and operational data across multiple touchpoints into a single, centralised real-time customer profile that is constantly updated.

3. Deliver the right experience at the right time

Customer journeys designed in Adobe Journey Optimizer can be dynamic and event-based to help brands react to real-time signals as well as connect those interactions with broad, audience-based engagement so the right experience is delivered, at the right time to drive the best outcomes for the consumer.

4. AI-driven decision-making

With Adobe Journey Optimizer, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) based intelligence is an integral part of the application. Brands can apply intelligence, learning and predictive insights to automate the process of deciding what communications to send on which channels and when to produce the best outcomes for individual customers.

"

Companies are looking for AI-driven, mass personalisation at scale wherever they can to make contextually relevant choices.

R "Ray" Wang, principal analyst and CEO, Constellation Research

Adobe can help

Adobe Journey Optimizer can help brands optimise and personalise experiences across the entire customer journey.

Whether it is a brand-initiated engagement like weekly promotional emails or personalised, real-time interactions like delighting customers with contextual information as they engage with the products and services they already bought.

Brands can use a single application to put the individual consumer at the heart of the customer journey and go beyond orchestrating individual campaigns to full, intelligent customer journey management.

Find out how Adobe Journey Optimizer can supercharge your customer experiences.

Learn more
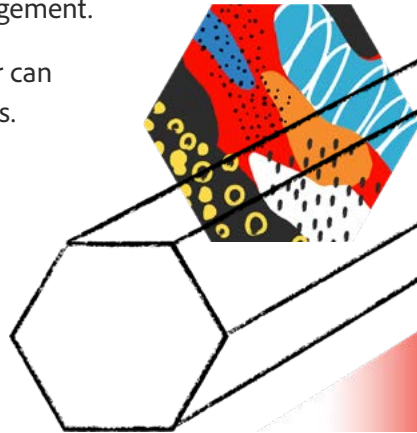
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